

Addis Ababa University
School of Graduate Studies

**Thematic Analysis of Selected Amharic Song Lyrics:
A Sociological Approach**

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**Thematic Analysis of Selected Amharic Song Lyrics:
A Sociological Approach**

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**Thesis Submitted to the Department of Foreign Languages
And Literature in Fulfillment of the Requirement of the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Literature**

**Addis Ababa University
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Addis Ababa University

School of Graduate Studies

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Neguss Yilma Woldesenbet, entitled: “*Thematic Analysis of Amharic Song Lyrics: A Sociological Approach*” and submitted in the fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (in Literature) complies with the regulations of the university and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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Declaration

I declare that “*Thematic Analysis of Selected Amharic Song Lyrics: A Sociological Approach*” is the result of my own effort and has not been presented to any university in the same or different form to merit a PhD degree other than that for which I am now a candidate, and that all sources used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Neguss Yilma Woldesenbet

March 2018

Abstract

This study examines the themes of Amharic song lyrics composed during the three consecutive regimes: Emperor Haile Selassie I, the Derge and the EPRDF. It offers a critical reading of the governing ideologies' roles in shaping the themes of the song lyrics, and the social functions of song lyrics at different historical periods. To this end, sixty (60) Amharic song lyrics composed by different lyricists have been selected through multistage sampling methods and analyzed. The three sociological perspectives: functionalism, conflict and symbolic interactionism have been adopted to conduct a qualitative analysis on the selected Amharic song lyrics. In addition, due attentions have been given to the governing ideology of the stated each period while analyzing the themes of the selected Amharic song lyrics. From this study, the following findings have been drawn.

The major themes of Amharic song lyrics composed during the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I are patriotism, education, moral decadence (prostitution and corruption) and political discontents. The positive functions of education and patriotism to enhance the stability and continuity of the society are emphasized in the songs. Whereas, the song lyrics which deal with the themes of moral decadence and political discontents show how poverty and maladministration caused the people's grievances and hopelessness. The inevitability of conflict between the oppressed mass and the ruling class due to the unfair distribution of wealth and political repressions is implied in these song lyrics.

The Amharic song lyrics composed during the reign of the Derge are thematically categorized into revolutionary songs and non-revolutionary songs. Apart from echoing the motto of the order "Ethiopia First", the themes of revolutionary songs hugely celebrate the achievements of the 1974 revolution. The revolutionists' effort to fight the serious political repressions is much appreciated in these songs. On the other hand, these songs label the opposition parties (EPRP & MEISON), the secessionists (TPLF & EPLF) and the Somali aggressors as the enemy of the revolution. Though few in number, the non-revolutionary songs of the period uncover the political discontents of the time.

Political discontents and migration are given much emphasis in Amharic song lyrics composed during the reign of EPRDF. These songs exposed EPRDF's failure to facilitate the country's transition towards democracy. In addition, the songs depict the social defeat that the nation faces due to migration.

The Amharic love songs collected from the stated three periods are thematically categorized into romantic love and maternal love. The functional roles of beauty, forgiveness, longing and idealization to blossom the intimates' strong attachments as well as the threatening effects of betrayal and gossip on the lovers' lives are depicted through the romantic love songs of Amharic. The unspeakable sacrifices that mothers make for the wellbeing of their children are shown in the songs that discuss maternal love.

In general, in this study, it is identified that the themes of Amharic songs are dominantly topical, and they have significant contemporary relevance. Therefore, further investigations need to be conducted on the songs from different perspectives to uncover the major messages that they (the songs') convey. Particularly, conducting comparative analysis on the themes of Amharic song lyrics and the song lyrics of other indigenous languages is recommended to understand the comprehensive sociopolitical landscape of the nation.

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List of Acronyms

EPRP----- Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Party

MEISON----All-Ethiopian Socialist Movement

EDU-----Ethiopian Democratic Union

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

EPLF----- Eritrean People’s Liberation Front

EPRDF----- Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front

E.C. ------ Ethiopian Calendar; there are a gap of 7–8 years between the Ethiopian and
Gregorian Calendars

Chapter I: Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

The origin of secular songs in Ethiopia has different narratives. Ashenafi Kebede, the most prominent scholar in the field of Ethiopian Music, argues that the origin of songs in Ethiopia is related to the Hamito-Semitic immigrants (Ashenafi, 1971). This perspective has traced back the coming of the Hamito-Semitic people to Ethiopia in the distant past. According to this perspective, the songs that these people brought with them gave birth to secular songs in Ethiopia. These people were using rituals, songs and dances to accompany sacrificial services of the dragon cult. This account is accompanied by the hypothesis that their songs might have been mixed later with musical practices of the indigenous inhabitants to form the backdrop for Ethiopian secular and sacred music (Ashenafi, 1971).

The second assumption is linked with sacred music. The argument here is that the growth of secular songs is attributed to Saint Yared, who is well known for composing Ethiopian Orthodox church service music (Ashenafi, 1971). Since the time of Frumentius, the first bishop of Ethiopia, music has played prominent role in church services. Church songs were coordinated by sistrum, drums and dances, and they were especially cultivated by ‘debteras’, “unordained but highly trained clergymen” (Amsalu Akelilu, 2002). 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, 1971:12). He deserves credit for the three melody sub-genre, namely, ‘geez’, ‘ezil,’ and ‘araray’. In this regard, the assumption is that the secular music got much of its melodic patterns and styles from the sacred music. According to Ashenafi (1971) the secular music was gradually adapted and developed through the ‘azmaris’ who had church trainings. He further claims that “the secular folk music tradition has flourished as the humble servant of the Christian religious music” (Ashenafi, 1971: 55).

The third assumption about the origin of secular songs in Ethiopia is associated with the Queen Sheba myth. There is not sufficient information on this issue; however, it is alleged that after returning from Jerusalem, Queen Sheba brought with her levities who were serving as musicians in the temple in Jerusalem (MOI, 1968:8 cited in Woube Kassaye, 1995:25).

From the above three speculations, one can conclude that there hardly exists a common understanding and concrete evidence on the origin of Ethiopian secular music. The issue is still a subject of controversy. This may be attributed to either lack of information or inquiry on the subject.

Similarly, as one possibly faces challenges to trace back the clear origin of music, s/he also comes with incomprehensive information on the history of secular Amharic songs of Ethiopia. Though pointing out the exact origin of secular Amharic songs is difficult, scholars tried to indicate the time when modern recordings of these songs were started. According to Woube (1997) the first original cassette (that is 'cassette having an established record label') printed in Ethiopia was assumed to be Alemayehu Eshete's album that was printed in 1974. However, with regard to albums printed on discs, there were a few albums produced before the Italian occupation (Ibid).

However, until the second half of twentieth century, it was the 'azmaris', who Ashenafi (1976:294) defined as "strolling poet musicians of Ethiopia" that monopolized secular music. Despite their immeasurable contributions to the growth of secular songs, the 'azmaris' were gradually marginalized from the current market. The disappearance of the 'azmaris' can be attributed to the beginning of programmed music and the growing accessibility of music on radio (Ibid).

Azmaris' wonderfully apply equivocal terms in their song lyrics. They are able to reflect feelings, situations, and social issues through witticism and entertainment. Powns notes that these singers had a very important role in transmitting and maintaining the traditions of Ethiopia. He also observes that they "sing of the past and preserve it for the future" (Michael Powns, 1968:67). Nonetheless, since they are not given enough attention and overtaken by the market, they are slowly disappearing and remaining confined to mead houses ('tej bet') and traditional nightclubs.

Although the confusion concerning the origin of secular songs in general and secular Amharic songs in particular is not yet resolved, no one denies the significant role that they (the songs) play in preserving social, economic, political and historical values of the society in Ethiopia. Zenebe Bekele (1987:20) observes, "In Ethiopia, birth, wedding and death are accompanied by songs". Ashenafi (1976: 292) also states that traditionally Ethiopians prefer "the soft, quiet, and clear tones

of a single instrument in an intimate setting such as ‘tej bet’ or honey mead houses.” In addition, he further writes that there is repetition of melodies, showing that high value and appreciation is rather attached to the meanings of the lyrics rather than the melody.

There are remarkable instances that show how Ethiopians give due attention to the messages of the song texts. For instance, to this day while the ‘azmaris’ play music, the audiences involve in producing song texts which they believe reveal their internal feelings. On various occasions while the live performances of the ‘azmaris’ go on, mostly, in houses where local beverages such as ‘ጠጅ’ [täǧǧ], ‘ጠላ’ [täla] and ‘አረቄ’ [aräqe] are sold and in different ceremonies like weddings, holidays, etc. the audiences engage in producing song lyrics which often comment on the existing social situations. In such scenarios, both the ‘azmaris’ and the audience are often seen commenting on various social, economic, political and historical situations of the nation through their song texts.

In attending the live performance of the ‘azmaris’, Ethiopians gain two things at a time. On one hand, they enjoy the beautiful melodies of the ‘azmaris’. On the other hand, the often social critics that the ‘azmaris’ raise in their song texts make them learn the spirit of the day. Most ‘azmaris’ are skillful in their applications of pun in their song texts. In consequence, through the subtlety of their compositions, they can show the successes and the failures of the society.

In Ethiopia, modern music in a fully-fledged manner was started nearly in the second half of the twenty century. As a matter of fact, the beginning of programmed music lessened the dominance of the ‘azmaris’. However, the practice of embedding major social issues in the song lyrics of Ethiopian music has continued to the present (Solomon, 2006).

The coming of modern music paved the ways for the establishment of the three bands, namely, The Police Orchestra, The Imperial Body Guard and The Ground Force. The new mode of musical composition that these bands adopted could not function with the improvisations as the ‘azmaris’ practiced for centuries. Therefore, finding song texts in their written form become inevitable for the music composed in the bands. As a result, talented song lyric writers such as Eyoel Yohannes, Yohannes Afework, Tesfaye Abebe, Solomon Tessma, Getachew Debaleke, Merhawi Sitote, Seifu

H/Mariam, Kifle Abocher, etc. joined the music industry being employed in those and other bands during the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I.

In 1974 the military junta known as the Derge seized power in a bloody coup. Led by Colonel Mengistu H/Mariam, the Derge claimed socialism as the governing ideology of the state; different art clubs known as ‘ክ.ነ.ቲ’ [kinätə] were mushrooming at the local district levels. This, in turn, encouraged so many young vocalists to involve actively in the music industry. And finding carefully refined lyrics that depicted the changing situations of the time was highly demanding for those young musicians. As a result, gifted poets like Alemtsehay Wodajo, Yilma Gebreab, Tsegaye Deboche, Sosina Tadesse, etc. produced lyrics to the best of their abilities to fulfill the interest of both the musicians as well as the people at large.

In 1991 the Derge regime was toppled. Since then EPRDF (Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front) has controlled the power. This period is also marked by talented writers such as Mulugeta Tesfaye, Mesele Getahun, Ejigayehu Shibabaw, Tewodros Kassahun, etc. who have followed the footsteps of the former lyricists in their manner of composing song lyrics with multilayered meanings.

The expansion of mass communications (radio, television and newspapers) has contributed much to addressing modern music to the people. The Media (especially radio) has created opportunities for Ethiopians to attend music relatively irrespective of time and place limitations contrary to the traditional scenarios in which the audiences had to avail themselves right on the spots while the live performances of the ‘azmaris’ went on. Though the western influences exerted on programmed music of Ethiopia in terms of the utilization of musical instruments and manner of compositions were strong, fortunately, the then visionary Ethiopians persistently struggled to make it keep its Ethiopic features (Kidel, 1989). In effect, they could fruitfully manipulate the traditional musical instruments like the ‘mesnko’ with the foreign ones in composing the indigenous music. Of course, the lyricists’ resumption to produce song texts that comment on social issues also testifies Ethiopians commitment to preserve their indigenous music traditions. It is because in the Ethiopian context a song text that could not address one or the other concerns of the society is hardly welcomed, however beautifully the music is composed (Zenebe, 1990).

Having been one of the most resourceful and working languages of Ethiopia, Amharic has been used to record enormous social phenomena for centuries. One can find ample documents of religion, history and literature in Amharic. In a very similar manner almost all lyrics produced for the programmed music in the stated three bands for the first time were in Amharic. Since then thousands of song lyrics have been composed in Amharic by different poets for over half a century. The researcher strongly believes that the diversified social matters embedded in Amharic song texts could picture out the different social aspects of the nation.

As one possibly learns from various documents, society and literature can influence each other. W. Witte (1941:86) writes, “It is widely admitted that the literature of any given period on the one hand and the social, economic, and political forces of that period on the other are in some important way interconnected.” As a member of society, an author of a literary text is thought to use his/her talent to describe the social realities in a much more meaningful way than an ordinary individual. Similarly, the researcher argues that as part of the society, the writers of Amharic song lyrics have engaged in multidirectional interactions in their day to day activities. And being keen observers of life, they could reveal the social situations in their lyrics.

The ‘q̄ne’, wax and gold, tradition adapted from the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, has been practiced in Amharic for centuries. As things stand, the ‘q̄ne’ style of writing enables the poets to address a certain social issue with conciseness, beauty and depth. Evidently, many lyricists are seen exploiting this long-standing tradition, the ‘q̄ne’, in their Amharic song texts. This, in turn, paves the ways for the lyricists to put flesh on the bones of the major social phenomena in a catchy and meaningful manner. Therefore, on the basis of the stated situations so far, this study has attempted to conduct a critical analysis on Amharic song lyrics to find out major themes that they conveyed for half a century (1950-2000 E.C.). The analyses have been conducted on the basis of the theoretical assumptions of the three grand sociological perspectives: functionalism, conflict and symbolic interactionism. The Amharic song lyrics which were composed for programmed music under the three consecutive regimes (The Emperor Haile Selassie I, The Derge and the EPRDF) show the social, economic, political, and historical events of the country.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Ethiopian music is dominantly vocal; such type of music practically combines a literary text and a musical setting that function at a time. Mabry in Pat Pattison (2012:105) remarks that “...Communication through language has been a key element of vocal music throughout history. The text of a song when clearly and expressively projected, can move the listener in ways the music alone could not accomplish.” In the Ethiopian context, the assumption is that since much weight is given to the meanings of the song texts, the lyricists would highly be committed to formulate song lyrics clearly and expressively.

Though there are situations where different genres of art appear in an intermixed manner as it happens to vocal music, they should not be equally dense. In this regard K. Langer in Pattison (2012:129) says, “There are no happy marriages in art-only successful rape.” It is to mean that when we blend works of art, for instance, melody and lyric, one should play the role of servitude. Pattison (2012:129) elaborates this concept as:

It is the matter of choice: how deep do you want the lyrics to go? Most often, it is a trade-off: if the lyric is dense, the music is simple, and conversely. Songwriter “poets” like Bob Dylan and Leonard Cohen generally use pretty straightforward melody and harmony. Usually, something’s gotta give: if everything is dense, nothing much is clearer and there is limited communication-or at least, communication to a narrower audience.

Evidently, in the case of Ethiopian music the lyric is much denser than the melody. When Zenebe reveals to what extent Ethiopians give due attention to song lyrics, he states “the one who is considered to be good or even the best singer is the one who knows a variety of song texts...” (1987:28). Furthermore, in his book entitled “ጭላንጭል: ታሪካዊ የሙዚቃ እይታ” Zenebe (1990:70) writes:

... For “the wax and gold (qōne’)” style of writing that existed with the development of religious literatures highly influenced the music, textual form of music was forced to be dependent on words and language items... It was the underlying subtlety of the lyrics that more likely impressed the audience rather than the development of the other aspects of the music [My translation].

Either writing in ‘qōne’, wax and gold, or understanding the text written in that manner seeks high level of thinking. Connotatively, ‘qōne’, wax and gold, usually helps to convey multilayered

and philosophical thoughts. Often times the allusive expressions hidden in the womb of ‘qðne’ can make the society keep in touch with prominent events of life. As one can understand from Zenebe’s justification, in Ethiopia the trend of practicing ‘qðne’ in religious texts has been adapted to secular song texts. This assumption seems strongly logical when we see the underlying spirituality in both religious and secular Amharic songs of Ethiopia (Kindel, 1989). For centuries, in their deep-rooted traditions of oral literature, the people in Ethiopia have exercised poetry better than the other literary genres. In line with this Ashenafi (1971:59) remarks that “the artistic spirit, vitality, and aesthetic conception of the Ethiopian tradition can be manifested in the sphere of poetry and versification more than in any other aspects of the culture.” Therefore, Ethiopians long existing familiarities with this genre enhance their consciousness to make logical value judgments on song texts. It might be because of this awareness that the people are frequently heard commenting on the themes of song texts. The researcher witnessed so many times when people forwarded critiques on the messages and other related qualities of song lyrics either in their informal discussions or on their media debate.

However, though gifted lyricists have produced prominent Amharic song lyrics for culturally oriented and conscious audiences for decades, their works have not received due attention from the academia yet (Woube, 2009). In this regard, the less involvement of foreign researchers in Ethiopian music might be related to the language barrier; understanding texts written in Amharic and investigating the content it conveys could be difficult for foreigners. Ashenafi (1971:51) observes, “The study of song texts in general has also great importance when we realize that ethnomusicology has done very little due to the fact that most ethnomusicologists lacked a working knowledge of the language in the music area of their specialty sufficient to enable them to grasp and translate accurately the subtle messages conveyed by the texts.”

Therefore, it needs the effort of Ethiopian scholars who do have a better understanding of the indigenous languages in order to uncover the subtle messages conveyed by the text. In this regard, this study could somehow fill the existing gap. It is because, being the native speaker of Amharic, the researcher believes that his exposure to the language enables him to uncover the messages embedded in the song texts. In addition, sharing the following views of Ashenafi (1971:60), the researcher argues that Amharic song lyrics deserve critical and intensive investigations:

An emphasis on the study of song texts becomes particularly imperative when we realize that the Ethiopian tradition attaches precedence over the melody that accompanies it; this forms the basis of Ethiopian aesthetic conception. Thus, the melodies are relatively repetitive, requiring no special effort from the performer or listener, while the song texts contain varied stanzas, artfully interwoven with subtlety and ambiguity, which only the knowledgeable attentive listener can translate meaningfully. We could, in fact, state further that the aesthetic elements and functions of Ethiopian music are dominantly governed by textual consideration. Consequently, the song texts will aid us in the understanding of the meaning, values, and uses of music within the Ethiopian social and cultural contexts.

Hopefully, the Amharic song lyrics that are artfully interwoven with subtlety and ambiguity could reflect the social, economic, political and historical aspects of the country. According to Merriam (1964:190), “you can say publicly in songs that you cannot say privately to a man’s face, and so this is one of the ways African society takes to maintain a spiritually healthy community.”

In practice, music reaches millions of audiences; irrespective of their educational background and the place where they live (rural or urban) people do have better access to music than other artifacts. Especially, the expansion of radio has hugely widened the people’s opportunities to enjoy music. In the Ethiopian context, Amharic is spoken almost throughout the nation. Therefore, the social messages that are conveyed through Amharic song lyrics reach millions of Ethiopians in different media (radio, television, cassettes, etc.). As a matter of fact, the music (or the melody of the song) makes people remember and internalize the song lyrics easily. In this regard, Cooper (2012: 141-142) writes, “Music makes lyrics easier to remember, to the point that many of us know hundreds if not thousands of songs by heart but can remember far fewer poems. Songs have shaped our collective consciousness far more than poetry has, for better or worse.” Furthermore, showing the magnitude of songs’ power through the intermingled function of music and lyrics, D. Austin (2008:118) states:

The music is doing something necessary and the words are doing something necessary. There is an organic flow between the music and the words, a partnership between equals. The words take the music to a deeper level and the music takes the words to a deeper level. Music and lyrics were the catalyst for therapeutic growth; they opened the doors to the unconscious and provided a container for in-depth processing to occur.

The researcher believes that the beautiful melodies and the well-crafted lyrics of Amharic songs can fulfill the points that Austin has stated above. Furthermore, all the points discussed under this section indicate the necessity of conducting intensive investigations on Amharic song lyrics.

As a result, this study has attempted to find out the major themes that are reflected through Amharic song lyrics which were composed within the last five decades (1950-2000 E.C.) Here 1950 E.C. marked the beginning of modern music in Ethiopia.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

1.3.1. General Objective of the study

The main objective of this study is to investigate the major themes embedded in Amharic song lyrics composed during the three consecutive eras (Emperor Haile Selassie I, the Derge and the EPRDF).

1.3.2. Specific Objectives of the study

The specific objectives of this study were intended:

1. To identify the major themes reflected through Amharic song lyrics.
2. To examine how the functions of social institutions are addressed through Amharic song lyrics.
3. To find out how the lyricists use significant symbols in their songs in their attempt to respond to the various consequences that occur due to either the failures or successes of social institutions.
4. To forward some comments on social, economic, political and historical events of the nation.

1.4. Significance of the Study

This study has the following significances:

1. It mainly indicates the functional roles of Amharic song lyrics in communicating various social issues in the Ethiopian context.
2. It has a positive contribution to the development of knowledge on Ethiopian music in general and Amharic song lyrics in particular.
3. It shows how the lyricists follow the realities of life in their composition of Amharic song lyrics.
4. It would motivate scholars in different fields of studies (sociology, anthropology, history and other related areas) conduct researches on different indigenous secular song texts.

1.5. Scope and Limitations of the Study

In this study due attention is given to find out the major themes embedded in Amharic song lyrics. However, in discussing the relevance of meanings contained within the song texts at different levels, some features of music in its totality are raised to a certain extent. This is done on the assumption that music served as the carrying medium through which the words of the songs are brought to life.

In Ethiopia different languages are spoken; the various ethnic groups do have their own secular and sacred music. However, this research is limited to investigate the main themes depicted in Amharic song lyrics. In addition, all the lyrics used in this research are composed for programmed music, and they are categorized under secular Amharic music. Though the researcher believes that taking some other secular song lyrics in some other languages of the nation and conducting a sort of comparative analysis would make the findings more comprehensive, he could not do this due to shortage of time and financial constraints. Furthermore, due to the diversities of the issues that the lyrics entertain, the researcher finds it unmanageable to deal with both their form and content at a time. Therefore, the researcher has not described the forms of the selected song lyric.

The custom of archiving documents for either research or other purposes is not satisfactory in Ethiopia. By the same token, one could hardly find documented song texts in print. Therefore, the researcher was forced to face double burdens. Firstly, he faced difficulties to collect cassettes from the most unstructured market. Since many music shops were not currently functioning, it was inevitable to gather the cassettes from black market that was weakened by the newly introduced Copy Right Law. Secondly, transcribing the song texts (lyrics) from poorly recorded cassettes was challenging. On top of these, translating the selected Amharic song lyrics to English was not an easy task. Thus, it became difficult to maintain the artistic flavor of the lyrics while they were translated into English.

1.6. Methodology and Procedures

The method used in this research is textual analysis. Hence, the themes of selected Amharic song lyrics are qualitatively analysed through the three sociological perspectives: Functionalism, Conflict and Symbolic Interactionalism.

The Amharic song lyrics selected for this study are broadly categorized into two: love songs and non-love songs (other songs). This is done due to the fact that lyricists dominantly compose non-love songs to respond to the major events or experiences of the given period. Thus, taking into account the social, political, economic, historical and cultural realities of the time when they composed is crucial while analysis is conducted on them (the non-love songs). Accordingly, the selected non-love songs composed during the reigns of Emperor Haile Selasie I, the Derge and the EPRDF, have been discussed under chapter four, chapter five and chapter six respectively.

However, the lessons taken from the pilot study indicate that the situation of love songs is basically different. Love songs under the same thematic categories raise conceptually similar issues irrespective of the era when they are written. For instance, if we take a love song that deals with longing from each period, we will hardly find differences in the messages they convey. Hence, in this study, it is tried to discuss the major themes of the selected love songs collected from the stated three eras under a separate chapter (chapter 7) after they are categorized thematically. Finally, conclusions are drawn on the basis of the major findings of the study.

1.6.1. Methods of Data Collection

The Amharic song lyrics used in this study are collected from two sources: audiocassettes and print documents. Repetitive listening is conducted to transcribe the song lyrics from the audiocassettes. Furthermore, it has been tried to contact some lyricists (Tsfaye Abebe, Getachew Debalke, Merhawi Sitote and Yilma Gebreab) so that they edit the transcribed versions of the song lyrics that they composed. During the collection of Amharic song lyrics found in print photocopy and digital camera are used. However, the National Theatre of Ethiopia denied the researcher to use either a photocopy or digital camera; hence, the song texts collected from this institution are copied down manually.

1.6.2. Amharic Song Lyrics Selection

Thousands of Amharic song lyrics were produced during the reigns of Emperor Haile Selassie I, the Derge and the EPRDF. Therefore, it is difficult to know the exact number of Amharic song lyrics composed under these consecutive regimes. And it has become crucial to follow the following procedures to select Amharic song lyrics for this study. Firstly, before proceeding to

collect the data, it has been tried to go through documents on Ethiopian music. Consequently, books, articles, theses, newspapers, magazines, commentaries, interviews, documentary film, etc. which dealt with Ethiopian music were thoroughly examined. This, in turn, paves the ways for the study to identify the major features of Ethiopian music, and it helps to know individuals such as Afework Yohanness, Tesfaye Abebe, Getachew Debaleke, Merhawi Sitote, Tizera H/Michael, Seife H/Mariam, Solomon Tesema, Tesfaye Lemma, Tesfaye Lemessa, Muluken Melese, Alemtsehay Wodajo, Yilma Gebreab, Tsegaye Deboche are some of the key figures in modern Ethiopian music.

Because of the concerned institutions' weakness in archiving and documenting song texts, collecting the songs is quite challenging. Therefore, coming into contact with some of the lyricists mentioned above was crucial to collect the data. The researcher has managed to meet Tesfaye Abebe, Getachew Debalke, Merhawi Sitote and Yilma Gebreab. The first three were actively engaging in producing various works of art (song lyrics, theatre scripts and poems) especially during the reigns of Emperor Haile Selassie I and the Derge. While Tesfaye Abebe served for many years in the former Police Orchestra, the rest two worked for National Theatre of Ethiopia for more than three decades. Being a full-time lyricist, Yilma Gebreab on his part composed hundreds of lyrics during the reigns of the Derge and the EPRDF. Luckily, many song lyrics were collected from these lyricists. Furthermore, by using informal interviews, the researcher took full advantage of learning from their extensive experiences especially about the best hits of the 1950s and 60s, 70s, 80s and 90s. They also helped him much to have access to the song lyrics of other lyricists such as Afework Yohanness, Seife H/Mariam, Solomon Tesema, Muluken Melese and Alemtsehay Wodajo. They gave the researcher the lists of song lyrics written by these lyricists so that he collected them from audiocassettes and other possible sources. Furthermore, the researcher has put all his efforts to gather additional data from Ethiopian Broadcasting Cooperation, The Police Orchestra, The Imperial Body Guard, The Ground Forces, The National Theatre of Ethiopia, 'The Hager Fiker Theatre' and The Addis Ababa Municipality. All in all, three hundred Amharic song lyrics composed between the years 1950-2000 E.C. On average one hundred songs were collected from each period. Then the collected songs from each period were thematically classified. Finally, 60 Amharic song lyrics which belong to the different thematic categories were selected for the analyses.

1.6.3. Methods of Data Analysis

The collected and transcribed Amharic song lyrics are categorized according to their thematic concerns. Leenhardt (1967:545) states, “An analysis of lyrical works, which are the artistic expressions of a poet's emotions and impressions, is, in its way, complex and difficult also. One way of analyzing them might be to group together various poems according to their subject, the problem they deal with, or their genre, within the various periods of the poet's creative activity.” Similarly, in this study also the Amharic song lyrics are primarily categorized mainly on the basis of their subject and the problem they deal with. And then some song lyrics are purposely selected from each category to analyze them through sociological perspectives: functionalism, conflict and symbolic interactionism. However, before conducting the analysis, the selected Amharic song lyric are literally translated into English. Though the artistic beauty and flavor embedded in the original texts are compromised while they are translated, the necessary efforts are made to conduct in-depth analysis on the selected song lyrics through the stated perspectives.

Practically, it would be a mistake to take the fictional reality as a carbon copy of the social reality. The artist does not merely record whatever is there in the physical world reality. Rather, s/he is selective in his/her abstraction. The writer applies his/her talent and imaginative power to “give his work artistic flavors and make the messages more attractive, palatable and sensational” (Eyayu, 1994:21). For instance, regarding the essence of reality in fiction Butterton in Eyayu (1994:22) observes, “This does not mean that fiction must be a precise reflection of reality, or that art...should hold up a mirror to life. To reflect life in every detail even if it were possible would be merely to ape the art of a photographer. The task of the writer is to make us see a segment of life through his own eyes, to select what is significant, and to impress on that his own interpretation”. Therefore, in his attempt to make us see a segment of life through his own eyes, the writer mostly depends on his own social outlooks and attitude towards the issue he deals with. As a result, his work might somehow be suffered from biases. The situations of the lyricists could not be different from this fact. Therefore, in order to tackle the problem mentioned so far, attempts have also been made to forward a contextual analysis of the song lyrics on the basis of relevant research works done on the indicated periods respectively.

1.7. Organization of the Study

This study is organized into eight chapters. The first chapter focuses on giving a background to the study, articulating the gap the study intends to fill, describing the objectives and methodology of the study and delimiting its scope and significance. The second chapter is devoted to the review of related literature where researches conducted before are reviewed in order to show the gaps this study aims to fill. In the third chapter, theoretical framework of the study is presented. In this chapter a brief review on the three sociological perspectives (functionalism, conflict and symbolic interactionism) is given. Analyses of lyrics in respective reigns is presented from chapter four to seven. The last chapter presents the conclusions drawn from the analyses carried out through the previous four chapters.

Chapter II: Review of Related Literature

2.1. Secular Songs in Ethiopia

As noted before, scholars who have dealt with secular Ethiopian Music often categorize its historical development into two different phases: before and after the introduction of Christianity to this nation. It is obvious that Ethiopians used music for different purposes before the coming of Christianity. Sylvia Pankhurst (1955:108) writes, “Ethiopian society had existed before the introduction of Christianity having long established customs, beliefs which were expressed in music and other manners”. However, many scholars believed that the introduction of Christianity to Ethiopia has immense contribution to the development of Ethiopian Music (Zenebe, 1990, 1987; Ashenafi, 1989; Ezra, 2009; Tiblese, 1982).

In relation to the valuable input of Christianity to Ethiopian Music, one can see the role of the great priest and composer in Ethiopian Orthodox Church, St. Yared, whose incredible innovations are still visible in both sacred and secular music of the nation (Ashenafi, 1976). It is believed that through time St. Yared’s innovation (ways of composing hymns) was disseminated among the society through the church’s service men like the “debtras” who acquainted themselves with basic skills of composing songs. Consequently, the transfer of knowledge from the church elites to the ordinary secular society in terms of composing songs resulted in bringing the ‘azmaris’, the traditional secular song composers and singers, to the scene (Ashenafi, 1989; Solomon, 2006; Zenebe, 1990, 1987).

2.2. Studies on Amharic Secular Songs

Tiblese Asegdom (1982) and Mestawot Wondimu (2005) investigated the possible origin and historical development of Ethiopian music. Their findings mainly rely on the three assumptions stated above concerning the origin of Ethiopian music. On the other hand, Mehiret Tamirat (1976) and Tseday G/Mariam (1999) find out how sacred and secular music are performed side by side especially during epiphany. According to their studies, while the Ethiopian Orthodox Church commemorates the miracles of saints and angels, sacred and secular songs are performed by the clergy and the adherents respectively. As indicated in their studies, though the church doctrinally bans the performance of secular music, its followers enjoy it even when religious holidays are

celebrated. Even if the studies that have been stated so far help the researcher understand the various aspects of Ethiopian music (particularly Amharic secular music), they all are different from the present research in that none of them conducted any sort of analysis on any Amharic song lyrics.

The other B.A theses conducted on Ethiopian music have been done by students of Ethiopian Languages and Literature of Addis Ababa University. These theses are significantly different from the theses discussed above in their approaches. It is because the center of discussion in all the theses is Amharic song lyrics that are overlooked by students of the former St. Yared's Music School. Theses that could create a context of understanding and relevance for the study at hand were discussed below:

In his senior essay Fekade Azeze (1965) investigated the contents of Amharic song texts performed by the "Three Military Bands" through the years 1960-1964 E.C. According to Fekade the theme of love is dominantly reflected through Amharic song lyrics that were composed in the stated years. He also points out that the themes of work and death are embedded in some Amharic song lyrics. As Fekade implies because of the strict censorship policies of the then regime, political issues are hardly available in the song lyrics. Though some of the Amharic song lyrics that Fekade analyzed could be subjects of this research, at least two basic points differentiate the present one from Fekade's. Firstly, Fekade has investigated the themes of Amharic song lyrics composed under Emperor Haile Selassie's regime. However, the present study has covered Amharic song lyrics composed during the three regimes, Emperor Haile Selassie I, the Derge and the EPRDF. Secondly, different from Fekade's in this study the grand sociological perspectives, functionalism, conflict and symbolic interactionism, have been implemented to investigate the major themes embedded in Amharic song texts. In short, the present research is different from Fekad's in terms of its magnitude and approach.

The other thesis is done by Alemseged Abebe (1998) who made content analysis on Negaderas Tesema Eshete's Amharic song lyrics. As to Alemseged, Negaderas Tesema Eshete was believed to be the first individual in Ethiopia as well as in Africa to print his music on seventeen discs when he was in Germany for scholarship. His song texts thematically focus on supporting the political sentiment of the then government, the manly feature of heroism, the greatness of love and the

evilness of jealousy (Alemseged, 1998). Though the themes of heroism, love and jealousy in Amharic song texts are also treated in the present study, they are examined on the basis of different social contexts. Negaderas Tesema's Amharic song lyrics were produced some decades ahead of the song lyrics collected for the present study.

Lishan Tefera (1974) has analyzed some Amharic song lyrics composed by Asenakech Worku. She claims that most of Asenakech's song lyrics reflect the theme of love. Hence, according to Lishan, Asenakech's Amharic song lyrics deal with physical beauty and conduct of the lover, the features of unofficial love, the desirability of honesty in love, and the pain of betrayal. Lishan does not discuss any social issue other than love depicted in Asenakech's Amharic song lyrics. Though investigating social realities related to love in Amharic song lyrics has been one aspect of the present study, it has also covered other aspects of life. Thus, this simply, in turn, makes the study at hand different from Lishan's. The other student researcher who uncovers the content of Ejegayehu Shibabaw's lyrics is Melaku Getachew (1998). Melaku argues that in her Amharic song lyrics Ejegayehu raises various social concerns such as homesickness of the Diasporas, the unity of the nation, wisdom of traditional poets and gifts of nature. As mentioned, Ejegayehu's lyrics would be used in this study. However, on one hand her work is not the only resource for this study; on the other hand, Melaku did not examine the song lyrics through the perspectives that the researcher preferred to put into practice. Hence, unlike this study, some sociological aspects such as the level of social interactions, the significance of various institutions and the impact of conflicting events embedded in Ejegayehu's Amharic song lyrics were not given due attention in Melaku's investigations.

Abinet Sime (1988) examines the forms of Yilma Gebreab's Amharic song lyrics. According to him, in terms of form Yilma's song lyrics are effective for strengthening one major point, creating image consistency and keeping rhythm. Though the themes of some Amharic song lyrics of Yilma would be analyzed in the study at hand, its sole target has not been investigating their form. Mikia Tadesse (1996) on her part has attempted to show the internal beauty reflected through Sosina Tadesse's Amharic lyrics. Either explicitly or implicitly the researcher would also raise the issues of internal beauty depicted in Amharic song lyrics. However, different from Mikia's attempt, he looked into the essence of beauty in line with other social aspects embedded in the song lyrics.

Apart from the Diploma and the undergraduate theses which have been seen so far, the researcher has come across two M.A. theses conducted on Ethiopian music. One of the M.A. theses is done by Wube Kassaye (1995) who thoroughly investigates the contents of Amharic secular song texts produced in cassettes through the period of 1972-1994. He tries to find out whether the lyrics could be exploited for curriculum planning. After showing love, politics, geographical appreciation, and cultural development are the major contents of the song lyrics, he stresses on the inevitable necessity of their values to plan all rounded and effective curriculum. However, unlike Wube's this study was not intended to investigate the contents of the Amharic song lyrics in terms of their values for planning curriculum.

The other M.A. thesis that focuses on Ethiopian Amharic song lyrics is conducted by TsionYohaness (2007). Tsion has investigated the portrayal of women in Amharic song lyrics printed in the cassettes in the year 1997. According to her, in the song lyrics women are dominantly portrayed as untrustworthy, irrational, incompetent and cruel. What makes the present research different from Tsion's is that looking into the women's image is not its sole target. Of course, while discussing various social aspects embedded in Amharic song lyrics, attempts were made to examine women's image.

In conclusion, unlike the studies mentioned above, in this dissertation attempts have been made to study the Amharic song lyrics across periods. Furthermore, unlike the studies discussed in this section, this study is not solely focusing on a specific thematic issue. It deals with various thematic concerns depicted through Amharic song lyrics across periods. Therefore, its inclusiveness differs this research from the ones discussed under this section. As a result, the findings of the research could show the representations of social realities in Amharic song lyrics in a more comprehensive manner than the above ones.

2.3. The Social Functions of Songs

Songs can make individuals behave in terms of the commonly perceived social orders. The social lessons that they deliver often strengthen social cohesions. Mithen (2006:105) observes, "... Songs contributes to social cohesion and thereby increases the effectiveness of group action. Work and war songs, lullabies, and national anthems have bound together families, groups, or whole

nations... music may provide a means to reduce social stress and temper aggression in others. The idea that music may function as a social cement has many proponents.” In his book entitled, “የሰነድ ጸሀፍ መሰረታዊዎች”, Zerihun Asefaw briefly states how farmers in rural parts of Ethiopia use songs (ዘፈን) to encourage hard-working and condemn laziness. Most of the song lyrics that the author uses to exemplify the situation forward a lesson that a farmer who fails to face the hardship of farming lives in poverty. So, the social commentaries that the farmers perceive from the songs can initiate them to hold the better position in their community being conscious and productive.

In the Ethiopian context the cohesive nature of music is vividly seen through war songs. As has been learned from experience, whenever Ethiopia is at war, the most famous song ‘ኛ በለው’ (če bäläwፊ) remains on air. In addition to its strong motivational power, this song impressively idealizes an Ethiopia hero. So, in its entirety, it encourages the people to stand together against the enemy. Furthermore, in Ethiopia since freedom of expressions has been restricted for years, people use song as a means to show their grievances (Meheret, 2016; Timkehet, 2009; Solomon,2006; Getie, 2002). Similarly, the Amharic song lyrics used for this study reveal the shared experiences of the people; besides showing social failures and successes, they are used to anticipate the events.

2.4. The Notion of Song Lyrics

In this section a brief explanation of song lyrics is given focusing on their similarities and differences with poetry. However, prior to this it is important to identify the similarity and the difference between music and song lyrics.

According to Meyer (2012) music is an art of sound in time that expresses ideas and emotions in significant forms through the elements of rhythm, melody, harmony, and color. It can stand by its own being in its abstract form, or texts (song lyrics) can be set to it. Whereas, song lyrics solely refers to the words or phrases composed to be set to music. Li & Li (2010:6) define song lyrics as “a set of words that make up a song in a textual format.” Therefore, in this study the phrase “song lyrics” are used to denote a set of Amharic words and phrases that are composed to set to Amharic songs. Oftentimes, the term song and song lyrics are used interchangeably; in this research, too, the term song (and even the term lyric) is used to refer to the Amharic song lyrics. With in mind, it is tried to discuss the main features of song lyrics against poetry next to this.

There seems to be confusions about the distinctions between song lyric and other forms of poetry, especially lyric poetry. This section devotes to review the features of song lyrics; in addition to uncovering the basic similarities and differences between song lyrics and especially lyric poetry, attempts has been made to forward the operational definition of song lyrics.

Cuddon (1999:481) observes, “The Greeks defined a lyric as a song to be sung to the accompaniment of a lyre (lyra). A song is still called a lyric (the songs in a musical are known as lyrics) but we also use the term loosely to describe a particular kind of poem in order to distinguish it from narrative or dramatic verse of any kind.” So, from the given explanation, we can understand that the term “lyric” might interchangeably be used to refer to the texts that set to music and the poem. However, it is important to note that the phrase “song lyrics” solely refers to texts that are written to set to music.

To realize the differences between poems and song lyrics, it would be useful to first understand their similarities. According to Franz (2012:79) in Jones, “There is a much closer relationship between poetry and music than the average mind can comprehend.” Often times, we expect a good poem to have effective imagery, compelling themes, emotional evocativeness and originality. As a matter of fact, we find these virtues of poems in the song lyrics. Wickham lists the similarities between song lyrics and poems as:

- *Both poems and song lyrics rely on the potent use of language.*
- *Both engage their readers and listeners emotionally.*
- *Both require a skilled use of word sounds and rhyming (2010:7).*

There are also several similarities between poetry and song lyrics in their manner of exploiting poetic devices such as metaphor, simile, alliteration, hyperbole, personification, onomatopoeia, etc. In addition, both rely on effective use of descriptive imagery (Wickham, 2010). As various studies show, different from narrative poem and dramatic poem, in lyric poem the speaker addresses his/her deepest internal views. In other words, the speaker in lyric poem makes us see things from his own perspective (Franz, 2012; Baldick, 2001; Kefyalw, 1981). Similarly, the speaker in the song lyric depicts his/ her internal feelings through “personal and conversational” manner in his/her exploitation of the language items and presentation of ideas (Davis, 1998:9).

In practice, there are no distinctions between song lyrics and poems regarding the themes that they address. Similar to poetry, song lyrics do have “remarkable insights into the human condition” (Pattison, 2012:132). Furthermore, in showing the extent to which the two of them go in parallel in reflecting the spirit of the day, Davis (1998:7) writes, “Lyricists and poets mine the same quarry of age-old human emotions. There are, after all, no new emotions, only fresh ways of treating them. Poems written by Oliver Wendell Holmes in the 1880s reflect the same romantic themes as the lyrics written by Rupert Holmes in the 1980s--- although they of course, differ in style.” We can also see such kind of intertextuality in the Ethiopian context. For instance, Tsegaye Gebremedhin’s poem ‘ማካው ምንትስ’ [manäwə mənətəsə] deals with prostitution; similarly, a number of Amharic song lyrics such as Sebsebe Kassa’s ‘አንቺ ሴተ ላጤ’--- anḋči setä late] address the issues of prostitution. Tsegay’s poem and Sebsebe’s song lyric were composed in 1971 and 1964 respectively (the years refer to the Ethiopian calendar).

Though song lyrics and poetry share the features that we have seen so far, they are not the same thing. Their differences basically arise from the concept that “poetry is made for the eye, and lyrics are made for the ear” (Pattison, 2012:132). Explaining this fact, Pattison (2012:122) writes, “Since readers can pause and continue reading at their own pace, the poet can use quite complex language: less familiar words, ambiguity, multiple meanings, intricate metaphor. The density of poetic language is a poet’s way of harmonizing ideas. Like putting chords under your words, it adds a new level of emotion. Poetry eats the whole animal and says the most it can with the least amount of words. Phrasing, form, poetic meter adds to this musical underpinning.”

The statement “poetry eats the whole animal and says the most it can with least amount of words” metaphorically implies the huge freedom that the poets enjoy to exploit language items irrespective of merely focusing on simplicity. Since the people could conduct a repetitive reading on a certain piece of work to explore meanings embedded in the language of the poem, the poet could convey multilayered themes in a very economical manner. Therefore, unlike poetry, the language of song lyrics needs to be relatively simple; it should be easy to say and to hear. For Eckstein the meaning of song lyrics should be “instantly clear.” He further states:

Unlike a poem which exists on paper, a song exists in time, as the motor of its melody propels the words forward. The listener, unlike the reader, gets no footnotes and must understand the lyric as it is being performed. One confusing line or inaudible word will derail the listener’s

attention. Unlike a poem, whose language can be abstract as a cubist painting, a lyric should be as direct as a high way sign. Most important, a lyric is designed to be sung. Its writer, therefore, must be instinctively musical and must choose words that roll off the tongue and soar on high notes. Every word should sing (Eckstein, 2010:8).

In different documents, scholars discuss the potential of song lyrics to keep records of historical events. For instance, Palmer (1998:2) writes, “Song lyrics describe as much about different eras of history as do books and newspapers.” Thus, the Amharic song lyrics used for this study are believed to describe the social, political, economic, historical and cultural phenomena that have occurred in Ethiopia for more than five decades (1950-2000 E.C.). To sum up, in this study, song lyrics/songs are conceptually viewed (used) in terms of the descriptions given in this section.

2.5. An Overview of the Sociopolitical Conditions of the Three Eras (the Emperor Haile Selassie’s, the Derge’s and the EPRDF’S)

This section deals with the major socio-political phenomena of the stated three regimes. The social, political, economic and historical events raised in this section would help to see the thematic analyses of Amharic song lyrics conducted in the three consecutive chapters (4, 5 &6) in context. As we can see, all the Amharic song lyrics that have been discussed in chapter four, chapter five and chapter six were composed during the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I, the Derge and the EPRDF respectively.

2.5.1. The Reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I

Emperor Haile Selassie I ruled Ethiopia for more than four decades. He was crowned emperor in 1930. Some five years later, he exiled since Italy invaded Ethiopia. When he had been in exile, he led the diplomatic missions against Italy’s unjust invention. Finally, he was reinstated in 1941 right after the Italian forces left the country, and he had been in power until the military junta, the Derge, overthrew him in 1974. So, it seems logical to look into the reign of the Emperor in terms of some three phases: before the coming of the Italians invaders, during the five years stay of fascist Italian forces, and after the reinstatement of the Emperor.

The significant point that can be raised from the first phase is that the Emperor Haile Selassie’s eagerness to resume the intent of modernization that was the main agenda of his predecessor, King

Menelik II. Moreover, Emperor Haile Selassie I was trying all his best to strengthen the central government.

The second phase was all about the Italy's invasion. October 3, 1935 was one of the gloomiest days in the history of Ethiopia. It was on this particular day that Fascist Italy invaded the country, which had stood as a symbol of freedom for Africans and the entire blacks throughout the globe. Guided by their revengeful motives, the Italian occupiers caused for the death of hundreds of thousands of innocent Ethiopians, and they distorted the nation's historical and cultural values in their five years stay.

Planning to stay long and fueling further their limitless exploitations, they had put in a lot of work to expand urbanization. Coincidentally, thousands of rural dwellers who had been displaced by the war were fleeing to the newly emerged towns and cities. The intimidating presence of the foreign power distorted traditional values; this in turn opened doors to the diffusion of foreign cultures. Thus, the period was marked for the aggravation of societal problems such as prostitution and alcoholism.

In this particular period Ethiopians were obliged to go through threatening experiences, and they habituated a new mode of life. In relation to this Zelalem (1990:2-3) writes:

The Italian occupation, in particular, is a significant landmark in Ethiopian history. It affected the entire social milieu, political apparatus and the economic and cultural foundation of the society. The occupation affected the lives of the entire population. It made thousands of people homeless; thousands fled to the mountains and took part in the patriotic resistance while others contributed to the anti-fascist struggle by acting as undercover agents of the patriots; still there were others collaborated with the enemy. A considerable portion of the population was forced to live in exile in neighboring countries. The rest lived under subjugation and underwent untold miseries. When independence was attained many had something to say from their own first-hand experiences.

The shocking social crises that put the nation under duress have called for mature judgments on the part of historians, novelists, playwrights and poets. Both Ethiopian and foreign historians have provided valuable insights into the nature of this devastating invasion. Ethiopian novelists, playwrights and poets have been inspired by the theme of the Italian occupation. They have intensively addressed the onset of the war, the nature of the war, the overall (political, social, economic and cultural) effects of the war and the patriotic resistances. Some of these works focus on the prevalent social problems that Ethiopians face after independence. For instance, novels such

as Mekonnen Endalekachew's 'አልሞትሁም ብዬ አልሞሽም' [almothum beyye alwašḏmḗ], Aseffa G/Mariam's 'የማጨው ቁስለኛ' [yämacäwḗ qusḗläñña] as well as plays like Mengistu Lemma's 'ጸረ-ኮሎኒያሊስት' [šäräk kolonoyalist] and Berhanu Zerihun's 'ባልቻ አባ ነብሶ' [Balča abba näfḗso] entertain the theme of Italian occupation (Zelalem, 1990).

On the eve of the war Fascist Italy used propaganda to influence and indoctrinate the people of Ethiopia. However, prolific writers such as Yoftahi Negussie, Agegnehu Engida, Temesegen Gebere and others launched the anti-propaganda campaign. Every Sunday they prepared open-air performances in Addis Ababa; they staged inspiring speech, stories of patriotism, songs, poems, etc. to arouse the team and fighting spirit of the people. In a magazine entitled 'ሀገር ፍቅር ልዩ መጽሔት' [hägärḗ fḗqḗrḗ lḗyu mäḗḗhetḗ], Nigatua Kelekay, the veteran vocalist, testified that in one of those Sundays she sang the following song:

አይባባ ልብሽ አይባባ
 አዲስ አበባ ልብሽ አይባባ
 ማሽላና ስንዴ ባንድ አብረን ስንቆላ
 እያረረ ሳቀ የባህር ማሽላ

.....
 Addis Ababa, don't let a mood of melancholy,
 Descends on you,
 When we roast maize and wheat being mixed;
 The maize bursts open and lightens
 While it gets heated;

It was Yoftahi Negussie who composed both the lyric and the melody. As Nigatua claimed, people burst into tears while she was singing it. Because the lyrics were powerful enough to echo the danger that invasion was a fast approaching. In the lyrics, the controversial nature of the **maize** is ironically used as the witting instrument of truth. It depicts the heartfelt feeling that anyone might share while they stay in the face of invasion.

The third phase began with the reinstatement of Emperor Haile Selassie in 1941. It was typically different from the first two in many ways. Practically, it was then that interest in development issues had got the greatest momentum. Especially, remarkable foundations for all rounded advancements were laid within a period of 1950s-1970s. Eyayu (1994:23-24) observes:

The period from 1950s-1970s may be characterized as an era of modernization and change in the contemporary history of Ethiopia. The educational sector had registered a remarkable achievement in the 1940s, culminating in the establishment of Haile Sellassie I University. It was also in the same period that the first batch of post-war Ethiopians graduates returned from abroad and assumed government forces. These graduates were the moving force of the political changes that took place in Ethiopia after 1950s.

The government revised the constitution in 1955, and after two years parliamentary election was held for the first time. The 1957 announcement of a five-year plan for economic development was also considered as one of the achievements of the regime. The government had also contributed much to the establishment of the OAU (Organization of African Union). Then, in this particular period Ethiopia became the head quarter of the OAU. Apart from backing anti colonial movements throughout Africa, the regime awarded scholarship for some African students to attend Haile Selassie I University.

Though the government had relatively been successful in the issues mentioned above, it failed to address various social, political and economic problems that Ethiopians faced for years. Thus, through time different oppositional groups were coming to the scene. For various reasons discontented peasants, students, soldiers and others were beginning to oppose the system. Even if the regime tried to suppress opposing views, the opponents committed to promoting a great revolution that ended with the overthrow of the monarchic regime.

The points raised so far would picture out the significant social, political, economic, etc. phenomena that the nation witnessed in the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I. This, in turn, creates a context of understanding to the analysis forwarded in chapter four for two practical reasons. Firstly, the Amharic song lyrics selected for the analysis in this section were majorly composed in response to the social situations that the lyricists faced during the reign of Haile Selassie I. The second reason lies in the inevitable interactions that the lyricists did have with their overall environments. As social beings, they possibly engaged in multidimensional social activities that would be initiated by the people in their immediate surroundings or the society at large. Therefore, the basic underlying variables such as the period the artists lived in, the culture in which they were brought up, and their social or class backgrounds put stamp on their artistic creations.

The selected love songs produced in this period together with the love songs of the two ears were discussed under chapter seven because of the justification given in the methodology; thus, chapter four is entirely devoted to songs that discuss other issues of the time rather than love.

2.5.2. The Reign of the Derge

Undertaking the revolutionary movement in the name of the peasants, the working class and other oppressed citizens of the nation, the Derge adapted the principles of socialism upon controlling the power in 1974. The ninety six abortive coup d'état led by the Neway brothers broke new ground to show that the emperor Haile Selassie's regime was vulnerable to be attacked by the oppressed groups. Particularly, the question of change and fundamental reform gained momentum once students began to oppose the government officially. In this regard, Andargachew in Timkehet (2009:2) states:

The abortive coup of 1960 was important in discrediting the ancient regime in the eyes, amongst others, the students. Once the Ethiopian Student Movement (ESM) came into existence, however, it was swept off the ground not by trends in the Middle East as in the case of regional rebellions, but rather by European ideologies and organizational models; it was a by-product of neo-colonialism in the sense that ESM was a part of the Western anti-authoritarian anti-imperialist movement of the 1960s, and a particularly militant variant of it at that.

Through time the Ethiopian Students' Movement (ESM) was backing by other social groups that strived for the collapse of the feudal-bourgeois government. The students' movement together with various underground movements committed to promoting revolution. As a result, the overall public opposition to emperor Haile Selassie's regime ended with the overthrow of the old monarchy through the great revolution in 1974.

According to Aleme (1982:15) in the reign of emperor Haile Selassie rigid censorship was exercised that "all branches of culture: literature, theatre, painting, music, the media, etc., in a leviathan manner, so that while all Progressist ideas remained buried and Progressist language stifled, superstition and witchcraft flourished. Culture was thus used as an instrument for the glorification and perpetuation of the regime." Contrary to this, the Derge's prior action was to push through poets to reflect the views of socialism in their artistic works. Echoing its motto "ኪነ ጥበብ ለመደቧ" (art for its class), the Derge consistently urged writers to promote its ideology in their

fictional works. In this regard, the regime had used music as decisive instrument to increase Ethiopians' political consciousness. The well-established theatres (National Theaters, Hagir Fiker Theaters, The Addis Ababa Municipality), and bands (Police Orchestra, Orchestra of the Ground Force, etc.) began to compose revolutionary songs that amplify and justify the Derge's activities (Aleme, 1979).

Therefore, gaining cultural liberation in Ethiopia was one of the prominent fruits of the popular revolution of February 1974. The liberation hugely manifested itself in “revolutionary marching songs, poetry, articles in the press, plays, etc., exposing the feudal oppression, corruption and crimes” (Aleme, 1982:18). Artists who had been marginalized in the previous eras became eager to put their heart in promoting the revolution in their works. In this regard, musicians composed numerous revolutionary songs that drew the attentions of the people to the changing situations.

The Derge used the revolutionary songs very well to make the people gain more knowledge and understanding concerning socialism, the newly adopted ideology. Music clubs locally known as *kinätə/h.ጎጎ* were mushrooming throughout the nation. As a result, numerous revolutionary songs that address various issues were produced. Whereas, private recording companies (Electra Music Shop, Ambassel Music Shop, Negarit Music Shop, etc.) were hugely engaged in producing dominantly love songs. While these private companies started to record the songs of the super stars (Tilahun Gessesse, Muhammad Ahmud, Bizunesh Bekele, Ali Birra, etc.) and young vocalists (Muluken Melesse, Aster Awoke, Ephrem Tamiru, Tewoderos Tadesse, etc.) on the cassettes and distributed almost throughout the nation, the music lovers began to entertain non-revolutionary songs which dominantly consist of love songs. Hopefully, the private recording companies' efforts to present especially verities of love songs in terms of their contents and melodies were welcomed by the audiences who were thought to be getting pretty bored with the endless revolutionary songs that they heard in Radio Ethiopia.

Since opposing either the revolution or the military junta was a deadly political business, the lyricists did not have the freedom to produce songs that criticize the regime. The regime severely threatened those who condemned its undemocratic rule through their songs. For instance, the lyricist Getachew Debalke, and the vocalist Tilahun Gessesse were imprisoned because of their

songs ሎሚ ተራ ተራ/lomi tära tära/ and አልማዝን አይቼ/alፊmazፊnፊ ayፊጅe/ respectively. As a result, the number of songs that criticize the regime are quite few.

As shown above, the songs produced during the Derge regime can be divided into two broad categories, revolutionary and non-revolutionary. Love songs are the dominant songs of the non-revolutionary songs. Because of the reasons forwarded in the methodology, the love songs produced in this period together with the love songs of the rest two eras were discussed under chapter seven. Thus, the entire analyses of chapter five focus on the selected revolutionary songs and the few songs that criticize the regime.

2.5.3. The Reign of the EPRDF

It was on 28 May, 1991 that Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front, EPRDF, overthrew the Derge. In 1993, it formulated the new constitution that created the country's federal system. As a result, the nation is divided into nine regional states (Tigray, Afar, Amhara, Oromiya, Somali, Gambela, Benshangul, Harari, Southern Nation and Nationalities) and two City Administrations (Addis Ababa and Deri-Dowa). In its effort to restructure the nation, EPRDF has placed great emphasis on promoting ethnicity and diversity contrary to its predecessors whose top priority was national identity. Melkamu and Ameyu (2013:81) observe, "In the context of multiethnic Ethiopia, the wide spread armed struggle of 28 May, 1991 has had long lasting effects. Immediately after the event, the government took drastic measures to fortify ethnic identity and unity in diversity as a prominent and underlying principle in the newly entrenched federal system."

EPRDF is the coalition of four ethnic based political parties created in 1989: the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), the Oromo People's Democratic Organization (OPDO), the Amhara National Democratic Movement (ANDM) and the Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement (SEPDM). However, these four alliances do not have equal political power within EPRDF; though the ruling party claims time and again that it strives for creating political system that equally treats ethnic groups throughout the nation, it fails to do so. For more than two decades TPLF that represents only 7% of the total population has got the strongest hold over the others. Stiftung (2014:5) states:

The Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), which has held power since the first elections in 1995, is formally committed to the existence of a stable multiparty democratic

system, a free market economy and ethnic federalism, that is, to devolve power from the center to the country's nine provinces. The regime, dominated for 20 years by the Tigray ethnic minority under Meles Zenawi, tried to gain political stability not through input-legitimacy (such as the rule of law or free and fair elections), but through output legitimacy in line with the Asian model of successful "tiger states". The regime intimidated opponents and harassed the opposition, especially following the 2010 elections (in which the EPRDF achieved 99% "victory") and started an ambitious and state-driven economic development strategy.

Upon the downfall of the Derge, many were hoping that EPRDF would commit to pave the ways for the country's transition towards democracy. However, against the expectation of the oppressed citizens of this poor nation, EPRDF has established a dictatorial government. It has made the entire system to be subject to massive and increasing central control. Abbink (2006:80) states:

The ruling party EPRDF took power in 1991 amidst a surge of relief and cautious optimism after the civil war and the devastating Derge regime. To some observers, notably donor-affiliated ones, it appeared puzzling why, despite the promises and the new start, the Ethiopian regime did not, after 15 years in power, make a decisive breakthrough to a democratic politics based on compromise strategies and a wide national agenda. This approach ignores the history and nature of the insurgent movement TPLF/ EPRDF that came to power via the familiar route of military action, based on forceful mobilization of a rural constituency and a rather sectarian ideology. It has not been successful in consolidating the initial momentum and establishing nationwide acceptance....

Superficially, the government claims that the people do have constitutional right to express their opinions freely; however, it hardly practices what it preaches. Practically, the government threatens its opponents. From time to time it narrows the political space; hence, the opposition parties hardly involve in changing the poverty-stricken life of the majority since they could not bear its ceaseless intimidations. Speaking honestly, Ethiopia is unfortunate enough to be ruled by another dictator, EPRDF, that harasses its every opponent beginning from the well-versed veteran scholars (Professor Aserat Woldeyes, Professor Mesfin W/Mariam, Engineer Hailu Shawele, Dr. Negasso Gidada, Dr. Merara Gudina, Dr. Yakob Woldemariam, Ato Assefa Chabo, etc.) and young politician and journalists (Birtukan Mideksa, Eskender Nega, Riot Alemu, Andualem Arage, Habetamu Ayalew etc.) Showing EPRDF's brutal measures against opposition parties, Stiftung (2014:2) writes:

Opposition parties have been undermined to the extent that they no longer pose a threat to the ruling party; several attempts to form a united opposition front failed, due to rivalries among personalities and politicians' ethnicity. The once-popular opposition leader Birtukan Mideksa remained in prison during the 2010 elections, but was eventually released. Thoroughly intimidated by her solitary confinement and disappointed by the divided opposition, she

announced later that she would not return to politics. The political opposition, largely forced into exile, is expected to remain too fragmented and feeble to play a considerable role in the political process unless brought on board as part of an internationally brokered process. Exile groups will continue to influence local parties and civil organizations.

EPRDF also inflicts continuous harassments on Ethiopian artists who attempt to criticize its undemocratic measures against the people. The citizens are denied not to have access to plays, songs and other fictional works that uncover how the ruling party is guilty of much talk and little action. For instance, the regime conspired to intimidate artists who were on a tour to perform Laureate Tsegaye G/Medhin's play, ሀሁ ወይም ጥፍ/hahu wäyðmð pðpu/ at a small town known as Dilla. Similarly, on the eve of the 2005 election, it banned Getenet Eneyew's one play from staging at the National Theater of Ethiopia. In addition, the cause of the young musician, Tewodrose Kassahun's imprisonment is thought to be related with some of his political songs.

During the last two decades, numerous songs were produced; similar to the period of Emperor Haile Selassie I and the Derge, the number of Amharic love songs produced in this era significantly exceeds the number of other songs. For similar reasons mentioned in relation with the love songs of the other two regimes, the selected love songs of this period were also analyzed under chapter seven. However, the other Amharic songs which were composed during the era of EPRDF are discussed under chapter six.

Chapter Three: Theoretical Framework

The theories that form the base of this study are sociological perspectives: Functionalism, Conflict and Symbolic Interactionism. In fact, it is probably more useful and informative to view the stated three sociological perspectives as complementary. One perspective may explain one element of the society better than another. Or, both may be useful for explaining social life. In short, all of the perspectives are correct in the sense that they offer compelling explanations for social phenomena. As noted before, in the Ethiopian context, lyricists are expected to address social issues; oftentimes, they respond to the main social, political, economic, cultural and historical phenomena that have some impact (positive or negative) on the individuals and the society at large. Therefore, the theoretical assumptions that these perspectives propose are found appropriate to study the major themes which are reflected through Amharic song lyrics.

3.1. Functionalism Perspective

This perspective sees society as an integrated unified whole. Functional theorists claim that society is formed from different structures which play their own roles to the harmonious continuity of the society. In other words, this perspective argues that parts of the society are structured to maintain its stability (Tuner & Maryanski, 1979). Furthermore, J. Hammond (2010: 21) writes, “The functionalist theory claims that society is in a state of balance and kept that way through the function of society's component part.”

Functionalists take the human body system as an example to elaborate their assumptions. Our body organs (liver, lung, heart, etc.) do have different functions. Their effective and interdependent roles within the metabolic system of our body make us keep living. However, if one of the body organs dysfunctions, it negatively affects the whole system. Likewise, though the intent of the various social structures (religion, economy, politics, family, etc.) is to strive for keeping social equilibrium to guarantee continuity, a dysfunction of anyone of them would result in social disequilibrium. This in turn makes society to form a new form of consensus to regain the stability.

J. Hammond (2010:21) observes:

Functionalists realize that just like the body, societies get "sick" or dysfunction. By studying society's parts and processes, Functionalists can better understand how society remains stable or adjust to destabilizing forces when unwanted change is threatened. According to this theory most societies find that healthy balance and maintain it (unless they don't and collapse as many have

in the history of the world). Equilibrium is the state of balance maintained by social processes that help society adjust and compensate for forces that might tilt it onto a path of destruction.

According to J. Hammond (2010), socialization, religious involvement, friendship, health care, economic recovery, peace, justice and injustice, population growth or decline, community, romantic relationships, marriage and divorce, and normal and abnormal family experiences are just a few of the evidences of functional processes in any society. Therefore, in this study an attempt has been made to explore to what extent these and other functional processes are depicted in Amharic song lyrics.

Though the principal objective of functionalists in general is to investigate how the various social structures operate in an interwoven manner to keep the society move forward, the angle from which they see functional processes in a society is different. Thus, in this study, attempts were made to apply the models of Talcott Parsons' and Robert K. Morten's views of functionalism.

Parsons opposes the Marxian theory of conflict. According to Marx conflict which is endemic to every social life goes on between the ruling class and the working class persistently until it ends in complete structural changes. However, Parsons argues that social change is not the product of complete breakdown of world society. For him change is a continuous process. He further indicates that every change motivates negotiation between systems and brings forward new form of continuity. It is on the basis of this assumption that he develops a theory known as analytical or critical functionalism (Cuff et al, 2006; Parsons, 1940). Parsons claims that society should be perceived as a **system** which consists of different parts. As a result, society has to fulfill four functional prerequisites in order to persist. The four pre-conditions include:

- A. Every system has to adapt to its environment
- B. Every system has to have mechanisms to set goals and ways to achieve the intended target
- C. Every system has to formulate ways to integrate various parts (or social structures)
- D. Every system has to develop mechanisms to manage tension (Savage, 1981; Parsons, 1953)

These four functional prerequisites (adaptation roles, goal attainment roles, integration roles and latency roles) have to operate effectively for the positive continuity of the society. Parsons also develops a generalization to show how these roles can be put into practice in four institutions (economy, education, religion and the legal system) which exist in every society. Thus, he points out that economy of every society negotiates with the environment to obtain resources that the

society consumes. In this regard, governmental organizations should identify the goals of different departments, mobilize resources and strive to gratify these goals. Besides, while education gives training to the people, religion and the legal system equip them with moral values and well-defined body of law respectively. All these help to integrate individual with individual, individual with institution, institution with institution and institution with society (Cuff et al, 2006; Parsons & Shils, 1951).

Parsons argues that in every society there are distinctive institutions and structures which play functional roles to guarantee the continuity of the society. In line with this, the four functional roles, Adaptation, Goal Orientation, Integration and Latent Function (AGIL), can be practiced in micro units like a school class, family, etc. In other words, a system whether at the level of micro or macro should fulfill the four functional roles to operate and keep its continuity. While the four functional roles operate, the different sectors of the society get inputs from the lower system and outputs from the higher one (Cuff et al, 2006; Parsons, 1971).

For Parsons every change is subject to negotiations and mutual dialogues between parts of the society. Since continuous negotiations are conducted between different parts of the society, change will never be partial. It is rather acceptable to every part of the society (Parsons, 1966). He also suggests that the four functional roles have to operate within any society (or system) in reference with three action systems: culture, social system and personalities. Cuff et al (2006:76) elaborate the three “action systems” as:

- Culture will prescribe what people should do in ways which will prove practically effective, relative to what people want to do.
- The pattern of activities and relationships in which people engage will prove capable of allowing the prescriptions of the culture to be effectively followed out (a good deal of the time).
- The personality structures of the parties to social life will have that which will enable them to associate with others, to participate in conjoint, collective ventures, and to accept and comply with the demands that the culture lays on them.

Parsons gives directions how individuals internalize the action systems through the methods of socialization and mechanism of social control (Parson, 1978, 1937). According to him, every individual goes through the process of socialization to identify his role and others’ expectations.

Cuff et al (2006:80) define socialization as:

Sensitivity is the lever of socialisation. Socialisation is simply learning to be social and works through the giving and withholding of affection and approval in the relation between parents and

children. Consequently, children come to adopt the parents' attitudes and standards as their own. Internalisation goes together with identification: children do not behave in certain ways simply to produce parental approval; in addition, they want to become like the parents, to identify with them. They do so by taking on the parental attitudes as their own, wanting and approving the same things themselves.

In different circumstances individual's social roles are defined through the process of socialization so that s/he internalizes norms, values and rules. Thus, s/he conforms to societal rules and regulations which move the society (or the system) forward effectively. In line with this, mechanisms of social control present guidelines for an individual pertaining to what kind of behavior s/he manifests in relation to the demands of the situations and other actors' expectations. So, individuals who pass through either informal or formal orientations of mechanisms of control highly avoid behaviors which can distort the will of concise collective (Parsons, 1951).

In general, in Parsons' view society is a product of consensus which restarts through negotiations, dialogue, etc. among different parts of it (society). Therefore, the possibility of coming to contestant conflict is very rare in the case of modern society. It is because in modern society the probability of enjoying individual freedom for someone is high. Even when, a person feels discomfort with a certain institution, s/he can forward his point so that s/he either gets solutions or justifications (Parsons, 1969).

Robert Merton is one of the social thinkers who comments on Parsons' views of functionalism. He argues that in every society there are different institutions that involve individuals in numerous activities. However, the role of one institution to the other may not grantee functions. There may be probabilities when a certain institution appears dysfunctional or non-functional to the others. According to Merton, justifying every social situation on the basis of the grand sociological perspectives may sometimes lead us to a wrong conclusion. Therefore, formulating down to earth approaches that address the everyday life of the people would become crucial. In consequence, Merton middle ground theories known as **manifest function** and **latent function**. As a matter of fact, these theories help us towards a better understanding of the details of particular practices. The manifest function refers to the stated and expected goals that a certain institution intends to achieve. Contrary to this, in the process of attaining the intended goals, things might go out of expectations. This situation is said to be latent function (Merton, 1938, 1945, 1957).

According to Merton the latent function could also embed the agenda that the institution wants to hide. For instance, a university usually sets its plans to offer sufficient training for learners to equip them with appropriate knowledge and skills. This indicates the manifest function of the university. However, in the meantime its latent function could be to make students delay from the job (Merton, 1938, 1945, 1957).

Dysfunction is a social phenomenon which could be a threat to social stability. If there are several reports of irregularities in the judiciary system of a nation, people will hardly get justice. Because of this dysfunction of the judiciary, people could not exercise their democratic rights, and it becomes the reason for the distortion of social equilibrium. Thus, to maintain the social balance people might stand against the system and go for consensus to reform it (Cuff et al, 2006).

3.2. Conflict Perspective

Contrary to the functionalists' focus on stability and consensus, conflict sociologists see the social world in continual struggle. Proponents of the conflict perspective assume that social behavior is best understood in terms of conflict or tension between competing groups. According to these social thinkers society is in a state of perpetual conflict and competition for limited resources. Their argument is that conflict arises when individuals oppose each other because of differences of interest, ideas, etc (J.Hammond, 2010; Collins, 1975).

Karl Marx is credited a lot for his contribution to the development of the theory of conflict. Marx states that conflict is a social fact that goes on between dominant group which control over the means of production and the working class that sells the labor force. According to him, the intensity of conflict gets its peak in capitalism; it leads to complete destruction of the existing system which eventually leads to the appearance of a classless society (Lois Tyson, 2005; Jessop & Wheatley, 1999; Kriesberg, 1973; Mandel, 1972; McLellan, 1971; Meszaros, 1970). However, in this study due focus has been given to views of conflict proposed by Max Weber and Ralf Dahrendorf. These scholars give due emphasis for conflict that occurs in almost every domain of life. This, in turn, helps the researcher to look into multidimensional existences of conflict. That is why the researcher prefers their models to the most polarized conflict approach of Marxists.

The researcher has put an effort to analyze the social conflicts embedded in the Amharic song lyrics through the theoretical assumptions of the stated four social thinkers. J.Hammond (2010:23) writes, “Conflict theory is especially useful in understanding: war, wealth and poverty, the haves and the have nots, revolutions, political strife, exploitation, divorce, ghettos, discrimination and prejudice, domestic violence, rape, child abuse, slavery, and more conflict-related social phenomena.”

Among the various social thinkers who critically questions Marxian theory of conflict is Max Weber. He criticizes Marxists’ emphasis on conflict as a historic phenomenon that underlies the inevitability of class struggle which leads to complete destruction of the existing system. Contrary to this Weber considers conflict as structural or institutional phenomenon. He observes that conflict exists in every domain of social life; it is not primarily polarized in character. Weber believes in the capability of conflict to bring forward verities of changes. For Weber conflict is an unavoidable social fact whose consequence is unpredictable (Morrison, 1995; Weber, 1985, 1978; Bendix, 1966)

Weber develops theory of social stratification; he observes that since there are innumerable social stratifications, it becomes impossible to understand society in terms of the existing limitless inequalities. Therefore, he attempted to study the features of conflict by formulating ideal inequalities. Thus, he identifies class, status and power as sources of inequalities, and determines to look into them sociologically (Theodore &Edward, 1997; Morrison, 1995; Giddens, 1982).

Weber’s theory of class is basically drawn from the concept of economy. Hurst (2007:202) states, “Class, at its core, is an economic concept; it is the position of individuals in the market that determines their class position. And it is how one is situated in the marketplace that directly affects one’s life chances.” What individuals bring to the market, and what they take from it decides their class position. For instance, someone might lack money to buy a certain goods from the market; on the other hand, if somebody else purchases it from the same market, their unequal access to the resources might imply how these two individuals belong to different social classes. The one who fails to take the goods from the market as a result of his low income might belong to the lower class, and the other one would be from the dominant groups.

According to Weber, in a society the life chance that an individual enjoys is determined by the market. In the words of Giddens (1973: 130) life chance refers to “the chances an individual has for sharing in the socially created economic or cultural “goods” that typically exist in any given society.” Therefore, the individuals’ opportunities to share “the socially created economic or cultural goods” vary according to the social positions of their classes. Those who hold the dominant positions would be more efficient than the lower classes to exploit the market. Weber (1978:302) writes that “a class situation is one in which there is a shared typical probability of procuring goods, gaining a position in life, and finding inner satisfaction.” In other words, the members of a certain class share common life chances. It is because the resources that an individual brings to the market govern the life chance that s/he faces.

It is necessary to notice that the resources that individuals bring to the market could be different. In addition to the distinction between property owners and non-owners, there is also variation in terms of particular skills and assets. However, what is crucial here is that all assets only have values in the context of the market. Therefore, the class situation of individuals is determined by the market situation in which they involve (Weber, 1978).

According to Weber, when the subordinate groups persistently fail to access resources from the market, they gradually feel up to accept their life chance. They begin to claim the unfair social orders that favor the upper classes. This, in turn, leads them to engage in conflict with the dominant groups (Weber, 1978; Giddens, 1973).

Power is the other social reality which brings inequality that leads to conflict. In his explanation of power, Weber mainly focuses on the nature of the party. He says that party exists in every sphere of society. According to him, party refers to an organized group of action which intends to capture power. By its very nature party entertains either internal or external conflict. The leaders might engage in conflict with the supporters for different reasons. On the other hand, when a party contests for power, it might clash with other parties on the basis of differences in their manifesto or some other reasons (Sargent, 2009; Weber, 1978). Weber also takes the other social stratification, status, as the source of social conflict. According to him, in every society there are status groups who enjoy a higher degree of job, privilege, etc. Since these groups are often favored in one way or another, they expect respect from the mass. On the other hand, individuals always

make an attempt to join the status groups, but they may not get entrance easily for the people in the groups challenge them strictly. However, with the development of modernity, some may show progress in life. As a result, they may improve and redefine their class position, and they could buy status from the market. All these conditions exhibit routine conflicts (Sargent, 2009; Cuff et al, 2006; Weber, 1978).

The other scholar who studies conflict is Ralf Dahrendorf. His assessment of conflict is highly based on Weber's theory of conflict. As to Dahrendorf, in every institutional structure, there are domination and subordination. People in these two social positions move to conflict whenever they strive for pursuing their interest. He further explains how status and rules brings forth conflict. In his analysis of conflict, he observes that a person in a certain status group might perform her/his duty in a responsible manner. S/he might demand to show up her/his creativity. However, the dominant group (within the status group) could set rules and regulations which prohibit her/him from exercising her/his freedom of work. This, in turn, motivates the worker to look for people who suffers from similar situations. Since people of likeminded come together through such phenomena, they create a quasi-group. As a result, driven by the interest of homogeneity the quasi-group begins to challenge the dominant ones to improve the work environment. Furthermore, the quasi-groups never cease their struggle; rather they search for other quasi-groups who share their concerns, and they establish interest groups. Thus, the more unified they become, the stronger they challenge the dominant groups. Dahrendorf views that the intrinsic goal of all these forms of conflict (individual with institution, quasi-group with institution, etc.) is to hold power. He also observes that conflict could bring new forms of ideology, redefine the work environment, improve social progress, etc. In addition, he states that one should not be worried about conflict for it serves as an instrument to question unfairness. However, Similar to Weber he also casts doubt on Marxian theory of conflict (Sargent, 2009; Cuff et al, 2006; Dahrendorf, 1979,1959).

Therefore, in this study, attempts have been made to investigate the various conflicts through the the theoretical assumptions that Weber and Dahrendor suggested concerning the causes and consequences of conflicts.

3.3. Symbolic Interactionism Perspective

The third sociological perspective used in this study is Symbolic Interactionism Perspective. As a matter of fact, the two perspectives (functionalism and conflict) mostly deal with Macro-sociology which focuses on the broad features of social structures in society, such as social classes and the relations of groups to one another. Contrary to this, symbolic interactionism dominantly gives due attention to Micro-sociology which emphasizes on processes and patterns of social interaction on a smaller scale. Symbolic interactionism examines society in terms of bottom up approach. It tries to define society at large on the basis of an individual's interaction to others. It basically functions depend on three fundamental premises. Herbert (1969:20) writes:

Symbolic interactionism rests in the last analysis on three simple premises. The first premise is that human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them. Such things include everything that the human being may note in his world—physical objects, such as trees or chairs; other human beings, such as a mother or a store clerk; categories of human beings, such as friends or enemies; institutions, as a school or a government; guiding ideals, such as individual independence or honesty; activities of others, such as their commands or requests; and such situations as an individual encounters in his daily life. The second premise is that the meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellows. The third premise is that these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters.

From the first premise we can learn that a person's reaction to a thing (or situation) is determined by the meaning that s/he attaches to it. In other words, an individual's response to the given condition may not be governed by the objective reality set by the society. For instance, so many scientific researches reveal the danger of cigarette smoking. Nevertheless, millions throughout the glob keep on smoking, ignoring the existing reality. Here, what matters is not the deadly impact that smoking imposes on them, but it is the meaning that the smokers attach to it. The second premise indicates that meaning is shared. People share meanings through numerous symbolic interactions. For example, the people become furious when they see their flag getting burnt or mishandled. The anger arises from the shared meaning (unity, dignity, etc.) they integrate with the flag symbolically. Besides, the third premise implicitly implies how man is a thinking being who moves forward with the dynamism of meaning which appears through the process of reinterpretations upon redefining consensus. The following historical incident that Hammond (2010:25) states well describes this situation as:

To understand the other person's symbols and meanings is to approach common ground. Listen to this statement by Rosa Parks (1913-2005), "All I was doing was trying to get home from work." In 1955 when she refused to give up her seat on the bus to a White person, it proved to be a spark for the Civil Rights Movement that involved the leadership of Martin Luther King Jr. and many other notable leaders. It was Rosa Parks' simple and honest statement that made her act of defiance so meaningful. The lion share of the nation was collectively tired and sick of the mistreatment of Blacks. Many Whites joined the protests while others quietly sympathized. After all that was written in the history books about it, a simple yet symbolic gesture by Rosa Parks symbolically started the healing process for the United States.

Here, we see how Rosa Parks redefines the established meaning; as to the racially oriented rules of the then U.S.A., she should have to abide to the existing norms. However, she denies the discrimination and her action get the momentum of symbolic signification. Explaining what forms of social conditions could be treated through symbolic perspective, Hammond (2010:25) writes:

Symbolic Interaction claims that society is composed of ever-present interactions among individuals who share symbols and their meanings. This is a very useful theory for: understanding other people; improving communications; learning and teaching skills in cross-cultural relations; and generally speaking, "not doing harm to your roommates" as many of my students often say after understanding this theory. Values, communication, witch hunting, crisis management, fear from crime, fads, love and all that comes with it, "evil and sin," what's hot and what's not, alien abduction beliefs, "who I am," litigation, mate selection, arbitration, dating joys and woes, and both personal and national meanings and definitions can all be better understood using Symbolic Interactionism.

Hence, in analyzing the selected Amharic song lyrics through the perspective of symbolic interactionism., it has been tried to investigate how the lyricists use significant symbols to address the social facts that Hammond indicates, and other phenomena (which deserve similar treatments).

In general, the impact of the different social institutions (secular or religious) reflected in the songs on the continuity and stability of the society would be examined through the theory of functionalism. Conflict theory would mainly be used to investigate selected Amharic song lyrics that reflect social conditions such as social, economic and political discontents which inflict grievance on the people and lead the different sections of the society to conflictious social interactions. And in order to investigate how the speakers in the selected Amharic song lyrics symbolically communicate the ideas the theory of symbolic interactionism would be used. The stated sociological perspectives are not mutually exclusive; therefore, in a number of instances the three of them have been used at a time to deal with the theme of a certain Amharic song lyric.

Chapter IV: Major Themes of Amharic Song Lyrics during the Reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I

This chapter presents analyses of Amharic song lyrics composed during the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I. The song lyrics produced in this era were thematically categorized into **patriotism/nationalism, prizing the nation, moral decadence, praising peasants, education, social and economic discontent, political discontent and death**. The analyses are conducted by using the theoretical framework described in the previous chapter.

4.1. Patriotism and Nationalism

Patriotism and nationalism show the relationship of an individual towards his or her nation. They are often confused and frequently believed to mean the same thing. However, there is a vast difference between patriotism and nationalism. Patriotism emphasizes the pride one enjoys on the basis of her/his country's achievements. Patriotic people do love their nation, but they often do not think that they are superior to people in other countries. Whereas nationalists believe that their interests, cultural and social values, or religion is superior to the rest of the world. Patriotism is manifested on the basis of affection whereas nationalism is rooted in rivalry and resentment. Most often the militant feature of nationalism is not reflected in patriotism.

In Amharic song lyrics we can dominantly see the feeling of patriotism. Though it may not appear as recurrently as patriotism, nationalism is also seen in some of them. Describing the reflection of historical facts in Ethiopian literature, Kane (1975:27) writes, "The theme of historical writing is fairly popular because of the association history had with national pride, and the fact that history has often been used to awaken patriotism and national unity." Amharic song lyrics that embed the theme of patriotism/nationalism were discussed following this:

The song lyric entitled 'ጅግናው' [ǧägŋawə] is composed by Alemayehu Mengestie (1961 E.C). This patriotic song lyric narrates the fascist Italy's two consecutive attempts to colonize Ethiopia; by denouncing the invader, Italy, the speaker in this song greatly appreciates the patriotisms of his countrymen during the battle of Adowa and the battle of Machew:

በአስራ ስምንት ሰማኒያ ስምንት
ተነሱቶ ነበር አንድ ጦርነት
ጀግናው ገሰገሰ ይህን እንደሰማ
ሊመከት አልቻለም ይህ ነጭ አሳማ

.....
During the year, eighteen eighty-eight
A war broke out;
The hero made a rush as he heard the news;
And he defeated the white pig;
.....

It was on 2 March, 1896 (1888 E.C.) that the battle of Adowa was fought between the invader, Italy, and Ethiopia. In its first attempt to colonize Ethiopia, Italy faced a decisive defeat while Ethiopian patriots secured the sovereignty of their nation. As the lines above suggest, the speaker wants the audiences to feel pride by reminding them of a triumphant page in the history of the black people. That is the victory of Adowa which records a symbol for the white races (Italians) suffered a humiliating defeat by the blacks, Ethiopians [ሊመከት አልቻለም ይህ ነጭ አሳማ/line 4 in the translation]. The battle of Adowa has symbolic significance for the black race in general and Ethiopians in particular (Levine, 1962).

As one can learn from the heroic tone of the speaker, the patriots took unhesitating and speedy action to defend the nations from the enemies [ጀግናው ገሰገሰ ይህን እንደሰማ/line 3 in the translation). This eminently testified the strong willingness of Ethiopian patriots to keep their country free and alive. This could give us a lesson that the various social structures and institutions were fruitfully functioning in shaping and socializing the people in a way that they fought for their freedom unconditionally. As a result, being sacrificial lambs, the heroes fought back a lot for the stability and continuity of the society. If they had reacted to the invasion indifferently, Ethiopia might not have enjoyed at least the grace of independence. Thus, their immeasurable commitments to the well-being of their nation and people have enabled Ethiopia to function as an independent state.

Ethiopians celebrate the golden victory of Adowa for it makes them continue to honor their ardent patriotism that confirms their nation's sovereignty. However, for Italians the situation is quite the opposite. The battle brought shame and disgrace to them, and it also ruined the white racial supremacy. "Italy experienced her defeat at Adwa as intensely humiliating, and that humiliation became a national trauma which demagogic leaders strove to avenge" (Levine, 1962:1). So, in

their insane desire to avenge, they invaded Ethiopia forty years later, after their first defeat at the battle of Adowa:

.....
አላስቸለው አለ ተመልሶ መጣ
ቂሙን በማስታወስ በቀሉን ሊወጣ
አልቻለም ፈጽሞ ሄደ ተመልሶ
ተልከከሱ ቀረ እየተላቀሰ
.....

Unable to forbear the humiliation, the enemy came back again;
Vindictively towards the hero;
However, he failed again and retreated,
Remained sniffing around,
By mourning for the dead publicly;

Italy wanted to avenge its crushing defeat at the battle of Adowa; therefore, in 1935 forty years later after the battle of Adowa it invaded Ethiopia. Ethiopian patriots emerged victorious from the battle of Adowa, and they put a brave fight in Machew where they were unlucky to lose. In this round Italians brutally used weapons of mass destructions for fear they would be defeated for the second time, and to erase their darkened name. According to Gashaw during their five years stay in Ethiopia Italians committed crime against humanity; referring the massacres of unarmed civilians at a cave locally known as ‘Amesetegna Washa’/ አምስተኛ ዋሻ he says that “...they used poison gas burnt down villages and slaughtered civilians. In this case, Ametsegna Washa; some call it “the cave of Zeret” was one of the forgotten massacres which happened in 1939, where up to 2500 Ethiopians were gassed and machine-gunned” (Gashaw,2015:119). Through the lines above, the speaker shows this vindictive motive of Italy [አላስቸለው አለ ተመልሶ መጣ/ቂሙን በማስታወስ በቀሉን ሊወጣ/lines 5&6 in the translation].

According to Zelalem (1990:25) in various Amharic novels and plays Italy is described as “the sworn enemy of Ethiopia.” The lyricist also underlies the feeling of enmity between Italy and Ethiopia:

.....
በሰላም ጥያቄ ተመለስ ቢሉት
በግፍ ስለመጣ አለቀ ጠላት
.....

The enemy refuses to retreat away though it was asked peacefully;
So, it was dismissed for launching an unjust war;

The speaker is committed to addressing in what manner the injustices facing Ethiopians forced them to stay in conflict with Italians. The invaders were absolutely in the wrong; as a result, innocent Ethiopians were threatened by war crime in their own land while they defended their sovereignty. Discussing the root causes of conflict, Kriesberg (1973:35) writes:

Two kinds of circumstances underlie social conflicts. One is consensus and the other dissensus. In the case of consensus, the parties agree about what they want, but in situations such that if one side obtains more of what it wants, the other receives less. Dissensual conflicts exist when the parties want different things, but the requirements of coordination make those differences incompatible or one side wants the other to accept the values, beliefs, or way of life it professes and thus makes unacceptable claims upon the other.

On the basis of Kriesberg's description one can identify the type of social conflict that the two nations engaged in. They were undoubtedly in dissensual conflict. In this case Italy "made unacceptable claims upon Ethiopia". Leading by the unfair global order, it crossed the natural boundary of the then Ethiopia twice, and initiated the unjust wars. With its sadistic motive Italy intended to exploit the human and natural resources of the country. Commenting on Italy's second invasion, Del Boca (1969:20) underlies that being an industrialized nation Italy looked for "a new outlet for her shrinking export trade." By considering Ethiopia as mass-market and promising source of raw materials, Italy began to distribute Ethiopian lands to its farmers, and offers protection to immigrants (Sbacchi, 1975). In other words, the invaders intended to make Ethiopia an instrument to solve their problem of unemployment that raised its highest level at the time. Therefore, in its totality, Italy engaged in conflict with Ethiopia over the scarce natural resources and power.

The speaker is not interested in calling the enemies by their names. Rather, he has named them "white pig" [ጎጭ አሳማ--- line 4 both in the original and in the translation]. In the Ethiopian context pig connotes something negative; it symbolizes gluttonous and impurity. In this song lyric, the white pig--- [ጎጭ አሳማ] refers to the invaders who had a white racial background. In doing so, the speaker is symbolically distancing the enemies in terms of their moral values and races. Some religions in Ethiopia consider pig as one of the anathematized animals. For instance, Orthodox Christianity prohibits its follower from feeding on the meat of this animal. This is for a more reason that pig symbolizes the state of impurity. In addition, the speaker seems to allude to Emperor Menilik's speech that was delivered when he made an official call for the people to defend the

nation from the colonizers. In his speech, the king announced the enemy’s intention to distort the indigenous religion (Alemayehu, 2006; Fiseha, 2004).

The speaker is not in a worrying mood regarding Ethiopia’s fate in the future:

.....
አገሬ ኢትዮጵያ ሰላም ልበልሽ
ላይን የማይታይ የሳት ጦር አለሽ

.....
Let me greet you Ethiopia, my country,
You have a spear, invisible and fire;
.....

Depending the lines above, it is possible to argue that Ethiopia being guarded by “invisible spear of fire” cannot easily be attacked by anyone else unless the incredible happens. As a matter of fact, “spear” and “shield” were the common weapons that Ethiopians used in many battlefields including Adowa and Machew. So, literally the speaker might intend to show the strength and sharpness of the patriots’ “spear”. However, connotatively, he has applauded the fearlessness and determination of Ethiopian heroes. By implementing the hyperbolic expression, “invisible spear of fire”, the speaker seems to celebrate the heroic sacrifices of Ethiopians. In this song, Ethiopia symbolizes a woman; Solomon (2006:352) observes:

The symbolic use of “mother” as a reference to Ethiopia is very common; Ethiopia is a “she,” a “lady,” a “mother.” Until recently, when kings and emperors—as well as other Ethiopian governments—wanted to rally Ethiopians against foreign aggressors, they called upon Ethiopians to defend their “mother”: Defend your “motherland” (inat-hägär). In recent times, the Derg was noted for mobilizing Ethiopians under the slogan “Mother Ethiopia or Death!”.

By considering Ethiopia as a woman (a mother figure), the speaker attempts to refer to the instinct mother-child attachments. Most often a child positively responds to his/her mother’s unconditional love. Due to this, under normal circumstance, anyone commits to return the unmeasurable favor that his/ her mother owes him/her. Thus, if a child considers his/her country as a mother, he/she will pledge to keep its wellbeing. In other words, s/he will never hesitate to defend his country if an enemy begins to wage war on it.

The speaker’s feeling of nationalism is vividly shown through the lines below:

.....
ከጎበዝም ጎበዝ ከጅግናም ጅግና አለ
የሀገሬን አርበኞች የሚያስንቅ የታለ

One may be more heroic than the other,
But the hero of my fellow countryman is unmatched;

.....

As shown in the lines above, the speaker argues that the heroic motive of “his fellow countryman” is unreachable and superior to anyone else in the world. Considering one’s position as non-defendable and incomparable is a pure sense of nationalism.

In fact, the lyricist attempts to construct the story on the basis of historical events. In its truest sense, Ethiopian patriots deserve due appreciations; they sacrificed much in keeping the sovereignty of the nation. During Italy’s second invasion they endured horrible war crimes for five years. Apart from the material and other distractions, a great deal of blood was lost in the process. Fessiha (2004:93) writes, “የኢትዮጵያ ነጻነት በደም የተገዛ ነው” ---Ethiopia sacrificed her blood to freedom. He further claims that Over 800,000 Ethiopians were murdered and so many others injured within the five years fights against the colonizers. And John Melly in Zelalem (1990:11) says that "this is not a war - it is not even a slaughter - it is the torture of tens of thousands of defenseless men, women and children with bombs and poison gas.”

As usual, the fascist barbarity was evidently seen when they massacred thousands of innocent Ethiopians on February 19, 1937. On this particular day two young Ethiopian patriots, Moges Asegedom and Abraham Deboche, made an attempt on the life of General Graziani, the then viceroy of Ethiopia. In revenge for this attack the fascists murdered tens of thousands of innocent Ethiopians. Ladislav Sava, a Hungarian physician, in Zelalem (1990:11) witnessed the scene of the crime as, "The corpses of men, women and children, over which vultures hovered, were lying in all directions. Great flames from the burning house illuminated the African night." Definitely, the sight of so much suffering was too much for the physician; indeed, there wouldn't be as bad scene as seeing "... corpses of children..." who deserved to gambol freely in their own free land. All these reveal the extent to which Ethiopians sacrificed to overcome such an unspeakable cruelty that dealt a death blow to the country’s sovereignty. Italy’s invasion was without a doubt one of the most dysfunctional perils that the nation faced in her history. The Italian’s divisive treatment of the society left scar on Ethiopians sense of solidarity, and their unjustly interruptions deformed the nation’s journey to modernization.

In general, in the song under discussion the speaker tries to reveal the patriotic devotion and the heroism of Ethiopians. He honors the heroes for their dedications and commitments to keep their nation remain independent by fiercely defending Italian consecutive invasions. Since he has complete confidence in Ethiopia’s ability to secure its independence, he encourages it (his nation) not to cringe in fear for it has an invisible spear of fire. This, in turn, shows the successfulness of the social institutions (education, religion, media, etc.) in building the moral strength of the citizens to make the ultimate sacrifice to defend their motherland against the invaders. Furthermore, the speakers in other patriotic songs such as ‘ካልነኩት የማይነካ’[kalðnakutð yämayðnäka] and ‘ወጅነው’[wäjänewð] also glorify the patriotic sentiments of their fellow countrymen [See Appendix A].

4.2. Praising the Nation

Different Amharic song lyrics are used as the medium of praising the nation. Most of them idealize Ethiopia’s natural beauty, fertility, history, etc. Chamberlain (2000:119) observes, “In Africa, the praise poem or praise song is a particular aesthetic device which appears to be common throughout the continent.... They may offer a history and a judgment, an interpretation and a prescription. They may be used to entertain or to teach. They cover a variety of themes....” The Amharic song lyrics that we see following this would reflect some of the points that Chamberlain claims.

Beriket Mengistab’s (1963 E.C.) song lyric, ‘አገሪ’ [aḡäre], praises the nation; the speaker in this song presents its glorious image in terms of its ancientness and remarkable role in Africa:

ኢትዮጵያ አገራችን ጥንታዊት ናት
የአፍሪካ ነጻነት ጠባቂ ናት
.....
Our country, Ethiopia, is an ancient nation,
She is the guardian of Africa’s freedom;
.....

According to Seelinger (2017) Ethiopia is one of the ancient nations of the planet, and it was not formally coloniz. It seems that Ethiopia’s struggle to defend her sovereignty and her support to anti colonial movements throughout Africa make the speaker label it as “the guardian of Africa’s freedom” [የአፍሪካ ነጻነት ጠባቂ ናት/line 2 in the translation]. According to Oban (2017) the strong unity between local kings, political and military genius, and a national sense of defiance play great

role to make Ethiopia stay free. Furthermore, the speaker makes use of biblical allusion to show the greatness of the nation:

.....
እንደ ሰማይ ገነት ሁሉ የሚመኛት
አምላክ የባረካት
እዝራ በመሰንቆ ዳዊት በበገና የመሰከረላት
ያሬድ በሀሌሉያ የዘመረላት
.....
All long for Ethiopia,
Like they long for paradise;
She is blessed by God;
With his ‘masinqo’ Ezra sang her praises;
With his harp, David sang her praises,
And in his hallelujah, Yared sang her praises;
.....

It is obvious that Christianity is a deep-rooted religion in Ethiopia; most people are believed to have strong exposure to the Holy Bible and religious narratives. Thus, by alluding biblical [David and Ezra] and religious figures [St. Yared] the speaker tries to inspire unquestioning trust in the audiences concerning her blessedness.

In the Christians’ view of the world, God is an essential character; His presence and His effect on life are not questioned. As for the speaker, Ethiopia “... is blessed by God.” So, she has got the perfect blessing from the unquestionable and ultimate power, God [አምላክ የባረካት/ line 3 in the translation]. According to the speaker the two biblical figures, David and Ezra, and the legendary architect of religious songs and praises in Ethiopian Orthodox Church, St. Yared “... sang her praises” for Ethiopia’s praiseworthiness is a God-given right.

In addition, he idealizes the nation. He equates Ethiopia with paradise. Religiously, paradise is a symbol for something extraordinarily good, and it is a state in which things are well. Ryken, Leland et al. write “Harmony is a major meaning of the image of Paradise. Adam and Eve are pictured as living in harmony with nature, including both plants and animals. They also live in harmony with each other.” (1998:1090) Thus, here one might deduce that the relative harmony among the people might inspire the speaker to draw analogy between his nation and the paradise [እንደ ሰማይ ገነት ሁሉ የሚመኛት/line 2 in the translation].

Communicating through the aforementioned biblical symbols, the lyric attempts to exploit the spiritual and moral values that religion as institution promotes in his society. In other words, he fruitfully manipulates the function of religion in the Ethiopian context (particularly Christianity) and biblical symbols to convey his attitude. It is not surprising if anyone becomes a supremely confident citizen when s/he is aware of the recognitions that her/his nation receives praises from godly figures (David, Ezra and Yared) and God Himself. In addition, such kind of narratives have the potential to gradually uplift the people's moral values and courage so that they defend their nation from enemy. In general, the functional roles of these narratives to make Ethiopians remain on the alert to keep the nation's independence cannot be undermined.

In his song lyric 'ልምላሜሽ ማማሩ' [lɔmɔlameʃɔ mamaru] Abebe Yemenu (1960 E.C.) praises the greenness and the suitable weather of Ethiopia as:

ሀገሪ ኢትዮጵያ ተራራሽ አየሩ
 ፏፏቴሽ ይወርዳል በየሽንተረሩ
 ልምላሜሽ ማማሩ
 በለምለሙ ሳር ላይ ውሀዎች ፈሰው
 ሜዳና መስኮችሽ አበባ ለብሰው
 ሀይወትን ያድሳል ሲያዩት ኮረብታው

.....
 Ethiopia, my country,
 Your mountains and your weather,
 Your fountain that flows over the hills,
 Make your greenness beautiful;
 It refreshes life to see,
 The water flows over the green grass,
 And Your fields covered with flowers;

Ethiopia is considered as the water tower of Africa, and it is known for its rich geographical diversity. According to Huxley et al (1963:3) Ethiopia is:

a country which consists of a tremendous massif rising from 146 m. below sea level in the Danakil depression to 4620 m. above sea level at Ras Degien (Simien), which is the remains of a gigantic volcano... Ethiopia contains within its own boundaries an exceptionally wide range of biological environments and hence of types of vegetation and ecosystems; of the 19 colour symbols used for the vegetation map of Africa, Ethiopia claims 10, more than any other African country, including the Republic of South Africa (8 only).

Through the lines above, the speaker presents the glorious image of Ethiopia; he claims that the outstanding natural beauty of the country refreshes life [በለምለሙ ሳር ላይ ውሀዎች ፈሰው/ሜዳና መስኮችሽ አበባ ለብሰው/ህይወትን ያድሳል ሲያዩት ኮረብታው/lines 5-7 in the translation]. Of course, it is possible to witness that Ethiopia has many spectacular sceneries. It is the land of natural mystic which consists the breathtaking lava lake, Ertale, and the great Blue Nile Falls, Tisisat. Huxley et al (1963: 17) observe “...the scenery and landscape of Ethiopia is of outstanding interest and splendor.”

The speaker also believes that Ethiopia is blessed by God with tremendous natural richness and great beauty:

.....
 አምላክ በጥበቡ ጥንቱን ሲፈጥርሽ
 ሁሉን አሟልቶ ነው ላንቺ የሰጠሽ

From the beginning,
 When God created you with His wisdom,
 He gave you everything to the fullest;

Therefore, as to the speaker, the nation’s beauty and resourcefulness is not artificial. He believes that God is responsible to endow her with the gifts that enrich her [አምላክ በጥበቡ ጥንቱን ሲፈጥርሽ/ሁሉን አሟልቶ ነው ላንቺ የሰጠሽ/ the lines 1-3 in the translation]. Therefore, it might be logical to consider the speaker’s point from the religious perspective; in the Ethiopian context the vast majority of the people believe in God’s ultimate power to either bless or perish.

In general, in the two songs discussed under this sub section, the speakers show the blessedness of Ethiopia in terms of rich natural resources and beautiful geographical sceneries. As Huxley et al (1963:17) state, “The Ethiopian landscape is thus extremely rich and varied, with many attractions to the naturalist and the geologist as well as to the lover of fine scenery. But for these attractions to be enjoyed, they must be made accessible; improved communications and easier access, both by road and air, will have to be provided.”

4.3. Moral Decadence

In the period under study different Amharic song lyrics were produced in reaction to some social evils. They critically render to what extent some immoral behaviors would be threats to the smooth

functioning of the society. Following this an attempt has been made to look into the song lyrics that entertain the major declines of moral standards such as prostitution and corruption.

4.3.1. Prostitution

Though the beginning of prostitution in Ethiopia can be traced as back as the 17th century, the Italy's invasion laid fertile ground for its expansions (Kebede, 1993; Lakech, 1978; Alemayehu, 1973). Italy's five years stay was marked by the growth of urbanization. The urban centers were commonly established around military barracks. In these relatively populated centers people began to run bar and hotel businesses so as to meet the needs of Italians and others. The hotels and the bars employed women who were mostly from families that were displaced as a result of the war between the patriots and the fascists. Zelalem (1990:14) writes, "Italian colonialism in Ethiopia had its social effects.... Disorganization of traditional ways of family and social life, and changes in the class relationship were significant. It dramatically shook medieval institutions and a traditional way of life. Stable village communities were disturbed and as a result more people flocked to the newly emerging urban centers."

The Italian soldiers who had exposure to sex-work in their own homeland and came to Ethiopia without wives used those women for sexual gratification (Joyce, 2004). This new situation enhanced an alarming development of prostitution. As for Richard Pankhurst (1974:178) the Italian occupation "inaugurated an era of extensive, highly developed prostitution." As all might know the vast majority in Ethiopia have followed the two dominant religions, Christianity and Islam for centuries. The believers of these faiths are strictly prohibited from engaging in prostitution for it is doctrinally taken as a sinful act. However, even the norms and values built by these faiths could not prohibit prostitution from being on the increase for "the all-round pressure exerted by the fascist occupation shook the Ethiopian society and challenged the continuity of established patterns of life" (Zelalem, 1990:57).

Lyricists responded to this amoral activity; they were critically commenting on it. For instance, in the following song lyric, 'ተው ተመለስ' [täwô tämäläsô], the writer uncovers the worst-case scenario of prostitution as:

.....
ተው ተመለስ የህጻን አባት
ቃልኪዳንህ ትዝ ይበልህ ድንገት

ተከተት በጊዜ ልጆችህን ሰብስብ
ትዳርክን በድለህ ጋለሞታ አትቀልብ

.....
You, the father of our kid,
Please, come back home;
Remember the wedding vow;

Come home in time;
Don't feed a prostitute,
At the expense of your marriage;

.....

In the above song lyric, the woman has voiced her concern over the unwelcome lifestyle her husband seems to develop lately. She is beginning to fear the worst that unless her ill-mannered husband improves his character soon, their marriage will be put at risk [ተከተት በጊዜ ልጆችህን ሰብስብ/ትዳርክን በድለህ ጋለሞታ አትቀልብ/ the last three lines in the translation]. Pitifully, the nameless woman, the prostitute/‘ጋለሞታ’/, on the other side threatens the stability of the household by potentially seducing the man away from his family. As the speaker points out, her husband has got a date with the prostitute at the beginning of the month when he receives his salary:

.....
በልደታ ሰሞን ደሞዝ ተቀብለህ
ወደ ውጭ አትሩጥ ህሊናህ ይውቀስህ

.....
When you take your salary at the beginning of the month,
Don't be in hurry to go out to throw your money around;
Let you regret spending your money in a careless way;

.....

The seductive act of the prostitute could make him (speaker's husband) find her sexually attractive. This, in turn, forces him to lose control of his strong sexual desire; therefore, by ignoring the huge responsibilities that parenthood bring, he spends too much money to have sex with her (the prostitute). So, it is possible to imagine the harshness of the problems that his family faces if he goes bankrupt at the beginning of the month. The whole family, especially the kids and their mother will face infinite social problems if the threats of the destabilizing force, in this case the prostitute, does not stop pushing to the limit of the social norms. This shows how prostitution attributes to the dysfunction of the family in particular and the society at large. The speaker

describes, with considerable sympathy, the challenges that their kids can face if he continues to be unconcerned about them:

.....
ልጆችህ ተርበው ከቤት ሲላቀሱ
ደስ ያሰኝህል ወይ አልኮልና ዳንሱ

.....
Do you enjoy the alcohol and the dance,
While your hungry child crying at home?
.....

As the lines above suggest, the speaker rhetorically indicates her husband’s lack of moral-fibre to manage his family. She wants to know how he takes pleasure in drinking alcohol and dancing while his hungry kids search for food at home. If the speaker’s husband keeps on drinking and womanizing, he fails to manage the hungry mouths to feed at home; this eventually makes him suffer from emotional trauma. When he finds it difficult to recover the trauma of economic and social instability, he might decide to leave his family. Apart from suffering much from poverty and other related social challenges, children from unstable family commonly fail to pass through the most vital process of socialization and social control mechanisms. From the beginning the overall familial shock makes them instable, so growing up under the guidance of a single parent family might not let them learn from the role plays of both parents in a comprehensive manner. Since the fundamental institution, the family, is unable to function properly to orient the children what is socially right and wrong, they most probably violate the norms and values of the society when they grow up. In our society we hear time and again people insulting such kids as “insolent”, [ሰድ አደግ...səddəd adägə].

The overall situations that the speaker’s husband is in cannot make him a model father; he is beginning to hold the lowest status within the people around him:

.....
ስመ ጥሩ ኑሮህ የሌለው አምሳያ
አቃቂር ወጣላት ሆነ መሳለቂያ

.....
Once you enjoyed the most appreciated and incomparable life;
But now people make your life the topic of mockery;

Once the people respected the speaker’s husband for leading a good life; however, both alcohol and adultery prohibit him from maintaining his dignity. Leave alone feeling positively towards

him, people begin to mock him. Thus, a father who becomes the topic of mockery for his misdeeds could not be his children's hero. They would rather feel disappointed and upset by his behavior. Above all when they see their father being ridiculed by others, they could be exposed to psychological damage.

The type of family that we find in the song under discussion seems to follow traditional family structure in which the man is the bread winner and the woman is responsible for the household activities [ትዳርክን በድለህ ጋለሞታ አትቀልብ/ Don't feed a prostitute/At the expense of your marriage]. This sort of family structure is commonly seen in a patriarchal society in which the dominant position is taken by the men and women play subordinating roles. As one can learn from the song, the wife is living in the shadow of her husband. She is absolutely suffering from powerlessness. She does not have the right of appeal to make her husband behave himself. She rather bows down to him and begs him so that he stops adultery [ተው ተመለስ የህጻን አባት/ቃልኪዳንህ ትዝ ይበልህ ድንገት--- You, the father of our kid/Please, come back home/Remember the wedding vow]. When his situation is examined in terms of Pierre Bourdieu's classification of capital, he is found to be "the owner of economic capital or wealth". He makes the money on which the entire family relies; thus, he has the deciding vote. This implies the existence of the silent but consistent conflict over resources and power between the dominant figure, the husband, and the subordinate one, the wife. As we can guess from this song, both power and resource are in the hands of the husband.

On the other hand, we can trace from the song lyric a matter of life and death conflict between the two women [the wife and the prostitute] over scarce resources. The wife accuses of her husband for spending his money in the sex industry [ትዳርክን በድለህ ጋለሞታ አትቀልብ/ Don't feed a prostitute/At the expense of your marriage]. Irrespective of societal values and norms the prostitute takes advantage of the man's adulterous behavior to exploit his money. As a result, the wife and her kid suffer a lot. However, though the prostitute's contribution to the destabilization of the family is undeniable, it would be unfair to blame her for the overall messes. We can make a logical guess that she happens to lead such a pitiful life because of the impact of the various dysfunctional social structures and institutions. Showing the possible root cause of prostitution, Lucille (2007:20) writes, "Systems of prostitution draw strength from the economic, social and physical vulnerability of girls and women, and reinforce the belief that girls and women are sexual objects. . . Sexual

exploitation exists because people are willing to exploit or use others, and because societies allow it to happen.”

So, the social system might leave the prostitute in such a degrading condition. In this song, the author, Tsegaye Berhane (1965 E.C.), implements the concept of vow for its symbolic functions. Traditionally, a person makes a wedding vow to show that s/he stays loyal to her/his marriage partner. In the words of Leland Ryken, et al (2007:3291) “... The vow is directed toward God. It always takes place within the context of prayer since it is always addressed to God. Vows are normally made in times of distress, and the supplicant’s gift is often contingent upon the granting of his petition.” Therefore, the vow symbolically serves as a mechanism of social control. When someone promises to God that they never betray the others, the chance of fulfilling their commitments would be high. Since the abstraction handovers the earthly matter to divinity, the vow takers will be bound by their promise, lest divine punishment will follow if they act otherwise. It is for this reason that in the song lyric under discussion the woman reminds her husband of “the wedding vows” [...ቃልኪዳንህ ትዝ ይበልህ ድን/... Remember the wedding vow].

Getachew Debalke’s (1964 E.C.) song lyric, ‘አደረች አራዳ’ [adäräčö arada], is all about the story of a prostitute who ceaselessly wanders from town to town:

አደረች አራዳ አደረች አራዳ
የኔ ብርቱካኔ የኔ ጽጌረዳ
ከህግ ባሏ ጋር አንባር ስትሰብር
ውብ አበባነቷ ያስደንቅ ነበር
አሁን ቀጠለች ሽርሽረ አራዳ
በያይነቱ መጠጥ ጀመረች ልትቀዳ

.....

She passed the night at downtown
She is my orange
And she is my rose, too.

When her husband deflowered her,
Her beauty caught anyone by surprise;
But now she begins to visit the downtown,
And imbibe varieties of drinks;

.....

In this song the lyricist presents a woman who has gone through spectacular changes of life styles. Unfortunately, she had a broken marriage; her way of life that she had the moment she engaged to

someone is in sharp contrast with the current one While she got married, she was virgin [[ከህግ ባሏ, ጋር አንባር/ the first line in the translation]. In Ethiopia there are long-standing traditions which place special values and significances on virginity. Various studies show that in most part of the country, even the harmful practices, female genital mutilation, take place in the notion of calming down the woman's sexual desire so that she preserves her virginity before marriage (Abebaw Ferede et al, 2009; Mitike Molla et al, 2008; Gemechu Beyene et al, 2006). Showing the personal and social values attributed to virginity in some cultures of the nation, Guday (2003:93) writes:

At her first marriage, a girl is expected to be virgin. If a girl is found not to be a virgin during her first intercourse with her first husband, it is a disgrace for her parents and for herself. In this context, the preservation of a girl's virginity until marriage is primarily a concern of the parents responsible for "watching" the girl properly, and then it becomes a moral, as well as a social issue with respect to the girl. The local community blames parents more than the girl for the loss of her virginity. For this reason, parents have always a strong desire to protect their daughters from pre-marital sex, while such restrictive measures are not taken to control sons. They also believe that early marriage for daughters is essential to protect them from pre-marital sex.

In the quotation above, we can see the symbolic values that the society attributes to virginity. As shown, it is considered as a status symbol. A deflowered female before marriage disgraces both her parents and herself. Since virginity conveys the image of purity and faithfulness, the girl who lost it before marriage, it is believed, humiliates both herself and her parents. Therefore, as we can learn from the song, the woman has moved from the state of purity to impurity with respect to the moral values of the society. Fitting the people's expectation, she came to marriage virgin.

Her virginity implicitly manifests her inner beauty; it underlies her quality of fitting to social expectations. With no doubt she manages to receive due respect and dignity from the people around her for preserving her virginity till marriage. On the other hand, in terms of appearance, she was a great beauty in her time. The speaker uses the metaphor of **orange** and **rose** to describe her captivating physical beauty [የኔ ብርቱካኔ የኔ ጽጌረዳ/lines 2&3 in the translation]. On the basis of this, we can guess that her eye-catching beauty could make her sexually attractive. This, in turn, could make her receive much pressure from the opposite sexes. However, very luckily, she did not surrender to anyone. Thus, it is logical to think that she was from a devoted family that played its social role in building her inner-self properly and offering due protections for her safety. Both she and her parents did not have a shameful episode in their history. So, the question here is that how

a woman who grows up in such social settings gives her back to her own people who orient her how to be respected and how to respect others.

In this song lyric the writer also raises the issue of alcoholism. During Italy’s invasion, Ethiopians were treated inhumanly by the invaders; the fascist even shot down religious leaders like Bishop Petros. Observing such horrible scene was quite unbearable for millions of Ethiopians. Hopelessness reigned among the people. Those who could not cope up with the traumas used alcohol as escaping mechanism. Zelalem (1990:68) writes, “After the loss of independence, Ethiopians find alcoholism an ideal means of escaping from the horrifying reality they daily witness. It is a deliberate means of self-denial, an attempt to forget oneself. Terror and anxiety necessitate an outlet.” In the song lyric, the author presents the woman while she imbibes verities of alcohol [በያይነቱ መጠጥ ጀመረች ልትቀዳ/ the last line in the translation]. The availability of alcohol in various kinds implies the expansion of alcoholism and the magnitude of alcohol users. The woman departed from her husband for some unstated reasons, and she has become a prostitute. Hence, her new social position has turned her world upside-down. Because of the absolute paradigm shift she has made in her life, she could not be respectful of other people’s points of view. Being in degrading conditions, she keeps on wandering from town to town to prostitute by turning a blind eye to the norms and values of her society:

.....
ገሰገሰች ሄደች አደረች ሰላሌ
ርብጎንደር ባስመራ ደግሞ በመቀሌ
በአሰብ በደሴ ገባች ውጫሌ
በሀዋሳ በኩል ሄደች ወደ ባሌ
ድሬዳዋ ናዝሬት አደረች አሰላ
ማነው የሚነካኝ የሚቆጣኝ ብላ

.....
She became a wanderer;
She was in a rush to leave the downtown;
She reached Selalle, and spent the night there;
She made the journey to other towns, too;
Traveling through Gonder, Asmara, Mekele, Aseb and Dessie,
She arrived at Wechale;
And she moved to Bale through Awassa;
She still kept on wandering;
She journeyed onwards to Dire-Dewa and Nazareth;
She reached Asela and passed the night there;
Being fearless of anyone’s wrath;

The cultural shock that Italy's invasion brought to the people might be blamed for the woman's unnatural practices. Since the invasion disintegrated the social orders which made everyone react to the well-being of the concise collective, the basic social controlling mechanisms would become functionless. The invaders took advantage of the dismantled political and cultural identity to indoctrinate their own values which would absolutely be foreign to the indigenous people. As a result, the natives were sandwiched between the motives of preserving the indigenous norms and adapting the foreign values. This eventually lets them go through identity crises. The degraded woman in this song exemplifies the risk of all rounded crises Ethiopians faced during Italy's invasion.

Twelve big and small towns are mentioned in the song under discussion; the speaker tries to show how prostitution and urbanization were hand in glove. When urbanization was expanding, more bars and hotels began to be built. These bars and the hotels attracted a large number of prostitutes. As shown in the previous sections, Italy's invasion contributed a lot to the expansion of urbanizations and hotel businesses.

In general, the two songs discussed under this sub-section show that prostitution poses a direct threat to social stability. The speaker in the song, 'ተው ተመለስ' [täwə təməläsə], witnesses that their marriage has been on the point of collapse since her husband dated a prostitute. Since he is spending a lot more on the prostitute and alcohol, the money he brings home is not enough to feed the family. As a result, he lost his dignity, so his poor treatment of his family risk making him an object of mockery. The speaker in the song, 'አደረኝ አራዳ' [adäräčə arada], on his part shows how the beautiful and polite girl becomes a wanderer; she moves from town to town to prostitute. She was once a very dignified married woman who respected her people. However, after she joins the world of prostitution, she turns her back on her former belief.

4.3.2. Corruption

Corruption is one of the most amoral human actions which is purely made for selfish reasons. It is implemented against the common will of the society. The presence of corruption can create massive upheavals in every level of social structure. Elijah (2007:15) describes corruption as:

Corruption is efforts to secure wealth or power through illegal means for private gain at public expense; or a misuse of public power for private benefit. Corruption like cockroaches has coexisted with human society for a long time and remains as one of the problems in many of the world's developing economies with devastating consequences. Corruption as a phenomenon, is a global problem, and exists in varying degrees in different countries. Corruption is not only found in democratic and dictatorial politics, but also in feudal, capitalist and socialist economies.

Any society in the world is not free from corruption (Hardoon, 2013; Shimeles, 2005). Corruption has been sucking all the strength out of Ethiopia's cradling economy since the imperial eras. For centuries, in the absence of strong central government, the country was ruled by few traditional elites who controlled its resources. Though attempts were made to collect taxes, it was embezzled by regional lords (Korajian, 2005; Paulos, 2000).

In Ethiopia modern public administration was relatively instituted during the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I. In this era, a new system was formulated to collect tax centrally, and the government began to pay monthly salaries for civil servants (Bahru, 2002). The central government was so effective in weakening the power of the provincial governors; gradually the civil services became the main instrument to promote the social and economic development of the nation (Fiseha, 2004). However, since the regime was formulated centering the Emperor who claimed the divine right of the ruler to govern state affairs with the intent of controlling almost every power (social, economic, political etc.), the civil sectors were not freely functioning. The Emperor himself and those who claimed "high-born" interfered politically in administrative issues. According to Shimeles (2006:65) during this time "Misadministration, excessive taxation and corruption, in general, became rampant."

We find so many song lyrics that critically comment the different forms of corruption in the era of the Emperor Haile Selassie I. For instance, we see a passionate outrage of anger in the song below:

.....
አንዳንድ የሀገር ሸክሞች ለጥቅም የሞታችሁ
የወገን ደም መምጠጥ ጉብ ይቅርባችሁ
.....
Some of you, selfish,
Who place burdens on the nation,
Stop taking bribe!
It is an act of sucking brothers' blood;
.....

The lyricist, Tesfaye Abebe (1962), entitled this song lyric ‘አገሪ በጅ ሄደ’ [əgðre bäge hedä]. It literally means “my leg walks by my hand”. So, literally these body parts, the leg and the hand, are not playing their own respective roles properly. Symbolically, this defamiliarized expression reveals how far corruption influences the nation to journey on the wrong road. It seems a certain institute has acted irresponsibly concerning the problem that the speaker faces. Thus, the concerned bodies’ failure to appeal to their sense of justice forces him to resort to bribery and promise them something.

The speaker boldly warns those idle egoists to stop “sucking brothers’ blood” [የወገን ደም መምጠጥ ጎብ ይቅርባችሁ/ lines 2&3 in the translation]. When people are obsessed with self-centeredness, they shamelessly begin to live at the expense of others. Their egocentric motives blinded them not to give due attention to the other individuals’ perspectives. Through time such a threatening social reality creates the state of disequilibrium within the society.

Corruption in its very nature abuses the economic activities; it makes the majorities hardly benefit from the market. Whenever it is excessively manifested in any form, the rule of law becomes functionless. Therefore, through time the overall unsettlements (social, political, economic, etc.) urge the oppressed ones to go into conflict with the corrupt officials. In some cases, since the grievances of the majority become unbearable, they demand the complete overthrow of the system. Then, this ignites a fully-fledged revolution in the mind of the oppressed masses. In this regard, together with the multiphase problems, corruption caused the overthrow of the regime of Emperor Haile Selassie I through the 1974 great revolution in the history of the country.

Anyone should work hard to survive; s/he needs to decide her/ his own fate through hard work. However, any action against this religiously and morally inclusive motive would be a threat to the well-being of the people. Bribery violets the legally binding rules and regulations that make the various social structures function in accordance with the common good of the people. So, in a situation when the formal state structures fail to serve the society in terms of the nation’s constitution, illegal mechanisms like bribing start functioning. For insistence, in principle, one has to invest her/his own money to feed on “fatty meat”. But if s/he bribes to have such food, s/he with no doubt violates the rule of law. The speaker exemplifies the impurity of the matter through the lines below:

.....
በጉቦ የተበላ ጭማ መች ይጠጋል
የቁልቋል እሾክ ነው ሆድ ይኮሰኩሳል

.....
Feeding on fatty meat that comes through bribe,
Is bad for health;
For it is, the thorn of euphoria that itches the stomach;

.....

Through this figurative expression he attempts to magnify the inevitable psychological traumas that bribers suffer from their own ill will. At times the corrupt individuals begin to feel crises of conscience; whenever, they sense that they are acting against the will of the majorities, they start to feel insecurity. Hence, motivated by their unsettled state of mind, they move to cover their guilt just to relieve their painful memory. However, their corrupted mind never lets them make appropriate corrective measures. They might rather commit crimes after crimes which aggravate the grief of the people; this eventually contributes a lot to speed up the total annihilation of the system.

In his song lyric, ‘ድህነት ባይኖር’ [dḁhḁnätḁ bayḁnorḁ], Alemayehu Mengistie (1964 E.C.) is complaining about favoritism that poisons the Emperor’s era:

.....
ምን ያለ ጊዜ ነው ሰአቱ የከፋ
ዘመድ የሌለው ሰው ምንም የለው ተስፋ
ብዙ ሰዎች አሉ ስርአተ ብልሹ
ተባብሮ እንደመስራት አድሎን የሚሹ

.....
What a cruel era is it!
There is no hope for a lonely one;
There are many unruly individuals,
Prefer favoritism,
To work together;

.....

In this song, the speaker bitterly bemoans the denial of basic human rights of the period. According to him, those who have no one to depend on in the administrations could not feel secure in life [ዘመድ የሌለው ሰው ምንም የለው ተስፋ-/ line 2 in the translation]. It is because to be a citizen of the nation by itself might not guarantee someone to exercise their rights. Most probably the “unruly individuals” could not judge people on their merits; therefore, howsoever efficient they would be

to perform a certain task, the lonely ones hardly secure their place in history by investing their potential in the nation building [ምን ያለ ጊዜ ነው ሰአቱ የከፋ./line 1 in the translation]. Thus, favoritism casts a dark shadow over self-reliance and productivity of genuine citizens. In the words of Shimeles (2005:35) favoritism is “a form of corruption in which state resource, are distributed in a highly biased manner. It is a way through which state officials grant offices or some kind of benefits to their friends, relatives, and, in most societies, to family, clan, tribe, ethnic, religious or regional group regardless of merit by abusing their public power.”

In this respect, there are two common forms of favoritism. The first one known as nepotism in which the office holder favors her/ his clans, and close relatives. Amundsen (2005:35) in Shimeles says, "When 'successful', deeply nepotist systems are getting closer to the 'mafia' because of the shared family 'values' and loyalties." The second form of favoritism appears when certain individuals are privileged depending on some aspects of the existing economic policies. Such individuals would be allowed to buy public properties cheaply, take loans unfairly, be selected as contractors for public work, etc.

When someone with due merit loses all the privileges as a result of corruption, s/he would suffer from alienation. Shimeles (2005:35-36) mentions the negative consequences of favoritism as, “The problem of favoritism is very serious because it is not only a legal and procedural case but also political as well. Favoritism creates partiality and discrimination among citizens, families, clans, regions or social sub-groups and hence the repercussion is very serious. Besides, favoritism is against merit, and seriously affects efficiency and effectiveness and hence, economic development.” The ongoing mismanagements create a mood of hopelessness in the mind of the speaker. He shows his irritating feeling as “There is no hope for a lonely one” [ዘመድ የሌለው ሰው ምንም የለው ተስፋ]. This situation reminds us of Weber’s theory of conflict of status. According to Weber those who hold the status are always unwilling to accept others. So, when the oppressed ones know that they are refused entry to the group in a peaceful manner, they engage in serious conflict. In this regard, the next step for the speaker would probably be to clash with the refusers who spoil the entire system. The speaker keeps on complaining of the moral decline of the time:

.....
የገንዘብ ሰብኛ አታድርገኝ ፈጣሪ
እውነት ፍቅርን ሰጠኝ እንዲሆነኝ መሪ

በገንዘብ ቁራኛ እንዲህ ተለካከራን
ከአብራሃም ረድኤት ቀረን ተለያይተን

.....

God, don't make me to have addiction to money,
Let You bless me with truth and love;
Poisoned by moneygrabber,
We get deprived of Abraham's blessedness;

.....

As the lines above suggest, the speaker wants to be a genuine person who has great affection for others. Therefore, he prays to God to save him from selfishness. Comparing his contemporaries with the great biblical figure Abraham, he regards them as a mere eccentric who have grown to love money. Being the father of the multitude of nations, Abraham is known for his ultimate kindness to host and invite any strangers to eat at his house anytime (Genesis 17, 1-8). The researcher observes that in the Ethiopian context, particularly among Orthodox Thewahedo Christians, Abraham's and Sara's (his wife) way of life is taken as a role model. For instance, people wish the bride and the bridegroom lead life as blessed as Abraham and Sara [ትዳራችሁን የአብረሃምና የሳራ ያድርግላችሁ/Let God bless your marriage as He bless the marriage of Abraham and Sara]. The speaker's biggest worry is that his fellow countrymen abandon to put Abraham's life principles into practice. They rather behave selfishly since money has become their god. Furthermore, the speaker's growing sense of frustration is expressed in the lines below:

.....
የዘመኑ ሰዎች አንሻልም ከአብድ
ገንዘብን በማፍቀር እንሸጣለን ዘመድ

.....

We, the people of these days are not better than a mad one,
Our moneygrabbing drive makes us sell our own relative;

.....

The lines above suggest that the moneygrabbing sentiments of the people of these days go to the extent of sacrificing their relatives to get money. This worst-case scenario of the time uncovers the depth of the corruption that exhibits man's inhumanity to man.

The speaker in Tsehaye Endale's (1965 E.C.) song, 'ለነገ አትቅጠሩኝ', [länägä atəqəṭäruñḍ] on her part is complaining about the maze of bureaucracy during the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I:

.....
ልትቀጣኝም እንደሁ ወይም ልትሸመኝ
የዛሬን ዛሬ እንጂ ለነገ አትቅጠረኝ
የዛሬው ዛሬ ቢሆን ይሻለኛል
ወይም እሞታለሁ አደጋ ያገኘኛል

.....
Either to promote or punish me,
Don't delay it till tomorrow;
I prefer my today's problem get solved today,
I may face either death or danger;
.....

As the lines above suggest, the speaker is tired of bureaucratic delays; we can see the tone of urgency in the title itself. She is not worrying about whether the decision is in her favor or not. But she wants the office holder to take a timely action. Hence, the most important thing for her is just to have the final say of the bureaucrat on her issue. Her urgent business will not let her wait for the intangible tomorrow; she needs the concerned individual to solve her “today’s problem today” [ልትቀጣኝም እንደሁ ወይም ልትሸመኝ/የዛሬን ዛሬ እንጂ ለነገ አትቅጠረኝ/ lines 1-4 in the translation]. That is why she appeals to the non-predictableness of life; she argues that she does not know what will happen to her tomorrow; she might either be getting sick or facing some danger [የዛሬው ዛሬ ቢሆን ይሻለኛል/ወይም እሞታለሁ አደጋ ያገኘኛል/ the last two lines in the translation]. Therefore, as to her there is no time like the present to meet her needs.

This song indicates that during the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I the bureaucracies were not functioning properly. Eyayu (1994:28) states, “In spite of endeavor to set up a modern bureaucracy Haile Selassie’s government was criticized for red tape, inefficiency and corruption.” Showing the ineffectiveness of the Emperor’s judiciary Markis in Eyayu (1994:29) writes:

The judiciary is undoubtedly the most traditional branch of the state...court capacity is chronically overloaded and calendars are hopelessly behind time. Innumerable postponements are the rule greatly to the cost of litigation...The quality of justice is generally impugned. Ethiopians seem to accept bribery as the conventional means of litigation. The integration of the judiciary is proverbially suspected as innumerable saying attest.

The Emperor’s bureaucracy requires a lot of patience. As expected, such dysfunctional bureaucracies offended a mass of people:

.....
ደህ እኮ ችኩል ነው ተስፋው ይቆረጣል
ቀጠሮ ሲበዛ ሞራል ይወድቃል

.....
The poor has no patience,
They abandon hope of finding what they need;
Be in a hurry to solve their problem;
.....

The unprivileged ones should work hard to scratch a living from something; thus, as the speaker suggests in the lines above, while having troubles in numerous things in life, the poor hardly shoulder the burden of bureaucratic delays. Since such a situation makes their morale low, they eventually begin rage against the injustice inflicted on them. As a result, their next measure would probably be engaged in conflict with the system either individually or together with like-minded people.

As we have seen so far, in the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I the people were suffering from numerous troubles that stemmed from longstanding injustices. However, within such chaotic social orders, the lyricists attempted to preach the virtue of honesty, hard work, etc. For instance, in Sebihat Ayecheluhem's (1963) song lyric, 'ጾሜን ልደር' [፩፡መ፡፩ ፲፩፡፩፡፩] the speaker indicates that refraining from any sort of corruption is a moral imperative. His level of commitment to live remain honest is shown as:

.....
በስርቆት ካልሆነ ወይም ያለ አጋር
የለም ካሉ እንጀራ እኔ ጦሜን ልደር

.....
If it is a must to win a bread
Through theft and nepotism,
I prefer to get starved
.....

The speaker reveals his self-sacrifice; he promises to face even hunger to survive through “theft and nepotism”. His commitments to stay loyal to his people is further expressed through the lines below:

.....
አብኩቶ መጋገር የሴቶች ሙያ ነው
ያለ ስራ መግባት ሀገር መበደል ነው
እኔ አላውቅበትም ወሻክቶ ማናቆር
ንጹህ ሆኖ እንባዩን ይሻላል ማንቆርቆር

.....

It is women's job to knead and bake,
However, interfering unprofessionally to do something is to wrong the nation;
I prefer cry tears of frustration at my inability to get what I need,
To indulge in gossip to make people quarrel with each other;
Of course, I don't know how to do it;

.....

As the lines above suggest, the speaker strictly condemns individuals' unprofessional interference with others' job. For him, such an unwise act threatens the wellbeing of the nation [...ያለ ስራ መግባት ሀገር መበደል ነው/line 2 in the translation]. And he prefers weeping tears of misery to making people come into conflict [እኔ አላውቅበትም ወሻክቶ ማናቆር/ንጹህ ሆኖ እንባዬን ይሻላል ማንቆርቆር/lines 3-5 in the translation]. In doing so, he forwards one of the most important lesson in life that valuing loyalty is crucial to keep the stability of the nation. If everyone commands loyalty, they can form a sense of national loyalty which is much more important for the proper functioning of the entire system (Connor, 2007).

Practically, corrupt individuals are disloyal to the fellow countrymen and the nation. Since they run after their own benefits, they fail to share both the sorrows and successes with others in truthful manners. The disloyalty of such individuals can make certain institutions dysfunctional. Thus, the more dysfunctional institutions would become, the faster would be the collapse of a certain system. Functional theorists argue that different social structures, institutions, organizations etc. exist for they serve a needed purpose. When the different parts of the society function as to the people's expectations, the social equilibrium that guarantees the continuity of the society will be well kept. However, if in case the various social parts become dysfunctional, unhealthy social environment would exist (Fowler, 2007). So, when we examine Emperor Haile Selassie's regime in terms of the fundamental assumptions of functionalists, it seems that most institutions were not functioning properly. If religion, school and other institutions had not been dysfunctional, we would not have seen such enormous impact of corruption.

In general, the speakers in the songs discussed under this sub-section attempt to discuss the likely impact of corruption on the nation and its people. They expose individuals in the administration as thoroughly corrupt. For the speaker in the song, 'እግሬ በጄ ሄደ' [ǝgǝre bǝge hedǝ], the corrupt officials are absolute burdensome that suck all the strength out of the economy of the country. The

speaker in the song, ‘ደህነት ባይኖር’ [dǝhǝnǝtǝ bayǝnorǝ], on his part gives up hope; he claims that the poor and lonely ones who have no one in the administration could not succeed in achieving their goal; therefore, he puts a curse on the entire corrupted system of the time. We see the speaker in the song, ‘ለገ አትቅጠሩኝ’ [lǝnǝgǝ atǝqǝtǝrǝuǝǝ], getting sad and offended at the bureaucrats who are causing more delays to solve her problem. She is curiously determined to see justice done. On the other hand, though a maze of bureaucracy is really trying his patience, the speaker in the song, ‘ጾሜን ልደር’ [ጾmǝnǝ lǝdǝrǝ], is determined not to surrender to corruption. For him, it would be a crime to bribe the individuals in the administration to obtain what he seeks. Hence, he prefers face either hunger or death to engage in corruption.

4.4. Praising Peasants

Many literatures testify that in the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I more than 80% of the population engaged in the agricultural sector. In every aspect this sector was taken as the backbone of the country (Baharu, 2002; Fesiha, 2004; Alemayehu, 2006). It is safe to say that every citizen’s fate was tied to agriculture. A failure in agriculture would bring a failure in almost all other sectors of the country. Therefore, its tougher impact on almost every domain of life made it attract the attentions of scholars in the different fields of studies. Lyricists also attempted their level best to address issues related to farming and the life of peasants.

One of the song written on this issue is entitled ‘ልማት’ [lǝmatǝ]. It was composed by Merhawi Sitot (1964 E.C.):

.....
 ምድራችን ምቹ ነች ለእርሻ ለኢንዱስትሪ
 መሆን ትችላለች ተርፏት አባዳሪ

.....
 Our country is suitable for both farming and industry;
 She can go beyond meeting her needs,
 And be a donor;

Through these lines the speaker confirms that Ethiopia is potentially rich and suitable to invest on agriculture and industry. We can see how the speaker’s argument is not made on shaky ground when we go through the following brief explanation of the sector:

In spite of the growth and expansion of a number of towns and the establishment of a few industries in the post 1941, period, Ethiopia remained a predominantly rural society. Agriculture

engaged more than 80% of the population, and accounted for about 60% of the gross domestic product in the 1960s. Over 90% of the value of exports was derived from agricultural commodities, of which 60 % came from coffee. Internally, however, grain constituted the most important agricultural product, followed by pulses and oilseeds. The country's livestock population was reputedly was one of the largest in Africa, and the per capital consumption of meat was among the highest in the continent (Bahru, 2002:191).

Bahru's detailed description of the sector reminds us of the dominant role that agriculture played in Haile Selassie's regime. The speaker on his part argues that if a sound investment is issued on farming, Ethiopia can hopefully achieve sustainable developments. For him the most profitable investment is farming; as a result, he gallantly comments on the faultiness of spending money on buildings:

.....
ብርን ከማስቀመጥ በድንጋይ ላይ ክቦ
ብንዘራው ያስገኛል ካፈሩ ላይ በቅሎ

.....
Instead of investing money on buildings,
Let's invest and generate a profit from farming,
.....

The speaker uses the metaphor of **stone** and **soil** to show the sterility and the profitability of buildings and framings respectively. So, as to him, to improve the living conditions of the majorities and keep the stability and continuity of society at large, it would be demanding to put a lot of efforts on agriculture. In the Ethiopian context the metaphor of a “stone” often refers to irresponsiveness and unkindness. In other words, if someone does not feel any sympathy for other people, s/he is considered as a stone. So, in the text, the irresponsive nature of the stone might refer to the beginning of individualism that often appears with the expansion of urbanization. Naturally, if excessive individualism prevails, people might not give due care for others. This, in turn, stands against the Ethiopian way of living that appreciates strong interdependence and togetherness. Furthermore, the speaker expresses his regret over the country's inability to utilize the resource of the Blue Nile:

.....
አባይ የሚወስደው ወርቁን አፈራችን
ሌሎችን አክብሯል ተርፎ ከራሳችን

.....
Our golden soil that Blue Nile erodes,
Makes others rich being spared our demands;
.....

“The golden soil” that the river takes to the foreign land signifies the tremendous fertility of the country. Being one of the nation’s most precious resource, the soil enables people to make a living from it [... ሌሎችን አክብሯል ተርፎ ከራሳችን/.... Line 2 in the translation]. However, the contrary is inefficient to make good use of her fertile soil that enriches foreigners. Though Ethiopia is the main source of the Blue Nile (Abay), it drives almost no benefit from it. The two African countries, Sudan and Egypt, are still reaping benefit from the Blue Nile and the fertile soil that it carries. Thus, it seems that by bringing forth the case of this river the speaker appeals to Ethiopians’ long-standing regret for not exploiting it.

Alemayehu Mengitie’s (1964) song, ‘መልካም ነው ሀገር ቤት’ [mälkamə näwə hägärəbetə], presents the instability that the peasants faced during the reign of Haile Selassie I. In order to convince the farmers in the countryside to stay where they are, the speaker gives some examples that show the troubles

.....
 አታስብ ወገኔ ለመሆን ከተሜ
 ባለህበት እርጋ ገበሬው ወንድሜ

.....
 Let me advise you, my people,
 You the farmer,
 My brother in the country side,
 I advise you to stay where you are,
 Don’t think to be townsfolk;

.....
 During the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I, peasants were migrating from the countryside to the cities. Social, economic and political factors made them flee to the nearby towns and the cities (Adamnesh et al, 2014). In the song, the speaker shows the burdens these migrants shouldered in the urban centers:

.....
 ግብርናውን ትቶ የገባው ከተማ
 ቆሻሻ ይጠርጋል ባካፋ በደማ

.....
 The one who abandoned his farming,
 And fled to the city,
 Is becoming a janitor;
 He cleans the dirt of the city,
 With his spade and pickaxe;

Peasants who abandon farming and join the cities are engaged in undignified jobs, cleaning dirty [ግብርናውን ትቶ የገባው ከተማ/ቆሻሻ ይጠርጋል ባካፋ በደማ/ lines 1-5 in the translation]. This shockingly degrades their social positions, and people begin to call them “coolie” [ሰትጠራ ስማ ኩሊ ተብለህ/ the last line in the translation]. In a normal circumstance man struggles to hold the highest social positions. In other words, no one lets himself be dragged down to the level of “coolie” unless he gets shouldered some unbearable social burdens. In this regard, the most blamable factor for farmers’ migration in that particular era was the Emperor’s land tenure system. Though the government privatized the land, it held a huge amount of land which was known as ‘የመንግስት ይዘታ’ [the land of the government]. The rest was possessed by few landlords. The majorities who were from the humble origin were totally landless and unemployed. These groups had put their life in the hands of the landlords. Bahru (2002:192) states the oppressive conditions in relation to the land tenure as:

... The most important consequence of the growth of private tenure was the concomitant spread of tenancy. Some 50%-65% of holdings were estimated to fall under this category... Most tenancy agreements were verbal, involving share cropping arrangements known as erbo (a quarter), siso (one-third), or ekul arash (half). As the value of land rose with commercial farming and mechanization, the arrangement tended to be weighted increasingly against the tenant, often culminating in his eviction. In addition to the agreed upon share he paid to the landlord, the tenant often had to bear the burden of the tithe (asrat), and sometimes even that of the land tax.

As mentioned, peasants had been dogged by persistent back problems. For some facing such unwarranted social burdens became unbearable. Thus, the only thing they could do was migrating to the towns where they took risks. The government had formulated policies to offer land from its large reserve to the landless and unemployed. But practically the Emperor’s regime made grants to the target groups that thought to be loyal to the system. The landless and the unemployed had hardly been benefited from the policy. The overall land policies of the Emperor were to “polarize rural society into landlords and tenants” (Bahru, 2002:195). The landlords did have absolute power over the poor tenants.

In general, the two songs discussed under this subsection cast light on the importance of farming and the life of the peasants. The speaker in the song, ‘ልማት’ [lɔmatɔ], is merely focusing on the fertility of the soil and the profitability of farming. Either directly or indirectly, he forwards no clue to what extent the sector imposes an unfair burden on the peasants. Contrary to this, the

speaker in the second song, ‘መልካም ነው ሀገር ቤት’ [mälkamð näwð hägärðbetð], implicitly uncovers the social instabilities that the peasants face during the stated period. While encouraging the peasants to stay where they are, the speaker shows how the most dysfunctional land policies of Haile Selassie created consecutive social crises. According to him, after uprooting from their villages, the peasants were risk humiliation by cleaning dirty of the towns. The “spades” and “pickaxes” which they used for farming were apparently turned to collecting trashes. This symbolically shows the wastage of both the human powers and the material of productions. In addition, one can imagine that the mistreated migrants would engage in contestant conflict with those who looked down on them. On top of this, the limited job opportunities and resources of the towns could ignite a conflict that sometimes led to vandalism within the migrants. It is possible to think that the severity of the psychological traumas that these people endured let them develop a hatred for the system and the oppressors. Furthermore, the traumas and their unsettled mental states fueled further their motives of engaging in gross violation of the rules and regulations.

4.5. The Theme of Education

During the reign of Haile Selassie I, a lot had been done in expanding modern education. The Emperor himself was keenly interested in education. Fesiha (2004:121) writes “ጃንሆይና ትምህርት አብረው የተወለዱ ይመስል አስገራሚ ፍቅር ነበራቸው/ The Emperor loved education as if it was his twin brother.” Since the king was increasingly conscious of the importance of education, he attentively followed the sector’s progress. As a matter of fact, during the Italy’s invention Ethiopia lost so many scholars who had traditional and modern schoolings. The fascist purposely murdered well versed Ethiopians who were civil servants and teachers in governmental schools as well as religious institutions. Therefore, in the post-independence period, it was crucial to fill the gap.

Different issues of education were raised in a number of Amharic song lyrics. Alemayehu Eshete’s song lyric ‘ተማር ልጄ’ [tðmarð lðge] is one of the most famous songs which has repeatedly been on-air for decades:

ተማር ልጄ ተማር ልጄ
ወገን ዘመድ የለኝ ሀብት የለኝም ከጄ

.....

You better learn, my child
I’m poor and,
I have no relative to lean on;

As the lines above suggest, a father is giving his son advice; he is voicing about the indispensability of education. He bears out that he lives in poverty. In addition to his economic insecurity, he has no one to rely on when he is in need. So, he confesses that education is a means to save his son from being chained with the vicious circle of poverty. Concerning the economic benefit of education, Cattan (2013:1) writes:

The impact of education on wages and employment is the most widely recognized private benefit, but individuals may also enjoy private returns if education impacts on other personal outcomes, such as their health, parenting skills or even marriage prospects. Education may also have external returns if its benefits spill over to other individuals in the same industry, city or economy. People with greater human capital may raise the productivity of others with whom they interact. External benefits could also extend beyond increasing labour market productivity, for example by decreasing crime or contributing to a more democratic political process.

The imageries in this song utterly show the personal and social benefits of education. The speaker has made a sharp distinction between the world of literate and illiterate:

.....
 ስማኝ ልጄ ሌት ጸሀይ ነው
 ላልተማረ ሰው ግን ቀኑ ጨለማ ነው

.....
 Listen to me, my kid;
 When you learn,
 You enjoy the midnight sun;
 But for an illiterate,
 Even the day turns to darkness;

For the literate ones the **sun** never sets in their sky. Hence, they enjoy the “midnight sun” that rises deviated from nature. In the text, rising sun symbolizes hope, brightness, superiority, etc. So, all the potential advantages that education embeds are represented through the symbolic values of the **sun**. Contrary to this, for the uncultivated ones, the reverse is true. Even their day is sunless; they are all in **darkness**. Practically, “darkness” represents hopelessness, lifelessness, misery, etc. [ስማኝ ልጄ ሌት ጸሀይ ነው/ላልተማረ ሰው ግን ቀኑ ጨለማ ነው/ lines 4-8 in the translation]. Thus, communicating through symbols, the speaker puts his kid between the two different worlds: the world of sun and sunless. For him, getting educated is nearly the matter of life and death.

The symbolic values of the sun are also integrated with inexpressible functions of education. As commonly believed, education enhances rational thinking. Since its consciousness-raising role

enables people to understand the moral, political and social issues, it makes their thinking more scientific than intuitive. And the class consciousness that eventually develops through education instigates individuals to notice class differences. This, in turn, often encourages them to raise objection to the unfairness of the regime’s decree. We can see the strong and positive impact of education in the historic movements of students and the Neway brothers’ attempted coup d’état to overthrow the regime. Contrary to this, the non-versed ones who are “under cover of darkness” would easily be misdirected and exploited by the governing ideology. Speaking honestly, if education had not awakened individuals to identify and oppose the unfairness of his regime, Emperor Haile Selassie would have stayed in power for years. It is because the illiterates (the sunless ones) did not have the caliber to mobilize strong oppositions against him, who was constitutionally claiming absolute power.

Some of the songs, which convey the theme of education, entertain the feeling of disillusionments. Abebe Yemenu’s (1961 E.C.) song lyric ‘መማር ብቻ አይበቃም’ [mämarð bðča ayðbqamð] reveals the unfulfilled expectations in the sector:

.....
 መማር ብቻ አይደለም ሰውን የሚያኮራ
 ሰርቶ መገኘት ነው በቂ በቂ ስራ

 It doesn't suffice to educate oneself,
 And one cannot pride himself of being educated,
 Unless one puts an important deed;

The speaker is questioning the practicality of education. Unless it functions as a down to earth business, it is no use whatever. As for him, someone versed should put into practice his knowledge to do something tangible that benefits the society. However, if he wants to sound boastful without putting into practice what he has gained from his trainings, his dysfunctional roles badly affect the harmony and stability of the society.

Similarly, in his song lyric ‘ቢማር ተሳሳተ’ [bimarð tsasatð] Amha Tewodaje (1960 E.C.) has made critical comments on the unintended effect of the so-called education:

.....
 በወላጁ ሳቀ በሀገሩ ተረተ
 ደነቆረ መሰል ቢማር ተሳሳተ

Quite unlikely, he behaved arrogantly,
When he gets educated;
He laughed at his parents,
And mocked his country;
It seemed that he became ignorant;

.....

As shown, the one who is thought to be a savior turns to ridicule his own people and nation. This uncovers how the processes of education that he has gone through alienate him from his own society. It seems that schooling has made him developed a new form of personality that urges him distancing himself from the day to day realities. Fikere Tolossa in Fiseha (2004) points out that adapting the Western curriculum that did not fit into the Ethiopian context caused Ethiopian scholars alienate themselves from their culture. Girma et al in Alemayehu (2012:60) Bishaw notify that in 1962 a research was conducted by the Education Commission to evaluate the country's system of education. It came with the following basic findings:

- (a) The Ethiopian Education system lacked a philosophy and its aims and objectives are not properly articulated.
- (b) Curriculum materials, teaching methodologies and approaches were based on foreign countries, and instructional materials had to be adapted for Ethiopians.
- (c) Ethiopian needs, in particular with respect to culture and language, were not well treated by the education system.
- (d) The social needs of Ethiopian students were not clearly reflected in the curriculum, and the goals of education system had been equally hazy.

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church, which contributed much in administrating the traditional form of education, did not welcome the beginning of the modern education. In his effort to introduce modern education Emperor Menilik II faced challenges from the church. The then bishop who was originally from Egypt was condemning the Emperor not to bring teachers from Europe. However, though his reason was not clearly stated, the King finally brought some teachers from Egypt (Alemayehu, 2012). From this we learn that the church's resistance might be a barrier to make the intended harmony between the traditional and the modern forms of education. This signifies that the process of Ethiopianizing modern education was not effectively done by the then religious elites. Therefore, achieving sustainable developments through artificially adopted systems and

strategies of modern education were not an easy task. The deviations we see in the above two lyrics were resulted from such dysfunctional traits of modern education.

Brock-Utne (2000: 14) states that adopting European curriculum, using their textbooks and implementing their ways of education “recolonizes the African mind.” Hence, making fun of one’s own people and country may not be humiliating for somebody who has gone through the process of recolonization. In this regard, in their works the lyricists could fruitfully address the soundless effect of the recolonize mind.

In general, the three songs discussed under this sub-section focus on the issue of education. The speaker in the first song, ‘ተማር ለጄ’ [təmarə ləge], vividly contrasts the benefit of literacy with that of illiteracy. According to him, the illiterate ones live in darkness while their literate counterparts enjoy the bright sunlight even in the midnight. On the other hand, in the last two songs, fears have been raised about the negative impact of education. The speaker in the song, ‘መማር ብቻ አይባቃም’ [məmarə bəčə ayəbqamə], claims that there is no use enjoying the privileges of education if one fails to put into practice what s/he has learnt. Hence, one has to convince of his people in his capability to come up with practical solutions to certain problems related to his/her field of study. Furthermore, the speaker in the song, ‘ቢማር ተሳሳተ’ [bimarə tsasatə], accuses the educated one of abusing the gift of education. As to him, it is a crying shame if a scholar laughs at his parents and brings disgrace upon his country.

4.6. Social and Economic Discontent

Ruling the country for nearly five decades, Emperor Haile Selassie’s regime could not bring the intended developments. Ethiopians were suffering from deep rooted poverty, diseases, illiteracy, etc. Through time the people began to uncover their irritations at the stagnant economy and numerous social crises. Especially, scholars who went to abroad for further studies got access to see the gap between Ethiopia and other countries. When they found out their country’s extreme backwardness, they started to oppose the government’s incapacity of developing the nation. Greenfield in Eyayu (1994:26) writes, “The educated elite of a new Ethiopian generation was an elite whose travels and studies, particularly in the sphere of economics and political science, had made them intensely embarrassed for their historic but backward country.”

During the Emperor’s era millions of Ethiopians led a poverty-stricken life. The speaker in Melkamu Tebeje’s (1962 E.C.) song lyric ‘መቼ ነው’ [mäče näwǝ], is having a very troublesome life:

ሚስት ኖሮኝ ቤቴ ሁሌ የምደሰተው
 ከአለት ችግር ዱቤ የምድነው
 በፊት ቤት ሰርቼ መኪና የምገዛው
 ለምጽአት ይሆን አላውቅም መቼ ነው
 ሰልችቶኛል መቼ ነው
 ከዚህ ኑሮ የምለየው

.....
 When will I get married and enjoyed myself at home?
 When will I cease making debt?
 When will I buy a car after I build a home?
 Is it during the doomsday that I live self-reliantly?
 I’m getting pretty bored with poverty-stricken life;
 So, when will I exonerate from this life?

The speaker is worrying about the total insecurity of life; he could not fulfill even the basic needs such as house. Furthermore, he is terrified of getting into debt. He needs to settle his debt, but he fails to do so [ከአለት ችግር ዱቤ የምድነው/ line 2 in the translation]. Poverty brutally darkens his entire life. In relation with the economic situation of the people under Haile Selassie’s feudalism Paulos (2011:124) writes, “At the time, destitution and poverty were the norm. The general picture was grim.”

The speaker fears that he may not enjoy his dream life in the near future. He is not sure whether he should wait the “doomsday” to see his dream coming true. Here the doomsday symbolizes the advent of Christ and the end of the earthly life. It is not the appropriate day to think of material rewards for one’s physical life. In this particular context, it rather stands to show the absence of timely solutions for the multifaceted problems Ethiopians faced at that particular era. The dreadful backwardness of the nation makes the speaker feel hopelessness.

The speaker that we find in Tesfaye Belay’s (1962 E.C.) song lyric ‘አልቅሼ ልሽኝሽ’ [alǝqǝše lǝšǎñǝšǝ] is on the verge of departing from his beloved wife because of poverty:

.....
 እድሌን ሰብሬ እድልሽን አልሰብርም
 ስቃይ በዝቶብሻል ሂጂ የኔ ፍቅር

I know I'm luckless,
 But I don't want to make you,
 Suffer an appalling fate;
 Let you go now, be free;

.....

The speaker could not succeed in life; he is not anymore in a position to afford the expense of his family. The choice he has at hand is to commit divorce that with no doubt breaks his heart once for all. As indicated, though he loves his wife, he asks her to leave him for her own sake. Poverty is hammering away their love and hope.

Both Melkamu's and Tesfaye's song enable us to see the situation of poverty from two different angles. In the first case the speaker is unable to get married since he is poor. In the second song, a gentleman is crying out because poverty forces him to break his marriage. On the basis of these two cases and other similar phenomena reflected through various songs, we can say that the government is not functioning well to eradicate or reduce poverty. The songs are essentially accusations that poverty is a means of oppression and exclusion. If the system had been inclusive, people might not have troubled with poverty and its limitless consequences.

Unequal distribution of wealth causes poverty and social crises. Ayalew Mesfin's (1963 E.C.) lyric 'ያገዳ ጎጃዬ' [yagāda goḡoye] clearly indicates the mutually exclusive situation between the haves and the have nots:

.....
 ለኔ የሰው ህንጻ ምንም አይጠቅመኝኝ
 ያገዳ ጎጃዬ አንቺው ኑሪልኝ
 ለኔም ለልጆቼ ለድህነት ሚስቴ
 ኑሪ ለዘላለም የጭራሮ ቤቴ

.....
 I derive no benefit from others' building;
 Let my stalk hut live;
 For me, for my kids and for my wife,
 Who live in poverty with me;
 Live forever my hut built of dry wood;

The speaker is alienated from the economic activities that take place in his surroundings. He has no means to improve his poorly built hut, and he expects nothing good from those who lead better

lives. Since the ongoing investments are not managed to bring common benefits, he is pressurized to live remain in poverty.

Symbolic interactionists argue that people’s appearance reflects their perceived social standings. According to them housing, clothing, transportation, etc. can make social statements; in other words, individuals’ social status can be indicated through the material properties that they possess (Blumer, 1969). In this regard, the “hut” in this song lyric symbolizes the poorest way of life that the family engages in.

Apart from critically commenting the potential danger of poverty, lyricists were trying to uplift the physical and psychic energy of the people. They repeatedly claim that people should not do something immoral, even when they live in poverty. Let us look into Sebsebe Kassa’s (1964 E.C.) lyric ‘ኑሪ ድህነት’ [nuri dḥḥnāte]:

.....
ጭንቀት የለብኝም ደሀ በመሆኔ
ለሀብት ስስገበገብ አልገባም ኩነኔ
ልኑር ደሀ ሆኜ እስከዘላለሙ
ቦታ እንዲሰፋቸው ለነወገን እርሙ

.....
I’m poor, but it doesn’t cause me to feel worried;
I never commit sin by making wealth selfishly;
And I prefer to live in poverty forever,
For the self-centered ones enjoy ample space!

.....

The sense of purity is the underlying motive that makes the speaker loyal to his faith and society. He prefers facing all the burdens of poverty to commit “sin” by running after wealth egoistically. His faith seems to prohibit him from involving in sinful deeds that blacken his “pure” state of mind. Therefore, the social role that religion plays to make people keep the moral values is implicitly reflected in this song. The fear of God causes him to live without corrupting [ጭንቀት የለብኝም ደሀ በመሆኔ/ለሀብት ስስገበገብ አልገባም ኩነኔ/ lines 1&2 in the translation]. This feeling of selflessness that the speaker internalizes would strengthen the social cohesion. Karbo (2013:45) explains social cohesion as:

Social cohesion is the connectedness among individuals of social groups that facilitates collaboration and equitable resource distribution at household, community and state level. It refers to those things which hold a society together. A society can cohere due to things like shared

ethnicity, shared religion, for example. Religious traditions can also help to tie a society together by reinforcing a feeling of unity in its people. Social cohesion is vital for societal stability and facilitates the easing of material and psychological strain of poverty. It also affirms individual and group identities and includes rather than exclude less powerful groups. Social cohesion is an aspect of social wellbeing. It is determined by unity within a community, demonstrated by shared understanding, mutual support and reciprocity in relationships.

Karbo (2013) also confirms that in Ethiopia religion is strongly functioning to bring social cohesions. However, the existed cohesion does not seem to make the people in power keep the principle of equity. If it is kept, people like the speaker can fairly share the resources of the nation. And also, their world would not have been invaded by the “self-centered ones” [...ለነገሩን እርሙ].

The speakers in the above two songs (‘ያገዳ ጎጆዩ’ and ‘ኑሪ ድህነቱ’) accept their terrifying situations as if they were destined to live a life of hardships. One thing we can possibly understand from their calmness is that they are not revealing their genuine selves. Practically, in such conditions there will be a conflict of interests. As anybody else, the speakers want to see progress in their life. When they struggle to change their status, they will face various social barriers. It could not be human nature to surrender to each and every obstacle. So, conflict would become the fact of life, and the key to change (Fowler, 2007).

Ethiopia’s long-standing backwardness seems the source of poverty, illiteracy, diseases and other social evils. Alemayehu Eshete’s (1957) song lyric ‘ስቀሽ ኢታስቂኝ’ [səqəʃʃə atasəqin], is showing the ever changelessness of the country:

እኔ ልኮራመት እኔ ከሰል ልምሰል
ስቀሽ ኢታስቂኝ የደላሽ ይመስል

.....

Let me suffer on your behalf,
Let my face turns to dark as charcoal;

But don’t make me laugh your agonizing laughter,
By pretending you lead a good life;

.....

The speaker has gone through the agony of witnessing his country’s backwardness. Though he hates her pretension, he never hesitates to shoulder the soul-destroying condition of the nation. It seems that the speaker is fed up with the government’s propagandas that base on the inexistent advancement of the nation. Therefore, he feels that the regime has made a complete fool of him

and his fellow countrymen in its presentation of the mythic image of the country. Bahru (2002:200) briefly describes the weak socioeconomic scenario of Ethiopia under Haile Selassie's government as:

... The post 1941 Ethiopia economy, although not totally stagnant, was only growing at a sluggish rate. Backwardness and underdevelopment were the hallmarks of the socio-economic order. The per-capital income estimated at just over \$ Eth. 150 (\$ US 72.50) in 1967 was among the lowest in the world. Illiteracy affected more than 90% of the population. The doctor-patient ratio was in the region of one per 70, 000 of the population. In spite of the injection of some degree of industrialization, the economy remained overwhelmingly agrarian. Even then, more than 90% the agrarian sector was of a subsistence character. The industrial sector itself, negligible as it was, was dominated by foreign capital. This dependency was compounded by the government's increasing resort to foreign loans to narrow the growing gap between revenue and expenditure.

Properly speaking, it was a great pity to see Ethiopia driving her people crazy with all these appalling miseries. Thus, anyone could not have a good laugh in such disturbing situations. It seems that the country's attempt to hide the truth under a covering of deceptive stories becomes upsetting to the speaker. As we all might know the Emperor's regime had firm controlled of the media, so it was difficult to know what was really happening in this country. The media were not often acting in the public interest. Rather, they distorted the facts through their boring and successive cover stories. Therefore, being the mouthpieces of the ruling class, the media were seen playing the dysfunctional roles.

The diffusion of foreign cultures went steadily up, especially in the 60s and 70s. A number of song lyrics were composed to appreciate the indigenous traditions and condemn the unwanted foreign cultures. This fact is clearly depicted through Melkam Tebeje's (1963) song lyric 'ምነው የኛን ጠላን' [mōnāwō yāñanō tōlanō]:

.....
ምነው እኛ የኛን ጠላትን የውጭውን አሰወደደን
የራሳችንን እንዳንወድ ምንድ ነገር ነው ያገደን

.....
Why do we hate our own things
And turns to foreigners' products?
What prohibit us from loving our artifact?

.....

The newly emerged interest of giving values to foreign products puzzles the speakers. He could not find any sound reasons that make the users prefer foreign goods to the indigenous ones. According to Eyayu (1994) the diffusion of foreign culture among the younger generation was

highly resisted by the traditional member of the society and the radical wing of students at Haile Selassie I University. A fashion show aimed to be delivered at the university was opposed by the student wings. Kiflu Tadesse in Eyayu (1994:290) writes:

In the spring of 1968, student agitation escalated in what became known as the “Mini-skirt” riot... The organizers of the 1968 show had ample warning from student publications and pamphlet that the show was unwelcome. A hostile campaign orchestrated by the radicals drew a connection between a smilingly innocuous affair like the fashion show and the underlying theme of cultural alienation and moral degradation, evils they attributed to Western Imperialism... In the melee that occurred outside the hall on the day the show was to take place, women were cursed and some were struck by male students, while the show organizers were pelted with eggs and forced to abandon the affair.

As we can understand from Kiflu’s discussion, excessive preference to foreign products is symptomatic of “moral degradation” and “cultural alienation”. This might make the people not feel pride on the quality and beauty of indigenous products. Unless one is suffering from a low self-esteem, he never devalues the indigenous products. Therefore, the efforts of the various institutions in building, especially the youths’ confidences were highly questionable. As we learn from life, it is the youngsters who are most attracted to foreign products.

4.7. Political Discontent

During the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I, the vast majority were victims of oppressions. Constitutionally, the king was given an absolute power to make decisions on any issue irrespective of the rule of law. He claimed that he was divinely anointed for he descended from the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. This exempted the Emperor from state law by virtue of his divine genealogy. Article 4 of the 1955 constitution confirms that the king was above the law of the state. Therefore, any attempt to oppose his absolute power and government was taken as severe crime (Paulos, 2011; Alemayehu, 2006; Fiseha, 2004; Bahru, 2002).

Freedom of speech and other basic human rights were strictly denied by the regime. However, all the restrictions could not prohibit the oppressed ones from expressing their grievances in different forms. A number of Amharic songs were composed to show the existing injustices of the time. In the words of Eyayu (1994:30), “most of the songs dealing with political discontent were not as explicit as the ones concerned with social and economic dissatisfaction.” This happens because opposing the political system was a risky business in the then Ethiopia.

Most of the political song lyrics are alluding to the 1960 abortive coup d'état. It was organized by General Mengistu Neway. His brother Girmame Neway, who was well versed, thought to be the architect of coup d'état. Relating to the abortive coup d'état and the overall political resentments historians consider 1960 as the watershed year in the political development of Ethiopia. Keller in Eyayu (1994:30) characterized it as “the year in which the specter of revolution first became apparent in the modern state, the year in which the variabilities of the anachronistic bureaucratic empire were laid all to see.”

Tesfaye Abebes's (1959 E.C.) lyric ‘ሲያውቁልሽ አታውቁ’ [siyawፊqulፊፊፊ atawፊqimፊ] is a political uproar of the Haile Selassie's regime:

አስቤልሽ ነበር አክብሬ ላኖርሽ
ሲያውቁልሽ አታውቁ ሁኚ እንደፈቀደሽ

.....

I was only thinking of the best for you;
To make you live in dignity and prosperity;
But you behave unwisely,
When one paves the ways for your betterment;
Then, let you live in your irritating way of recklessness;

.....

The political paralysis that affects the government filled the speaker with anguish. The dormancy of the system dampens his enthusiasm. He is not dreaming to improve his personal life. Rather, he has put all his efforts to boost her development. However, he is irritated by the nation's inactive reaction to his efforts. The abortive coup d'état organizers did have a similar motive. While the coup was in progress, General Mengistu Neway delivered a speech to university students. He said, “Our actions are in no way self-assertive. You know me for example. As things stand in our country, I'm one of the privileged. As commander of the Guard, I can get anything I want-a car, a villa, furniture and servants” (Greenfield, 1965:321).

In the song under discussion, the speaker blames his country for not putting her intended efforts to exploit her natural resources by mobilizing the people. Although she has everything at hand, she is screaming and begging for food shamelessly:

.....

እህል በጎተራ ሳይጠፋ ቤትሽ
መጋገር ተሰኖሽ ለገዛ ሆድሽ

ሳለሽ ስትለምኝ ነውርን አትፈሪ
ማስተዋልን ይዘሽ ይሉኝታን አክብሪ

.....
You have grains in your granary,
But you fail to cook and serve yourself;
It is a pity to beg for food without shame,
While you have it;
.....

Here the speaker seems to allude to the repetitive droughts that the nation went through. It is undeniable that among other similar incidents the early 1970s drought in Wollo and Tigray provinces has put Ethiopians to shame. Santen (2011:2) writes:

The drought in Wollo and Tigre provinces started in the late 1960s with a number of years with below average rainfall, reducing harvests and leading up to the severe drought of 1973-1974 when rain completely failed. The effect on the small fragile erosion prone, highland farms in Wollo and Tigray Provinces was disastrous. Crop production failed from the 1970 harvest onwards for four subsequent years and by 1973 the livestock started to die in large numbers, as all grazing land had dried out completely. After the farmers had consumed their last food stocks, they also started to die in great numbers. Estimates of victims of the famine ranged from 200 000 to 1,000 000 deceased persons.

It is a heart stopping incident to see the country in such troubles. However, unbelievably, the Emperor's regime was turning a blind eye to the tragic deaths of hundreds of thousands of Ethiopians due to the starvation. Pitifully and undeservedly, since then Ethiopia has stretched out her hands to the Western world to beg food.

As we can see in Tesfay's song, the speaker comments on the work ethics of the time. When citizens use their initiatives to deal with social problems, the government's response is quite discouraging. Since most of the governmental positions were held by the privileged ones (the "high born"), citizens from the humble origins hardly got the intended social space whatever innovative they might be. Especially, the literate groups from the lower class blatantly opposed such discriminations that were committed on the ground of class differences. And those who were hard at work eventually become hopeless. It seems this might be the case that urges the speaker to leave his country for good:

.....
በቁም መሞትሽን እኔ ቆሜ አላይም
ሄጃለሁ እርቁ እንዳይሽ አልፈቅድም
እናቴ ክብራ ነሽ ስትጠቁ አልወድም::

.....
 Since I don't need to see you risking further humiliation,
 I go far away;
 However, for you are my mother and my pride,
 I don't like to see you getting attacked;

Since the overall situations in his beloved nation are stagnating, the speaker's hopes of development are fading fast. Therefore, he decides to go for good not to witness further crises that his country might face in the future.

While the political upheaval intensified in the 1960s and 70s, some began to propose the idea of political independence. Then it was the most debatable issue, and many feared that it crumbled the country. Lyricists also depict the delicacy of the issue in their works. Ayalew Mesfin's (1964 E.C.) song, 'አንድ ነው ደማችን' [anəddə nəwə dəməčədnə] is exemplary:

.....
 አገር መከፋፈል ዘር መለየት ቀርቶ
 በህብረት ላገሩ መስራት ነው በርትቶ

 ለሚቀናብን ሆነን በር መግቢያ
 በገዛ አገራችን እንዳንወድቅ ከትቢያ

Instead of dividing the nation
 And segregating tribes,
 We need to do work hard cooperatively
 For her wellness;

 If we fail to sustain our togetherness,
 We would be exposed for those
 Who are jealous of us
 And we would collapse;

In this song, the speaker seems to fear that the motive of disunity can weaken the country's strength, and our mortal enemies who are "jealous of us" can attack us. Therefore, abandoning the emerging sentiments of tribalism is so demanding. As indicated in various literatures, some students in Haile Selassie I University were raising the question of nationalities. Especially, Walleigne Mekonnen, who was one of the activists of the student movement, was claimed for officially addressing this most sensitive issue. In his article entitled "On the Question of Nationalities in Ethiopia" Walleigne (1963:3) states:

What are the Ethiopian people composed of? I stress on the word peoples because sociologically speaking at this stage Ethiopia is not really one nation. It is made up of a dozen nationalities with their own languages, ways of dressing, history, social organization and territorial entity. And what else is a nation? It is not made of a people with a particular tongue, particular ways of dressing, particular history, particular social and economic organization? Then may I conclude that in Ethiopia there is the Oromo Nation, the Tigray Nation, the Amhara Nation, the Gurage Nation, the Sidama Nation,...the Adere [Hararghei] Nation, and however much you may not like it the Somali Nation. This is the true picture of Ethiopia. There is of course the fake Ethiopian Nationalism advanced by the ruling class and unwillingly accepted and even propagated by innocent fellow travelers.

Being the most contentious idea, it divided the students’ movement; in reality, Ethiopia is composed of many nationalities; in order to keep its unity and continuity, there should be fair and harmonious interactions among the different ethnic groups. Otherwise, as Walleligne argues, certain groups dominancy creates “... the fake Ethiopian Nationalism...” that eventually weakens and disintegrates the country.

This newly emerged sentiment sounded the death knell of the monarchical state; it sandwiched the government between the fear of losing power and the potential danger of disintegrating the country. In addition to launching a propaganda campaign against the movement, the government took relatively harsh measures on the propagators. It is widely believed that the security was involving behind the mysterious death of Walleligne Mekonnen who actively proposed the notion of nationalities (Fesiha, 2004).

Afework Yohanes’s (1951) song ‘አልቻልኩም’ [alɔɕalɔkumɔ] is loaded with political messages:

እስከ መቼ በአንቺ ባህሪ እነዳለሁ
 አልቻልኩም አርጫ ብያለሁ፤
 ሰለቻኝ መረረኝ እኔን
 ተጨነቅሁ እንደምን ልሁን
 አልቻልኩም ንዝንዝሽን አልቻልኩም
 ምን ልሁን እኔ ለኔ አልሆንኩ

.....

Till when will I suffer your misconduct,
 I just cannot bear it;
 Let you behave yourself;
 I’m so bored and frustrated;
 I don’t know what to do,
 I’m fed up with your nagging manner;
 I can’t tolerate my neglected state;

.....

Afeworke composed it some three years before the abortive coup d'état. Explicitly, the speaker seems to be in the lovelorn. However, according to contemporaries, this song refers to the political discontent that reached its height during the period under discussion. For instance, Kiflu Tadesse (1993:13) writes about this song as:

Some of the songs composed by the Group were censored for political meanings. Among them was “Alchalkum” (I just cannot), by the vocalist Tilahun Gessese. The lyrics sung to a woman had an apparent love connotation and expressed disgust and bitterness about life. In an indirect way, the song expressed the dismal condition of the army. The woman, the apparent source of discontent, interpreted to be Haile Selassie himself. The song became a number one hit in the country and after it was aired for some time was banned until it surfaced some fifteen years later.

The Emperor, who found to be abusing his absolute power, is symbolically seen as the source of discontentment. Though he claims that he is an elect of God, the speaker considers him as the nagging woman who is trying his patience. Such a woman is rarely open for comments. Rather, she ceaselessly inflicts sufferings on others. This implies how the people were getting tired of living under his regime.

Practically, the Imperial Bodyguard and the Police Force were thought to be the watchdogs of the government. However, since the political sphere was the sources of dissatisfaction for almost every sector, these groups turned against the monarchy in a bitter struggle for power. Their opposition to the regime was effectively shown through various songs. In line with this the two bands, the Imperial Bodyguard and the Police Orchestra, were composing songs which indicated the political tensions of the era. Together with other social movements the songs did have the power to provoke serious reactions. While the Imperial Bodyguard Band produced the above song a couple of years before the abortive coup d'état, the Police Orchestra in its part staged the song ‘አትበሳጭ [atəbəsacə] just a year before the overthrow of Haile Selassie’s regime. Tesfaye Abebe (1959 E.C.) composed it as:

.....
ከስራዬ ግርጌ ቢሆንም ደመወዜ
አትበሳጭ ሆኔ ያልፋልና ጊዜ

በደካሞች ስልጣን በሴረኞች ላንቃ
እየዋት ስትግረው መብቴ መሬት ወድቃ

.....
Though my salary is too little,
Compared to the job I engage in,

I don't have to hurt myself with anger,
For this unfavorable time would pass;

Look! How I get disgraced
For the lazy authorities and the wicked talkers
Abuses my human- right;
They throw it in the dust and kick it!

.....

In this song, the speaker specifically comments on the oppressions and exploitations of the military. He accuses the people in power of threatening his rights. They fail to make fair payment for the military. It is the best warning sign of the inevitable conflict between the government and the armed forces.

Once the lyricist told the researcher that the government warned him and the vocalist, Almayehu Eshete, not to stage this song. However, they took a risk of performing it before the military. It hugely encouraged the participation of the target audience, the military. And the entire situation became so offensive to the government. In consequence, the lyricist was sentenced some months of imprisonment for motivating the military to stand against the regime.

Tsegaye Berhane's (1964 E.C.) song 'አልተሰማላችሁም' [alፀtäsdmamañፀmፀ] is addressing the injustices facing the working class during the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I:

በስራ ቀጥረውኝ ሀብት የተረፋቸው
አደግድግ ይሉኛል ቆሜ እንዳጎርሳቸው

ቢሆኑ አለቃዬ በእንጀራ ቢያዙኝም
ይቅርታ አድርጉልኝ ከእንግዲህ አላጎርሱም
ጣቴ እየነደደ እርሱን መቀለቤ
ትርፌ ድካም ሆነ ጎበጠ ወገቤ

.....

The rich one employees me for a job;
However, he looks down me
As if I am his slave
He wants me to feed him as I stand still;
Though you are the powered chief

Though you boss me around
Forgive me, I never feed you here after;
Even if I feed you till my fingers burn,
I gain nothing except bending of my back
And dying of tiresomeness.

As we learn from this song, the speaker belongs to the working class; he seriously condemns the act of violence against his rights. Since he cannot bear the severe enslavements, he decides not to obey his inhuman boss anymore [ቢሆኑ አለቃዬ በእንጀራ ቢያዙኝም/ይቅርታ አድርጉልኝ ከእንግዲህ አላጎርሰም/ lines 5-7 in the translation]. It is logical to think that the moment he refuses to be a slave labor, his boss, who is the owner of the wealth and enjoys making life difficult for the speaker stands either to punish or fire him. This alienating circumstance will naturally urge the speaker to engage in conflict with the system in general and his boss in particular.

Alemayehu Borbor’s (1964 E.C.) song lyric ‘ቀበጠ’ [qäbātu] also reveals the denial of human rights in the reign of Haile Selassie I:

.....
 አንገት ደፍቶ መሄድ አላውቅ ብዬ እንደሰው
 ይህ ቀና ማለት ቤቴን አፈረሰው

My failure to walk bowing my head as others do,
 Caused the damage to my home;

Literally, the speaker seems to blame his walking style for his failure in life. However, symbolically he signifies the abusive nature of the regime. If anyone attempts to defend the unruly treatment of the government, s/he would be put at risk. And to the speaker’s dismay the existing system favors submissive people. So, the condition that he is in eventually makes him take fright to exercise his rights.

Evidences show that giving voice to the voiceless cost the lyricists; in several occasions the government suspended them for their brave reaction to its scandals. Often times, they were kept under the surveillance of the security. For instance, Firew Hailu was repeatedly asked by the security to give an explanation of his lyric ‘አጠረ ቁመቴ’ [atärä qumäte]. Though Firew consistently told the security that the song dealt with his short stature, practically in the lyric he made sarcastic comments on the backwardness of the country (Eyayu, 1994). Englert (2008:11) writes, “Many political regimes throughout Africa have responded with repression to pieces of popular music which they perceived as containing criticism, fearing that the music would otherwise become a site for resistance.” Similarly, fearing their political impact the Haile Selassie regime banned some 41 songs from airing in any media (Eyayu, 1994).

4.8. Death

The theme of death is reflected in a number of Amharic song lyrics. Geteu Ayele's (1963 E.C.) song lyric, 'ጥጥ' [motô], deals with the impartiality of death:

.....
ጥጥ መኝ ያዳላል እንደ ሰው
መቶ መውሰድ ብቻ እድል ለደረሰው

.....
Unlike man death is impartial
It takes all on a freak of chance

.....

Here the speaker emphasizes on the impartiality of one of the most frightful natural phenomena, death. It seems that the existence of the unfair social order and the evils of prejudice in human nature urge him to appeal to the justice of death. Across cultures and time, death has been woven into the fabric of life. As Huntington, et al (1979:2) observe, "life becomes transparent against the background of death." In this regard, the speaker exploits the essence of death to mirror man's failure to stick to the principle of equality [ጥጥ መኝ ያዳላል እንደሰው/ line 1 in the translation].

Chapter V: Major Themes of Amharic Song Lyrics during the Derge Regime

5.1. The Themes of Revolutionary Songs

In the literatures, it is stated that the Ethiopian revolution freed the unprivileged citizens from the political, economic and cultural oppressions of the Emperor Haile Selassie's regime. Consequently, those who did have the talent and artistic temperament intensively exploited the emerging cultural liberation to compose various works of art. Timkehet (2009:2) writes:

Besides the political and economic liberations from the past monarchy that followed the outburst of the revolution, the cultural liberation was enormous. This refers to literature, painting, theatre, poetry, media and music, that is expressed in various ways. The flood of new political songs produced within a very short period of time was thus, overwhelming. The political condition of the revolution experienced especially in the early years highly encouraged artistic creation. Thus, among other things music played a pivotal role, predominantly as a medium to transmit simple slogans and revolutionary ideologies that were at first positively accepted and responded by the majority of Ethiopians.

It became increasingly common to hear revolutionary songs that reflect the progresses and achievements of the revolution on radio. Commenting on the abundance of revolutionary songs on the national media, Aleme states, "...serving as important agitating and educating instruments revolutionary songs have almost completely replaced the love songs and moralist songs as well as songs from western countries that used to be heard in Radio Ethiopia during the feudo-bourgeois regime" (1979:6). Studies show that revolutionary songs play strong role to spread the achievements and aims of the revolution to the wider population throughout a certain nation within a short period of time (Nuxoll, 2015; Puffleau, 2014; Mittler, 2008). According to Pring-Mill revolutionary songs are "... praising heroic figures and lamenting the fallen, denouncing tyrants, campaigning against abuses, proposing solutions, helping to spread ideas and crystallize ideals in the process of 'raising awareness'... always involves alerting people to the moral dimension of the issues raised" (1987:179). Similarly, the messages of the Amharic revolutionary songs dominantly focus on either praising the devotion of the progressive forces to practice socialist principles or condemning the oppressive laws and practices of the ruling class of Emperor Haile Selassie I regime.

Since illiteracy was widespread under the Emperor's rule, it was challenging for the Derge to address its propagandas to the much wider population through written documents (newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, etc.). Revolutionary songs, by contrast, were strategically effective to disseminate the government's propaganda mainly on the radio. According to Ellul propaganda is "a set of methods employed by an organized group that wants to bring about the active or passive participation in its actions of a mass of individuals, . . . unified through psychological manipulation and incorporated in an organization" (1965:61). One can see how the points suggested by Ellul are reflected in the revolutionary songs analyzed under this section.

The major themes of the Amharic revolutionary songs are identified as **Ethiopia First (Ethiopia Tikedem), Condemning the Oppositions, Condemning the Somalia Aggression and Famine and Draught.**

5.1.1. Ethiopia First (Ethiopia Tikdem)

Right on the eve of the Ethiopian Revolution of 1974, three soldiers from each military branch gathered in Addis Ababa, and they established a sort of military parliament called the Derge. The English equivalent for the Amharic term *Derge* is committee. The Derge deposed the Emperor though it promised to stay loyal to him. The Derge which was not an important figure on the political scene while the students, the teachers and the other social groups fiercely struggled against the Emperor's regime unexpectedly snatched the historic victory of the revolution. Baharu (2002:236) writes:

The proclamation that deposed the Emperor transformed the Derge into the Provisional Military Administration Council which assumed full state power. Simultaneously, it suspended the constitution, dissolved parliament, and banned all strikes and demonstrations...A child of the popular movement, the Derge now disowned its parent. That fact became the recipe for collision with the popular elements of the February upsurge, notably the students and teachers.

The Derge was starting to run under the slogan Ethiopia First (Ethiopia Tikdem); at the beginning it seemed that the Derge used it to encourage the revolutionaries so that they hoped for the best concerning the future of the nation. However, gradually it turned to a kind of dogma in that anyone who opposed it would automatically be accused of treason (ibid). Scholler and Brietzke (1975:185) briefly state, "Ethiopia Tikdem (Ethiopia First or Forward) was initially a mere motto, but is developing into a vague "philosophy", as a result of impromptu and consequently ambiguous

applications to justify particular actions. Early formulations make no reference to God in a deeply religious country and few references to tradition, and stress social justice, brotherhood, mutual respect in the world community, prevention of moral degeneracy and Lincoln's government of, by and for the people.” Many Amharic songs which magnify and celebrate the creed of Ethiopia First (Ethiopia Tikdem) were composed to make the people feel a flame of the revolution and understand the newly adopted socialist principles.

It was in 1967 E.C. that Girmaye Mekonnen composed the song lyric, ‘ህብረተሰባዊነት’ [həbdrätäsäbawintə]; it attempts to promote the intents of Ethiopia First (Ethiopia Tikdem) that give due emphasis to the impartial participations of the citizens for their prosperity and the unity of the nation:

.....
 ማንም ሳይጨቆን ማንም ሳይዋረድ
 በአዲሱ ጎዳና እኩል እንራመድ

 የእኩልነት ትርጉም ሙብትን የማያውቁ
 በኢትዮጵያ ትቅደም ከእንቅልፋቸው ይንቁ

Let us move on the new road,
 Where no one is oppressed and humiliated,

Let those unaware of the right of equality,
 Awake from their sleep,
 With the slogan “Ethiopia First”;

.....

Through the lines above, the speaker communicates to the fellow citizens that Ethiopia begins to follow the new ideology that defends them from being oppressed and humiliated [ማንም ሳይጨቆን ማንም ሳይዋረድ/በአዲሱ ጎዳና እኩል እንራመድ/ lines 1&2 in the translation]. Symbolic interactionalists claim that in their symbolic interactions people could exploit either the explicit or the implicit meanings of physical objects to convey their message (Blumer,1969). Similarly, in this song, the speaker symbolically uses the physical object, “the new road/ በአዲሱ ጎዳና/” [line 1&2 in the original and the translation respectively] to refer to the socialist ideology that the nation commits to implement. According to Scholler and Brietzke (1975:185), “On 21 December 1974, Ethiopia was declared a socialist state and Ethiopia Tikdem was defined as encompassing the tenets of Ethiopian Socialism: self-reliance, respect for hard work, elimination of the "limitless idolatry of private

gain", and public participation in local administration.” Therefore, the bombastic pronouncement, Ethiopia First (Ethiopia Tikdem), is used both as a slogan and a radical political creed to awaken those who do not know the principles of non-discrimination to the fact that oppression is over.

The addressees of the speaker could probably be both the oppressed and the oppressor sections of the society. It is because the time when the Ethiopian Revolution erupted was not in line with the expectations of the vast majority. Commenting on the bewilderment of both the ruling class and the opponents by the suddenness of the eruption of the revolution, Bahru (2002:228) writes, “The Ethiopian Revolution of 1974 caught almost everyone by surprise. Although they had been calling and fighting for it for almost a decade, even the most radical of the students were unprepared. As for the ruling class, while it might have had a premonition that something might go wrong, it took quite some time for it to gauge the magnitude of the crisis.” The speaker further makes an effort to pull those who are in subjection and hardship especially by the unjust exercises of the upper class into the principles of creating a just society guided by the objectives of Ethiopia First (Ethiopia Tikdem):

.....
ወዝ አደሩ ለፍቶ ጉልበቱን ጨርሶ
ለሰው ቤት አይሰራም የራሱን አፍርሶ
ወይም መራመጃ አይሆንም መሰላል
አንድ አገዛዝ ኑሮ ከአንግዲህ አክትሟል
ገዢና ተገዢ የሚለው ቃል ጠፍቶ
ይኖራል ያገር ልጅ እኩል ተደስቶ

.....
The laborer never throws his energy,
To build home for others,
By ruining his own;
Nor he allows others,
To use him as a ladder to move to a higher social position,
Unitary system is over;
In the absences of oppressor and oppressed,
The fellow countrymen will live happily,
Enjoying equality;

.....

As the lines above suggest, the new political system (socialism) that the nation begins to build will never allow working people to be vulnerable to exploitations by unscrupulous employers. Through this propagandist song, the speaker makes an approach to the people of Ethiopia that they commit to respond to the change in a timely manner. In the words of Mittler (2008:485)“Propaganda

represent and serve very basic timely and culturally dependent needs. They are not usually what they appear to be. They are shared formulations, attempts to express emotional, cognitive, and mental needs. They are symbolizations. Thus, they have effects, and those include social and political practice.” Therefore, by announcing the end of exploitative relationships that was exercised during the previous regime, the speaker informs the people of the deposition of the monarchic rule and the adoption of the socialist ideology that strives to form a classless society [ገዢና ተገዢ የሚለው ቃል ጠፍቶ/ይኖራል ያገር ልጅ እኩል ተደስቶ/ the last three lines in the translation].

Evidences show that Emperor Hailesilassie’s regime did not put the necessary effort to tackle the ever-growing gap between the rich and the poor. The Emperor and his relatives reportedly lived a life of absolute luxury. While narrating the experiences of Nebiy Mekonnen, who was the victim of red terror, Huang (2006:81) writes, “Like others of his generation, Nebiy was raised to believe that the emperor was something akin to a god. Though millions of Ethiopians starved while the emperor traveled the world in a private jet and fed fresh meat daily to the lions in his private zoo, Nebiy's parents raised him to accept the old adage, 'You can no more fault the emperor than you can sow the sky.’” Even if the regime made the oppressed ones consider the emperor as a cult figure, through time they were beginning to run out of patience. Therefore, as the speaker in the song under discussion claims, the vast unprivileged majority stands together and overthrows the most oppressive regime of Emperor Haile Selassie I through the much more needed Ethiopian revolution of 1974.

Economic problems could frustrate the people and make them engage in conflict with the ruling class (Calhoun, 1993; Collins, 1975; Bendix,1966). When the Ethiopian Revolution of 1974 reached its peak, people from the different sectors (soldiers, teachers, taxi-drivers, etc.) officially protested the unfair distributions of wealth. According to Bahru (2002) it was the economic reasons that moved the soldiers camped in various parts of the country (Nagalle, Addis Ababa, Dabra Zayt, Asmara, etc.) to mutiny. He further states:

The general tenor of the popular movement was one of the low rising against the high and mighty-the soldiers and junior ranks against the high officers, the poor against the rich, employee against employer and labour against management... Early in March, the Confederation of Ethiopian Labour Union (CELU), which had been notable for its lethargy rather than its militancy, waged a four-day general strike. The workers’ demands include wage increase, the passing of new labor legislation, and freedom of association... (Bahru, 2002:231).

In his theory of conflict Ralf Dahrendorf proposes that at the institutional level there would be conflict between the dominant groups and the subordinate ones whenever they strive for pursuing their interest (Sargent, 2009; Cuff et al, 2006; Dahrendorf, 1979,1959). Similarly, as indicated in the quotation above, unequal access to the resources provoked conflict between the privileged and the unprivileged ones in various organizations before the protest took shape across the nation. Moreover, the serious disagreement between the stated two groups could be exemplary to conceptualize Weber’s assumption of “life-chance”. According to Weber, individuals’ life-chance is decided upon their capabilities to share the socially created economic and cultural goods (Weber,1978). If it is the case, the subordinate groups in each institution mentioned by Bahru (2002) above, could refuse to accept their life chance when they persistently fail to have access to the resources. Thus, it had to be the sense of grievance developed within the marginalized ones here and there urged the broad mass to shake their fear of the Emperor, a cult figure, and stand collectively to bring radical changes almost in every sphere of life.

N.Tellez in Pring-Mill (1987:181) states that revolutionary songs must say that “...our people is free and that today, facing the future, a [new] society is being constructed by the hands, by the fists and by the arms of a people whose heroism and valour have stunned the world.” The same holds true in the song under discussion. As one can see, the speaker symbolically uses the metaphor of “ladder/መንሰላል” to point out the severe exploitations of the oppressed ones. On the other hand, he asserts that no more subjugations would be tolerated in the socialist Ethiopia for power lies in the hands of the people [ወዝ አደሩ ለፍቶ ጉልበቱን ጨርሶ/ለሰው ቤት አይሰራም የራሱን አፍርሶ/ወይም መራመጃ አይሆንም መሰላል/አንድ አገዛዝ ኑሮ ከእንግዲህ አከትሟል/the first six line in the translation]. Literally, being a lifeless thing, the ladder is a helpless and passive victim of our actions; it is naturally incapable to react to our actions while we climb it towards any directions (up or down). Here, the main point that the speaker needs to convey through this analogy is that the oppressed Ethiopians during the reign of the Emperor were as passive as the unresponsive ladder in their manner of accepting any threats that the exploiters inflicted on them. Therefore, once again the speaker uses the physical object, the ladder, symbolically in his attempt to communicate the remarkable achievements the oppressed ones enjoy and the commitments they honour under the banner of Ethiopia First (Ethiopia Tikdem).

The other song that reflect the theme of **Ethiopia First (Ethiopia Tikdem)** is Merehawi Sitot’s (1967 E.C.) ‘**ጎህ ሲቀድ**’ [goh̄ siqäd̄]. In this song also, the speaker believes that it is worth to accept the change, and strive for more freedom under the new motto, **Ethiopia First (Ethiopia Tikdem)**:

.....
 ሞራልን አላሽቆ ያረገው በረዶ
 ያ ጨለማው ጊዜ ፍርሀት ተወግዶ
 በዚህ ንጋት ጮራ ህይወት በሚያድሰው
 የታፈነው ሀይል ሲጮህ ህዝብን ቀሰቀሰው

When the darkness and fear
 That declines the moral values
 And leaves everyone cold is over,
 With this morning rays that renew life,
 The voice of the oppressed awakes the people;

In the lines above, the speaker exploits symbols (darkness and light) to make comparison between the Emperor’s regime and the new one. For him, under the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I, the nation was in its dark age that “decline the moral values and leaves everyone in the dark” [ሞራልን አላሽቆ ያረገው በረዶ/ያ ጨለማው ጊዜ ፍርሀት ተወግዶ] the first three lines in the translation]. Ofttimes, darkness connotes the most unpleasant experiences in life. “Darkness is the symbol of evil or mystery or fear. The darkness is almost a monster waiting to swallow you whole. It is the absence of light” (<https://symbolism.wikia.com/wiki/Darkness>). Therefore, by using “darkness” as a symbol, the speaker tries to uncover how the Emperor’s governmental system was repressive that led the people to a degradation in their moral values. Contrary to this, he considers the new system as the rays of dawn (light) which commonly symbolizes revelation, goodness, clarity, etc. In their very nature revolutionary songs are thought to serve the same purpose (Nuffer, 2015).

With this in mind, the speaker keeps on glorifying the arrival of the long-awaited moment (the revolution) and the chance of breathing a sigh of relief:

.....
 በታህሳስ ተሰፋ አጭተን የካቲት ሰርጋችን
 ቢዘገይም ሰምሯል መች ይሆን በዓላችን
 በሰሜን ተራራ በዝቋላ ጋራ
 በሰላም ተንፍሷል ያ እሳተ-ጎመራ

We betroth hope in December,
And our wedding is in February;
Though late, our plan is fulfilled;

The volcano of the Semine and the Zequala mountains,
Is erupted peacefully;

.....

There is a wide spread belief that the Neway brothers' (Mengistu Neway and Germame Neway) abortive coup d'état of 1960 encouraged the oppressed majority to stand against the system by awakening them to the fact that the Emperor's regime did not have the God-given right to rule forever. For instance, in praising the huge contributions of the event to the strengthening of opposition against the regime, Timkehet states, "Among the political consequences, the unsuccessful military coup d'état in 1960 may be mentioned that paved the way for an ever-increasing urban uprising as a unique political event" (2009:1). Similarly, the speaker alludes to the Neway brothers' abortive coup d'état that took place over a decade ago against the government [በታህሳስ ተስፋ አጭተን የካቲት ሰርጋችን/ ቢዘገይም ሰምሯል መች ይሆን በዓላችን/ the first three lines in the translation]. In Amharic the Neway brothers' attempted coup d'état is often referred as 'የታህሳስ ግርግር' [yätahäsasu gōrōgōrō/ the December's unrest]. It was in the month of 'ታህሳስ'/tahäsasō/ (its English equivalent term is December) that the Neway brothers staged a failed coup d'état against the emperor's regime. And it was after some fifteen years later that the Ethiopian Revolution of 1974 erupted in the month of 'የካቲት'/yäkätitō/ (its English equivalent term is February).

The speaker, then, traces back the link between the two significant events happened in these two months (December and February) in the political history of Ethiopia. Therefore, by doing this, he emphasizes the stiffness of the struggle to achieve the victory of the revolution, and the ultimate sacrifices made to free the country from the brutal tyranny. According to N.Tellez in Pring-Mill (1987:181) revolutionary songs have always been one of the ways used by the society "to speak of its poverty, its sufferings [and] the exploitation to which it has been submitted for so long. While [working] in clandestinely, in conspiratorial activity [or] in the trenches of the war we have listened to these voices [of the people] singing about life and communicating their hopes for the future, demanding bread, liberties, a new regime, [and] a more just society."

In the song under discussion, the speaker also uses the metaphor of volcano to describe the grievances that the people carry for years [በሰሜን ተራራ በዝቋላ ጋራ/ በሰላም ተንፍሷል ያ እሳተ ጎመራ/ the last

two lines in the translation]. Naturally, at depth in earth a mixture of liquid rock, crystals and dissolved gas form an element known as magma. It can stay remain silent for years; however, when the explosive potential of the magma reaches its peak, it expels onto the earth’s surface irresistibly (A. Nelson, 2016). Thus, the speaker’s analogy is that the growing resentments of Ethiopians during the stated period was as uncontrollable as the volcano that possibly exist in the two mountains of Ethiopia, Ziquala and Semine.

‘መስከረም ነጻነት’ [mäsdäkärämö näšanäte] is the other song that encourages the sentiments of **Ethiopia First (Ethiopia Tikdem)**. It was in 1967 E.C. that Fiseha Haile composed it to commemorate the special month in the history of the Ethiopian revolution, and to show the oppressed masses’ commitment to keep the gains of the revolution against the reactionaries:

መስከረም መስከረም አደይ አበባችን
 እንኳን ደህና መጣሽልን እንቁጣጣሻችን
 መስከረም እርምጃ መስከረም ነጻነት
 የፌዴራላዊ ስርዓት የፈረረሰበት

.....

September, September, our ‘adäyö abäba’;
 Welcome our ‘öndquṭaṭaṢ’
 September is our progress;
 It is our freedom, too;
 It was on September,
 The Feudal Regime fell from power;

.....

‘መስከረም/mäsdäkärämö’[September] is the first month in the Ethiopian Calandra. As the lines above suggest, the speaker uses flower symbolism to emphasize the nature’s role to beautify the land particularly in this month of the year [መስከረም መስከረም አደይ አበባችን/እንኳን ደህና መጣሽልን እንቁጣጣሻችን/ lines 1&2 in the translation]. In the Ethiopian context, new year is nationally celebrated on September 1; fortunately, in this month nature adoringly beautifies the land with the most colorful flower ‘adäyö abäba’/ አደይ አበባ/ in many parts of Ethiopia. Amsalu Aklilu (2010:196) defines this term as, “maskel flower (wild flower that grows during the month of September, species of the ox-eye daisy).”

September offers significant symbolism for the activists of the Ethiopian Revolution. Bahru (2002:236) writes, “For the Derge and its supporters, 12 September came to be celebrated annually

as the crowning moment of the popular movement. For the opposition, more particularly the civilian left, it marked the day when the movement was derailed.” It was on 12 September, 1974 that the Derge officially deposed the emperor. Those who were backing the Derge’s plan commemorated the day with lively and enjoyable celebrations. However, many of the civilian leftists (the students, the teachers, other civil-servants) who were fiercely struggling to overthrow the emperor’s regime were getting increasingly desperate when they witnessed power lying in the hands of the other dictator, the Derge.

In the song under discussion, for the speaker, September is a welcome bonus; the two official main events, the Ethiopian new year and the national revolution day, were celebrated on September 11 & 12 respectively during the reign of the Derge regime. The Amharic term ‘እንቁጣጣሽ’/ ‘ənɔqutašaš’ (line 2) is referring to September 11, the day when the new year occur, and the day of the revolution is marked on the next day, September 12. These imply that the speaker enjoys dual happiness. Apart from gratifying with the traditional ceremony and the natural grace of the month, he celebrates the fall of the monarchial regime of Haile Selassie I [መስከረም እርምጃ መስከረም ነጻነት/የፊደላዊ ስርዓት የፈራረሰበት/ line 3-6 in the translation].

The speaker also symbolically testifies the adoption of the new ideology, socialism, and the existence of a bitter struggle against the reactionaries:

.....
 ዘመኑ ሲለወጥ ለአብዮት በአላችን
 የምናጌጥበት ቀይ ነው ሸማችን
 ለእንቁጣጣሽ በአል አዲሱ አመት
 የኢምፔሪያሊዝምን ደም እናፍስስለት

In the New Year,
 We decorate with red cloth to celebrate our holiday;
 For our New Year Festival,
 Let us offer the blood of imperialism as sacrifice;

The speaker claims that he and his fellow comrades wear the red-cloth to celebrate the day of the revolution. According to Gouvea (2015) it was since the French Revolution that the red colour has been associated with the revolutionary movement. In most socialist countries red colour is used to represent “the blood of the heroes who contributed to nation-building and remember a bloody fight

for freedom...” (ibid, 2015:3). Thus, the speaker uses the metaphor of the red cloth to point out the nation’s adoption of socialist ideology and to honour the sacrifices that the revolutionists have paid to defend the revolution.

There has been a long-standing tradition in Ethiopia to slaughter animals for holidays like the first day of the new year (‘እንቁጣጣሽ’/‘ጠጠርታላሽ’). The speaker symbolically refers to this custom to encourage his fellow revolutionists so that they keep struggling against the enemy of the revolution [ለእንቁጣጣሽ በአል ኣዲሱ ኣመት/የኢምጶሪያሊዝምን ደም እናፍስስለት/the last two lines in the translation]. However, implicitly these lines show to what extent the revolution was causing riot and bloodshed in Ethiopia. In a bold move to promote the aims of the revolution, the speaker degrades the reactionaries by equating them with the sacrificial lambs. This shows to what extent the political leaderships in the Derge and their supporters got ride of morality.

It was very unfortunate that the Ethiopian Revolution of 1974 fell into the wrong hands. For years it was the civilian leftists struggled to overthrow the Emperor Haile Selassie’s regime. However, it was a great pity that they snatched defeat from the jaws of victory. The sudden and unexpected downfall of the emperor paved the ways for the Derge, to take control of power. The junior officers who formed the Derge led by Colonel Mengistu H/Mariam lacked the necessary skills and experience to lead the country on addressing the deep rooted and multidimensional problems. Then, brushing aside, the indispensable contributions of the civilian leftists, the Derge made the gun command the politics of the country. Since it denied to relinquish state control to civilian authorities, its dictatorship act eventually led the army officers to the permanent division of political powers. From the beginning the Derge killed three of its leaders, General Aman Andom Michael, Brigadier General Teferi Benti and Major Atenafu Abate one after the other. In addition, the Derge’s brutal act was vividly shown on a Black Saturday of 14 November,1974 when it executed 60 imprisoned former officials without trial (Tronvoll et al, 2012).

The Derge’s inhuman treatments of its own members and the former officials remind us of Weber’s theory of conflict. For him, individuals or groups engage into conflict to control power. The power struggle could be between parties (in this case the Derge and other leftists against the emperor’s regime), and within the party or the group itself (in this case the Derge’s summary execution of its own leaders). According to Weber (1958), conflict brings forward different changes, and its

consequence (or outcome) is unpredictable. Ethiopians might not have conflicted against the emperor's regime if they had known that power could lie in the hands of the other dictator, the Derge. Many hoped to build a democratic and prosperous Ethiopia while they were struggling to depose the emperor's regime. However, the unexpected happened.

In the song under discussion, the speaker is further promising tougher actions against the reactionaries:

.....
 ዓይናቸው ደም ይልበስ ጠላቶቻችንም
 ታጋይ ከአብዮቱ ወደ ኋላ አይልም
 ፊታቸው ጠቋቁሮ ቢመስል ጥቀርሻ
 እርቅ የለም ከአድሀሪ እስከመጨረሻ

.....
 Let our enemies see red,
 The progressive never retreat from promoting the revolution;
 We never compromise with the reactionaries,
 Even their face turned dark like soot with anger;

.....
 The speaker is unwilling to negotiate with the reactionaries; he rather motivates his fellow revolutionists to keep on fighting against the opponents to the end. The speaker's attempt to close the door of conciliation and compromise shows the dysfunctionality of various social institutions such as religion, education, etc. If these institutions were effectively functioning, the speaker would never deny his responsibility to begin the process of reconciliation.

In general, in the three revolutionary songs discussed above, the speakers put efforts to reveal the principal objectives of Ethiopia First (Ethiopia Tikdem) which are going to be implemented under the umbrella of socialist ideology. They hope that the revolution will bring back the light to Ethiopia; therefore, they celebrate the abolishment of monarchial regime of Emperor Haile Selassie I which they think is the sources of all types of oppressions. The new government, the Derge, used these songs to propagate its belief (or the newly adopted socialist ideology), and to condemn the weaknesses of its predecessor. As a matter of fact, during this period, in almost all African countries people used songs in their struggle to free themselves from multidimensional oppressions (Nuxoll, 2015). In the first song, 'ህብረተሰባዊነት' [həbərätäsäbawintə], the speaker asserts that the Ethiopian Revolution of 1974 is crucially important to strengthen the unity of the nation, to obliterate the deep-rooted oppression, and to create a classless society. The speaker in

the second song, ‘ጎሀ ሲቀድ’ [gohə siqädə], also uncover the darkness of the Emperor’s regime, and he focuses on the sacrifices of Ethiopians to overthrow the monarchy. Furthermore, the speaker in the third song, ‘መስከረም ነጻነት’ [mäskärämə näšanäte], is showing his firmness and commitment to defend the gains of the revolution from the reactionaries. Although the speakers in these three songs entirely focus on magnifying the positive qualities of socialist ideology in disseminating the government’s propaganda, they make no attempt to present the people with alternative ideologies. In revealing the unidirectional nature of propaganda, Mittler (2008: 476) states that “... propaganda is univalent and forces the recipient to interpret it in one way only”

There are so many other revolutionary songs which reflect the issues raised in the above three songs. For instance, ‘ተነሳ ተራመድ’ (tänsä tärämäd), ‘ድል የሰፈው ህዝብ ነው’ (dälə yäsäfiwə hädzəbəd näwə), ‘ነጻነት’ (näšanäte), ‘ቢቃ አምነናል’ (bäqa amənnälə), ‘አቢቃ ስቃይ’ (abäqa səqayə), ‘የትግሉ ጎዳና’ (yätəgəlu godana), ‘አብዮት ውበት’ (abyotə wəbətə), ‘አብዮት እንዲህ ነው’ (abyotə ənədihə näwə), ‘ንጋት’ (nəgatə) and ‘ቀዩ አበባ’ (qəyu abəba) are some of the revolutionary songs which amplify the messages that depict through the above three songs (see **appendix B**). As Mittler states, “The repetitive use of the propaganda creates a feeling of trust. Thus, a framework is established that makes it possible for society to stick together” (2008: 485). Hence, practically, the Derge might not have kept propagating its propaganda through numerous revolutionary songs if it had not valued its (propaganda’s) impact on the vast majority.

5.1.2. Condemning the Oppositions

Though there had been a burning desire for change, neither the Emperor’s regime nor the opponents expected the sudden eruption of The Ethiopian Revolution of 1974 (Andargachew, 1990). Commenting on the suddenness of its occurrence and a cruel twist of fate for the nation, Baharu (2002: 228) writes:

Indeed, the equivalent term for ‘revolution’ (abyot) was a relatively recent one in the Amharic lexicon; many came to learn it only after its eruption. Hence the highly expressive characterization of the very process of that eruption: abyot fanada (‘revolution exploded/erupted’). It certainly exploded in the faces of both the regime and its opponents. How to handle, let alone direct, that explosion became one long process of adjustment and improvisation that ultimately delivered the country into the clutches of a totalitarian dictatorship.

It is unfortunate that the people of Ethiopia have not seized political power in their long history. Until the regime of Emperor Haile Selassie I, political power and political authorities were distributed among the monarchial family members. For instance, the fuedo-bourgeoisie during the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I used every means at their disposal to undermine and eradicate political oppositions. Since they claimed that they had a God-given right, they were not ready to descend their unlimited political and economic power to the people. Thus, when the Emperor's regime was deposed suddenly, there were not well established political parties and other civil organizations that could lead the nation. Even the students who were the most active participants during the revolution did not have open stages to discuss alternative political ideologies. This eventually forced the students and civil servants to adopt the socialist ideology as the only way out of the repression under the emperor's regime (Randi, 2009).

Derge used the existing gap and controlled the political power; this, in turn, highly offended the civilian leftists. Committing summary execution of the former officials, and its own members, Derge broke its promise to return the country to civilian rule. It went on considering itself as "the guardian of the revolution" (Baharu, 2002:238).

The Derge's denial of relinquishing power and its cruelty to kill the former officials and its own members (the two generals and one major mentioned above) triggered a fierce response from the civilian leftists. Baharu (2002:239) observes, "The connection between the general's shooting and the callous execution of the detainees, which was presented to the public as a 'political decision', is not exactly clear. What is incontestably clear is the fact that the summary execution rendered all the fanfare surrounding the enquiry commission set up to examine the former officials' wrongdoings totally meaningless. It also initiated a cult of political violence that attained its climax in the so called Red-Terror."

As mentioned in the quotation above, Red Terror, a period of repression and mass killing, was started. At the beginning, among the civilian leftists EPRP (Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party) went underground and established secret armed resistance group to struggle against the Derge and the other civilian leftist, MEISON (All-Ethiopian Socialist Movement). Then, the Derge together with MEISON began a blood-drenched conflict against the EPRP. Though MEISON for the time being sided with the Derge, later on violent clash broke out between them (the Derge and

the MEISON). Thus, MEISON also eventually went underground to struggle against the Derge. Apart from EPRP and MEISON, the secessionists, TPLF (Tigray People’s Liberation Front) and EPLF (Eritrean People’s Liberation Front) formed their own rebel groups and started gruella fighting against the Derge (Randi, 2009, Fiseha, 2004, Baharu, 2002).

Knowing that condemnations of it grew across the nation and especially the Western part of the world, the Derge began to use every means to justify its brutal acts of killing. Among other mechanisms, it used revolutionary songs to launch agitation against the underground movements (EPRP & MEISON) and the secessionists (TPLF & EPLF). As a result, hundreds of revolutionary songs that condemn the oppositions as anti-revolutionist were mushrooming. Following this, attempts have been made to discuss some of these songs. For the sake of clarity, the researcher divides these revolutionary songs into two sub-sections: those condemning the underground movements and those condemning the secessionists.

5.1.2.1. Condemning the Underground Movements

The revolutionary songs discussed under this sub-section are chiefly condemning those opposition groups that involved in the underground movements (EPRP and MEISON):

The outbreak of hostility between the Derge and its opponants is evidently seen in Chirotaw Kelkaye’s song, ‘ጸረ-አንድነት’ [ṣärä-anḍḍnät] :

ጸረ-አንድነት ፣ ጸረ-ሰላም ፣ ጸረ-እኩልነት ይውደም
 ህብረሰባዊነት ይለምልም ዘላለም
 ብዝበዛ ምዝበራን እንቃወማለን
 በህብረሰባዊነት እንራመዳለን
 ሁልጊዜ ቢመጁት ሀገራችንን
 የኢምፔሪያሊስት መፈንጫ አትሆን

 እንደመስሳለን መኤሶንን
 ኢ.ህ.አ.ፓ. ኢ. ዲ. ዩን እንደመስሳለን

 Let anti-unity, anti-peace and anti-equality be destroyed,
 And socialism flourishes forever;
 We oppose exploitation,
 And we shall be guided by the principles of socialism;
 Though they wish they would overtake our country,
 We never let the imperialist gambol in it;
 We destroy the ‘MEISON’,
 We destroy EPRP and EDU;

Weber (1973) states that there would be serious conflicts among parties to control the political and the economic power of a certain nation. Similarly, as the lines above suggest, the Derge clashed with both the leftists and the rightists over power. EPRP (Ethiopian People's Revolution Party) and MEISON (All-Ethiopian Socialist Movement) represent the leftists. On the other hand, EDU (Ethiopian Democratic Union) and the imperialists in general belong to the rightists. Obviously, the Derge came into conflict with these two ideologically different groups over power.

In the song under discussion the term 'ኢምፔሪያሊዝም' / imperialism/ superficially refers to the whole capitalist nations, but intrinsically it denotes the U.S. government. According to Fesiha (2004) United States of America did have multidimensional relationships with the regime of Emperor Haile Selassie I. However, the unexpected control of political power by the Derge cast doubt on the friendly relationship between the two countries. Eventually, the situations went from bad to worse when the then government of America officially condemned the massacre of the sixty former officials by the Derge. Trying to ally itself to the socialist countries such as Soviet Union, Cuba, etc., the Derge began to treat U.S.as the enemy of the revolution (<http://www.jstor.org/stable/4366406>). That is why the speaker in the song under discussion brags that he and his fellow revolutionists never allow the imperialists gambol in their country though they (the imperialists) are fond of doing it [ሁልጊዜ ቢመኛት ሀገራችንን/የኢምፔሪያሊስት መፈንጫ አትሆን/lines 5 & 6 in the translation]. The other rightist that the Derge targeted was EDU (Ethiopian Democratic Union). This party was established by Leul 'Ras Mengesha Seyoum who is member of the royal family. He was married to Emperor Haile Selassie's granddaughter Princess Aida Desta. Since the Ethiopian Revolution of 1974 posed a direct threat to the former dignitaries and officials in general, Leul 'Ras Mengesha Seyoum went underground to fight against the Derge leading his party, EDU.

The two civilian leftist parties, EPRP and MEISON, are hugely different from the Derge in terms of their intellectual assets. The leading figures of the two parties were well educated and open minded. Most of them were attending their undergraduate and postgraduate programs in the local and foreign universities. Being the great minds of the nations, they were believed to have the desirable traits of personality and character to lead the citizen and facilitate the country's path to economic growth. Contrary to this, the junior officers who formed the Derge did not have the stated qualities that the members of the civilian leftists possessed. They hardly had the enthusiasm and the necessary professional skills to establish the democratic form of government that allowed

popular participation through the electoral process. As it happened during the revolutions of China and French, the Ethiopian revolution made a further turn toward dictatorship which led to the terrible bloodshed (Baharu,229).

The civilian leftists were ultimately frustrated when they watched their dreams of successes fade away before their eyes. Lacking the intended political competence, the Derge was not willing to have democratic discussions with the civilian leftists. It further disallowed the genius of the people to flourish and make the gains of the revolution bring sustainable development for the nation. As shown in the song under discussion, the speaker is threatening to kill all the oppositions [እንደመስሳለን መኤሶንን/ኢ.ህ.አ.ፓ. ኢ. ዲ. ዩን እንደመስሳለን/ the last two lines in the translation]. Conspiring against the two most experienced and respected army generals, Aman Andom Michael, Teferi Benti, Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam became the leader of the Derge. Unfortunate to the nation and its people, he was one of the most murderous dictators of the junior officers who formed the Derge. Huang (2006:79) observes, “Mengistu Haile Mariam emerged as the most ruthless member of a secretive military junta called the Derge. After executing his military rivals, Mengistu went after the civil opposition with a series of search-and-destroy campaigns that he christened the "Red Terror." People were caught hiding in the woods and at roadblocks, seized jumping over walls, and plucked from demonstrations, buses, and home.” Thus, led by the merciless Mengitu Haile Mariam the Derge embarked upon indiscriminate massacre of citizens in the name of the Red Terror.

The speaker in Getachew Yeshaw’s (1972 E.C.) song, ‘አሻግሮ ገዳይ’ [aṣḡāro gādayō], boasts the Derge’s success of eradicating its opponents who involved in underground moments:

የቀበሌ ማህበራት የገገበሬ ማህበራት
ከጭቁን መለዩ ለባሽ ጋር ሆኖ አሳሽ ሰራዊት
መነጠረ አንጠረጠረ
ጸረ አብዮተኞችን አሳረረ አኮማተረ
አብዮታዊት እናት ሀገር ወይም ሞት ብሎ
አነፈረው ጠላቱን እንደ ንፍሮ ቀቅሎ
ሰርጎ ገቡን በሞት ቀጣ
ማረከ አንበረከከ
.....

The unions of the Kebele [qäbäle] and the farmer,
Together with the oppressed soldier,
Swept and burnt the reactionaries;
Shouting the slogan “Revolutionary Mother Land or Death”,
The unions of the Kebele [qäbäle] and the farmer,
Over boiled their enemies like the boiled beans;
They surrendered and killed the intruders;

.....

Right after deposing the Emperor’s regime on 12 September, 1974, the Derge proceeded to establish the Provisional Military Administrative Council (PMAC). This strongly offended the student activists and the civilian leftists, EPRP, MEISON, Confederation of Ethiopian Labours’ Union, Ethiopian Teachers’ Association, etc. All urged the Derge to leave the power and pave the ways for the establishment of Popular Provisional Government. In an article entitled “Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Ethiopia”, this situation is stated as:

Only four days after the military dictatorship formally usurped power on September 12, 1974, it faced a challenge from its class enemy, the proletariat. At its annual congress, CELU unanimously rejected the provisional military government and demanded the immediate establishment of a popular provisional government. Two days later, the heroic vanguard of the Ethiopian student movement, University Students' Union of Addis Ababa (USUAA), backed the proletariat on the question of state power. The following day the University Teachers' Association joined CELU and USUAA. The organs of the EPRP, Democracia and Labbader, continued intense agitation on the significance of the week-old military putsch (<http://www.jstor.org/stable/4366406>).

The civilian leftists’ demand of establishing the popular provisional government pressurized the Derge to be split into two groups. There were soldiers who proposed to return to the barracks by handing over the power to a popular provisional government. Whereas, the rest rejected this plan, and decided to defend their position to the end. Due to this, a severe clash broke between these groups, and unfortunately many soldiers who were willing to relinquish power were killed by those who opposed the idea of returning to their barracks (ibid). According to Baharu (2002:239), “United by the shedding of blood, members of the Derge realized that there was no going back...” In the song under discussion, the speaker reveals the depth and magnitude of the Derge’s cruelty to get rid of its oppositions. As the speaker indicates the unions of the kebele and the farmer involve in fighting against the civilian leftists [የቀበሌ ማህበራት የገንቦሬ ማህበራት/ the first line in the translation].

All the civilian leftists favored land reform while they were trying to overthrow the Emperor's regime. The popular slogan of the students' "Land to the Tiller" was echoed by different sectors across the nation (Baharu, 2002; Fiseha, 2004; Ottaway; 1977). However, it was the Derge that took radical measures to redistribute the land and to make the vast majority landless Ethiopian tenants the owner of land. Koehn (1979:57) states, "The Provisional Military Administrative Council (PMAC) formally terminated the ruling monarchical system in March 1975, nationalized the landholdings of the royal family, and rapidly promulgated a series of radical measures designed to transform rural Ethiopia from semi-feudalism directly into a socialist society. By 1977, the PMAC had drastically altered the imperial legal order."

Apart from giving a plot of land to every peasant irrespective of either his/her ethnic or social background, the Derge extended the following privileges to this section of the society:

Specific provisions of the proclamation dramatically transformed the legal status of tenants and landlords, agricultural laborers and entrepreneurs. Article 6 freed former tenants from further rent payments to landowners, abolished all existing debts or obligations to former landowners, and allowed former tenants to keep any agricultural tools and oxen which their landlord previously provided. Article 4 prohibited employment of hired laborers except in situations where a woman without other adequate means of livelihood holds the land, or where the holder dies or is too sick to farm and his children are minors (Koehn:57-58).

Since the vast majority of Ethiopian peasants were illiterate, it was hard for them to make sense of the dreams of the oppositions who went underground. On the other hand, they derived the stated huge benefits from the change of the legal order. In the words of Dunning (1970:271), "Land, for most Ethiopians, is central to life. From the land comes sustenance, status and often political power. In the agricultural societies of highland Ethiopia, to have rights over land is to be human." Contrary to this "to be landless is to be sub-human" ('Mesfin Wolde-Mariam in Dunning, 1970:271). Therefore, the Derge did have such fertile grounds to manipulate the overall situations and mobilize this marginalized section of the society to stand against its oppositions. The Derge was at distinct advantage because it could use the state-controlled media to deceive the peasants into thinking that the oppositions were the enemy of the revolution.

The harsh words such as 'መነጠረ'/(swept) and አኮማተረ/(burnt) that the speaker uses in the song under discussion show to what extent the Derge was merciless to the reactionaries. In the Ethiopian context, the word 'መነጠረ'/(swept) is commonly used when one removed the weeds from his

farmland before he ploughed it. Thus, the speaker's attempt to identify the reactionaries as weeds reveals the Derge's degrading treatment of its oppositions. Furthermore, the Derge's cruelty and barbarity is vividly seen through the simile that the speaker implements in this song [አካራራው ጠላቱን እንደ ንፍሮ ቀቅሎ/line 3 in the translation]. Basically, the speaker treats the oppositions, the political rivalries, as enemies. This, in turn, shows the Derge's erroneous judgments concerning the contributions of oppositions to the establishment and development of democratic government. Le Bas in Wondwosen (2009:60) states that "a strong opposition may be the most effective means of creating checks and accountability in hybrid regimes and, therefore, the most important prerequisite for democratic deepening."

The speaker in the song under discussion attempts to hold up the supposed moral superiority of the Derge by magnifying its victory over the opponents [ሰርጎ ገቡን በሞት ቀጣ/ማረክ አንበረክ/the last line in the translation]. The bloodiest conflict between the Derge and the civilian leftists eventually led to the beginning of the White Terror and the Red Terror which were run by EPRP and the Derge respectively. There has been intense debate over the beginner of the terror, but in some documents EPRP is blamed for starting the assassinations. Fiseha (2004) goes further to say that the Red Terror would have not been started if EPRP had not launched the White Terror against the Derge. Furthermore, Tronvoll et al (2006:26) state:

The most significant, if abortive, act in this regard was the assassination attempt on Mengistu Hailemariam on 23 September. Mengistu not only survived the attempt but also used the incident to whip up public solidarity for himself and for the denunciation of EPRP tactics. On October 1, the EPRP gunned down one of the Ma'ison members of POMOA, Dr. Fikre Merid. This act provoked the famous 'exchange rate' statement by the Derge, when the life of one 'revolutionary' was deemed to be equivalent to the lives of one thousand 'anti-people elements'. But the actual transaction did not take place until about a month later, when the Derge executed twenty-three EPRP members, a number of whom were members of the EPRA (the rural armed wing of the EPRP) captured in Wallo and kept in detention long before the escalation of hostilities in September.

During the beginning of the revolution the two civilian leftists, EPRP and MEISON, shared common hatred for the Derge. However, through time a considerable disagreement raised between them especially about how best to deal with the land reform policy. "A kind of civil war developed between different politically active factions of the civilian left, demonstrating that they had the capacity to kill one another over political disagreements. At the root of this could be found

conflict and even hatred between groups of students that had returned from abroad and who held different views on the policy of land reform” (ibid: 265). In the meantime, MEISON appreciated the progress and gave its full support to the Derge when it (the Derge) distributed the land to the tiller.

The true reason behind MEISON’s decision to side with the Derge was not the revolutionary measures that the Derge took to reform the land policy. MEISON committed to relate with the Derge for it was aware of its incapability to compete against EPRP which enjoyed wider support among the working class and the youths. Thus, MEISON intended to strengthen itself by using the state machineries and organizational structures. Furthermore, MEISON planned to play mind game with the inexperienced junior officers in the Derge. However, it could not be successful to achieve its objectives out of this tricky relationship (Wondwosen, 2009; Dawit, 1989).

The temporary relationship formed between the Derge and MEISON caused EPRP to get irritated, so it established the “death squad” in its effort to initiate the terrorist attack, known as the White Terror, to kill the members and the supporters of both the Derge and the MEISON. Up to fifty supporters of these groups were assassinated by EPRP. Since this provoked a furious response of the Derge, Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam, the Derge’s leader, declared to beat back the White Terror with the Red Terror (Balsvik, 2009; Dawit, 1989). Practically, it is not surprising to see the Derge wreaking avengement on the members and the supporters of EPRP. However, its revenge was much harsher than the members and the supporters of EPRP deserved. It is to mean that the Derge took unbalanced revenge on them.

When Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam and his fellow comrades were aware of the sabotage of MEISON, they turned their back on its members and supporters. Failing to forge a policy that united their members and supporters, EPRP and MEISON suffered an appealing fate. Since the Derge labelled them as the enemy of the revolution, they fell victims of the Red Terror. Tronvoll, et al (2012:29) observe, “The terror targeted not only the EPRP but also its former archrival, Ma'ison. Refusing to concert in life, the two organizations were united in death.”

The Red Terror has enormous negative impact on the nation and its people. Some estimated that 100,000-300,000 members and supporters of EPRP, MEISON, and other opponents were

murdered, and thousands more were imprisoned. This particularly happened when the Red Terror campaign alarmingly escalated into indiscriminate killing between 1977 and 1978. Thousands were forced to undergo terrifying and inhumane treatment, including severe torture, malnutrition, illness without medical care, indoctrination, etc. (Tronvoll, et al, 2012; Wondwosen, 2009; Huang, 2006; Dawit, 1989). As a matter of fact, the Red Terror was putting huge obstacles in the way of Ethiopia's effort to fill the gap after it lost its educated and productive citizens by the unjust invention of Italy (Tronvoll et al, 2012).

In general, the speakers in the two revolutionary songs, 'አሻግሮ ገዳይ' [ašagōro gädäyō] and 'ጸረ-አንድነት' [šärä-anōdōnätō], acclaims the on-going terror that was a crime against humanity. Nega Mezlekia in Huang (2006: 79) describes the most unpleasant experiences of the time as "The calamity was beyond anyone's wildest imagination. The streets, public parks, and market stalls were littered with the open-mouthed dead." One learns from these songs the paradox of developing the nation while its great minds were murdered under the midday sun. Particularly, between the two darkest years, 1977 and 1978, one out of three youths were imprisoned. "It was a time when many young people simply vanished into thin air" (ibid:78). The unreasonable loss of the productive forces just to keep the murderous Mengistu Haile Mariam and his fellow junior officers in power is the severe blow to the country and its people. The inefficiency in almost every sector of life in Ethiopia indicates the country's failure to cope with the daunting aftermath of the Red Terror (Tronvoll et al, 2012). That is why Balsvik labels it, "The Ethiopian Holocaust" (2009:264). Other song lyrics such as, 'እርግጥ ሆነው ለወጡ' [ōrōmačōhunō awōtū]; 'ወይ ንቅንቅ ወይ ፈቀቅ' [wäyō nōqōnōqō wäyō fäqäqō], are dealing with issues discussed in the above two songs under this sub-section (See Appendix B).

5.1.2.2. Condemning the Secessionists

After committing the indiscriminate killing of its opponents mainly EPRP and MEISON, the Derge only won temporal moral victory. The weakening of these two Derge's rivalries did not bring lasting peace in Ethiopia. According to Wondwosen, "During the Derge's rule (1975-1991) all types of ethnic parties, multiethnic parties, and non-ethnic parties were persecuted" (2009:61). However, even during the process of the revolution, some ethnic groups started clandestine struggle against prejudice, poverty and so on. The non- democratic governing system of the Derge

pushed some ethnic groups on to form guerrilla forces. Particularly, the Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF), the Eritrean People’s Liberation Front (EPLF) and the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) and others rebelled against the Derge (Tronvoll et al: 2012). Many songs that mainly condemn the Tigray (TPLF) and Eritrean (EPLF) secessionists were mushrooming while these groups kept up a long guerilla warfare in Tigray and Eritrea respectively. Following this, attempts have been made to discuss Amharic revolutionary songs that disapproved of the rebels.

The song, ‘ጎበዝ ተነስ አታመንታ’ [gobäzð tänäsð atamänðta], was composed by Endrias Teferi in 1976 E.C. The speaker in this song labels the rebels betrayer:

የከንቱ ምኞት አርበኛ የጠባባ ስሜት ምርኮኞች
 ግራ የገባው ህይወት መሪ “አጥፍተህ ጥፋ” ቡኩኖች
 ሸረ ምን አስመልክቷቸው ባንቺነትሽ ላይ ተነሱ
 ከቶ ምንኛ ቢተብቱ የናት ውለታሽን እረሱ
 ወይስ በጭፍን ገብተው አጥቢ ጡትሽን ነከሱ
 ወለላ ማርሽን ጠብተው ሬት አድርገው መለሱ
 ሰላምን ስትናፍቁ መንታ ጦርን ደገሱ
 አንድነትን ስታደምቁ መገንጠልን ጠነሱ

.....
 The patriots of futility and the narrow-minded tribalists,
 The confused, murder-suicide and dissipations,
 What make them stand against you, my country?
 What arrogance let them forget your motherly favor?
 Or what make them bite your hands that feed them blindly?

They sucked your honey, but they pay you aloes in return;
 When you strive for peace, they start a joint fight against you;
 And when you celebrated unity, they induced dissociation;

.....
 It seems that the speaker could not bear his irritation at the secessionists’ unfaithfulness to their motherland, Ethiopia. According to him, being a good mother Ethiopia provides them (the rebels) with everything she possesses. However, instead of returning the favour, the disloyal rebels repay her generosity with ingratitude and injury [ከቶ ምንኛ ቢተብቱ የናት ውለታሽን እረሱ/ወይስ በጭፍን ገብተው አጥቢ ጡትሽን ነከሱ/ወለላ ማርሽን ጠብተው ሬት አድርገው መለሱ/lines 3-6 in the translation]. The speaker believes that the secessionist’s narrow mindedness and other worst qualities in them make them stab their mother land in the back [The first two lines both in the original and the translation]. Furthermore, he is confident in the rebels’ inability to succeed in achieving their goal for they are “the confused, murder-suicide and dissipations”/ ግራ የገባው ህይወት መሪ “አጥፍተህ ጥፋ” ቡኩኖች.

During the age of the princes ('Zemene Mesafint') Ethiopia was under the warlord governances. However, this situation was significantly changed with the rise of King Tewodros II in 1855 (Alemayehu, 2006; Fesiha, 2004; Baharu, 2002). The successive kings Yohannes IV, Menelik II and Haile Selassie I, who ruled Ethiopia followed the footsteps of King Tewodros II, were contributing much to "the consolidation of the territorial boundaries of the modern state, the creation of the national professional army, and the development of a national system of bureaucratic administration" II (Keller, 2005:87). As a result, Ethiopia became the only uncolonized country in Africa. Though the Derge was accused of its undemocratic ways of governing, it never compromised the unity of the nation. Therefore, the speaker finds it difficult to conceptualize the secessionists' (TPLF and EPLF) decision to secede the two provinces, Tigray and Eritrea, after all the sacrifices that Ethiopians paid to defend the nation's sovereignty.

The speaker is in no position to accept the devilish plot of the rebels who degrade the blood that was shed for freedom at countless battle fields, Adowa, Machew, etc. For him, the dysfunctional secessionists are threats to the unity of his country. Therefore, upsetting about the disloyalty of these "narrow-minded tribalists", the speaker is promising tougher actions against them:

.....
 ከእንግዲህማ
 አይዘኝ አንቺ ሀገሬ ውድ እማማ
 ፍጹም ግንባሬን ላልፈታ ያንቺን አንድነት ሳላይ
 የሰላም መድረክ ሳላውጅ በኤርትራና በትግራይ
 የጠላትሽ ሬሳ ከተቢያ ገብቶ ሳይደባይ
 የፍትህ አየር ሳያውድ በዚያች መንደር ቀዬ ላይ
 ጸረ ሰላም ወንበዴ ሳይሆን የአሞራ ሲሳይ

.....
 Here after, be strong my country, my lovely mother;
 I act daringly:
 Until I see your unity, and declaring peace in Eritrea and Tigray,
 Until I bury your enemy and keep the peace in that village,
 Until I make vulture feed on the dead bodies of anti-peace ruffian;

.....
 As the lines above suggest, the speaker is committing to fight to death for defending the unity of his country, to strives for maintaining peace in the nation and to see justice done in the two disturbed provinces, Tigray and Eritrea. According to him, all these happen when he makes the vulture hovers over the rebels' dead soldiers. And of course, he is utterly sure that the fight against them (the secessionists) result in victory.

The other song that strictly condemns the separatists' effort to secede the stated two provinces is 'ተነሳ ታጠቅ' [tänäsa taṭäqê]. It was in 1970 E.C. that Roman Alemu composed it; the speaker in this song motivates his fellow citizens to arm themselves with machineguns and fight the rebels:

ተነሳ ተነሳ ተነሳ ታጠቅ ወገኔ
አሳየው ክንድህን የአባትህን ወኔ

.....
Stand and arm yourself my fellow countrymen;
Show for your enemy your strength and vigor that you inherit from your father;

.....
As the lines above suggest, the speaker attempts to remind his fellow countrymen of the heroic commitment of their fathers to defend the nation's independence. And he urges them to honor the patriotism of their fathers and fight the enemy accordingly. Furthermore, the speaker points out that the rebels' appeal to separate Eritrea is historically unjustified:

.....
ስምሽን ለውጠው ኤርትራ ቢሉሽ
ባህረ ነጋሽ ነበር መጠሪያ ስምሽ
መቅደላ መተማ ታሪክ ምስክር ነው
የባህር በራችን የሚደፍራት ማነው

.....
Though they change your name and call you Eritrea.
Your real name was 'Bahir-Negash';
What happened in Meqedela and Metema is a historical witness,
So, who dare to cross our port?

.....
Eritrea's former name was Bahir-Negash; it was in the 19th century the Italian invaders named it with its current name, Eritrea (Alemayehu, 2006; Fiseha, 2004). Thus, according to the speaker its former name, Bahir-Negash, symbolizes its natural integration with the Ethiopian mainland [ስምሽን ለውጠው ኤርትራ ቢሉሽ/ባህረ ነጋሽ ነበር መጠሪያ ስምሽ/lines 1&2 in the translation].

In this song, the speaker alludes to the two significant historical events, the battle of Meqedela and the battle of Metema, occurred during the reigns of King Tewodros II and King Yohannes IV respectively. It was in April, 1868 that the British led by Robert Napier fought unjust war against King Tewodros II of Ethiopia at Meqedela. Though the British won the battle, Ethiopians fought bravely against the enemy's soldiers. King Tewodros II did not make a humiliating mistake at the battle; by committing suicide, he rather faced his death with great dignity. Similarly, in March, 1889, at the battle of Metema King Yohannes IV heroically fought against the Mehadist of Sudan

until he was killed by the enemy’s soldiers. Therefore, in the song under discussion the speaker draws analogy between the braveness of the kings in the stated two battles and the fellow countrymen’s patriotic sentiments to destroy secessionists. He promised to defend Eritrea, the natural sea outlet of the Ethiopian mainland, against the separatists’ attack [የባህር በራችን የሚደፍራት ማነው/the last line in the translation]. Furthermore, the speaker vividly accuses of the Arabs for backing the Eritrean separatists:

.....
 የአድሀሪ አረቦች ጉራና ድንፋታ
 ለመመለስ ላይችል የጎላን ኮረብታ
 ቀይ ባህን ተመኘ በዘይት ጨረታ
 ይህ ነበር ቀልባሾች የኢተዮጵያስ ወሮታ?
 ምኞት ላስከረው ጥቅም ላሳወረው
 የአድዋን ድል ጋሻ ከንድህን አሳየው
 አውአሎም ዘራይን የአፈራችው እናት
 ዛሬም አልመከነች ተተኪ ጀግና አላት

.....
 The boast and vaunt of reactionary Arabs,
 Couldn’t take back the Golan Heights;
 But the Arab reactionaries who earn income from petroleum lusts for the Red see;
 You reactionary, is it that you return for the favor that Ethiopia did to you?
 For the one that drunken with his desire and get blinded by his selfishness,
 Show him your shield and strength that made you victorious at the battle of Adowa;
 The mother of Awalom and Zeray is not barren;
 These days too, she has heroes who follow the footsteps of the formers;

Practically, in their effort to influence their historical enemy, Israel, the Arabs need to use the strategic benefit of the Red Sea. Al-Anazi (2001: iii) states, “The Arab states have used the Red Sea as a tool to put pressure on Israel.” There has been conflict of interest over the Red Sea between the dominantly non- Muslim nations (U.S., France, British, Israel, etc.) and the Arab nations whose dominant religion is Islam. Religious wise, Ethiopia is labelled as Christian and non-Arab and Eritrea as Muslim and Arab. Therefore, being the non-Muslim nations U.S. and Israel need Eritrea to remain as part of Ethiopia, but the Arabs support the Eritrean independence. According to Assefaw, in his 1952 address to the Security Council of the United Nations, John Foster Dulles, the then US Secretary of State, says, “From the point of justice, the opinion of the Eritrean people must receive consideration. Nevertheless, the strategic interest of the United States in the Red Sea

basin and considerations of security and world peace make it necessary that the country has to be linked with our ally, Ethiopia” (Assefaw, 2006:3).

However, the strong relationships between the U.S. and Ethiopia was remarkably interrupted with the coming of the Derge to the power. “As a result of the socialist revolution in Ethiopia, from 1974 U.S. democracy/governance and economic assistance was cut. Until the end of the Derge rule in Ethiopia, the U.S. provided for only humanitarian assistance. In 1992, after the overthrow of the military regime, the relationship between the two countries was normalized” (<https://www.usaid.gov/ethiopia/history-usaid-ethiopia>). On the contrary, the Arab nations increased their multidimensional supports to the Eritrean separatists so that they (the rebels) succeed to get their independence.

The speaker alludes to the Arab-Israeli war of 1973 to satirize the Arabs. It was during this war that Israel took the Golan Heights from Syria. Even if the Arab nations collectively fought against Israel, they could not achieve victory. Therefore, it is depending on this historical phenomenon that the speaker makes the Arabs the topic of mockery [የአድሀሪ አረቦች ጉራና ድንፋታ/ ለመመለስ ላይችል የጎላን ኮረብታ/the first two lines in the translation]. In other words, the Arabs’ failure to regain the Golan Heights makes him undermine the impact of their commitments to support the Eritrean separatists. On the other hand, the speaker believes that the non-patriotic Arabs use their money that they earn from petroleum to offer the Eritrean secessionists an enormous bribe to secede the province from Ethiopia.

The secessionists’ disloyalty and decision to fight against their own motherland makes the speaker really angry [ይህ ነበር ቀልባሾች የኢተዮጵያስ ወሮታ?/ line 4 in the translation]. Therefore, by taking courage from the great victory of Adowa, he motivates the fellow citizens to fight against the faithless rebels. He further honor and remember the two heroes, Awalom and Zeray, who bravely fought against the enemy’s soldiers during the first Italo-Ethiopian war (1895-96) and the second Italo-Ethiopian war (1935-36) respectively. With this he tries to brag that Ethiopia is still the home of heroes [the last 4 lines both in the original and in the translation].

Generally, the speakers in the two songs, ‘ጎበዝ ተነስ አታመንታ’ [gobäzä tänäsä atamänöta] and ‘ተነሳ ታጠቅ’ [tänäsa taṣäqä], see TPLF and EPLF as a real threat to the unity of Ethiopia. Consequently,

they, reject the secessionists' attempt to separate the two provinces, Tigray and Eritrea, as wholly unjustified. They further present the images of the rebels as disloyal, selfish and narrow minded. Of course, right now when one sees how Ethiopia is suffering from a deeply oppressive, unequal and divisive political system under the TPLF dominated current regime of Ethiopia, s/he might appreciate the gift of prophecy of the lyricists of these two songs.

Particularly, the speaker in the second song, 'ተነሳ ታጠቅ' [tänäsa taṭäq̄], implicitly raises the geopolitical issues of the Red Sea. He accuses the Arabs of conspiring to control over the Red Sea by supporting the Eritrean secessionists; thus, being offended by their destructive roles, he ridicules them (the Arabs) for their failure to recapture the Golan Heights. He uses it (the Golan Heights) as a symbol to show the intrinsic weakness of the Arabs. And he makes use of this historical failure as instrument to raise the brave and enduring spirit of the Ethiopian soldiers.

The Derge uses these songs to perpetuate its propaganda; through such songs the Derge intends to diminish the overall strengths of the rebels. For instance, the speakers in both songs do not give the benefit of the doubt concerning their victory, however, in reality it is the secessionists who win the war. The two secessionists jointly overthrew the Derge regime in 1991. While the Eritrean secessionist declared its (Eritrea's) independence, the TPLF that changed its strategy to secede Tigray on the eve of the victory, has begun to rule Ethiopia since 1991. Other Amharic revolutionary songs such as 'አናወድማለን' [änawäd̄malän̄], 'ዳግመኛ መወለድ' [daḡmäña mäwäläd̄], 'ዞር በል ከፊት' [zor̄ bäl̄ käfite], 'ትግላችን አይቆምም' [t̄ḡlač̄n̄ aȳdqom̄m̄] and 'አረሙን እናንሳ' [ar̄amun̄ ðnan̄ðsa] reflect similar issues raised in the two songs discussed under this subsection [See Appendix B).

5.1.3. Condemning the Somali Aggression

In May 1977, Somalia invaded Ethiopia, and Ethiopians began to defend their mother land against the Somalia aggression. This nightmare scenario had been a time bomb waiting for explode since Somalia got its independence in 1960. Somalia did have strong ambition to take the large portion of the eastern part of Ethiopia including Ogaden, Hararghe and etc. Therefore, when it was confident that it could take advantage of Ethiopia which was weakened by the inner turmoil due to the Derge's struggle against the underground movements (EPRP & MEISON) and the

secessionists (EPLF & TPLF), it was waging a full-scale war against Ethiopia. Showing how deep Ethiopia was politically in trouble, Makinda (1984:5) states:

At that time, Mengistu was facing numerous problems. Although he had been the most powerful man in the Dergeue ever since the overthrow of Haile Selassie in 1974, his hold on power was uncertain in the period immediately following the disturbances of 3 February 1977. In addition, insubordination and desertions in the military, and the struggle for self-determination by various ethnic groups throughout the country had increased. Worse still, the traditional arms supplier, the US, had terminated all military ties with his country... Finally, Sudan, which had normalized relations with Ethiopia in 1972, announced in February 1977 that 'it would resume active support for the Eritrean guerrillas as well as other Ethiopian opposition groups. Against that background, Ethiopia urgently needed arms (1984:5).

Benefitting from surplus supplies of armaments from Soviet Union (USSR), Somalia fought Ethiopia by violating the rules of the Organization of African Union (OAU). Article 3 of the charter of OAU forbids the use of force to settle boarder disputes. In addition, the 1964 Cairo Resolution of the OAU approves African frontiers established during the colonial era (ibid). Responding to the Somalia's unjust war against Ethiopia, many lyricists composed song lyrics that strictly condemn the aggression; these songs bring discredit upon the aggressors, and they serve to kindle and sustain the fighting spirit of Ethiopians. Following these attempts have been made to discuss one of such songs:

Desalegn Mekuria's (1970 E.C.) song lyric, “በለው የአገራ ልጅ” [bäläwð yagäre löjð], deals with the issue of the 1970 Ethio-Somalia war. In this song, the speaker calls on the fellow citizens to stand together against the Somalia aggressors:

በለው የአገራ ልጅ አንተ ልብ ሙሉ
አገርክን ለመቁረስ ለሚሞክር ሁሉ
ለብልብው አቃጥለው አድሀሪን ሁሉ

.....

You courageous my fellow countrymen,
Hit out at your enemy;
Let you burn those reactionaries who seek to secede your country;

.....

The speaker has complete confidence in the bravery of his countrymen [the 1st line both in the original and in the translation]; he might develop this sense of sureness from Ethiopians unchangeable commitments to keep their nation remain independent. Above all, for the speaker, it seems regrettable to see the newly independent Somalia which is not healed the wound left by the

colonizers invading his country, Ethiopia, that never surrenders even to European colonizers in its entire history. Therefore, it has to be sharing the honor due from the phenomenal victory at the battle of Adowa that the speaker motivates his fellow citizen to attack the enemy [በለው የአገሪ ልጅ አንተ ልቦ ሙሉ/line 1 in the translation].

The speaker is possibly faced with some tough decisions. Practically, the Somalia's army has already crossed the border of Ethiopia and kicked-off huge offensive against the Ethiopian military forces in the province of Ogaden, Jijiga, Hararghe, etc. As Gebru (2000:635) states, "The Ethiopia-Somalia armed conflict was one of the two biggest wars between African states in contemporary times and its repercussions were felt far beyond the continent." This shows that the magnitude and extent of the war was demanding the full attention and participation of Ethiopians to repel the invasion. Furthermore, Somalia claimed to seize significantly large territory including Hararghe, Bale, and Sidamo which are some of the most fertile provinces in Ethiopia. Gebru (2000:637) writes:

Soon after its establishment in 1960, the Somali state sought to wrest the Ogaden from Ethiopia on ethnic and cultural grounds. What the Somali irredentists called Western Somalia extended almost as far as the Awash River, embracing the whole of Harargheghe where two of Ethiopia's largest cities, Hararghe and Dire Dawa, are located as well as large portions of Bale and Sidamo provinces. This claim conflicted with the multiethnic composition of the area, in which the Somali are a distinct minority. Apart from the Ogaden proper, Somalis are confined to the northern lowlands of Harargheghe, mainly the Dire Dawa district, and the southern lowlands of Bale. In the midst of the Oromo majority also live clusters of Hararghei, Afar, Argobba and Amhara peoples.

Somalia's plan mentioned above seems to stretches the speaker's patience to the limit; since he fails to swallow his anger to look for alternative solutions, he stands to encourage his fellow countrymen to destroy the invaders [አገርክን ለመቁረስ ለሚሞክር ሁሉ/ለብልበው አቃጥለው አድሀሪን ሁሉ/the last two lines in the translation].

The speaker labels the Somalia aggressors "reactionary" [‘አድሀሪ’]; oftentimes, this term is used to condemn the pro-capitalist groups. As a matter of fact, the then Somalia was a socialist nation, and it was the closest friendly country with the other socialist nation, Soviet Union for almost two decades. As Makinda (1984: 2) observes, "By the mid-1970s, the Soviet Union had a substantial military presence in Somalia." Somalia hardly fit the description in this regard; therefore, there should be some other nation that the speaker needs to criticize. Of course, US most probably be

the target of his criticism. As the Soviet Union did in Somalia, the US in its part had significant military presence in Ethiopia especially during the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I. However, when the Ethio-Somalia war broke out, the two superpowers made dramatic shift in their policy towards the horn of Africa, particularly Ethiopia and Somalia. Ayoob (1978:5) observes:

Regional rivalries in the Horn of Africa have been intense for many centuries but never has there been such a clash between neighbors as the present full-scale war between Ethiopia and Somalia. However, this conflict is more than simply a local war between neighbors because of the involvement of the superpowers, the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R., and several other regional powers. Furthermore, it is a contest replete with dramatic changes and sudden switches of allegiance such as the shattering of the close military relationship between Ethiopia and the U.S.A., the expulsion of the Soviets from Somalia and the substantial military support given by the U.S.S.R. and Cuba to the embattled Ethiopians.

During the war Somalia expelled Soviet military advisers and terminated military ties with Moscow. On the other hand, Ethiopia changed her defense dependence from US to USSR; Makinda (1984:8) writes, "...on 27 April, the Pentagon suspended all US arms supplies to Ethiopia, including those that had been paid for, thereby forcing Ethiopia to turn to the USSR for weapons." Furthermore, offended by the presence of Soviet and Cuba in Ethiopia, US promised to supply arms to Somalia. Hence, the US's decision to switch its diplomatic relationship from Ethiopia to the aggressor, Somalia, at that critical moment makes the speaker consider the US as "reactionary" [‘አድህሪ’].

In the lines below, the speaker shows the public's reaction to the war, and its consequences:

.....
 በምስራቅ፣ በሰሜን
 ኢትዮጵያን ለመውረር ጠላትም ቢመጣ
 የኢትዮጵያ ጀግና እሳት ሆኖ ወጣ
 ወየው ሰይድ ባሪ ተርመጥምጠህ ቀረህ በምንህ ትወጣ

When the enemy came in the south and in the east to invade Ethiopia,
 The Ethiopian hero stood fiercely to defend the enemy;
 Woe to you Said Barre, you got in a mess,
 How could you escape?

As the lines above suggest, Ethiopia fought on multiple fronts [በምስራቅ፣ በሰሜን.../line 1 in the translation]. While Somalia's aggressors occupied large territories in the Eastern Ethiopia, the

Eritrean People Liberation Front (EPLF) was waging the full-scale war to secede the province, Eritrea. The Ethiopian armed forces that based in the Ogaden province and monitored the boarder in the east could not manage to defend the Somalia's aggressors. The invaders were much better than the Ethiopian counterpart in terms of their size and military strength. Due to this, the Derge was forced to bring many of its experienced troops from Eritrea to the eastern part of the country to stop the advancing invaders. This, in turn, weakened the defense in the north and paved the ways for EPLF to control various strategic places throughout the province. Therefore, pitifully, Ethiopia was sandwiched between the bloody wars against EPLF in the north and the Somalia invaders in the east.

Ethiopians might not have defended the simultaneous attacks which were opened by EPLF and the Somalia invaders in the stated two different directions if they had not been prompt in responding to the call of the government; when the US turned its back on Derge to supply arms, it (the Derge) took two strong measures. Firstly, it put all its efforts for the speedy mobilization of the whole nation to defend the ongoing aggressions. As a result, more than one hundred thousand militias from different corners of the country joined Tatek Military Camp to take military training for some three months [...አ.ት.ዮ.ጵ.ያን ለመውረር ጠላትም ቢመጣ/የአ.ት.ዮ.ጵ.ያ ጀግና እሳት ሆኖ ወጣ.../the first 2 lines in the translation]. Secondly, the Derge succeeded in having strong diplomatic ties with the two socialist countries, USSR and Cuba. These two nations advised the Somalian government not to invade Ethiopia; nevertheless, hoping to get arm supplies mainly from US, it failed to act on their advice. This eventually worsened the relationship between Somalia and the two socialist nations. Particularly, USSR feared that its reputation would be harmed in Africa if it sided the aggressor, Somalia. Thus, though it had huge military presence in Somalia for nearly two decades, it opposed Somalia's unjustified attempt to invade Ethiopia by violating the charter of the OAU. Practically, the real interest of the USSR was to sustain its ties with Somalia and strengthen its diplomatic relationship with Ethiopia. However, this offended Somalia and it expelled the Soviet military advisors from the country. This, in turn, created golden opportunity for Ethiopia to get the remarkable supports from USSR and Cuba. While those Soviet military advisors who were expelled from Somalia came to Ethiopia and began to consult the military, around eighteen thousand Cuban soldiers assisted the Ethiopian troops to trample the enemy (Gebru, 2000; Makinda, 1984; Ayoob, 1978).

Preparing for years for the war, the dictator Somalia's leader, Said Barre, was boasting that his country could defeat Ethiopia. However, his country's crushing defeat exposes him to ridicule [...ወየው ሰይጅ ባሪ ተርመጥምጠህ ቀረህ በምንህ ትወጣ/... the last two lines in the translation]. It seems that the speaker makes Barre the topic of mockery for he is getting tired of hearing Barre bragging about the strength of his army. Of course, the supplies of arms and trainings that his soldiers gained from USSR and US's willingness to strengthen his army with modern machineguns made Barre give himself airs. However, unfortunate for Barre, things happened against his plans. Gebru (2000:635) states, "The dramatic and massive intervention by socialist countries enabled the Ethiopians to crush and repel the invading army, which never recovered fully from its stunning defeat." After those endless boasts, Barre admitted of his country's defeat on 8 March, 1978.

Evidences show that apart from the political turmoil in Ethiopia there had been huge differences especially in terms of equipment between the armies of these two neighboring nations. Somalia's soldiers were better equipped than the thinly scattered Ethiopia troops. During the beginning of the war, being poorly equipped and thinly scattered, Ethiopian soldiers suffered much to combat the well-equipped army of Somalia. The militias most of whom belonged to the peasantry stayed only for three months at Tatek Military Camp. Since the aggressors were in the verge of controlling the two strategic towns, Harar and Dire-Dowa, the Ethiopian army were in urgent need of additional troops; hence, there was no ample time to train them (the militias) thoroughly so that they coped with the full spectrum of military challenges. This forced Ethiopians to win the victory at the cost of many lives. The casualties in the hard-fought battle Ethio-Somalia war were heavy. (Gebru, 2000; Makinda, 1984; Ayoob, 1978).

The war was totally dysfunctional for both Ethiopia and Somalia. They should have struggled to solve the biggest problems such as poverty, illiteracy, etc. of their own respective people rather than engaging in such costly war. Particularly, Somalia has hardly recovered from the aftermaths of the stunning defeat. Said Barre, who orchestrated the war, paid dearly for his nightmarish mistake of forming a new nation the so called "The Greater Somalia" by taking the largest territory from Ethiopia. The defeat cheapened the dignity of his office, and many armed groups launched military operations to overthrow his government. As Hull in CoolBen (2015:6) states, "... like many African leaders he was never really prepared to be anything except to be a lifetime leader and never really prepared for what would happen after he died. So, after he died his supporters

simply formed their own factions and turned on each other.” After ruling Somalia for 21 years (1969-1990) Barre forced from power in early 1990s by a collision of armed opposition groups. Soon after his deposition, different clans in Somalia started to kill each other, and finally the nation became a failed state.

On the other hand, Ethiopia’s dictator, Mengistu H/Mariam, manipulatively used the victory to magnify his role. He became the most influential figure by centralizing his administration and thereby weakened the oppositions. Instead of solving the Eritrean issue diplomatically, he kept on fighting against the Eritrean People Liberation Front (EPLF) under the slogan “የምስራቁን ድል በሰሜን እንደግማለን”/As we win victory in the east, we will win victory in north, too/. Denouncing his undemocratic government, the most experienced and well-trained army generals launched a failed coup d’etat attempt on May, 1989. Unfortunately, thirteen (13) of them were executed in relation to the attempted coup-d’etat. It is good to note that one of the most outstanding war heroes, Major General Demissie Bulto, was among the executed ones. He received Medal for heroism during the Ethio-Somalia war. Thus, terribly, with this unjustified execution, Menegistu exposed the nation to the total security threats. The absence of the experienced generals made the secessionists gain tactical superiority over the Ethiopian troops. As a result, it took them less than two years to depose Mengistu and secede Eritrea.

Economy was thought to be the cause of Somalia’s aggression. Though Somalia claimed to unite with its territory the Somali tribes in Ogaden of Ethiopia, its real objective was to take some of the most fertile provinces including Hararghe. Therefore, Somalia’s curiosity to have the fertile and strategic province, Harargheghe, blinded it to the fact that Ethiopia is the land of patriots that never compromise their freedom. In the lines below, the speaker amplifies how Somali’s biggest mistake leads it to face the stunning defeat:

.....
እንቆርሳለን እንወስዳለን ሲሉ የጄግኖችን አገር
ገብተው ሰምጠው ቀሩ ከጄግኖቹ መንደር
ቀልድ የለም በሀገር በጎበዞች ድንበር
.....

When they claimed to take over the country of the heroes,
They were trapped and dismissed by the heroes;
No one can make fun of the heroes’ country;

The speaker labels Ethiopia the land of heroes who are alert to preserve and defend their freedom at any cost. Due to this, the Somalis, who invaded this nation, became the agent of their own destruction [ገብተው ሰምጠው ቀሩ ከጆግኖቹ መንደር/ line 2 in the translation].

Generally, in the song under discussion the speaker focuses on two major issues. He strictly condemns the Somalia aggressors, and he encourages the fellow citizens to fight bravely for their people and the nation. He attempts to reveal that Somalia's useless dreams and bragging brings it trouble. Besides condemning the invaders, he motivates the fellow citizen to stand against the enemy. As things stand, Ethiopians responded swiftly to the call of the nation, and they won victory by enduring the bitter hardships they faced during the war. They faced shortage of equipment, food, clothing, etc. during the war. A soldier in Gebru (2000: 661) witnesses that, "... the uniform and boots provided for a year are not even adequate for four months. So, men are forced to walk barefoot and without clothing even; their feet are often swollen and oozing." There is no doubt that USSR and Cuba made their contribution to the victory; however, the intended victory could not be won if Ethiopians were not determined to make the ultimate sacrifice. The other Amharic song lyrics such as "ቀሩ እየቀለሉ" [qäru äyäkälätu], "እማማ ኢትዮጵያ" [ämama itäyopäya] and "አፈር መስኮት የለው" [afärä mäsdokotä yälöwö] deal with the issues raised in the song under discussion. The speakers in all these songs outright condemn the invention, and they encourage the fellow citizens to follow in their grandfathers' footsteps to repel Somalia's illegal and immoral act of aggression (See Appendix B).

5.1.4. Famine and Draught

Oftentimes famine and drought are taken one and the same; however, they are different in their nature. Drought is either the prolonged absence or shortage of rainfall that leads to scarcity of water. Famine, on the other hand, is the extreme shortage of food. Drought can cause famine in areas where a country fails to have ready reserve foods. This shows that famine is a manmade disaster, and it is preventable. Contrary to this, drought is entirely determined by natural phenomena which is absolutely unpreventable.

During the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I, 80% of the population gained their livelihood from farming. As a result, Ethiopian economy was mainly based on subsistence agriculture. The ruling classes that persistently exploited the peasants and consumed the surplus often failed to provide

them (the peasants) with incentives which enabled them to either improve production or store their excess harvest. Therefore, Ethiopian peasants who were dominantly the victim of the corrupted political system were forced to live from harvest to harvest. This, in turn, made them vulnerable to crop failures. Consequently, Ethiopia was stricken by severe famine time and again. For instance, in 1973 hundreds of thousands of Ethiopians starved to death because of famine. Particularly, the two provinces, Wollo and Tigray, suffered more severely than any other part of the country. Emperor Haile Selassie 's regime turned a blind eye to the ongoing danger while the people of its kingdom wasted away during the famine. The regime's complete blindness to the reality eventually became one of the main factors for the deposition of Emperor. Kohn (1979) states:

By 1974, almost 8 percent of Ethiopia's people had experienced starvation (Shepherd, 1975: 39) and more than two hundred thousand Ethiopians had perished in the famine's wake.' The famine captured an exceptionally high level of public and media attention throughout the world. Considerable public concern arose within Ethiopia and abroad over the vast dimensions of human suffering involved and in reaction to the government's callous attempt to conceal rather than alleviate the consequences of the disaster. Eventually, the famine and unmasking of the moral bankruptcy of the government's response to it became important precipitating factors in the deposition of Emperor Haile Selassie I and termination of monarchical rule by military coup d'etat in 1974.

During the revolution many lyricists composed songs which discuss the deadly famine that claimed thousands of lives during the years 1973-1974. Following this an attempt has been made to deal with such songs:

It was in 1967 E.C. that Getachew Yeshaw composed the song, “ቀባሪ አጥቶ ሬሳ” [qäbari aṭṭo resa]; in this song, the speaker mourns for the victims of the famine, and issues a call for support for the fellow countrymen:

በወሎ በትግሬ በባሌ በሀረር
 ቀባሪ አጥቶ ሬሳ በሬሳ ሲከመር
 በረሀብ አለንጋ ሲገረፍ ፍጥረቱ
 መረዳዳት እንጂ አይጠቅምም ማየቱ

.....

In Wollo, Tigray, Bale and Harar,
 In the absence of someone to bury a pile of dead bodies,
 And when the living creatures suffer from hunger,
 Helping each other is decisive;

There is an old saying in Ethiopia that say, “የወደቀን አንሱ፤ የሞተን ቅበሩ” [help someone up after a fall and bury the dead one]. Local social organizations such as ‘idir’, ‘mehaber’, ‘equib’, etc. paves the ways for the development of the social nature and ideals of people. They also contribute much to make individuals intimately interact and cooperate over a long period of time. Among the various socio-economic traditions in Ethiopia, “idir”/እድር/ is the wide spread one both in urban and rural areas of the country (Ayele, 2003). Under normal circumstance, the ‘idir’ and other local social institutions organize a time and place to bury the deceased. Apart from covering some of the cost of the burial ceremony, the member of the ‘idir’ and the neighbors continuously soothe the family of the deceased person. However, as the lines above suggest, the dead bodies are left unburied. This shows the depth of the devastation that the famine inflicted on the people of the stated provinces. It entirely collapsed the local social institutions and made all go wrong. As a result, the paralysis of the institutions obliged the people to face the horrific burden of leaving the dead bodies unburied [... ቀባሪ አጥቶ ሬሳ በሬሳ ሲከመር/line 2 in the translation].

By uncovering the shocking scenes of the famine, the speaker tries his best to draw the fellow citizen on the subject of the hunger. He underlies the decisiveness of helping the needy as fast as possible [በረሀብ አለንጋ ሲገረፍ ፍጥረቱ/መረዳዳት እንጂ አይጠቅምም ማየቱ/ the last two lines]. Furthermore, being in the midst of chaos, he expresses his hopes and dreams for the nation:

.....
 ምድርሽ የሰጡትን ሁሉን ይቀበላል
 ተፈጥሮ ያለማው ያበቅላል ያፈራል
 ሀብት እያለሽ ንዋይ ለዘር ዘርሽ በቂ
 አትሆኚም ከእንግዲህ እርዳታ ጠያቂ

.....
 Since your land is fertile, it grows anything;
 The wild plants produce fruits;
 You never beg for support here after,
 For you have resources
 That even the generation to come could rely on;

.....
 As the lines above suggest, the speaker believes that being the resourceful nation, Ethiopia will never be stricken by such a deadly famine. Studies show that Ethiopia possesses large fertile plains, hills and valleys, and it is rich in natural resource. It has the potential to feed its own people and stand on its own two feet. Koehn (1979: 51) states, “... Ethiopia possesses rich natural endowments

that are favorable for food production, including large size, diversity in terrain and elevation, fertile soil, a favorable person-to-land ratio, and an industrious peasantry.” Therefore, if Ethiopians commit to use its resources properly, they can make the speaker’s dream come true.

In Getachew Yeshaw’s (1967 E.C.) another song, “ወገኔ እሹሩሩ” [wägäne ôŠururu], the speaker tries to comfort the victims and point out the root causes of the famine:

.....
 ሲጎል የሚያሳጣ ሰውነት ክፉ ነው
 ወገኔ ቆራጥ ሁን ለርሀብ ፊት አትስጠው
 የባይ ተመልካች ሆነህ ላደሀሪ
 ላዋይ ቁራሽ እንኳን አጣህ ፍርፋሪ

.....
 Though a starved body causes shudder,
 Be courageous, my fellow countrymen;
 Don’t get defeated by hanger;
 You are excluded from the wealth of the nation;
 You see the reactionaries exploiting the country’s resource,
 While you don’t have even the crumble of food;

.....

The speaker attempts to motivate the fellow citizen not to feel demoralized though the hunger causes them great pains and physical deteriorations. He wants them to stay strong to break out of the miserable life they are living now rather than crippling themselves being in the shadow of the terrible famine [ሲጎል የሚያሳጣ ሰውነት ክፉ ነው/ወገኔ ቆራጥ ሁን ለርሀብ ፊት አትስጠው/the first 3 lines in the translation].

In the song under discussion, the reactionaries are held responsible for the famine [የባይ ተመልካች ሆነህ ላደሀሪ/ላዋይ ቁራሽ እንኳን አጣህ ፍርፋሪ/the last 2 lines in the translation]. Similarly, studies show that during the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I, the land tenure system highly favored the royal families and the landlords. Instead of giving due attentions to vast majority peasants who depended on subsistence agriculture within various constraints, the government offered facilities for large-scale commercial agricultural enterprises that produced cash crops for export. This, in turn, contributed much to the occurrence and intensity of the famine. Koehn (1978:52) observes:

... food production increased less rapidly than population in the latter years of Haile Selassie's rule while political and economic conditions fostered by the legal order made peasants more vulnerable to drought. One major reason for these developments is that government plans, tax incentives, credit policies, and infrastructure projects abetted large-scale commercial agricultural enterprises engaged in producing cash crops for export while the laws and policies

governing resource allocation for agricultural development in imperial Ethiopia failed to promote and often retarded the production of food for domestic consumption by small scale farmers and pastoralists.

During the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I, the land tenure policy was mainly formulated on assumption that development in the agricultural sector could be gained only by the rapid improvement of large-scale commercial farms producing crops for export (Dunning, 1970). Thus, the government was committed in increasing the production of cash-crops for export. Paradoxically, it offered huge incentives to either Ethiopian land lords or expatriates who involved in commercial farming (Koehn, 1979). The legal order of the government did not give the peasants security of tenure. The absence of supportive court justices and written contracts exposed them not to have protection from sudden or arbitrary eviction. Furthermore, the peasants were hardly compensated for the improvements they made on the land that they rented. Most often, when they increased the yield of their harvest by improving the fertility of their plot of land, the landlords increased the rent of their land (Bahru, 1976; Gilkes, 1976). Therefore, “under such exploitative and insecure conditions, peasants possessed no incentive and showed little inclination to increase food production, adopt agricultural innovations, conserve trees and water, or invest in improved soil fertility” (Koehn, 1979:55). The cumulative effect of such unfavorable situations led to the decline of crops for domestic consumptions. The speaker also criticizes the regime for the way it handles the crisis:

.....
ችግርክን ደብቀው አድርገውት ሚስጥር
ትዝብት አተረፉ ቀን ማለፉ ላይቀር
መከራህ መከራው የሆነው አካልህ
ደርሶልህል ዛሬ ተሰምቶት ስቃይህ

.....
They hide the problem that you face,
But their disappointing guilt is exposed;
Your fellow countrymen who feel and share your misery,
Arrive to save you from such sufferings;

.....

The speaker accuses the regime of keeping the famine a secret from its own people [ችግርክን ደብቀው አድርገውት ሚስጥር.../line 1 in the translation]. The vast majority of Ethiopians were offended with the way the regime handled the famine that claimed more than two hundred thousand lives. Instead

of putting all the efforts to mobilize the people to support the victims, it tried to cover the whole thing up. Koehn (1979:56) observes:

Final proof of the exploitative and ineffective nature of the pre-coup legal and administrative order emerged during the height of the famine. Haile Selassie's government demonstrated extraordinary callousness toward the suffering of the Ethiopian peasantry. Rather than attempt to respond to the most obvious signs of famine, officials at all levels deliberately suppressed news that famine had stricken the countryside. Indeed, local police prevented starving peasants seeking food in Wollo province from entering market towns in May of 1973. The imperial administrative system proved incapable of dealing effectively with famine conditions in any event.

The people were not fully aware of the horrible danger that the famine inflicted on their fellow countrymen in the two provinces, Wollo and Tigray, until Dimbleby's documentary film entitled "The Unknown Famine" was televised on the national television. This documentary film exposed the regime that turned its blind eye to its own citizen who suffered from severe famine as irresponsible and reckless. As a result, those who were seeking regime change outrageously struggled to overthrow the emperor. Dimbleby (1998:1) himself witnesses, "Twenty-five years ago, in 1973, I was responsible for an ITV film called The Unknown Famine which exposed Ethiopia as a crumbling empire stricken by mass starvation. Within Ethiopia the film aroused shame and anger. As a direct result, The Unknown Famine became the catalyst for the overthrow of a feudal emperor in favor of that gruesome dictatorship which soon became synonymous with the name of Mengistu."

The junior officers who were on the verge of committing coup d'état retitled Dimbleby's "The Unknown Famine" "The Hidden Famine", and they used it as an instrument of propaganda. The oppressed masses hardly contained their irritation at watching the malnourished children, women and men who were dying from hunger. They started to oppose the emperor's ruthless determination of abusing his power; thousands of demonstrators poured out in the capital, Addis Ababa, and small towns across the country in a show of outrage over the negligence of the regime to support the victim of the deadly famine (Dimbleby, 1998).

To sum up, the two revolutionary songs, "ቀባሪ አጥቶ ሬሳ" [qäbari aṭṭo resa] and "ወገኔ እሹሩሩ" [wägäne ḍšururu], discussed under this sub-section evidently show the dysfunctions of social structures during the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I. As functionalists claim, various sections of the society are organized to keep its (the society's) stability. When parts of the society function properly, they could maintain its harmonious continuity. However, if any of the structures fails to

play their expected role, the society cannot be in its state of balance; in this respect, the famine could not have been as devastating as this if the governmental institutions at local and national levels had made concentrated efforts to solve the problem. As Koehn (1979:51). points out, “The legal and political patterns sanctioned by Haile Selassie's government accentuated the effects of drought and turned a serious climatic problem into a human calamity.” From the beginning, the wrong orientation of the agricultural sector contributed a lot to the occurrence of the famine; the regime’s failure to give due attention to the productions of crops for local consumptions exposed the people to the famine. Furthermore, the bureaucracy of the regime was delaying the process of providing emergency aid to the victim. Asmarom and Seleshi in Koehn (1979:56) state “The worst feature of the administrative reaction to the famine was the amount of time spent registering the starving thousands... Many died needlessly while waiting to be registered.” The other song, “የወገን ጥሪ” [yāwägänፊ ፎጥሪ], also deals with the issues raised in the two songs that have been discussed so far (See Appendix B).

5.2. Political Discontents

In its seventeen years stay in power, the Derge did not tolerate anyone questioning its measures. Those who opposed its motto, **Ethiopia First (Ethiopia Tikedem)**, were either detained or assassinated (Tronvoll et al, 2012; Wondwosen, 2009). Therefore, songs that However Consequently, for fear the risk that the regime posed to them, lyricists began to refrain from composing songs that dealt with political discontents of the time (Timkehet, 2009). Tesfaye Lemma’s ‘አልማዝን አይቼ’/alፊmazፊn ayፊፎፆ/ and Getachew Debalke’s ‘ሎሚ ተራ ተራ’/lomi ፊጥራ ፊጥራ/ are among the few songs that criticize the regime. In this section, it has been tried to analyze the theme of these two songs.

Literally, the speaker in the song ‘አልማዝን አይቼ’/alፊmazፊn ayፊፎፆ/ deals with love; nevertheless, intrinsically, he communicates political discontents:

አልማዝን አይቼ አልማዝን ሳያት
 ሰስተኛዋ አልማዝ ብትመጣ ድንገት
 ሁለቱን አልማዞች ስላስረሳችኝ
 ምርጫዬ በምርጫ ተበላሸብኝ

.....

First, I saw Almaz, and again I saw another Almaz,
 When the third Almaz came all of a sudden, she made me forget the first two;
 So, I failed to choose one of the three ‘Alemazes’;

The speaker faces difficulty to choose one among the three women who are called by the name Almaz. They bear absolute resemblance to each other, so he utterly fails to choose one from them. Here, the three women represent the three military officers: General Aman Andom, Brigadier General Tafari Banti and Major Mengistu H/Mariam who led the Derge one after the other. After they deposed Emperor Haile Selassie I, these military officers led to power struggle. Berouk (2002:33) observes:

The PMAC (Provisional Military Administrative Council) was initially headed by Lieutenant General Aman Andom...However, the PMAC was racked by violent internal power struggles between rival factions on how best to organize and lead the country. Disputes on how to deal with the Eritrean problem led to the killing of the general in November 1975, immediately followed by the execution of fifty-seven officials and dignitaries of the old regime. General Aman's successor, Brigadier General Teferi Banti, met the same fate in February 1977 following a gun battle at the Derg's main office. The liquidation of Brigadier General Teferi was followed by the purge in November 1977 of Lieutenant Colonel Atnafu Abate, the second vicechair man of the Derg, marking the concentration of power in the hands of Lieutenant Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam).

Opposing Emperor Haile Selassie's failure to effect substantial economic and political reforms, students and the different sections of the society struggled a lot by demanding change. However, the stated army officers who controlled the power unexpectedly could not offer the country its best hope for peace and prosperity. Rather, in their fierce struggle to hold the power, they threatened the country's transition toward democracy. Hence, in this song the speaker claims that the replacement of one army officer by the other could not bring the expected changes. For him, they are the same for the simple reason that they believe political power grows out of the barrel of a gun. The speaker has got fed up with spending much time on choosing one from the three 'Almazes'; in his judgement, they are not dependable. This urges him to look for a new woman whom he thinks is better than the 'Almazes':

.....
 ከአልማዝ መሀል ገብቶ በአልማዝ መቸገር
 ለሰሚው ግራ ነው የሚያደናግር
 የሶስት አልማዝ ምርጫ ስለሰጩክቀኝ
 ጥሩወርቅ ተሸላ ስለታዩኝኝ
 ሄድኩኝ ከጥሩወርቅ አልማዞቹን ትቼ
 አላዋጣም ቢለኝ ነገሩን ገምቼ

.....
 Finding oneself among 'Almazes', and got challenged by them confused the hearer;
 I was frustrated by my inability to choose one from the three 'Almazes';
 Examining the matter, I found Tiruwork better than 'Almazes';
 So, abandoning 'Almazes', I went to Tiruwork;

As the lines above suggest, the speaker begins to deal with the new woman called Tiruwork. He finds the qualities he admires in her, so he leaves the ‘Almazes’ for her [...ጥሩወርቅ ተሽላ ስለታየችኝ/ሄድኩኝ ከጥሩወርቅ አልማዞቹን ትቼ.../the last two lines in the translation]. Here, the new woman, Tiruwork, seems to represent those who run the civilian political movements such as EPRP (Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Party), MEISON (All-Ethiopian Socialist Movement), etc. Evidences show that in the civilian political parties there had been most desirable candidates with better educational backgrounds and experiences to rule the nation (Balsvik, 2009; Huang, 2006; Babile,1997).

The speaker in Getachew Debalke’s song, ‘ሎሚ ተራ ተራ’/lomi tōra tōra/, critically ridicules the military leaderships in the Derge:

.....
 ወራሽ ነኝ ይል ጀመር አንዳንድ ዲቃላ
 ካማካሪው ጋራ ተሻርኮ ሊበላ
 እናቴን አድርጓት ሞኝና ተላላ

.....
 Some illegitimate children begin to heir the throne;
 They planned to exploit her with his accomplice;
 By considering my mother as foolish;

.....

In this song, Ethiopia is considered as a mother [እናቴን አድርጓት ሞኝና ተላላ/the last line in the translation]. According to the speaker of this song, the political leaderships who start claiming power are the illegitimate children (‘ዲቃላ’/diqalq/). In the Ethiopian context, the term ‘ዲቃላ’/diqalq/ is an intolerable insult to someone’s dignity. And under normal circumstance, little social recognition and respect is given to the illegitimate children/ ‘ዲቃላ’/diqalq/. Thus, by using this insulting word, the speaker shows that he feels too upset to see them attempting to hold the undeserved position by insulting his mother’s (in this case his country’s) intelligence.

In general, the speakers in the two songs discussed under this section have voiced their concern over the Derge’s inability to lead Ethiopia. As things stand, the students, the workers and other sections of the society were dreaming to establish popular government after the deposition of Emperor Haile Selassie I. However, the Derge which was mainly formed by the junior army officers, controlled the power unexpectedly. This eventually provoked furious reactions; people

who supported the civilian opposition parties began to oppose the Derge so that it relinquished power. In its attempt to eliminate and discredit its opponents, the Derge contributed much to the occurrence of some darkest events including the Red Terror in Ethiopia's history. Unfortunately, the well-known vocalist Tilahun Gessesse who sang the first song, 'አልማዝን አይቼ' /alðmazðn ayðče/, was imprisoned due to the message of the song and his refusal to expose the lyricist. In addition, Getachew Debalke, who composed the second song, 'ሎሚ ተራ ተራ' /lomi tðra tðra/, also became the victim to the Derge's mass imprisonment. He told the researcher that if God had not saved him, he would have been died in the prison due to the harassment he faced there (in the prison).

Chapter VI: Major Themes of Amharic Song Lyrics during the Reign of EPRDF

This chapter presents the thematic analyses of Amharic song lyrics composed during the reign of EPRDF (Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front). Numerous Amharic songs have been produced since EPRDF began to rule Ethiopia in 1991. Amharic song lyrics composed during the era under discussion are thematically categorized into **political discontent, migration, patriotism, and nostalgia**. However, in this paper decision is made to discuss the selected Amharic song lyrics under the first two thematic categories (political discontent and migration). This is done due to the fact that the detailed socio-politics and socio-economics landscapes of Ethiopia under EPRDF are depicted through these songs better than the songs under the rest two thematic categories (patriotism, and nostalgia). Therefore, following this an attempt has been made to analyze the themes of the Amharic song lyrics that deal with political discontents and migration occurred during the reign of EPRDF.

6.1. Political Discontent

In its more than two decades stay in power EPRDF fails to set mechanisms that enable it to solve the social, political and economic problems that the country has faced for centuries. The federal system that EPRDF keeps on implementing mainly depends on language. It does not give due attention to the nation's long history and the multifaced interactions among the various ethnic groups. Moreover, against their expectations, the ruling party has disallowed the people to exercise their democratic rights. As a result, millions of Ethiopians suffer from poverty, disease and multidimensional maladministration (Alem, 2004).

Oftentimes, it would pay anyone to condemn the evil deeds of such an oppressive regime through songs or any other forms of literary works. However, though few in number, there are lyricists who courageously criticize the undemocratic measures of this dictatorial government. Following this, attempts have been made to discuss the songs that reflect political discontents of the period under discussion.

Tewoderos Kassahun's (1997 E.C.) song 'ያስተሰርያል'/yasፅätäsärፅyälፅ/ deals with the paralysis of Ethiopian political culture. In this song, the speaker draws analogy between the bloody transitions of power from Emperor Haile Selassie I to the Derge and from the Derge to EPRDF:

ግርማዊነታቸው ከሲ ሰረገላ
 ወደ ወገል ወርደው ሲተኩ በሌላ
 በአዛውንቶች እራስ ስልሳ ጉድጓድ ምሳ
 አብዮት ሞላቸው የተማሪ እሬሳ
 ባስራ ሰባት መርፌ በጠቀመው ቁምጣ
 ለለውጥ ያጎፈረው ዙፋን ላይ ሲወጣ
 እንዳምናው ባለቀን ያምናውን ከተካ
 አዲስ ንጉስ እንጂ ለውጥ መቼ መጣ

.....
 His Majesty down from the throne
 Reduced into an ordinary Wagen's ride
 Followed a revolution that began by digging
 60 holes to bury elderly official heads
 Followed by a mass of students' bodies.

Then now came the rebels all the way
 Mending their warrior rags with 17 needles
 Wearing long hair symbolizing change
 they took the seat for that very cause
 But like the previous leaders they
 punished their predecessors.
 We only see leaders taking over seats,
 but no change in its real sense.

.....

As the lines above suggest, the speaker mourns the fruitless transitions that Ethiopia faced repeatedly in its political history. In its attempt to depose Emperor Haile Selassie I, the Derge committed historic mistake by killing 60 former officials. And it promised to build a better nation that strives for the equality of its people. However, what happened was quite the opposite. Breaking its promise, the Derge itself became one of the most dictatorial government in Africa. Let alone facilitating democratic transition of the nation, it brutally stood against all democratic forces. Pitifully, the Ethiopian students who fiercely struggled for the right of the oppressed masses became the victim of the unjustified killing and imprisonment of the Derge [በአዛውንቶች እራስ ስልሳ ጉድጓድ ምሳ/አብዮት ሞላቸው የተማሪ እሬሳ/lines 3-5 in the translations].

According to the speaker, the Derge failed to bring the intended change, and the same is true to the EPRDF. In this song, the length of the years that the fight took and its harshness is symbolically

described [ባስራ ሰባት መርፌ በጠቀመው ቁምጣ/Then now came the rebels all the way/Mending their warrior rags with 17 needles]. Here the speaker uses 17 needles to refer to the seventeen years that the bloody war went on between the two brothers. Furthermore, he also tries to mention the poor wearing situation of the soldier of EPRDF while they were fighting against the Derge. EPRDF's soldiers were not wearing standard military uniforms; they instead wore shorts which were mended here and there. This, in turn, implies how a lot of blood and sweats have gone into the victory that EPRDF won. However, after all the sacrifices it made, EPRDF has become as dictator as its authoritarian predecessor, the Derge [... ለለውጥ ያገፈረው ዙፋን ላይ ሲወጣ/አንዳምናው ባለቀን ያምናውን ከተካ/አዲስ ንጉስ እንጂ ለውጥ መቼ መጣ/lines 8-13 in the translation]. Therefore, the transition from the Derge to the EPRDF is all about change of individuals but not change of system (Abbink, 2006). Practically, it is not difficult to witness the similarities between the Derge and the EPRDF in terms of their undemocratic measures. Even if the geopolitics of the horn of Africa has helped EPRDF to achieve some economic developments, political wise, it is as tyranny as the Derge. The speaker also claims that we Ethiopians suffer from starvation due to the lack of shared affections among us:

.....

ጃ ያስተሰርያል... ጃ ያስተሰርያል

ፍቅር አጥተን እንጂ በርሀብ የተቀጣን
 አፈሩ ገራገር ምድሩ መቼ አሳጣን
 አሲሳ አሲሳ አሲሳ ማንዴላ
 ይቅር አባብሎ እንዳስጣለ ቢላ
 በተስፋዋ መሬት እንዲፈጸም ቃሉ
 ሞፈሩን ያዙና ይቅር ተባባሉ

.....

Jah is the redeemer, Jah is the redeemer

The land is fertile, and it provides well
 It was because we let love suffer
 that we are punished by hunger
 Osis Mandela

Like he reconciled the opponents and let them willingly disarm
 So be it, true for His words to come
 Hold the plough up and forgive one another

.....

According to the speaker, if it wasn't for the absence of mutual affections among us, the fertility of the soil would enable us to feed ourselves. Thus, for him, we are responsible for the hunger we

face now [ፍቅር አጥተን እንጂ በርሀብ የተቀጣን/አፈሩ ገራገር ምድሩ መቼ አሳጣን/lines 2-3 in the translation]. Though EPRDF has continuously claimed that it achieved a double digit economic growth, millions of Ethiopians still live in poverty, and the country is one of the poorest in the world (Alemayehu & Addis, 2014). Commenting on the current living conditions of the people in Ethiopia, Abubeker et al write that “in Ethiopia it is estimated that about one-third of the population are living in extreme poverty. About 87% of the population faces multiple deprivations while additional 6.8 % of the population is at verge of falling under multiple deprivations” (2014:257). In a situation when more than 80 % of the total population depends on subsistence farming, “... access to basic food is a major factor of household welfare... Ethiopia indeed suffers from extreme food poverty” (Alemayehu & Addis, 2014:10).

The people might not have suffered from poverty to this level if the political leaderships had pursued fair and effective land policy. Apart from denying to privatize the land, EPRDF displaces the peasants unconditionally when it needs their plots of land for investment. According to Stiftung (2014:29), “Land grabbing has caused much conflict between people who do not know how to survive following the government’s decision to intensify commercial farming and resettlement programs. Several dozen people were reported killed and more than 120,000 displaced in 2010 – 2011. Conflicts over access to resources necessary for survival, such as fertile land and water, are the main reasons.” Therefore, one might find the speaker’s argument as logical when he/she takes into account the tenure insecurity and the land grabbing crime that is happening in Ethiopia currently.

By alluding to the huge achievements of Nelson Mandela, the South Africa’s freedom fighter, the speaker indicates a way out of the messes that Ethiopia faces now. After all the pains and the traumas he went through for twenty-seven years in prison, Nelson Mandela did not want to revenge himself on those who detained him unjustifiably. He rather forgave his mortal enemies. This, in turn, has saved his nation from devastating racial conflict between the blacks and the whites. Thus, the speaker wants his fellow citizens to follow the foot-steps of Nelson Mandela. For him, being the Redeemer, God has the ultimate power to forgive those who beg for His mercy [ጃ ያስተሰርያል... ጃ ያስተሰርያል/the first line in the translation]. However, according to him, it is only when his fellow citizens heal their wound through forgiveness that God blesses Ethiopia to enjoy the promise that He makes to it (Ethiopia, “the land of hope”). With this the speaker seems to refer to the words of

Jesus in the Gospel. As Jesus commands in the Gospel, to be forgiven one has to forgive those who offend him/her. The only problem is that “the government is obviously more interested in fighting and punishing political opponents who pose a present-day threat to the country’s political stability” (Stiftung, 2014:35).

It has to be depending on the Holy Bible that the speaker calls Ethiopia “...the land of hope”. For instance, as described elsewhere in this study, in the verse of David it is said that “Ethiopia stretches forth its hands unto God” (Psalm 68). And according to the speaker in the song under discussion, the term “Jah” means God. Here we see the positive functioning of religion to promote the stability and continuity of the society. Being the follower of Christianity, one is forced to forgive the offender if he/she (the victim in this case) wants to be forgiven by God.

In this song, the speaker presents the functional power of forgiveness that keeps the society’s continuity through reconciliation. According to him, those who have the courage and willingness to heal their wound through forgiveness as Nelson Mandela did can build a better nation by protecting it from the divisive act of the political leaderships. However, the situation in Ethiopia is extremely disappointing; instead of uniting the people through reconciliation and forgiveness to build a better nation, the power brokers in Ethiopia put all their efforts to stay in power by coercion.

Opposition parties continuously urges EPRDF to pave the ways for the national reconciliation among different interest groups in Ethiopia. However, all their desires to reach a consensus through genuine discussions have met with a deafening silence on the part of the ruling party (Abbink, 2006). EPRDF is not ready to promote a policy of peace, forgiveness and reconciliation. It does not seem to have had a change of heart about its ineffective political ideology that keeps on crippling the sense of togetherness among the citizens. However, the speaker hopes for the best that Ethiopia will soon be free from this oppressive regime:

.....
ዘጸአት ለኢትዮጵያ ወደ ተስፋ ጉዞ
ባህሩን የሚያሻግር አንድ ሙሴን ይዞ
ቅርብ ነው አይርቅም የኢትዮጵያ ትንሳኤ
ባንድነት ከገባን የፍቅር ሱባኤ

.....
Be it exodus for Ethiopia to the realm of hope
Getting across the sea led by a Moses of its own
Ethiopia’s resurrection is nearing

As the lines above suggest, Ethiopia needs a man as blessed as Moses, the great biblical figure, who led his fellow countrymen from Egypt to Israel with the help of God. According to the Holy Bible Israelites were severely enslaved by Egyptians for many years. The miseries that the Israelite faced under their Egyptian masters is shown in the Holy Bible as, "... And the Egyptian made the children of Israel serve with harshness; and they embittered their life with hard labour in clay and bricks, and in all manner of labour in the field: all their labour with which they made them serve was with harshness" (Exodus: 1, 13-15]. The speaker's argument is that if we love each other and pray to God to save us as He saved the Israelites through Moses, He (God) will give us a Moses of our own who can lead us to "the land of hope". In other words, if we pray to God with the sense of togetherness and love, He will forgive us and let us free.

The other song that deals with the politics of the period under discussion is Ejigayehu Shibabaw's song, 'እስከመቼ' /əskämäčə/. In this song also, we see the speaker nursing her grievance against her unspecified offenders:

እህህ እስከመቼ እህህ ያዛልቀናል
 እህህ እስከመቼ እህህ ገና ብዙ ነገር ብዙ ይቀረናል

 How long do we give a scream of grief?
 We have a lot to do;

The speaker claims that she is tired of giving a scream of grief while she sits idle. In a situation where all the means of expressing opinions are blocked, one would suffer from the deepest grief like the speaker. If she is able to share her ideas with likeminded people publicly, she may experience some relief from her painful feelings. To do this, there has to be free medias. However, as studies show, EPRDF threats free presses, and it restricts freedom of information. Stiftung (2014:8) states:

There is no freedom of information in Ethiopia. During the review period, the government even attempted to block information relating to the Arab Spring revolutions. During 2011 and 2012, several publications and newspapers were shut and reporters harassed, among them the weekly publications Addis Neger and Awramba Times. A shrinking number of governmental journals still remain. The state practice censorship while some journalists practice self-censorship; others leave the country altogether, alleging intimidation and threats to their safety.

Deep at heart the speaker feels that she and her fellow countrymen should work a lot at a fast pace to enjoy a relaxing atmosphere, free of tension. However, in practice, her progress is painfully slow. As a result, she is beginning to complain about her sluggishness:

.....
 እህህ እስከመቼ ልቤ ፈጠን በል
 እህህ እስከመቼ እግሬ ተራመድ
 እህህ እስከመቼ ምን ያንኳትንሃል
 እህህ እስከመቼ አመድ ለአመድ
 እህህ እስከመቼ አይ...አይ...አይ...

.....
 How long do I give a scream of grief?
 Let you my heart be fast;
 How long do I give a scream of grief?
 Let you my leg walk fast;
 What makes you hover around pile of ashes?

Though the speaker has to be fast to come up with a practical solution to the problem she faces, she falls into the trap of doing something irrelevant. Under normal circumstance, she has to leap into action instead of hovering around the pile of ashes. In Ethiopia there is a belief that one might be possessed by the devils if he/she stays long in a place where there are piles of ashes. Unluckily, the speaker is hovering in such a dreadful place. She might use the metaphor of ash particularly to ridicule the fruitfulness of individuals (especially the leaderships of the opposition parties) who spend much of their time on a trivial matter rather than standing unitedly to overthrow the regime by defending its conspiracy against them. In the last two decades there had been occasions in which people argued over historical events that has no importance to them today. Either the state media or the cadres of the regime oftentimes aggravate the situation instead of creating awareness among the people so that they understand the causes and consequences of conflicts occurred in the past by putting them (the issues that caused the disagreement) in their historical context. The speaker is not feeling healthy at the moment, so she is beginning to suffer from serious impairment:

.....
 ልቤ በፍርሀት እጅግ ተበክሏል
 በርሀብ በጥማት ሰውነቴ ዝሏል
 እግሬ አልንቀሳቀስ እጄ አልሰራም ብሏል
 ጆሮዬም አልሰማ አይኔም አላይ ብሏል
 የራሳችን እንጀራ ወይ ወይኑ መስሏቸው
 የጠማኝ ወተቱ ወይጠጁ መስሏቸው
 ችግራችን ጭንቀቱ ሚስጥሩ ያልገባቸው
 ያቺ ሰው ተራቦች ሲሉ ሰማኋቸው
 እኔን የራሳችን ፍቅር ነው

.....

My heart is full of fear;
 My body is weakened by hunger and thirst;
 My legs fail to walk,
 My hands fail to work;
 My ears fail to hear;
 My eyes fail to see;
 They thought I'm hungry for *ḍnḍḡära* or wine;
 They thought I'm thirsty for milk or *täḡḍ*;
 Those who don't know the secret of my troubles and worries misjudge me;
 I heard them say "that girl is hungry;"
 But I'm hungry for love;

Neither lack of food and drink nor social deprivation makes the speaker suffer from impairment and fear. The major cause of her paralysis is her hunger for love [...እኔን የራብኝ ፍቅር ነው/ the last line in the translation]. Here the speaker considers love as a means to free oneself from grief; in other words, if love prevails, she will no more give a scream of grief. Thus, being a means to a miraculous recovery of grievance, in this song, love is presented as a healing force that positively functioning to the harmonious stability and continuity of the society.

It seems that the speaker has got fed up with relying on those individuals in the political leaderships who have difficulty showing affection. Thus, she urges them to come to their senses and stop disrupting the peaceful and longstanding interactions among people:

.....

ጎጃም ያረሰውን ለጎንደር ካልሸጠ
 ጎንደር ያረሰውን ለጎጃም ካልሸጠ
 የሸዋ አባት ልጁን ለትግሬ ካልሰጠ
 ፍቅር ወዴት ወዴት ወዴት ዘመም ዘመም

.....

If the farmers of Gojam can't sell their crops for the people of Gonder,
 If the farmers of Gonder can't sell their crops for the people of Gojam,
 If a father from Showa denies his daughter to marry someone from Tigray,
 Where is the true love then?

.....

Through the lines above, the speaker is challenging the contentious styles of ruling that EPRDF inflicts on the different sections of the society. Geographically, Gonder and Gojam are neighbouring provinces under the Regional State of Amhara. Apart from speaking the same language, Amharic, the people of these two provinces share numerous things together. However,

the speaker fears that sectarian hatred that the regime advocates might pose a real threat to the stability of the people in the stated provinces. One may share the speaker's fear when he/she observes the divisive mechanisms that the regime implemented against the farmers of Gojam while the land redistribution was on progress. Temesgen (2013:155) states:

After the fall of the Derg, the current government also introduced a new land redistribution policy. The policy was endorsed and applied without the consult of the peasants of Gojjam. The reform has resulted in suspicion, conflict and insecurity among the peasants of Gojjam. The peasants became helpless against the abuse. There was no one to hear their problems and grievances. discrimination, corruption, and favoring relatives and friends were the order of the day. The oppositions were observed in the form of poems, songs, and arms of actions. Yet, the government was able to manage the possible oppositions to the land redistribution process using divide and rule, and force of action.

Unlike Emperor Haile Selassie I and the Derge, EPRDF places greater emphasis on ethnicity. In the words of Abbink (2006:194), "The current government has done a lot to make ethnicity the discourse of politics in Ethiopia..." Of course, being the regime of minority, it seems difficult for EPRDF to entertain diversity in a positive manner. That is why instead of narrowing the rift among the various ethnic groups within the country, EPRDF strives for either to sustain or widen the gap. Tronvoll (2009:159) observes, "Analyzing the origin of TPLF/ EPRDF, and its ideological basis, it seems clear that the EPRDF has never appeared as an organization committed to pluralism for its own sake." Directly or indirectly, Ethiopians keep on condemning the harassment that the regime inflict on them. For instance, farmers in Gojam came into conflict with the cadres of EPRDF by opposing the unfair and discriminatory land redistribution (Getie Gelaye, 2002).

Studies show that except among the Tigreans EPRDF has little acceptance among many other ethnic groups including the two large ones, Oromo and Amhara, who stand more than 70% of the total population. Thus, shocked by the result of the 2005 election, and knowing its insignificant acceptance among the various ethnic groups, EPRDF has put much efforts to recruit new members throughout the nation. Stiftung (2014) observes:

Political parties are still essentially a new phenomenon in Ethiopia, which may help to explain their volatility and instability. Before 2008, the government was mostly seen as a tool of the TPLF, with little grassroots support outside of the Tigray. In September 2008, it was announced that the EPRDF had 4.5 million members, compared to just 600,000 three years earlier. In 2010, the EPRDF claimed to have 5 million members, after immense government spending on massive membership drives, party cell organizations, propaganda meetings, party and civil service trainings and other unproductive government spending. The ruling EPRDF, led by Prime Minister Meles for 21 years, governed with the support of 546 of 547 members of parliament in the legislature. Government in essence faced virtually no opposition.

Practically, EPRDF's defeat in the capital city, Addis Ababa, during the 2005 election shows its weak acceptance by most ethnic groups in Ethiopia. As things stand, Addis Ababa is the home of almost all ethnic groups. Hence, if EPRDF had been popular among the different ethnic groups of the nation, it would not have been faced the land sliding defeat in Addis Ababa in that election.

In general, the speakers in the two songs discussed under this sub-section 'ያስተሰርያል'/yasätäsäräyälä/ and 'አስከመቼ'/äsökömāčē/, believe that hostility disrupts the harmonious continuity of the society. The speaker in the first song advocates the need of having national reconciliation to heal the social wound through forgiveness. He also believes that in order to be blessed by the grace of God's forgiveness we Ethiopians should forgive each other. Otherwise, as to him, replacing a tyranny by another tyranny could not bring change. So, a real change that we strive for can be achieved through forgiveness, togetherness, love and affection. In addition, being trapped in a grief-stricken life, the speaker in the second song does not know how long she should wait to breathe a sigh of relief. The overall contentious situations around her makes her suffer from impairment and fear. However, since she knows the curing power of love to free her from her grief, she becomes strongly hungry for it (love). Hence, in this song too, the positive role of love to the stability and continuity of the society is given emphasis. Furthermore, songs such as 'አለ ገና'/alä gäna/ and 'ኢትዮጵያ'/itäyopäya/ also strengthen the issues raised in the above two songs (See Appendix C).

6.2. Migration

Traditionally, in Ethiopia a person who separated from his/her home land is called sädätäñña/አደተኛ/ which literary mean migrant. Being a migrant (sädätäñña/አደተኛ) is negatively connotated as "...rootlessness and helplessness" (Solomon, 2006:343). Furthermore, Koehn in Solomon (2006:343) states that prior to the 1974 Ethiopian Revolution, "most Ethiopians were unfamiliar with the very concept of a 'refugee' and repelled by the idea of moving abroad permanently." It might be due to this reason that the national language Amharic lacks a word that unequivocally translate as "immigrant" or "refugee". Kane (2006:343) in Solomon states that the Amharic equivalent for both words is sädätäñña, which denotes "a refugee, a displaced person, exile, banished person." Here the Amharic term sädätäñña stands for "...any person who has left

his/her domicile, rather than specifically a person who has left his/her country for another” (Solomon, 2006:343).

Recently, the issues of migration have captured the attention of lyricists in Ethiopia. Through their songs, lyricists have commented on the human cost of voluntary labour-related exigencies or forced migration. Solomon (2006: 341) observes, “... lyrics dating from after the emergence of the Ethiopian diaspora (1974–present) invoke the concept as an integral part of Ethiopian life, moving it from a term of shame to a desirable status with connotations of success and initiative.” Following this, attempts have been made to discuss selected songs that deal with the issue of migration:

It was in 1995 E.C. that Yilma Gebreab composed the song lyric, ‘ንፋስ ነው ዘመዴ’/nɔfasɔ nəwɔ zämäde. Living in a foreign land, the speaker in this song desperately feels lonely:

ንፋስ ነው ንፋስ ነው ዘመዴ
ከሀገር አሰውጥቶ አስቀረኝ መንገዴ
ንፋሱ ነው ዘመዴ፣ንፋሱ ነው ዘመዴ
ዛሬስ ለምጃለሁ የለ የማይለመድ
ካለው በሰው ፋንታ ንፋስ ሆኖኝ ዘመድ
ደርሶ በሽውታው ሁሉን ያዋየኛል
አምላክ ካለወጣኝ ማን መቶ ያየኛል?

.....

Wind is my relative;
But the road is not;
It has driven me out and left me remain there;
In the world, nothing is inadaptible;
I become familiar with the situation today;
Instead of man the wind becomes my relative;
It whispers everything to me;
Unless He [God] free me, no one will take care of me;

.....

Through the lines above the speaker uncovers the deprivation of his life being a migrant. Since he has no one on his side, he unnaturally becomes a friend of wind/ዛሬስ ለምጃለሁ የለ የማይለመድ/ካለው በሰው ፋንታ ንፋስ ሆኖኝ ዘመድ/lines 4-6 in the translation/. Literally, it is the wind that shares his feelings. However, connotatively, the wind symbolizes the pieces of news or rumours that he hears about either his homeland or relatives. Leading such a disconnected and lonely life, he gives up all

hope of finding solution from the worldly power. Thus, he begins to hope God because, for him, God is his only savior/...እሱ ካለወጣኝ ማን መቶ ያየኛል? the last line in the translation/. Practically, the speaker might not have abandoned all hope of getting support from the secular institutions if his country had been in a position to watch out for the wellbeing of the diaspora. The lines below give clues to the existing situation in his homeland:

.....
ከእሳተ-ጎሞራ ነፍሴን ላደን ብዬ
መከራን ልሸሻት ብጠፋ ኮብልዬ
ምን ይገዢ ልመለስ ከሰው ሀገር ውዬ?
.....

I left my country to save myself from the volcano;
I had no wealth to bring with me if I intended to turn back to my country;
.....

The speaker uses the metaphor of volcano to show the unbearable socio-economic and socio-politics of his native land. With this, he might need to draw the analogy between the unpredictable nature and devastation of volcano with the deadly impact of his country's overall instability. The speaker wants to return his homeland, but his failure to acquire wealth in his exile prohibits him from fulfilling his dream [ምን ይገዢ ልመለስ ከሰው ሀገር ውዬ?/the last line in the translation]. As things stand, in a nation like Ethiopia where two-third of the general population suffers from poverty, and 60% of the youths are unemployed, poverty undoubtedly become one of the major pushing factors that make people migrate (Stiftung, 2014; Fransen &Kuschminder; Abbink, 2006). From the beginning poverty might force the speaker to separate from his motherland. In addition, in the Ethiopian context, supporting families and relatives is taken as a moral imperative. Solomon (2006:355) observes, "... supporting parents and relatives through remittances is a source of pressure as well as pride. In some cases, remittances from a refugee/emigrant son or daughter are the only means of livelihood for relatives in Ethiopia." Thus, if the speaker returns his country without acquiring wealth in the form of money or goods, he fails to meet the needs of his families. As a result, his families may not give him a warm welcome. This, in turn, forces him to bear all his suffering with incredible patience rather than becoming an embarrassment to his families.

Apart from poverty, the instability of political system in Ethiopia is also another pushing factor for migration. As shown in the previous section, for more than two decades Ethiopians have been suffering an appealing fate under EPRDF. Stiftung (2014:28) states, "...It is fair to say that

Ethiopia ranks high worldwide in terms of the difficulties facing democratic transformation and economic development...” Pitifully, this obliges the well-versed citizens who fear to be a prisoner of conscience leave their country. Once again, Stiftung (2014:9) states, “The country’s so-called brain drain can be seen as an indicator of Ethiopia’s harsh and repressive climate. Professionals, intellectuals, journalists and political dissidents are leaving the country in high numbers, totaling several thousand annually. Ethiopia ranks among the top-20 countries in the world affected by brain drain, according to a source.” Thus, the speaker might consider his country as volcano for he is sandwiched between severe poverty and intolerable political repression [ከአሳተ-ጎሞራ ነፍሴን ላደን ብዬ/the first line in the translation].

Yilma Gebreab’s other song, ‘ወገኔ ህብረትን’ [wägäne hōbōrätōnō], also deals with the issue of migration:

.....
 ሠዉ በአደባባይ የሆዱን ሳይነግር
 ተከታትሎ አለቀ እንደው እግር በእግር፤
 የሚጓዘው በዛ ወንዝ የሚሻገረው
 እዚያ ሊያልፍ ይሆን ወይ እዚህ የቸገረው?
 እስኪ እንጨዋወት ጨዋታ ምን ከፋ
 የሆድ በሆድ እያልን ጊዜ ከምንገፋ፤
 ይሄም አፉን ያዘ ያም አንገቱን ደፋ
 ምነው የኛ ነገር መላ ቅጡ ጠፋ?

The people leave the country one after the other,
 Without telling anyone anything officially;
 So many people travelled and crossed the river;
 Would they be free from the troubles that they faced here in their lives abroad?

Let us chat about the issues at hand;
 Chatting is better than spending time in stunned silence;
 This one keeps silent, and that one bends down;
 Why are we at a loss to understand what has happened to us?

.....

As the lines above suggest, the speaker gets a shock when he sees numerous of his fellow countrymen leaving the nation [... የሚጓዘው በዛ ወንዝ የሚሻገረው/line 3 in the translation]. What frustrates him the most is the people’s silence. No one says anything as to what causes him/her leave his/her country [ሠዉ በአደባባይ የሆዱን ሳይነግር/ተከታትሎ አለቀ እንደው እግር በእግር/ lines 1&2 in the translation]. Therefore, he comes to believe that the silence need to be broken to uncover the

pushing factors that force the fellow citizen migrate to the foreign land [እስኪ እንጨዋወት ጨዋታ ምን ከፋ/የሆድ በሆድ እያልን ጊዜ ከምንገፋ-/lines 5&6 in the translation]. It is possible to think that if the government paved the ways for the general public to have discussions about the major problems that they face, the fellow citizens might not leave their country being in a stunned silence.

The points raised in the quotation above indicate that the political leaderships close their ears to criticism; hence, being under such repressive political atmosphere, the people would hardly open their hearts. If in case they violate the restrictions that the regime imposes on them, they might be harassed or imprisoned by the authorities. Oftentimes, individuals who commit to struggle for freedom and justice will be the victims of miscarriage of justice. It is because the court is not independently functioning (Alemayehu, 2008:13). Therefore, if individuals are forced to injure years of intimidation and violence as we have seen so far, it cannot be surprised to see them leaving their motherland in silence. Of course, there is no question that they face serious challenges in another country. That is why the speaker rhetorically asks as to whether they can live in comfort for the rest of their life in the foreign land [የሚጓዘው በዛ ወንዝ የሚሻገረው/እዚያ ሊያልፍ ይሆን ወይ እዚህ የቸገረው?/line 4 in the translation].

Ejegayehu Shibabaw’s song, ‘ከአራዊት ጋራ’[käärawit∅ gara], shows a criminal act that the human traffickers commit against illegal migrants:

ከጅብ ከአራዊት ጋር ዘመድ ሆንኩኝ ብዬ
 ከክፉ ከእባቡ ተወዳጅሁ ብዬ
 ከዘንዶ ጡት ወተት የሚጠጣ መስሎኝ
 ጥርሳቸው አኝኮ አኝኮ አኝኮ አደረቀኝ

.....
 I thought I became relative with hyena and beast;
 I thought I became friends with the evil snake;
 I thought I could feed on the milk of serpent;
 They were chewing on me until they made dry me off;

The speaker has attempted to form attachment with ferocious wild beasts such as hyena, snake, serpent, etc. It is possible to make an educated guess that she already knows the danger of taming these fierce beasts. However, she is deceived into placing trust on them. And as we all might expect, she falls victim to these dangerous animals [ጥርሳቸው አኝኮ አኝኮ አኝኮ አደረቀኝ/the last line in the translation]. Here the speaker uses the metaphor of these dreadful creatures to show the

viciousness of the human traffickers who guide her through the desert while she migrates. Here the analogy is that as she very possibly knows the risk of calming the stated animals, she is most probably aware of the danger of dealing with the wild beasts. Hence, unless the human traffickers deceive her, she never be caught in a trap of them. In this regard, the speaker seems to represent one of the unprivileged Ethiopian girls who illegally try to go to the Middle East. Fransen &Kuschminder (2009:18-19) state:

... In the case of Ethiopian women going to the Middle East, the initial migration decision is made by their own free will. They are, however, given misinformation regarding the position and circumstances waiting for them in the host country. Numbers of trafficked women are unknown but are estimated to be as large as 130,000 Ethiopian women and children in the Gulf States. The top destinations are Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and the United Arab Emirates (2009:18-19).

The lines below further show how the speaker has been subjected to inhuman treatments:

.....
 ተብትበው ተብትበው ሰውነቴን ሁሉ
 አስረው ገንዘው እጅ እግሬን በሙሉ
 ተነሽ ተከተይን ድረሽብን አሉ፤
 እግሬን ስላሰሩኝ ከትልቋ ግመል
 እነርሱ ከላይዋ ቁጭ ከስር ስንከባለል ፤
 በረሀው እረዥም ነው የማቋርጠው
 ቢሄዱ ቢሰቃዩት ማለቂያ የሌለው

.....
 After they roped my whole body up,
 After they tied my hands and legs up,
 After they shrouded me as if I were dead,
 They ordered me to follow them;
 They tied me to the big camel;
 They mounted the camel while I was rolling on the ground;
 The desert was too vast to cross;
 Though one kept on his miserable journey;
 He would hardly get to its end;

Man’s inhumanity to man is briefly indicated through the lines above; the human traffickers whom the speaker calls “the beast” have shown that they have no morals at all. It is only the mindless thugs who tie someone with the camel on which they mount [እግሬን ስላሰሩኝ ከትልቋ ግመል/እነርሱ ከላይዋ ቁጭ ከስር ስንከባለል/lines 5&6 in the translation]. If she survives such ill-treatments and reaches one of the Middle East countries, she will be enslaved at the hands of some individuals’ housewives who are mostly illiterate and dullard. Fransen &Kuschminder (2009:22) observe:

Ethiopian women working as domestic workers in the Middle East are described as suffering inadequate working conditions and physical and sexual abuse... Women have described having their passports taken away so they cannot leave, being expected to work 24 hours per day, and not being able to have contact with other Ethiopians... From 1999-2005 the Quarantine Office of the Addis Ababa International Airport reported 129 female bodies returned from Jeddah, Dubai, and Beirut. In all cases the cause of death was determined to be suicide.

Ethiopian government that boasts double digit economic growth and uses all its forces to repress the opposition parties, NGOs, journalists, human right activists, etc. has not taken strong measures to combat such a humiliating social defeat. Oftentimes, the returnees claim that the regime in general and Ethiopian Embassies in the Middle East countries in particular are not responsive to their (the returnees’) safety concerns. On the part of the speaker, it seems that she abandons all hope of getting support from her government. So, she begins to pray to God:

.....
 እባክህ አምላኬ ስጠኝ ብርታቱን
 እባክህ ጌታዬ ስጠኝ ጉልበቱን
 በረሀውን ችዬ የማልፍበትን
 ወንዝ የለው ምንጭ የለው ደረቅ ነው መንገዱ
 ከቶ አይደረስም ቢሄዱ ቢሄዱ
 ይህ ክፉ ወጀቦ የበረሀው ገፋስ
 ለያይቶ ጨረሰው ስጋዬን ከነፍስ

Please my God, make me strong;
 So that I cross the desert;
 It doesn't have river;
 It doesn't have spring;
 The road is dry;
 It is unreachable;

It is a pity to see a woman from Ethiopia which is thought to be the tower of water dying of thirsty in a vast and barren desert [... ወንዝ የለው ምንጭ የለው ደረቅ ነው መንገዱ/ከቶ አይደረስም ቢሄዱ ቢሄዱ/lines 3-6 in the translation]. Furthermore, being an Ethiopian one could barely contain his/her irritation at seeing his/her country which is incomparably more fertile than the Middle East let her youths suffer from servitude at the hands of the Arabs.

As things stand, Ethiopians are not fond of living abroad; their love for their nation and their emotional attachments to their people is persistent and strong. In their stay there, they suffer from psychological discomfort. For example, commenting on Ethiopians situation in the United States,

Koehn in Solomon (2006:351) says that “exiles [and refugees] from Ethiopia, in particular, are reported to experience psychological distress over separation from homeland; concern about the welfare of relatives left behind; loss of autonomy, power, and daily social reinforcements; and the impersonal and culturally insensitive treatment they encounter in the United States.” However, even if Ethiopians hardly adopt the foreign countries where they live as home, the number of Ethiopians who seek to go abroad at any cost is increasing from time to time. Surprisingly, Ethiopians who went either to Europe or the United States for further education during the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I were curious to come back home. However, the situation during the Derge and EPRDF is quite the opposite (Adamnesh et al, 2014; Fransen &Kuschminder, 2009; Shinn, 2003).

Human right violation, conflict, poverty, corruption, unfair distribution of wealth etc. have continued to drive migration flows out of Ethiopia (Adamnesh et al, 2014; Fransen &Kuschminder, 2009). It is not only the unemployed youths who migrate to look for better job opportunities but also highly educated individuals leave the nation in great number. As evidences show, Ethiopia has suffered substantially from “brain drain”, or the out-migration of highly-skilled Ethiopians over the years (Reinert, 2006; El-Khawas, 2004; Bariagaber, A.,1997). Though millions of Ethiopians suffer from different fatal diseases including HIV-AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, etc. throughout the nations, Ethiopia is losing many highly trained medical doctors to other countries (Fransen &Kuschminder 2009:23).

In general, the three Amharic song lyrics discussed under this sub section show that political repressions and poverty have become the major reasons that force Ethiopians to migrate to the foreign countries. The speaker in the song, ‘ንፋስ ነው ዘመዶ’/nɔfasɔ nəwɔ zämäde/, indicates that he is the victim of total instability in Ethiopia. He uses the metaphor of “volcano” to show the utter crises that he faces while he is in his own country, Ethiopia. Though he goes there to escape from the social deprivations that he describes it as “volcano”, he is not happy living abroad. Being lonesome, he has no one to share his feeling except “the wind”. Thus, the deep feeling of loneliness urges him to go back home where the “volcano” keeps on crippling it. The speaker in the second song, ‘ወገኔ ሀብረትን’ wägäne hɔbɔrätɔnɔ, uncovers the repression that EPRDF inflict on the people of Ethiopia. As he testifies, the fellow citizens continue to migrate to foreign lands being in a stunned silence. This, in turn, shows the denial of freedom of speech in the present-day Ethiopia.

And the speaker in the last song, ‘ከአራዊት ጋራ’/käärawitð gara, witnesses the social defeat that Ethiopia faces under the leadership of EPRDF. There is nothing more humiliating in this world for a sovereign nation than to see its citizen tying with the big camel on which the mindless human traffickers mount. This song particularly addresses the severe challenges that Ethiopian youths face at the hands of the cannibalistic human traffickers while they (the youths) migrate to the Middle East. All in all, the serious social problems raised in these three songs in relation with migration testify the dysfunction of both social and political institutions in Ethiopia during the reign of EPRDF. People might not migrate and face the stated hardships if the institutions achieved what they set out to do. In its totality, EPRDF is just a paper-tiger. It boasts the double digit economic growth day and night, but practically it fails even to feed its own people. Unless it stops talking nonsense and starts revisiting its programs, it might erode the national sovereignty. Songs such as ‘ላጽናናሽ’/latsðnanaš/, ‘ባህር ማዶ’/bahðrð mado/, ‘ትዝታ’/tðzðta/, ‘እርግቤ’/ðrðgðbe/ and ‘ባገሬ እኮራላሁ’/bagðre ðkoralðhu/ also deal with the issues raised through the above three songs discussed under this section [See Appendix C].

Chapter VII: Major Themes of Amharic Love Songs during the Three Consecutive Eras: The Reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I, the Derge and the EPRDF

Love is a kind of emotion almost all human beings share. Csikzentmihalyi (1980: 313) defined love as the investment “of attention in another person with the intention of realizing that person’s goals.” Love is one of the most prominent social phenomena that initiate scholars in the different field of studies (literature, psychology, philosophy, etc.,) to deal with its features. The different literary genres (novel, short story, poetry, etc.,) commonly discuss love relationships besides other social issues. However, songs are almost fully preoccupied with aspects of love. Inglis (1997:37-38) writes:

The predominant theme of popular music lyrics has always been and continues to be today - love. The principal styles in which it has been expressed have been the lament for lost or unrequited love, the celebration of mutual and/or genuine love, and the comment about the nature and importance of love...All poetry is not -love poetry; all movies are not romances; all novels are not love stories. Popular music, however, has been recognized as the appropriate context through which aspects of love may be explored. In this way, a special association exists between the medium and its content which is repeated nowhere else).

Friedlander (1996) claims that love songs cover the majority of all songs written so far, and they are important signposts of cultural development. As a matter of fact, love is the most frequently appeared theme in Amharic song lyrics composed during the stated three eras. This might happen because of two principal reasons. Firstly, the impact of the serious censorship restricted lyricists to focus on the theme of love which was a risk-free business by far when compared to other sensitive social and political issues. Secondly, lyricists might get access to let out their strong emotions in composing well-polished love songs. In this regard Oland (2003:3) states that “when you have learned how to express yourself in love songs, a whole new world of emotional catharsis will open up for you.”

The collected Amharic love songs deal with different thematic concerns: romantic love relationships, maternal love, love of the country, politics, etc. are discussed in Amharic song lyrics. However, this study intends to investigate the themes of romantic love relationships and the themes of maternal love depicted through Amharic song lyrics. Practically, this section is almost

entirely devoted to discuss themes of romantic love relationships. This is done due to the fact that the most recurrent theme in the selected Amharic love songs is romantic love relationships. The songs that discuss maternal love are few in number, and unlike the romantic love songs they do not raise diversified thematic concerns. On the other hand, the other thematic issues (love of country, politics, social discontents, etc.) are in one way or another raised in other song lyrics selected for this study. For instance, the issues in relation to love of a country are implied through the patriotic songs composed during the reign of Haile Selassie and the revolution songs of the Derge regime. With this in mind, attempts have been made to analyze the stated thematic concerns (romantic love relationships and maternal love) depicted through the selected Amharic love songs following this:

7.1. Romantic Love Relationships

Many scholars claim that almost every society throughout the globe experiences romantic love relationship (Fletcher et al, 2015; Dion and Dion ,19 96; Fisher, 1994). Romantic love is the one that commonly involves very deep physiological and emotional attractions between lovers. Discussing the unique features of romantic love, Larsen et al., (2008:59) write, “Romantic love differs from friendship by its emphasis on sexual interest, by the fascination and infatuation with the partner, and the exclusiveness of the relationship. Such relationships are emotional and exciting.”

The major thematic concerns of Amharic song lyrics that typically deal with romantic love relationships are **beauty (attractiveness), betrayal, forgiveness, gossip, longing and idealization**. Following this, it has been tried to reveal how these issues are depicted in the selected Amharic song lyrics.

7.1.1. The Depiction of Beauty (Attractiveness) in Amharic Love Songs

In many Amharic love songs, we hear the speakers appreciate either internal or external beauties of his/her beloved one. According to Synnott beauty is defined in Concise Oxford as, “Combination of qualities, as shape, proportion, colour, in human face or form, or in other objects, that delights the sight.” Most speakers in Amharic song lyrics vividly echo especially the powerfulness of physical beauty, and they often applaud how the unique beauties that they notice in their lovers

make them fall in love. Emphasizing the power of beauty and its prominent consequence in love relationship, Larsen et al (2008:25) write, “Physical attraction is a powerful determinant of liking and has lifelong benefits. Attend any social event and who do you first notice? If you are a heterosexual man, you will first notice the attractive women, and if you are a woman your eyes will feast on the handsome men...So while physical attractiveness is important in the early phases of a relationship, the benefits continue in a variety of ways.” In line with this, attempts have been made to explore the social significances of beauty indicated in the selected Amharic love songs:

The song ‘**ሞናሊዛ**’ [Mona Lisa] has been one of the most frequently played songs since it was composed by Solomon Tessema in 1961 E.C. The speaker in this song lyric is absolutely impressed by the beauty of his beloved; therefore, he plainly confesses that her beauty has left him speechless with admiration:

ቃላቶች ያጥሩኛል ምን ብዬ ላድንቅሽ
 እንዲያው በደፈናው ሞናሊዛዬ ነሽ

.....
 I don’t have words to admire you,
 To put it simply, you are my Mona Lisa;

Thus, failing to rate her beauty, the speaker forces to compare the beauty of his beloved with the beauty of Mona Lisa, Leonardo da Vinci’s legendary portrait. [እንዲያው በደፈናው ሞናሊዛዬ ነሽ/ line 2 in the translation]. In various works of art poets refer to the symbolic beauty of, Mona Lisa. Pijet (2009:1) states, “Mona Lisa, the portrait of a beautiful Florentine woman is probably one of the most known feminine images in the world.” For centuries Mona Lisa has urged people of different professions to react to the enigmatic expressions of her face and her mysterious smile. For instance, Carpenter (1963:501) goes to the extent to consider her glance as “the glance of love”. So, in equating his beloved’s beauty with the ever-mysterious beauty of Mona Lisa, the speaker underlies that her beauty is quite incomparable with other women whom he has known so far. Furthermore, being proud to have her by his side, he keeps on appreciating her breathtaking beauty:

.....
 እንዳቺ ውብ የለም በምድራቱ ላይ
 ብዬ ባዳንቅሽ ይበቃኛል ወይ
 ሲሰራሽ የዋለ ሲሰራሽ ያደረ
 ያንቺው በመሆኔ ክብራ ተከበረ

Will you be satisfied if I say no one in the world is as beautiful as you?
God spent the whole day and night on creating you;
I get more dignified,
For you are mine;
.....

As the lines above suggest, extremely obsessed with his beloved's unmatched beauty, the speaker paradoxically claims that God spent much time in beautifying his beloved while He created her [ሲሰራሽ የዋለ ሲሰራሽ ያደረ/line 3 in the translation]. It seems illogical to think that God who created the entire universe within seven days spent “the whole night and day” to create the speaker's romantic partner. However, it is possible to deduce that the speaker's huge satisfaction and over-exaggeration of her beauty partly emerges from his courage to see his partner in an idealized way. Idealization makes an individual to regard the partner as unique and especial, and the experience of romantic love is expected to be all-consuming, fulfilling, and transcendent (Dion&Dion, 1996). In addition, Griffin et al (1996:1155) write:

Relationships most likely to persist, even in the face of conflict and doubts, when intimates idealized one another the most. Intimates who idealized one another more initially also reported relatively greater increase in satisfaction and decrease in conflicts and doubts over the year. Finally, individuals even came to share their partners' idealized image of them. In summary, intimates who idealized one another appeared more prescient than blind, actually creating the relationships they wished as romance progressed.

The more the speaker idealizes his intimate, as he has done so far, the more he sees her glorified image with his mind's eyes. Idealization, in turn, positively functions in that it makes him tolerate her flaws and failings. Glorifying the positive aspect of the loved one would guarantee long-term relationships that make the romantic partners lead happy and successful life. And that is why, the speaker witnesses that he “gets more dignified” for she is his soulmate [ያንቺው በመሆኔ ክብራ ተከብረ/the last line in the translation]. As a matter of fact, the speaker's effort to maximize pleasure and minimize pain through idealization possibly makes the couple form a stable family that positively functions within the existing social system.

The speaker not only astonished by his intimate's striking physical attractiveness, but also impressed by the quality of her personality traits:

.....
 ያሁኒቷ እመቤት የፊቷ ተማሪ
 እግዚያብሄርን አማኝ አካልሽን አከባሪ
 ሆነሽ በማግኘቴ አድናቆት ይዞኝ
 ላደንቅሽ ተነሳሁ ሰው እስኪሰማኝ

.....
 You were a student in the past, and a lady of these days,
 So, I begin to praise you in front of others,
 For I find you believe in God and respect yourself;

.....

Luckily, apart from respecting God she is gracing and dignifying herself [እግዚያብሄርን አማኝ አካልሽን አከባሪ/ line 2 in the translation]. As various studies show, favorable outcomes are often associated with physical attractiveness. M. Jæger (2011:983) writes, “...empirical studies have shown that physical attractiveness is positively correlated with many types of psychological, socio-economic and social outcomes. Not only are physically attractive individuals more confident, popular and extroverted, healthier and happier than less attractive individuals they are also more successful in the sex, marriage and labor markets.”

In the given song lyric, the speaker testifies that he has witnessed the beloved’s transition from youth to adulthood. As to his judgment, he loves her for her faith in God and self-respect which makes her sweet and lovable. This implies that he might not have such a strong love to her if she were ungrateful to God. His clear appreciation to her faith is a case in point. This, in turn, shows the positive function that religion has in shaping his beloved’s personalities. In other words, in this song the remarkable role that religion plays in the process of romantic mate selection is implied. Sunil (2011:3) states the positive function of religion to the wellbeing of the society as, “Religion promotes the major social virtues like truth, honesty, non-violence, service, love, discipline etc. A follower of the religions internalizes these virtues and becomes disciplined citizen of the society.” Hopefully, it is her beautiful appearance together with her God-fearing manner that makes him praise her boldly in front of others [ላደንቅሽ ተነሳሁ ሰው እስኪሰማኝ/line 4 in the translation].

It was in 1998 E.C. that Yilma Gebreab composed the song, ‘ቆንጆ ልጅ ነሽ’ [qonጅጅ lጅጅ nəጅጅ]; in this song, the speaker overtly testifies the woman’s beauty through the following lines:

የቁንጅና ሚዛን እናርግሽ መለኪያ
 ማን ይቁም በቦታሽ የለሽም መተኪያ፤
 ለናሙና እንኳን ቢፈለግ በዓለም
 በዚህ ምድር ላይ አምሳያሽ የለም፤

.....
 Let's make you the top scale of beauty,
 Who could stand on your place?
 There is no one substitute for you;

Although the above lines could be taken as the best sample to show how the speaker acclaims the woman as beautiful, it is difficult to judge his level of intimacy with her since he comments nothing on the quality of her personality traits. However, most of the lines in the song suggest that the speaker has eyed the woman from her head to toe with an open appreciation of her beauty. So, it would be her external beauty that urges him to establish romantic relationship with her. According to Stack (1996:83), “Physical attractiveness overshadowed all other desired mating values in predicting success at finding a mate.” This, in turn, makes us focus on the symbolic significance that physical attractiveness has in the process of beginning and strengthening romantic relationships. Different researchers have conducted in-depth investigation to prove whether there is some truth in the stereotypic assumption, “beauty is good” (Kirkpatrick & Cotton, 1951; Margolin & White, 1987; Stack, 1996; Larsen et al, 2008). And all the studies that the researcher has gone through so far claim the existence of positive correlations between physical attractiveness and good personality traits. For instance, L. Lorenzo et al (2010:1777-1778). state:

It is often assumed that “what is beautiful is good”, as physically attractive individuals tend to be perceived and treated more positively in daily social interactions. Termed the physical attractiveness stereotype or the attractiveness halo effect, attractive individuals are expected to be more sociable, friendly, warm, competent, and intelligent than less attractive individuals... For example, take Jane, a highly attractive woman who is more organized and less generous than most people. According to the physical attractiveness stereotype, regardless of her standing on each trait, Jane is likely to be perceived quite positively on each of these desirable characteristic

The quotation above shows the positive effect that physical attractiveness has in romantic relationships. We see the speaker dreaming to live with the woman for he is obsessed by the peerless and highest state of her physical attractiveness:

.....
 ደጉ አምላክ ዘመኑን ያንቺ አድርጎት አድሎሽ ማማሩን፤
 ቢሰራሽ አስመኘኝ በቁንጅናሽ ካንቺ ጋር መኖሩን።

The kindhearted God make it your time for He has beautified you,
So, I wish I lived with you.

.....

The speaker wants to enjoy intimacy with her, for the simple reason that she is beautiful. In various longitudinal studies it is identified that in heterosexual relationship men place more emphasis on physical attractiveness of the romantic partner (P. Acevedo & Aron, 2009; Gangestad & J. Scheyd, 2005). Concerning the preference of men and women in mate selection, Larsen et al (2008:29) state, “In all cultures men rated physical attractiveness as more important in a mate, and they preferred younger partners. Women on the other hand preferred partners who were older, and who could provide material resources.” As shown in the Amharic version of the song lyric, the speaker refers to the woman as ‘ቆንጅ ልጅ ነሽ’ [qonፊጃ ለጅፍ ነሽ]. In Amharic the term ‘ልጅ’ [lፊጅ] literally refer to a person who is either in his/her childhood or youth. Therefore, apart from possessing adorable appearance, the woman is still enjoying the bloom of her youth.

There are scholars who assume beauty as the gift from God. Aristotle in Diogenes (1972: 461) states that “Beauty is the gift of God.” In addition, considering beauty as God’s blessing Emerson in Synnott (1989: 629) says, “Beauty is the mark God sets up on virtue... a beautiful person is sent into the world as an image of the divine beauty, not to provoke but to purify the sensual into an intellectual and divine love.” Likewise, in the song under discussion, the speaker seems to consider the natural beauty of the woman as the manifestation of divine wisdom. As to him, it is God who endows her with such a “faultless beauty”:

.....
ተጠባል አምላክ አንቺ ላይ
ሲሰራሽ ከሌሎች በላይ
ልቅም አድርጎ የፈጠረሽ
አንከን የሌለሽ ቆንጅ ልጅ ነሽ፤

.....

Oh you girl...
With the fount of all wisdom, God made you the best of all,
Being His perfect creation, your beauty is faultless;

.....

Furthermore, in praising the matchless beauty of the woman, the speaker alludes to the prominent religious and biblical figures, Yared and Ezra respectively:

በገናን ለያሬድ መሰንቆንም ለዕዝራ፤
መልክን ላንቺ ሰጠ አቤት ያምላክ ስራ፤

.....

Oh, the miracle of God!
He gave harp to Yared, lyre to Ezera and beauty to you;

.....

According to Ethiopian Orthodox Church and scholars who have studied Ethiopian music Yared is the founding father of religious songs of Ethiopian Orthodox Church (Sertse, 2006; Zenebe, 1990; Ashenafi 1989). And his contribution to Ethiopian secular music is immense. Similarly, as one can learn from the Holy Bible, Ezra was the most famous expertise for playing harp to praise God. Therefore, the speaker’s argument is that as God blesses Ezra and Yared with the incredible gift of composing and playing songs, He blesses the woman with the highest states of attractiveness. In addition, the speaker alludes to the custom that the priests in Ethiopian Orthodox Church perform in praising God:

.....

ቅኔ ቢቀጥልሽ እያሞጋገሱ
ማህሌት ያስቆማል ተፈጥሮሽ ሞገሱ

.....

If a poem is composed to admire your beauty,
The grace of your nature wins praises;

.....

As to the long-standing tradition of this church, priests often praise God with songs that entertain texts composed in wax and gold style [ቅኔ/ባቅኔ]. So, the speaker thinks that the beauty of the woman deserves such a ceremonial and high praise. He also witnesses that she enjoys admirers wherever she goes:

.....

ተገርሞ ተደንቆ እያየሽ በውበት በቅርጽሽ
ብዙ ሰው ይፈዛል በመልክሽ “ልዩ ናት” እያለሽ፤
አልተገኘም ልክሽ ልክሽ፤
እድል ሰጪኝ ላውራሽ እባክሽ?

.....

Astonished at your beauty and shapely appearance,
Many people become in a stupor by saying, “she is unique;”
Your likeness is not found,
Please, allow me to talk to you;

.....

As the lines above suggest, stunned by her beauty, many people shout, “she is unique.” Emerson in Synnott (1989:629) states that beauty is welcomed “as the sun wherever it pleases to shine.” In this regard, we can imagine to what extent the breathtaking beauty of the woman makes many people welcome her with open arms. This, in turn, implies the positive function of beauty. If this beautiful woman keeps on receiving such warm welcome wherever she goes, she will definitely develop high self-esteem. Hauser in Synnott (1989:631) implies this fact as, “Most beautifying of all is the knowledge of being loved, that someone finds you beautiful and desirable.”

Yilma Gebreab’s other song lyric, ‘ውብ አነጋገር’ [wፊፊፊ anägagäruwa] was composed in 1985 E.C. In this song the concept beauty is presented somehow different from the above two songs. As we have seen, the appreciations of the two lovers in the above songs centre on the physical attractiveness of the women. Whereas, the narrator in this song highly emphasizes the convincing power of his beloved’s beautiful speech:

.....
 መጫወቱንም ማንም ይጫወታል
 ሁሉም ሰው ቢቃሉ ወግን ያጣፍጣል
 የእርሷ ግን ልዩ ነው ልብን ያሸፍታል
 የምትናገረው የምትለው ሁሉ
 ምንም አይጠገብ ሲሰሙት ቢውሉ

.....
 Of course, anyone might chat with someone,
 And all use words to sweeten their chat,
 But hers is quite different;
 Her speech is very dear to the listener’s heart;
 Everything that she talks is so lovely to listen to it the whole day;

As shown through the lines above, the speaker presents his beloved as an articulate attractive woman; according to him one can listen to her sweet talk the whole day without getting bored. He further witnesses that what impressed him most about her is her speech:

.....
 ትውስ የሚለኝ ከነገር
 ግርም የሚለኝ ከነገር
 ውብ አነጋገር

.....
 What I remember about her,
 And what surprises me about her,
 Is her beautiful way of speech;

Showing the positive function of good communication skill in romantic relationship, Larsen et al (2008:23) state, “Social intelligence can be demonstrated by being a good conversationalist. Skilled speakers were seen as more likeable, whereas boring communicators were not only rated as less likeable, but also as less friendly and more impersonal.” In this song, of course, there are lines that suggest the attractive physical appearance of the woman:

.....
 ከአካል ከአንደበቷ ከአንዳም ያልጎደላት
 የተካነችው ነች ከሁሉም ያደላት
 አይኗ እየወሰደኝ ሲያለምደኝ አመላ
 አፏ እየጣፈጠኝ እየሳበኝ ቃሏ
 መለየት አቃተኝ አካሌን ከአካሏ

.....
 Both her appearance and speech is perfect,
 She is lucky in every aspect of life,
 She is flavored,
 And she is lucky that she misses nothing;
 I fail to separate from her,
 Because her eyes attract me most
 Her words impress me,
 And her manner comforts me;

.....

The speaker testifies about the great role that her beautiful eyes play to grace the sweetness of her speech; he gazes into her adorable eyes while he attends her impressive speech [... አይኗ እየወሰደኝ.../ line 6 in the translation]. Studies show that being physically attractive is a huge plus for the fruitfulness of smart communicators. After investigating the impact of physical appearance on communication, Chaiken (1979: 1394) observes, “Attractive communicators were more fluent speakers and faster speakers than their unattractive counterparts. Further, attractive communicators described themselves somewhat more favorably along several dimensions (persuasiveness, attractiveness, interestingness, optimism about getting an excellent job) that may tap aspects of self-concept.” The speaker also witnesses that with her interesting speech, she can even manage to calm people who quarrel down:

.....
 ይከስማል ይጠፋፋል ነገር
 እሳቱም ውሀ ነው እርሷ ስትናገር

.....
 She cools off contention;
 Everything calms down when she speaks;

.....

Therefore, depending on her excellent skill of communication, it is possible to guess that she can establish a happy and stable romantic relationship. Regarding the decisive function of communication skill in promoting smooth romantic relationship, L. Larsen et al (2008:23) write:

Obviously, communication skills are essential to long-lasting relationships. We are especially fond of people whose ways of relating to others are similar to our own... Those with high communication skills saw interactions as complex with highly valued psychological components. People with low skill levels saw communications as more straightforward and less complicated. To communicate at the same level is a very important aspect of attraction and liking. Operating at the same skill level is rewarding, as we feel empathy and understanding. Those who do not share the same level of communications are less likely to develop long-lasting relationships.

The speaker presents his beloved as a brilliant communicator and beautiful woman. So, we can imagine that because of the adorable personal qualities that she possesses, so many people would welcome her with open arms. Consequently, the more she enjoys a warm and friendly atmosphere wherever she goes, the more she gains confidence. Acevedo and Aron (2009:63) describe the importance of self-esteem in romantic relationship as:

Several theorists have suggested self-esteem plays an important role in relationships and specifically in relation to romantic love. In contrast, Mania (obsession) is described as being full of insecurity and doubt and related to relationship turbulence, dissatisfaction, and obsession. Consistent with this idea, several studies report that self-esteem is moderately positively associated with higher Eros and lower Mania scores. The direction of causality could be from self-esteem to love. For example, adults classified as “secure” according to attachment theory models, tend to report higher self-esteem. Thus, having the felt security that a partner is “there for you,” not only makes for a smooth functioning relationship but also may facilitate feelings of romantic love. In contrast, individuals classified as insecure are less effective at using and providing a consistent secure base for their partners, have lower satisfaction and greater conflict in relationships, and also report lower self-esteem. Such events may heighten feelings of insecurity about the relationship and could manifest as obsessive love.

The self-confidence that she develops through such a welcoming atmosphere might enable her to get married to a man who has similar communicative skill and other desirable personality traits to her. Hence, getting married to a like-minded person is an added advantage for the woman so that she and her life partner form a stable family that in turn positively contributes to the wellbeing and continuity of the society.

In other Amharic song lyric, “የላቅ ፍቅር” [yäsaqð fðqðrð], the facial beauty of a man appears as a means for liking:

ከቀስተ ደመና ገጽታው ይፈካል
እንደ ብሩህ ቀለም ሲያዩት ይማርካል
በፍልቅልቅ ሳቁ አሰርጉዶ ጉንጨፍን
በጥርሱ ያፈሳል የፈገግታ ምንጨፍን፤

.....

His face is brighter than the rainbow
He is as attractive as the shining colour;
His smile broadens until his dimple appears;
Spring water of smile flows from his teeth;

.....

In this song, the speaker is romantically attracted to the facial beauty of the man. She witnesses that the face of her beloved is brighter than a shine of rainbows [ከቀስተ ደመና ገጽታው ይፈካል/line 1 in the translation]. In the real world it is almost impossible to find someone who is shiner than rainbows. However, as we have seen previously, in romantic relationship people often tend to idealize either the physical appearance or the internal personality traits of their partners. Referring a study conducted by Sternberg (1989), Haack and Falcke (2014:106) write, “In loving relations, although two individuals are involved, there may be others, which are the persons each partner idealizes. The partners’ happiness and satisfaction in a relationship can be significantly affected by a fantasy of perfection or by the expectation based on a person’s present and past.”

As we learn from the song, the speaker falls in love with the man for she is highly impressed by the captivating beauty of his smile. When she sees him smiling, she experiences an overwhelming feeling of tiredness. This happens because of the deep feeling of happiness that she enjoys while he smiles:

.....
በድንገት ያላንዳች ነገር እላለሁኝ ፍዝዝ
ስልምልም አድርጎኝ ባሳብ እላለሁ ትክዝክዝ
ለካ እንዲህ ነው የሳቅ ፍቅር ሲይዝ?
በፍልቅልቅ ሳቁ አሰርጉዶ ጉንጨፍን
በጥርሱ ያፈሳል የፈገግታ ምንጨፍን
ለካ እንዲህ ነው የሳቅ ፍቅር ሲይዝ?

.....

I feel numb all of a sudden for no apparent reason;
While I stay in pensive mood, thought makes me go weak at the knees;
Does it make like this when laughter makes one fall in love?
His smile broadens until his dimple appears;
Spring water of smile flows from his teeth
Does it make like this when laughter makes one fall in love?

Agrawal (2014:2) observes, “Current research (and common sense) shows us that a smile is contagious; it can make us appear more attractive to others. It lifts our mood as well as the moods of those around us. And it can even lengthen our lives.” Similarly, as shown in the lines above, Being the initial attraction, the beloved’s smile puts the speaker in a position to closely access his other fascinating qualities. She takes the beauty of his smile as “spring water” [በፍልቅልቅ ሳቁ አሰርጉዶ ጉንጨን/ በጥርሱ ያፈሳል የፈገግታ ምንጭን/lines 4&5 in the translation]. Commonly, the symbolic importance of spring water places on the sense of freshness and pureness. With this, the speaker seems to imply the goodness of her intimate’s entire personalities. There are studies which claim that the physical appearance of a person in general and the face in particular symbolizes his/her inner or spiritual qualities [Synnott, 1989; Emerson, 1968]. Wittgenstein (1989: 628) in Synnott stated that “the human body is the best picture of the human soul.” Furthermore, in his essay “The Aesthetic Significance of the Face”, George Simmel (1965: 278). writes, “...in the features of the face the soul finds its clearest expression; the face strikes us as the symbol, not only of the spirit, but also of an unmistakable personality.” In short, these scholars argue that the physical appearance of an individual would tell us his/her sincerest feeling.

Therefore, the speaker’s attempt to use the metaphor of “spring water” to show the moral goodness of her beloved on one hand and her tendency of romanticizing their togetherness on the other hand indicate that how positively his appearance influences her perception of him. For instance, in this song, we see the speaker witnessing his happiness on the basis of her beloved’s beautiful face:

.....
 እኔህን የሚያስተው ይምጣልኝ ጨዋታው
 በገጽታው ውበት ይገኛል ደስታው፤

.....
 I’m so eager to enjoy his breathtaking chat;
 His beautiful face reflects his happiness;

As shown in these lines, the beloved’s beautiful face describes his happiness. Hence, on the basis of this song it is possible to say that the lyricist, Yilma Gebreab (2003 E.C.), seems to support the assumption that claim “beauty is the promise of happiness” (Stendhal as cited in Rosen et al, 2011: 319). Furthermore, commenting on the symbolic significance of human face, Knapp (1980: 179)

states, “The face reveals facts not only about a person's mood, but also about his character, health, personality, sex life, popularity, ability to make money, social status and life expectancy.”

Similar to the three songs discussed above, this song also reveals the fact that physical attractiveness is functional to the society; the speaker wishes she would be in her beloved’s arms so that she enjoys the gift of his beauties:

.....
እቅፍቅፍ ካንተጋር እቅፍ
ተያይዞ ከንፍ
.....
Embrace you,
And flying in love with you is marvelous
.....

Therefore, if she wins his heart, she will put all her efforts to the success of their romantic relationship. Moreover, at every opportunity she might try her best to the positive progress of their love from the stage of passionate (intense longing for a union) to compassionate (that involves the highest level of commitment). This situation by itself enables them to form a strong and stable family that positively contributes to the wellbeing of the society at large.

The other love song that deals with the theme of beauty is **‘ኩሪበት’** [kuribätö]; Mesfin Abebe composed this song some two decades ago. As the first stanza of the song references, the woman is so successful in possessing “sweet” and extraordinary beauty:

.....
ሁለንተናሽ ጣፋጭ እንከን የሌለብሽ
የሕይወት ቅመም የመንፈስ ቅመም
እንዳንቺስ የተሳካለት በዓለም ቢታሰብ የለም፤
.....
You are perfectly sweet;
You are the spice of life and spirit;
In the world, no one is as successful as you;
.....

The speaker assures his beloved that he finds her perfectly sweet; he also considers her as the source of comfort for him. As a result, he labels her “... the spice of life and spirit...” Moreover, since her unrivalled beauty causes him to have a feeling of great respect for her, he calls her attention so that she prides herself on being the most beautiful women in the world:

.....
በተፈጥሮሽ ታደሏል ሁለመናሽ
በቁንጅናሽ ታጅቧል ሁለንተናሽ
ኩራት ኩራት ይበልሽ ይገባሻል፤
አሟልቶ ሰጥቶሻል፤

.....
Luckily for you, nature blesses your entire body;
All your appearance is beautiful;
Let you be proud of yourself;
You deserve it for God has fully beautified you;

.....

The speaker treats his beloved like royalty for the simple reason that she is physically attractive. Kirkpatrick and Cotton (1951:81) indicate that physically attractive people are perceived and treated positively, and they state, “One could assert that attractive women are relatively free from inferiority feeling, they tend to have success in the courtship process... they fit the prevailing cultural norms and stereotypes...” Thus, being free from inferiority complex, the beloved would have the grace of playing her social roles up to the expectation of the society. If she does not suffer from the painful feeling of incomplete, unworthy and unacceptable as a person, she will enjoy the meaningful interactions with people around her.

The speaker also uses the metaphor of water (river, holy water) to uncover the perfectness of the woman’s beauty and loveliness:

.....
ፍቅር እንደጸበል ከላየሽ ላይ ፈልቆ፤
የውበት ጅረቱ በአከላትሽ ፈሶ፤
መንፈሴን አጽናናው ባንቺ ለዛ አድሶ፤

.....
Love flows from you like holy water;
A river of beauty has poured down on your body;
Your beauty has given me a relief, and it consoles my spirit;

.....

In some Christian religion holy water, which is thought to be blessed by priests, is used for sacramental purpose; in the Ethiopian context, particularly Orthodox Tewahedo Christians use holy water to drive away evil spirit and dispel sickness. Hence, the speaker seems to put stress on symbolic significance of holy water, purity and blessedness, to mirror the highest level of his beloved’s attractiveness that deserves to be loved. Some scholars argue that beauty and love are

the same thing. For instance, for Plato beauty is “the object of love” (Synnott, 1989:612). Furthermore, Emerson in Synnott (1989:613). states that “perfect beauty and perfect love are one.” Therefore, when we judge the beloved’s situation from where these scholars stand, her faultless beauty can make her the most loveable woman for the speaker and his contemporaries. That is why the speaker openly testifies that his beloved is even more beautiful than other women whom he knows:

.....
 ኢድምቆሻልና ተፈጥሮሽ በውበት
 ኩሪበት ኩሪበት፤
 አልቆሻልና ከሌሎች በውበት
 ኩሪበት ኩሪበት፤
 አብልጦሻልና ከሌሎች በውበት
 ኩሪበት ኩሪበት፤

.....
 For your natural beauty decorates you, feel pride in it;
 Since God make you more beautiful than others, feel pride in it;

.....

There are studies that verify the notion that women pay more attention to their beauty. Martin and Gentry (1997:21) observe that “... girls are generally preoccupied with attempting to become beautiful.” Furthermore, in her book entitled “Ultimate Confidence: The Secrets to Feeling Great About Yourself Every Day” the therapist, Marisa Peer (2009) emphasizes that women often measure themselves against each other by their looks rather than success in the other aspects of life. So, taking into account the great attention that women pay to beautiful appearance, it would be logical to think that the speaker’s beloved deserves to be proud of herself since she is blessed with tantalizing beauty that every woman dreams to have. And undoubtedly, possessing the highest level of physical attractiveness which is a joy to see, the beloved would be surrounded by men who compete for her attention. This, in turn, will widen her chance to select the best romantic partner to get married and form stable family that fruitfully functions to the wellbeing of the society at large.

ኅህ የኔ ወለላ’ [nähd yäne wäläla] is the other love song selected for its remarkable treatment of the theme of beauty. In the beginning of this song, the narrator tells us that her lover is honey and orange:

ከህ የኔ ወለላ ጣፋጭ ብርቱካኔ
ቁጭ ብለህ አጫውተኝ አትለይ ከጎኔ፤

.....

You are my honey,
And my sweet orange,
Let you sit beside me so that we chat away;

.....

While honey commonly symbolizes sweetness, orange stands for both its sweetness and delicious smell. Thus, the speaker metaphorically describes the highest level of her beloved's beauty equating with the adorable qualities of these natural foods, honey and orange. Consequently, impressed with his handsome features, she begs him to stay and chat with her [ቁጭ ብለህ አጫውተኝ አትለይ ከጎኔ/line 3 in the translation]. His beautiful appearance influences her to make positive judgments about him. Seng LOH (1993:421) observes that physically attractive people “benefit from a physical attractiveness stereotype in which they are believed to possess a number of other able, but unobserved, personal qualities by virtue of their pleasing exterior.”

In the song, we also see the speaker pronouncing herself satisfied being in love with him. Apart from claiming that he gives her relief and happiness, she idealizes the qualities of his personality traits in that she regards him as an angel who guards her soul:

.....
የአይምሮዬ አዳሽ መንፈሴን አስደሳች
የነፍሴ መከታ የልቤ ምስራች፤
የወይን ዘለላ አበባው ሸጋዬ
ከምንጣፉ ይልቅ ባንተ ሞቀ አልጋዬ፤

.....

You make me feel relief and happy;
You are the guard of my soul and the source of joy to my heart;
You are attractive as grapevine and beautiful as flower;
You warmed up my bed better than the bed cloth did;

.....

In the lines above, the speaker claims that her beloved's presence gives her the sense of security, and he is the one who makes her heart feel with happiness. This eventually enables her to breathe a sigh of relief, and enjoy the contentment pouring through her. In addition, through the metaphors in the lines below, the speaker stresses that her beloved is handsome in the highest degree:

.....
አይንህ ሲንከባለል የሰው ልብ ያስቀራል
አከላትህ ሁሉ ማሽ ነው ያበራል፤

.....
When your eyes move passionately, it gladdens anyone's heart;
Your body is an oil lamp that produces light;

.....
The passionate movement of his eyes flushes her with intense pleasure that fills her heart with joy. And she has got the pleasure of watching his body that shines like a lamp. Hume in Synnott (1989:626) states that "...beauty is fitted to give a pleasure and satisfaction to the soul." The speaker is also impressed with her intimate's good manner which is being praised. Her beloved's handsomeness fits with Kant's judgment of beauty that "the beautiful is the symbol of morally good" (Kant in Synnott 1989: 626). The last two lines of the song show how the speaker's idealization of her beloved reaches its peak:

.....
እንኳን እኔን ቀርቶ የምድር ምድሪቷን
ጀንበርም ሰው ብትሆን ይበላል አንጀቷን

.....
Let alone me, the woman of this world,
He could impress the sun if it were human;

.....
Among the countless stars, it is the sun that appears the brightest to all of us on Earth. Above all, the sun makes physical objects visible, and it generates life. However, according to the speaker, the beauty of her beloved could beguile one of the most precious creatures of God, the sun, if it (the sun) were human. Thus, through such romantic idealization she implies that she will always have special place for him in her heart.

In general, in this section attempts have been made to investigate the depiction of beauty in Amharic love songs. In the songs, physical attractiveness is presented being positively correlated with other aspects of life. The researcher identifies that in almost all love songs whose underlying theme is beauty, God is taken as the source of all beauty. In one way or another, the songs favor the stereotypic assumption that claims "the human body is the best picture of the human soul" (Wittgenstein in Synnott, 1989: 627). As depicted in the songs, romantic partners who have attractive physical appearances are regarded as morally good ('ሞናሊዝ' [Mona Lisa]), good communicator ('ውብ አነጋገሯ' [wəbəb anägagäruwa]) and the source of pride and joy ('የላቅ ፍቅር' [

yäsaqð fðqðrð)) and ‘ነህ የኔ ወለላ’ [nähd yäne wäläla]) and ‘ቆንጆ ልጅ ነሽ’ [qonðgo lðጅð näšð] . The songs in their totality indicate that attractive physical appearance is functional to the stability of romantic partners as well as the society at large. Other songs such as ‘ፈላጊሽ ብዙ ነው’ [fälagišð bðzu näwð], ‘ማን ነበር ያላንቺ’ [mand näbärð yalanðč̣i] and ‘የቀይ ዳማ’ [yäqäyð dama] deal with the role of beauty in romantic relationships [See Appendix D).

7.1.2. Betrayal depicted in Amharic Love Songs

People would commonly set out expectations when they engage into some sorts of relationships. Though they usually put their efforts to maintain the smooth flow of their interactions, there will be occasions for them to violate their expectations. Finkel et al (2002: 956) observe a strong possibility of turning positive interactions into negative as, “Although close partners often treat one another in a positive and considerate manner, negative interactions are nearly inevitable.” Likewise, intimates in romantic relationships might fail to meet their needs, and they may find their relationships cease being a source of comfort and pleasure. Oftentimes the love relationship goes wrong when one of the intimates betrays her/his beloved’s trust. Once again discussing the occurrence of betrayal, Finkel et al (2002: 957) state, “Betrayal may be said to have occurred when the victim believes that the perpetrator has knowingly departed from the norms that are assumed to govern their relationship, thereby causing harm to the victim...”

Various studies have attested betrayal being one of the very common social phenomena that destructs the positive romantic relationships (*Meskó, N. & Láng, A.,2013*; Georgia, 2012). Showing the ever existence of betrayal in human history and the vulnerability of romantic relationship to the act of betrayal, Fitness (2001:76) writes, “Over the course of their evolutionary history, humans have become finely attuned to the possibility of betrayal by others...Typically, people tend to think of betrayal in the context of romantic relationships, and with good reason, since spouses and romantic partners are the most frequently cited sources of betrayal.” One might often come across the theme of betrayal in songs and different literary genres. Most authors in the Western world enjoy exploring the themes of deception and betrayal (Afejuku, 2005). In addition, “Many African writers are pre-occupied with examining the theme of betrayal ...” (Upah, 1987: 10). Seemingly, betrayal is one of the most recurrent themes in Amharic love songs. Following this, attempts have been made to indicate how the issues of betrayal are things that are at the heart of some of Amharic love songs:

It was in 2005 E.C. that Tewoderos Kassahun composed the song lyric, ‘አኩሉ’/ [akukulu]. Betrayal is the central theme of this song:

ለጨረቃ ብርሀን ጀንበር ለቃ ቦታ
እንሂድ ብለሽ ወጥተን ጨዋታ
ተዛዘብን በአንድ ቀን ማታ
አልከዳህም ብለሽ ቃል ገብተሽ ለልቤ
እንደ ጴጥሮስ ከዳሽኝ ሶስቴ
አዘነብሽ ቦታ ስሜቴ

.....

On moonlight night when the sun set,
We went out to enjoy ourselves at your request;
I observed your doing with disapproval just at one night;
You promise to stay loyal to my heart,
But as Peter did, you betrayed me three times;
So, you offended me;

.....

In his attempt to uncover the magnitude of the anguish that fills him due to his beloved’s shameless infidelity to him, the speaker alludes to the three acts of Peter’s denial of Jesus [እንደ ጴጥሮስ ከዳሽኝ ሶስቴ/line 5 in the translation]. According to The New Testament, while Jesus was having the last supper with His twelve disciples, Peter (one of the apostles) promised that he would never betray Jesus. However, as Jesus predicted, Peter denied Him three times before rooster crowed in that same day (Luke 22:54_62).

The speaker uncovers that his beloved has already made a vow that she would stay remain loyal to him [አልከዳህም ብለሽ ቃል ገብተሽ ለልቤ/ line 4 in the translation]. However, she breaks her promise at the very unexpected moment while they spend an enjoyable moonlight night. This, in turn, makes him feel the most glaring grievance [አዘነብሽ ቦታ ስሜቴ/ the last line in the translation]. Since betrayal by its very nature is a shock, it disturbs the inner peace of the faithful partner. In the words of Macdonald (2008:21) intimate betrayal is “the ultimate act of un-love,” and she further claims that implicitly the message from the straying partner is echoed deep inside the hurt partner as, “You don’t matter to me at all. You are not worth protecting. You are of no value. Therefore, I can betray you at will. I don’t care if I hurt you. Our relationship is not worth preserving. You are scum to me. I can do whatever I please, since you are a nothing in my eyes” (Macdonald, 2008:21). In this regard, the speaker might often be challenged by the emotional dysfunctions such as anger, loneliness, hopelessness, etc. As the negative thought patterns and feelings devastate his

state of mind, he might fail to behave in a sensible way in his day to day interactions with others around him. In other words, being disturbed with the painful experiences of betrayal and rejection, the speaker cannot function positively for the wellbeing and stability of his family and the society at large.

Of course, the speaker believes that any similarity between Peter’s denial of Jesus and his beloved’s infidelity to him is merely superficial:

.....
ያንቺስ ለብቻው ነው ስሜት የሚጎዳ
በንሰሀ ልቡን ሊያጸዳ ለመልካም ነው ፔፕሮስ ቢከዳ

.....
Of course, Peter betrayed;
But he purified his heart;
For he professed abject repentance for his impiety and disloyalty;
However, your sin is severe and matchless one,
It has touched my heart;

.....

Practically, Peter and the speaker’s intimate were absolutely in the different situations. Peter was facing the doomsday scenario that he would have been crucified if he had not betrayed his Lord, Jesus. Undoubtedly, Peter was in a place “where his faith could be tested beyond its endurance” (MacArthur, 2013:2). Hence, since Peter denied Jesus not to be attacked by those who crucified Jesus, the sense of self-accusation began to take root in his mind right after the moment of the betrayal. As mentioned in the four gospels of The New Testament, Peter was weeping bitterly over his denial of Jesus. Luckily, after resurrection, Jesus accepted Peter’s repentance and tear. It is because Peter’s tears “were not merely tears of remorse—they indicated a true sorrow and turning from sin” (ibid) [በንሰሀ ልቡን ሊያጸዳ ለመልካም ነው ፔፕሮስ ቢከዳ/ lines 1-3 in the translation]. Contrary to this, there is not any external pressure that forces the speaker’s beloved to betray him. It seems that adultery is the motive behind her immoral decision, and on top of that she shows no sign of repenting of her adulterous affair. Thus, her rude and disrespectful manner is the cause of the speaker’s irritation [ያንቺስ ለብቻው ነው ስሜት የሚጎዳ/the last two lines].

Much to the dismay of him, the speaker witnesses the incident in which his beloved cheats on him:

ከአንተ ሌላ ፍጹም ብለሽኝ
እወድሀለሁ ብለሽ ዋሽሽኝ
ሌሊቱ ገና ሳይነጋ
አየሁሽ ከሌላ ሰው ጋ

.....
 You promise me not to have affairs with others,
 You falsely claimed that you loved me;
 But, I saw you with someone else before the day broke;

The manner that the faithful partner discovers her/his intimate's infidelity matters a lot how she/he reacts to the immoral behavior of the traitor. According to Greene (2006:37), "Discovering the infidelity through solicited information seeking and catching the partner "red-handed" were found to be the most likely discovery methods to lead to relationship dissolution." Thus, it is possible to imagine how the speaker suffers from the deepest sorrow for he catches his beloved red-handed cheating on him [ሌሊቱ ገና ሳይነጋ/አየሁሽ ከሌላ ሰው ጋ/ the last line in the translation]. For the speaker, knowing his beloved whom he trusts with his heart has an affair is "... a deeply distrusting shock" (Fitness, 2001:90). As various studies show, having a cheating spouse would be a source of humiliation for the wounded partner. For instance, Fitness (2001:79) observes:

From an evolutionary perspective, our survival as social beings critically depend on the degree to which valued others accept and respect us, and people will go to extreme lengths to avoid looking weak or foolish - indeed, some will even die to protect their reputation. The horror of humiliation, then, derives not simply from its assault on a person's self-esteem, but also from the perceived loss of social status it evokes. So, for example, the humiliating discovery that one has been the "last to know" about a partner's infidelity, and the suspicion that one has been the subject of other people's gossip and pity, may trigger as much pain as the act of betrayal itself. Similarly, the humiliation of being discarded by one's partner for someone more physically attractive compounds the pain of betrayal and rejection.

In the song under discussion, time and again the speaker accuses his beloved of breaching the vow [ከአንተ ሌላ ፍጹም ብለሽኝ/አወድሀለሁ ብለሽ ዋሽሽኝ/ lines 1&2 in the translation]. In a normal circumstance vow serves to cement romantic relationships positively. However, when the vow loses its symbolic value, the relationship would dissolve. According to R. French et al (2009:2) betrayal "strikes at an individual's deeply held sense of self, leaving them devastated, enraged and bewildered at being treated so unexpectedly and deceitfully or dishonorably." Hence, being remain under the serious strikes of negative emotions such as pain, confusion, disbelief, and etc., the speaker could lose courage to stay with his unfaithful partner. He places emphasis how a liar his beloved is. In the first place, though she confesses that she loves him, she fails to be loyal to him. On top of that, her infidelity shatters his faith and trust when he sees her hiding her engagement ring the moment she seduces the other man:

.....
ላወቅሽው ኣዲስ ሰው ዋሽተሽው
ቀለበቴን ፈተሽ ደበቅሽው

.....
You told your new friend a false story;
You hid the wedding ring

.....

Her attempt to appear as if she were single implies two things at a time. In one hand, it signifies that she keeps lying through her teeth in her new affair with the other man. MacDonald (2008:14) states “Hiding begets more hiding. Lying begets more lying.” On the other hand, her hiding of the wedding ring shows that she makes an intentional adulterous move to the other person. She does it because she is aware of the danger of destructing the serious deal that the engagement ring symbolizes. Studies show that an engagement ring is a lasting symbol of profound commitment. Mayntz (2013:1) describes the symbolic importance of an engagement ring as:

Engagement rings are symbols of the love, devotion, and fidelity a couple shares. The very shape and design of the ring, however, has additional symbolism that many couples incorporate when they design a ring or select the perfect ring to represent their relationship...Engagement rings are ultimately circles of metal, and the circle is a part of very sacred, symbolic geometry. Circles have no beginning and no end and thus represent eternity, renewal, wholeness, and perfection. They are also symbolic of the sun, moon, and planets, bringing together all life just as an engagement ring brings together the lives of two people.

As one can learn from the song, the unfaithfulness of his beloved makes the speaker tremble with anger. Since his beloved’s untrustworthiness gives him a shock in a very unexpected moment, he comments nothing on their future relationship. However, from the sensitiveness of the matter, it is possible to guess that the speaker might fail to cope with the aftermath of the betrayal. Therefore, if the speaker continues to suffer from the emotional trauma of being betrayed, he might take decisive measures to dissolve the relationship. Some studies show that man and woman respond to infidelity somewhat differently (Ahrndt, 2014; Guadagno & J. Sagarin, 2010). For instance, H. Green (2006: 19) writes, “...when the spouse of the affair participant is a woman, she is more likely to try to rehabilitate the marriage following an affair, whereas when the spouse of the affair participant is a man, he is more likely to end the marriage following an affair and initiate a new relationship with a more presumably loyal partner.” So, on the basis of this assumption, the speaker might lose interest to rebuild their relationship especially if she keeps on lying as she does in that

moonlight night. It is to mean that the more she lies, the more he loses trust on her for the simple reason that lies foster distrust (Macdonald, 2008; L. Toma, et al, 2008; Lawson, 1988).

The woman in Solomon Tessema’s (1961 E.C.) song lyric, ‘ብቃኝ የሰው ነገር’ [bɔqañð yɔsāwð nägärð/, is suffering from heartbreak and disillusionment:

ስለደረሰብኝ ከፍተኛ እርግጥ
የሰው ነገር ብቃኝ ከዛሬ ጀምሮ

.....

I place no trust in anyone
For I’m terribly hurt;

.....

The speaker in this song lyric becomes suspicious of a man in love affairs. She has lost trust in anyone for the one whom she confided much betrayed her unexpectedly. In a situation when the romantic partner gives up her/his relation, the other party would hardly recover from the emotional trauma. Reasoning out the painfulness of such a condition, Oland (2003:3) writes, “Only to those who know you well—life partners, parents, siblings, kids, and great friends—do you ever grant insights into your depths. Perhaps that is why betrayals from lovers and friends, to whom you entrust vulnerable parts of yourself, sting and hurt so much. You feel so exposed. It is a difficult thing to expose oneself emotionally, but it can also be one of the most freeing experiences life offers.” All the secrets, the untold stories and private matters that the intimates share while they are in love shockingly lose their confidentiality. In such circumstances individuals feel defenseless that apparently destroys their emotional balance. The broken-hearted woman boldly claims that she is mistrustful of people in terms of romantic love.

It would be hard for the woman to avoid the negative impact of betrayal. It is for this reason that she refuses to engage in romantic affairs anymore. Of course, it is highly questionable whether she succeeds in her plan. However, in the meantime, she inevitably suffers from loneliness, anger, rejection, and etc. Facing the pain of being rejected and feeling the bitter cold of loneliness could be quite unbearable for the woman who had been warm-heartedly enjoying the romantic love. Fisher (2004:3) says that “Love has its sorrow, of course. Being rejected is among the most painful experiences a human being can injure.” In the song under discussion, the speaker beloved’s sudden departure exposes the speaker to the feeling of emptiness and financial insecurity:

.....
ህይወቴ ነው ብዬ እምነቴን ጥቁብኛለሁ
በባዶ ቤት ጥሎኝ ሄደ ወዳሻበት፤

.....
Thinking that he is my life,
I depend solely on him,
But he betrays me,
And goes where he needs
Leaving me behind in an empty home;

.....

The above lines suggest the two major challenges that the speaker faces because of her intimate's unfaithfulness. Firstly, she lacks emotional safety; loneliness makes her feel empty that she could not pull herself away from it. There are credible evidences that show that women give due attention to emotional connections. Consequently, they would severely be offended and depressed by emotional infidelity. When their intimates betray their trust, women also experience a deep feeling of guilt, and they suffer from the feeling of being unworthiness. Spring (1996: 33) observes, "When a relationship falters or fails, a woman is more likely to get depressed and experience a diminution of self. It's not just that she loses her partner, she loses herself." Accordingly, it is possible to imagine to what extent the speaker is forced to go through psychological and emotional traumas when the man whom she thinks is her life leaves her humiliatingly [ህይወቴ ነው ብዬ እምነቴን ጥቁብኛለሁ/ lines 1&2 in the translation]. Concerning the difficulties that women face while they are betrayed by their spouses, H. Green (2006:21) writes:

Research has also found that women are also more likely to define themselves in relation to others and equate their self-worth with being loved. Women who had experienced a humiliating marital event, i.e. husbands' infidelity, were six times more likely to be diagnosed with major depressive disorder than women who had not experienced a humiliating marital event. A comparison group design with 25 women who had experienced a humiliating marital event and 25 women who had not showed groups reported similar levels of marital distress. A similar longitudinal study with infidelity labeled as a severe negative stressor also reported an increase in depressive symptoms. One explanation for this could be a woman's tendency to direct criticism inward rather than to project outward at others.

Secondly, being in such a sickening moment, the speaker seems to face the lack of material rewards for a living. The emptiness of the home does not merely refer to his mysterious disappearance. It also symbolizes the weakening of her household income. After her beloved's

sudden departure, she stays in an “empty home” [በባዶ ቤት ጥሎኝ ሄደ ወዳኛበት/the last line in the translation]. Studies show that apart from suffering from the pain of emotional infidelity, women go bankrupt when their husbands leave them. In many societies since women spend much of their time in household activities, they could not earn their living. Consequently, they hardly earn a crust when their husbands leave them for other women. This, in turn, makes them voiceless; for them making a decision to leave their marriages is quite scary. Rather, they are forced to stay in unhappy marriages even when they discover their husbands’ infidelity (H. Green, 2006). The speaker maintains her innocence that she does not exert any pressure on her beloved to lead him to infidelity:

.....
 ክፉ እንዳልሰራሁት ሲያውቀው ልቦናውው
 ጥሎኝ መኩብለሉ የሚያሳዝን ነው፤

 He knows at heart that I haven’t hurt his feeling;
 But it is a great pity he has left me;

People engage in extramarital affairs for various reasons. Often times people give due attention to the cost and the benefit of relationships that they engage in. They may not continue their relationships if they do not find them rewarding. Larsen et al (2008:35) write:

All relationships involve rewards as well as costs, and relationship outcomes are defined as the rewards minus the costs. The partner may bring comfort, sexual excitement, support in bad times, someone to share information, someone to learn from, all possible rewards. However, the partnership also has costs. The partner might be arrogant, a poor provider, unfaithful, and have different values. These are the potential costs. Social exchange theory proposes that we calculate these rewards and costs consciously or at the subliminal level. If the outcome is positive, we are satisfied and stay in the relationship; if not, we bring the relationship to an end.

From the given assumption of cost and benefit, it is possible to guess that the speaker’s beloved might not meet his expectations in their romantic relationships. In other words, he might not drive sufficient benefit as he dreams from their marriage. If so, he decides to look for other woman who can fulfill his needs better than the speaker.

As the poet Emily Dickinson in Fisher (2004:5) states, “Parting is all we need to know of hell.” This truly depicts to what extent betrayal negatively influences romantic love. It makes the ultimate relationships dysfunctional. Undoubtedly, the torturous memories insist the speaker in the song

lyric under discussion to be suspicious of people (especially the opposite sexes) around her, and she reacts accordingly. So, the failure of her romantic love somehow impacts on her personal life and the harmonious functioning of the society.

The song, ‘አላስገድድሽም’ [alasəgädəddəšmə/], was composed by Yilma Gebreab in 1981 E.C. The speaker in this song is suspicious of his intimate; he has been in some doubt about her faithfulness since they started the relationship:

ጥንትም ላይሆንልሽ እንደው ተቸገርሽ
እኔስ አይገርመኝም ወደ መጥላትሽ

.....

From the beginning, you didn’t fall truly in love with me;
I’m not surprised to see your love turning to hate;

.....

Various studies underlie that individuals who fail to engage in relationships often feel empty and hollow inside. Therefore, in order not to feel desperately lonely, people involve in multilateral social interactions. In other words, under normal circumstance people do have strong desire to form relationships so that they feel a sense of peace and well-being. Larsen et al (2008: 5) state, “Throughout life a normal human being will seek out relationships responding to a biological need for companionship.” From what the speaker suggests one can realize that he (the speaker) is highly motivated by the need to belong. Unless he fears to shoulder a huge burden of loneliness, he never decides to suffer from such an unrequited love [ጥንትም ላይሆንልሽ እንደው ተቸገርሽ/ the last line in the translation]. On the other hand, the speaker’s beloved seems unable to meet her need being with him:

.....

ፍቅርም ካልቀደመ ከገንዘብ ከሀብቱ
ቁም ነገር የለውም መዋደድ በከንቱ፤
ካንቺ እማልደብቀው ችዬ የማልሸሽግሽ
መውደዴን ነው እኔ መቼም የማልነፍግሽ፤

.....

If love is not preferred to money and wealth,
It will be meaningless to act as though one falls in love with someone;
The love I have for you is a thing that I cannot keep secret from you;

.....

As the above lines of the song suggest, the speaker is bitterly disappointed with the deceitfulness of his beloved. Though he loves her with all his heart, she has left him for a richer man. Different studies reveal that there is a significant biological difference between men and women in selecting mates (Rosen, et al. 2011; LOH , 1993; Margolin and White, 1987; Kirkpatrick & Cotton, 1951). When choosing their romantic partners, men often place great emphasis on the youngness and attractiveness of the women. On the contrary, women prefer rich men over the poor ones. Larsen et al (2008:29) observe, “In all cultures men rated physical attractiveness as more important in a mate, and they preferred younger partners. Women on the other hand, preferred partners who were older, and who could provide material resource.” Though the speaker loves his intimate so much, he is not in a position to satisfy either her material or financial needs:

.....
 አንዱ ብሩን ሲቸር ሌላው ጌጥ ያመጣል፤
 የእኔ ልብ ሀብታም ነው እምነቱን ይሠጣል፤
 ዛሬም አለኝ ፍቅር የያዘኩት ሠሰቼ፤
 መቼም በዚህ በኩል አላውቅም ደህይቼ

.....
 One would give his loved one money;
 The other might present ornament to his lover;
 But my heart is rich; it gives my lover its conviction;
 Even now, I have love that I have preserved in secret;
 I have never been poor in this regard;

.....
 As shown in the lines above, love is the speaker’s generous gift for his beloved. However, he is unable to reward her with either money or ornament like other lovers do to their intimates. Hence, unless she violates their relationships, his insufficient income might make her face financial hardships. According to Larsen et al (2008:17), “... We seek relationships and continue in these if the rewards exceed the costs and therefore yield a profit.” Accordingly, it seems that the speaker’s beloved finds it unbeneficial to stay with him. Thus, she leaves him for a richer man who might offer a huge comfort to her. The speaker does not explicitly comment on either the physical attractiveness or other qualities of his intimate, but he testifies that she can easily make romantic partner:

.....
 ጸጸቱ እስኪሰማሽ ጨክነሽ ብትቆርጧም
 ለኔው ይብላኝ እንጂ አንቸሽ ሰው አታጩም፤

I feel, without you, my life is not worth living;
Surely you meet someone who loves you;
Though you will live to regret for being disloyal to me;

.....

As shown through these lines, the speaker is sure that his beloved possesses personal qualities that enable her to form a new romantic relationship with someone. This, in turn, leads us to deduce that she is very accurate in displaying her admirable and lovable traits which make a man fall in love with her. As it is indicated before, men care less about wealth, and emphasize the value of external beauty in mate. If so, most probably the speaker's beloved could be physically attractive. On the other hand, the speaker lacks one important thing which is sought by almost every woman; he is unable to meet her financial needs. On top of this, he seems to lack other compensating qualities. For instance, she would remain loyal to him if he were at least either handsome or good communicator. Oftentimes, these and other positive qualities can compensate for what one fails to bring to the relationship.

In conclusion, the songs discussed in this section shows how romantic partners could be suffering from the adverse effects of betrayal. As depicted in the songs, betrayal violets the expectations of the intimates that make the betrayed partner face painful psychological traumas. Witnessing the shocking act of his beloved's infidelity, the speaker in 'አኩኩሉ' [akukulu] equates her unfaithfulness with the well-known denial of Jesus by one of His closest and most prominent disciples, Saint Peter. The speaker vividly complains that he is irritated by her disloyalty. Mad with grief, he may be no longer in love with her. Similarly, the speaker in 'ቦቃኝ የሰው ነገር' [bɔqɑñɔ yɔsəwɔ nəgärɔ] is furious at being left by her beloved who abuses her trust. She never expects that her life is ruined by the one whom she trusts with her heart and soul. Thus, she becomes suspicious of everybody for she cannot cope with the aftermath of her beloved's infidelity. Furthermore, in the song, 'አላሰገድድሽም' [alasdɔgäddɔdšmɔ] the speaker is filled with anguish for his beloved leaves him for a richer man. For him, seeing her valuing money over love is a crying shame. In the words of Fitness (2001: 2), betrayal "... is devastating because it disrupts an ongoing, meaningful relationship in which partners have invested material and emotional resources." The speakers in the stated songs seem to share Fitness' view. In addition to the three songs discussed under this sub-section, songs such as 'አንተን ነው' [andtäñɔ nəw] and 'ቃል-ኪዳን ተረሰቶ' [qald kidanɔ tärsɔto] also discuss the impact of betrayal in romantic relationships [See Appendix D).

As the lines above suggest, the speaker does not deny that his beloved’s betrayal of his trust inflicts pain on him. However, he decides to forgive her instead of laying a guilt trip on her. Studies show that forgiveness in its real sense does not mean either to forget the wound left by the offender or to pretend that the wrongdoer is faultless. Researchers from Organ State University observe:

We all know the old adage, “Forgive and forget”. However, forgiving someone does not mean we forget the wrong that the person did. Forgiveness has nothing to do with forgetting. For example, what would happen if you burned your fingers on the stove, and you forgot that hurt? Remembering the pain helps us to not let the event be repeated... An important part of forgiveness is remembering and dealing with what has happened. Pain inflicted will probably never be forgotten. Forgiveness allows us to put the pain in a place where it doesn’t continue to hurt us... By forgiving, we are not saying that what they did was acceptable or unimportant, or “not so bad”. It was bad, it did hurt, and it was wrong. We are not declaring the offender “not guilty” or absolving the person of the wrong. We do not need to justify or explain the other person’s behavior... Forgiving does not mean removing responsibility for what the person has done. There is nothing about genuine forgiveness that precludes holding people accountable for their actions (www.dearshrink.com/luskin_forgiveness_participant.pdf).

Practically, in any form of relationship forgiving offenders is not an easy task; in romantic relationship when an intimate violates the expectations of his/her partner, the victim might be locked in a cycle of anger and vengeance. Therefore, one cannot swallow his/her anger and resentment unless he/she is satisfied with the romantic relationship that he/ she engages in. Furthermore, when one commits to loving his/her partner to the rest of his/her life, he/she can forgive the transgressor. The line below shows as to why the speaker needs to forgive his beloved:

.....
 ተይልኝ ተይልኝ
 የልብሽን ሀዘን እርግፍ አርገልኝ
 ሀዘኔን ትቻለሁ በደሌም ተረሳኝ
 ይቅር ቅያሜዬ አንቸን ከሚነሳኝ፤
 ከፍተሽ ግቢ በሬን ከፍተሽ እንደወጣሽ
 ጥፋትሽን ልሽከም ጨርሼ ከማጣሽ፤
 ናፈቀኝ ፈገግታሽ የጫወታሽ ለዛ
 መጣ በዙሪያዬ የፍቅርሽ መዓዛ
 ዛሬም እንደፊቱ እንኩር በጋራ
 እጠብቅሻለሁ ከይቅርታ ጋራ፤

Let you stop feeling guilty
 I forgive you, and I never put blame on you henceforth;
 I don’t need to hold grudge that make me lose you;
 Open my door and come in as you opened it when you left me;

I prefer to tolerate your misdeed to lose you forever;
I feel the fragrance of your love;
Let us live together;
Mercifully, I keep on waiting for you;
.....

In the words of Gunderson and Ferrari (2008:2) "... forgiveness of a romantic partner for a given transgression is an indication that the relationship is committed and satisfactory." Likewise, the fact that the speaker keeps on feeling the fragrance of his beloved's love and longing for her smile proves his depth of satisfaction that he gets from being in love with her [ፍሬቀኝ ፈገግታሽ የጫወታሽ ለዛ/መጣ በዙሪያዬ የፍቅርሽ መዓዛ/lines 6&7 in the translation]. Consequently, willing to tolerate her misdeed, he is fully committed to rebuild their broken relationship. [ከፍተሽ ግቢ በሬን ከፍተሽ እንደወጣሽ/ጥፋትሽን ልሽከም ጨርሼ ከማጣሽ/lines 4&5 in the translation].

Oftentimes forgivers are not interested in taking inventory of their intimates' faults. They rather emphasize on their partners' constructive behaviors. As scholars of Organ State University suggest, genuine forgivers should work toward empathy, understanding and compassion for the offender who is part of humanity on this earth (www.dearshrink.com/luskin_forgiveness_participant.pdf). In this regard, the speaker in the song under discussion sympathizes with his beloved, and he attempts to tell her that nobody is perfect; he underlies that being human everyone makes mistakes.

In the song under discussion, one can learn how forgiveness is functional to bring stability to romantic partners when they come into conflict. In its very nature forgiveness is unilateral; it is to mean that one of the partners can forgive the other irrespective of his/her partner's cooperation. "Forgiveness is something we do on our own. The other person does not need to cooperate or even be aware of it. Forgiveness does not depend on what the other person does or doesn't do" (ibid). As a matter of fact, in this song also it is the victim (in this case the speaker) who needs to forgive his beloved. If she positively responds to his action, they can keep on loving each other and grow comfortable in their romantic relationships. They may eventually develop a great understanding of each other that in turn enable them to form a stable family.

The other song that deals with the issue of forgiveness is 'አወድሽ ነቢ' [əwädəšə nəbärä]. It was in 1960 E.C. that Seifu H/Mariam composed it. In this song, the speaker claims that he makes the

ultimate sacrifice to the love he has for his beloved. However, contrary to his expectation she fails to be true to her word:

እኔ በበኩሌ እወድሽ ነበረ
አደራ ያልኩሽ ቃል ምንው ተሰበረ
ያልሆንኩት የለኝም እኔ ላንቺ ስል
እየተሰማሽኝ የልቤ ቁስል

.....

For my part, I love you;
Why did you break the promise that we made?

You are the wound of my heart;
You cause me suffer the most;

.....

Though the speaker believes that his beloved is responsible for the serious rift develops between them, he is willing to forgive her. Knowing how she has been unfaithful to him, he commits to show her mercy for the simple reason that he could not live without her:

ካንቺ ተለይቼ መኖር ስለማልወድ
ጥፋትሽን በሙሉ እፍቃለሁ በግድ

.....

I couldn't live without you;
So, I am forced to forgive you;

From these lines one can learn that the speaker loves her unconditionally; no matter what she does to him he gives her true love. In addition, he is the one who believes in honoring his commitments. If he were not determined to keep loving her, he might not patiently shoulder the burden of her misdeeds [ያልሆንኩት የለኝም እኔ ላንቺ ስል/እየተሰማሽኝ የልቤ ቁስል/line 3&4 in the translation]. Therefore, once again in this song too we see love and commitment promoting forgiveness (Hargrave, 1994; Finkel et al, 2002). On the other hand, he speaker suspects the social disapproval that she faces as a result of her unfaithfulness might lead her to have a guilty conscience. Practically, he fears others' destructive comments would worsen the already existing rift between them:

ይሉኝታ እና ፍቅር ለየብቻ ናቸው
ያሉትን ይበሉ ሌሎቹን ተያቸው

.....

Being sensitive to others' opinion and love are different things;
Let the others say whatever they need to say;
Don't bother about their feelings;

.....

Parents, friends and others reactions for the relationships can either positively or negatively affect the stability of romantic relationship (Sprecher and Felmlee, 1992). The speaker’s attempt to encourage his beloved not to be offended by others’ negative comments on her transgression confirms not only his unconditional love that he has for her but also his highest level of commitment for their romantic relationship. Hence, no matter how others disapprove their love relationship, he decides that she remains be the love of his life. Once again, we can see how forgiveness powerfully functioning to rebuilding and normalizing love relationship.

The other song that deals with the theme of forgiveness is Alemtsehay Wodajo’s ‘ምነው ከረፈደ?’ [mፀnäwፀ käräfädä]. It was in 1975 E.C. that she composed it; in this song, the speaker rhetorically asks his lover why she is so late to ask him forgiveness:

የሰራሽን በደል ስሩ ከሰደደ
ይቅርታሽ ደረሰኝ ምነው ከረፈደ
የይቅርታው ጊዜ አልዘገየሽም ወይ
ያፈቀረ ጊዜው አይረዝምበትም ወይ

.....

Why are you so late to make an apology?
The plight of your misdeed has already touched my heart;
Aren’t you so late to ask for forgiveness?
Don’t you think it is a long wait for a person who is in love?

.....

As the lines above indicate, the speaker is complaining of the delayed apology of his beloved. Studies show that an apology can be effective either to reduce or to resolve interpersonal conflict when it is extended at the right time. In other words, time always stands as the intrinsic aspect of apology; thus, the one who violates the relationship should make the appropriate judgment concerning the time to extend apology (Schumann, 2012; Tsang et al, 2003). Because of poorly timed apology, the victim might develop the impression that the offender has reckless disregards for his/her (the offended party’s) feelings. Rubin et al (1994: 165) claimed that “... if improperly timed or meant insincerely, an apology can arouse suspicion on the part of other.” Likewise, the speaker’s sense of unease grows because of the untimely apology of his beloved [ይቅርታሽ ደረሰኝ ምነው ከረፈደ/ the first line in the translation].

When one’s sense of right is denied, he/she experiences emotional disturbances. Often times the wounded partner in a relationship will feel threatened, and he/she bears grudge against the

offender. Practically, when such situation exists, “something inside of the offended calls for justice” (Chapman & M. Thomas, 2008:18). Therefore, the sense of justice develops deep inside the victim urges him/her to see the offender taking responsibility for straining the relationships:

.....
ከዛሬ ከነገ ሲጠብቅሽ ልቤ
ትመጣለች ብዬ ወስኜ በሀሳቤ
አልረፈደብሽም አልዘገየሽም ወይ
ለወደደ ጊዜ ፋታ ይሰጣል ወይ

.....
My heart waits for you every time;
I thought you would come;
Aren't you so late?
Does it bring respite for the one who falls in love?

.....

As the lines above clearly show, the speaker has been waiting for his beloved to apologize. “People often expect someone to ask their forgiveness as part of an apology. Requesting forgiveness indicates that you want to see the relationship restored. It admits guilt, that you deserve condemnation or punishment” (ibid: 93). Contrary to this, if the offender fails to come back to apologize, it will signal that he/she (the wrong doer) is careless of the feelings of the victim. This, in turn, makes the victim think that the offender keeps on hurting his/her feelings on purpose. Consequently, the painful experience of being looked down and other uncomfortable emotions which eventually develop inside of the victim might prohibit him/her from rebuilding the relationship. It seems the same holds true to the speaker; his beloved’s disrespectful attitude towards him (or their romantic relationship) irritates him much [የሰራሽኝ በደል ስሩ ከሰደደ/ line 2 line in the translation].

Observing changes in his beloved’s behavior leads the speaker to question the genuineness of her delayed apology. He testifies that his beloved used to ask his forgiveness without delay whenever she wronged him:

.....
ሆነሽ በደለኛ ጣል ጣል አርገሽኝ
ዛሬ ከተሰማሽ እኔን የሰራሽኝ
ልክ እንደ ቸልታሽ እንደ ኩርፊያሽ መጠን
ምነው አልነገርሽኝ ለጥፋትሽ ምክንያት

.....

If you regretted your fault,
If you regretted the way you devalued me
Why didn't you tell me your reason to mistreat me,
As you did it when you were sulking?

.....

In the above lines of the song, it is stated that in the past the speaker's beloved came with a reasonable excuse for her faults without delay; however, this time not only she fails to offer a timely apology but also, she offends him for no apparent reason. Since it is uncharacteristic of her to behave like this, it casts the shadow over their romantic relationship. Therefore, her unreasonableness on one hand and her delayed apology, on the other hand, make the speaker doubt his beloved's word.

As shown before, timing in offering an apology is so crucial; Grigsby (2007:1) writes, "Our lives could be less complicated if we could know precisely when apology is warranted and when it is not. In truth there is no universal answer to the question when apology is warranted. It may be better to base our decision to apologize on when one is expected." In this regard, the speaker's beloved seems to fail to meet his expectations. Furthermore, wrong timing in warranting apology (if it is either too late or too early) specially to de-escalate serious issues could make the victim doubt its sincerity. According to Chapman and M. Thomas (2008:25), "What most people are looking for in an apology is sincerity." Thus, on the basis of the overall situations of the speaker, one cannot possibly think that he becomes willing to heal the broken relationship.

In general, from the three songs above ('ቂም አልይዝም ባንቺ', 'እወድሽ ነበረ' and 'ምነው ከረፈደ?') one can learn that forgiveness is instrumental in amending broken relationships. When couples disagree on certain issues, the one who abuses the relationship asks the victim forgiveness to show that he/she commits a regrettable mistake. Most often individuals who either unconditionally love their romantic partners or genuinely commit to their relationships become sympathetic towards their beloveds. Whatsoever they suffer from the pain that their intimates inflict on them, they are willing to forgive their romantic partner). The situations the speakers are facing in the first two songs ('ቂም አልይዝም ባንቺ' and 'እወድሽ ነበረ') can show this fact. On the other hand, the effectiveness of forgiveness is significantly determined by time. If an offender seeks to be forgiven by the victim, he/she has to know well when to extend an apology. An apology that is offered either too early or too late could arouse suspicion on the part of the offended party. As shown in the last song ('ምነው

ከረፈደ?”), the speaker refuses to accept his beloved’s unreasonably delayed apology. However, if an apology is made sincerely and timely, it could make couples solve their problem and lead a stable life. According to Grigsby (2007:3), “when an apology is effective, the offended party feels lifted of a burden. In turn, forgiveness can help the offender feel lifted of the burden of guilt.” This eventually makes couples focus on reinstating their love relationships rather than taking inventory of their mistakes that could destabilize their familial and social life being the victims of their unpleasant experiences. The theme of forgiveness runs through other Amharic songs such as ‘ወደ የጠላ ሰው’ [wädo yäṭäla säwô] and ‘ተበድዩሰ ይቅርታ አልልም’ [täbädäyesô yôqôrdäta alôlômô] [See Appendix D).

7.1.4. The Depiction of Gossip in Amharic Love Songs

Quite a number of Amharic song lyrics composed in the stated three eras show the effects of gossip upon romantic relationships. Webster's Third New International Dictionary defines the noun “gossip” as "a person who habitually retails facts, rumors, or behind-the-scenes information of an intimate, personal, or sensational nature." And according to this dictionary, the verb ‘gossip’ means “to converse idly... about other person.” Although scholars from various streams, for instance, sociology and psychology view the features of gossip somewhat differently, every one of them agrees on the shared property of all gossips that “the target or targets of discussion are not present and thereby are not directly party to the conversation” (Kuttler et al, 2002:106). Discussing the characteristics of this universal social issue, B. Gelles (1989:667) observes that gossip is:

the telling of tales about a person not present. This telling of tales serves manifold functions; of entertainment, a story with a plot and a moral that satisfies the emotions. Moreover, gossip develops a mode of not only the social but the psychological bonding of the teller and the listener. And by using the power of this bond, a successful gossip may manipulate opinions to enhance her or his status - or to destroy the status of others... This potentially malicious use of gossip as a weapon to serve has contributed strongly to its negative reputation in philosophy, literature and religion.

As one can learn from the quote above, B. Gelles (1989) discusses both the positive and the negative impacts of gossip on relationships. It is to mean that a piece of gossip might enhance the bonding between gossipers and listeners; contrary to this, it could destruct the reputations of the target (the one who is discussed). Studies show that some people engage in gossiping just for fun; others think that they get the information they need while they are gossiping about others. People

might have different motives to gossip; however, to do it safely the gossipers should be certain that they trust each other. (Holland, 1996; Eder and L. Enke, 1991).

Even though gossip could create the strong sense of belonging and trustworthiness within the participants as indicated above, it might damage the reputations of individuals. Since the person who is gossiped does not have the chance to defend himself/herself against the verbal abuse or criticism while the backbiting is going on, his/her entire relationships can seriously be ruined. It would be quite challenging for the victim to shake off his/her distorted public image created by gossip (Scott, 1991; B. Gelles, 1989; Lanz, 1936). According to Holland (1996), the bad effects of gossip arise from its evaluative nature. Commenting on its adverse effects, he states that “gossip may also, of course, be motivated by anger or malice. For example, my dislike of someone or resentment about how he or she has treated me may be vented through gossiping. In addition to simply letting off steam, I may also use gossip to try to separate the person at whom I am angry from those to whom I speak, as well as from those to whom the story may be conveyed” (Holland, 1996:201).

Nicholas Emler in Ratledge (2014) states that 80 percent of our day to day conversations are completely personal, of which gossip covers the dominant portions. Gossip is a universal social phenomenon that exists among all cultures as well as among individuals (Holland, 1996). Therefore, the social impact of gossip and its commonness captures the interest of poets throughout the globe. Vermeule (2006: 104) writes, “Literary narratives, in short, are deeply ambivalent about gossip: they depend on it even as they disavow it. In this respect, they are just like the rest of us. Gossip, though everywhere practiced, is everywhere despised.” Similarly, Ethiopian song lyric writers in the stated three eras addressed the different social impacts of gossip. Following this an attempt has been made to discuss the themes of gossip that depicts through Amharic song lyrics:

It was in 1998 E.C. that Yilma Gebreab composed the song, ‘ጥላህኝ ስትቀር’ [təlälðhðñð sətəqärð/]. The speaker in this song has fallen victim of malicious gossip. She reveals her grief over the mystery of his unexpected decision to leave her:

ጥለህኝ ስትቀር ቅያሜህን ገልጸህ ሳትነግረኝ
ሀጥያቴን አብዝተው ክፉ አድርገው ከልብህ እያወጡኝ
የቀኑብኝ ሁሉ ባንተ ቀጡኝ

.....

You abounded me without telling me your grudge;
I learned the shocking truth as to why you did it;
Those who were jealous of me ruined me;
They were gossiping to you about me;
They make you hate me,
By telling you heartbreaking stories that that blacken my name;

.....

As the lines above suggest, the speaker's beloved does not give her the chance to discuss why he decides to leave her [ጥለህኝ ስትቀር ቅያሜህን ገልጸህ ሳትነግረኝ/the first line in the translation]. She believes that her lover makes this painful decision due to the spiteful gossip that he has heard about her [ሀጥያቴን አብዝተው ክፉ አድርገው ከልብህ እያወጡኝ/line two in the translation]. If that is the case, the gossipers succeed in clouding his judgments. It is because if the backbiters had failed to misrepresent her as someone disloyal, he would not have disguised his bitterness about what had happened and left her in a very unpleasant manner. On his part, the love of their lives they enjoyed and the great time they spent together has lost their meaning at once since the gossip has badly darkened her reputations. Related to this, McAllister (2014:3) writes, "The most dangerous part about gossip is that it steals another person's reputation. A reputation is very fragile. When you gossip, you are helping to destroy something extremely valuable." Hence, it seems that the gossip makes her beloved lose interest in her personal qualities that he used to admire once.

The speaker claims that people gossip about her because they look at her with envy [የቀኑብኝ ሁሉ ባንተ ቀጡኝ/ line three in the translation]. Mentioning the typical reasons for gossiping, Barrett (1986:3) states:

A chronic faultfinder criticizes because they have a poor self-image. Such a one feels that by making others look bad they themselves look better. Running others down makes them feel important. This of course is a bad case of self-deception. Others may criticize because they are self-righteous... Another reason people criticize is because they are jealous or just holding a grudge. This is their way of getting even and satisfying their resentment and jealousy. Another class of people who critique are those who do it by habit. They have complained and griped for so long it becomes a habit.

As shown in the quotation above, jealousy can cause gossip. Of course, the speaker's qualities that make the gossipers feel jealousy of her are not explicitly mentioned in the song. However, her

beloved's decision to abandon her evidently reveals to what extent their jealousy of her showed itself in spiteful malice. With regard to the negative effect of gossip, Gambetta (1994: 201) observes, "Gossip can destroy trust, punish innocent people and promote cliques."

In the lines below, the speaker confirms that her beloved does not deserve the blame for leaving her:

.....
ሀሰት ሲያወሩልህ ምላው ተገዘተው
እንዴት ልፈረድብህ የሚያስቱህ በዘተው?
.....

How could I put the blame on you while many were there to mislead you?
They took an oath to tell you a complete pack of lies about me;

.....

The speaker believes that the gossipers have tricked her beloved into believing that she is somebody untrustworthy. According to her, they have lied through their teeth; thus, they tell him many untruths about her [ሀሰት ሲያወሩልህ ምላው ተገዘተው/line 1 in the translation]. With regard to the conditions that enable backbiting to function, Gambetta (1994:211) states that "gossip does not require truth... A convincing story gets repeated because of its appeal not its truthfulness." Furthermore, the speaker implies that the gossipers are morally wrong and deliberately intending to hurt her. Since they are wicked, they make vows just to tell her beloved false stories about her. Under normal circumstance, people take a vow to show their sincerity. Hence, they do things with great care when they take vows because vows are considered as sacred and honorable before God and man. However, as shown in this song, their mean-spiritedness urges gossipers to show a blatant disregard for the symbolic values of vows.

The speaker claims that she had a great enthusiasm for life; however, the gossipers put her life at risk with their maliciousness:

.....
እኛቸ ለማስተዋል ቀና ብዬ ነበር
አንገቴ በሀሜት ድንገት ባይሰበር
.....

I hoped to have a bright future ahead of me,
But gossip made my dream fade away;

.....

According to McAllister (2014:3) “...being gossiped about can be extremely painful.” As the lines above suggest, the speaker continues to suffer emotional trauma; being in a miserable state, she has lost all hope. Therefore, she decides to leave her home town:

.....
ከጓደኛቸው በታች ካደረገኝ መውደድ፣
እድሌ ነውና እንግዲህ ልሰደድ፤

.....
If love make me hold a lower status than my friends,
It would be my fate to run away;

.....

Once gossip distorts someone’s reputations it would be quite difficult to change the public’s perception of him/her. It is to mean that one could hardly prove his/her innocence if his/her name is ruined by gossip. Since backbiting can make people look up at the gossiped one suspiciously, she/he (gossiped one) tends to feel devalued. “If you have ever had a rumor spread about you, then you know how difficult it can be to overcome the untruthful words” <http://www.loveisrespect.org/content/rumors-and-relationships/>. Seemingly, the speaker in the song under discussion fails to cope with the aftermath of the gossip. Holland (1996:203) writes, “Gossip may damage relationships with persons who hear stories and may negatively affect the job security of the person gossiped about. Gossip may also serve to perpetuate the isolation of an outsider.” As gossip has poisoned her entire social interactions, the speaker decides to leave for good.

The other song that deals with the theme of gossip is ‘ሰንት አየን’ [sənətə ayänə/]. In this song, the speaker is curious to know whether his beloved has heard a piece of gossip about someone:

.....
ምን ሰማ ጆሮሽ ምን ሰማ
ምን ታየ ዛሬስ ማን ታማ
በሰው ፍቅር ገብቶ አንዱ ጭንቅ ይላል አንዱ ለተሰማማ

.....
What have you heard?
What has been seen?
Who has been gossiped today?
One evilly interferes in someone’s love affairs;

.....

It seems that the speaker gets irritated by the inescapability of gossip; he is quite sure that not a day passes without someone is gossiped about [ምን ታየ ዛሬስ ማን ታማ?/the third line in the translation]. This, in turn, implies how gossip is there in abundance in individuals' day to day conversations. Indicating the commonness of gossip B. Stirling (1956:262) writes, “gossip, or an equivalent, appears to be common to all mankind.” Furthermore, in an article published by Wayne State University Press, the frequentative availability of gossip is shown as “.... gossip was a dominant portion of friends' talk, comprising almost half of their dialogue” <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23096126>.

The backbiters' motives for gossiping about others possibly make the speaker frown in puzzlement [በሰው ፍቅር ገብቶ አንዱ ጭንቅ ይላል አንዱ ለተሰማማ/the last line in the translation]. As to him, gossipers fail to behave reasonably; he could not make sense of their evil deeds to poison the love life of others. According to Holland, gossipers discuss the private lives of other persons. He further observes, “Gossip contains a piece of news involving a morally dubious if not outright reprehensible action” (Holland, 1996: 198). Gossipers feel disappointed at seeing others flushed with success. They rather guiltlessly enjoy themselves so much from the failure of others (Lanz, 1936).

The speaker observes that the gossip they hear strikes them as odd, so he sets a defense mechanism against its devastating effects:

.....
 ጉድ ሰማን እንደው ጉድ ሰማን
 ስንት አየን የነገር ሸማን
 በይ ፍቅርን ደራርበን እንላበስበት እኔና አንቺን ላማን

 We heard strange stories;
 We received news of conspiracy against us;
 Let us flourish our love;
 Let the gossipy ones see our triumph;

As the lines above suggest, the speaker encourages his beloved not to surrender herself to the deceptiveness of gossip. According to him, devoting themselves to blossom their love is the best way to shield their social and emotional well-being from its hurtful effects [በይ ፍቅርን ደራርበን እንላበስበት እኔና አንቺን ላማን/the 3rd & the 4th lines in the translation]. Studies show that the preferable

method to break the gossip chain is not to associate with gossipers (McAllister, 2014; Eder & L. Enke, 1991).

The speaker thinks that the gossipers are untrustworthy; in the lines below, he shows how gossipers betray anyone's trust:

.....
እኔን ያጥላላ አይበጅም ላንቺ
እኔን ያማ ሰው አይተኛም ላንቺ
በቅናት ወሬ እንዳትፈቺ

.....
The one who has ridiculed me couldn't be good to you;
The one who has gossiped about me couldn't be good to you;
Don't lose your trust of me;
Being biased by the rumor of those who are jealous of us;

.....

The lines above reveal that no one is immune from the influences of gossip. As Spacks states, "Today's gossiper may turn into tomorrow's subject of gossip" (1985: 90). Thus, the one who gossips about others today can be the subject of gossip tomorrow. There is no consistency in the way that gossip functions. It is to mean that someone's social position or reputation could be determined on the basis of his/her decision either to be inside or outside the gossipers' community. "Gossip can either unite a community or divide it," (Tsuchiya, 2007: 392). Oftentimes individuals who have low self-confidence use gossip as instrument to mask their emotional weakness. They feel that they get the chance to shine while they disgrace others in their gossips. B. Ben-Ze'ev (1996:204) in Holland states that a person with a low self-image "may gain some respect by conveying information which is slightly damaging to others." The speaker fears that they (he and his beloved) might face the threat of gossip anytime in their day to day interactions. Therefore, once again he urges his beloved to stay away from gossipers:

.....
እንግዲህ ጆሮሽ ሀማት አይስማ
እንግዲህ ልብሽ በወሬ አይድማ
እንዳይለያዩን በነገር አድማ

.....
Don't listen to gossip hereafter;
Don't let your heart bleed from gossip;
In order not they separate us with conspiracy;

.....

There is a growing belief that gossip can restrict individuals’ freedom to enjoy their love-life. In relation with this, K. Gaynor (2013: 5) writes, “Knowing that there are people forming opinions about your relationship based on hearsay can sometimes cause you to become overly concerned with proving others wrong; desperately trying to appear like the perfect couple. Not only does it create an unrealistic expectation, but it prevents you from being free in your relationship, and more so held captive to the perception of others.” Similarly, in the song under discussion the speaker is anxious about their future; therefore, he is warning his beloved to take extra care in her interactions with the backbiters. In his opinion, unless she refuses to hear gossip, their romantic relationship would be ruined [እንዳይለያዩን በነገር አድማ/the last line in the translation]. One might consider the speaker’s fear as logical when he/she notes that gossip is “a social force, an intricate mechanism through which the organized forces of evil gain access to various departments of human life” (Lanz, 1936: 494).

Studies show that gossip is viewed differently in different societies. In some societies gossipers would face serious punishments. B. Stirling (1956:263) writes:

Among the Ashanti, a West African tribe, gossiping, tale-bearing, and ridicule are considered serious breaches of etiquette and are publicly punished. If the offense is committed against a person of high status, the perpetrator either has his lips cut off or he is executed... Among the Seminole Indians in the southeastern part of the North American continent, "talking bad about anyone" is placed in the same category as lying and stealing, and it is believed that it not only lessens the gossiper's receptivity to super-natural aid in this world but that it also is a hindrance to reaching Big Ghost City in one's spirit life after death.

The points raised in the quotation above are also somehow reflected in the song under discussion.

The speaker symbolically describes the lowest social positions that the gossipers hold as:

.....
 ውል ሲያጣ ጆሮ ከሸመተው
 ሲዛባ ልብም ከገመተው
 አሉ ባይ ከትቢያም ዝቅ ይላል ከሞተው

.....
 When one heard something meaningless, and failed to guess the truth,
 The gossipy would have lower status than the dust and the dead ones;

.....

In the lines above “the dead” seems to refer to the inner death and spiritual paralysis of the gossipers. Macmillan Dictionary defines the term “dead” as “no longer considered useful, relevant, or likely to be successful.” If so, in the song under discussion, the term symbolizes the extent to

which backbiters disgrace themselves in gossiping about others. Furthermore, no one allows himself/herself covered with dust if he/she needs to have a way of life that is healthy and morally good. Normally, when people see dust on their clothes, they never hesitate to wipe it off for it makes them feel very self-conscious. Thus, by degrading the status of the gossipers as less than the dust, the speaker lays emphasis on the personality disorder of the gossipers. According to Paulson (2013: 2-3), “Research shows that people who gossip the most have very high levels of anxiety. They are generally not particularly popular because they cannot be trusted... Gossiping shows others the gossipers’ insecurity and mean-spiritedness.” In general, in this song, the lyricist, Yilma Gebreab (1985 E.C.) has given particular attention to the negative impacts of gossip on romantic relationships.

“እስኪ ተወቅት” [əsdəki təwəwatə/] is the other song that discusses the theme of gossip. In this song, the speaker strongly refuses to hear any gossip about his beloved:

 እስኪ ተወቅት ለእኔ ትኑር በደህና
 አትረብሻት ሰላም አላት እና
 ምን ያደርጋል ፍቅር ማበላሸት
 አታውሩልኝ እኔ አለወድም ውሸት

Leave her to me;
 Let she live in peace;
 Don't disturb her for she is a peace loving one;
 It is no use ruining love;
 Don't lie to me for I hate it;

As indicated in the lines above, the speaker has had the sense to turn the gossipers away. This happens due to the fact that he knows very well that his beloved achieves inner peace [አትረብሻት ሰላም አላት እና/line three in the translation]. This, in turn, implies that the speaker enjoys the peace of mind being in love with her. Therefore, the growing sense of peace and well-being which he feels being with her enables him to disallow the backbiters from making her the innocence victim of gossip. In other words, he realizes to what extent the gossipers’ evil motives put the romantic relationships between him and his beloved in danger [ምን ያደርጋል ፍቅር ማበላሸት/the fourth line in the translation].

The speaker does not refer to any personality clash between him and his beloved. And he openly admires her peace-loving nature. This leads one to make an educated guess that they are the source of great comfort to each other. It should be the reason why the speaker places considerable trust on her. Barrett (1986:5) writes, “Gossip factors into our doubts and fears, sometimes these doubts and fears have come from past relationships or ever past life experiences.” Fortunately, the speaker is confident enough that his beloved stays loyal to him. If that is the case, it is not surprising if he refuses to hear gossip about her. In addition, he identifies the gossipers as liars. And as he claims, he hates lies. Therefore, it is expected to see him warning the gossipers to stay away from shattering her peace [ኢታውቁትም እንዲህ ናት አትበሉ/ the last line in the translation]. Moreover, as the lines below suggest, the speaker overcomes the prejudice of the gossipers’ act against his beloved:

.....
 ኢታውቁትም እንዲህ ናት አትበሉ
 ለመሳሳት ፈጽም አትቸኩሉ
 አትምጡብኝ ወሬ ሰንቃችሁ
 ደህና ግቡ ወደ የቤታችሁ
 እባክችሁ

.....
 You don’t know her well;
 So, don’t say anything about her;
 Don’t be in hurry to make mistake;
 Don’t come to me for gossiping;
 Please, go home in peace;

The speaker is sure that the gossipers’ stories about his beloved are groundless and erroneous. He comes to this decision because he believes that the backbiters are not in a position to understand his beloved [ኢታውቁትም እንዲህ ናት አትበሉ/ the first line in the translation]. In this regard, the speaker seems to share the following views of Holland (1996:204)

Gossip can blunt one's understanding of one's own character as well as the character of others. Gossip can both increase the information one has available and diminish one's understanding. Part of the experience of gossiping is having a sense of insight into another person; one sees clearly that some aspect of his behavior or person is faulty. One has the impression of being an acute judge of character and conduct, and of not sharing the faults under discussion. Yet this sense of insight is deceptive. One is unaware, at least temporarily, of the person's strengths and the relation of his strengths and weaknesses to each other. One does not consider his character as a whole or the wider circumstances of his life. A sense of proportion is lost; flaws loom large. Moreover, one is nicely oblivious to one's own flaws and sharply aware of one's strengths. This may be very pleasant but it can hardly contribute to understanding, good judgment, perceptiveness or empathy.

In the song under discussion as well as in the quotation above, it is implied that the gossipers' baseless stories are stemmed mainly from their poor understanding of themselves and others. However, quite contrary to the backbiters, the speaker fully counts himself in the know about his beloved as:

.....
በዚች ዓለም ስትኖር ከእኔ ጋራ
አልፈልግም እንዲያያት መከራ
አወቃታለሁ ከማንም የላቀ
ኢታውሩልኝ አለቀ ደቀቀ

.....
While she lives with me in this world,
I don't want to see her facing misery;
I know her better than anyone knows her;
It is over; don't tell me anything about her;

.....
Studies show that gossipers often attempt to project their inner most weaknesses and anxieties on to the subject (the one who is gossiped). Stirling (1956: 264) observes that a gossip “...put the onus of his own shortcomings on the shoulders of the target, just as in ancient times the sins of the group were laid upon the shoulders of the sacrificial goat...” In the song under discussion, the speaker knows everything about his beloved, down to the last detail. Thus, he is not willing to see her being made a scapegoat for the gossipers' evil deeds. This should be the other reason that makes him turn deaf-ear to listen to gossip about her [አወቃታለሁ ከማንም የላቀ/ኢታውሩልኝ አለቀ ደቀቀ/ the last two lines in the translation].

According to the lines above, apart from knowing his beloved fully, the speaker's love to her is unconditional. He is absolutely committed himself to safe-guard her against any danger [በዚች ዓለም ስትኖር ከእኔ ጋራ/አልፈልግም እንዲያያት መከራ/line 1&2 in the translation]. The lines below also echo the speaker's unconditional love to his beloved:

.....
እስኪ ግቢ ቤቴ የልቤ ወራሽ
ታምሜ እድናለሁ ሳይሽ ሳወራሽ
ብልህ እና አስተዋይ ቻይ አርጎ ፈጥሮሻል
ምን ልጩምርበት መፈቀር ያንሰሻል

Come in my love;
You are dear to my heart;
I would be cured when I see you and talk to you;

You are created being wise and uncomplaining;
You deserve something more than being loved;

.....

Most probably, to be loved is one of the most precious things one might have in life. As shown in the lines above, the speaker claims that his beloved deserves something more than being loved [ምን ልጩምርቦት መፈቀር ያንሰሻል/the last line in the translation]. Furthermore, he testifies that she cures him of a disease [ታምሜ እድናለሁ ሳይሽ ሳወራሽ/the third line in the translation]. All these make him develop overwhelming desire to stay in love with her; therefore, it is the case that he refuses gossipers not to poison his mind against his beloved with their fictitious stories.

It is recommended in the literatures that individuals have to take a firm stand not talk about others behind their back. However, if they keep on participating in gossip, their chance to expose themselves to its negative effects would be high (Jaworski & Coupland, 2005; Lanz,1936; MacDonald, 2011). McAllister (2014:4) observes, “Don’t judge people based on gossip. If you should hear gossip about someone you don’t know, you have two choices: allow the gossip to determine what you believe, or let your own personal experience determine what you think. The first time you have an experience with someone that is contrary to the gossip you’ve heard, you’ll be a lot more careful about spreading or believing gossip the next time you hear it.”

Therefore, the speaker’s decision not to hear gossip about his beloved is formal and correct. Moreover, individuals who deny involving in gossiping are thought to be morally strong. Since such persons do have sufficient understandings for life, they never take decisions on the basis of groundless gossip in haste. Murdoch (1996: 205) in Holland states that people who commit not to participate in gossiping live “in a different world, and see other people with a difference.” Hence, the speaker might have such personal qualities which enable him to stay away from gossip.

To sum up, in this section attempts have been made to deal with the themes of gossip as depicted in Amharic song lyrics. In the literatures, both the positive and the negative effects of gossip on any form of relationships have been thoroughly discussed from different perspectives. Some claim that gossip could strengthen interactions either among individuals or groups (Spacks, 1982).

Others investigate how gossip destructs either romantic or other forms of relationships (Vleet, 2003). The researcher observes that almost all the Amharic secular songs devoted to the issue of gossip place greater emphasis on its maliciousness. The three songs discussed above could be taken as exemplary to show the extent to which the Amharic song lyrics focus on the negative effects of gossip in romantic relationships. In the song, “ጥላህኝ ስትቀር” [təlähəŋ sətəqärə/], gossip has turned the speaker’s world upside-down. Gossipers deceived her beloved to leave her unexpectedly. Therefore, since she finds it difficult to cope with the aftermath of losing him, she decides to go somewhere for good. In the song, “ሰንት አየን” [sənətə ayänə/], too, the speaker lives in fear of the gossipers’ evil deeds. He warns his beloved to deny listening to any stories of the backbiters. And in the last song, “እስኪ ተውዋት” [əsəkki təwəwatə/], the speaker firmly decides to shut his ear to the fabricated stories of the gossipers. He states that he knows her like the back of his hand. Thus, since he has better access to know anything about her than the gossipers do, he expects nothing from the backbiters to tell him anything new about her.

7.1.5. The Experience of Longing in Amharic Love Songs

Physical proximity is thought to be crucial to form romantic relationships; however, such a relationship could be carried out in geographic separation due to various reasons. Military deployment, education demands, emigration and other factors might force romantic partners to be separated by hundreds or thousands of miles (Jiang, & T. Hancock, 2013). Various studies confirm that romantic partners often experience longing in long distance romantic relationships (Kowalski et al, 2013; Merolla, 2012). While commenting on the causes of romantic longing, Le et al (2010:511) write:

Whether it is the expected separations that define commuter marriages, unavoidable military deployment of a partner, spring break for college students, or periodic work-related travel, romantic partners will at some point face geographic separation. The occurrence of partners’ separations may give rise to longing, which we broadly define as the individual experience resulting from physical separation between partners, such that one’s partner is not immediately physically available when proximity is desired.

Separation would place barrier in psychological closeness which is thought to be “a hallmark of intimate romantic relationships” (ibid: 654). When geographic closeness is not possible, it inevitably interrupts the psychological closeness of romantic partners. This could eventually make romantic partners develop unpleasant feelings such as depression.

The theme of longing a romantic partner is depicted through many Amharic love songs. It was in 1977 E.C. that the song, ‘ልዩ ጃኖ’ [lōyu ḡano], was composed by Yilma Gebreab. In this song, the narrator speaks of the psychological impact of longing her intimate:

.....
 እንዴት እሆናለሁ ያልተገኘህ ለታ?
 መጨነቄን አይተህ ና የኔ ዘንካታ፤
 ሰርቼ እንዳልበላ ማን ዳኛ ቀጣኝ፤
 እኔስ መናፈቅ ነው እጄን የያዘኝ፤

.....
 How could I manage things just in case you are not with me?
 See how deep I get frustrated, so come to me my shapely lover;
 No judge has banned me from doing something for a living;
 It is longing that has chained my hands and made me idle;

.....
 The speaker misses her beloved so much; therefore, she keeps on begging him to come back [the first two lines both in the original and in the translation]. No judge has banned the speaker from working something for a living, but her longing for her beloved makes her sit idle. The last two lines of the song briefly show how she is paralyzed with the experience of longing her romantic partner [ሰርቼ እንዳልበላ ማን ዳኛ ቀጣኝ/እኔስ መናፈቅ ነው እጄን የያዘኝ/ the last two lines both in the original and in the translation]. Westly (2009:1) writes, “Everyone knows it’s no fun to be away from your significant other. Studies using anecdotal evidence have indicated that long-term separation from a romantic partner can lead to increased anxiety and depression as well as problems such as sleep disturbances”. Hence, if the speaker’s intimate fails to meet her demand, she might go through other painful experiences.

The speaker testifies that her beloved’s absence makes her feel lonely. As a result, she has no one to put her trust in:

.....
 ሚስጥር የማዋየው ማን አለኝ አዋቂ
 እስቲ እንመካከር አንተ ተናፋቂ፤

.....
 I have no one to share my secret,
 You, my beloved, whom I long for,
 Let us talk it over;

As one can learn from the lines above, the speaker needs her intimate most to share her secret. In other words, she seeks to communicate her feelings (fear, happiness, sorrow etc.) with him. In order to have a closer, deeper and more emotionally safe relationship, romantic partners need to adopt workable communication mechanisms either in geographically close or long-distance dating.

Stafford & J. Merol argue that face to face interaction is thought to be vital “for fostering and maintaining interpersonal relationships, particularly romantic ties” (2007: 38). In addition, while Tracy (2002:18) considers little stuff of routine conversation as the “basic ingredients for building and maintaining relationships”, Duke (1994:11) on his part claims that “everyday talk is the essence of relationships, providing evidence of partners’ psychological geography.” Commenting on the potential power of everyday talk to enhance romantic relationships between partners, Duke (1994:11) further states that “through everyday talk, partners check out one another’s lusts, desires, and attitudes; announce their values; reveal the structure of their concerns; uncover their attachment styles; and otherwise discourse freely on a multitude of topics that both openly and subtly reveal their own, and give clues to other people’s, meaning.” However, contrary to this, if there is a breakdown in communication between romantic partners, they hardly develop their mutual understanding. The more the face to face communication and the level of interdependence decrease between the romantic partners, the more they get frustrated.

Contrary to the conditions mentioned above, studies also show that the experience of longing the significant others is somehow functional to the longevity and sustainability of the romantic relationships. Longing for the romantic partner makes the individual to keep in touch emotionally with her/his beloved. It is because the intense longing for the beloved one means to dream of having psychological and geographical proximity to her/him. This, in turn, unequivocally implies that the one who longs for the beloved perceives that both the physical and the emotional satisfaction cannot be obtained from other alternative partners (Merolla, 2012; Benjamin Le et al, 2008). Thus, on the basis of this assumption, it is possible to make an educated guess that the experience of longing makes the speaker in the song under discussion to stay loyal to her beloved even when she lacks someone to share secret.

Yilma Gebreab's other song entitled 'ይረገም ይህ ልቤ' [yǝrǧǧǧǧǧ yǝhǧǧǧǧǧ lǝbe] which was composed in 1974 E.C., also deals with the experience of romantic longing:

ይረገም ይህ እግሬ አልፎ የሄደበት
 “ “ ጎኔ ሄዶ የተኛበት
 “ “ ጥርሴ ሄዶ የበላበት
 “ “ ልቤ ሌላ ያሰበበት
 “ “ ክንዴ ሌላ ያቀፈበት
 “ “ ከንፈረ ሌላ የሳመበት
 ያይኔ ነገርማ ገና ብዙ አለበት፤

.....

These legs of mine let them be cursed for going away;
 This flank of mine let it be cursed for going there to sleep;
 These teeth of mine let them be cursed for going there to eat;
 This heart of mine let it be cursed for making someone else get engraved on it;
 This arm of mine let it be cursed for embracing someone else;
 These lips of mine let them be cursed for kissing someone else;
 My eyes pay dearly for their deeds;

.....

As the lines above suggest, the speaker curses himself for being disloyal to his beloved. It seems that he has lived to regret his untrustworthiness since he involved in a casual dating sometimes in the past. According to Bowles (2013) casual dating is “the process in which people meet and go out together without any expectation of a long-term, committed relationship. When two people are casually dating, they are usually spending time together without an exclusive relationship or any agreement to date in the future.” While living separately, intimates might search for mechanisms to escape from the feeling of loneliness and depressive states of mind. This would eventually erode one’s loyalty to her/his beloved. Studies also show that in such a situation, the possibilities of the intimates to engage in unintended or casual dating are high. According to Benjamin Le et al (2010:656), “...being apart from a partner is an opportunity variable that provides a context for cheating to occur...” In the song under discussion, the speaker regrets making love with another woman. Based on the lines below, one can deduce that he might not have committed adultery if he had lived with his beloved:

.....

እሷ ወዲያ ሆና የልቤ አይደርስልኝ፤
 እስቲ ወዲህ ትምጣ ትግባ ትደባብሰኝ፤
 እንደ ቄሱ ጭራ እንደ እንዝርቷ ብታኝ፤
 ይህው መጣሁላት ደግማ ታንገላታኝ፤

መላመድ ነው እንጂ መራቅ የት ተገኝቶ፤
እንግዲህ ከእልፍኙ ካዳራሹ ገብቶ፤
ሰፊው መንገድ ሳለ ለመመለሻ፤
ልቤን አረገኛው መነሻ መድረሻ፤

.....

I am feeling very dissatisfied with her absence;
Let she come here and touch me;
Here I go back to her;
Let she swing back and forth me,
Like a priest does to his flyswatter;
And let she swing back and forth me,
Like she does to a piece of cotton,
While she spins it with her spindle;

Once entered her salon,
It is lovely to deepening intimacy with her;
For it is impossible to leave her;
While there is a broad way to travel back and forth,
She makes my heart starting and resting-place;

.....

As the lines above reveal, the speaker gives his beloved the right over himself; figuratively, he describes that she has the right either to swing him back and forth like a priest does to his flyswatter or like she does a piece of cotton while she spins it with her spindle [እንደ ቁሱ ጭራ እንደ እንዘርቷ ብታኝ/ይህው መጣሁላት ደግማ ታንገላታኝ/ lines 2-7 in the translation]. This shows how the speaker is hungry for the physical and the emotional proximity with his beloved. In the long-distance relationship, a romantic partner is intensely fond of communicating with and touching the partner, talking about the partner with others, and looking at pictures of the partner (Benjamin Le et al, 2010).

The speaker witnesses that his beloved fully reigns in his heart; literally, she makes his heart the place where she starts and ends her journey though she can walk on the broad way [ሰፊው መንገድ ሳለ ለመመለሻ/ልቤን አረገኛው መነሻ መድረሻ/ the last line in the translation]. From this, one can learn how the speaker keeps on thinking about the unforgettable moments he had with his beloved. Oftentimes, when a romantic partner misses her/his partner, she/he would be overwhelmed with reminiscent thinking. Cate et al in Stafford & Merolla (2007: 39) state that reminiscent thinking “focuses on thoughts about positive memories in the relationship, which may represent relationship-enhancing thoughts.” Since the experience of longing makes the speaker incapable of

staying far from his beloved, he pays her a visit [እንደ ቄሱ ጭራ እንደ እንዝርቷ ብታኝ/ይህው መጣሁላት ደግማ ታንገላታኝ/ lines 2-7 in the translation]. Here again, one can observe how the experience of longing the significant other is functioning to heighten romantic relationships.

Yilma Gebreab’s song, “አያኮራም” [ayakoramō], also depicts the theme of romantic longing is. Although the speaker in this song is always planning to pay a visit his beloved, he fails to do so:

.....
 ሰኞ ማክሰኞ ስል ሳትመጪም ሳልሄድም፣
 ሀሙስ አርብ አለፈ. ቅዳሜም እሁድም፣
 ዛሬ ነገ እያልኩኝ ገፋሁት አመቱን፣
 በጋውን ጨርሼ ወጣሁት ከረምቱን፤
 ድረሽ ልበል ልዘዝሽ ባንደበቴ፣
 ነይ ነይ ልበል፣
 ልይሽ ልበል ነይልኝ ሰውነቴ፣
 መላ አጣ ናፍቆቴ፤

I planned to pay you a visit with every passing day, but I failed;
 You also didn’t visit me;
 So, weekdays and weekends passed without being seen each other;
 Though I schedule to see you every today and every tomorrow, I fail to do so;
 Summer and winter passed without meeting you;
 Let me order you; come to me;
 Let me see you, my love;
 My longing for you is quite unbearable;

In the song, the speaker does not mention his reasons that prohibit him from fulfilling his plan to go where his beloved lives. However, almost a year passed before his dream comes true [ዛሬ ነገ እያልኩኝ ገፋሁት አመቱን/በጋውን ጨርሼ ወጣሁት ከረምቱን/line five in the translation]. Consequently, his longing for his beloved becomes unbearable as his desire to meet her is intensified every passing day. When he finds it difficult to endure his strong interest to see her, he begs her to come [ድረሽ ልበል ልዘዝሽ ባንደበቴ/ነይ ነይ ልበል/ልይሽ ልበል ነይልኝ ሰውነቴ/መላ አጣ ናፍቆቴ/ the last three lines in the translation]. This, in turn, indicates the extent to which the speaker is committed and loyal to their romantic relationship. In the literature, it is indicated that commitment and the experience of romantic longing are positively correlated. For instance, Benjamin et al (2010:656) state:

Therefore, longing a romantic partner may be particularly functional in motivating behavior to reestablish the interdependence threatened by geographic separation. Committed individuals are likely to miss their partners more, thus prompting behaviors to protect and enhance the

relationship when interdependence is threatened by separation... committed individuals engage in maintenance behaviors in the form of positive, open, and assuring communications with their partners. In addition, they may remain faithful to their partners during the separation. Thus, in the context of geographic separation, commitment is associated with longing a romantic partner and facilitates relationship maintenance.

As shown in the quotation above, a committed lover misses her/his partner much. And when s/he misses the significant other, s/he may not look for alternative partners. Hence, the experience of longing a romantic partner positively fosters long distance dating. In the lines below, the speaker confirms that keeping in touch with his beloved through a letter could not satisfy him fully:

.....
በቃል ቢደረደር ናፍቆት በደብዳቤ፣
ማስታመሚያ አይሆንም ለባከነው ልቤ፤
ጭንቅን ይግለፅ እንጂ ስለመለያየት፣
ብዕር መስኮት አይሆን ዓይንሽን ለማየት፡፡
.....

If a letter is written about longing,
It won't nurse my heart back to health;
A letter might express the pain of parting,
But, a pen never serves as a window to see your eyes;

.....
The speaker seems unlucky for he is sandwiched between the intense interest of having physical and emotional proximity with his beloved in one hand and his failure to pay her a visit as he plans on the other hand. Practically, this is one of the challenges that intimates in the long distance romantic relationships could often face. Related to this, Tseng (2016:329) writes, “Even with the convenience of technology, face-to-face interaction still plays an important role in maintaining relationships... couples who physically saw each other less than once a month and lived less than 250 miles apart reported less satisfaction. Seeing each other physically provides certainty and comfort, but the reunion may be restricted by many factors, such as financial concerns, academic schedule, geographical distance from partner, and each person's willingness to travel.” This make us think that the more the speaker misses his beloved, the more he turns a deaf ear to the temptations of other alternative partners. Therefore, in a situation in which a letter or other methods of communication fails to satisfy his needs, he will put all his efforts to meet his beloved in person.

The last song, ‘ዘገየሽ’ [zägäyäšə], selected to discuss the experience of romantic longing is also composed by Yilma Gebreab. In this song, the speaker is disappointed with his beloved’s repeated failure to come to visit him; therefore, being mournful and gloomy, he lodges a complaint as:

መቼ ትመጫለሽ ወዳጄ?
 ነገ ዛሬ ሲባል ስትቀራብኝ ሄጄ
 የያዝኩት አበባ ጠወለገ ከአጄ
 አጥቼሽ ስገባ ሆድ ባሰኝ ከደጄ፤

.....

My love, tell me; when will you come?
 Having flowers in my hand, I was waiting for you every passing day;
 You failed to appear, and the flower in my hand got dried;
 Staying at my doorway, I got offended for you failed to show up;

.....

As these lines reveal, in spite of the speaker’s eagerness to receive his beloved with open arms, she always fails to pay him a visit. Pityingly, the fresh flowers in his hands are drying while he is waiting for her [የያዝኩት አበባ ጠወለገ ከአጄ/ the third line in the translation]. The flowers that turns from freshness to dryness in his hands symbolize the controversial emotional states that the luckless speaker goes through. While the flowers in their freshness represent his pleasure and enthusiasm to meet his beloved whom he misses for long, its dryness stands for the heartbreaking moment that he experiences upon her failure to appear where he hopes their hungry eyes meet. He becomes emotionally disturbed and feels bad when he learns that she does not show up once again [አጥቼሽ ስገባ ሆድ ባሰኝ ከደጄ/ the last line in the translation]. According to Kowalski et al (2013:1)., in long distance romantic relationships “intimate communication is important for mental, emotional and physical health.” In this regard, the lines below show to what extent the prolonged absence of the speaker’s beloved distorts his emotional wellbeing:

.....
 ስንቱን ጊዜ ችየው ብቸኝነቴን
 መጣሁ ብለሽ ሳጣሽ ጠላሁት ቤቴን፤
 ያረፈውን ልቤን እየቀሰቀሰሽው
 ዛሬስ ከአይኔ በላይ ሆዴን አስለቀሽው፤
 ዘገየሽ ወዳጄ ምነው?
 ተይ ከፋኝ ጨነቀኝ አንች ሰው
 ምን ይባላል ለሰው?
 ሄጄ ስመለሰው
 ምኑን ልተንፍሰው?
 ምን ልበል እንግዲህ ምን ላውራ?

.....

For long, I endured loneliness;
But I hated my home when you failed to appear, as promised;
You woke my heart up that was at rest;
You made my stomach cry more than my eyes;

My love, why were you late?
I'm so frustrated;
What do I say to others?
When I turn back empty handed, what could I say?

.....

In the lines above, the speaker claims that his beloved's absence exposes him to loneliness [ስንቱን ጊዜ ችየው ብቸኝነቴን/ line 1 in the translation]. According to Tseng (2013:328) "Findings suggested that distance had a large impact on couples, including thoughts of ending the relationship, loneliness, insecurity, and distrust.". Various studies indicate that loneliness affects the mind and body of an individual (Cacioppo, 2014; Seepersad et al, 2008). Fromm in Booth (1983:116) says "...if an individual's basic needs (two of which are rootedness and relatedness) remain unfulfilled, either the person will die or become insane. Even if the individual does not fall prey to those extremes, he or she will become powerless." For the speaker, his longing for his beloved and his feeling of loneliness make his life more and more complicated. This is the reason why his discomfort goes so far as to make him hate his home [ስንቱን ጊዜ ችየው ብቸኝነቴን/መጣሁ ብለሽ ሳጣሽ ጠላሁት ቤቴን/ the first two lines in the translation].

Studies conducted on long distance romantic relationships show that intimates have strong demand to "keep in touch, share emotions, feel connected despite the geographic distance" (Kowalski, 2013:1). Thus, if intimates fail to meet these human needs, they will feel both saddened and offended. It is the case that the speaker feels very disappointed at not meeting his beloved though he hopes to find pleasure in sharing his feelings with her. Her failure to pay him a visit exposes him to be overwhelmed by the deepest sense of grievance. In the fourth line of the song, the lyricist implements deviation as a literary technique to show the distress and emotional torture that the speaker goes through [ዛሬስ ከአይኔ በላይ ሆኔን አስለቀሽው/line 4 in the translation]. In a natural manner, when one cries her/his tears roll down from her/his eyes; however, unnaturally, the speaker cries his stomach out more than his eyes at his unluckiness to meet his beloved.

In the song under discussion, the speaker vividly shows his frustration and disappointments at her failure to pay him a visit [ዘገየሽ ወዳጄ ምነው?/ተይ ከፋኝ ጨነቀኝ እንኛ ሰው/lines 5&6 in the translation]. The lines below also reveal how the experience of longing his beloved and his loneliness lead the speaker to face emotional and social stress:

.....
አብሬሽ ልመለስ ጓጉቼ ሰወጣ፤
እንደው ይከፋኛል አጥቼስ ሰመጣ፤
ሰገባ ከበሬ ሁሌ ባዶ እጄን፤
እንኳን ተመልካቹን አፈርኩት ደጄን፤
.....

I intend to turn back with you;
I get frustrated when I fail to do so;
Coming home without you makes me feel shame
Not only to be with the people around,
But also, to see my own doorway,
As if it observed my failure;

As shown in the lines above, the speaker feels ashamed that he could not succeed to meet his beloved. Her prolonged absence even puts his interaction with his neighbor at risk [ሰገባ ከበሬ ሁሌ ባዶ እጄን/እንኳን ተመልካቹን አፈርኩት ደጄን/lines 5-6 in the translation]. Tseng (2013:328) comments on the psychological impact of long distance romantic relationship as:

Separations may create threats to couples and affect both the relationship and individuals; ... Some studies have found that those in long-distance dating relationships tend to have more depressive symptoms compared to geographically close relationships (Some couples face challenges in dealing with uncertainty, negative thoughts, and loneliness. Without face-to-face interaction, individuals miss daily conversations, shared free time, and physical intimacy. Some researchers found lower levels of relationship quality in long-distance dating relationships.

In the long distance romantic relationships intimates do have low mutual dependence. In the words of Reys (2011:5) “Mutual dependence refers to the degree to which partners influence one another's fate and enactment of preferred behavior.” In order to strengthen their mutual dependence and free themselves from depressive feelings, romantic partners need to arrange visits. When one pays her/his romantic partner a visit, s/he enjoys the multidimensional benefits of face to face communication (ibid: 2011). While living separately the speaker and his beloved do have little opportunity to recognize non-verbal cues. This, eventually restrict them from sharing their real feelings (either their pleasure or sorrow) which, in turn, reduce interdependence between them.

As the intensity of their mutual dependence keeps on weakening, uncertainty would be heightened. Consequently, through time the situation distresses the speaker to think that he has no hope of changing things.

To sum up, in the long distance romantic relationships the lack of physical and emotional proximity leads partners to have the experience of longing. When one is longing for the significant other who lives in another place, s/he might feel either depressed or lonely. For instance, the speaker in the song ‘ልዩ ጃኖ’ [lōyu ḡano] sits idle as a result of the psychological impact of her longing for her beloved. In addition, we witness the speaker in the song ‘ዘገላሽ’ [zägäyāšō] hates his home as a result of his intense longing for his beloved. In the long-distance dating, romantic partners who do have strong longing for their intimates seek to come into contact with them (intimates). As shown, in the song ‘ይረገም ይህ ልቤ’ [yōrḡämō yōhō lōbe], the experience of longing forces the speaker to give his beloved the right over himself. The other significant point reflected through the songs is that the experience of romantic longing is positively correlated with commitment. Those who are committed would highly miss their partners, and they stay loyal to them. The speaker in the song ‘አያኮራም’ [ayakoramō] exemplifies the committed romantic partners’ strong experience of longing and loyalty to their beloveds. He has been longing his beloved for a year, and he is still loyal to her. All in all, the experience of longing a romantic partner plays a significant role to enhance the longevity and continuity of the long-distance dating relationships.

7.1.6. Idealization and the Construction of Satisfaction in Amharic Love Songs

In romantic relationships individuals often idealize their partners; it is to mean that romantic partners mainly focus on magnifying the positive qualities of their significant others. According to Ben-Zeév (2012:3) idealization is “an increase in positive perceptions and a decrease in negative perceptions toward one’s partner (and the relationship).” As idealization makes lovers have strong motivation to be with their partners, it contributes a lot to the continuation of romantic relationships. Commenting as to how idealization brings forth satisfaction in romantic relationship, Murrar et al. (1996:79) state, “...intimates saw their partners in a more positive light than their partners saw themselves. Furthermore, these idealized constructions predicted greater satisfaction. Individuals were happier in their relationships when they idealized their partners and their partners

idealized them. Taken together, these results suggest that a certain degree of idealization or illusion may be a critical feature of satisfying dating and even marital relationships.”

In Seifu Haile Mariam’s (1961E.C.) song lyric ‘የህይወቴ አጥር ነሽ’ [yähdydwäte atärð näšð], we see the speaker idealizing his beloved as:

አራዊቱ ሁሉ ወጥቶ ቢከበኝም
የህይወቴ አጥር ነሽ ምንም አይነካኝም

አንቺ ካለሽልኝ ጠባቂ ህይወቴን
ከደስታ በቀር አላውቅም ጉዳቴን

.....

If all the beasts surround me,
Nothing bad would happen to me;
For you are the fences of my life;

Whenever you are with me,
Being the guardian of my life,
I feel joy, and nothing irritates me;

.....

Naturally, people would engage in any kind of relationships with the motive of having access to something. Hence, the chance of forming an empty-headed relationship is so rare. Concerning this Oland (2003:22) writes, “Every person gets and stays involved in a relationship for different reasons. Some are in it for the security of knowing they belong to someone; others are in it for the financially attractive package it presents. Some people enter a relationship because they are addicted to the sex and others because they are in awe of the other person’s intellect.” As we can see in the lyric under discussion, in the presence of his loved one, the speaker feels secure. He thinks that she is capable of shielding him from any possible dangers [አራዊቱ ሁሉ ወጥቶ ቢከበኝም/የህይወቴ አጥር ነሽ ምንም አይነካኝም--- the first three lines in the translation]. Therefore, among other things the side benefit of feeling being secured with her makes him prefer her to other women.

As we learn from this song lyric, the speaker casts light on the loved one’s external and internal quality. In other words, he idealizes both the internal and external qualities of his beloved. If she is with him, even “the wild beasts” will not have the power to terrify him. Thus, she is either physically strong enough to defend him from the attack of any wild beast or she is utterly fearless and full of energy. In this case, her inner-self is viewed through her fearlessness. Furthermore, one

can logically infer that “the wild beasts” [አራዊቱ] symbolize the troubles that he faces in his social interactions. Then, whenever he is in troubles, fortunately she has the presence of mind to come up with tangible solutions that put him on the safe side of life. This also indicates how she has got the maturity to be a loving and protective partner. The speaker entirely focuses to see what is good about the idealized image of his beloved, Griffin et al. (1996:79) write:

... people immersed in the experience of romantic love often appear to bend reality to the will of their hopes and desires. Rather than being constrained by the sometimes-disappointing reality of their partners' actual attributes, individuals may view their partners through the rosy niters provided by images of ideal partners. Within such idealized constructions, intimates may even see virtues in one another's apparent faults. For example, individuals may preserve feelings of confidence in their romantic relationships— in the face of the doubts posed by a partner's failings— by weaving stories that depict such faults in the best possible light.

Of course, in the entire lyric we see the feeling of romantic fantasy. We hardly find such a perfect lover in the real world. In reality the speaker's beloved might not have the described qualities. It is his idealization that makes him magnify her personality traits. This, in turn, enhances the satisfaction that he gains being with his beloved. “In the case of love, realities model themselves enthusiastically on one's desires . . . it is the passion in which violent desire is most completely satisfied” (ibid: 79). The way that the woman is pictured in the song lyric allows us to make an educated guess that the speaker himself might get the character to enjoy such a stunning romantic love. It is to mean that he might not have relied on her this much for his safety if he had failed to play his part so well in offering her comfort when she is in need. In other words, there is strong mutual interdependence between them; Schneier (2008:13) states that “security is a trade-off.... There's no such thing as absolute security, and any gain in security always involves some sort of trade-off.”

Idealization blinds one not to realize the accurate personality traits of her/his romantic partner. However, this would be changed through time; when the intensity of idealization decreases, lovers begin to face the real personal qualities of their partners. In some cases, when there is significant mismatch between what they think about their partners and their partners' real traits, there would be disillusionment. Ben-Zeév (2012:5) writes, “Idealization does not last forever: it declines the longer that the relationship continues. In the romantic realm, in which people are supposed to be very close to each other, there is a strong motivation to idealize each other. But in light of such closeness, it becomes increasing more difficult to disregard the facts; hence idealization can easily

turn into disillusionment.” Therefore, when the speaker begins to see the real nature of his beloved upon the termination of the infatuation period, he could admit that he is in the wrong regarding his judgment about his beloved.

The song ‘የሚሰረቅ ቢሆን ሰው ከነ ህይወቱ እልም አንተን ይዞ ነበር መድሀኒቱ ከዚህ የበለጠ ምን ጽድቅ ሊገኝ ነው አንተን ይገዢ ገዳም መንኚ እማልገባው

የሚሰረቅ ቢሆን ሰው ከነ ህይወቱ
እልም አንተን ይዞ ነበር መድሀኒቱ
ከዚህ የበለጠ ምን ጽድቅ ሊገኝ ነው
አንተን ይገዢ ገዳም መንኚ እማልገባው
.....
If it was possible to steal a man alive,
I would take you somewhere, a far-off land;
For I feel better this way;
Why don't I join the monastery with you?
For there is no righteous life better than that;

As we can learn from this song text, the woman falls in love, and she romanticizes her loved one. However, it seems that she is insecure about the hustle and bustle of the social environment in her surroundings. So, since she likes to portray her feelings as very personal and not to be shared in public, she dreams to take him to the monastery where life is calm and simple. Most often individuals commonly seek to lead a secretive life, especially when they fall in love. Oland (2003:2) states:

Throughout your life, your psyche has been a private sanctuary that you keep so well guarded, you yourself are barely allowed in for a peek. Especially when it comes to love, you want nobody to really know what's going on in there, in case they can somehow use it against you. Your self-protection instinct is like an onion that has grown in tight layers around you. Each successive experience of love's pain, disappointment, or disenchantment has formed another stratification of onion, and your free spirit within is suffocating in there under all those layers of cocoon-like self-preservation.

The woman in the song lyric under discussion has to have some reasons to hide in the monastery with whom she loves most. She might be jealous of other women who compete for his attention. However, in any case she violets the objective reality. It is because in reality monastery is a place where religious communities are living. In other words, monks and nuns who live under chastity and obedience dwell in a monastery. Leaving aside the stated monastic way of life, the woman

wishes to enjoy romantic love in a place where such a thing is seen as a mortal sin. Romantic love inevitably involves sexual intercourse. Spiritually, it would be a crime to commit such a mistake in a holy place, the monastery. It is believed that if anyone makes sex in a monastery, they cannot come near to God. As Ben-Zeév (2012:5) states romantic love is often characterized “as being guided by idealizations (or positive illusions), sometimes even by blindness... Thus, people exaggerate the extent to which their real-life partners resemble archetypal ideals.” In this case also the speaker would not have dreamt to dwell with her beloved in a monastery unless she had been guided by utter blindness. Furthermore, studies show that “during the state of infatuation, a biochemical process takes place within our altered brain, which is similar to addiction. That’s why this state has been compared to being drugged, and it is similar to insanity” (<https://exploringyourmind.com/need-idealize-order-love/>).

Through reinterpreting the objectively shared symbol, the monastery, the woman tries to secularize the purely religious setting. In addition, she seems to deviate from the custom by preferring the joy of romantic love to the spiritual virtues [ከዚህ የበለጠ ምን ጽድቅ ሊገኝ ነው--- the last line in the translation]. Definitely, love forces her to be deprived of her logical thinking. Oland calls such kind of love as “love that consumes”, and he states, “*It’s* like a disease; it takes over their minds and bodies. They can’t work, eat, sleep, or bother with anybody else. They are unable to function in many of the ways that count. All they want to do is be together. Some of them get together and it’s pure fire. Others get together and it’s desperate and emotionally draining. Many songs are about this type of love, as it is so powerful” (Oland, 2003:169). As shown in the first two lines of the song lyric, the woman is able to identify whom she loves most. She has already made a choice with whom she intends to spend her life. Indicating the nature of romantic love in making proper choice and identity formation, Swatek (2013:4), writes:

Romantic love is central to many contemporary persons; it is also of considerable significance because of the way it contributes to these persons’ identities. This means that, in virtue of its centrality, romantic love often becomes a significant source of self-understanding and an important part of a person’s identity formation. In the lives of those where romantic love has become central and significant it is commonplace that such persons identify and understand themselves, often most of all, as being lovers. In much the same way that a doctor’s identity becomes intertwined with the practice of medicine, a lover’s identity becomes interwoven with her involvement in loving romantically.

The woman is in a state of intense longing for union with the man. This intrinsically shows the functional aspect of love. If her dream comes true, she will probably get married to the man whom she loves most. If so, her love for her husband possibly ensures the formation of a firm bond between them, and they can build a very successful family. As the functionalists claim, if a certain family succeeds in leading stable life, it positively functions for the wellbeing of the society. Moreover, marriage guarantee the continuity of the generation for in most cases there would be children born to the couples (Fowler, 2007).

Seifu Haile Mariam’s (1961 E.C.) song lyric, ‘እኔን ይከፋኝ’ [ənənə yəkəfañə], reveals the great devotion that the woman who falls in love shows to her romantic partner:

.....
 እኔ ልከፋልህ አንተ አትከፋብኝ
 ትካዜህን ማየት አልሻም ይቅርብኝ

.....
 Let me be in your shoes,
 And shoulder all the discomforts that you feel;
 Let you, feel free,
 Since I don’t feel an ease while you are disappointed;

The speaker in this song lyric is ready to put herself in a state of self-sacrifice so as to make her loved one happy. Since she never likes to see him suffering from anything in his life, she is always there to shoulder all his burdens. Averill (1985) points out that commitment to the well-being of the loved person is one of the features of romantic love. Moreover, for R. Jankowiak, and F. Fischer (1992:15), romantic love is "... any intense attraction that involves the idealization of the other, within an erotic context, with the expectation of enduring for some time into the future." In this regard, one can sense the undeniable attraction that the woman has to her romantic partner. Under normal circumstance, she might not make up her mind to be a scapegoat for taking all the risks in his shoes unless she idealizes him. Her powerful emotional state implies that she is romantically involved in a sort of passionate love which is sometimes called “obsessive love,” “infatuation,” “lovesickness,” etc. According to Hatfield and Rapson (2002:393) passionate love is “a state of intense longing for union with another... Reciprocated love (union with the other) is associated with fulfillment and ecstasy.”

Here again we see romantic love functioning in favor of the societies. Logically, we can imagine that the woman will take a good care of her romantic partner. The feeling of strong attachment that the woman enjoys enabling her to remain together with him long enough to rear children. Thus, her love fits what Fisher writes, “Love is as important to the individual as it is to their society and our world” (<http://www.health-e-learning.com>). Attachment theorists argue that individuals are highly motivated to seek feeling of safety and security in their relationships (Griffin et al., 1996). Psychologists on their part believe that “lasting satisfaction depends on individuals’ understanding their partners’ real strengths and frailty” (Ibid:11).

In general, in all the songs discussed under this section, the speakers mainly focus on magnifying the positive qualities of their beloveds. Practically, finding fantasy blending with reality is common in love songs. Oland (2003:161) writes, “Love is part reality and also part fantasy. One without the other is not enough. Thus, every reality-oriented song ought to include some elements of lightness and fantasy; every fantasy-oriented song would do well to include elements of reality. Balance is essential in telling a love story well in a song format.” Though its intensity decreases through time, idealization makes romantic partners enjoy comfortable emotion and form strong attachment especially during the first stage of the relationship. For instance, the speaker in ‘የህይወቴ አጥር ነሽ’ [yähöyöwäte atärö näšö] takes his beloved as guardian angel who saves his life from danger. Similarly, while the speaker in ‘የላሳሳሪቅ ቢሆን’ [yämisöröqö bihonö] dreams to camp in the monastery with her beloved, the speaker in ‘እኔን ይከፋኝ’ [änən yököfañö] commits to sacrifice herself to comfort her beloved.

7.2. Maternal Love

Besides producing romantic love songs, many Amharic song lyricists composed memorable song lyrics on maternal love. The unconditional love that a mother has for her child is given due emphasis in all the songs that deal with the theme of maternal love. According to Hrdy (2001: 3), maternal love is “a powerful emotion, rivaled only by the strength of each person’s preconceptions about it. For every human life is shaped by being a mother, by having a mother, or by wishing we had one. Phrases like “maternal instinct” are used every day to refer to love or unconditional devotion to children.”

Getu Ayele's (1964) song lyric 'ለናቴ እናት ሆንኳት' [lənate ənətə honəkɯwatə], shows the strong mother-child attachments. It runs:

.....
ለናቴ እናት ሆንኳት ቀረ ልጅነቴ
የሰው ብድር አይቀር ተረግዞ ባንጀቴ
አባቴ ሞቶብኝ በህጻንነቴ
አሳድጋኛለኝ ቆሎ ሸጣ እናቴ

.....
I become a mother for my mother;
For it is impossible to ignore her favor,
She is conceived deep inside me;

My father died when I was young,
It was my mother, who brought me up,
By selling roasted grain for a living.

.....

In this song lyric, the speaker is confessing that his mother cared for him with great devotion. Therefore, he has made a commitment to return the favor to his loving mother. It seems the speaker consistently feels his mother's unconditional devotion to him at heart. It is because she brought him up with love and care albeit she suffers from poverty. The "roasted grain" that she sold to earn their living explicitly shows the level of the poverty trap that they were in. However, the underlying message symbolizes her unconditional maternal love that makes her endure the resentments of life uncomplainingly [አባቴ ሞቶብኝ በህጻንነቴ/አሳድጋኛለኝ ቆሎ ሸጣ እናቴ--- the last three lines in the translation]. In his self-expression, the speaker violates the law of nature; by "conceiving her deep inside him," he is trying to have the genuine feeling of her maternal instinct [ለናቴ እናት ሆንኳት ቀረ ልጅነቴ/የሰው ብድር አይቀር ተረግዞ ባንጀቴ--- lines 1-3 in the translation].] Being the primary care givers, mothers play the greatest roles in shaping the personality of their children. Children who are destined to have constructive attachments with their mothers in their early ages can successfully interact with others when they grow up. Erickson (2013:3) writes:

Research has shown that the quality of attachment between a baby and his or her primary caregiver(s) is a powerful influence on what that child comes to expect in relationships and, therefore, on how that child feels and behaves in relation to other adults and peers. Children who have a secure attachment as one-year-olds are more likely at later ages to be confident, cooperative, caring, and able to manage their emotions and impulses in an acceptable way.

As we can see in the song lyric, the speaker is lucky enough to grow up under the protection of such an adoring and responsible mother. Traditionally, in Ethiopia one is expected to care for

her/his aged parents. So, if she had failed to make him internalize the customs and values of the society, he would not have made up his mind to support her. Therefore, we can guess how the successful socialization that he went through under the guardian of his indulgent mother enables him to enjoy smoother interactions with the society. This, in turn, implies the positive functional roles that maternal love plays in keeping the stability and harmony of the society. In short, the researcher identifies that similar to the song under discussion other songs such as ‘የእናት ውለታዋ’ [yädnatä wälätawa] and ‘እናት’ [änatä] which discuss maternal love chiefly echo the huge sacrifices their mothers make to bring up them.

Chapter VIII: Conclusion

Song lyrics do have huge potential to keep records of major historical events of a society that occur within a certain period of time. This is evidently shown in Amharic song lyrics used for this study. The themes of the Amharic song lyrics are topical, and they have significant contemporary relevance. The functional as well as the dysfunctional aspects of the different social structures of the three regimes, Emperor Haile Selassie I, the Derge and the EPRDF, are meaningfully depicted through the Amharic song lyrics composed during these respective periods.

The main objective of this study was to investigate the major themes embedded in Amharic song lyrics selected from the three consecutive eras (Emperor Haile Selassie I, the Derge and the EPRDF). The emphasis of the analysis in the dissertation is mainly on the functional, conflict and symbolic interactionist perspectives. To this end, Amharic song lyrics from the stated periods were selected based on the issues they address and analyzed through appropriate theoretical framework. The thematic issues recurrently addressed in the song lyrics were analyzed depending on the governing ideology of each period. The detailed analyses of the thematic concerns have been discussed in the previous four chapters, and in this concluding section, the researcher presents only a brief summary of the key findings as per the objectives of the study.

The Amharic song lyrics which were produced during the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I show the major achievements and failures of the period. The valuable contributions of patriotism and education to the stability and harmonious continuity of the society are given due emphases in many Amharic song texts. On the contrary, moral decays like prostitution and corruption are pointed out as the social evils. They are thought to create serious conflicts among parts of the society and being the destructive forces, they lead social institutions to the paralysis. In addition, the social and political discontents that embedded in Amharic song lyrics convincingly disclose the extent to which the country was in crises under Emperor Haile Selassie I. The denial of human rights to the mass of the population, the deep-rooted poverty and the total dissatisfactions among the various parts of the society during the period are soundly mirrored through the songs.

The revolutionary songs of the Derge regime describe the society divided into two classes: the progressives and the reactionaries. The progressive ones are considered as loyal to the nation, and

they are praised for their commitment to practice the principles of socialism, the governing ideology of the period. They are thought as the savior who can defend the revolution against the reactionaries in their effort to bring back the light to Ethiopia by adopting the motto, “Ethiopia Tikedem/Ethiopia First.”

The revolutionary songs present reactionaries as the enemy of the revolution. This group include the deposed king, Emperor Haile Selassie I, and his officials, landlords, the imperialists, the opposition parties (mainly EPRP & MEISON), the secessionists (TPLF & EPLF) and the Somali aggressors. The songs strictly condemn the emperor and his officials for oppressing the people in general and for giving blind eyes to the victims of the devastating famine in Wolo and Tigray provinces. However, controversially, the songs attempt to justify the Red Terror campaign that the Derge launches to eliminate mainly the supporters of EPRP & MEISON. Evidences show that in comparison with the Derge in these two civilian political parties (EPRP & MEISON) there had been most desirable candidates with better educational backgrounds and experiences to rule the nation. Unfortunately, most of them became victim to the murderous measures of the Derge. Thus, the paradox of developing the nation while its great minds are unjustifiably murdered is shown through the songs.

The revolutionary songs also label the two secessionist groups of the time (TPLF & EPRP) and the Somali aggressors betrayers, selfish, narrow-minded and trusted messengers of the Arabs and the American imperialists who are taken as the antagonists of the revolution. As a result, the songs devote much to kindle and sustain the fighting spirits of the fellow citizens against the secessionists and the Somali invaders. Contrary to this, songs that attempt to uncover the political discontents of the time emphasize the Derge’s incapability to meet the challenges that the country faces. In addition to raising questions on the regime’s integrity, the songs vividly ridicule the fruitless power struggle among the army officers in the Derge.

The non-love Amharic songs composed during the reign of EPRDF mainly focus on the problems of migration and political discontents. In the songs, this period is marked by the manifestations of ethnicity that hold the potential to generate conflict among different sections of the society. The songs also uncover the EPRDF’s lack of integrity to facilitate the country’s transition towards democracy. They show that in its more than two decades stay in power the regime could not stop

the long-standing grievances which are caused by the overall social deprivations and poverty. According to them the stated uncomfortable conditions causes thousands of Ethiopians from all walks of life to look for a better life in other countries. All in all, the songs depict the social defeat that the nation faces due to migration to which political discontents and poverty stand as push factors.

Studies show that throughout the globe love songs cover the majority of all songs written so far. Particularly in a nation like Ethiopia where freedom of expression severely restricted, lyricists consider composing love songs a risk-free business. Due to this, in the stated three periods the production of love songs exceeds other songs significantly. In this study, love songs are thematically categorized into romantic love and maternal love. The romantic love songs basically deal with beauty, betrayal, forgiveness, gossip, longing and idealization. The songs echo the stereotypic assumption that the human body is the best picture of the human soul. Romantic partners who are thought to have attractive physical appearance are regarded as morally good. Contrary to the positive effect of beauty, in the songs betrayal is presented as a threat that violate the expectations of the intimates. It makes the betrayed partner suffer from painful psychological traumas. In the songs while forgiveness is taken as an instrument to heal the psychological wound of romantic partners, gossip, on the other hand, is considered as a destructive force that poison the positive interaction of sexual partners. However, both longing and idealization are viewed in the songs as psychological phenomena that strengthen the romantic relationships between lovers.

Depending on their song lyrics used for this study, the researcher argues that the lyricists are able to encode the governing ideology of the period linguistically. And their works are magnificent in their subtlety of details. In their appreciable composition, they efficiently exploit literary devices. The symbols, imageries, figures of speeches, etc. that they implement in Amharic song lyric could make the audiences conceptualize the main idea of the texts. In addition to keeping brevity, the lyricists are good at reflecting realities on the basis of the shared subjective agreements.

Amharic song lyrics are not a mere servitude of melody. Rather, they can convey significant social messages, and they are rich in sociopolitical thematic concerns. Therefore, they can be categorized as poetic songs that give meaning with or without the musical settings. If scholars from different fields of studies conduct in-depth analysis on them, they can uncover Ethiopians ways of life, and

the major events that have been taking place in this nation. The findings of the study show that except in the revolution songs in almost all other Amharic songs used for study the positive contributions of religion to the stability of the society is described. It is served as a way out of a mess that individuals face in their day to day interactions. And God is taken as the ultimate judge and source of solutions. However, this fact is hardly reflected in the Amharic revolutionary songs used for this study. Hence, further research can be conducted as to why these songs deviate from this trend. Above all, the production of song lyrics in other languages spoken in Ethiopia such as Afan Oromo, Tigrigna, Guragigna, etc. have alarmingly been increasing recently. Hence, if a comparative analysis is conducted on the themes of Amharic song lyrics and the song lyrics of one of these or other indigenous languages, it will be possible to understand the comprehensive sociopolitical landscape of the nation.

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Appendix: A

Chapter Four: Major Themes of Amharic Song Lyrics during the Reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I

Patriotism/Nationalism

ጀግናው

በአስራስምንት-ሰማይያስምንት
 ተነስቶነበርአንድጦርነት
 ጀግናውገሰገሰይሄንአንደሰማ
 ሊመክትአልቻለምይሄንጭአሳማ
 የአድዋ ጦርነት እንደምን ነበረ
 ነጩ ገደል ገባ እየደነበረ
 በሰላም ጥያቄ ተመለስ ቢሉት
 በግፍ ስለመጣ አለቀ ጠላት
 አላስቸለውአለተመልሰመጣ
 ቁሙንበማስታወስበቀሉንሊወጣ
 አልቻለምፈጽሞሄደተመልሰ
 ተልከስከሰቀረእየተላቀሰ

(በአለማየሁ መንግስቱ፣1961 ዓ.ም.)

ካልነኩት የማይነካ

የኢትዮጵያ ጀግና መራራ ደፋሩ
 ሰፈሩ አይታወቅ መኖሪያው መንደሩ
 ዛሬ በምስራቅ ነው ነገ በምዕራብ
 ዛሬ በሰሜን ነው ነገ በደቡብ
 ፈላጊው ሲመጣ እርሱን የሚለውን
 ያስተናግደዋል የሚፈልገውን
 ዘራፍ በሀጻንነት፣ዘራፍ በጉልምስና፣ ዘራፍ በሽምግልና፣
 በሀገር በወገን ቀልድ የለምና
 መሞት ለሀገር ነው መሞት ለድንበር
 መሞት ለወገን ነው መታገል ለክብር
 የሞት ሞት ይመጣል ባልታሰበ ነገር
 ዘራፍ ብሎ መሞት የጀግና ደንቡ ነው
 እናቴ ድረሺ የሞት ሞት እርሱ ነው
 በገናናው መሪ በአንበሳው ንጉሥ
 በልምላሜ ሜዳ በነጻነት ፈረስ
 ስንጻዝ እንኩር እያለን ደስ ደስ።

(በታጠቅ ገብረወልድ፣ 1965 ዓ.ም)

The Hero

During the year, eighteen eighty-eight
 A war broke out;
 The hero made a rush as he heard the news;
 And he defeated the white pig;
 How was the battle of Adowa fought?
 Being frightened; the white skedaddled the cliff;
 The enemy refuses to retreat away though it was asked peacefully;
 So, it was dismissed for lunching an unjust war;
 Unable to forbear the humiliation, the enemy came back again;
 Vindictively towards the hero;
 However, he failed again and retreated,
 Remained sniffing around,
 By mourning for the dead publicly;

ወጅኔው

ወጅኔው ሎጋ እምቢ አሻፈረኝ
 አልወድም ፈሪ
 መወዜር አጋድሞ ድንጋይ ወርዋሪ
 እምቢ አሻፈረኝ ፈሪስ አይሳመኝ
 አፉ ይዋጋል እንደከሰመኝ
 ተው በለውና ዳቢት ዳቢቱን
 እንከፍለዋለን የዳኝነቱን
 የማነች ወዳጅ የልበ ሙት
 ጭርቋ ያለቀው በመጓተት።
 (ከበደ ካሳ፣1962 ዓ.ም)

Praising the nation

አገሪ

ኢትዮጵያ አገራችን ጥንታዊት ናት
 የአፍሪካ ነጻነት ጠባቂ ናት
 የጥንት ወደቧ አዳሊስ ነው
 የጥንት ግዛቷ አስከ እስያ ድረስ ነበር
 እነ ዛንዚባር፣ ሞዛምቢክ ኬኒያም ከርሷ ጋር ነበሩ
 አገሪ አገሪ ጥንታዊት ኢትዮጵያ
 የመርከቦቿ ወደብር ባህረ ኤርትራ ነው

My Country

Our country is historical,
 She is the guardian of Africa's freedom;
 Its former port was Adulis,
 Its former territory reached as far as Asia,
 Zanzibar, Mozambique and Kenya fell within its territory;
 All long for Ethiopia,
 Like they longing for paradise;

እንደ ሰማይ ገነት ሁሉ የሚመኛት
 አምላክ የባረካት
 እዝራ በመሰንቆ ዳዊት በበገና የመሰከረላት
 ያሬድ በሀሌሉያ የዘመረላት
 (በረከት መንግስት አብ፣1963 ዓ.ም.)

She is blessed by God;
 With his 'masinqo' Ezra sang her praises;
 With his harp, Dave sang her praises,
 And in his hallelujah, Yared sang her praises;

ልምላሜሽ ማማሩ

ሀገሬ ኢትዮጵያ ተራራሽ አየሩ
 ፏፏቴሽ ይወርዳል በየሽንተረሩ
 ልምላሜሽ ማማሩ
 እስቲ ላነሳሳሽ ኢትዮጵያ አገሬን
 ከጅግኖቻሽ ጋራ ልምላሜሽን
 የምታበቅያቸው አትክልቶች በሙሉ
 የሰው ልጅ ህይወትን በጣም ያድሳሉ
 በለምለሙ ሳር ላይ ውሀዎች ፈሰው
 ሜዳና መስኮችሽ አበባ ለብሰው
 ህይወትን ያድሳል ሲያዩት ኮረብታው
 አምላክ በጥበቡ ጥንቱን ሲፈጥርሽ
 ሁሉን አሟልቶ ነው ላንቺ የሰጠሽ
 (በአበበ ይመኑ፣1960 ዓ.ም.)

The beauty of your Greenness

Ethiopia, my country,
 Your mountains and your weather,
 Your fountain that flows over the hills,
 Make your greenness beautiful;
 Ethiopia, my country
 Let me praise you and your heroes;
 All the plants that you grow,
 Taste refreshing man's life;
 It refreshes life to see,
 The water flows over the green grass,
 And Your fields covered with flowers;
 From the beginning,
 When God created you with His wisdom,
 He gave you everything to the fullest;

**Moral Decadence
 [Prostitution]**

ተው ተመለስ

ተው ተመለስ የህጻን አባት
 ቃልኪዳንህ ትዝ ይበልህ ድንገት
 ተከተት በጊዜ ልጆቻህን ሰብስብ
 ትዳርክን በድለህ ጋለሞታ አትቀልብ
 በልደታ ሰሞን ደሞዝ ተቀብለህ
 ወደ ውጭ አትሩጥ ህሊናህ ይውቀስህ
 በሙብትህ ስራበት ክብርህ አለው ዋጋ
 ኢትዮጵያዊ ዜጋ ግዳጅህን አትዘንጋ
 ስመ ጥሩ ኑሮህ የሌለው አምሳያ
 አቃቂር ወጣለት ሆነ መሳለቂያ
 እድሜህ እየገፋ ጸጉርህም ሽብቶ
 አሁን ምን ይባላል ያንተ ቅብጠት ከቶ
 ልጆቻህ ተርበው ከቤት ሲላቀሱ
 ደስ ያሰኝህል ወይ አልከልና ዳንሱ
 (በጸጋዬ ብርሀኔ፣1965 ዓ.ም.)

Come Back Home

You, the father of our kid,
 Please, come back home;
 Remember the wedding vow;
 Come home in time;
 Don't feed a whore,
 At the expense of your marriage;
 When you take your salary at the beginning of the month
 Don't be in hurry to go out to spend your money;
 Being an Ethiopian, your right is valued,
 Let you exercise your right;
 Once you enjoyed the most appreciated and
 incomparable life;
 But now people make your life the topic of mockery;
 You are getting old, and your hair is greying,
 How could one make sense of your rudeness?
 Do you enjoy the alcohol and the dance,
 While your hungry child crying at home?

አደረች አራዳ

አደረች አራዳ አደረች አራዳ
የኔ ብርቱካኔ የኔ ጽጌረዳ

ከህግ ባሏ ጋር አንባር ስትሰብር
ውብ አበባነቷ ያስደንቅ ነበር
አሁን ቀጠለች ሽርሽረ አራዳ
በያይነቱ መጠጥ ጀመረች ልትቀዳ

ገሰገሰች ሄደች አደረች ሰላሌ
በጎንደር ባስመራ ደግሞ በመቀሌ
በአሰብ በደሴ ገባች ውጫሌ
በሀዋሳ በኩል ሄደች ወደ ባሌ
ድሬዳዋ ናዝሬት አደረች አሰላ
ማገው የሚነካኝ የሚቆጣኝ ብላ

(ጌታቸው ደባልቄ፣ 1964 ዓ.ም.)

She passed the night at downtown

She passed the night at downtown
She is my orange
And she is my rose, too.

When her husband deflowered her,
Her beauty caught anyone by surprise;
But now she begins to visit the downtown,
And imbibe varieties of drinks;
She became a wanderer;

She was in a rush to leave the downtown;
She reached Selalle, and spent the night there;
She made the journey to other towns, too;
Traveling through Gonder, Asmara, Mekele, Aseb
and Dessie,

She arrived at Wechale;
And she moved to Bale through Awassa;

She still kept on wandering;
She journeyed onwards to Dire-Dewa and Nazareth;
She reached Asela and passed the night there;
Being fearless of anyone's wrath;

Corruption

እግሬ በእጄ ሄደ

በሰው የፈራሁት በራሴ ደረሰ
እግሬ በእጄ ሄደ ላሌ እየፈሰሰ

አንዳንድ የሀገር ሽከሞች ለጥቅም የሞታችሁ
የወገን ደም መምጠጥ ጉብ ይቅርባችሁ

በጉብ የተበላ ጮማ መች ይጠጋል
የቁልቁል እሾክ ነው ሆኖ ይኮሰኩሳል።
(በተስፋዬ አበበ፣1962 ዓ.ም.)

My Legs walk by My Hand

I fear for others when it happens to them,
But now I myself become its victim;

Some of you, selfish,
Who place burdens on the nation,
Stop taking bribe!

It is an act of sucking brothers' blood;
Feeding on fatty meat that comes through bribe,
Is bad for health;
For it is, the thorn of euphoria that itches the stomach;

ድህነት ባይኖር

ምን ያለ ጊዜ ነው ሰአቱ የከፋ
ዘመድ የሌለው ሰው ምንም የለው ተስፋ

ብዙ ሰዎች አሉ ስርአተ ብልሹ
ተባብሮ እንደመስራት አድሎን የሚሾ

የገንዘብ ሱሰኛ አታድርገኝ ፈጣሪ
እውነት ፍቅርን ስጠኝ እንዲሆነኝ መሪ
በገንዘብ ቁራኛ እንዲህ ተለካክፈን
ከአብራሀም ረድኤት ቀረን ተለያይተን

የዘመኑ ሰዎች አንሻልም ከአብድ
ገንዘብን በማፍቀር እንሸጣለን ዘመድ
(አለማየሁ መንግስቱ፣1964ዓ.ም.)

If there was no Poverty...

What a cruel era is it!

There is no hope for a lonely one;

There are many unruly individuals,
Who prefers favoritism to work together;
God, don't make me to have addiction to money,

Let You bless me with truth and love;

Poisoned by moneygrabber,

We get deprived of Abraham's blessedness;

We, the people of these days are not better than a mad one,
Our moneygrabbing drive makes us sell our own relative;

ለነገ አትቅጠረኝ

ልትቀጣኝም እንደሁ ወይም ልትሾመኝ
የዛሬን ዛሬ እንጂ ለነገ አትቅጠረኝ
የዛሬው ዛሬ ቢሆን ይሻለኛል
ወይም እሞታለሁ አደጋ ያገኘኛል
የዛሬውን ዛሬ ቶሎ ፈጽሞልኝ
ችግሪ ዛሬ ነው አታሳድርብኝ
ደሀ እኮ ችኩል ነው ተስፋው ይቆረጣል
ቀጠሮ ሲበዛ ሞራል ይወድቃል

ለበላይ አስበው ሰራተኛህን
በንጹህ ልቦና ርዳው ወንድምህን

(**ጸሀይ እንዳለ፣1965ዓ.ም.**)

Solve My Problem quickly

Either to promote or punish me,
Don't delay it till tomorrow;
I prefer my today's problem get solved today,
I may face either death or danger;
Let you solve my today's problem today;
It is right now that I am in trouble;
So, don't postpone it until tomorrow;

The poor has no patience,
They abandon hope of finding what they need;
Be in a hurry to solve their problem;
Let you pave ways for your employee,
To promote him/her to a better position;
Let you help you brother out of innocence;

ጾሜን ልደር

በስርቆት ካልሆነ ወይም ያለ አጋር
የለም ካሉ እንጅራ እኔ ጾሜን ልደር
አብኩቶ መጋገር የሴቶች ሙያ ነው
ያለ ስራ መግባት ሀገር መበደል ነው
እኔ አላውቅበትም ወሻክቶ ማናቆር
ንጹህ ሆኖ አንባዬን ይሻላል ማንቆርቆር::
ሰው በማቆላለፍ አፊ ከሚፍታታ
እኔ ጾሜን ልደር ልሁንም ከርታታ
ልምድ ስለሌለኝ አላውቅም ጋግሬ
ቀረሁ ወደ ኋላ ተደነጋግሬ::
ያለው የሌለውን እርግጥ ሰው ይንቃል
ልሙት ጾሜን ልደር የፈጠረኝ ያውቃል::
(**በስብሀት አይችሉህም፣1964ዓ.ም.**)

Let Me be starved

If it is a must to win a bread
Through theft and nepotism,
I prefer to get starved;
It is women's job to knead and bake,
However, interfering unprofessionally to do
something is to wrong the nation;
I prefer cry tears of frustration at my inability to get
what I need,
To indulge in gossip to make people quarrel with
each other;
Of course, I don't know how to do it;
Rather than making people clash each other,
Let me get starved,
And let me be vagrant;
Being inexperienced, I haven't bake yet,
I have dropped back, and perplexed;
Practically, the riches look down on poor,
Let me get starved,
And let me die,
I put myself in the trust of God;

Praising Peasants

ልማት

ልማት ልማት ልማት የእርሻ ልማት
ያስፈልጋል በርቱ ለሁላችን አራት
ልማት ልማት ልማት ብሄራዊ ልማት
ምድራችን ምቹ ነች ለእርሻ ለኢንዱስትሪ
መሆን ትችላለች ተርፏት አበዳሪ
ብርን ከማስቀመጥ በድንጋይ ላይ ከቦ
ብንዘራው ያስገኛል ካፈሩ ላይ በቅሎ

Development

Development, development, development,
National development,
Development, development, development,
Agricultural development,
Be strong, it is needed to feed ourselves;
Our country is suitable for both farming and industry;
She can go beyond meeting her needs,

አባይ የሚወስደው ወርቁን አፈራችን
 ሌሎችን አክብሯል ተርፎ ከራሳችን
 ድንግሉ በረሀ በህብረት ታረሰ
 በሴቲቱምራ ወርቅ አልማዝ ታፈሰ
 ከንዳችሁ ይበርታ ወገኖቼ እረሱ
 ምንም ጥቅም የለው ሸቀጥ ማግባባት
 (በመርገዊ ስጦት፣1964 ዓ.ም.)

And be a donor;
 Instead of investing money on buildings,
 Let's invest and generate a profit from farming;
 Our golden soil that the Blue Nile erodes,
 Makes others rich being spared our demands;
 The virgin desert is ploughed collectively,
 The vast amount of gold and diamond are mined at Satitumera;
 You my fellow countrymen, be strong and plough well,
 There is no need for you to purchase a surplus of goods;

.....

.....

መልካም ነው ሀገር ቤት

እለምናለሁኝ እድሜ ለገበሬ
 እህልን ይዘራል በደጋጋ በሬ
 በሬና ገበሬ አምላክ ሲፈጥራቸው
 አርሰው እንዲበሉ ቃል ኪዳን ሰጣቸው
 አታሰብ ወገኔ ለመሆን ከተሜ
 ባለህበት እርጋ ገበሬው ወንድሜ
 ግብርናውን ትቶ የገባው ከተማ
 ቆሻሻ ይጠርጋል ባካፋ በደማ
 (አለማየሁ መንግስት፣1964 ዓ.ም.)

The Countryside is Good

I wish the peasant living long,
 He harvests crops with kind oxen;
 When God created the peasant and the ox
 He ordered them to farm for a living;
 Let me advise you, my people,
 You the farmer,
 My brother in the country side,
 I advise you to stay where you are,
 Don't think to be townfolk;
 The one who abandoned his farming,
 And fled to the city,
 Is becoming a janitor;
 He cleans the dirt of the city,
 With his spade and pickaxe;

.....

.....

The Theme of Education

መማር ብቻ አይበቃም

ትንሽ ትልቅ ሆነን በህብረት ሆነን
 በርትተን እንስራ ሌት ተቀን ተግተን
 ተግተው የሚሰሩ ለውድ አገራቸው
 ህይወታቸው ቢያልፍም ህያው ነው ስማቸው
 ዓለም ተራቆተች ብለን ከማውራት
 እኛም እንታጠቅ ለሀገር እድገት
 መማር ብቻ አይደለም ሰውን የሚያኮራ
 ሰርቶ መገኘት ነው በቂ በቂ ስራ
 (አበበ ይመኑ፣1961 ዓ.ም.)

Being educated is not enough by itself

Let us we all unite together,
 And let us work hard day and night;
 Those who work hard for their beloved nation,
 Will be remembered for their dedication forever;
 Instead of talking about the deforestation of the world,
 Let us stand together for the prosperity of the country
 It doesn't suffice to educate oneself,
 And one cannot pride himself of being educated,
 Unless one puts an important deed;

.....

.....

ቢማር ተሳሳተ

በወላጁ ሳቀ በሀገሩ ተረተ
 ደነቆረ መሰል ቢማር ተሳሳተ
 እንጨት ለቅማ ሸጣ እናት አሳድጋ

He made mistake when he learned

Quite unlikely, he behaved arrogantly,
 When he gets educated;
 He laughed at his parents,
 And mocked his country;

በልጅ መካድ ሆነ ያገኘችው ዋጋ

አባት ሎሌ ሆኖ ለአሳደገው ልጅ
ባዕድ ሰው ሲመጣ አይደርስም ከደጅ

ምንስ ሰው ቢራቅቅ ሰማይ ቢዳስሱ
አባት እናት ካዱ ይላል ወይ ሳይንሱ
(አመሀ ተወዳጅ፣1960 ዓ.ም.)

It seemed that he became ignorant;

How could one betray his own mother,
Who raises him by selling firewood for a living?

A father who earns a living being a slave to raise his child,
Is forced to stay away when a guest appears;

One might become a sophisticated person,
And he might become an astronomer, too,
But, does science make him betray his parents?

Social and Economic Discontent

መቼ ነው

ከቤት ኪራይ የምድነው
የምድነው መቼ ነው
ማታ መዘር የሚቀረው
አልገበኝም ለመቼ ነው

በገንዘቤ ተጠቅሜ
የምመካው ባለኝ አቅሜ
ለመቼ ነው ንገሩኝ
ይህ ብቻ ነው ያልገባኝ

ሚስት ኖሮኝ ቤቴ ሁሌ የምደሰተው
ከአለት ችግር ዱቤ የምድነው
በፊት ቤት ሰርቼ መኪና የምገዛው
ለምጽአት ይሆን አላውቅም መቼ ነው
ሰልችቶኛል መቼ ነው
ከዚህ ኑሮ የምለየው

የሰዎች እጅ ከማየት
ካሽከርነት ባርነት
መቼ ይሆን እንደልቤ
የምኖረው በሀሳቤ

(በመልካሙ ተበጅ፣1962 ዓ.ም)

When will It be

Being free from renting house
When will be happy?
when do I stop wandering at night?
I can't understand it;

When do I use my money to have what I need,
By relying on my earned income?
I can't understand it,
Tell me, when will it happen?

When will I get married and enjoyed myself at home?
When will I cease making debt?

When will I buy a car after I build a home?
Is it during the doomsday that I live self-reliantly?
I'm getting pretty bored with poverty-stricken life;
So, when will I exonerate from this life?

Being free from slavery,
When will I manage my own life?

አልቅሼ ልሸኝሽ

አልቅሼ ልሸኝሽ መቼስ ምን ላድርገው
ባንቺ አይደለም ፍቅሬ ማዘነው በድሌ ነው

በችግር ምክንያት ሂጂ ብዬ ብልም
አቤት አቤት ይላል ልቤ አለቀቀሽም

እድልሽን ሰብሬ እድልሽን አልሰብርም
ስቃይ በዝቶብኛል ሂጂ የኔ ፍቅር

አክሱት የለኝ አጎት እህት የለኝ ወንድም
ሞቼ እስከምቀበር አንቺ ነሽ ሁሉንም

(ተስፋዬ በላይ፣1962 ዓ.ም.)

Let Me see you off with Tears

What can I do except seeing you off with tears?
I feel sorry for myself,
My love, I haven't got you wrong;

Though my poverty-stricken life forces me to set you free,
I still love you very much,
So, your departure breaks my heart;

I know I'm luckless,
But I don't want to make you,
Suffer an appalling fate;
Let you go now, be free;

I have no aunt, sister and brother,
It is only you the I have till I die;

ያገዳ ጎጆዬ

ያገዳ ጎጆዬ ነሽ ከለላዬ
የጭራሮ ቤቴ አንቺ ነሽ ለኔ መስታወቴ
ምሳሰሽ ድጋፌ ጥላሽ ማረፊያዬ
ገበና ከታች ያገዳ ጎጆዬ

የትም አገር ዞሬ የምሰፍርብሽ
የጭራሮ ቤቴ ታኮሪኛለሽ

ሽንብራ ቆርጥሜ ውሀዬን ጠጥቼ
የድሀ ሽርዬን ጎመኔን በልቼ
ከልጆቼ ጋራ ስቄ ተጫውቼ
አኖርባታለሁ ዘወትር ተደስቼ

ለኔ የሰው ህንጻ ምንም አይጠቅመኝ
ያገዳ ጎጆዬ አንቺው ኑሪልኝ
ለኔም ለልጆቼ ለድህነት ሚስቴ
ኑሪ ለዘላለም የጭራሮ ቤቴ።
(አያሌው መስፍን፣1963 ዓ.ም.)

ኑሪ ድህነቴ

እኔ አልተከፋሁም እንዳትከፈብኝ
ድህነቴ እኔኑ ኑሪ ደግፈሽኝ
ደሀ ነኝ እያልኩኝ አልናገር ምሬት
ሀብታሙስ ምን ሰራ ያለው ብዙ ንብረት

ጭንቀት የለብኝም ደሀ በመሆኔ
ለሀብት ስንገበገብ አልገባም ኩነቴ
ልኑር ደሀ ሆኜ እስከዘላለሙ
ቦታ እንዲሰፋቸው ለነወገን እርሙ

እንዳትርቁብኝ ሚስኪን ድህነቴ
ጓደኛዬ አንቺ ነሽ ግማሽ አካላቴ
እንዲህ በማለቴ እንዳትፈርጁብኝ
ሀብት ላልሰራበት ምንም አያደርግልኝ
(ሰብሰቤ ካሳ 1964 ዓ.ም)

ምነው የኛን ጠላን

ምነው እኛ የኛን ጠልተን የውጭውን አስወደደን
የራሳችንን እንዳንወድ ምንድን ነገር ነው ያገደን
ባለቤት ያቀለለውን አይቀበለውም ባለዳ
እንዴት ራሳችንን እኛው መልሰን እንጉዳ

ከጫማ አቅም እኛ አያለን
የውጭውን እንመርጣለን
ታዲያስ የኛን ከጠላነው
የሚወስድልን ሌላ ማነው?

ይህ ማራሳችንን መልሰን እኛው ጎዳነው
እኛው የኛን ካልወደድነው በብሄራዊ ስሜታችን
ሀገራችንን መጉዳት ነው መልሰን ራሳችን

የራሳችንን አቃለን የውጭውን ማድነቃችን
እንዴት አይታወቅም እኛ የኛን መጉዳታችን

የሚያስፈልገን ብዙ ነገር
ስላለን በኛው ሀገር
ባለማወቅ ስንረዳ

My Stalk Hut

My stalk hut, you are my shelter;
My stick home, you are my mirror;
I lean on your pillar,
And I take rest in your shadow;
My stalk hut, you hide my faults,
You are my destination where I take rest,
After I wander here and there;
My stick home, I am proud of you;

Eating my chick-pea and drinking my water,
Eating the food of the poor, ‘shiro’ and cabbage,
Laughing and chanting with my children,
I happily live in my stalk hut;

I derive no benefit from others’ building;
Let my stalk hut live;
For me, for my kids and for my wife,
Who live in poverty with me;
Live forever my hut built of dry wood;

Let You Live My Poorness

I am not disappointed,
Let you not be disappointed,
I never complain of being a poor,
What does the rich who has several properties do after all?

I’m poor, but it doesn’t cause me to feel worried;
I never commit sin by making wealth selfishly;
And I prefer to live in poverty forever,
For the self-centered ones enjoy ample space!

My poor poorness, don’t leave me alone;
You are my friend and my better half,
Don’t be angry with me for saying this,
The wealth which I couldn’t invest is no use whatever;

እያጣራን የሰው አዳ
 እንዴት ራሳችንን መልሰን እንጉዳ
 ሰው እንደ ቤቱ እንጂ አይኖርም እንደ ጎረቤቱ
 ለምን አናሰብታለንም ይባል የለም ወይ ተረቱ
 የውጭውም ካስፈለገን ምንም አይደል እዚህ ካጣን
 ግን እያለ ባገራችን
 የውጭውን መግዛታችን
 እንደሆነ እንረዳ እኛው እኛኑ መገዳታችን
(መልካሙ ተበጀ፣1963 ዓ.ም.)

Political Discontent

ሲያውቁልሽ አታውቁም
 አስቤልሽ ነበር አኩብሬ ላኖርሽ
 ሲያውቁልሽ አታውቁ ሁኛ እንደፈቀደሽ
 እህል በጎተራ ሳይጠፋ ቤትሽ
 መጋገር ተስኖሽ ለገዛ ሆድሽ
 ሳለሽ ስትለምኛ ነውርን አትፈሪ
 ማስተዋልን ይዘሽ ይሉኝታን አኩብሬ
 በቁም መሞትሽን እኔ ቆሜ አላይም
 ሄጃለሁ እርቁ እንዳይሽ አልፈቅድም
 እናቴ ኩብሬ ነሽ ስትጠቁ አልወድም።
(ተስፋዬ አበበ፣1959 ዓ.ም.)

You behave unwisely...
 I was only thinking of the best for you;
 To make you live in dignity and prosperity;
 But you behave unwisely,
 When one paves the ways for your betterment;
 Then, let you live in your irritating way of recklessness;
 You have grains in your granary,
 But you fail to cook and serve yourself;
 It is a pity to beg for food without shame,
 While you have it;
 Since I don't need to see you risking further humiliation,
 I go far away;
 However, for you are my mother and my pride,
 I don't like to see you getting attacked;

.....

.....

አንድነውደማችን
 እሰቲአንመካከርአርሰበራሳችን
 ዘርመለየትይቅርአንድነውደማችን
 እገሌንከእገሌማለቱይቅርና
 በሀብረትእንስራሰራውአንዲቃና
 አለመግባባትንወዲያአስወግደን
 እንደነበርይጽናአንድነታችን
 አገርመከፋፈልዘርመለየትቀርቶ
 በሀብረትላገሩመስራትነውበርትቶ
 ለሚቀናብንሆነንበርመግቢያ
 በገዛአገራችንእንዳንወድቅከትቢያ
 እገሌንከእገሌማለቱይቅርና
 በሀብረትእንስራሰራውአንዲቃና
 ብዙደምአፍስሰንየመለስናትን
 ተጥቀንእንጠብቃትአገራችንን
 ብዙደምአፍስሰውአባቶቻችን
 በመትረየስአልቀውየመለሷትን
 ተመስገንብለነውእንስራበሀብረት
 ይኑርከእኛጋርሰላምናአንድነት።
(አያሌውመስፍን፣ 1964 ዓ.ም.)

አትበሳጭ
 የእዩዬ ወሽኔ የዋኔ ጭፋሮ
 በእከክ መስንቆ ውርደት እንጉርጉሮ
 የፎከት ዳንኪራ በሲቃ ከበሮ
 እዚያው ፈላ ሞላ ለአምና ለዘንድሮ
 ከስራዬ ግርጌ ቢሆንም ደመወዜ
 አትበሳጭ ሆዴ ያልፋልና ጊዜ
 በደካሞች ስልጣን በሲረኞች ላንቃ
 እዩዋት ስትግረው መብቴ መሬት ወድቃ።
(በተስፋዬ አበበ፣1953 ዓ.ም.)

Death

ሞት
 ትንሽ ትልቅ አይል ደሀ አይል ሀብታም
 አጭር ቀጭን አይል ረጅም ወፍራም
 ሞት ለሁሉ እኩል ነው በመላው ዓለም

Death
 Death is impartial,
 The poor and the rich,
 The young and the old,

ሞት መቸ ያዳላል እንደ ሰው
መጥቶ መውሰድ ብቻ አድል ለደረሰው

ሞት ከኔ ሲመጣ እኔ እዚህ የለሁም
እኔ እዚህ አያለሁ ሞት ከኔ ጋር የለም

ሞት እንደ ሰዎች ብታዳለ ኖሮ
ይበዛ ነበረ በፍጥረት አሮሮ

ምንም እንኳን ቢሄድ ጥበብ አያደገ
ማነው አስተ አስረዳኝ ሞትን ድል ያደረገ

(ጌጡ አየለ፣1963 ዓ.ም.)

All are equal in its face,
Death treats all equally throughout the world;

Unlike man death is impartial,
It takes all on a freak of chance;

When death comes to me, I won't be here,
While I'm here, death is nit with me;

Death, if you treat partialy as people do to each other,
The world will have full of causes for compliants;

Tell me, is there anyone who wins victory over death
Though the world id getting civilized?

.....

Appendix: B

Chapter Five: Major Themes of Amharic Song Lyrics during the Derge Regime

Ethiopia First (Ethiopia Tikdem)

ኢትዮጵያውያን

ለውድ ሀገራችን ለህዝቡም አንድነት
እጅግ ጠቃሚ ነው ህብረተሰብአዊነት

ማንም ሳይጨቁን ማንም ሳይዋረድ
በአዲሱ ጎዳና እኩል እንራመድ
የእኩልነት ትርጉም መብትን የማያውቁ
በኢትዮጵያ ትቅደም ከእንቅፋቶቹ ይንቁ

ወዝ አደሩ ለፍቶ ጉልበቱን ጨርሶ
ለሰው ቤት አይሰራም የራሱን አፍርሶ
ወይም መራመጃ አይሆንም መሰላል
አንድ አገዛዝ ኑሮ ከእንግዲህ አክትሟል

ገዢና ተገዢ የሚለው ቃል ጠፍቶ
ይኖራል ያገር ልጅ እኩል ተደስቶ
አባጣ ጎርባጣ ኑሮ እንዲሰተካከል
እንራመድ ይላል ተራማጁ ክፍል

(ከግርማዬ መኮንን፣1967 ዓ.ም.)

ጎህ ሲቀድ

ጎህ ሲቀድ ሲነጋ ለሊቱ
የለውጥ አየር ማሽተት አቤት ማስደሰቱ

ሞራልን አላሸቆ ያረገው በረዶ
ያ ጨለማው ጊዜ ፍርሀት ተወግዶ
በዚህ ንጋት ጮራ ህይወት በሚያድሰው
የታሪክው ሀይል ሲጮህ ህዝብን ቀስቀሰው

ጣኦት ልሁን ያለው በገዛ ወገኑ
ሲያብረከርክ ታየ አንበሳ ዝሆኑ
የቱ ነው መሻሻል የቱ ነው እድገቱ
ባጽም ሞልቶ ሲታይ የዳቦ ቅርጫቱ

በታህሳስ ተሰፋ አጭተን የካቲት ሰርጋችን
ቢዘገይም ሰምሯል መቼ ይሆን በዓላችን
በሰሜን ተራራ በዝቋላ ጋራ
በሰላም ተንፍሷል ያ እሳተ-ጎመራ

እምነት ማጣት ላገር አውዳሚ በምብ ነው
ለውጡ ለኢትዮጵያችን ተሰፋ ትንሳኤ ነው

ነፍሳችን ላታጣ ጽድቅ ወይም ኩነኔ
ለውጡ ጉዞ ፍታህት ሆኖ አድከሞ ወኔ
እናንት የለውጥ ሀይሎች ይጠንክር ከንዳችሁ
ሀዘባችሁ ተባብሯል ምኒን ባላማችሁ

በለውጥ ትንሳኤ ገና ለዘላለም
በህብረት ታድሳ ኢትዮጵያ ትቅደም
ጎህ ሲቀድ ሲነጋ ለሊቱ
የለውጥ አየር ማሽተት አቤት ማስደሰቱ

(መርዳዊ ስጦት፣1966ዓ.ም.)

Socialism

For our beloved country,
And the unity of the people,
Socialism is so important;

Let us move on the new road,
Where no one is oppressed and humiliated,
Let those unaware of the right of equality,
Awake from their sleep,
With the slogan "Ethiopia First";

The laborer never throws his energy,
To build home for others,
By ruining his own;
Nor he allows others,
To use him to climb the social ladder,
Unitary system is over;

In the absences of oppressor and oppressed,
The fellow countrymen will live happily,
Enjoying equality;

The progressive claims to be going on a march,
Against the uncomfortable life;

When the Daybreaks

It is very pleasing,
To see the daybreaks,
And to sense a change;

When the darkness and fear
That declines the moral values
And leaves everyone cold is over,
With this morning rays that renew life,
The shout of the oppressed awakes the people;

The one that claims to be deity of his countrymen,
Is seen wobbling;

For it is a fake lion and a sham elephant;

Where is the improvement?
Where is the development?
The bread basket is seen,
Filled with skeletons;

We betroth hope in December,
And our wedding is in February;
Though late, our plan is fulfilled;
The volcano of the Semene and the Zequala mountains,
Is erupted peacefully;

Dishonesty in country affairs,
Is an annihilating bomb;
For our Ethiopia,
The revolution is hope and resurrection;
You the activists of the change,
Be strong;

Your countrymen are united,
Let you lead us into your objectives;
Forever, with the resurrection of change,
And renewed with unity,
Let Ethiopia be first;

መስከረም ነጻነት

መስከረም መስከረም አደይ አበባችን
እንኳን ደህና መጣሽልን እንቁጣጣሻችን
መስከረም እርምጃ መስከረም ነጻነት
የፊውዳሉ ስርዓት የፈራረሰበት
ዘመኑ ሲለወጥ ለአብዮት በአላችን
የምናገኘበት ቀይ ነው ሸማችን
ለእንቁጣጣሽ በአል አዲሱ አመት
የኢምጴሪያሊዝምን ደም እናፍስስለት
በፊውዳሉ ስርዓት ስንጨቁን ኖረን
መስከረም ሁለት ቀን ነጻነት አገኘን
ሲበዙበዝ ኖሮ ጭቁኑን ሲያለፉ
መስከረም ሁለት ቀን ፊውዳሉ ተደፋ
ተውሳኩ ተባዩ ጉንፋን ቅራቅንቦ
ከምድረ ኢትዮጵያ እንዲወድም ተስቦ
ተገንጣይ ቀኝ ክንፍ እስከሚሆን አመድ
የአብዮቱ ችቦ ይቀጣጠል ይንደድ
ዓይናቸው ደም ይልበስ ጠላቶቻችንም
ታጋይ ከአብዮቱ ወደ ኋላ አይልም
ፊታቸው ጠቁቁሮ ቢመስል ጥቀርሻ
እርቅ የለም ከአድሀሪ እስከመጨረሻ
(በፍሰህ ኃይሌ፣1967 ዓ.ም.)

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ተነሳ ተራመድ

ተነሳ ተራመድ ከንድህን አበርታ
ላገር ብልጸግና ለወገን አለኝታ
እንበል ሀሌ ሉያ ታላቅ የምስራች
ከብዙ እስር ዘመን ኢትዮጵያ ተፈታች
ኢትዮጵያ ትቅደም ብለን እንገሰግስ
ለትውልድ እንዲተርፍ የያዘነው ጥንስስ
ሀ---ሀ ኢትዮጵያ ትቅደም!
ሀ---ሀ ኢትዮጵያ ትቅደም!
(በኢትዮጵያ አየር ሀይል የሙዚቃ ቡድን የተዘጋጀ፣1967 ዓ.ም.)

.....

አበቃ ስቃይ

አበቃ ስቃይ ቀረ መከራ
ተነስ ወገኔ በርትተህ ስራ
እናት ኢትዮጵያ በእኛ እንድትኮራ
ጸሀይ ፍንጥቅ አለች ብርካት ደመቀ
ጨቋኝ ለተጨቋኝ ስልጣኑን ለቀቀ
የበዝባዣ ስርዓት አለቀ ደቀቀ
ያዳሀሪ ነግር አከተመ አለቀ
ሸመኔ አንጥረኛ ፋቂ ቀጥቃጭ ማለት
ቀርቷልና ድሮ የዕድገት እንቅፋት
ዛሬ ግን በጎሳ ልዩነት ሳንፈጠር
በአንድነት እንክፈት የመሻሻልን በር

September is Freedom

September, September, our flower;
Welcome our New Year Festival;
September is our progress;
It is our freedom, too;
It was on September that Feudal Regime fell from power;
In the New Year,
We decorate with red cloth to celebrate our holiday;
For our New Year Festival,
Let us offer the blood of imperialism as sacrifice;
We got freedom on the 11th of September,
After we were oppressed under the feudal regime;
Exploiting the oppressed for years,
The feudal regime fell from power;
Let the torch of the revolution keep on burning;
Until Ethiopia gets rid of vermin, influenza,
The odds and ends as well as contagious disease;
And let the torch of the revolution keep on burning;
Until she turns the right wing secessionists to ash;
Let our enemies see red,
The progressive never retreat from promoting the revolution;
We never compromise with the reactionaries,
Even their face turned dark like soot with anger;

.....

Stand and March

Stand; be on a march, and be strong,
For the wealthy of the country,
And wellbeing of the fellow countrymen;
Let's say Hallelujah, and shout "hurrah",
For Ethiopia breaks free of a long imprisonment;
Let's on a march with the motto "Ethiopia First",
So that the generation to come take a lesson from us;
'ha...hu'Ethiopia First!
'ha...hu'Ethiopia First!

.....

Suffering is Over

Suffering is over;
My fellow countrymen stand, and work hard,
For mother Ethiopia will be proud of us;
The sun rises and sunshine illuminated,
The oppressor leaves his power to the oppressed;
The regime of the exploiter and reactionary is over;
Degrading waver, tanner and smith,
Is no more practiced;
For it is obstacle to development;
But today, by avoiding tribalism,
Let us open the door of improvement;

ሴቶችም ተነሱ ጾታ አያስገዛቸው
 በርትታችሁ ስሩ ለውድ ሀገራችሁ
 ተረግጠን ተከፍተን ይኔ ላሳለፍነው
 አይተናል ውጤቱ ብሄራዊ ድል ነው
 የዳቦ ቅርጫት ነች የተባለችውን
 እናስመስክርላት በተግባር ፈጽመን
 አድሀሪ ሲወድቅ ጨቋኝ ሲደመሰስ
 ኢትዮጵያችን ትቅደም ወደፊት ትገሰግስ
(በጌታቸው የሻው፣1968 ዓ.ም.)

Women also stand;
 Don't let your sex cause you laziness;
 You rather work hard for your beloved country;
 Our nation has been claimed as the basket of bread;
 Let us determine to testify that it is proven true;
 Upon the fall of the reactionary,
 Let Ethiopia comes first, and be on a march;

ድል የሰፊው ህዝብ ሆነ

ሆነ ሆነ ሆነ ሆነ እሰይ ሆነ
 ድል የሰፊው ህዝብ ሆነ
 ለመሬት ከበርቴ ማደግደጉ ቀርቶ
 ደስ አለው ከበርቴ ፍላጎቱ ረከቶ
 ሆነ እሰይ ሆነ
 ድል ለሰፊው ህዝብ ሆነ
 ሀምሳ ስልሳ ጋሻ ተነጥቆ ባንድ ሰው
 ወዝ አደሩ አገኘ መሬት ደረሰው
 ፈንግለን ፊውዳሉን ጥለናል ጨቋኝን
 ያለርህራሄ ረግጦ የገዛንን
 ሆነ እሰይ ሆነ
 ድል ለሰፊው ህዝብ ሆነ
 ዳግም ላይነሳ አቆርቋኸ ወደቀ
 በመደብ ትግላችን አጥንቱ ደቀቀ
 ለኢትዮጵያ እናታችን ለቅድስቷ ምድር
 የልጆቿን ለቅሶ ስምቶላት እግዚያብሄር
 ሆነ እሰይ ሆነ
 ድል ለሰፊው ህዝብ ሆነ
 በግፍ መጠቃቷን መበደሏን አውቆ
 ድል አጎናጸፋት እንባሞን አድርቆ
(በጌታቸው የሻው፣1968 ዓ.ም.)

Victory is for the Broad Mass

Hurrah! It happens,
 The broad mass is victorious;
 Humiliating oneself before the landlord is over;
 The oppressed is satisfied with his joyful victory;
 Hurrah! It happens,
 The broad mass is victorious;
 The regime allows an individual to have many hectares
 of land;
 But now, since unfairness is over,
 The laborer gets his share of land;
 The feudal that oppresses us brutally,
 And trample on our right is overthrown;
 Hurrah! It happens,
 The broad mass is victorious;
 The oppressor falls once for all,
 His bone is broken through our class struggle;
 Knowing our mother Ethiopia, the holy land, is
 threatened,
 God answers to her prayer;
 So He endows her with victory;

ነጻነቴ

በአንድነት ተነሱ እንራመድ
 ተወግዷልና የግፍ ወጥመድ
 ለኛ ለኛ ለኛ ህብር ይበጃል
 ህብረሰባዊነት ታውጃል
 የጌቶች የአሜቱ ወጉ መአረጉ
 ወርዶ ጫማ መሳም ቆሞ ማደግደጉ
 ከእንግዲህ አብቅቷል ሰው ለሰው መስገዱ
 ተራመድ ወዛደር ተጠርጓል መንገዱ
 ሰባት ቤት ተቋጥሮ የአከሌ ልጅ ማለት
 መሳፍንት ባላባት በደሀ መጫወት
 ቀርቷል ማበላለጥ ሰው ከሰው መለየት
 ጠራርን ጥሎታል ህብረሰባዊነት
 በእርሻ በእንዳስትሪ በሳይንስ በኪነት
 በህክምና በንግድ በመሀንዲስነት

My Freedom

Unite, stand, and be on a march,
 To be caught in a trap of atrocity is over;
 For us, unity is important,
 Socialism is declared;
 The prestige of the lord and the lady is over;
 Humiliating oneself before them is not practiced
 anymore;
 It is over now; no one bows down to anyone;
 Be on a march, laborer; the road is t in the clear;
 Favoring a far distant relative is over;
 No nobility and landlord can oppress the poor;
 For socialism abandons discriminations;

በሌላውም ሁሉ የተሰማራችሁ
ከንዳችሁ ይበርታ ለውድ ሀገራችሁ

እንዳይፈረዱን ሀገርና ጊዜ
ለጥቅም አንገዛ ላረጁው አባዜ
ትቅደም አትቀደም ብለን እናታችን
በሰራ እንራመድ በየተግባራችን

(ተሰፋዬ አበበ፣1967 ዓ.ም.)

Those of you, who engage in agriculture,
Science, art, medicine, trading, engineering,
And other professions,

Be strong to serve your beloved country;

In order not country and time bring our case to the
court of justice,

We need to free ourselves from the old trends,
In which selfishness is prevailing;

አዎ አምነናል

አዎ አምነናል እኛ በደርጉ አምነናል
የሰራው ውጤት አስደስቶናል አዎ በደርጉ አምነናል

የዕድገት በሀብረት ዘማኞች
የታሪክ ምዕራፍ ከፋኞች
ሀዘቡ በናንተ አርጋል ተሰፋ
አቆርቋኝ ሲወድም ሲጠፋ
የምትገኘው ለምለም እናት
ኢትዮጵያ ትቅደም አስቀድሟት

ትራመድ ትሂድ ወደ ፊት
የእውቀት ፋና አብሩላት

ሲወገር ኖሮ ሲረሸን
ለሀገር እድገት ለወገን
ቢያወጣን ተሜ ከግፍ ጎሬ
ፍትህ አገኘን ይሄው ዛሬ

ወላጅ በልጅ ድል ነሳ
ከወደቀበት ተነሳ
ሆታ ቀለጠ እልልታ
ላደረገለት ውለታ

የካቲት ሀያ አምስት
የአርሶ አደሩ ልደት
ድርጅም ለዚህ ነው ትግላችን
ይሄው ቢታችን ሞቀልን

አበጀ ደርጉ አበጀ
መሬት ላራሹን አወጀ
የበላይ በታች ቀረ ዛሬ
ጸሀይ ወጣለት ገበሬ

(በጌታቸው የሻው ፣1967 ዓ.ም.)

Yes! We believe in Derg

Yes, we believe in Derg,

We enjoy with the consequence of its action;

You, the campaigners of development through cooperation,

You are making history;

Be aware that the people rely on you;

Upon the falling of the oppressor,

You will have the flourishing mother, Ethiopia;

Let she be first, and let you make her stand first;

Let Ethiopia go forward,

Let you be the torch bearer,

To spread illiteracy;

To develop their country and their fellow countrymen,

Students have suffered much;

They have been torched and murdered;

The justice that we enjoy today is the fruit of their struggle;

The child makes his parent emerge victorious;

For he makes his parent rise from the ashes of the old one;

“Crying Ilill” and singing songs,

The parent celebrates the great deeds of his child;

4 March, 1974 is marked as the birthday of the peasants;

Here our life is improved;

It is to achieve this that we have struggled so far;

The Derg has done the right thing;

It declared “Land for the Tiller”;

For the farmer, the sun come up;

አብዮት እንዲህ ነው

መስከረም ሁለት ቀን የአብዮት ድላችን

ምስጋና ይድረስሽ ወረደ ሸክማችን

ለብዙ ዘመናት በግፍ በአሰቃዩን

በመስከረም ሁለት ድልን ተቀዳጅን

ሰፊው ህዝብ አልቅሰህ አልቀረም አዘንህ

መስከረም ሁለት ቀን ነጻነት አገኘህ

ከነግብረአበሩ ደማችንን መጥጦ

አብዮት እንዲህ ነው አሳዩን አጋልጦ

ቅርንጫፉ በዝቶ ተሸፍኖ ግንዱ

መስከረም ሁለት ቀን ተገለጠ ጉዱ

ማንንም አይፈራ አብዮት እንዲህ ነው

Revolution is like this

11th September is our lucky day,

We thank it for our revolution becomes victorious,

And for unloading our burdens;

It is in this day that we wine victory over the oppressors;

The people at large don't lead a mournful life anymore;

For they get their freedom on the 11th September;

The oppressor with his accomplices sucked our blood;

But the revolution saved us, and exposed our enemies;

The trunk was covered by many branches that grew out of it;

ብዙ ተአምር አየን ገርሰሰ ቢጥለው
 አይዞህ ጭቁኑ ህዝብ መስከረም ከሰናል
 በአገር የቀላደ ዋጋውን አኝቷል
 አሁንም አብዮት ገና ድል ያደርጋል
 ደም መጣጩን ዋግምት ድራሹን ያጠፋል
(በጌታኑ ደመሴ)

When on the 11th September the branches were cut from the trunk,
 It was exposed, and the secret was divulged;
 Revolution fears no one;
 It shows us many surprises when it topples the trunk;
 Be strong the oppressed;
 September compensated us for what we suffered;
 Those who trifled with the nation were punished;
 And revolution has kept on winning victory,
 It eradicated the cupping instrument which sucks blood of the oppressed;

ንጋት

ነጋ ነጋ መስከረም ጠባ
 የጸደይ አደይ ታዩ አበባ
 ያብዮቱን ደውል አስተጋባ
 ያ ጨለማ ወራት ድጡ ማጡ አለፈ
 መስከረም ሁለት ቀን ጉሙ ተገፈፈ
 ያ የጭንቁ ዘመን ጭጋጉ ለቀቀ
 መስከረም ሁለት ቀን አደይ ፈነጠቀ
 አሰቃይቶን ነበር ጨብጦ አኮራምቶ
 ሄደ ያ ደመና ጠፈጠፉን ትቶ
 እንኳን አለፈ እንጂ ጨለማው ክረምቱ
 ለጠፈጠፉ ጭንቁ ላል ነው ብልሀቱ
 ሳሩ ከደጃችን ብልሀቱ በእጃችን
 ከአንግዲህ ጠፈጠፍ ውጣ ከቤታችን
 ሰርን ገብ ጠፈጠፍ የጎጂችን ጠሩ
 ነገ ዛሬ ሳንል ይደፈን ሽንቁሩ
 ክረምቱስ ካለፈ ውሎ አድሮ ነበረ
 ጠፈጠፉ ጎዳን አየበረበረ
 ሰርን አየገባ ቤታችንን የጎዳው
 ይደፈን በቶሎ የጠፈጠፍ መግቢያው
 ጠፈጠፉ ጠፍቶ እንዲሟሟቅ ቤቱ
 አዲሱ አልፍኛችን ይጥበቅ መሰረቱ
 የጸደይን ጸሀይ እንደልብ ለመጥቀስ
 የጠፈጠፉን ምንጭ ኩሬውን ነው ማድረቅ
(በቀለመወርቅ ደበበ፣1970 ዓ.ም.)

Dawn

The day dawned, the day dawned,
 September has begun,
 The flower of spring is seen,
 To echo the sound of the revolution;
 Those dark months and the mud is over;
 On the 11th September the cloud disappeared;
 We were suffering a lot;
 The clouds disappear leaving its drips;
 The good thing is to see the passing of the darkness and
 summer;
 It is easy to handle the drips;
 The grass grows at the entrance of our home,
 And the mechanism is on our hand;
 So, the drips, leave our home here after;
 The distracters of our home, the intruder and the drips,
 Should be eradicated soon;
 Of course, the summer passed long ago,
 But we still suffer from the drips;
 Since the drips harm our home,
 The drenched hole should be repaired soon;
 To keep the home warm by avoiding the drips,
 Our new home should rest on strong foundation;
 To enjoy the sun of the spring fully,
 The pond, the source of the drips, should be dried up;

ቀዩ አበባ

አበባ መስከረም አበባ ቀዩ አደይ
 የጭቁኖች ተሰፋ የጭቁኖች አደይ
 አርብቶና አስብቶ ያኖረውን ሙከት
 ቅቤ አጠራቅሞ ከሚያጠባት ጥገት
 ጭሰኛው ለበዝባሻ የሚገብርበት
 መስከረም ነበረ ከአራት አመት በፊት
 ከተሟው ሰርቶ አደር ጥሬ እያረረበት
 ሻምጋኝ ውስኪ ይዞ እጅ የሚነሳበት
 የዚያ ፊውዳል ስርዓት ግባተ-መሬት
 መስከረም ሁለት ቀን ሆነ /ዛሬ/ አራት አመት
 ጭቁኑ ገበሬ ጭቁኑ ወዝ አደር
 ገና ከታወቀ የሰውነቱ ክብር

The Red Flower

September is flower;
 It is the red flower;
 Before four years ago, it was a different September;
 The peasant was open to be abused;
 He taxed his fatten animal and his milk for the lord;
 It was four years ago on the 11th of September
 That the Feudal regime was buried;
 Before it fell, it made the city dwellers and the laborers,
 Present champagne and whiskey to the lord,
 While they were suffering from lack of grain;

የፌውዳሉ ስርዓት ስሩ ከፈረሰ
 አራት አመት ሆነው አፈር ከለበሰ
 ያ የፌውዳል ቁንጮ የጭቁን ባላንጣ
 ወዙን ያለዋንጫ የኖረው ሲጠጣ
 ከሞቀው አዳራሽ ከአልፍኝ ከወጣ
 አራት አመት ሆነው ጭቁኑ ቀን ከወጣ
 የፌውዳሉን ስርአት ቀልብ እየገፈፈ
 ካድሪታሪ ጋራ ትግሉን ካጠጧፈ
 ሰፊው ህዝብ ሙብቱን ታግሎ ካስከበረ
 አራተኛ አመቱን ዘንድሮ አከበረ
(በቀለመወርቅ ደበበ፣1970 ዓ.ም.)

It has been only four years since the Feudal regime fell;
 And the human rights of the oppressed laborers and farmers
 have been respected;

It has been only four years
 Since the summit of the Feudal who exploited the oppressed,
 Was fired from his luxurious life;

It has been only four years,
 The broad mass defended its rights,
 By breaking the spirit of the reactionaries;

አብዮት ውበቱ

አብዮት አብዮት ውበቱ
 አንተ ነህ ዳግማዊ ልደቱ

ስበዘበዝ የኖርኩ ወዜን በከበርቱ
 ጭቁን ነው መደቤ ስረ መሰረቱ
 ስመዘበር ኖሬ በፊውዳሉ ስርአት
 ገና አራት አመቱ ከወጣሁ አርነት
 ገላዬን ያልነካ የአብዮት ቁንጥጫ
 ጭቁን ነው መደቤ ትግል የኔ ምርጫ
 ጀርባዬን መርምሩ አቋሜን ገምቱ
 ቁርጠኛ ታጋይ ነኝ እኔ ለአብዮቱ
 ቢሻው በጦር ሜዳ አለዚያም በምርቱ
 ወደ ኋላ አልልም እኔ ለአብዮቱ
 በፊውዳሉ ስርአት የኖርኩ ተመዝብሬ
 መች ይታጠፋል ለትግል ግንባሬ
 ለእኩልነት ኑሮ እኩል መድከም ያሻል
 ስራ አላማርጥም ያለፈው ይበቃል
 አናጸ እሆናለሁ ወይም ግንበኛ
 ስራን እንደ እህል ዘር አልመርጥም ዳግመኛ
 ከድረብ ጭቆና ፈጥኖ ለመላቀቅ
 ትግል ነው መፍትሄው ትጥቅን ማጠባበቅ
 ስራ ስለሆነ የሰው መልክ ውበቱ
 ተሰልፌ በአቅሜ ልስራ ለአብዮቱ
(በቀለመወርቅ ደበበ፣970 ዓ.ም.)

Revolution, My Splendor

Revolution is my splendor;
 It also causes my rebirth;

I belong to the oppressed class;
 And I've been exploited by the reactionaries throughout my life;
 It was only four years ago that I got freedom;
 I had been exploited by the Feudal Regime;

Since I'm from the oppressed class, and I welcome the struggle for freedom,
 The revolution places no burden on me;
 Let you profiling my class background, and examining my stand;
 I'm very definite about my intention to defend my revolution;

Since I am bored with the exploitation of the reactionaries,
 I never hesitate to sacrifice myself for my revolution;
 I'm ready to struggle whether in the battle field or production;

Everyone should be committed to achieve equality;
 I never discriminate one job from another;
 I can be carpenter or bricklayer;

To free himself/herself from double oppressions,
 One has to struggle, and get ready of his equipment;
 Since work is the grace and beauty of man,
 Let me contribute what I can to the success of my revolution;

የትግሉ ጎዳና

ችቦ በራ የሄው በራ
 ችቦ በራ ይሄው በራ
 የትግሉ ጎዳና መንገዱ ጠራ

ያንን አረመኔ እርኩሱን ዘመን
 ሰው በላውን ስርአት ደርምሰን ጥሰን
 ማጭድ መደሻውን ቀዩን ኮከቡን
 ቀይ ሰንደቁን ይዘን እናጊጥ ደምቀን
 ዛሬም ነገም ሁሌም ፍትህ እኩልነት
 እንሻለን በትግል ለማግኘት ነጻነት
 አልቀረም ትግላችን ይሄው ይታየናል
 የነጻነት ጮራ ብርሀን በርቶልናል
 ስለዚህ ሰፊው ህዝብ ቆርጠን እንጎሳ
 ኢትዮጵያችን ትቅደም ቀዩን ካባ ለብሳ
 ጀግናው የኢትዮጵያ ህዝብ ድርም ጠንካራ ነው
 ጭቆናን አውድሞ ለድንበሯ ሟች ነው
(በአሰፋ ደገፉ፣1969 ዓ.ም.)

The Road of the Struggle

Here is the light of the torch,
 The road of the struggle is clear;

Overthrowing that cannibalistic, infidel and cold-blooded regime,
 Let's decorate ourselves with sickle, hammer, red star and red flag;

Whenever, we need to have justice and freedom,
 Through our struggle;

Here we can see, our struggle is fruitful;
 For we begin to enjoy the rays of freedom;
 So, the broad mass, let's stand with courage,
 And let Ethiopia wear mantle and be first;

The heroic deeds and strength of Ethiopians are known;
 They eradicate oppression and sacrifice to defend their nation.

Condemning the Oppositions (Revolutionary Songs Condemning the Underground Movements)

ጸረ-አንድነት

ጸረ-አንድነት ፣ ጸረ-ሰላም ፣ ጸረ-አኩልነት ይውደም
ህብረሰባዊነት ይለምልም ዘላለም

ብዝሃው ምዝብራን እንቃወማለን
ባህብረሰባዊነት እንራመዳለን

ሁልጊዜ ቢመኛት ሀገራችንን
የኢምፔሪያሊስት መፈንጫ አትሆን

እንደመስላለን ቀኝ መኤሶንን
ኢ.ህ.አ.ፓ. ኢ. ዲ. ዩን እንደመስላለን
ኤ.ኤል ኤፍንም አናወድመዋለን

ድንበራችንን በደማችን እናስከብራለን
እንዳባረርናቸው ከአደዋ ምድር
እንዳራወጥናቸው በየጦር ግንባር
አሁንስ ማነው የሚደፍረው የኢትዮጵያን ድንበር
(በቸርታው ከልካይ፣1970 ዓ.ም.)

.....

አሻግሮ ገዳይ

የቀበሌ ማህበራት የገበሬ ማህበራት
ከጭቁን መለዩ ለባሽ ጋር ሆኖ አሳሽ ሰራዊት
መነጠረ አንጠረጠረ
ጸረ አብዮተኞችን አሳረረ አኮማተረ

አብዮታዊት እናት ሀገር ወይም ሞት ብሎ
አነፈረው ጠላቱን እንደ ንፍር ቀቅሎ
ሰርጎ ገቡን በሞት ቀጣ
መረከ አንበረከከ

ፈጨው ሰለቀው ጠላቱን
አሳወቀ አስረዳ ማንነቱን
አሳመነ ለጠላት ቆረጥ ኢትዮጵያዊነቱን
ለእናት ሀገር መሞቱን መስዋቱን
ተልኮውን ፈተመ ግዳጁን

የአብዮታዊ እናት ሀገር ወይም ሞት መፈክሩን
ቆርጦ የተነሳው ቀዩ ጦር ህዝባዊ ሰራዊት
ለሀቀኛ አብዮት
ይበርታ ያውድም ያጥፋ የውስጥና የውጭ ጠላተን
ያሳይ ያስመስክር በእናት ሀገር ቀልድና ፊዝ
ያለመኖሩን
(ከጌታቸው የሻው፣ 1972 ዓ.ም.)

.....

Anti-Unity

Let anti-unity, anti-peace and anti-equality be destroyed,
And socialism flourishes forever;

We oppose exploitation,
And we shall be guided by the principles of socialism;
Though they wish they would over take our country,
We never let the imperialist gambol in it;

We destroy the right wing ‘meison’, EPRP, EDU and EPLF;
We sacrifice our blood to defend our boarder;

As we rid them from Adowa, and chased off them in the battle fields,
No one dares to cross Ethiopia’s boarder today;

.....

He who shot down across

The unions of the Kebele [qäbäle] and the farmer,
Together with the military,
Swept and burnt the reactionaries;

Shouting the slogan “Revolutionary Mother Land or Death”,

The unions of the Kebele [qäbäle] and the farmer,
Over boiled their enemies like the boiled beans;
They defeated and killed the intruders;

They crushed the intruders to death;
They made it clear their courageousness;
They convinced their enemies,
By showing their resoluteness to defend Ethiopia;

They met their commitment,
By putting into practice their slogan, “Revolutionary Mother Land or Death”;

Let the military that stand heroically to defend the truthful revolution,
Destroy the internal and the external enemies;
Let it show that jest is unacceptable in handling the issue of mother land;

.....

እርማችሁን አውጡ

አብዮቱ ለኛ መሆኑን አውቀናል
በአምስት አመት ትግል ብዙ ተምረናል
ከአንግዲህስ በቃ ጭቁኖች ነቅተናል

በምስራቅ በደቡብ ያወናበዳችሁ
በሰሜን ጦር ግንባር ሻጥረ የሰራችሁ
በምርት ዘመቻ በትግሉ ስርጋችሁ
ጭቁኖች ነቅተናል ተደቆሳላችሁ

የአፍ ተራማጆች በተግባር የሌሉ
አብዮቱንና ታጋይ የሚያጥላሉ
ክፉ ቀን ሲመጣ የሚከበልሉ
ቶሎ ይጋለጡ መሀላችን አሉ

ኢ.ህ.አ.ፓ ኢ.ዲ.ህ እርማችሁን አውጡ
ተገንጣይ ቡድኖችም እርማችሁን አውጡ
ለፓርቲው ምስረታ እንዳትቀላውጡ
(ከፍሰህ ሀይሌ፣1972 ዓ.ም.)



ወይ ንቅንቅ ወይ ፈቀቅ

ወይ ፈቀቅ ወይ ንቅንቅ ወይ ፍንክች ከአብዮቱ
ጦር ቢሰገሰግ በሰራ አካላቱ በሀመሀል ደረቴ
እሞታለሁ ለሀገሪ እሰዋለሁ ለድምበሬ
እያስገደደኝ የነጻነት ክብሬ

ለሀገሬ እሞታለሁ ለድንበሬ እሰዋለሁ
ላጥፋሽ የሚላትን አጥፍቼ እጠፋለሁ
አርሶ አደሩ ወዝ አደሩ ወታደሩ
መስዕዋት ነው ለሀገሩ ለድምበሩ

በርቱ በርቱ ታጋዮች በርቱ በርቱ ጭቁኖች
በርቱ በርቱ ሀቀኞች የኖጭ ሽብር በቀይ መላሸች
እየታገልኩ አመርታለሁ እያመረትኩ እዋጋለሁ
እኔ ለአብዮቱ መስዋዕት እሆናለሁ
(ከጥጋቡ አዲስ)



Revolutionary Songs Condemning the Secessionists

ጎበዝ ተነስ አታመንታ

የከንቱ ምኞት አርበኛ የጠባባ ስሜት ምርኮኞች
ግራ የገባው ህይወት መሪ “አጥፍተህ ጥፋ” ቡኩኖች
ኧረ ምን አስመልክቷቸው ባንቺነትሽ ላይ ተነሱ
ከቶ ምንኛ ቢተብቱ የናት ውለታሽን እረሱ
ወይስ በጭፍን ገብተው አጥቢ ጡትሽን ነከሱ
ወለላ ማርሽን ጠብተው ሬት አድርገው መለሱ
ሰላምን ስትናፍቁ መንታ ጦርን ደገሱ
አንድነትን ስታደምቁ መገንጠልን ጠነሱሱ

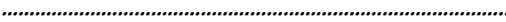
ከአንግዲህማ
አይዘሽ አንቺ ሀገሬ ውድ እማማ
ፍጹም ግንባሬን ላልፈታ ያንቺን አንድነት ሳላይ
የሰላም መድረክ ሳላውጅ በኤርትራና በትግራይ
የጠላትሽ ሬሳ ከተቢያ ገብቶ ሳይደባይ
የፍትህ አየር ሳያውድ በዚያች መንደር ቀዬ ላይ
ጸረ ሰላም ወንበዴ ሳይሆን የአሞራ ሲሳይ

Eschew Hope

We know that the revolution is for us;
And we have learned a lot through the five years struggle;
So, here after, we the oppressed are aware;
Those of you, who swindle in the east and in the east,
Those of you, who sabotage in the northern battle field,
Now, you intrude into the production campaign;
But, we the oppressed have identified your intrusion,
So, you will be crashed;

Those imposters who disfigure the revolution and the progressives,
And run away from struggle when hard times come,
Have to be exposed soon for they present among us;

Ethiopian People Revolutionary Party and Ethiopian Democratic
Union eschew hope;
The secessionists eschew hope;
Don't pine for the foundation of the party;



No Retreat

I never retreat from defending my revolution,
If spears are pushed into all over my body, and in the center of my chest;
I'll die for my country,
For the dignity of being free obliged me to do so;

I'll die for my country,
I sacrifice myself to kill those who seek to destroy my country;
The farmer, the laborer and the soldiers sacrifice for their country;

Be strong, the activists and the oppressed,
Be strong, the truthful wrestlers who defend the white terror with red terror;
I produce while I fight and the vice versa,
I sacrifice for my revolution;



You Hero, Stand Unhesitatingly

The patriots of futility and the surrenders of narrow-mindedness,
The confused, murder-suicide and dissipations,
What make them stand against you, my country?
What arrogance let them forget your motherly favor?
Or what make them bit your breast blindly?
They sucked your honey, but they pay you aloes in return;
When you strive for peace, they start a joint fight against you;
And when you celebrated unity, they induced dissociation;

Here after, be strong my country, my lovely mother;
I act daringly:
Until I see your unity, and declaring peace in Eritrea and Tigray,
Until I bury your enemy and keep the peace in that village,
Until I make vulture feed on the dead bodies of anti-peace ruffian;

ከእንግዲህማ
 አይዘብ አንቺ ሀገሪ ውድ አማማ
 መንገዳቸው ከታወቀ ውንብድና ከሆነማ
 የኮራው ነጻነትሻን ዳርድንበርሽን ለመሸጥ ከተሰማማ
 ልብሽ በሀዘን ተወግቶ በፍላጻው ቢደማ
 አሉልሽ እኔ ልጅሽ ለጥሪሽ ሳላቅማማ
 አልመለስም ከቶ ሳላደምቅሽ ቢድል ሽማ!
 (ከእንደርያስ ተረፈ ፣1976 ዓ.ም.)

Here after, be strong my country, my lovely mother;
 If their intention is known that they involve in brigandage,
 If they sabotage to violate your prideful freedom and sovereignty,
 And if the sword of mourn bleed you heart,
 I, your child, is present to listen to your call wholeheartedly;
 I never retreat before I decorate you with a dress of victory;

ተነሳ ታጠቅ

ተነሳ ተነሳ ተነሳ ታጠቅ ወገኔ
 አሳየው ከንድህን የአባትህን ወኔ
 በራሽ ቢያናፋ ቀልባሽ ቢያሸካካ
 ዘበት ነው ሙከራው ድንበሪ አትነካ
 ባራ ቢያናፋ የሳት እራት ሊሆን
 አይለምደውም ከእንግዲህ ቀምሶታል
 ከንድህን
 ስምሽን ለውጠው ኤርትራ ቢሉሽ
 ባህረ ነጋሽ ነበር መጠሪያስምሽ
 መቅደላ መተማ ታሪክ ምስክር ነው
 የባህር በራሽን የሚደፍራት ማካው
 የአድሀሪ አረቦች ጉራና ድንፋታ
 ለመመለስ ላይቸል የጎላን ኮረብታ
 ቀይ ባህን ተመኛ በዘይት ጨረታ
 ይህ ነበር ቀልበሾች የኢተረፍጽስ ወሮታ?
 ምኞት ላስከረው ጥቅም ላሳወረው
 የአድሞን ድል ጋሻ ከንድህን አሳየው
 አውአሎም ዘራይን የአፈራቸው እናት
 ዛሬም አልመከነች ተተኪ ጆግና አላት
 (ሮማን አለሙ፣1970ዓ.ም.)

Stand and Arm Yourself

Stand and arm yourself my fellow countrymen;
 Show for your enemy your strength and vigor that you inherit from your father;
 Though infiltrator brays and reactionary giggles,
 It is an absurd attempt to dare to cross my border;
 Bare was braying to be burnt in the fire;
 He never tries again for you beat him severely;
 Though they change your name and call you Eritrea.
 Your name was ‘Bahir-Negash’;
 What happened in Meqedela and Metema could be taken as historical witness,
 So, who dare to cross our port?
 The boast and vaunt of reactionary Arabs,
 Couldn’t take back the Golan Heights;
 But the Arab reactionary lusts for the Red see;
 You reactionary, is it that you return for the favor that Ethiopia did to you?
 For the one that drunken with his desire and get blinded by his selfishness,
 Show him your shield and strength that made you victorious at the battle of Adowa;
 The mother of Awalom and Zery is not barren;
 These days too, she has heroes who follow the footsteps of the formers;

ዳግመኛ መወለድ

ያን ተገንጣይ ያን ወንበዴ
 በለው በነራዴ
 ከሀዲዎች ሁሉ በሰሜን ጦር ግንባር
 መፈክራችንን ይዩልን በተግባር
 ለማያዳግመው ለወሳኙ ፍልሚያ
 ለተገንጣይ ቡድን የለንም መቆሚያ
 ታጋይ ለኢትዮጵያ ታጋይ ለአብዮቱ
 ለእናት ሀገሩ ሲል ታልፋለች ህይወቱ
 እስከመጨረሻው ትግሉን አፋፍሞ
 ተገንጣዩን ቡድን ይመጣል አውድሞ
 የማይካደው ሀቅ ግልጽና ተጨባጭ
 አብዮቱን ለሸጠ ሞት ይሁን ለአፈንጋጭ
 ኤርትራን ከኢትዮጵያ ገንጥሎ ለመውሰድ
 ያሻል ከሞት ኋላ ዳግመኛ መወለድ
 (ጌታቸው የሻው ፣1970 ዓ.ም.)

Rebirth

Put that secessionist and ruffian to the sword;
 Let all the renegades in the northern battle field,
 See our slogan practically;
 We stand for the unrepeatable and decisive fight;
 We don’t have place for the secessionist;
 The one who struggle for Ethiopia and the revolution,
 Will sacrifice to defend his mother land;
 By continuing his fight to the bitter end,
 He will come back after he destroys the secessionist;
 The undeniable, clear and tangible fact is,
 To kill the one who betrays the revolution and the secessionist;
 Seceding Eritrea from Ethiopia is a heavily demanding job;
 For one has to be reborn to do so;

ዞር በል ከፊቴ
ዞር በል ከፊቴ አወናባጅ
ጨቁነህን ነበር እረግጠህ ከጉድጓድ
ጭቁኖች ተባብረን ገለበጥንህ በግድ

ዞር በል ከፊቴ አትቁም ከጎኔ
እኔ ካንተ ጋር አለብኝ ቅራኔ
ነቅተናል እኝ ጭቁኖች
ቢቃ አንታለልም ለአወናባጆች

ዞር በል ከፊቴ አወናባጅ
ስትቅብዘበዝ ትጠፋለህ
ቀይ ሽብር ይምታቸው አወናባጆችን
ተራመጅ መስለው የሚያታልሉትን

ዞርበል ሻጥረኛው ዞር በል ወግድ
ሰባብሮ ይጥልሀል የጭቁኖች ክንድ
(ከጥጋቡ አዲስ፣1970 ዓ.ም.)

ትግላችን አይቆምም

ከግባችን ሳንደርስ ከቶ አንመለስም
የመጣው ቢመጣ ትግላችን አይቆምም

ተልካሻ ቢቃወም አብዮታችንን
ለመግፈፍ ቢሞክር ነጻነታችንን
እንበጥሰዋለን አንገቱን በካራ
በሀገር ቀልድ የለም ለማንም አንራራ
በለው በለው

ቢዘል ቢጎፈራገጥ በዝባዥ ቀበኛ
ወዝ አደሩን ጭቁን አሳሳች መጋኛ
ውድቅ ነው ሀሳቡ የሚያሰራው ሲራ
የድሀን ደም መጣጭ የኛ ባላጋራ
በለው በለው

የሀሰትን ዘሮች ቋጥሮ የሚበትን
ያድሀሪን ስራት ይዞ የሚያጋንን
አንቃወማለን በከረረ መንፈስ
ይገደል ይወገዝ ደግሞም ደሙ ይፍሰስ

በለው በለው
(ከቀለመወርቅ ደበበ፣ 1970 ዓ.ም.)

አረሙን እናንሳ

አንዳንዱን አየነው እንዲያ ሲያተራምስ
በግራው ተራምዶ በቀኙ ሲመለስ

ጥቀቅን አረሞች ገብተው ቢያስቸግሩ
ረጅሙን ጉዞ መራመድ ከፈሩ
ውጥንቅጥ አረሞች ይውጡ ከሰፈሩ

ኢትዮጵያ እንግዲህ ወደ ኋላ አትልም
ሰፊው ህዝብ አንድ ነው አይልም ወለም ዘለም
ፓርቲ ሊመሰርት ሀቀኛ ሲነሳ
አድሀሪ ሀይላት ጉራውን ቢያገሳ
ኮሚኒስቶች በርቱ አረሙን እናንሳ

ኢትዮጵያ አገሪ ትግሏ አይበርድም
ለአድሀሪ ሲራ ለሲአይኤ ሲራ አትንበረከክም
ከሀዲ እምነተ ቢስ አረሙቻ ሁሉ
ገባ ወደ አስር ቤት ተገልጦ ተንኮሉ
(ከአንዱ ዓለም ይታየው፣1972 ዓ.ም.)

Back off You Charlatan

Back off you charlatan
You oppressed us;
You throw us in the well and trample on us;
But, we the oppressed united and overthrew you;

Back off, an don't stand beside me,
For I oppose you;
We the oppressed are aware,
We will never be deceived by charlatan;

Back off you charlatan;
You will be killed while you wander here and there;
Let the red terror dismiss the charlatan;
That deceives as if they were progressive;

Back off you perfidious;
The oppressed will crush you;

Our struggle will never be stopped

We retreat before we meet our objective;
Whatever happens, our struggle will never be stopped;

If the sluggish opposes our revolution and restrict our freedom,
We cut off his neck with the sword;
We have no sympathy for anyone who is enemy of our country;

Hit him...hit him.....

Although the reactionary who deceives and exploits the oppressed laborer is
getting restless,
His idea is unacceptable for he is our enemy who sucks our blood;

Hit him...hit him.....

We strictly oppose the one who sow the seed of false,
We also oppose the one who amplify the system of the reactionary;
Let him be killed and outcasted;
And let him bleed to death;

Let us remove the Weed

We see some hesitant, who spoil the situation,
We see them once communists, they are now converted to capitalists;

If the tiny weeds disturb and fear the long journey,
Let them disappear from our village;

Here after, Ethiopia never retreats,
The broad mass is united, and it never hesitates to progress;
While the forthright activists stand to establish the party,
The reactionaries might be boasting;
But be strong communists so that we avoid the weed;

Ethiopia, my country, never stops struggling;
She will never be surrendered the threats to the reactionaries and CIA.;;
All the renegades, dishonest and worthless are imprisoned,
For their wickedness is exposed;

በለው የአገሬ ልጅ

በለው የአገሬ ልጅ አንተ ልብ ሙሉ
አገርክን ለመቁረስ ለሚሞክር ሁሉ
ለብልበው አቃጥለው አድሀሪን ሁሉ

በምስራቅ
በሰሜን

ኢትዮጵያን ለመውረር ጠላትም ቢመጣ
የኢትዮጵያ ጆግና እሳት ሆኖ ወጣ
ወየው ሰይድ ባሪ ተርመጥምጠህ ቀረህ በምንህ ትወጣ

እንቆርሳለን እንወስዳለን ሲሉ የጀግኖችን አገር
ገብተው ሰምጠው ቀሩ ከጀግኖቹ መንደር
ቀልድ የለም በሀገር በጎበዞች ድንበር
(በደሰላኝ መኩሪያ፣1970 ዓ.ም.)

They risk Humiliation

We repeat [the red] victory of the east in the north,
We have no doubt that we will win;

EDU, EPRP, and secessionist,
It is over;

The petro dollars of the Arab have no more values;

Our militia fighters marched to the front,
The military also marched to the front;

The reactionary regimes of the Arabs and imperialists
are humiliated;

We never be tricked by fake negotiation,
We keep on fighting until the enemy leaves our
boarder with humiliation;

Let our internal and external enemies be
humiliated;

We never retreat until we win victory;

እማማ ኢትዮጵያ

ላገሬ ደንበር ለወገኔ ክብር ለህዝቤ ነጻነት
ለጭቁን ወገኔ ለብዙሀኑ መብት ነጻነት
ለወሳኙ ትግል ለህዝባዊ የድል ጦርነት
ልድማና ልቁሰል ህይወቴ ይለፍ የሞት ሞት ልሙት

አንተ ወዛደር ገበሬ ጭቁን ወገኔ
ከብዝበዛና ከግፍ ጨቆና ከቁም ኩነጅ
ነጻ ወጥተህ እጩይታ አግኝተህ አይቸህ በአይኔ
ያሻው ፈተና ስቃይ መከራ ይምጣብኝ በኔ

የነፍሴ አዳራሽ የህይወቴ እልፍኝ የኑሮዬ ቅርስ
ስሜኝ እማማ የኔነቴ አርማ የችግሬ ልብስ
ያን አድሀሪ ድንበር ደፋሪ ሳልግተው እርሳስ
ቃል ገብቼያለሁ ግንባሬን ላላጥፍ ፊቴን ላልመልስ

እማማ ኢትዮጵያ እማማ
የአጽጌ ማረፊያ የነጻነቴ አርማ
(በቀለመወርቅ ደበበ፣1970 ዓ.ም.)

Hit Out Your Enemy

You courageous my fellow countrymen,
Hit out your enemy;

Let you burn those reactionaries who seek to secede your country;

When the enemy came in the south and in the north to invade Ethiopia,
The Ethiopian hero stood fiercely to defend the enemy;

Woe to you Ziade Bare, you got in a mess,
How could you escape?

When they claimed to take over the country of the heroes,
They were trapped and dismissed by the heroes;
It is impossible to make fun of a country;

ቀሩ እየቀለሉ

የምስራቁን ቀይ ድል ሰሜን እንደግማለን
አንጠራጠርም እናሸንፋለን

ኢዲየ ኢሀፓ ተገንጣይ ይበቃል
የአረብ ፔትሮ ዶላር አከተመ ደቆ ተንኮታኩቷል

ሚሊሻ ጦራችን ወደ ፊት ገስግሷል
መደበኛው ጦርም ወደ ፊት ገስግሷል
የዓረብ አድሀሪ መንግስታቶች ሁሉ
ኢምፔሪያሊዝምም ቀሩ እየቀለሉ

አንሸንግልም ለእርቅ ለድርድር
እስኪወጣ ጠላት ቀሎ ከኛ ድንበር
ጠላታችን ይፈር የውስጥም የውጭም
ድል በእጃችን ሳይገዛ እኛ አንመለስም

(ከቤተው ወርቁ ፣1970 ዓ.ም.)

Mother Ethiopia

For the boarder of my country,
For the dignity and freedom of my fellow countrymen,
For the oppressed fellow countrymen and freedom of the broad mass,
For the decisive struggle and the victory of the people in the battle field,
Let me bleed, injure and die;

You laborer and farmer, the oppressed fellow countrymen,
Promise you I face any misery,
After I see you free from severe oppressions;

Listen to me my country,
You are the emblem of my identity and the savior of my life;
Your are parlour of my soul and the bases of my life;
Promise you I never retreat before I kill that reactionary who crossed your bo.

Mother Ethiopia,
You are my emblem, and the one whhere I rest in peace when I die;

አፈር መስኮት የለው
 በደማችሁ ፍሳሽ
 በአጽማችሁ ክስካሽ
 ሀገር በድል ኮርታ ወገን ሲምነሽሽ
 ጉሮ ወሽባ ሲባል ሲዘመር መዘመሩ
 ደስታችን ነበር ዛሬ ብትኖሩ፤
 ምኞታችን ነበር አንድ ላይ ብናየው
 ዳሩ ምን ያደጋል አፈር መስኮት የለው፤
 ለአገራችሁ ክብር ለነጻነት ተስፋ
 እግራችሁ ተቆርጦ አይናችሁ የጠፋ
 ሽታችሁ ነበረ የዛሬን ተስፋ።።
(ክፍሌ አቡቸር፣1970 ዓ.ም)

Grave doesn't have a window
 With the blood you shed,
 When the nation celebrates the victory,
 When your fellow citizen feel pleasure,
 When a song of victory is sung,
 We wish you were with us and shared our joy;
 Unfortunately, it is impossible for you to do so,
 For a grave doesn't have a window;
 Those of you who lost your eyes and legs,
 To keep the honor and freedom of the nation,
 You were dreaming to enjoy this moment;
 With the blood you shed
 We wish you were with us and shared our joy

Famine and Draught

ቀባሪ አጥቶ ሬሳ
 በወሎ በትግሬ በባሌ በሀረር
 ቀባሪ አጥቶ ሬሳ በሬሳ ሲከመር
 በረሀብ አለንጋ ሲጋረፍ ፍጥረቱ
 መረዳዳት እንጂ አይጠቅምም ማየቱ
 ምድርሽ የሰጡትን ሁሉን ይቀበላል
 ተፈጥሮ ያለማው ያበቅላል ያፈራል
 ሀብት እያለሽ ንዋይ ለዘር ዘርሽ በቂ
 አትሆኚም ከእንግዲህ እርዳታ ጠያቂ
 ለተራባው ወገን ለጎዳው መከራ
 ያለንን አወጥተን እናብላው እንጀራ
(በጌታቸው የሻው፣1967 ዓ.ም.)

No one is there to bury the Dead
 In Wollo, Tigray, Bale and Harar,
 In the absence of someone to bury a pile of dead bodies,
 And when the living creatures suffered from hunger,
 Helping each other is decisive;
 Since your land is fertile, it grows anything;
 The wild plants produce fruits;
 You never beg for support here after,
 For you have resources
 That even the generation to come could rely on;
 For the fellow countrymen who suffered from hunger,
 Let us contribute what we have and feed them 'injera';

ወገኔ እሹሩሩ

እሹሩሩ ወገኔ እሹሩሩ እሹሩሩ አንጀጭ እሹሩሩ
 እንግዳ አይደለም ጦም ውሎ ማደሩ
 ሲጎል የሚያሳጣ ሰውነት ክፉ ነው
 ወገኔ ቆራጥ ሁን ለርሀብ ፊት አትሰጠው
 የበይ ተመልካች ሆነህ ላዳሀሪ
 ላዋይ ቁራሽ እንኳን አጣህ ፍርፋሪ
 ችግርክን ደብቀው አድርገውት ሚስጥር
 ትዝብት አተረፉ ቀን ማለፉ ላይቀር
 መከራህ መከራው የሆነው አካልህ
 ደርሶልህል ዛሬ ተሰምቶት ስቃይህ
 ሀብረት ሲጠነከር አንድነት ሲኖር
 አይመጣም ዳግመኛ ድርቅና ችግር
 ለኔ ማለት ቀርቶ ለኛ ነው ነገሩ
 ንቃ በርታ እንግዲህ ወገኔ እሹሩሩ
(በጌታቸው የሻው፣1967ዓ.ም)

Take Heart My Fellow Countrymen

Take heart my fellow countrymen;
 For you, it is not new to live in wretched poverty;
 Though a starved body causes shudder,
 Be courageous, my fellow countrymen;
 Don't get defeated by hanger;
 You are excluded from the wealth of the nation;
 You see the reactionaries exploiting the country's resource,
 While you don't have even the crumble of food;
 They hide the problem that you face,
 But their disappointing gilt is exposed;
 Your fellow countrymen who feel and share your misery,
 Arrive to save you from such sufferings;
 Drought never appear again,
 If unity is strengthened;
 Take heart my fellow countrymen;
 Here after, the motto "for us"
 Replaces "for me";

የወገን ጥሪ

የወገን እራብ ጥማቱ ጨኸቱ ተሰማኝ
ሲቃይ ሆኖ ኑሮው ዛሬ ልቤን እያደማኝ
እናት ልጄን በጀርባዋ ተሸከማ
በርሀብ ብዛት ተጨብጣ መሄድ ደከማ
ስትሰቃይ ስትነሳ ጣር ላይ ሆና
ዳቸኝ ልቤ በሞት ጭጋግ ተሸፍና
መላ ጠፍቶት ዘዴ እያጣ ጨንቆት አባት
ቤተሰቡ በአንድ ጊዜ አርፈውበት
ጉድጓድ ምሶ እንዳይቀብር ወኔ ከድቶት
በምን አንጀት በምን ጉልበት ረሀብ ፈትቶት
ኧረ ወገን ኧረ ዘመድ አንሳኝ እያለ
ቀዬውን ለቆ ተሰደደ አደጋ አልቻለ
የአየሩ ለውጥ የተፈጥሮ ችግር ጣጣ
ስንቱን ህጻን ሽማግሌ ወጣት ቀጣ
(በጌታቸው የሻው፣1977 ዓ.ም.)

**Political Discontests
አልማዝን አይቼ**

አልማዝን አይቼ አልማዝን ሳያት
ሰስተኛዋ አልማዝ ብትመጣ ድንገት
ሁለቱን አልማዞች ስለሰረሰችኝ
ምርጫዬ በምርጫ ተበላሽብኝ
ሰስቱንም አልማዞች ባያቸው ባያቸው
እቺም ያቺም አልማዝ ሁሉም አልማዝ ናቸው
አልማዝን ከአልማዝ መምረጥ ቸገረኝ
እስኪ አንዴት ይሻላል ምክር ለግሱኝ
ሰው የተቸገረው በሌላ ሌላ ነው
እኔን የቸገረኝ የአልማዞች ምርጫ ነው
በአልምዝ መቸገሪ አይደለም ቅንጦት
ይቀልድ ይሆናል ያልደረሰበት፤
ከአልማዝ መሀል ገብቶ በአልማዝ መቸገር
ለሰሚው ግራ ነው የሚያደናግር
የሰሰስት አልማዝ ምርጫ ስለሰጠኝ
ጥሩወርቅ ተሸላ ስለታየችኝ
ሄድኩኝ ከጥሩወርቅ አልማዞቹን ትቼ
አላዋጣም ቢለኝ ነገሩን ገምቼ
(በተስፋዬ ለማ፣1967 ዓ.ም.)

ሎሚ ተራ ተራ

ሎሚ ተራ ተራ ሎሚ ተራ ተራ
የማምዬን ነገር ጎረቤቱ አደራ
እናቴ ካንድ አባት አሰራ አራት ወልዳላች
ሞግዚትም እናትም ሆና አላድጋለች
ጣሪ በማጣቷ አሁን ታለቅሳለች
አባባም ተግዞ ወህኒ ገብቷል አሉ
ጋሽዬም ጤና አጥቶ ካገር ወጥቷል አሉ
አብዬም ሸፍቷል አምጸል ይላሉ
ሎሚ ተራ ተራ ሎሚ ተራ ተራ
የማምዬን ነገር ጎረቤቱ አደራ
ወራሽ ነኝ ይል ጀመር አንዳንድ ዲቃላ
ካማካሪው ጋራ ተሻርኮ ሊበላ
እናቴን አድርጓት ሞኝና ተላላ
ታገጅታላችሁ ቁልቁል አቀርቅራ

The Call of the Fellow Countrymen

I felt the hunger and thirst of my fellow countrymen;
I heard their shout;
Their miserable life is bleeding my heart;
I see a mother carrying her child on her back;
Hanger has left her to weak to walk;
It is heartbreaking to see her suffering in her death throes;
Standing in the middle of the dead bodies of his entire family,
The father [the head of the family] is at a loss and confused;
He cannot bury the dead bodies;
Because hanger has left him too weak to do so;
Calling the fellow countrymen to led him a hand,
He has left home and migrated for he couldn't face the danger;
The change of the weather and its worst consequences,
Bring untold misery to children, youths and old people;

Looking at Almaz

First, I saw Almaz, and again I saw another Almaz,
When the third Almaz came all of a sudden, she made me forget the
first two;
So, I failed to choose one of the three 'Almazes';
I saw repeatedly three 'Almazes,
This one and that one all are 'Almazes,
I could't choose one Almaz from the other Almaz,
What shall I do?
Please advise me on this issue;
Others don't face what I face,
Choosing the Almazes is my problem;
It is not luxury to fail to choose from 'Almazes';
The one who never faced such a thing might joke with my problem;
Finding oneself among 'Almazes', and got challenged by them
confused the hearer;
I was frustrated by my inability to choose one from the three
'Almazes';
Examining the matter, I found Tiruwork better than 'Almazes';
So, abandoning 'Almazes', I went to Tiruwork;

Take the Lemon in turn

Take the lemon in turn...,
You my neighbor, I beg you to take care of my mother;
My mother bore my father fourteen children;
She grew up her children serving as a maid and mother;
But now, she is crying for she has no one to look after her at her retirement;
They said my father has been imprisoned;
They said **gaShdyo** was sick, and he left the country;
They said **abdyo** became a rebel;
Some illegitimate children begin to heir the throne;
They planned to exploit her with his accomplice;
By considering my mother as foolish;

የፈጫይ ስትፈጭ የጋጋሪ ጋጣራ
ከገበያው ማዶ ከረባዳው ስፍራ
ሎላ ተራ ተራ ሎላ ተራ ተራ
የማምዶን ነገር ጎረቤቱ አደራ

You find my mother bend down on the other side of the market place;
There she became the servant of the grinder and the baker;

.....

(በጌታቸው ደባልቆ፣ 1967 ዓ.ም.)
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Appendix: C

**Chapter Six: Major Themes of Amharic Song Lyrics during the Reign of
EPRDF**

Political Discontent as depicted in Amharic Song Lyrics

ያስተሰርያል

ግርማዊነታቸው ከሲ ሰረገላ
 ወደ ወገል ወርደው ሲተኩ በሌላ
 በአዛውንቶች እራስ ስልሳ ጉድጓድ ምሳ
 አብዮት ሞላችው የተማሪ እሬሳ

ጃ ያስተሰርያል... ጃ ያስተሰርያል

ባስራ ሰባት መርፌ በጠቀመው ቁምጣ
 ለለውጥ ያገፈረው ዙፋን ላይ ሲወጣ
 እንዳምናው ባለቀን ያምናውን ከተካ
 አዲስ ንጉስ እንጂ ለውጥ መቼ መጣ

ይቅር በለውና የበደለን ወቅሰህ
 ምህረት አስተምረን አንድ አድርገን መልሰህ

ጃ ያስተሰርያል... ጃ ያስተሰርያል

እማማ ኢትዮጵያ... እማማ አብስኒያ
 እማማ ኢትዮጵያ... ሳባዊ አስራኤል
 እማማ ኢትዮጵያ ስሜ...እማማ አብስኒያ
 እማማ ቁም በቀል ክፉ ነው...እማማ አብስኒያ
 እማማ ከአምላክ ያለያያል...እማማ አብስኒያ
 እማማ ተዋዶ መትጋት ቅጣት ያስተሰርያል

ጃ ያስተሰርያል... ጃ ያስተሰርያል

ዘጸአት ለኢትዮጵያ ወደ ተስፋ ጉዞ
 ባህሩን የሚያሻግር አንድ ሙሴን ይዞ
 ቅርብ ነው አይርቅም የኢትዮጵያ ትንሳኤ
 ባንድነት ከገባን የፍቅር ሱባኤ

ጃ ያስተሰርያል... ጃ ያስተሰርያል

ፍቅር አጥተን እንጂ በርሀብ የተቀጣን
 አፈሩ ገራገር ምድሩ መቼ አሳጣን
 አሲሳ አሲሳ አሲሳ ማንዴላ
 ይቅር አብብሎ እንዳስጣለ ቢላ
 በተስፋዋ መሬት እንዲፈጸም ቃሉ
 ሞፈሩን ያዙና ይቅር ተባባሉ

ይሄም በክፉ ቃል ይሄንን ሲወቅሰው
 ይሄም በጥላቻ ይሄንን ሲወቅሰው
 መለየት አቃተን የሚበጀንን ሰው

ኤሎሄ ኤሎሄ ላማ ሰበቅታኒ
 አትሰማኝም ወይ በይው

ጃ ማለት ፈጣሪ መሰረይ ይቅርታ
 እኛ ስንዋደድ ይሰማናል ጌታ

እሱቴ ተዋደዱ ይያያዝ እጃችሁ በልዩነታችሁ
 አለበለዚያም በምን ያስታውቃል እኛን መውደዳችሁ

አቤት ስቃይ አቤት ጠኔ
 ሰማይ ጨክኖ በወጠኔ
 ስንት አሳለፍን አለቀስን ሳናባራ ብለን ወይኔ
 እዚህ ጋ ደግሞ ሌላ ትኩሳት
 ወጠኔ አለቀ በወሲብ አሳት

ኸረ አይነጋም ወይ ኸረ አይነጋም ወይ ሌቱ

(በቴዎድሮስ ካሳሁን፣1997 ዓ.ም.)

Ja is the redeemer

(Ja is the redeemer, Ja is the redeemer)...

His Majesty down from the throne
 Reduced into an ordinary Wagen's¹ride
 Followed a revolution that began by digging
 60² holes to bury elderly official heads
 Followed by a mass of students' bodies.

Then now came the rebels all the way
 Mending their warrior rags with 17³ needles
 Wearing long hair symbolizing change
 they took the seat for that very cause
 But like the previous leaders they
 punished their predecessors.

We only see leaders taking over seats,
 but no change in its real sense.
 Do pardon the wrongdoer once making him regret
 Then teach us mercy and unite us back instead.

Ethiopia...Abyssinia, Ethiopia...Abyssinia
 Evil is bitterness and retaliation,
 as it distances one from God's direction
 Whereas working together with love,
 wins us His redemption.

Be it exodus for Ethiopia to the realm of hope
 Getting across the sea led by a Moses of its own
 Ethiopia's resurrection is nearing
 It just takes us prayers for love and harmony

The land is fertile, and it provides well
 It was because we let love suffer
 that we are punished by hunger
 Osisa Osisa Osisa Mandela
 Like he reconciled the opponents and let them
 willingly disarm

So be it, true for His words to come
 Hold the plough up and forgive one another

When one curses the other with his evil words
 And the other responds with as much meanness
 They left us confused as to who is better for our
 purpose

¹ Referring to the Volkswagen by which Haileselassie was taken to prison
² The plus or minus sixty officials of Haileselassie's officials killed by the Derg
³ The seventeen years of armed struggle before EPRDF took power

እስከመቼ

እህህ እስከመቼ እህህ ያዛልቀናል
እህህ እስከመቼ እህህ ገና ብዙ ነገር ብዙ ይቀረናል

እህህ እስከመቼ ልቤ ፈጠን በል
እህህ እስከመቼ አግሬ ተራመድ
እህህ እስከመቼ ምን ያንኳትንሃል
እህህ እስከመቼ አመድ ለአመድ
እህህ እስከመቼ አይ...አይ...አይ...
ልቤ በፍርሀት እጅግ ተበክሏል
በርሀብ በጥማት ሰውነቴ ዝሏል

እግሬ አልንቀሳቀስ እጅ አልሰራም ብሏል
ጆሮዬም አልሰማ አይኔም አላይ ብሏል
የራሰኝ እንጅራ ወይ ወይኑ መስሏቸው
የጠማኝ ወተቱ ወይጠጁ መስሏቸው
ችግሬ ጭንቀቴ ሚስጥሩ ያልገባቸው
ያቺ ሰው ተራባቸ ሲሉ ሰማኋቸው
እኔን የራሰኝ ፍቅር ነው

እህህ እስከመቼ እህህ አበባው ሲረገወፍ
እህህ እስከመቼ እህህ ሰሩ ሲበጣጠስ
እህህ እስከመቼ እህህ ዝምብለህ አትየው
እህህ እስከመቼ እህህ ወድቆ ሲበሰብስ
እህህ እስከመቼ እህህ አይ...አይ...አይ...

ጎጃም ያረሰውን ለጎንደር ካልሸጠ
ጎንደር ያረሰውን ለጎጃም ካልሸጠ
የሸዋ አባት ልጁን ለትግሬ ካልሰጠ
ፍቅር ወዴት ወዴት ወዴት ዘመም ዘመም

አገርም አለችን አገር የኔ ህመም
ሰሩ እንዳይበጠስ መቋጠሪያው ደሙ
አረንጓዴ ቢጫ ቀይ ነው ቀለሙ

እኔን የራሰኝ ፍቅር ነው

(በእጅግአየሁ ሺባባው)

አለ ገና

የጥንቱ መውደዴ ገርፎኝ በጨፈቃ
ተጎዳሁኝ ብዬ ስለየው በሲቃ
ሌላኛው ማፍቀሬ በግሩ ተተክቶ
በደረቁ ሽመል ጣለኝ አነኳኩቶ፤
እሱንም ሳማርር ሳሳቅል ለእግዜሩ
ይባስ ብሎ ሰጠኝ ለባለሞቱሩ፤
እንዳልናገር አፌን ላብሰው
አለና ገና ከዚህም የባሰው
እህህ ቢሉት የት ይደረሳል
የሚተካውም ካለው ይብሳል፤
ክፉን ካላዩ ደግ አይሞገስ
ሌላም አለና ተው ልቤ ታገስ፤
ይብስ ይብስ ይብስ አለና

How Long...?

How long do we give a scream of grief?
We have a lot to do;

How long do I give a scream of grief?
Let you my heart be fast;
How long do I give a scream of grief?
Let you my leg walk fast;
What makes you hover around a pile ashes?

My heart is full of fear;
My body is weakened by hunger and thirst;
My legs fail to walk,
My hands fail to work;
My ears fail to hear;
My eyes fail to see;

They thought I'm hungry for *ፊንጃራ* or wine;
They thought I'm thirsty for milk or *ጥጅፊ*;
Those who don't know the secret of my troubles and
worries misjudge me;
I heard them say "that girl is hungry;"
But I'm hungry for love;

How long do I give a scream of grief?
When flowers drop off and the roots are cut into pieces,
Don't passively see them dropping and decaying;

If the farmers of Gojam can't sell their crops for the
people of Gonder,
If the farmers of Gonder can't sell their crops for the
people of Gojam,
If a father from Showa denies his daughter to marry
someone from Tigray,
Where is the true love then?
I have a country whose pain I share;

Keep safe the root of the blood that ties all together;
Its colour is green, yellow and red;
I am hungry for love;

The worst is yet to come

In the past, love beat me with *ቻቫቫ*;
I stop loving her; it was a grief stricken moment;
But the new love that replaced the former one,
Beat me with dry staff until I broke and fell down;
I poured out before God my complaint,
But things went from bad to worse;
God handed me over to someone who armed Mauser;
I fear to speak out what I feel,
For the worst yet to come;
Letting grief out brings no solution;
The one that will replace is worse than the present one;

ልቤ ዝም ብለህ ባለው ተጽናና፤
 ይላል ገና ልቤ ላየው ሽርጉድ፤
 በዚህ ብቻ መቻ ይለያል ከመውደድ፤
 አይድን ነገም ያሳብ መቻ ከማውረድ፤
 ከቶ አይቻልም ሰው ከፍቅር ሊጋረድ፤

አከርመው ልቤ ይህን ፍቅር
 ትለምደዋለህ ሌላው ቢቀር፤
 ምን ሊያገኙበት መረጣውን
 መቀበል እንጂ የመጣውን፤
 መውደድ ቢሸኙት መውደድ ይመጣል፤
 ሁሌ አዲስ ዳገት እንዴት ይወጣል?
 ገና ገና ምን ታየ ገና ሌላ አለ ገና
 ልቤ ዝም ብለህ ባለው ተጽናና
 እንዲህ በቀልድ የፍቅር ጦስ መቻ ያልቃልና
 ደግሞ ሌላው ከተፍ ይላል እያቃና
 ጠብቋል ብሎ ያዝናል እንጂ ሰው በገና
 ከኛም ከራር የከረረው አለ ገና።

(በይልማ ገብረአብ፣1990 ዓ.ም.)



ኢትዮጵያ

የማንነቴ መለኪያ ኩራቴ መመኪያዬ ክብሬ
 የሶስት ሺ አመት አመቤት አንድ ናት ኢትዮጵያ አገሬ
 እስቲ አንቺ የኔ መብራ አገሬ እስቲ ልጣይቅሽ
 ያገቡሻል ይፈቱሻል ያጩሻል አሁንም ድንግል ነሽ
 ከክብርሽ በታች ወደቁ ነገስታት በክብርሽ ተነድፈው
 ደናግላን መነኩሻሽ አለምን ደስታቸውን ጥለው

እማማ እናት ኢትዮጵያ
 እማማ አንቺ እናት አለም

ዘመን አመጣሽ የዘር በሽታ
 መድሀኒት አለው የማታ የማታ
 ሀገር በወገን እንዴት ይረታ
 ፍቅር በነገር እንዴት ይፈታ
 ዘር ሳይለያየን ወይ ሃይማኖት
 ከጥንት በፍቅር የኖርንባት
 እናት ኢትዮጵያ ውዲት ውዲቷ
 በጎጆ አይልቅም መብርነቷ

እማማ እናት ኢትዮጵያ
 እማማ አንቺ እናት አለም

እናት ኢትዮጵያ እስቲ ልይሽ
 ክብርሽ የታለ አንቺነትሽ
 አርበኛ አርበኛ አርበኛ ላይ
 ልውጣ መቅደላ ልበል ዋይ ዋይ
 ምንው ቢነሳ መይሳው ካሳ
 አልወድም ጎበዝ ጀግና ሲረሳ
 እማማ አንቺ እናት አለም

(በአጅግአየሁ ሺባባው)



One fails to appreciate his good time in the past,
 Until he experiences the bad one;
 So, be patient, my heart;
 For the worst yet to come;
 The worst yet to come,

Let you, my heart, learn to live with it;

My heart will humble itself to any new comer;
 But serving the new comer humbly never makes my heart free from
 love;

Tomorrow, my heart will pour out its painful thoughts;
 Man never protects himself from love;

Let you keep this love, my heart;

You will learn to live with it;

Nothing good is happening in choosing one from the other;
 You had better welcome whoever comes;

One could stop loving someone and fall in love with someone else;

But how is it possible to climb a new uphill always?

It is not the only one; some other thing yet to come;

Let my heart learn to live with it;

It is not easy to free oneself from the aftermath of love;

The other one would appear all of a sudden by facilitating its way;

People feel sad with the tightness of the harp,

But the one tighter than our lyre yet to come;



Ethiopia

You are the emblem of my identity;

You are the source of my pride and dignity;

You are my shield;

Ethiopia, the lady of three thousand years, is one;

Ethiopia my bride,

Ethiopia my country,

Let me ask you,

They marry you and divorce you,

They propose you again,

However, you are still virgin;

Impressed by your dignity, the kings surrender to you;

For your sake, the virgins become hermit;

They forsake the joy and pleasure of this world;

You mother Ethiopia:

The evil fashion of tribalism gets solution at end;

How come a country is defeated by her own fellow citizens?

How come evilness prevails loves?

From the beginning, we live in love;

Either religion or race never troubles our unity;

Ethiopia is our beloved nation;

She never spends her entire honeymoon in a hut;

You mother Ethiopia:

Ethiopia, my mother, let me see you;

Where is your dignity that witness who you are?

Let me go to Meqedela to see the patriot, and cry out;

I wish Meyessaw Kassa rose from the dead;

I hate witnessing a hero being forgotten;

Migration

ንፋስ ነው

ንፋስ ነው ንፋስ ነው ዘመዴ
ከሀገር አሰወጥቶ አስቀረኝ መንገዴ
ንፋሱ ነው ዘመዴ፣ንፋሱ ነው ዘመዴ፤

ዛሬስ ለምጃለሁ የለ የማይለመድ
ካለው በሰው ፋንታ ንፋስ ሆኖኝ ዘመድ፤
ደርሶ በሽውታው ሁሉን ያዋዋኛል
አምላክ ካለወጣኝ ማን ሙቶ ያየኛል?
የሀገሬን ጢያራ ልሳፈረውና
ከአረባ አራቱ አደባራት ፊግጥን ላዙርና
በርሬ ልመለስ ባየሩ ጎዳና፤

ደስታ ይገድ ነበር ከሀገር ስወጣው
ጠፋ በትዝታ ንፋስ ባመጣው፤
አቤት የኔስ ነገር ሰቄ ወጥቼው
ቀረሁ እዚህ ቦታ ተድላን አጥቼው፤
ከእሳተ-ጎሞራ ነፍሴን ላደን ብዬ
መከራን ልሸኝት ብጠፋ ኮብልዬ፤
ምን ይገድ ልመለስ ከሰው ሀገር ውዬ?

(አረጋኸኝ ወራሽ፣1995 ዓ.ም.)

Wind is My Relative

Wind is my relative;
But the road is not;

It has driven me out and left me remain there;
In the world, nothing is inadapttable;
I become familiar with the situation today;
Instead of man the wind becomes my relative;

It whispers everything to me;
Unless He [God] free me, no one will take care of me;

Let me take my country's plane,
And travel to the land of the forty-four arks of covenants;

I was happy when I left my country;
But my happiness disappeared with nostalgic feeling that the wind
brought to me;

Oh, no! I had a good laugh when I left my country;
But I failed to return back;
I stayed remain here being unhappy;

I left my country to save myself from the volcano;
I had no wealth to bring with me if I intended to turn back to my
country;



ከአራዊት ጋራ

ከጅብ ከአራዊት ጋር ዘመድ ሆንኩኝ ብዬ
ከክፉ ከእባቡ ተወዳጅሁ ብዬ
ከዘንዶ ጡት ወተት የሚጠጣ መስሎኝ
ጥርሳቸው አኝኮ አኝኮ አኝኮ አደረቀኝ

ተብትበው ተብትበው ሰውነቴን ሁሉ
አስረው ገንዘው እጅ አግሬን በሙሉ
ተነሽ ተከተይን ድረሽብን አሉ፤
አግሬን ስላሰሩኝ ከትልቋ ግመል
እነርሱ ከላይዋ ቁጭ ከስር ስንከባለል ፤
በረሀው እረኸም ነው የማቋርጠው
ቢሄዱ ቢሰቃዩት ማለቂያ የሌለው

እባክህ አምላኬ ስጠኝ ብርታቱን
እባክህ ጌታዬ ስጠኝ ጉልበቱን
በረሀውን ችዬ የማልፍበትን

ወንዝ የለው ምንጭ የለው ደረቅ ነው መንገዱ
ከቶ አይደረስም ቢሄዱ ቢሄዱ
ይህ ክፉ ወጀቦ የበረሀው ንፋስ
ለያይቶ ጨረሰው ስጋዬን ከነፍሱ

ሰሀራ ነው ቆላ ነው በረሀ
አሾህ አሜክላ አሜክላ
የሚጠጣ የለ የሚበላ

(በእጅጋየሁ ሺባባው)

With a Wild Beast

I thought I became relative with hyena and beast;
I thought I became friends with the evil snake;
I thought I could feed on the milk of serpent;
They were chewing on me until they made dry me off;

After they roped my whole body up,
After they tied my hands and legs up,
After they shrouded me as if I were dead,

They ordered me to follow them;
They tied me to the big camel;
They mounted the camel while I was rolling on the ground;
The desert was too vast to cross;
Though one kept on his miserable journey;
He would hardly get to its end;

Please my God, make me strong;
So that I cross the desert;

It doesn't have river;
It doesn't have spring;
The road is dry;
It is unreachable;

This the horrible storm of the desert,
Separates my soul from my flesh;
It is Sahara; it is desert;
It is full of thorns and thistles;
Food and drink are not available; dessert



ላጽናናሽ

ላጽናናሽ አቅሜ እንደሚቸለው
ከሀገር ስትወጧ ቆሜ ላይሽ ነው፤
ምን ላድርግ ታዲያ ሆይን ደስ ሳይለው
ጥሩ ነው ልበልሽ ስደትሽ ግድ ነው፤

ከትምርት ቤት አብረን አድገን
በንጹህ ፍቅር ተፈላልገን
ሳንወደው መቷል የእኛ መለየት
ስደት ተሸላል ከመሠቃየት፤
ያቀድነው ሁሉ ደብዛው ሲጨልም
አልጨበጥ ሲል ህይወት እንደ ህልም
ተስፋው ሲታጣ ጣገር የመኖሩ
መሄድ ግድ ይላል እየተማረሩ፤

ከ! ፈጣሪ ና አስባት ኢትዮጵያን
መሠደድ ሠለቸን በምህረትህ ጎብኘን፤

ተወልደን ለሀሳብ እንጣላለን
አሳር መከራ ፍዳ እናያለን፤
ሳንፈልግ መጥተን ካለንባት ምድር
እናደራሰን የፈተናውን ድር፤
ቸግር አሳቆን ባሳብ አድገናል
ድህነት መቼ ሰው ያረገናል?

(በይልማ ገብረአብ፣1995 ዓ.ም.)



ባህር ማዶ

ያለሽበት ድረስ እንዳልመጣ እራቀኝ
ተመለሼ ፍቅሬ ብቻዬን ጨነቀኝ፤
እንዳልመጣ እኔ አቅሜ አልፈቀደልኝ
ድረሺልኝ ነይ ነይ የእኔስ ሆድ እምቢ አለኝ፤

ያለሽው ባህር ማዶ
ልቤ አለቀልሽ ነደ፤
መጥቼ እንዳላይሽ አቅሜ እንኳ አልፈቀደልሽ፤
ሰው ኖሮኝ ሰው ያጣሁኝ ሆኛለሁ ያልታደልኩኝ፤
ብሱቴን ለማን ልገር?
ጭንቅ ሆኗል የእኔስ ነገር፤
እንዳልመጣ ርቆኛል
እንደው ምን ይሻለኛል?
ብቸኛ አድርጎኛል፤
ዋ መላው ጠፍቶብኛል፤

ልሂድ ብል ተጓጉጠ
ለስንቅስ ምኔን ይገፍ?
እንዳልሂድ አቅም አነሰኝ፤
ከወዲያ ማን ያድርሠኝ?
ጠቅልዬም እንዳልመጣ፤
ልብ የለው ገንዘብ ያጣ፤
አሠኘኝ እንደው “ዋ እኔ”
አቅም ያጣሁ በመሆኔ፤

(ይልማ ገብረአብ፣1999 ዓ.ም.)



Let Me encourage You

Let me encourage you as much as possible;
Here, I stand passively to see you leaving your country;
I am not happy to see you going abroad, but what can I do to stop it?

I know you are forced to defect;
So, I have no choice other than to encourage you on the occasion of
your leaving;

Since our schooldays, we have grown up together;
We truly love each other;
But now, you and I are forced to separate;
Defection is better than suffering in one’s own country;

In a situation, when our all our plans failed,
And our dreams of success faded away before our eyes,
Complaining and leaving one’s country is inevitable;

Oh, God! Have mercy on Ethiopia;
We are dying of defection;

Since our birth, we have been thrown to worrisome life,
And we have suffered untold hardship and misery;
We haven’t come this world of our own free will;
But we have been afflicted by countless problems;
We grew up in deep troubles;
Poverty never let us be our own man;



Abroad

The country where you live is too far for me to come;
My love, let you come back for I’m suffering from loneliness;
I’m eager to visit you, but I cannot afford it;
Let you come for I cannot bear the longing for you;

You live abroad;
My heart is burning;
I’m not in a position to visit you,
For I cannot afford it;
I’m unlucky;
I have you, but at a time I’m alone;
I have no one to share my grievance;
My life is full of trouble;
It is too far to visit you;
What could I do?
I’m alone, and frustrated;

If I need to go there, I cannot afford it;
Who would take me there?
Being poor, I lose the courage to go there for good;
My poverty-stricken life filled me with anguish



ትዝታ

እሰው ሀገር ምድር የተቀመጣችሁ
ከአድማስ ወዲያ ማዶ በርቀት ያላችሁ
እናንት ወገኖቼ እንደምን አላችሁ?

ደግሞ እስኪመልሰው አካሌን ከጎኔ
ቀን እስኪመልሰው አካሌን ከጎኔ
ጤናን እመኛለሁ ለራቀው ወገኔ ::

ሁሌም በጸሎት ነው የምደግፋችሁ
ሁሌም በጸሎት ነው የማስታውሳችሁ
በሰላም እጆቼ አምላክ እንዲያቅፋችሁ፤

እኔ ምን ልረዳ ቢናገር ምላሴ?
ሐይልና ጉልበቱ አቅሙ የሰላሴ፤

በዚያ ባህር ማዶ ማን ሊኖር ተጠሪ?
በዚያ በሰው ሀገር ማን ሊኖር ተጠሪ?
አምኖ ማደር እንጂ ባንዱ በፈጣሪ፤
አሁን ማን ያየዋል አገሩን ከማዶ?
በአድማስ በተራራ በጋራ ተጋርዶ፤

አገር ለልጆቻችሁ አንቺ ነሽ ምርጫቸው
በኑሮ ሲርቁሽ በትዝታ አምጫቸው፤

በአናት እልፍኝ ያምራል ማጌጥ መሸቀርቀሩ፤
በአባት እልፍኝ ያምራል ማጌጥ መሸቀርቀሩ፤
እናንት ወገኖቼ እደጅ እንዳትቀሩ፤

ይሄ ዕድል የሚሉት እምን ላይ ይጥላል?
የቀና አሰመስሎ ከአገር ይነጥላል፤
ዋለሉ ፊቱ ላይ እህት ወንድሞቹ፤
ዋለሉ ፊቱ ላይ ወገን ዘመዶቹ፤
በሰቀቀን እንባ በሞሉት አይኖቻችን፤
ወትሮም ውጭ አዳሪ ሀሳቡ ከቤት፤
እሩቅ ውቶ አዳሪ ሀሳቡ ከቤት፤
በወገን ትዝታ በዘመድ ናፍቆት፤
መቼም አይሞላል? ሌት ተቀን አሰበን
ጊዜስ በትኖናል አምላክ ይሰብስብን?፤

(ይልማ ገብረአብ፣1992 ዓ.ም.)

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ወገኔ ህብረትን

እህህ ለሆዴ አገልግሎትን ሠራ
ምን ይቀመጥበት ስንቅ አይሆን መከራ?

ይማርክ ነበረ ሠበዝና አለላው
የሠራነው ሁሉ ሆነ እንጅ ለሌላው፤
ስፌቷ ነበረ የእሷ ጥበብ አርማ
ምነው አልይዝ አለች ይቺ ሀገር አክርማ?

እስቲ እንተባበር ለዝቸ ለአንዲት ሀገር፤
ባላና ምሶሶ ብንሆንላት ማገር፤

ሠዉ በአደባባይ የሆዱን ሳይነግር
ተከታትሎ አለቀ እንደው እግር በእግር፤
የሚጓዘው በዛ ወንዝ የሚሻገረው
እዚያ ሊያልፍ ይሆን ወይ እዚህ የቸገረው?
እስኪ እንጨዋው ጨዋታ ምን ከፋ
የሆድ በሆድ እያልን ጊዜ ከምንገፋ፤
ይሄም አፉን ያዘ ያም አንገቱን ደፋ
ምነው የኛ ነገር መላ ቅጡ ጠፋ?
የሚያዋጣን አጥተን አፋፍ ዳገቱን
በአጅብ አዋራጁን አየን ብዛቱን፤

tôzôta

Those of you, who are strangers in the foreign land,
Those of you, who live abroad,
You, my fellow countrymen, how are you?

I wish my fellow countrymen, who are abroad good health,
Until they come back home;

I'm always with you in my prayers;
I wish the loving hands of God wrap around you;

I should hold my tongue for it has no use to speak;
Power is in the hands of the Trinity;

Who could represent the strangers in that foreign land?
To live there in peace,
The better is to place life in the strong hands of God;

Being abroad, who could see his country?
It is covered by the hills;

My country, you are the preference of your children;
Let you be in their thought while they are abroad;

One's beauty is impressive while one is her mother's salon;
One's beauty is impressive while one is her father's salon;
You my fellow countrymen, don't stay remain there forever;

Destiny plays trick on one;
It makes him leave his country thinking that he could lead better life
abroad;

My sisters and brothers are in my thought;
My fellow countrymen are in my thought;
Thinking of them fills my eyes with tears;

We never achieve the life that we dream to have though we think of it
day and night;

Time has scattered us, so let God bring together US.

.....

Unite, My Fellow Countrymen

Thought has made its 'agälôgôl' in my stomach;
What should I put in it?
Misery cannot be provisions;

The raffia grass and 'alôla' was attractive;
But that we made up of it was snatched by others;
Wickerwork was the emblem of her wisdom;
Why did this country fail to keep her 'akôrôma;

Let us unite behind this country;
If we can be her catapult, pillar and wall reinforcing beam;

The people leave the country one after the other,
Without telling anyone anything officially;
So many people travelled and crossed the river;
Would they be free from the troubles that they faced here in their lives
abroad?

እድገት በላይ ሆኖ ውድቀትም ቢታች
 ቁልቁል ሂደት ይላል ክፉ አመላካች፤
 ወገን ባገር ጉዳይ ቸልታውን ቢተው
 በድንግል መራቱ ባልተመጸውተው፤
 ወገኔ ህብረትን ቢያደርገው ነገሩ
 ስንዴ ባለመነ በለምለም ሀገሩ፤
 ህይወታችን ሁሉ ቢያየው ተመልካች
 እንደ ካሮት ተክል ቁልቁል ወደታች፤

(በይልማ ገብረአብ)

Let us chat about the issues at hand;
 Chatting is better than spending time in stunned silence;
 This one keeps silent, and that one bends down;
 Why are we at a loss to understand what has happened to us?
 No one accompanied us when we climbed the top of the hills;
 But so many people accompany us when we came down the hills;
 Development is there up the hill;
 Retrogression is there down the hill;
 The wicked urged us to come down the hill;

If the fellow countrymen are not negligence in the affairs of their country,
 They will never be begging for donation while they have their own fertile
 land;

If my fellow countrymen unite, they will never beg for wheat while they have
 fertile land;

If someone observes our life,
 He learns that our growth is going down like the growth of carrot;

My Dove

You, the dove, which lives yonder over the mountain,
 What sort of hunger pangs does strike you?
 What do you benefit from other dish?
 I serve you my own heart;

Though you have gone too far,
 The distance between us never separates me from you;
 How many times should I tell you the love I have for you;

I don't know what, but I have missed something;
 Your breakfast, dinner and provision have been kept deep inside me;

In this world, let life offers you comfort;
 Let you beautify yourself;
 Let you never be hurt forever;

I fear for you,
 For your innocence makes you vulnerable to damage;
 In a tree that you flew towards and spent the night,
 You created no wealth except a nest;

I am proud of My Country

I remember the guardian spirit [mountain]* in my country;
 I remember the village where I was born;
 The view of the village fills my thought;
 When shall I pay it a visit?

You, my country, don't make me longing for you;
 You are there behind the mountain;
 If I achieve what I set out to do, I will come to you;
 Of course, it takes me a long time, but I shall pay you a visit;
 You, my father's country, don't make me longing for you;
 If I am not ached with longing to return home,
 I can manage to strengthen and calm down myself;
 You, my father's country, don't make me longing for you;
 If I am not ached with longing to return home,
 I can manage to strengthen and calm down myself;

እርግቤ

እዚያ ማዶ ጋራ ያለሽው እርግብ
 ምን እረሀብ አገኘሽ የሚያንገበግብ?
 ሌላ ማእድ ላንቺ ምን ያደርግልሻል?
 ልቤ እንደገቢታ ተዘርግቶልሻል፤
 ካንቺ እንደማይለየኝ እርቆ መሄድሽ
 ስንት ቀን ልናገር ሁሉ እንደምወድሽ?
 ተለዮኝ እራቀኝ አጣሁት ምንድነው?
 ሁሌም ቁርስ እራትሽ ስንቅሽ በሆዴ ነው፤

እመሪበት ኑሮን ይድላሽ በዓለም
 አይጎዳ ገላሽ ለዘላለም፤
 ድመቂበት ኑሮን ይድላሽ በዓለም
 አይጎዳ ገላሽ ለዘላለም፤
 እመሪበት ኑሮን ይድላሽ በዓለም
 ድመቂበት ኑሮን ይድላሽ በዓለም፤

ስለምትጎጂ በየዋህ ጸባይሽ
 ሀሳቤሽ አረገኝ እንዴት ትሆን ባይሽ፤
 በረሽ ባረፍሽበት ባደርሽበት ዛፍ ላይ
 ምን ገብረት አፈራሽ ከአንዲት ጎጂ በላይ?

(በይልማ ገብረአብ ፣1997 ዓ.ም.)

ባገራ እኩላሁ

ትዝ አለኝ የአገር አድባሬ
 የበቀልኩበት መንደራ፤
 ከአይኔ አልጠፋ አለኝ ቀየው
 መቼ ይሆን ሄጄ የማየው?
 አትናፍቀኝ ዛሬ አንተ አገር
 ሆነህ ከጋራው ባሻገር፤
 አሳቤ እንደ ሰው ይሙላ እንጂ
 መጪ ነኝ ጊዜም ቢፈጅ፤
 አንተስ የአባቴ አገር ማረኝ ናፍቆትህን
 እንዲበረታ ልቤ እንዳይባከን፤
 አንተ የናቴ አገር ማረኝ ናፍቆትህን
 እንዲበረታ ሆዴ እንዲሰከን፤
 ምን ጎህ ቢፈነጥቅ ምን ጅንበር ቢወጣ
 እኔስ ኢትዮጵያ ላይ ጭላንጭልም ባጣ፤
 እንደ ጧፍ ቢያበሩም ቢመስሉም ጸሀይ

ተስፋው ጭለማ ነው እሰው አገር ላይ፤
 ምንም ቢብለጨለጭ ቢፈካም ዓለም
 የትም የትም ቢሉ እንዳገር የለም፤

ከአገር የወጣ ማልዶም ትዝታ መሸቶም ሁሌም ትዝታ
 እየተከዘ በወንዝ ውለታ
 ከአድባር የራቀ ዛሬም ትውስታ ነገም ትውስታ
 ዘወትር ትውስታ
 እየተከዘ በአገር ትዝታ፤

ምን ጎህ ቢፈነጥቅ ምን ጅንበር ቢታይ
 በኮከብ ያምራል የወንዜ ሰማይ፤

ምን ገነት ቢሰሩ እዚች ምድር ላይ
 የሚያጓጓኝ የለም ካገሬ በለይ፤

ባገሬ እኮራላሁ ከምንም በላይ
 ቀስተ ዳመናውን ቀለማቷን ሳይ፤

ባገሬ እኮራላሁ ከምንም በላይ
 አረንጓዴ ቢጫ ቀዩን ሰንደቅ ሳይ፤
 በኢትዮጵያ እኮራላሁ ከምንም በላይ፤
 ታላቅ ታሪክ ያለው ባንዲራሽን ሳይ
 ባገሬ እኮራላሁ ከምንም በላይ፤

(በይልማ ገብረአብ ፣1990 ዓ.ም.)



I prefer to live in Ethiopia even when she is plunged into darkness;
 Though the daybreaks and the sun shine brightly,
 Living in a foreign country is only a pious hope;
 Though the rest of the world gets more decorated and shined,
 One feels comfortable in living in his own country that holds a lower statu

In a foreign land, one often lives in the past;
 He remembers the river back home in his country;
 One who is far from the guardian spirit [mountain] often remembers
 his country;

Though the daybreaks and the sun shines brightly in the foreign land,
 The way the stars beautify the sky in my country is more impressive
 to look at;

Though they make a paradise on earth;
 It couldn't be as enthusiastic as one's own country;

Seeing her colours, the rainbow,
 I am proud of my country more than anything else;
 Seeing the Ethiopian green, yellow and red flag,
 I am proud of my country more than anything else;
 Seeing the historical flag of Ethiopia,
 I am proud of my country more than anything else;



Appendix: D

Chapter Seven: Major Themes of Amharic Love Songs during the Three Consecutive Eras: The Reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I, the Derge and the EPRDF

Romantic Love Relationships

The Depiction of Beauty (Attractiveness) in Amharic Love Songs

ሞናሊዛዬ ነሽ

ቃላቶች ያጥሩኛል ምን ብዬ ላድንቅሽ
 እንዲያው በደፈናው ሞናሊዛዬ ነሽ
 ያሁኒቷ እመቤት የፊቷ ተማሪ
 እግዚያብሄርን አማኝ አካልሽን አክባሪ
 ሆነሽ በማግኘቴ አድናቆት ይዞኝ
 ላድንቅሽ ተነሳሁ ሰው እስኪሰማኝ።
 ጠቢባን ሊያደንቁሽ ቢፈልጉ ቃላት
 ፍጹም አቃቃቸው አልቻሉም ለማግኘት
 በምን ላስመስልሽ ምን ብዬ ላድንቅሽ
 የሽጋዎች ሽጋ ሞናሊዛዬ ነሽ።
 እንዳቺ ውብ የለም በምድራቱ ላይ
 ብዬ ባዳንቅሽ ይበቃሻል ወይ
 ሲሰራሽ የዋለ ሲሰራሽ ያደረ
 ያንቺው በመሆኔ ክብራ ተከበረ።
 (በሰለሞን ተሰማ፣1961 ዓ.ም.)

You are My Mona Liza

I don't have words to admire you,
 To put it simply, you are my Mona Liza;
 You were a student in the past, and a lady of these days,
 So, I begin to admire you until others listen to me;
 For I find you believe in God and respect yourself;
 Wise men fail to find words to appreciate your beauty,
 What thing do I find that bears a likeness to you?
 And what do I say to admire you?
 You are the most beautiful woman just like Mona Liza;
 Will you be satisfied if I say no one in the world is as beautiful
 as you?
 God spent the whole day and night on creating you;
 I get more dignified,
 For you are mine;

ቆንጆ ልጅ ነሽ

ተጠባል አምላክ አንቺ ላይ፤
 ሲሰራሽ ከሌሎች በላይ፤
 ልቅም አድርጎ የፈጠረሽ፤
 እንከን የሌለሽ ቆንጆ ልጅ ነሽ፤
 ዜማ ቢጻፍልሽ ቢገጠም ስላንቺ፤
 ለድርሰቱ ማማር አቤት ስትመቺ፤
 ቁመና መልክሽ ደራሲ ያሽዋል፤
 ሀገሩን ሁሉ ሙሉ አርገሽዋል፤
 ቅኔ ቢቆኙልሽ እያምጋገሱ፤
 ማህሌት ያስቆማል ተፈጥሮሽ ሞገሱ፤
 ታጣልሽ ወደር ምትክ አምሳያ፤
 ሆነሽ ተፈጥረሽ ታምር ማሳያ፤
 ተገርሞ ተደንቆ እያየሽ በውበት በቅርጽሽ፤
 ብዙ ሰው ይፈዛል በመልክሽ “ልዩ ናት”
 እያለሽ፤
 አልተገኘም ልክሽ ልክሽ፤
 እድል ስጪኝ ላውራሽ እባክሽ?
 በገናን ለያሬድ መሰንቆንም ለዕዝራ፤
 መልክን ላንቺ ሰጠ አቤት ያምላክ ስራ፤
 ከዩት ልነሳ ከምን ልጅምር፤
 ከጸጉር እስከ እግርሽ ቁመናሽ ሲያምር፤
 የቆንጅና ሚዛን እናርግሽ መለኪያ፤
 ማን ይቆም በቦታሽ የለሽም መተኪያ፤
 ለናሙና እንኳን ቢፈለግ በዓለም፤
 በዚህ ምድር ላይ አምሳያሽ የለም፤
 ደጉ አምላክ ዘመኑን ያንቺ አድርጎት
 አድሎሽ ማማሩን፤
 ቢሰራሽ አስመኝኝ በቆንጅናሽ ካንቺ ጋር
 መኖሩን።
 (ይልማ ገብረአብ፣1998 ዓ.ም.)

You are a Beautiful Girl

With the fount of all wisdom, God made you the best of all,
 Being His perfect creation, your beauty is faultless;
 If a melody and a poem are composed about you,
 Indeed, you fit in with the composition;
 Your appearance deserves the appreciation of a poet,
 For the whole country is marked with the fullness of your beauty;
 If a poem is composed to admire your beauty,
 The grace of your nature wins praises;
 You are unique, and there is no one substitute for you;
 God created you to show His miracle;
 Astonished at your beauty and shapely appearance,
 Many people become in a stupor by saying, “she is unique;”
 Your likeness is not found,
 Please, allow me to talk to you;
 Oh, the miracle of God!
 He gave harp to Yared, lyre to Ezera and beauty to you;
 From where do I start?
 From your hair to your feet your appearance is beautiful;
 Let's make you the top scale of beauty,
 Who could stand on your place?
 There is no one substitute for you;
 If one searches for someone who bears your likeness in the world,
 He never finds one on earth;
 The kindhearted God make it your time for He has beautified you,
 So, I wish I lived with you.

ውብ አነጋገር

ትውስ የሚለኝ ከነቶሯ፤
ግርም የሚለኝ ከነቶሯ፤
ውብ አነጋገሯ፤

□ርሷን ለ□ቱታቃሷን ለቁም ነቶር፤
አሟልቶ ሠቷታል አቤት የአምላክ ነገር፤

ያዋየችው ሁሉ ቃሏን ሲረዳላት፤
□መ□መ□ እ□ □ሠሚም ቶት አላት፤
መ□ □ቱንማ ማንም □□ □ታል፤
ሁሉም ሰው በቃሉ ወግን ያጣፍጣል፤

□ሷ □ን ል□ ነ□ ልብን □ሽአ ታል፤

የምትናገረው የምትለው ሁሉ፤
ምንም አይጠገብ ሲሠሙት ቢውሉ፤
ከአካል ካንደቡቱ ከአንዱም ያልጎደላት፤

□ተካነች□ ነች ከሁሉም ያደላት፤
አ□ኗ እየወሰደኝ ሲያለምደኝ አመሏ፤

አፏአየጣፈጠኝ እየሰበኝ ቃሏ፤
መለየት አቃተኝ አካሌን ከአካሏ፤

ይበርዳል ይከስማል ይጠፋፋል ነገር፤
እሳቱም □ሀ ነ□ እሷ ስትናቸር፤
ያያት የሚደነቅ ያዳመጠ የሚያምናት፤
በፀባይ ተጨዋች በመልክም ትማምናት፤

ቀርቦ መወዳጀት መዛመድስ ከሷ፤
አቅርን እግሞቀች በ□-ብ እስትን□ሷ ናብን ታበር□ሽች በአ□ንና በ□ርሷ፤

(በይልማ ገብረአብ፣1985 ዓ.ም.)

የሳቅ ፍቅር

ከቀስተ ደመና ገጽታው ይፈካል፤
እንደ ብሩህ ቀለም ሲያዩት ይማርካል፤
በፍልቅልቅ ሳቅ አሰርጉዶ ጉንጨኔን፤
በጥርሱ ያፈሳል የፈገግታ ምንጨኔን፤
በድንገት ያላንዳች ነገር እላለሁኝ ፍዝዝዝ፤
ስልምልም አድርጎኝ ባሳብ እላለሁ ትክክክዝ፤

ለካ እንዲህ ነው የሳቅ ፍቅር ሲይዝ?
አያምረኝ እንደሱ ጉብ የጋገረው ማር፤
ልቤን ያስረሳኛል የፈገግታው ማማር፤
እሩህን የሚያስተው ይምጣልኝ ጨዋታው፤

በገጽታው ውበት ይገኛል ደስታው፤
እቅፍቅፍ ካንተጋር እቅፍ፤
ተያይዞ ክንፍ፤
አንተን አሳመረህና፤
እኔ አጣሁኝ ጤና፤

(በይልማ ገብረአብ፣2003 ዓ.ም.)

Her Beautiful Way of Speech

Her beautiful way of speech is unforgettable,
It surprises me;

Oh! It is the miracle of God,
He created her perfectly;
She has a beautiful smile,
And she is a woman of her words;

Anyone whom she discusses with understands her speech;
She is also lucky for people are interested in listening to her;

Of course, anyone might chat with someone,
And all sweeten use words to sweeten his chat,
But hers is quite different;

Her speech is very dear to the listener's heart;
Everything that she talks is so lovely to listen to it the whole day;

Both her appearance and speech is perfect,
She is lucky in every aspect of life,

She is floatoured,
And she is lucky that she misses nothing;

I fail to separate from her,
Because her eyes attract me,
Her words impress me,
And her manner comforts me;

She cools off contention;
Everything calms down when she speaks;
She astonishes anyone who looks at her;
She can make listeners believe her story;
She is a beautiful and playful woman;

It is good to befriend her;
For she calms downs aquarelles with her eyes and teeth,
And she blossoms the love with her sweet breath.

Laughter being a means to fall in Love

His face is brighter than the rainbow
He is as attractive as the shining colour;
His smile broadens until his dimple appears;
The spring water of his smile flows from his teeth;

I feel numb all of a sudden for no apparent reason;
While I stay in pensive mood, thought makes me go weak at the knees;
Does it make like this when laughter makes one fall in love?

The honeycomb that honeybees make never attract me like he does;
I'm overwhelmed by the beauty of his smile;

I'm so eager to enjoy his breathtaking chat;
His beautiful face reflects his happiness;

Embrace you,
And flying in love with you is marvelous;
God endow you with beauty;

ኩሪበት

ሁለመናሽ ጣፋጭ እንከን የሌለብሽ፤
ሁለንተናሽ ጣፋጭ እንከን የሌለብሽ፤
የሕይወት ቅመም የመንፈስ ቅመም፤
እንዳንቺስ የተሳካለት በዓለም ቢታሰብ
የለም፤

ፍቅር እንደደበል ከላየሽ ላይ ፈልቆ፤
የውበት ጅረቱ በአካላትሽ ፈሶ፤
መንፈሴን አጽናናው ባንቺ ለዛ አድሶ፤
በተፈጥሮሽ ታድሏል ሁለመናሽ፤
በቁንጅናሽ ታጅቧል ሁለንተናሽ፤
ኩራት ኩራት ይበልሽ ይገባሻል፤
አሟልቶ ሰጥቶሻል፤
አድምቆሻልና የተፈጥሮሽ በውበት፤
ኩሪበት ኩሪበት፤
አልቆሻልና ከሌሎች በውበት፤
ኩሪበት ኩሪበት፤
አብልጦሻልና ከሌሎች በውበት፤
ኩሪበት ኩሪበት፤

በፊትሽ ፈገግታ በመልክሽ የደሰደሰ፤
ሁልጊዜም ይኖራል ተፈጥሮሽ ሲወደስ፤
በተዋበው ገላሽ ባማረው ቅርጽሽ፤
ልቤ ይማረካል በጣፋጭ ድምጽሽ።
(በመስፍን አበበ)

ነህ የኔ ወለላ

ነህ የኔ ወለላ ጣፋጭ ብርቱካኔ፤
ነህ የኔ ወለላ ጣፋጭ ብርቱካኔ፤
ቁጭ ብለህ አጫውተኝ አትለይ ከጎኔ፤
የአይምሮዬ አዳሽ መንፈሴን አሰደሳች፤
የነፍሴ መከታ የልቤ ምስራች፤
የወይን ዘለላ አበባው ሽጋዬ፤
ከምንጣፋ ይልቅ ባንተ ሞቀ አልጋዬ፤
ከደጅህ ጎዳና ከቤትህ መድረሻ፤
መጥቼልሀለሁ ያንተው ሆደባሻ፤
አይጠላህ አንጅቴ ከፉህ አይነገር፤
ምነው ጨከንክበት የማፍቀሩን ነገር?

አይንህ ሲንከባለል የሰው ልብ ያስቀራል፤
አከላትህ ሁሉ ማሻ ነው ያበራል፤
ያመልህም ነገር ዝናው ይነገራል፤
እንግዲህ ካላንተ እንዴት ይታደራል?
ጨረቃ ስትጎላ ቀኑ ሲል መሸትሸት፤
ይቀሰቅሰኛል ትዝታህ በድንገት፤
እንኳን እኔን ቀርቶ የምድር ምድሪቷን፤
ጀንበርም ሰው ብትሆን ይበላል አንጅቷን።
(በይልማ ገብረአብ፣ 1980 ዓ.ም.)

ማን ነበር ያላንቺ

እግዜር በፈጠረው ባማረው ውበትሽ
ፈዞ ይቀር ነበር የሚመለከትሽ
ልክ እንደ ጨረቃ ብቅ ስትይ ደምቀሽ
እንዲህ አልነበረም ስታፈገሮ ስቀሽ።

Let you feel pride in Your Beauty

You are perfectly sweet;
You are the spice of life and spirit;
In the world, no one is as successful as you;
Love flows from you like holy water;
A river of beauty has poured down on your body;
Your beauty has given me a relief, and it consoles my spirit;

Luckily for you, nature blesses your entire body;
All your appearance is beautiful;
Let you be proud of yourself;
You deserve it for God has fully beautified you;

For your natural beauty decorates you, feel pride in it;
Since God make you more beautiful than others, feel pride in it;

You will be admired for ever for your smile and charm;
Your shapely and beautiful appearance attracts my heart;
So, does your melodies voice;

You are My Honey

You are my honey,
And my sweet orange,
Let you sit beside me so that you chat with me;

You make me feel relief and happy;
You are the guard of my soul and the source o joy to my heart;
You are attractive as grapevine and beautiful as flower;
You warmed up my bed better than the bed cloth did;

I, the excitable one, stand on the street near your home;
Deep inside me I never hate you;
But why have you ignored my love?
When your eyes move passionately, it gladdens anyone’s heart;
Your body is shining brightly like an oil lamp does;
The fame of your good manner is talked up;
So how could it be possible to pass the night without you?
When the moon becomes bright at night,
The memory of you awakes me up;
Let alone me, the woman of this world,
He impressed the sun if it were a man;

ፈላጊሽ ብዙ ነው

የባህር ዳር ሰርዶ የምንጭ ዳር ችግኝ
መቼ አረፈ ልቤ እኔ አንቺን እስካገኝ
ልቤ በፍላጎት ሲብረከረክ ያድራል
ትርታውን ትቶ ስላንቺ ያሰባል
መመኘቴ ለማግኘት ውጤቱ ከሆነ
ፍላጎቴ አንቺ ነሽ ቢቃ ተወሰነ

ስራ ፈቶ ሲያይሽ ያንቺ ተመልካች
 በውበት ቁንጅና ማን ነበር ያላንች

ጊዜው ሲለዋወጥ ሁሉም ጥሎሽ ሸሽ
 ትርንጎ እሚመስለው ጉንጭሽም ሟሽሽ
 ስንቱን ነበር ያንቺ ፍቅር ያሳበደው
 ውበት ቁንጅናሽን ዛሬ ምን ወሰደው
 አሳምሮ መልበስ ጸጉር አበጣጠርሽ
 እስቲ ልጠይቅሽ ባፌ ተናግሬ
 የነበረሽ ውበት የት ደረሰ ዛሬ።

**(በስብሀት አይችሉህም፣ 1964
 ዓ.ም.)**

አያሻሽም ውሀ ለእድገትሽ ምርኩዝ
 ቤትሽ ምንጭ ዳር ነው በሩቅ የሚያፈዝ
 መውደድና ማፍቀር ባንቺ ስለጀመርኩ
 ስላረካኝ ፍቅርሽ በራስሽ ተወሰንኩ

እንዳይቀጣጠፉሽ ሰዎች እንዳታደገ
 ልብሽ ከኔ ይሁን ስሚ ልብ አድርገ
 ያለሽበት ቦታ ድርቀት ስለሌለው
 ተጠንቀቂ አደራ ፈላጊሽ ብዙ ነው።

(በካሳሁን ገማርያም)

የቀይ ዳማ
 የድንገት እንግዳው ውብ ዓይናማ፣
 ውበት የታደለሽ የቀይ ዳማ፣
 በናፋቂ ጠረን ተሸልማ፣
 ልቤን ነስታኝ ሄደሽ በእኔ አድማ፣

የገላዋ ድምቀት አልፍኝ ያካልላል፣
 ያይን አሰናዘሯ ጎበዝ ያባንናል፣
 መዓዛ ጠረኗ ጭምት ያዋልላል፣
 ወድጃት ብረታህ ማን ሰምቶ ጉድ ይላል?

አካል ሰውነቴ እንዲያ እንደዋተተ፣
 ተስካር አውጡ እንግዲህ ልቤ ለሰው ሞተ፣
 ብሞት ጉማ አትብሉ ቢፈርስ አካላቴ፣
 እርም የለኝ በፍቅር አይቆርጥም አንጅቴ፣
 መነኩሴ ሲያግባባ ቃልሽ አንደበትሽ
 ደምግባት ውበትሽ፣
 ቢሆን ማን ፈረደ ገላዬ ግዛትሽ ቅርሴ
 ሰውነትሽ፣

ናፍቆት ጭጋግ ጥሎ በኔው ከዳመነ፣
 ደቦ እንተጋገዝ ልብሽ ሰው ካመነ፣
 ትካዜን አበዛ ልቤም ደስታ እርቆት፣
 ባጥቢያ ኮከብ ድረሽ አሰጨነቀኝ ናፍቆት፣

የከበሻውን ቃል ምን ይሆን ማፍረሷ፣
 የጎጆዬ ባላው የወደቀው ባሷ፣
 ከራቆች አትመጣ ማዘን አታውቅበት፣
 እስቲ ገል አጋዙኝ ቤቴን ላሙቅበት፣
 እልሽ አልነበር ወይ የልቤ ወዳጅ በግቢም በደጅ፣
 ብታውቂ ከተማ መንገድ ብትለምጂ ሄደሽ አትቅሪ እንጂ፣

የዘመድን ለቅሶ ትቼው በጅምር፣
 እሷ በዘገየች እዋትት ጀመር፣
 ችግር አይታክቴ ልቤ ገራገሩ፣
 ናፍቆት ይዘት ሄደ ወጣ ከመንደሩ፣
 ውጪ በልደታው አንቺ ልጅ ከቤትሽ፣
 ይሳሉበሽ እንደው በደማምትሽ፣
 አካልሽ በማሾ ሊሰየም ምን ቀረው፣
 እስቲ ለሰው ታይ ብርሃን ለቸረገው፣
 ተነስተሽ ውጪና ቁሚ ከደጃፋ
 እያየሽ ይለፉ፣
 ተንጎራደጂና ይታይልኝ ጎዴ
 ቆንጆ የመውደዴ።

(በይልማ ገብረአብ፣1977 ዓ.ም)

Betrayal depicted in Amharic Love Songs

አኩሱ

ለጨረቃ ብርሀን ጅንበር ለቃ ቦታ
 እንሂድ ብለሽ ወጥተን ጨዋታ
 ተዛዘብን በአንድ ቀን ማታ
 አልከዳህም ብለሽ ቃል ገብተሽ ለልቤ
 እንደ ፔፕሮስ ከዳሽኝ ሶስቴ አዘነብሽ ቢቃ ስሜቴ

ከአንተ ሌላ ብለሽ ፍጹም ብለሽኝ
 እወድሀለሁ ብለሽ ዋሽሽኝ
 ሌሊቱ ገና ሳይነጋ
 አየሁሽ ከሌላ ሰው ጋ

ላወቅሺው አዲስ ሰው ዋሽተሽው
 ቀለቡን ፈተሽ ደበቅሽው፤
 አዘነብሽ ቢቃ ስሜቴ
 ስትከጃኝ ሶስቴ፤
 አኩሱ አኩሱ አኩሱ
 ነጋ ወይ ሌቱ፤

‘akukulu’

On moonlight night when the sun set,
 We went out to enjoy ourselves at your request;
 I observed your doing with disapproval just at one night;
 You promise to stay loyal to my heart,
 But as Peter did, you betrayed me three times;
 So, you offended me;

You promise me not to have affairs with others,
 You falsely claimed that you loved me;
 But, I saw you with someone else before the day broke;

You told your new friend a false story;
 You hid the wedding ring;
 So, you offended me when you betrayed me three times;
 akukulu akukulu akukulu,
 Does the day break?

ያንቺስ ለብቻው ነው ስሜት የሚጎዳ
በንሰህ ልቡን ሊያጸዳ ለመልካም ነው ፔፕሮስ ቢከዳ

አልከዳም ብለሽ በኪዳን አስረሽው
በአንድ ለሊት ሶስቴ ከዳሽው
የዋህ ልቤን በቃ አሳዘንሽው
(በቴዎድሮስ ካሳሁን፣ 1995 ዓ.ም.)

አንተን ነው

ምን ደላህ ንገረኝ በላ?
ምን ቀናህ ንገረኝ በላ?
አስረዳኝ በላ?
ስትበላ በሁለት ቢላ፤
ንኔ ስለ ፍቅር አየተጨመተ፤
ሠርቆ ሙብላት ሆኗል የተሰማሃህ ለአንተ፤
ሠው ከሚወደው ሠው ባሳብ ተነጥሎ፤
ሌላ አንዴት ይመኛል የያዘውን ጥሎ?
ተው እንጅ በያዘከው እርጋ እንጂ፤
ተው እንጅ እረጋ በል እንጅ፤

ካገኙት፣ መከነፉ፤
ካዩት ጋር መከነፉ፤
ትዝብት ነው ትርፉ፤
ከዝቸም ከዛቸም ማበዱ መከነፉ፤
ትዝብት ነው ትርፉ፤

የንጎን ትተህ ስታይ ማዶ፤
የፍቅርህን ታሪክ አደረከው ባዶ፤
የልብህን ሠርተህ ስታበዛ መሀላ፤
የበተንከው ኑሮ ይቆጭህል ኋላ፤
አይንህን በሠው ላይ ስታሸጋግረው፤
ያጣህ ትመስላለህ ወዳጅ የቸገረው፤
የአካሄዱን እንኳን ወጉን አታውቅበት፤
እስቲ ሠውነትክን አይተህ ወደቅበት፤

በጀመርከው መንገድ ትዘልቃለህ ስልህ፤
እንደው አድሮ ውሎ ይታጠፋል ቃልህ፤
አዛም አዛም ስትል ከአንድ አረጋም ብለህ፤
እንዳትቀረው መና የጉያህን ጥለህ፤

(በይልማ ገብረአብ፣ 1988 ዓ.ም.)

አላስገድድሽም

ጥንትም ላይሆንልሽ እንደው ተቸገርሽ፤
እኔስ አይገርመኝም ወዶ መጥላትሽ፤
ጥለሽኝ ስትሄጅም ካልከበደሽ ግፉ፤
አላስገድድሽም ትዝብት ነው ትርፉ፤

ፍቅርም ካልቀደመ ከገንዘብ ከሀብቱ፤
ቁም ነገር የለውም መዋደድ በከንቱ፤
ካንቺ እማልደብቀው ችዩ የማልሸሽግሽ፤
መውደዴን ነው እኔ መቼም የማልነፍግሽ፤
በአይኔ ሳይሰሰት በእጄም ሳልመጥነው፤
እማላጎድልብሽ ምንጌም ፍቅሬን ነው፤
ቢከብድም ባይከብድም በምድር ውለታዬ፤
ለአንቺም የማቀርበው ይህ ነው ስጦታዬ፤
ቁምነገር ነው ብዬ ውለታን ወያለሁ፤
አላስቀየምኩሽም ቃሌን አክብሬያለሁ፤
በደል ከቁምነገር ከበዛብሽማ፤
አቻሽን ፈልጊ ለአንቺ እንደሚሰማማ፤

Of course, Peter betrayed;
But he purified his heart;
For he professed abject repentance for his impiety and disloyalty;
However, your sin is different,
It has touched my heart;
You promised to stay loyal,
But you betrayed me three times at one night;
So, you offended my innocent heart;

I said It to You

Tell me, what comfort did you take in eating with two knives?
I have suffered a lot, loving you;
But you felt at ease in eating stolen one;
How could a person cease thinking of his loved one and fall in love with someone else?
Please calm down;
It is shame to have affair with a woman whom you meet by accident;
You ignored your loved one and looked for someone else restlessly;
So, you made your love story meaningless;
You cheat on me, but you repeatedly swear that you are innocent;
You will live to regret about the life that you have distorted;
You have your eye on someone as if you lack a loved one;
You don't know even how to be in love with someone else;
Let you know to whom you should make love;

I thought your love is forever,
But time to time you fail to keep your promise;
Moving here and there adulterously, you might lose your loved one;

I never force you to love me

From the beginning, you didn't fall truly in love with me;
I'm not surprised to see your love turning to hate;
If you don't regret the atrocity of leaving me,
Though I'm offended, I never force you to be with me;
If love is not preferred to money and wealth,
It will be meaningless to act as though one falls in love with someone;
The love I have for you is a thing that I cannot keep secret from you;
So it will never be less than it has ever been;
Either my approach has gained or lost favour in this world,
My gift for you is the love I have for you;
Since I had been serious about our relation, I owed you a favour;
So, I didn't disappoint you because I kept my promise;
However, if you stand to hurt me ignoring my favour,
Let you find someone else who fits with your personality;

አንዱ ብሩን ሲቸር ሌላው ጌጥ ያመጣል፤
የእኔ ልብ ሀብታም ነው እምነቱን ይሠጣል፤
ዛሬም አለኝ ፍቅር የያዘኩት ሠስቼ፤
መቼም በዚህ በኩል አላውቅም ደህይቼ፤

ጎጆማ ጓዳማ ቤትማ ነበረኝ፤
ማእድ የሚያቋርስ ሰው ነው የቸገረኝ፤
ዛሬ እኔን ዘንግቶ ገላሽ ሰው ቢለምድም፤
ትናንት ወደሽኛል ክፉሽን አልፎቅድም፤
ቁምነገር ነው ብዬ ውለታን ውያለሁ፤
አላሰቀየምኩሽም ቃሌን እኩብሬያለሁ፤
ጸጸቱ እስኪሰማሽ ጨካኝሽ ብትቆርጧልም፤
ለኔው ይብላኝ እንጂ አንቸሰ ሰው አታጨም፤
ይሻል ይሆን ብለሽ ከተነሳሽ አንቺ፤
እኔም ሽኝቻለሁ በይ ደህና ሠንብቼ፤
የህልምሽ ሎተሪ ቅኝት ነው አይወጣም፤
ይባስ ይሆን እንጂ የተሻለ አይመጣም፤
ገንዘብ ከሠው በልጦ ከጠቀመሽ ላንቺ፤
አላሰገድድሽም በይ ደህና ሠንብቼ።
(በይልማ ገበረካብ፣1981 ዓ.ም)

በቃኝ የሰው ነገር

ስለደረሰብኝ ከፍተኛ እርሮ
የሰው ነገር በቃኝ ከዛሬ ጀምሮ
ሀይወቴ ነው ብዬ እምነቴን ጥዩበት
በባዶ ቤት ጥሎኝ ሄደ ወዳሻበት
የበደሉ ብዛት እብድ ስላረገኝ
ለማለት ተገደድኩ የሰው ነገር በቃኝ።
ክፉ እንዳልሰራሁት ሲያውቀው ልበናው
ጥሎኝ መኩብለሉ የሚያሳዝን ነው
በፍቅራችን ወራት ስቀን ተጫውተናል
ትዝ ባለው ጊዜ ይጸጸት ይሆናል።
ከመጠን ያለፈ እወደው ቢሆንም
ተው ተመለስ ብዬ አልማጸነውም
እዛው ደህና ይሁን እንደፈለገው
ለኔም እግዚር አለ የማይላካው።

(በሰለሞን ተሰማ፣1961 ዓ.ም)

ቃል ኪዳን ተረስቶ

ፍቅርን በልቤ መስርቶ
ሌላ አሰበ ወይ ልብህ እኔን ከድቶ
ያን ሁሉ ቃል ኪዳኑን ረስቶ
እረሳኸውና ያን ሁሉ መሀላ
ልብህ ተመኘ ወይ ፍቅርን ከኔ ሌላ
አንተም እንዳሻህ የኔም እንባ ይፍሰስ
መቼም አልታደልኩኝ ፍቅርን ልጨርሰው።
በፍቅርህ እረመጥ ሲቃጠል አንጀቴ
ዓይንህ ነው ልብህ ነው የከዳኝ ጠላቴ
የገባህውን ቃል እንዲህ ልትረሳ
ስንቱ ነገር ቀርቶ ባንተ የተነሳ።
(በፈንታ አንተ አለኸኝ ፣1964 ዓ.ም)

One would give his loved one money;
The other might present ornament to his lover;
But my heart is rich; it gives my lover its conviction;
Even now, I have love that I have preserved in secret;
I have never been poor in this regard;
I have home to live;
But I have no one to have a meal together;
Though you fall in love with someone else now,
I never forget the love that you had for me in the past;
So I don't want to see your failure;
If your interest is to leave me, I'll never oppose you;
Rather, I wish you well in your life;
Meeting a lover better than I am will never come true;
It is simply a nightmare;

I never place Trust in Anyone

I place no trust in anyone
For I'm terribly hurt;
Thinking that he is my life,
I depend solely on him,
But he betrays me,
And goes where he needs
Leaving me behind in an empty home;
I'm forced to say, "I place no trust in anyone."
Because his ill-treatment drives me crazy;
He knows that I have never hurt him;
But it is a pity he has left me;
We spent an enjoyable time chatting and laughing with each other;
When he remembers our happiest moments, he might regret about leaving
me;
I love him with all my heart;
But I never beg him to come back;
Let him live in peace there;
I have no fear for God, theomniscient, is with me;

The Vow is Forgotten

You captured my heart;
Did you betray me and fall in love with someone else?
Did you break all the vows?
Did you break all the vows and lose your heart to someone else?
Let you live as you wish;
Let my tears flow;
I am not destined to be loved to the end;
I am suffering a lot from the love I have for you;
Which one causes you to betray me, your eye or your heart?
Placing trust in you, I missed opportunities;
Pitifully, you broke the vow;

The Depiction of Forgiveness in Amharic Love Songs

ቂም አልይዝም ባንቸ

ቂም አልይዝም ባንቸ አስቀየምሽኝ ብዬ፣
ይቅር እልሻለሁ ሁሉን ነገር ችዬ፣
አልጨክንብሽም አልቀርም አምርሬ፣ እቀበልሻለሁ ተመለሽ ፍቅሬ፣

ተይልኝ ተይልኝ፣
የልብሽን ሀዘን እርግፍ አርጊልኝ፣
ሀዘኔን ትቻለሁ በደሌም ተረሳኝ፣
ይቅር ቅያሜዬ አንቸን ከሚነሳኝ፣
ከፍተሽ ግቢ በሬን ከፍተሽ እንደወጣሽ፣
ጥፋትሽን ልሽከም ጨርሼ ከማጣሽ፣
ናፈቀኝ ፈገግታሽ የጫወታሽ ለዘ፣
መጣ በዙሪያዬ የፍቅርሽ መግዛ፣
ዛሬም እንደፊቱ እንኑር በጋራ፣
እጡብቅሻለሁ ከይቅርታ ጋራ፣
አጥፍቻለሁ እያልሽ መጸጸት አይጉዳሽ፣
እንዴት እቀራለሁ አንቸን ሳልረዳሽ?
ፍቅር አስታራቂ እንጅ አይሻም ጠበቃ፣
ያለፈው አለፈ ተመለሽ ቢቃ፣
አንቸስ መጸጸትሽ አራቀሽ ከንኔ፣
ብዙ ነው ከፍቅርሽ የቀረብኝ እኔ፣
መሳሳት ያለ ነው አታርጊው አንግዳ፣
ይልቅ ፍጡኝልኝ ብዙ እንዳልጎዳ።

(በይልማ ገብረአበ፣1998 ዓ.ም)

እወድሽ ነበረ

እኔ በበኩሉ እወድሽ ነበረ
አደራ ያልኩሽ ቃል ምነው ተሰበረ
ያልሆንኩት የለኝም እኔ ላንቸ ስል
እየተሰማሽኝ የልቤ ቁስል
ካንቸ ተለይቼ መኖር ስለማልወድ
ጥፋትሽን በሙሉ እፍቃለሁ በግድ
ቃልሽ አይለወጥ አባክሽን
ፍቅሬ ለኔ ብለሽ አደራሽን
ይሉኝታ እና ፍቅር ለየብቻ ናቸው
ያሉትን ይበሉ ሌሎቹን ተያቸው
ከአንቸ ተለይቼ መኖር ስለማልወድ
ጥፋትሽን በሙሉ እፍቃለሁ በግድ
(በገዢኝ ደስታ፣1955 ዓ.ም.)

ምነው ከረፈደ

የሰራሽኝ በደል ስሩ ከሰደደ
ይቅርታሽ ደረሰኝ ምነው ከረፈደ
የይቅርታው ጊዜ አልዘገየሽም ወይ
ያፈቀረ ጊዜው አይረዝምበትም ወይ
ሆነሽ በደለኛ ጣል ጣል አርገሽኝ
ዛሬ ከተሰማሽ እኔን የሰራሽኝ
ልክ እንደ ቸልታሽ እንደ ኩርፊያሽ መጠን
ምነው አልነገርሽኝ ለጥፋትሽ ምክንያት

I don't bear Grudge against You

I don't want revenge for the trouble you caused;
I tolerate everything and forgive you;
I will never be cruel to you; I don't leave you;
Come back, my love; I welcome you with open arms;
Let you stop feeling guilty;
I forgive you, and I never put blame on you henceforth;
I don't need to hold grudge that make me lose you;
Open my door and come in as you opened it when you left me;
I prefer to tolerate your misdeed to lose you forever;
I feel the fragrance of your love;
Let us live together;
Mercifully, I keep on waiting for you;
Don't suffer from the regretful feeling that persists in your heart;
How could I fail to understand you?
Love doesn't need lawyer, but mediator.
Let us put the past behind us;
And let you go back to me;
You leave me for you feel guilty;
But I have been a real loser since you went away;
Making mistake is not something unusual;
You would better be quick to go back to me;

I Loved You

For my part, I loved you;
Why did you break the promise that we made?
You are the wound of my heart;
You cause me suffer the most;
I couldn't live without you;
So, I am forced to forgive you;
Please my love,
Keep your words for my sake;
Being sensitive to others' opinion and love are different things;
Let the others say whatever they need to say;
Don't bother about their feelings;

Why are you so late?

Why are you so late to make an apology?
The plight of your misdeed has already touched my heart;
Aren't you so late to ask for forgiveness?
Don't you think it is a long wait for a person who is in love?
If you regretted your fault,
If you regretted the way you devalued me

ሰው በቦጋ በቀን ጸሀይ በወጣበት
ይቀዘቅዘዋል ይበርደዋል እንዴ

ከዛሬ ከነገ ሲጠብቅሽ ልቤ
ትመጣለች ብዬ ወስኜ በሀሳቤ
አልረፈደብሽም አልዘገየሽም ወይ
ለወደደ ጊዜ ፋታ ይሰጣል ወይ
በጫታ መሀል ጣልቃ በቁም ነገር
ስምሽን እየጠሩ ቢያወጉ ምን ነበር

ለጥቂት ደቂቃ የራቅሽኝ እንደሆን
ማነው የሚያስጥለኝ ከሀሳብ ከሰቀቀን
ይህንን ጠብቆ አክብሮ የቆየሽን
ምነው አስርፊድሽው ያዝሺው ይቅርታሽን
ቀኑ ሲረዝምብሽ እኔን ካላየሽኝ
ጭንቀት ሲበዘብሽ ለኔ ካልነገርሽኝ
ይህን የሚያዋየኝ ያ ሁሉ አንደበትሽ
ዛሬ ለይቅርታው ምነው ረፈደብሽ

(አለምጸሀይ ወዳጅ ፣1975 ዓ.ም.)

ተበድዬስ ይቅርታ አልልም

ተበድዬስ ይቅርታ አልልም የቀረው ይቅር እንጂ
ተበድዬስ ማሪኝ አልልም የቀረው ይቅር እንጂ
እንኳን ልልክ አማላጅ እግሬ አይረግጥም ካንቺ ደጅ

አፍቅሬታ እኖራለሁ ስትይኝ ከርመሻል
ታምኜ እኖራለሁ ስትይኝ ከርመሻል
ያኔ በአንደበትሽ ጽኑ ሰው መሰለሻል
ቃልሽ የታጠፈው ዛሬ ምን ነክቶሻል
ከአካሌ መለየት መራቁን ስትመርጭ
ሽህረተት እያልሽብኝ ከእቅሬ ስትወጪ
ልቤን እየከፋው ላስናብትሽ እንጂ
ተከትዬ አልመጣም ጥለሽኝ ስትሄጂ
በደል ያሻከረው ሆዴን ላታባቢ
የጨከነ አንጅቴን ችለሽ ላታባቢ

የማይሸር ጥላቻን በኔ ልብ አፍርተሽ
በአንባ መማጸኑን አታስቢ ደፍረሽ
የት ነበርሽ የት ነበርሽ
የት ነበርሽ የት ነበርሽ

ስታጠፊ ኖረሽ ስታገስሽ ኖሬ
ስንቱን ጊዜ አለፍኩት ቀን በቀን መከሬ
ያንቺ ነገር ባይሆን እየፈጩ ጥሬ
ደክሜልሽ ነበር እኔስ አስከዛሬ

በአድሜ ሳይገደብ ከልጅ አስከ አዋቂ
የበደለ ሰው ነው ይቅርታ ጠያቂ
መቻሌ ሳያንሰኝ የጥፋትሽን ህመም
እንደው ምን አድርጌሽ ይቅር በይኝ ልበል?

ዛሬ ህሊናሽ ወቅሶሽ ምንም ብትቆጪ
በደልሽ አጥሮሻል መኛም ከኔ አትመጪ

(በጸሐይዬ ይኋንሰ)

Why didn't you tell me your reason to mistreat me as you did
when you were sulking?

Is a person cold in a summer day when the sun rises?

My heart waits for you every time;

I thought you would come;

Aren't you so late?

Does it bring respite for the one who falls in love?

Dealing with serious issues, I want to hear something about
you;

Who would save me from being worried if I happened to stay a
few minutes without you?

It is this much that I respect you;

Why are you so late to make an apology?

You told me that the day would be too long for you when you
didn't meet me;

You told me that you got relief when you talked to me about
your worries;

You made me know everything about you, to the last detail;
So, why are you so late to make an apology?

.....ወዶ የጠላ ሰው

ፍቅር የሚጣፍጥ በፍቅር ጊዜ ነው
ከተጣሉ ወዲያ መመንቻቸክ ነው
ሰው ወዶ ከጠላ እርቅ አውርድ ቢባልም
መመናቸክ እንጂ ፍቅር አይባልም

ሰው በጣም ተዋዶ እስኪጠበው መሬት
የተጣለ እንደሆነ ይላል እሬት አሬት
ፍቅር ከተጣሉ መቼ ይታወሳል
ጣፋጭ የነበረው በሬት ይለወሳል::

ሽፍኖ ይሄዳል ፊቱን በነጠላ
ባይኑ ማየት አይሻም ሰው ወዶ ከጠላ
በሬት ወዶ ወዶ አንዴ ከጠላ ሰው
ከቆረጠ አንጀቱ ማንም አይመልሰው
ወዶ የጠላ የቆረጠ አንጀቱ
ጠምዞ ይሄዳል አያሳይም ፊቱን::

(በሰይፈ ኃ/ማርያም፣1963 ዓ.ም.)

The Depiction of Gossip in Amharic Love Songs

ጥለኸኝ ስትቀር

ጥለህኝ ስትቀር ቅያሜህን ገልጸህ ሳትነግረኝ፤
ሀጥያቴን አብዝተው ክፉ አድርገው ከልብህ እያወጡኝ፤
የቀኑሰኝ ሁሉ ባንተ ቀጡኝ፤

ሀሰት ሲያወሩልህ ምላው ተገዝተው፤
እንዴት ልፈረድብህ የሚያስቱህ በዝተው?
የወላጅን ፍቃድ ትዛዝንም ጥሼ፤
ለፍቅር ተዋረድኩ ከሰው ሁሉ አንሺ ።።
ከጓደኛ ባታች ካደረገኝ መውደድ፤
እድሌ ነውና እንግዲህ ልሰደድ፤
የወዳጅ ጠበቃ ተሟጋች ከለሰው፤
ባመነው ይጎዳል ሰው ተከዳ ካለው፤
እሩቅ ለማስተዋል ቀና ብዬ ነበር፤
አንገቴ በሀሜት ድንገት ባይሰበር፤
ህልማችን ተሰፋ አጣ አንላይም ያልነው፤
ለካስ የጸብ ሀይሉ ከፍቅር በላይ ነው፤

ጤናም አልጎደለኝ ሙሉ ነው አካሌ፤
በሰው ነገር እንጅ መሰከካከሌ፤
ይመካብኝ ነበር ያፈራኝ ቤተሰብ፤
ስንቱን አሳፈረው የኔ ላንተ ማሰብ፤
ላመንኩበት ፍቅርህ ራሴን ሰጥቼ፤
ይሄው መና ቀረሁ ከቤቴ ወጥቼ፤

(በይልማ ገብረአብ፣1998 ዓ.ም)

ስንት አየን

ምን ሰማ ጆሮሽ ምን ሰማ?
ምን ታየ ዛሬስ ማን ታማ?
በሰው ፍቅር ገብቶ አንዱ ጭንቅ ይላል አንዱ ለተሰማማ፤
ጉድ ሰማን እንደው ጉድ ሰማን፤
ስንት አየን የነገር ሽማን፤
በይ ፍቅርን ደራርበን እንላበስበት እኔና አንቺን ላማን፤

እኔን ያጥላላ አይበጅም ላንቺ፤
እኔን ያማ ሰው አይተኛም ላንቺ፤
በቅናት ወሬ እንዳትፈቺ፤
ልብሽ ከልቤ እምነት በገዛ፤
አካሌ ባንቺ ታቅፎ በወዛ፤
በተዋደድን ስማችን በዛ፤
በተፋቀርን ስማችን በዛ፤
ልቤማ ፍቅሬንም አያስተው፤
ይችላል መቻል አይታከተው፤
ተፈጥሯል እያዩ ለማለፍ ለመተው፤
ምን ጉድ ሲል ልቤ ሲችለው፤
አሉ ሲል ሁሉ እንደተመቸው፤
የት ልድረስ የት ልዋል ነገርን ሸሽቼው?

ምን አሉ ደግሞ ምን አሉ?
ምን ዋሹሽ ዛሬስ ምን ጣሉ?
መቼም ያሉ ነገር አይሞቅም አይደምቅም ትንሽ ካልቀጠሉ፤
ባልገባሽ አሳች ባልጋባሽ፤
ባልታየሽ አሉ ባልታየሽ፤
ያካላቴ እንግዳው ሃሳብ አይደለም ወይ አንቺ ከዘገየሽ፤

You abandoned Me

I put the blame on you for abandoning me without telling
me your grudge;
However, I finally learned the shocking truth as to why
you did it;
Those who were jealous of me ruined me;
They were gossiping to you about me;
They told you heartbreaking stories that I was cruel and
sinner;

How could I put the blame on you while many were there
to mislead you?
They took an oath to tell you a complete pack of lies
about me;

Disobeying my parents, I dishonoured myself for the love
I had for you;
I felt the lowliness of my position;
If love made me have lower status than my friends,
It would be my fate to run away;

If a person lacks friends who serves him as a lawyer,
And if he is destined to be betrayed,
He will be mistreated by those whom he trusts;

I drew myself upright to see far from where I was;
But I failed to do so for gossip broke my neck;

Our dream to live together forever faded away;
So that was the case; I found disagreement more powerful
than love;

I am healthy; I am not disabled;
On the contrary, it is people who make me fruitless;
My parents were proud of me;
But making myself ill worrying about you was an
embarrassment to my family and others;

I sacrificed myself for the love I had for you;
I became such a lost soul as result;

We have Undergone Hardship

What have you heard?
What has been seen?
Who has been gossiped?
One evilly interferes in someone's love affairs;
We heard strange stories;
We received news of conspiracy against us;
Let us flourish our love;
Let the gossipy ones see our triumph;

The one who has ridiculed me couldn't be good to you;
The one who has gossiped about me couldn't be good to you;
Though those who are jealous of us gossip about us,
Don't lose your trust of me;

Since you lose your heart to me,
And I get beautified into your embracement,
Our names have been blackened for we love each other;

እንግዲህ ጆሮሽ ሀሜት አይሰማ፤
 እንግዲህ ልብሽ በወሬ አይደማ፤
 እንዳይለያዩን በነገር አድማ፤
 የኛ መዋደድ እያስከፋቸው፤
 የኛ መፋቀር እያስቆሜቸው፤
 ነገር ስንቶቹን ስራ አስፈታቸው፤
 ሀሜት ስንቶቹን ስራ አስፈታቸው፤

ውል ሲያጣ ጆሮ ከሸመተው፤
 ሲዘባ ልብም ከገመተው፤
 አሉ ባይ ከትቢያም ዝቅ ይላል ከሞተው፤
(ይልማ ገብረአብ፣199829.ም)



እስኪ ተዋት

እስኪ ተዋት ለእኔ ትኑር በደህና፤
 አትረብሻት ሰላም አላት እና፤
 ምን ያደርጋል ፍቅር ማበላሸት፤
 አታውሩልኝ እኔ አለወደም ውሸት፤
 አታውቋትም እንዲህ ናት አትበሉ፤
 ለመሳሳት ፈጽም አትቸኩሉ፤
 አትምጡብኝ ወሬ ስንቃችሁ፤
 ደህና ግቡ ወደየቤታችሁ፤
 እባክችሁ፤

በደስታችን ብርሃን ያልተከፋ የለም፤
 የቀና ይጎብጣል እንደዚህ ናት ዓለም፤
 አታውሩልኝ ለእኔ እንዲህ ናት ብላችሁ፤
 ጆሮዬም ላይሰማ ልቤም ላያምናቸሁ፤

በዚች ዓለም ስትኖር ከእኔ ጋራ፤
 አልፈልግም እንዲያያት መከራ፤
 አወቃታለሁ ከማንም የላቀ፤
 አታውሩልኝ አለቀ ደቀቀ፤

እስኪ ግቢ ቤቴ የልቤ ወራሽ፤
 ታምሜ እድናለሁ ሳይሽ ሳወራሽ፤
 ብልህ እና አስተዋይ ቻይ አርጎ ፈጥሮሻል፤
 ምን ልጨምርበት መፈቀር ያንሰሻል።

(በይልማ ገብረአብ)



I have a passionate interest in love;
 So, I tolerate troubles unconditionally;
 I believe I'm created to accept things as they are;
 "It is just weird," says my heart;
 When everyone gossips as they wish;
 Where do I go not to be ruined by a conspiracy?

What did they say about us?
 What lies did they tell you?
 Gossip is not a thing to be heard unless it is exaggerated and distorted;

Let the gossipy never deceives you;
 Let you ignore gossip;
 A thought struck me when you come to me late;
 Don't listen to gossip hereafter;
 Don't let your heart bleed from gossip;
 In order not they separate us with conspiracy;
 Being offended by our love,
 Many gossipy persons have become idle;

When one heard something meaningless and failed to guess the truth,
 The gossipy would have lower status than the dead ones;

Leave Her Alone

Leave her to me; let she leave in peace;
 Don't disturb her for she is a peace-loving woman;

It is no use ruining love;
 I hate lies; don't tell me lies;
 You don't know her well;
 So, don't say anything about her;

Don't be in hurry to make mistake;
 Don't come to me for gossiping;
 Please, go home in peace;

Our happiness offends everyone;
 A straight object would bend down;
 It is the way of the world;
 Don't tell me anything about her;
 My ear never listens to you,
 And my heart never believes your story;

While she lives with me in this world,
 I don't want to see her facing misery;
 I know her better than anyone knows her;
 It is over; don't tell me anything about her;
 Come in my love;
 You are dear to my heart;
 I would be cured when I see you and talk to you;
 You are created being wise and uncomplaining;
 You deserve something more than being loved;



The Experience of Longing in Amharic Love Songs (Longing in Love)

ልዩ ጃኖ

እንደው ልዩ ጃኖ ለበስክልኝ ወይ?
እንደው ልዩ ኩታ ለበስክልኝ ወይ?
አይኔ የወደቀው ባከላትህ ላይ፤

እንዴት አሆናለሁ ያልተገኘህ ለታ?
መጨነቄን አይተህ ና የኔ ዘንካታ፤

ሰርቼ እንዳልበላ ማን ዳኛ ቀጣኝ፤
እኔስ መናፈቅ ነው እጄን የያዘኝ፤

ማን አሳየብኝ መንገድ ለኔስ የዛን ልጅ መውደድ?
ኮርቼ አልሄድ እንደሰው ፍቅር ልቤን ሲያፈርሰው፤
ሚስጥር የማዋየው ማን አለኝ አዋቂ?
አስቲ እንመካከር አንተ ተናፋቂ፤

እንደምን ዝም አልከኝ የልቤን ጉዳይ፤
አንተስ የፍቅር ሰው አይደለህም ወያ?
ለበሽታዬማ መቸ ተረታሁ አኔ?
አስቸገርከኝ እንጅ አየመጣህ በይኔ፤

ትዝታህ በልቤ አብሮኝ ከኖረማ፤
አስቲ ላሰፋለት ለመውደደህ ሸማ፡፡

(ይልማ ገብረአብ፣1977ዓ.ም.)

ይረገም ይህ ልቤ

ይረገም ይህ እግራ አልፎ የሄደበት፤
“ “ ጎኔ ሄዶ የተኛበት፤
“ “ ጥርሴ ሄዶ የበላበት፤
“ “ ልቤ ሌላ ያሰበበት፤
“ “ ከንዴ ሌላ ያቀፈበት፤
“ “ ከንፈሬ ሌላ የሳመበት፤
ያይኔ ነገርማ ገና ብዙ አለበት፤

እሷ ወዲያ ሆና የልቤ አይደርስልኝ፤
አስቲ ወዲህ ትምጣ ትግባ ትደባብሰኝ፤
እንደ ቁሱ ጭራ እንደ እንዘርታ ብታኝ፤
ይህው መጣሁላት ደግሞ ታንገላታኝ፤
መላመድ ነው እንጂ መራቅ የት ተገኝቶ፤
እንግዲህ ከአልፍኵ ካዳራሹ ገብቶ፤
ሰፊው መንገድ ሳለ ለመመላለሻ፤
ልቤን አረገቸው መነሻ መድረሻ፤

እሷን ባየሁበት ባይኖቼ ብኩራራ፤
ማን ሰምቶ ይመልስ ማን ስለኔ ያውራ?
አርቀሽ አትሂጅ ምንም አልሆን ብለሽ፤
ከሰው አይን ገብተሽ መመለሻም የለሽ፤
እንዲህ ከሚጎዳኝ ይሻላል ብርቀው፤
ፍቅርሽን ማምለጫው መሸሽጊያው የት ነው?
ወዲህም አትድረሽ እዚያው ተቀመጪ፤
ደግሞ ባካሌ ላይ በልቤ ሳትመጪ፤

አደባባይ ልውጣ ፍቅርሽን ልክሰሰው፤
ሳላይሽ ከዋልኩኝ ያጣላኛል ከሰው፤
ቦታሽ አንኩኝ ታውቆ እንደየሩሳሌም፤
አይጨንቀኝም ነበር መጥቼ ብሳለም፤
እበዛብኝ እንጂ ወዲያው ወዲያው መውደቅ፤
በፍቅር ጨክኜ ጡር ሰርቼም አላውቅ፤
ስትፈለግ ጠፍታ ብአሁድ ቀን በሰንበት፤
ባዘበት ቀን መጣች ፀዲቅ በሌለበት፡፡

(ይልማ ገብረአብ፣1975 ዓ.ም.)

Especial ğano

Have you even worn special ğano?
Have you even worn special kuta?

But, I rather have my eye on your appearance than on your outfit;

How could I manage things just in case you are not with me?
See how deep I get frustrated, so come to me my shapely lover;
No judge has banned me from doing something for a living;
It is longing that has chained my hands and made me idle;

Who has showed me the way to fall in love with that boy?
Unlike others, I lack the confidence to walk in the streets,
Because love hurts my heart;

Do I have someone matured to tell him secret?
You, whom I longing for, let us talk it over;
How would you be neglectful of my affair?
Aren't you a faithful to love?

I'm not surrendered myself to my illness;
It you who are engraved to my memory trouble me much;

If you are stamped in my memory,
Let me have a tailor made cloth to the memory of the love I have
for you;

This heart of mine let it be cursed

These legs of mine let them be cursed for going away;
This flank of mine let it be cursed for going there to sleep;
These teeth of mine let them be cursed for going there to eat;
This heart of mine let it be cursed for making someone else get engraved
on it;

This arm of mine let it be cursed for embracing someone else;
These lips of mine let them be cursed for kissing someone else;
My eyes pay dearly for their deeds;

I am feeling very dissatisfied with her absence;
Let she come here and touch me;

Here I go back to her;
Let she swing back and forth me,
Like a priest does to his flyswatter;
And let she swing back and forth me,

Like she does to a piece of thread while she is spinning it with her spindle;

Once entered her salon,
It is lovely to deepening intimacy with her;
For it is impossible to leave her;

While there is a wide street to travel back and forth,
She makes my heart starting and resting-place;

If I feel proud of my eyes for seeing her,
Who could respond to what he heard,
And who could talk about me;

Don't go far away thinking that you are in safe hands;
You fail to return to me for you would be an apple of somebody's eye;
Instead of suffering from the love I have for you, I better leave you;
But where do I hide out myself from the love I have for you?

Don't go back here; stay there;

.....
አያኮራም

ለጉብል ልጅ የታመመ ገላ፤
በግንቦት ወር እጅ ያልገባ ጥላ፤
አያኮራም ለጉዳይ ካልሆነ፤
እንዲያው ከባከነ፤

ሰኞ ማክሰኞ ስል ሳትመጪም ሳልሄድም፤
ሀሙስ አርብ አለፈ ቅዳሜም አሁድም፤
ዛሬ ነገ እያልኩኝ ገፋሁት አመቱን፤
በጋውን ጨርሼ ወጣሁት ክረምቱን፤
ድረሽ ልበል ልዘዘሽ ባንደበቱ፤
ነይ ነይ ልበል፤
ልይሽ ልበል ነይልኝ ሰውነቴ፤
መላ አጣ ናፍቆቴ፤

በቃል ቢደረደር ናፍቆት በደብዳቤ፤
ማስታመሚያ አይሆንም ለባከነው ልቤ፤
ጭንቅን ይግለፅ እንጂ ስለመለያየት፤
ብዕር መስኮት አይሆን ዓይንሽን ለማየት፡፡
(ባይልማ ገብረአብ1978 ዓ.ም)

.....
ዘገየሽ

መቼ ትመጫለሽ ንገራኝ ወዳጄ?
ነገ ዛሬ ሲባል ስትቀራብኝ ሄጄ፤
የያዘኩት አበባ ጠወለገ ከጄ፤
አጥቼስ ስገባ ሆድ ባስኝ ከዳጄ፤
ስንቱን ጊዜ ችየው ብቸኝነቴን፤
መጣሁ ብለሽ ሳጣሽ ጠላሁት ቤቴን፤
ያረፈውን ልቤን እየቀሰቀሰሽው፤
ዛሬስ ከአይኔ በላይ ሆዴን አስለቀሽው፤
ዘገየሽ ወዳጄ ምነው?
ተይ ከፋኝ ጨነቅኝ አንቸ ሰው፤
ምን ይባላል ለሰው?
ሄጄ ስመለሰው፤
ምን ልተንፍሰው?
ምን ልበል እንግዲህ ምን ላውራ?

አብሬሽ ልመለስ ጓጉቼ ስወጣ፤
እንደው ይከፋኛል አጥቼስ ስመጣ፤
ስገባ ከበሬ ሁሌ ባዶ እጄን፤
እንኳን ተመልካቹን አፈርኩት ደጄን፤
(ይልማ ገብረአብ፣1992 ዓ.ም)

.....

Rather than making my heart ill with worry;
Let me appear in court to accuse “the love I have for you”,
Of making me quarrel with others whenever I fail to see you;
I go back to you if I know where you are,
And I never regret worshipping you like Jerusalem is worshiped;
Though I’m destined to fall in love with someone time and again,
I hadn’t been cruel to any lover,
And I never dishonored any lover before;
On Sunday, the holyday, she disappeared when she was looked for;
But she appeared on a weekday when there was no holy-bread;

.....
It doesn’t have made one proud
The beauty that makes one fall sick,
And the umbrella that one fails to have during the month of
May,
Both never have made one proud if they are wasted;
I planned to pay you a visit with every passing day, but I failed;
You also didn’t visit me;
So, weekdays and weekends passed without being seen each
other;
Though I schedule to see you every today and every tomorrow,
I fail to do so;
Summer and winter passed without meeting you;

Let me order you; come to me;
Let me see you, my love;
My longing for you is quite unbearable;
If a letter is written about longing,
It won’t nurse my heart back to health;
A letter might express the pain of parting,
But, a pen never serves as a window to see your eyes;

.....
You are late

My love, tell me; when will you come?
Having flowers in my hand, I was waiting for you every passing
day;
You failed to appear, and the flower in my had got dried;
Staying at my doorway, I got offended for you failed to show up;
For long, I had never felt so lonesome;
But I hated my home when you failed to appear, as promised;
You woke my heart up that was at rest;
You made my stomach cry more than my eyes;
My love, why were you late?
I’m so frustrated;
What do I say to others?
When I turn back empty handed, what could I say?

I intend to turn back with you;
I get frustrated when I fail to do so;
Coming home without you makes me feel shame not only to be
with the people around,
But also to see my own doorway as if it observed my failure;

.....

Idealization and the Construction of Satisfaction in Amharic Love Songs

የህይወቴ አጥር ነሽ

አራዊቱ ሁሉ ወጥቶ ቢከበኝም
የህይወቴ አጥር ነሽ ምንም አይነካኝም

ብሰጭት አይገባኝ አዝኜ አልከፋ
አንቺ በመሆንሽ የኑሮዬ ተስፋ

ደስታም ያላንቺ እንደሌለኝ አምነሽ
ስትደባብሺኝ ከአጠገቤ ሆነሽ
ያለምንም ህመም ያላንዳች ኮሽታ
ገለል ይልልኛል የያዘኝ በሽታ

አንቺን ያጣሁ ለታ ብዘጋም ደጃፊን
እነቃለሁ ለሊት ሳልጨርስ እንቅልፈኛለሁ።

አንቺ ካለሽልኝ ጠባቂ ህይወቴን
ከደስታ በቀር አላውቅም ጉዳቴን

የያዘኩት ይመስለኛል አለምን ጨርሼ
ከጎንሽ ስተኛ ጸጉርሽን ለብሼ።
ህይወትሽ ቆሞልኝ እስካለሁኝ በዓለም
ለኔ ህይወት አጥር አንቺ ነሽ ዘላለም።
(በሰይፈ ታ/ማርያም፣1961 ዓ.ም.)

You are the Fence of My Life

If all the beasts surround me,
Nothing bad would happen to me;
For you are the fences of my life;

Since you are the hope of my life,
I never be angry at things,
And I never be offended;

When you fondle me,
Believing that I don't get happiness without you,
I easily get cured;

Though I close my door,
If you are not with me,
I wake up in the night still feel sleepy;

Whenever you are with me,
Being the guardian of my life,
I feel joy, and nothing irritates me;

I feel as if I hold the entire world at my hand,
When I sleep with you wearing your hair;

As far as you are I alive,
You are my fence for ever;

የሚሰረቅ ቢሆን

የሚሰረቅ ቢሆን ሰው ከነህይወቱ
እልም አንተን ይዞ ነበር መዳኒቱ

ከሚመክሩኝ ይልቅ ለእድገት ለስራዬ
አንተን ጣልቃ አግብተው ቢያወሩ ደስታዬ

መች በጤናዬ ነው እኔማ ዘንድሮ
ከዘመዶቼም ጋር በቅሏል አምባገር
ቢያወሩኝ አልሰማ ቢያዙኝም አልፈጽም
ፍቅርህ ልቤን ሰርቆ አድርጎታል ጉርድም።

ለማንኛው ዘመድ ምን ብዬስ ላዋየው
ሰው የሰውን ችግር ከምንም አይቆጠረው

ከዚህ የበለጠ ምን ጽድቅ ሊገኝ ነው
አንተን ይገዢ ገዳም መንኛ አማልገባው።
(በፈንታ አንተአለህኝ፣1963 ዓ.ም.)

If Possible to steal a Man...

If it was possible to steal a man alive,
I would take you somewhere, a far-off land;
Instead of being advised about my wellbeing,
And the improvement of my job,
I would be happy if people talk about you;

I am not healthy these days;
I quarrel with my relatives;
I never hear when they talk to me,
And I fail to obey them,
Since your love steals my heart;

To which of my relative I share my problem?
A man denies to share other's burden;

For I feel better this way;
Why don't I join the monastery with you?
For there is no righteous life better than that;

እኔን ይከፋኝ

እኔ ልከፋልህ አንተ አትከፋብኝ
ትካዜህን ማየት አልሻም ይቅርብኝ

ልሰቃይ ልጎዳ ብዙ በመዋተት
አንተ ሰላም ሆነህ እኔ ልንከራተት

ተለያዩ ከሚል የተመለከተን
እኔን ይከፋኝና ደስ ይበልህ አንተን

አንተ ስትለየኝ እኔ በመቅረቴ
ችሎ ለመቀመጥ አይረጋም አንጀቴ

Let me be disappointed on your behalf

Let me in your shoe,
And share all the discomforts that you feel,
Let, you feel free,
Since I don't feel an ease,
While you are disappointed;

Let me suffer from being restless,
Let you live in peace,
While I wander on your behalf;
I couldn't stay alone,
If you leave me;

Let me mourn hundred times,

መቶ ጊዜ ልዘን ሺ ጊዜ እኔን ይክፋኝ
ሙሉ አካል የለኝም አንተ ስትጠፋኝ

አባክህ አባክህ በሀሳብህ እርዳኝ
አትሂድ አትራቀኝ ስላንተ እኔን ይክፋኝ።
(በሰይፈ ኃ/ማርያም ዓ.ም.)

Maternal Love

ለእናቴ እናት ሆንኳት

ለእናቴ እናት ሆንኳት ቀረ ልጅነቴ
የሰው ብድር አይቀር ተረግዛ በሆዴ

የማይጫው አርበኛ ባልሽ ሞቶብሽ
አሻሮ በመቁላት ያለቅሳል አይንሽ

ካንቺ በፊት እኔን ያስቀድመኝ እንጂ
አትሙቺ እማማ ቢከፋም ቢበጅ

አባቴ ሞቶብኝ በሀጻንነቴ
አሳድጋኛለች ቆሎ ሸጣ እናቴ

ጠኔ ሊገለኝ ሲል እንደ ድርቅ ጥጃ
እማ ፍትግ አርጋ አበላችኝ አጃ

አድጌልሻለሁ እንደምንም ብዬ
አምላክ ያውቅልናል አይዘሽ እምዬ

አስታውሰዋለሁ ሁሉን በምልክት
የሰው ልጅ ማሰቡን አሳ ወንዙን አይስት

(በጌጡ አየለ፣1964 ዓ.ም)

የእናት ውለታዋ...

የእናት ውለታዋን ባወሳ እወዳለሁ
ደግነቷ ብዙ መሆኑን አውቃለሁ፤
ወላጅ እናት እኮ ፍጹም በመንፈሷ
ልጇን ትወዳለች አብልጣ ከራሷ፤

ዘጠኝ ወር በሆዴ ከዚያ በጀርባዋ
ጡቷን እያጠባባች እኔን ማሳደጓ
ዘወትር ይሰማኛል የማዬ ድካሟ
ዝላ በማሳደግ በሴትነት አቅሟ፤

አባቴ ሞቶብኝ በሀጻንነቴ
ደክማ አሳደገችኝ ብቻዋን እናቴ፤
ሳይርበኝ ሳይጠማኝ ወይም ሳልታረዝ
ነው ያሳደገችኝ የማም ብድሯ...

እናቴን የማይወድ ሰው አለ ቢሉኝ
ሰው ነው አልለውም አውሬ ነው ባይ ነኝ፤
የዋሂቷ እናቴ እኔን ወላጇቷ
እጅግ ይሰማኛል እውነተኛነቷ፤

(በሰይፈ ሀ/ማርያም፣ 1961 ዓ.ም)

Let me be disappointed thousand times,
Without you I become handicap;

Let you share your opinion with me, please,
Don't go away, and don't leave me;
Let me be disappointed on your behalf;

I became a Mother for My Mother

I become a mother for my mother;
For it is impossible to ignore her favor,
She is conceived deep inside me;

You cry tears of frustration while you roast cereals,
For your husband, the patriot of Machew died;

Let God take my soul first,
Mam, let you live long for good or bad;

My father died when I was young,
It was my mother, who brought me up,
By selling roasted grain for a living;

When hunger threatened me to kill me,
Mam fed me roasted oats;

Mam, don't worry, we hope to God,
I have grown up bearing all the burden,
So, I will be a real help to you;

I remember everything that we faced,
It is the law of nature,
A man never stops thinking as fish never misses its river;

እናት

ቢያልፍም ጊዜው ቢያልፍም
ዘመን ቢያልፍ አመታት
የምዬን ውለታ የምዬን

አረሳም እድሜ ዘላለሜን
ጽናትን ታድላ ትዕግስትን ተላብሳ
ቀን ታሻግራለች በጭለማ ዳብሳ
ልፋቷን ቆጥሮላች ይሰማታል ጌታ
አልፋም ታኖራለች ምርቃቷን ትታ
ምን የሚገርም አለ ከእናት ጥበብማ
አንጀቱ እንደማይቸል አድርጎ አሚሰማ
ጥሬውን አልማ ደረቁን ፈጭታ
አርጋ አሳዳጊ ናት ያላትን ፈትፍታ
የዚህ ዓለም እናቶች ቢለያይ ኑሯቸው
ሲያረግዙ ሲያምጡ ሲያጠቡ አንድ ናቸው
እንኳን የሰው እናት ያራዊት የወፏ
ልጅ ታሳድጋለች ያፏን ሰጥታ ባፏ
ለራሷ ማቸ ሆነ ቆርሰሽ የጎረሹው
ስም ተረፈሽ እንጂ በጡትሽ መለሽው
በከንዶቹ ታቅፈን በፍቅር ያለብነው
ወተት ብቻ አይደለም የፍቀር አስትንፋስ ነው
ከሆድሽ ስወጣ መቸ ነበረኝ ጉልበት
አይኔ ሳይገለጥ ባይንሽ አየሁበት
አቅፋም አሳድጋ መቸ ሰከን ልቧ
ልጇን ይከተላል የማያርፍ ቀልቧ
አስር በማትሞላ በአምስቷ ደቂቃ
ስለእናት ለማውጋት ምንም ጊዜ አይበቃ፤
(በይልማ ገብረአብ፣2007 ዓ.ም.)