

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND
LITERATURE

THE SOCIAL FUNCTION OF AMHARIC FOLK POETRY
WITH REFERENCE TO SHÄNÄČČA IN RAYYA QOBBO

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JUNE, 2010
ADDIS ABABA

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KEYS FOR TRANSLITERATION

Consonants

ñ	sh
ϕ	q
ϕ̣	č
ʎ	ñ
ϕ̣̣	j
ᄁ	ʃ
ᄂ	č
ʎ	ts

Vowels

ᄃ	ä
ᄄ	u
ᄅ	i
ᄆ	a
ᄇ	e
ᄈ	ĩ
ᄉ	o

ABSTRACT

In countries like Ethiopia, where the rate of literacy is very low, and the written word is deficient to wave public opinion, the role of folk literature is mammoth. Contrary to this fact, folk literature in Ethiopia is overwhelmed by western cultures and many such heritages are on the verge of oblivion, in the country in general and in *Rayya Gobbo* in particular; and *Shänäčča* folk poetry is among the victimized assets. Bearing such assumptions in mind, this study was designed to record *Shänäčča* folk poetry in *Rayya Gobbo* and to examine its social functions through thematic as well as contextual analyses.

The study embraces six chapters, of which the first provides a general background to the study, physical and social setting of the study area and insights about the magnitude of the problem, the objectives, significances and scope. In the second chapter, different theories, approaches and studies are reviewed and definitions of terms are given to substantiate the research with guiding framework. In chapter three, the different methods employed in collecting Amharic *Shänäčča* folk poetry using audiotape recorder and classifications used in the study are described. In the fourth chapter, a brief description of the ceremonial process of *Shänäčča* and major occasions of performances of *Shänäčča* folk poetry are given. Chapter five, mainly deals with a contextual analysis of *Shänäčča* folk poetry to brought to the fore its themes and social functions. Thus, forty poems were selected, transcribed on paper, translated in to English and analyzed accordingly. Chapter six, the conclusion, gives a succinct summary of the social functions of *Shänäčča* folk poetry as reflected in the data collected and analyzed.

Thus, the study revealed blessing, curse, praise, socio-political commentary, historical record and cherishing patriarchy as the major social functions of *Shänäčča* folk poetry. Blessing appeared as the most common function served and wealth, power and fame, victory, successful marriage, health, long life and righteousness were identified as the main focuses. Regarding curse, contrary to blessing, weak sides of individuals got expressions. Praise also appeared playing roles in upraising individual's generosity, wealth and heroic deeds. In the category of socio-political commentary, criticism of the manner of the society like envy and malevolent and protest against a government were reflected. In recording history, historical places, names of heroes and heroic deeds appeared as points of focuses. Finally, *Shänäčča* folk poetry was also found playing roles in maintaining conformity to male supremacy by cherishing patriarchy.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Ethiopia, like many African countries, is a multi-ethnic state. This, as it is asserted by *Mälaknäh* (1990), “presupposes the existence of numerous nationalities with which the country is populated, each predominantly with its distinct language, culture and oral literature” (1). *Gete* (2000) quoting Levin (1965:25) also supports this notion by stating that in Ethiopia, as in the most countries where the level of literacy of the greater part of the population has been very low for ages, people are rich in oral traditions.

The Amharas are among the major ethnic groups in the country endowed with different kinds of oral traditions. Covering a wide area of the country - Gondar, *Gojjam*, *Wällo* and Northern *Shäwa* - the *Amhara* National Regional State, in addition to the majority Amharas, serves as also a home to other ethnic groups like the *Agäws* of *Awi* Zone in *Gojjam* and *Wag Hïmra* Zone in *Wällo* and the *Oromos* of *Kämise* Zone in *Wällo* which contributes to the building up of diverse cultural legacies and oral traditions.

Among the above cited sub-regions, *Wällo* as *Mäsïñ* (1981:18) cited in *Shibäshi* (1986) puts, is characterized by various linguistic, ethnic, cultural and religious systems. The present culture of this area, as *Mäsïñ* (1981) claims, to be the outcome of centuries-long historical process of population, movements and religious expansions. The eventual settlement of *Oromos* in *Wällo* together with the assimilation of *Tigïrännä* and *Agäwännä* speaking people from North and the *Afar* from East from the one hand, and the coercive expansion of Islam and Christian on the other create a society characterized by extreme religious and ethnic tolerance. Consequently, this made the people affluent in practicing, composing, and reciting ample and heterogenic cultural legacies and folk literatures.

In this context, North *Wällo*, which embraces the target area of this study, i.e. *Rayya Qobbo*, is a case in point. People live in this area are also results of different linguistic and religious groups and, perhaps, this made them rich in oral traditions. Thus, looking into the physical and social setting of the study area (*Rayya Qobbo*) is paramount importance.

1.1.1 Physical Setting of *Rayya Qobbo*

Rayya Qobbo found in North *Wällo*, which is among the eleven zones of the Amhara National Regional State. Through different systems of government, the people in this area have experienced a shifting and re-shifting of localities to neighboring administrative states. During the *Däriḡ* regime it was named as *Rayya Qobbo Awirajja* and incorporates some parts of Western Afar and some *qäbäles* which are currently situated in South *Tiḡray*. Then after, it was named as *Qobbo wäräda* and currently partitioned in to two separate *wärädas* namely *Qobbo wäräda* and *Qobbo Town*.

This area is bordered on the East by Afar region, on the West by *Gīdan wäräda*, on the North by *Tiḡray* region and on the South by *Gubalafto* and *Habiru wärädas*. (See appendix VI for the map of *Rayya Qobbo*.)

1.1.2 Social Setting of *Rayya Qobbo*

According to the 2007 Population and Housing Census of the Central Statistics Agency report, *Rayya Qobbo* has a total population of 276721, of whom 139577 are males and 147141 are females. Among the total population 238077 and 38648 live in rural and urban areas respectively. The composition of the people in this area is of different ethnic and religious groups and backgrounds. The largest ethnic group in *Rayya Qobbo* is the Amhara (93%). All the other ethnic groups make up 7% of the total population. Consequently, Amharic is spoken as a first language by 93% of the population and the remaining 6.03%, 0.9%, 0.05%, and 0.013% speak *Tiḡire*, Afar, Oromo and *Agāw* languages respectively. Religious wise

reports show that 83% of the people practices Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity, 16.03% Muslims, 0.03% Catholic and 0.125% Protestants. Farming and cattle raring are the occupation of the majority of the people in the area and infrastructures are still at low levels.

As far as the history of the beginning of settlement in the area, there seems to be no adequate research. Besides, historical materials about *Rayya Qobbo* are also limited and controversial. Looking in to some materials about this issue of settlement will hopefully give insight to readers.

Käbädä (1997 E.C.) in “The Socio-cultural and Economic Document of *Rayya Qobbo*” states that the first settlers in this area are Oromos, who came from *Awash Gama*. These Oromos name the first place they have settled as “*Ĉuhän*” by the name of their leader. He further maintains that the latter coming of *Atse Libñe Dñgìl*, the building of forty four monasteries around *Zobìl* (a highland in Eastern *Rayya Qobbo*) and his Amharic speaking followers has also influenced the socio-cultural situation of this area. Besides, the invasion of *Grañ Mohammed*, the destruction of most of the monasteries and the massacre on the Christians and also the military expedition by the people of *Lasta* guided by *Yohannes II* are all about settlement. According to this document, the socio-economic relations strengthened through marriage and other economic activities with the Amharas of *Lasta* and the Tigrians has lead to cultural assimilation and the extinction of the Oromo language in the area.

On the other hand, a document released from the *Qobbo Wäräda* Communication Bureau on a news paper, *Hidase* no. 41 on *Yäkatit* 30, 2002 E.C. asserts that the name *Rayya* and *Qobbo* in the Oromo language means “Soldier” and “Castor plant” respectively. In this article it is also stated that the pioneer settlers are of three tribes, namely “*Dobä’a*”, “*Kädda*” and “*Angot*” who set up their living in the area before the Oromos.

According to this article, the coming of *Bä’idä Mariam* in to power (1468 – 1478 E.C) and his wish to govern the area changed these tribes in to

Orthodox Christians. Besides, in this document it is reported that the settlement of the Oromos was an outcome of *Grañ's* invasion. However, this article did not reveal anything about the language and religion of the tribes mentioned above. Over all, the issue needs further investigation.

To put the issue in a nutshell, even though, it is difficult to get concrete evidences about the first settlers in the area, the different oral traditions, material cultures and legacies witnessed that, the people of *Rayya Qobbo* are results of different historical, ethnic and religious realities. This is evidently reflected through the oral traditions recited and performed during religious festivals of Orthodox Christianity and Islam, and other folk customs. According to *Mogäs* (2005:11), there are various types of oral traditions which are outcomes of these religious practices and secular activities in the area. He further maintains that, societies in this area are also known for various types of rituals which call for social gatherings and recital and performance of folk literature. These rituals, which are performed in different social folk customs, include celebrations of *Zar* (in which special people sing and dram to allure spirit), *Dubärti* (selected women make a special song which carry message to God), *Wädaja* (Muslim devotees and their followers sing and pray for the welfare of the society and property), *Tufñta*¹ (in which old men [*Tufteññas*²] gather to compose and recite folk poetry [*Shänäčča* ³] in order to bring about peace and harmony in the society), and so on.

In general, what is stated above indicates that, people in *Rayya Qobbo* are rich in folk literature, and used their oral traditions for various purposes. Taking the above points in to consideration, the researcher has tried to study the social functions of *Shänäčča* folk poetry of the people of *Rayya Qobbo*, which is among the particular forms of folk poetry composed, recited and performed in the area.

¹ The occasion in which *Shänäčča* folk is recited and performed.

² Old men who compose and recite *Shänäčča* folk poetry.

³ A particular form of folk poetry recited by a group of men (*Tufteññas*) in a ritual called *Tufñta*.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Many scholars claim that, a society can be studied through its folk literature. Ruth Finnegan, the authoritative author on African oral literature, asserts that there is no society without folk literature and the study of folk literature is the study of society. Okpewho (1992:118) also brace this notion by claiming that, it is through folk literature that a given society records the historical facts and events that constitute that society and it is by studying its folk literature that one can understand everything about that society.

As has also been mentioned in the background folk literature serves a given society in many ways. In countries like Ethiopia, which is serving as a home to diverse ethnic groups, dominantly oral people, which transmit and reproduce their own histories, cultural experiences and unique traditional values from generation to generation orally, the role of folk literature is huge. In line with this, *Birhanu* (1999:14) maintains, in developing countries like ours in which the written word is very much inadequate to sway public opinions the position and function of folk literature is immense.

This entails that a society without its folk literature seems a society without history, cultural elements, traditional values and other rudiments that constitute a society as society. Contrary to this fact, folk literature in Ethiopia seems overshadowed by Western cultures in the name of “globalization” and “modernization”. Specially, the younger generation seems enslaved by western culture i.e., watching football games and movies. And even, hard to believe the fact that they can remember names of hundreds of football players and film actors than a couplet (two line oral verse or poem).

In addition to this, authorities at different levels and Media agencies seem to influence people to think their own traditions and folk customs, which serve as a source to composition, recitation and performance of different folk literatures, as harmful traditions. This is also aggravating the problem.

Because of these reasons, folk literature in general and folk poetry in particular seems gradually vanished from the society. Specifically, *Shänäčča*, for ritual purposes and cultural reasons, needs preparation of cultural foods and local drinks which cost the society much. And for this reason, these days, it is difficult to see as many performances as it has been some five or ten years ago.

Besides, the insufficient attention that has been given to Amharic folk poetry is one of the pushing factors. In addition, as far as the researcher's best knowledge is concerned, no research endeavor has been done to investigate issues in relation to *Shänäčča* folk poetry. Thus, it is the present researcher's desire to investigate the role of this form of folk poetry in the social and cultural life of the society.

On top of this, as a member of the society, which performs and recites the type of folk poetry under examination, the present researcher has memories of some of the themes and social functions of *Shänäčča* folk poetry. Furthermore, the researcher believes that the oblivion of this asset will be a great loss in Ethiopian literature in general and the people of *Rayya Qobbo* in particular. These are the basic reasons that make the present researcher to believe that studying the issue is inevitably necessary.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The major objective of this study is to collect, describe, explore and analyze *Shänäčča* folk poetry in line with its social functions. Having this major objective, the research focuses on the following specific objectives, i.e. to:

- record and document *Shänäčča* folk poetry.
- identify the major themes raised in *Shänäčča* folk poetry.
- classify *Shänäčča* folk poetry based on its social functions.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study by focusing on the above objectives will hopefully help to yield different benefits. Firstly, the study will have contributions on preserving the folk poetry under analysis which give insight into the artistic imagination and social experience of the people of *Rayya Qobbo*. Secondly, it is the researcher's conviction that, this research will help government officials and Media agencies to clearly see what harmful tradition is and what is not, since some cultural elements are blindly considered as harmful and are on the verge of dying out.

Moreover, this research will help to increase the growing body of knowledge on national folk poetry in particular and literature in general. Finally, it will also hopefully help to inspire researchers on other fields like anthropology, sociology and folklore to study the traditional values in the society.

1.5 Scope of the Study

The study has been conducted in *Rayya Qobbo*, the province which incorporates two of the twelve *wärädas* in North *Wällo* Zone of the Amhara National Regional State. In North *Wällo* there are twelve *wärädas*, which are inhabited by dominantly Amharic speaking people. Of these twelve *wärädas* the researcher has focused only on *Qobbo Wäräda* and *Qobbo* Town as chief sources of data. These *wärädas* are chosen, for the reason that, they serve as a host for the performances of *Shänäčča*.

Qobbo Wäräda is chosen as one of the study areas for the researcher has attended his elementary education there, and has acquaintance with members of the society that can help him being primary source of information and data. The other *Wäräda Qobbo* Town is selected because it is near to *Qobbo Wäräda* and apt for transportation. However, while

collecting data, priority has been given to rural *qäbäles* of these *wärädas* for the sake of originality of data.

Although it is obvious that folk poetry seems to be one of the most popular literary forms pervasive everywhere in Ethiopia in general, and *Rayya Qobbo* in particular, the study is not comprehensive in making a survey of themes and social functions of folk poetry in Ethiopia, North *Wällo* or even *Rayya Qobbo*, but it rather is limited only on *Shänäčča* which is one form of Amharic folk poetry.

Besides, because of the nature of folk literature to cross boundaries, recitation and performance of *Shänäčča* folk poetry is not also limited to the areas under focus. Rather, it is common to observe these social aspects in other neighboring *wärädas*, zones and regions; for example, *Habru*, *Gubalafito*, *Gidan*, and *Bugma Wärädas* of North *Wällo*, some parts of South *Wällo* Zone, Southern *Tigray* i.e. around *Rayya Azäbo*, and Eastern part of Afar can be taken as good examples. But the study only focuses on the two *wärädas* mentioned earlier.

Therefore, the themes and social functions that are explored in this thesis only concern the particular folk poetry under examination in *Rayya Qobbo*. Its degree of applicability in other types of folk poetry and places should be verified by other researchers.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

In most folkloristic studies there are problems during processes of data gathering. The collection of *Shänäčča* folk poetry by and large is not a different task from the other folkloristic studies.

The collection of *Shänäčča* folk poetry, in *Rayya Qobbo*, was not a simple task for the researcher. Apparently, *Shänäčča* ceremony in *Rayya Qobbo* is on the verge of oblivion. Perhaps, *wäräda* officials in culture and tourism bureaus took the lion's share for this; for they consider it as one of the

harmful traditions and working to eliminate it. The rationale for this is that, *Shānāc̣c̣a* costs the society lots of money and time in preparing the ceremony. Consequently, it has been difficult to find live performances of *Shānāc̣c̣a* ceremonies and record sufficiently enough *Shānāc̣c̣a* folk poetry for this study.

The other obscurity was, most of the informants could not recite *Shānāc̣c̣a* poems through interview and at artificial contexts in the absence of a stimulating real context. Thus, the researcher has been forced to make deals with relatives to arrange him real contexts. And even in doing so, convincing some of the *tuftāññas* about the researcher's mission was a tiresome task.

Besides, after managing these difficulties, the translation of *Shānāc̣c̣a* folk poetry into English equivalents was also a troublesome undertaking. The cultural elements carried through *Shānāc̣c̣a* folk poetry have also made the translation task tricky. Thus, emphasis has been given to the message of the poems than the form, and as a result, the English versions of the poems lose their rhyme, rhythm, and other poetic forms and this is also another limitation.

The classification of *Shānāc̣c̣a* folk poetry has also been another tiresome job; for it is difficult to deal with the possible overlap between themes and functions, and even between one function of a *Shānāc̣c̣a* poem with another. Besides, the nature of the *Shānāc̣c̣a* poems in carrying different messages and serving various functions has also been another predicament. Furthermore, the different themes and functions compressed in different lines of long *Shānāc̣c̣a* poems have also made the overall task exigent.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is to give the thesis a theoretical basis by discussing some basic terms and concepts and reviewing related studies. In so doing, the generic term, folklore –which embraced the main focus of this study i.e. folk poetry– is explained. This is also followed by a discussion in folk literature in general and folk poetry in particular. Finally, related studies are reviewed and the approaches that have been applied in this study are briefly elaborated.

2.1 Folklore

Folklore, as a generic term embraces different oral traditions and material cultures. Consequently, folk poetry, which is the main focus of this research, is one form of this broad area of knowledge. The definition of this umbrella term, ‘folklore’ has been an issue of academic debate ever since it was coined. Dundes (1965) claims that “debates about how folklore should be defined have been waged continuously ever since the word was coined in 1846 by William Thomas” (1). For further illustration over the existing controversy on the definition of folklore, Stith Thompson cited in *Mälaknäh* (1990) has to say the following:

Although the word folklore is more than a century old, no exact agreement has been reached as to its meaning. The common ideas presented in all folklore is that of traditions, something handed down from one person to another and preserved either by memory or practice rather than written record. It involves the dances, songs, tales and legends and traditions, the belief and superstitions and the proverbial sayings of the people everywhere. It also includes studies of customs of traditional agricultural and domestic practices, types of buildings and utensils and traditional aspects of social organization. But for the latter aspect there seems to be a general agreement to consider them when found in a primitive ... society, as part of ethnology rather than folklore. This latter division of labour is largely a matter of convenience

and is not universally accepted. At least among literate peoples, all the subjects mentioned above are considered as folklore, since all of them are truly traditional.

The above quotation seems to explain to us that folklore is of broad and difficult concept to give a simple and all inclusive single definition. This is also further supported by Maria Leach, who has listed about twenty-one different definitions of the term in the Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend. *Shibäshi* (1986), *Mälaknäh* and (1990), *Abdulqadir Haji* (1982) claim that looking in to some of the definitions collected by Maria Leach will help us to feel the magnitude of the controversy. The following two are from the materials mentioned above.

Folklore is that part of a people's culture which is preserved consciously or unconsciously, in beliefs and practices, customs and observances of general currency in myths, legends and tales of the same acceptance and in arts and crafts which express the temper and genius of a group rather than an individual. Because, it is a repository of popular traditions, and an integral element of popular "climate" folklore serves as a constant source and frame of reference for more formal literature and art, but it is distinct therefore in that it is essentially of the people, by the people and for the people.

(Theodore H. Gaster)

The following quotation resonates with the foregoing definition of Theodore H. Gaster.

Folklore is the generic term to designate the customs, beliefs, traditions, tales, magical practices, proverbs, songs, etc. in short, the accumulated knowledge of a homogenous unsophisticated people, tied together not only by physical bonds but also by emotional ones, which colour their every day expression, giving it unity and individual distinction.

(Maria Leach)

The above three quotations (including Thompson's) are too explanatory, for the reason that, the main focus is on the transmission, preservation and

function of folklore rather than its definition. Beside, these scholars tried to point out the different oral and cultural elements that folklore embraces than what it means.

This is evidently supported by Dundes (1965), for he states that “the most common criterion for a definition of folklore is its means of transmission that is orally” (1). And scholars like Okpewho (1992) focuses on its function. This, on the other hand signifies the predicament in defining the term folklore.

Focusing on the different oral and cultural traditions that this generic term embrace, (Dundes, 1965:6) and Dorson (1972:2-3), categorize folklore into four broad divisions. These are:

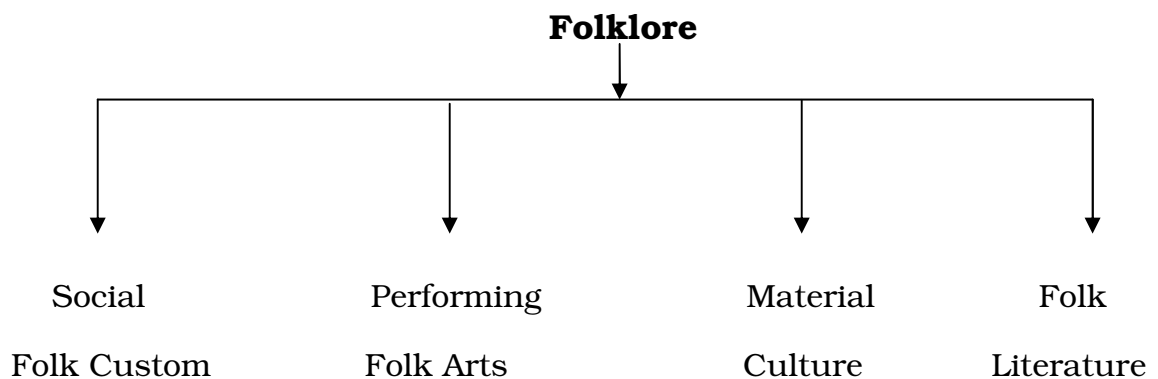
Social Folk Customs - which includes the people’s traditional beliefs, dressing styles and other ways of life;

Performing Folk Arts - such as traditional drama and song and dance;

Material Culture - traditional materials (tools) used by the society and

Folk Literature (Verbal arts) – which includes folk poetry, riddles, proverbs, myths, folktales, fairy tales, etc.

This can be summarized in a chart as follows.



Whatever the case may be, the foregoing explanations pointed out by scholars of the field folklore, give us some insight about what folklore means. But scholars like Bascom (1965) also give much emphasis to its function than other characteristics. Bascom in Dundes (1965:296) maintains that “to fully understand folklore and its role in man’s life, we must have more knowledge of the specific functions of each of these forms in various societies...”.

In general, the issues pointed above confirm that human beings use folklore for different purposes. Giving insight into the essential of folklore in general and its elements (like folk literature and folk poetry) in particular from different perspectives, it is possible to construe that most of the conceptions and definitions given by scholars in the field are highly related to its functions and different fields of studies that it incorporates.

2.1.1 Functions of Folklore

In folklore studies, Bascom (1965:279) states that, the view “every folklore item has to have a function in human life” was first developed by Bronislaw Malinowski. As it is bluntly stated earlier, most of the definitions given to folklore by scholars of the field are directly or indirectly related to its functions. This on the other hand leads to the question “what are the things that folklore does for us?”. In answering this question scholars came up with diverse and ample functions of folklore.

Apart from its difficulty to determine the role of this giant social element, there is no denying the fact that there are scholars who attempt to point out some of the major functions it serves. To begin with, Simiyu (1994) focuses on how folklore serves for multiple contemporary purposes that directly or indirectly refer to different aspects of human life. He further maintains that, folklore serves valuable functions by reflecting the popular social, cultural, political, economic and traditional practices. Miruka (1994)

and *Fäqadä* (1991) have also tried to generalize the functions of folklore in to four main categories, namely, to entertain, educate, validate culture and maintain conformity to accepted patterns of behavior. In a much more similar way to what is stated above Bascom (1965: 277) also state the following.

There are many diverse functions of folklore. Some of the most important functions of folklore include aiding in the education of the young, promoting a group feeling of solidarity, provide socially sanctioned ways for individuals, serving as a vehicle for social protest, offering an enjoyable escape from reality and converting a dull work in to a play.

The foregoing quotation confirms that folklore has unlimited role in a given society. This is also evidenced by its roles in educating and advising the young, creating social conformity among people by promoting moral purity, and strengthening cultural belongingness by encouraging good behavior and discouraging the immoral ones.

Besides, Bascom has also to say the following about the norm breaking role of folklore.

One of the most important single functions of folklore is permitting action that is usually not approved. There are in every culture words that should not be spoken and deeds that should not be done. However, the words and deeds appear in the folklore of these cultures. (ibid)

In generalizing his ideas Bascom (ibid) identified four main functions of folklore i.e. validation, maintaining conformity (control), to escape and to educate (ibid). These elements can be elaborated as follows.

Folklore, as the above scholar suggests, validates certain aspects of culture and justifies its rituals and institutions. In other terms, it helps to validate doubted patterns or to warn of subsequent consequences if necessary when

accepted practices are violated. Besides it also provides rationalizations when institutions and conventions are challenged.

The other function which Bascom (ibid) calls maintaining conformity plays roles in creating group cohesion and group feeling. This notion emphasizes the way folklore acts as a controlling factor. On the other hand, *Fäkadä* (1991) calls it control and suggests that, the process of folklore transmission certainly strengthens links between generations as well. In this process, the elderly gifted the young with knowledge and entertainment and the young gifted the elderly with attention and respect.

Bascom (1965) labels a third function of folklore, escape from something lacking in reality, and he suggests that folklore may serve as an ego building device in fantasy from frustrations and repressions and geographical environment and biological limitations.

Bascom (1965), Dorson (1972) and *Fäqadä* (1991) agree that a fourth function of folklore is to educate. Folklore can carry along and teach the history of a people as well as its cultural norms diligence, respect, perseverance, etc. Dangers and how to avoid them may also be pointed out.

While Carthy (2010) came up with another function of folklore and claims that, “no one labels entertainment as a function of folklore, it seems that one of the primary purposes served when a story is told is to interest, and provides fun or excitement”.

In the Ethiopian context, though there are not sufficient studies and explorations to satisfy our ego, the notable scholar *Fäqadä Azäzä*, who has been encouraging, facilitating and conducting researches in this field, has continuously emphasizing the significance functions of folklore in socio-economic and political situations of the country. As to him, folklore can function in preserving heritage, formulation of rural development strategies, conceptualization of formal education and enrichment of literary works.

The function of folklore on the other hand seems to have connection with the different items it embraces. This is well stated by Bascom (1965) as he states that “different types of folklore can share similar, if not identical functions. [...] It is equally important to realize that any one item of folklore may have different functions” (279). This notion leads to the claim that, the function of folklore has something to do with the types and aspects of folklore to be studied. Accordingly, Okpewho (1992:5) groups folklore in to two categories i.e. what the people traditionally say (folk literature) and what the people traditionally do (material culture). On the other hand Dorson (1972:3-5) came up with four categories of folklore namely, folk literature, folk custom, performing art and material culture. Hereafter, it is pertinent to deal with folk literature for it embraces the main focus of this study i.e. folk poetry.

2.1.2 Folk Literature

The world of folk literature is immense. In the history of mankind’s artistic experience folk literature is among the different types of traditions that have the highest rank and as old as human beings. However, it is “identified by various scholars by such terms as oral literature, orature, traditional literature, and folklore” (Okpewho, 1992:1).

In addition to the various names given to folk literature scholars have not tried to provide its definition in all inclusive and exact terms. This does not mean there are no attempts to define the term. For instance, Dundus (1965:7) defines folk literature as “orally transmitted literature whatever found, among primitive isolates or civilized marginal cultures, urban or rural societies, dominant or subordinate groups”.

In this definition the focus is on its way of transmission, the where about of its performance and related issues rather than what it mean. By the same

token, Nandwa and Bukenya (1983:1) in Okpewho (1992) state the following.

Folk literature may be defined as those utterances, whether spoken, recited or sung, whose composition and performance exhibit to an appreciable degree the artistic characteristics of accurate observation, vivid imagination and ingenious expression (4).

From all these, it is possible to claim that, folk literature is the sum of oral works, both poetry and prose, which are produced usually by anonymous authors and are preserved in the people's memory for a long time by being passed on orally from generation to generation. But the definition given in the above quotation is a “may be” one which does not insure a confidence about what folk literature is. Underlining on the difficulty of defining the term, instead of giving a definition Okpewho (ibid) also focuses on what is depicted in the different names given to the term.

Supporting this notion Dorson (1972), Finnegan (1970), *Fäqadä* (1991) and *Bīrhanu* (1999) comment that the best way to understand what folk literature is by looking in to its characteristics, functions and forms, rather than simply stating what it means.

2.1.2.1 Characteristics of Folk Literature

Folk literature, as a genre, has its own characteristics. If one focuses on its medium of transmission folk literature can also be termed as oral literature. As it is discussed in the foregoing sub sections the two terms can be used interchangeably. As a result, most of the following characteristics of folk literature are explored and exploited in relation with oral literature.

Concentrating on the more obvious properties of folk/oral literature, the notable scholar on African oral literature, Ruth Finnegan, has identified some characteristics of folk literature. These are: actual performance,

improvisation and original composition, the audience and the actual occasion.

The first and the most basic characteristics of folk literature is actual performance. Finnegan (1972) asserts that “oral literature by definition is dependent on a performer, who formulates it in words in a specific occasion” (2). This actual performance includes devices such as expressiveness of tone, gesture, facial expression, dramatic use of pause and rhythm, the interplay of passion, receptivity to the reaction of the audience, etc. She further creates a connection between the above characteristics of folk literature with its transmission and existence. Hence, it will not be a mistake to consider actual performance as the only way through which folk literature realizes itself as a literary product.

The second characteristic of folk literature which happens during the actual performance is the question of improvisation and original composition (Finnegan, 1970:7). She further maintains that:

Something more may be involved in the delivery of an oral piece than the fact of its actualization and re-creation in and through the performances aided by a technique of delivery that heightens its artistic effectiveness. ... The performer introduces variations on older pieces or even totally new forms in terms of the detailed wording, the structure or the content (ibid).

From this quotation one can infer that, how this kind of innovation is highly dependent on the kind of genre, individual performer and the question of original composition is a difficult one. This on the other hand creates verbal variability which is a significant character of folk literature.

A further essential factor which is often directly involved in the actualization and creation of a piece of folk literature is the audience (ibid). Since a face-to-face confrontation between the performer and the audience is unavoidable during performances, the performer can exploit it or

influenced by his audience. Apparently it will influence the mood of the performer and contributes something to the content and form of that literary expression. So, it is possible to deduce that audience in folk literature is something influential in the actual performance.

Finnegan (1970:11) also came up with another important characteristic of oral literature that can have an effect on both the content and form; that is the actual occasion. Folk literature tends to be involved in the occasions of its utterances, so its form of delivery and content can be directly influenced by its actual occasion. Regarding this point, Finnegan maintains that “most of oral performances are ‘occasional’ in that it is designed and arises from particular situation. ... Appropriateness to the occasion may be more highly value” (ibid). That is why the performer of oral piece could thus be said to be more involved in actual social situation.

To put the issue in a nutshell, folk literature as other forms folklore has its own characteristics. Though, its characteristics are not specifically limited to some points, the above are among the viably major ones. And these characteristics help one to properly understand what folk poetry means and how it functions in a society.

2.1.2.2 Social Relevance of Folk Literature

No society appears to be without verbal arts, and no folk literature appears without function or social relevance. Though, the functions of folk literature differs from genre to genre, most scholars in the field of folklore and folk literature have tried to identify some. Okpewho (1992) and *Fäqadä* (1991) maintained that folk literature serves a given society by giving explanation to natural happenings, build identity and natural pride, record historical events and facts, and play a great role in educational purpose and entertainment.

Most of the functions discussed by these scholars are somewhat similar to that of the significance of folklore. However, Okpewho (1992) in a more generalized manner considered “entertainment and relaxation”, “asserting interests and outlooks”, “teaching ideals and conducts” and “recording life” as some of the major social significances of folk literature.

Whatever roles it plays and has diverse functions, folk literature in any society appears in two forms – prose and verse. Finnegan (1970) states that, folk literature can be categorized in to two broad groups. These are poetic and prose narrative forms, which again comprises different genres that can be studied and classified.

According to Finnegan’s classification folk poetry is the poetic or verse form of folk literature. And issues related to its definitions and conceptions will be presented in the following section.

2.1.3 Folk Poetry

In the previous sections issues related to the characteristics and functions of folk literature have been discussed. In this section the focus is on folk poetry, which is the main target of the research.

Mentioning folk poetry as one of the fundamental branches of folk literature; *Shibäshi* (1986) states that it is the oldest form of verbal art. Furthermore, *Gete* also states that “folk poetry is the most common form of folk literature through which people’s internal feelings as well as serious issues are expressed or brought to the fore in response to the physical world” (2000:1).

Besides, scholars in the field of folklore and folk literature in general and folk poetry in particular, seems to agree that giving a precise definition to the term folk poetry is a difficult undertaking, like that of the umbrella terms, folklore and folk literature. Nevertheless, it is also common to see attempts to define this generic term too.

Mentioning the possibility of diverse definitions and conceptions of the term, in the Wikipedia the Free Encyclopedia it is stated that “folk poetry is poetry that is composed and transmitted without any aid of writing”. In this definition the focus is on its composition and transmission – that is orally. Similarly, Lord (1965:1) in Finnegan (1977) defined it as “poetry composed in oral performance by people who cannot read or write”. In this particular definition, apparently, the emphasis is also on the composers, i.e. non-literate people. Thus, it is possible to presume that these definitions are limited, for the reason that, folk poetry can be found among people who can read and write.

On the other hand, *Fäqadä* (1991), being aware of the nuance in the academia on this issue, gives a relatively wider definition; “poetry that is composed, performed, transmitted and preserved orally and rhythmically through songs and other ways which have a similar musical element” (86). In this definition, in addition to the above discussed elements, *Fäqadä* brought to the fore the issue of rhythm and musical element, which are among the typical characteristics of folk poetry.

Finnegan in contradiction with Notopolus’s statement (cited in Finnegan, 1977:8), which states that, “... folk poetry is something clear and distinctive, with known characteristics and setting, and that to isolate it to study is in principle a simple matter” (1964:50), attests that the whole concept of folk poetry is a complex and variegated one. She further maintains that, many generalizations made about folk poetry are over-simplified and misleading.

The main reasons Finnegan (ibid) pointed out to complement this argument are the many various forms that folk poetry appears and its appearances in different cultural situations. The points made above by this scholar seem inevitably acceptable because folk poetry by its very nature is heterogeneous.

At this juncture, the point worth stressing is the notion stated by Finnegan (1977), Okpewho (1992) and *Fäqadä* (1991). These scholars state that the best way to understand what folk poetry is by looking into its features and characteristics. Perhaps, folk poetry shares the characteristics of folk literature (the wider term which includes folk poetry and oral prose) which are discussed earlier, and it will not be significantly important to re-discuss them here again. However, it will be valuable to see some of the features which are particularly specific and relevant to folk poetry.

One of the many features of folk poetry is its musical setting. Finnegan (1977) states that “much of what is normally classed as poetry ... is designed to be performed in a musical setting, and the musical and verbal elements are thus interdependent” (4). Supporting this, *Fäqadä* (1991) also commented on the difficulty of understanding and appreciating the beauty and flavor of folk poetry without the knowledge of literature and music. Therefore, it is possible to state that explaining poetry without its musical element is a difficult task, and musical elements are among the typical characteristics of folk poetry which distinguishes it from the prose ones.

The other important feature which is connected with its musical nature is accompaniment. On this issue, Okpewho (1992) maintains that, during performance folk poetry will be accompanied by movements of different parts of the body, such as face and hands. In addition to this musical instruments and cultural materials also can accompany a given oral performance.

Poetic devices can also be considered as other important features of folk poetry. Conceivably, these devices include repetition, rhythm, alliteration, parallelism, assonance, tonality, and other elements (ibid, 71-104).

In general, these features, including those it shares with oral prose (since it is one form of folk literature) gives some idea about what folk poetry means.

Besides, like the umbrella term folk literature the occurrence of folk poetry appears to be culture universal. Finnegan (1977) and Kipury (1983) states that, folk poetry is of common occurrence in literate and non-literate society with diverse functions. Therefore, folk poetry shares the social significance and function discussed under folk poetry. That is, entertaining people, asserting interests and out looks, teaching ideals and conducts and recordings life.

2.1.4 Social Function of Folk Poetry

In the foregoing sub-sections it is discussed that folkloric items have roles in a given society ranging from entertainment to education and cultural recording. Folk poetry, as the other forms of folkloric items, has also its own functions and roles in a given society. Supporting this, Miruka (1994:118) stating the very mundane, philosophical and abstract nature of his classifications, identified five functions of folk poetry. These are socialization, aesthetics, interfluence, social commentary and cultural and historical record.

To look in to some details, what Miruka (ibid) calls socialization is the role of folk poetry as a way of fitting one in to a social fabric. This on the other hand reflects the role of folk poetry in creating social relationship while people participate in its performances. What this scholar identified as aesthetic function is also the beauty that lies in the language of the folk poetry.

According to Miruka (1994:120) interfluence is the coming together of two or more genres. For example, in folk poetry recitation there may also appear proverbs and narratives. Social commentary is also another important aspect of social function which is identified by this scholar, and it is concerned about how people react with certain social acts with folk poetry. The other role of folk poetry identified is cultural and historical record. Any

society, as Finnegan (1970), Okpewho (1972) and Dorson (1972) attested, can be studied through its folk literature. Therefore, this presupposes a record of culture and history in the oral traditions of that society. Thus, folk poetry is not a deviant form in this context, and it is this wit which is considered as social function by Miruka (1994) and the foregoing scholars.

On the whole, folk poetry, if it is viewed from the functionalists' perspective, has roles which a given society served. Thus, it is these roles which are considered as social functions by the foregoing scholars.

So far, an attempt is made to discuss what folklore and folk literature in general and folk poetry in particular means and the diverse functions of these aspects of human traditions are also viewed. In the following section researches that have been conducted on folk/oral poetry and have connection with the present study will be reviewed.

2.2 Review of Related Studies

In countries like ours, the life of the society is inextricably bound with its folk literature. However, folk literature in Ethiopia has not been studied sufficiently. Even though, it is hard to deny the fact that, there is a growing interest of research works in the area, there still is a great potential of literature to be studied.

Folk poetry is one branch of folk literature; and despite its importance and role in the society, as far as the researchers best knowledge, it has not given due attention. Specifically the issue of *Shānāčča* is not addressed and explored by any researcher. However, since the focus of this research is on Amharic folk poetry, the following researches seem to share some points with the present study.

Shibāsh (1986) has conducted his MA thesis on “Famine Inspired Amharic Oral Poetry” with the objective of thematically analyzing famine inspired

poems collected from South *Wällo*. By so doing, he has tried to show how the collected poems mirror the psychological and physical state of the drought affected groups of the society. Besides he has also classified the poems based on their major themes.

Daniel (1998) has also done his MA thesis on “Red-Terror Inspired Oral Poems in *Gojjam* and Gondar”. By collecting and contextually analyzing the major themes of red-Terror inspired poems, he has also tried to bring insight in to the physical and emotional experience of the victimized groups. And finally classified the poems based on their themes.

Mäsfīn (2000), in his MA thesis, has also dealt with “*Abawude* Oral Poems” collected from South *Wällo*. In his study he has assessed issues related with the performance, composition and recitation of “*Abawude*” oral poems. Finally, he has also come up with five genres of “*Abawude* Oral Poems” classified based on a combinations of different approaches, i.e. themes, local names, contexts and stylistic features.

Bīrihanu's (1998) MA thesis is also among the researches which are relevant to be reviewed in the present study. This thesis attempts to discuss Islamic oral poetry in its social context. The objective of this research has been identifying the various genres of Islamic oral poetry, their occasion of recital, context, functions and stylistic quality. By so doing, *Bīrihanu* has identified five occasions of poetry recitals and four genres classified based on terminologies.

Aläbaččew (2007) in his MA thesis “Socio-Economic and Political Issues in Wag *Him̄ra* Oral Poetry” also deals with poems of Wag *Him̄ra* people with the objective of discussing occasions of recital and classification of the oral poetry. Thus, the research is limited to the extent that it collect and analyze only fifty four poems (most of them couplets) of different forms of oral

poetry and come up with some classifications based on issues raised in the poems.

The other research which shares some points with the present study is *Täsiffaye's* (2007) "Subject Matter Analysis of Amharic Oral Lyric Poetry in *Rayya*". The purpose of this research has been to see the peoples thought, feelings, beliefs, hopes and ways of living through thematic analysis of the poems collected from the area. Though, there is not clearly mentioned way of classification, he came up with five genres oral poetry. Besides, the research does not seem to treat all the oral lyric poems, since there are various types of such oral treasure in the area including *Shänäčča*.

Viewing the foregoing researches from different angles, in relation with *Shänäčča* folk poetry, it is possible to claim that these studies are far from complete for the reason that; they are specific in their collection and did not completely treat this genre of folk poetry, on the one hand and they did not handle the issue of social function of Amharic folk poetry in general and *Shänäčča* folk poetry in particular on the other hand.

In general, as far as the researcher's best knowledge, no research endeavor has been done under the framework of *Shänäčča* folk poetry. Besides, these researches did not treat the social functions that folk poetry serves the people that perform and recite it. Thus, it is important to have study which makes its overall focus on *Shänäčča* folk poetry.

Taking the above discussed points and gaps into considerations, the present researcher has tried to study *Shänäčča* folk poetry of the people of *Rayya Qobbo*, which is among the particular forms of folk poetry.

2.3 Theoretical Frame-work

Since the study of folk literature and or folk poetry has been central to the discipline of folkloristics, the many views of theories and methods provided by folklorists will be relevant to the study of folk poetry. In view of this, the known folklorist Richard M. Dorson in Folklore and Folklife: An Introduction published in 1972, discusses a number of theoretical points that can be used as a theoretical framework in the field of folklore researches and currently vie for acceptance.

As a result, Dorson (ibid) has identified about twelve theories of folklore that can be applied in the study of oral literature. These theories are; historical-geographical, historical-reconstructional, ideological, functional, psychoanalytical, structural, oral formulaic, cross-cultural, folk cultural, mass-cultural, hemispheric and contextual.

Some scholars have also tried to develop different theories and approaches that can be used in analyzing and classifying particular folkloric elements. Miruka (1994), which can be taken as a good example for this particular point, has identified seven criteria that can be used to classify folk poetry; namely: traditional, thematic, functional, contextual, personal, structural and stylistic.

Among these theories, the present researcher has found the functional and contextual approaches specifically relevant to the present research.

2.3.1 Functional Approach

As it is briefly stated in the sub section, “Functions of Folklore” the functional approach was first developed by Bronislaw Mlinowsky, from the view that everything in human life must have a function. Similarly, according to this approach, in folklore studies every folklore item has to

have a function. Consequently, citing Bascom (1926) Dorson calls attention to various functions of folklore.

Proverbs help settle legal decisions, riddles sharpen wits, myths validate conduct, satirical songs release pent – up hostilities. ... So a living recitation delivered to a responsive audience for such cultural purposes as a reinforcement of custom and taboo, pedagogical explanations of the natural world, application of pressure for conventional behaviour (1972:21).

The above quotation confirms that a folkloric item in its social context has its own functions. So that, the functional approach helps to utilize the particular function that a given oral tradition plays in a given society.

In a more detailed manner, Miruka (1994: 100) attested that, the functional approach is a way of classifying folk poetry according to its didactic or artistic purpose. According to this scholar, the focus is on questions like “what are the words of the poem supposed to convey?” and “is the poem supposed to praise, satire, lament, encourage, indoctrinate, or just entertain?” Therefore, from the above discussions it is possible to infer that, in using the functional approach or criteria, we have to also understand the themes or messages that are conveyed through the words of the folk poems.

The foregoing discussed points lead to the consideration of an additional approach to the present study, that is, contextual.

2.3.2 Contextual Approach

Contextual approach, according to Dorson (1972), is applicable to analyze the meaning and functions of folkloric items by considering its social context.

Supporting this notion, Bascom (1965:281) argues that folklore comes in to use in its social and cultural context. Thus, the folklore text is extremely important but without the context it is lifeless. Similarly, Murphy (1978)

clarifies that social context is crucial not simply to understand social life but to better interpret the text. Concerning this particular point Norick in *Taddäsä* (2004) asserts that “it is impossible to understand the function of folk literature out of its context, as its function and content are always associated with its context” (149 – 151).

According to Miruka (1994: 101) the social context of a folk poem refers to the where, when and the circumstances of a performance. He further maintains that the social context gives it an immediate application of meaning.

In applying the functional and contextual approaches to *Shänäčča* folk poetry in this research; first, discussions on the general background and the social context in which *Shänäčča* folk poetry is recited and performed has to be made. Besides, identification of the occasions of *Shänäčča* performances is an avoidable task. This, as stated above by Miruka, is helpful in identifying the themes and functions of the folk poetry under examination. In doing so, figurative speeches, particularly metaphorical expressions which carry different contextual messages should also be considered. After that, classifying the poems based on the purposes that they played in their contexts of performance is plainly applicable.

To sum up, by considering the above discussed points, the researcher has found the functional and contextual approaches relevant to the present study. Consequently, the study has looked at the different social and cultural settings to identify the themes and functions of *Shänäčča* folk poetry, and the classification has been done based on the functional approach.

2.3.4 Operational Definition of Social Function

As the focus of this study is on the Social Function of *Shänäčča* folk poetry, the researcher has found providing an operational definition to what social function in folk poetry means a necessary task.

Miruka (1994) in defining what social function of poetry means, states that “poetry, whether recited, declaimed or sung, has got certain ends to meet. It is these ends that we call social functions” (118). In this context, this scholar attests that folk poetry has its own social functions and the functions are counted on the roles they play in a given society.

This thesis considers social function as a role which *Shänäčča* folk poetry serves the people of *Rayya Qobbo*. To this end, any role of this particular form of Amharic folk poetry is considered as a social function.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS AND PROCEDURES

This section deals with methods that have been used in gathering, analyzing and classifying data. Furthermore, it raises issues related to the selection and transcription of *Shänäčča* folk poetry that has been gathered in *Rayya Qobbo* using different methods.

This research is a purely qualitative one, and presents thematic and functional analysis of *Shänäčča* folk poetry collected from *Rayya Qobbo*. In conducting this study, more than seventy *Shänäčča* poems were collected from *tuftännnas* and elders of *Qobbo wäräda* and *Qobbo* town. The collection data has been accomplished between 26th of March and 14th April 2010, and the collection and analysis of *Shänäčča* folk poetry were done by applying different instruments and procedures.

3.1 Data Collecting Instruments

The success of a research, specially, in the fields of folk literature highly depends on its methodology and instruments of data collection. Thus, the researcher, in order to achieve the objectives of this research, has employed participant observation and interview.

In most folkloristic studies there are problems during processes of data gathering. One is members of the society may become suspicious of the researcher's mission. The case of the people of *Rayya Qobbo* is not a different one. And in this study area there are influences from different levels of administration and Media agencies by considering some cultural elements as harmful practices; and these were also causes which aggravate the problem. However, the researcher has tried to overcome such difficulties using different techniques.

At the outset, the researcher has asked the Department of Foreign Language and Literature to write him a letter of cooperation to *Qobbo*

wārāda and *Qobbo* town Culture and tourism bureaus. Then, after necessary preparations for the field work the researcher has traveled directly to *Rayya Qobbo* and made contacts with officials that have direct relationship with the issue. At this particular moment, the researcher, as a native in those *wārādas*, has also exploited his acquaintances with these officials to make the process smooth. Through these ways, the researcher got permission to carry out the fieldwork in the target *wārādas*. Furthermore, the researcher also gathered information about the where and when of *Shänäčča* performances from these *wārāda* officials.

Into the bargain, looking for old friends and relatives has also been found necessary to get hold of assistance for the fieldwork. With the help of these old friends and relatives, fifteen informants who are knowledgeable in composing, reciting and performing *Shänäčča* folk poetry has been identified. Among these fifteen informants, the researcher has found seven of them having former relations with him, and this made the establishment of the rapport he has planned smooth. Besides, before any trial of data collection a week has been spent in establishing rapport with the other elders, who compose, recite and perform the folk poems under examination. All this has been done by giving some incentives and meager invitations to informants and assistances.

3.1.1 Observation

In order to collect folk poetry in a given society, it is pertinent to use observation. Having this in mind, the researcher, after identifying the where and when about of *Shänäčča* ceremonies, has tried to observe as many performances of *Shänäčča* folk poetry as possible.

Surprisingly enough, it was hard for the researcher to find live performances and ceremony of *Shänäčča* in the research area. Therefore, he has made contacts with relatives, one in Kobo *wārāda*, in a small village

known as *Täkuläsh* (a place where the present researcher has completed his elementary education) and the other in *Qobbo* town (a town in which the present researcher has attend his secondary education), to arrange *Shänäčča* ceremonies. After all the preparations, on the day of the ceremony the *tuftäññas* were told that the present researcher, as a native in that area, want to tape and video record it, to document and study his and or their tradition. Astonishingly, most of the *tuftäññas* were happy and even supportive in all circumstances of the researcher's observation and to be tape and video recorded. This has been done by enlightening them about the oblivion of cultural legacies like *Shänäčča* and the drawbacks that can be followed.

After all this has been done, the observation and tape and video recording of *Shänäčča* folk poetry were plain. Besides, all the necessary expense for the preparation of the ceremony, local food and drinks has been covered by the researcher.

In addition to this, artificial context has been also arranged and some poems were collected by tape recording the performance. This was arranged in a small village, named *Aradum*, near to *Qobbo* town, in a local bar (*tälla bet*), by inviting elders who can recite *Shänäčča* folk poetry. At this particular moment three *tuftäññas* were invited and informed about the researchers mission, and were also cooperative too. These *tuftäññas* were invited local drink (*tälla*) and recitations were also tape recorded. But, for them, it was not an easy task to recite *Shänäčča* folk poems detached from their real context, and the poems recorded through this method were very much limited and fragmented. Through all these performances the researcher has done his observation and recordings being a participant observer.

3.1.2 The Interview Paradigm

The other type of data collection method that has been implemented in this research was interview. In this case, the researcher has focused not only on informants who are identified knowledgeable in composing, reciting and performing *Shānāc̣c̣a* folk poetry, but also officials in the *wārādas* who have responsibilities in cultural and tourism bureaus and related areas. In addition to this, elders (who are not *tuftāññas*) who can recite the types of folk poems to be recorded have also been selected as informants. On top of this, the researcher has made acquaintance with his informants in advance in order to create intimacy and make the collection of the data smooth and successful.

Having done all this, the researcher with his assistances has collected all the possible *Shānāc̣c̣a* folk poems recited through informal interview. In doing so, the recording has been made using tape recorder and some incentives has also been given to informants. In this case, reciting *Shānāc̣c̣a* poems without the initiating real context was also a hindrance and most of the poems collected through this method were fragments of long *Shānāc̣c̣a* poems. This informal interview has also been used to get insights about the possible functions themes and contexts and occasions of performances of *Shānāc̣c̣a* folk poetry.

Furthermore, efforts has been made to collect documented *Shānāc̣c̣a* poems in the two *wārādas*' culture and tourism bureaus and shockingly the researcher has got no documented evidences about *Shānāc̣c̣a* folk poetry, except a preliminary study on harmful practices which also label *Shānāc̣c̣a* as a bad practice without detail examinations.

3.2 Procedures of the Study

The data collected through the above instruments have also been processed by applying different procedures. The procedure focuses on transcription, translation and analysis of data.

3.2.1 Transcription, Translation and Analysis of Data

The collection of data has been followed by transcription, translation and analysis. Transcribing recorded texts on paper has been carried out soon after field works. It has also been done by listening to the recorded texts repeatedly until the researcher has fully understood the messages and there followed transcription of the data. By doing so, the *Shānāčča* poems collected through interview and recording live performances were transcribed and organized separately to make the whole task plain. The total number of the *Shānāčča* folk poems that has been collected through the foregoing instruments was seventy three. Among these poems forty were selected for the analysis. And the researcher has found the rest replications and fragments of the others, and avoided to manage redundancies.

Then, as the texts are in Amharic the researcher has translate them into their English meanings. In doing so, emphasis has been given to the themes rather than the forms. Because of this, possible distortions in the rhythm, rhyme and other qualities of the translated English versions are tolerated.

Finally, major social functions and themes of *Shānāčča* folk poetry has been identified, and forty *Shānāčča* poems have been classified according to their social functions and analyzed based on some theoretical frameworks.

3.2.2 Method of Classification

The transcription and translation of the data have been followed by classification. Though, there are various ways of classifications suggested by different scholars in the field of folklore, the researcher finds what is claimed by Dorson (1972) appropriate for his study. Mentioning that his theories are mutually inclusive the above scholar has come up with twelve theories to the study of folklore. These are, historical-geographical, historical-reconstructional, ideological, functional, psychoanalytical, structural, oral formulaic, cross-cultural, folk cultural, mass-cultural, hemispheric and contextual.

Considering its relevance to the present study the researcher has found the functional approach appropriate for his thesis. And consequently, classification of *Shānāčča* folk poetry has been done based on this approach. In this context, the researcher also find it impossible to classify the poems based on their functions without dealing with the themes; and contextual analysis of the *Shānāčča* poems has also been applied in this research.

CHAPTER FOUR: CEREMONIES AND OCCASIONS OF SHÄNÄČČA PERFORMANCES

Folkloric forms of any society emerge from the socio-cultural life of that society. Miruka (1994) states that, folk literature is sturdily related to the social realities and traditional practices of a society; and familiarity with these situations can help to understand what is meant by a particular folk form of a society. Therefore, it can be claimed that, folk poetry as one aspect of folklore in general and *Shänäčča* folk poetry in particular has to be treated in such a way if it has to be understood properly.

As any other forms of folk literature, *Shänäčča* folk poetry, in *Rayya Qobbo*, flourishes from the social and cultural life of the people. Thus, in order to investigate the themes and functions of this particular form of folk poetry in *Rayya Qobbo*, it is pertinent to understand the overall context in which it is performed. Therefore, this chapter by and large deals with ceremonies and occasions of performances of *Shänäčča* folk poetry.

4.1 Ceremonies of *Shänäčča* (*Tufiṭa*)

In *Rayya Qobbo*, *Shänäčča* folk poetry is composed, recited and performed in a social folk custom (ritual) known as *Tufiṭa*. The term *tufiṭa*, according to the researcher's informants is related to the actions of the *tuftäññas*, i.e. they after a full round of blessing through *Shänäčča* folk poetry will breathe on the drink which is given to the one who is in possession of the blessing. However, most people in the area used the terms, *Shänäčča* and *Tufiṭa*, interchangeably. But sometimes the former is used to mention the folk poetry recited and the latter to the folk custom or ceremonial process.

According to the custom and belief in this area, it is believed that those who are blessed through *Shänäčča* will succeed in every aspect of life. Consequently, the performances in this social element vary according to the

reasons and occasions of its presentations. Accordingly, ceremonies may be prepared inside homes, under trees or around farm places.

In *Shänäčča (Tuftä)*, most of the time, old people (all males) will be invited to pray for those people who are responsible for the preparation of the ceremony. Hence, local drinks like *ḥälla* and *Aräqi*, local foods like *Injära* with *Wäḥ* and bread will be prepared and served. Besides, a coffee ceremony is a must one.

On the day of the ceremony, the invited older people who can compose and recite *Shänäčča (tuftäññas)* will arrive soon after lunch time. According to the custom, the number of these *tuftäññas* should be three, five or seven; because it is believed that odd numbers call for good sprit. In addition relatives and neighbors, who are invited, will join the party.

The *tuftäññas* at their arrival will elect the elderly one among them as the leader of the whole performance. Soon after, following their leader, the *tuftäññas* will put a small lath of olive tree each around the door and spread out fresh grass on the floor; for it is believed that such things are signs of hope and calls for good sprit too. Then, the *tuftäññas* will sit in a half circle in front of those who are going to be blessed (most of the time male, sometimes with their wife and children) and will start drinking *ḥälla*. Soon the leader will begin the blessing by the recitation of *Shänäčča* poems; by saying:

እግዚአብሔር ይሰጣችሁ፤

May God give you what you are requesting for,

/አሜን/

/Amen/

ኑሩ ተባረኩ፤

May you live a blessed life,

/አሜን/

/Amen/

ያሰጣችሁት ይሙላ።

And, may your wishes come true.

/አሜን/

/Amen/

During the performance of *Shänäčča* when one of the *tuftäññas* recite a poem every audience has to participate by saying “Amen” or “*Yihun*” to mean “let it happen”. The recitation of *Shänäčča* will continue by the *tuftäññas* by taking turns, and sometimes male audiences are also allowed in the recitation of poems.

After a continuous performance of one to two hours, food will be served to everyone in the ceremony and the recitation will go again. Finally, coffee will be served and the *tuftäññas* will leave the house of their hosts at the sun set, wishing their hosts all the best in their future.

4.2 Major Performance Occasions of *Shänäčča*

In *Rayya Qobbo*, where the *Shänäčča* poems for this study were collected, recitations and performances take place throughout the year. However, there are common occasions in which the *Tufita* rituals performed and *Shänäčča* folk poetry recited.

To mention the major occasions for the performance of *Shänäčča*, in *Rayya Qobbo*, Wedding (*särīg*), Traditional Conflict Management (*Zäwäld ħrīg*), the coming of farming and harvesting seasons, *däbo* and construction of new houses are identified.

4.2.1 Wedding (*Särīg*)

In *Rayya Qobbo*, as it is in most part of Ethiopia, wedding is considered as an important and basic social phenomenon, and of course it is since it serves as a starting point of family formation. In this area, wedding, most of the time takes place in January till the beginning of Lent (a two month long fasting period for Orthodox Christians) and sometimes in April, immediately after Easter. Surprisingly enough, not only the majority Christians, but also the Muslims follow these communal schedules. It is because of the custom

that people with different religion celebrate such phenomena together and there is no religious discrimination in the area.

As elsewhere in Ethiopia, people in *Rayya Qobbo* are eager to see the marriage of their children. Besides, people are accustomed to big feasts during wedding ceremonies. This is because of the custom and attitude of the people that preparing wedding ceremonies in a highly stylized ways and arranging big feasts is considered as a sign of respect and wealth. In doing so, with the help of relatives and neighbors local food and drinks will be prepared and then follows the wedding ceremony.

In *Rayya Qobbo*, performances of different kinds of rituals and recitations of folk poetries are common before, during and after wedding ceremonies. *Shänäčča* is among the different kinds of folk poetries performed and recited in connection with wedding parties. The rituals of *Shänäčča* most of the time, performed some days before the wedding ceremony and sometimes few days after the party, at the time of honeymoon. In this particular society it is believed that such rituals help to make marriages successful and facilitate fertility.

4.2.2 Traditional Dispute Management (*Zäwäld ĩrĩq*)

Zäwäld is a traditional way of managing dispute, which is known and performed around North *Wällo* in general and *Rayya Qobbo* in particular. According to *Käbädä* (1997), this social and communal experience has a long age of history beginning from *Zämanä Mäsafĩnt* (1761 – 1847). This social trend has got its name from a known wise leader and administrator who had been voluntarily serving the people of Lasta by intelligently judging cases and managing disputes. That is why, *Käbädä* (ibid) states that, *Zäwäld* was among the few pioneer traditional leaders in North *Wällo*; and this social institution has got its name from this person.

Käbbädä (ibid), further maintains that, in times when there were no modern courts this social institution has played different roles in bringing about peace in the society. Even these days, it is legally granted recognition and is still active in *Rayya Qobbo* and neighboring *wärädas*. The mediators in *Zäwäld* are always elderly men and those who are considered as icons in the society. In the mediation process these people also considers the socio-economic and historical situations of the society.

Zäwäld ħriq, most of the time, focuses on mediating peace treaty between families of a killer (killers) and families of deceased, when there is murder, in order to bring to an end the killing of each other for vengeance. In doing so, wise and elderly men (called *Zäwäld*) who have special connection with the deceased family will be elected and begin the mediation. In most cases such treaties are accomplished with success, because those who reject the *Zäwäld* will be discriminated from the society. Furthermore, a sum total amount of money ranging from five thousand to twenty thousand birr collected from the families of those at fault will be given as indemnity to the families of the deceased. Following this, a peace treaty will be signed and submitted to the *Wäräda* or Zone Court of Justice.

In *Zäwäld* there are also different performances of rituals including *Shänäčča*. *Shänäčča* is performed and recited in places where the guilty are hidden. The reason for the celebration of this folk custom and recitation of folk poetry is to pray for peace.

4.2.3 Communal Labour (*Däbo*)

As in many parts of Ethiopia, *däbo* in *Rayya Qobbo* is among the commonly practiced traditional ways of cooperation where by people willingly contribute their labour and tools to carry out certain urgent and time required tasks at peak seasons. According to the researcher's informants,

däbo is a form of mutual assistance that incurs considerable costs in terms of finance, material and labour.

From interviews with some farmers in *Rayya Qobbo*, the researcher have understood that, people organize themselves and form *däbo* to easily manage difficult and time taking works. For example, at peak agricultural seasons such as ploughing, weeding, harvesting, threshing, and construction of new houses, etc. *däbo* plays great roles.

Däbo as community based mutual helping agreement those who organize the *däbo* should also work for those who helped them. Besides, the host is expected to provide food and drink for the participants. The number of *däbo* members varies according to the type of work. If the size of the *däbo* team is large the amount of food and drink items also will be much accordingly. All the food and drinks will be prepared at home and will be taken to the *däbo* site and this will be carried out by women and children of the hosts and their neighbors.

Däbo, in *Rayya Qobbo*, as it calls for social gathering, also serves as an occasion of verities of folk poetry recitals, including *Shänäčča*. During *däbo* *Shänäčča* is performed after the accomplishment of the work and when the participants finish their meal and start drinking. At this particular time, elderly men and those who partake in the work will participate in the recitation *shänäčča* folk poetry.

4.2.4 Faming and Harvesting Seasons

In *Rayya Qobbo*, March, April and May are considered as farming (ploughing) seasons. During this season farmers prepare their tools and start ploughing their lands to prepare it for sowing seeds. Specially, farmlands that are used for planting sorghum should be tilled during months of April and March.

From interviews with some farmers and *wäräda* officials the researcher has learned that people arrange *Shänäčča* ceremonies during these times to wish better cultivation of crops, particularly sorghum. According to the social custom in *Rayya Qobbo*, farmers deem that *Shänäčča* rituals help them to secure successful harvest.

Similarly *Shänäčča* rituals also performed at November and December the harvesting season. This time the ritual is performed to wish for peaceful and successful future in using the harvest and to bless the yield.

4.2.5 Construction of New Houses

In *Rayya Qobbo*, construction of new houses is considered as one of the basic phenomenon. In this area, when people (especially, newly married couples) construct a house, they will call elderly men who can recite and perform *Shänäčča* and invite relatives to celebrate the occasion. The custom is, after the construction of a house no one has to settle his living there before it is blessed through *Shänäčča*.

In such occasions, it is also believed that the house as well as the owners will be blessed and become prosperous and evil spirit will vanished. Because of this, recitation and performance of *Shänäčča* after construction of houses is a common experience in rural districts of *Rayya Qobbo*.

In general, *Shänäčča* in *Rayya Qobbo* mainly performed during the above occasions. In addition to this, from interviews with different farmers and officials in the area, the researcher has also learned that *Shänäčča* can be recited some times when there is war to wish victory and bless the warriors. Besides, unexpected social and natural happenings like dispute between tribes, earth quake and drought may also become cases of *Shänäčča* rituals. In addition, the researcher has found that such customs are also common in some neighboring *wärädas* zones and regions which are mentioned earlier.

CHAPTER FIVE: MAJOR SOCIAL FUNCTIONS AND THEMES OF SHĀNĀČČA FOLK POETRY

In the previous chapter, attempts have been made to provide a general background about the social setting of *Rayya Qobbo*, the socio-cultural background of *Shānāčča* folk poetry and its contexts and occasions of performances in order to prepare the pathway for better understanding of meanings and functions of the poems collected in the research area.

In this chapter, the major themes and functions served through *Shānāčča* folk poetry are discussed. In doing so, themes of the poems are analyzed contextually and classified based on their functions. For ease of discussion, the *Shānāčča* folk poems are classified based on their functions under six major categories; namely, blessing, praise, curse, social commentary, historical record and cherishing patriarchy. Function, as it is stated in Miruka (1994:120) is preoccupied with the divulgence of message; and for this reason, in this analysis overlaps between functions and themes has been treated accordingly. In this case, similar poems may be analyzed under different functions for the reason that, some lines in a single poem serves one function and the rest another. Besides, it is also possible to find similar poems serving different functions.

5.1 Blessing

In *Rayya Qobbo*, people perform *Shānāčča* as a folk custom to be blessed by elderly men called *tuftāññas*. Thus, according to the folk custom, it is believed that those who are blessed through *Shānāčča* will succeed in every aspect of their quests. That is why people in this area call for the celebration of *tufīta (Shānāčča)* and are blessed by elderly men through the recitations of *Shānāčča* folk poetry. The blessing through *Shānāčča*, includes, blessing for wealth, blessing for power and fame, blessing for

victory, blessing for successful marriage, and blessing for health, long age and righteousness.

5.1.1 Blessing for Wealth

In *Rayya Qobbo*, when people sees someone who is prosperous it is a common experience that they say “ተመርቆ ነው” (he must be blessed by elders). In the case of *Shänäčča*, blessing for wealth focuses on cattle herding, successful harvest, trade and other aspects of socio-economic realities. With regard to blessing for successful harvest and cattle herding, the following poems can be mentioned.

- | | | |
|-----|---|---|
| (1) | <p>ሃብታም ገበሬ ሁን፣
/አሜን/</p> <p>ሃብታም ገበሬ ሁን፣
/አሜን/</p> <p>የጊደር ወተቱን፣
/አሜን/</p> <p>የወይፈን እሹቱን፣
/አሜን/</p> <p>የምኩት ደረቱን ይስጥሁ።
/አሜን/</p> | <p><i>May you become a wealthy farmer,</i>
<i>/Amen/</i></p> <p><i>May you become a wealthy farmer,</i>
<i>/Amen/</i></p> <p><i>May God give you:</i>
<i>Milk, from your heifer,</i>
<i>/Amen/</i></p> <p><i>Fruit, from the farming of your bull,</i>
<i>/Amen/</i></p> <p><i>And Beef, from your fattened goat.</i>
<i>/Amen/</i></p> |
|-----|---|---|

In the first poem the speaker (*tuftäñña*) is blessing the man, who is in possession of the ceremony (his host⁴), to become a prosperous farmer. The *tuftäñña* wishes his host to have milk-cows which are heifers, for heifers are full of milk. Besides, in the fourth line he maintains his wish by claiming bulls for farming than oxen. In *Rayya Qobbo*, it is believed that bulls are more strong and energetic than oxen, and those who plough their farm lands with bulls are successful than those who use cows and oxen. The blessing also goes further and the speaker wishes this man to enjoy meals

⁴ This word, throughout the analysis, represents those who prepare the *Shänäčča* ceremony and are in demand of the blessing by the *tuftäññas*.

of beef from fattened goat all the way through life. In *Rayya Qobbo*, as it is in many parts of Ethiopia, slaughtering fattened goat is considered as a sign of wealth and respect.

(2) እላቢህ ጊደር፣

/አሜን/

ጠብመንኛህ መውኬር፣

/አሜን/

ያርግልኝ እዝጌር።

/አሜን/

ኮርማው ያግሳ፣

/አሜን/

በቁሎው ይፍሳ።

/አሜን/

የምቦሳ ጫጫታ፣

/አሜን/

የካርፎ ጋጋታ፣

/አሜን/

ከዚህ ቤት አይጥፋ።

/አሜን/

May god make:

Your dairy cow, a heifer,

/Amen/

Your gun, a Mouzer,

May your bulls roar,

/Amen/

Your mules fart at home.

/Amen/

The babbling of calves,

/Amen/

Concatenation of milk-canes,

/Amen/

Be always at your home.

/Amen/

The second poem, as the foregoing one, is recited at a celebration of *Shänäčča* ceremony, which the researcher have recorded at a farmer's house, and the *tuftäñña* begins his blessings by wishing a heifer for a milking-cow like the other one did in the first recitation. In addition, he also asks God to give this farmer a 'Mouzer', a kind of rifle which enables a shooter not to miss his target, to guard his wealth. Furthermore, he seems in demand of God's will to allow the roaring of bulls, breaking wind of horses and babbling of calves in the house of his host. Perhaps, bulls roar, horses break wind and calf babble when they are fed well, and the wish is to succeed in all these. Besides, the speaker wants to see enumerable milk-cows in the house of this farmer, since concatenations of milk-canes glorify

the point in hand. In general, all the foregoing discussed points are signs of prosperity and the blessing is to put this farmer at the peak of the wealthy.

In *Rayya Qobbo* blessing for wealth through *Shänäčča* can also be seen with reference to places where the hosts live. The following poem enumerates this point.

<p>(3) ከራያ ጤፉን፣ /አሜን/ ከላሰታ ገበሱን፣ /አሜን/ ከዋድላ በጉን ይስጥህ። /አሜን/ እራሽህ አማያ፣ /አሜን/ የምትጭነው ማኛ፣ /አሜን/ ለዚያ መጫኛ፣ /አሜን/ ቡላ አህያ ይስጠህ። /አሜን/ አገርህ ዙብል፣ /አሜን/ የምትጭነው ሳሙን፣ /አሜን/ የምትበላው ማር፣ /አሜን/ ያርግልኝ እዝጋር። /አሜን/</p>	<p>May God give you: Teff, from Raya, /Amen/ Barley, from Lasta, /Amen/ Sheep, from Wadla, /Amen/ Your farm at Amaya, /Amen/ What you harvest is “Mañña”, /Amen/ For the bundles to load, /Amen/ May God give you gray donkeys. /Amen/ Your home is at Zobil, /Amen/ Your ride is “Samun”, /Amen/ Honey is your meal. /Amen/</p>
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In this particular poem the blessing is not for simple matter of wealth, rather a wish to monopolize various aspects of prosperity and comfort from different directions. This is meticulously reflected through the first four lines of poem (3), as the speaker claims *teff* from *Rayya*, *barley* from *Lasta* and *sheep* from *Wadla* for his host. The motive is, these particular places are known for production of *teff* and *barley*, and *sheep herding* respectively. Further, the *tuftäñña* also prolong his blessing by stating the place where he

wishes his host to live, i.e. “Zobīl”, for *Zobīl* is among the few high land areas in *Rayya Qobbo*, which are comfortable for living. In the tenth line, it is also the kind of mule (*Samun*) which is stated by the *tuftāñña*. Here, the word “*Samun*” stands for a beautiful mule in which only rich people can afford and ride it. Furthermore, he also maintains his blessing by wishing honey as a meal for his sponsor, perhaps, in this context honey is not brought in to the recitation as simple honey, rather metaphorically to represent all kind of delicious foods.

In the middle of the poem (fifth line) it is also stated the where about of the farm land of this farmer. At this particular point, the *tuftāñña* seems wishing this farmer to have a farmland at *Amaya*; because *Amaya* is among the fertile lowland areas in *Rayya Qobbo*. And that is why; the speaker in the sixth line used the word “*mañña*”, (a name of a particular type of *teff* with high quality) which can be harvested only on fertile farmlands. Perhaps, the speaker does not also limited his blessing to the harvest of *mañña*; but keep on his wish to his host to own strong donkeys for the transportation of his yield, since his home is at *Zobīl* which is a little bit far from *Amaya*.

In *Rayya Qobbo* blessing for wealth through *Shānāčča* is not also particularly limited to cattle herding and harvesting. Instead, it is common to see recitations of *Shānāčča* poems which are associated with trade and modern life. This is plainly depicted in the following poem.

(4)	<i>ደገገሽ ልባም ይሁን፤</i>	<i>May your broker be wise;</i>
	<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>
	<i>ሱቅሽ ከበርሽ ይሁን፤</i>	<i>And your shop at your gate;</i>
	<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>
	<i>ገበያሽ ከቤትሽ ይሁን፤</i>	<i>And your sell at your home;</i>
	<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>
	<i>አደናክር አይንካሽ፤</i>	<i>May bankruptcy go away;</i>
	<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>

ገበያ አዳኛ አይንሳሽ።

And may fortune and wealth be with you.

/አሚን/

/Amen/

In this *Shānāčča* poem (a poem recorded from an interview) the *tuftāñña* expresses his blessing using words which signify the process of buy and sell stuff; like broker, shop, sell and bankruptcy. According to the researcher’s informants, this poem has been recited in a house of a merchant and the *tuftāñña* is wishing success for this man’s wife in her activities of trade.

In this poem the *tuftāñña* is blessing the merchant to have a broker who is wise; for brokers can highly influence ones sell. On top of this, he wants this merchant to have a shop at her gate in order to save her from ups and downs. Furthermore, in the third line, the word “*gābāya*” in this context literally means market, is used metaphorically to represent wealth and comfort. The metaphor reclined on this word, in view of the fact that, market stands for a place where one can buy anything he/she wants. Therefore, this *tuftāñña* is wishing his host a house which is filled with retail goods like a market. Besides, the blessing also goes further to protect her from bankruptcy and crisis. Therefore, the blessing in poem (4) is to succeed in trade and to become prosperous. And one can claim that the central point in the foregoing poem is blessing for wealth.

Sometimes, surprisingly, *tuftāññas*, while blessing for wealth, also recite poems which reflect exaggerated modern life. The following poem successfully echoed the point in focus.

(5) በሰማይ የበረረ፤

The airplanes,

/አሚን/

/Amen/

በምድር የተሸከረከ፤

The Lorries and cars,

/አሚን/

/Amen/

ባህር የተሻገረ፤

The boats and ships,

/አሚን/

/Amen/

ወቅት ያወጣው ዘመን ያመጣው፤

/አሜን/

ያንተ ይሁን።

/አሜን/

And all the modern products,

/Amen/

May all these be yours.

/Amen/

The *Shänäčča* poem recited above, perhaps a poem recited in a *Shänäčča* ceremony performed and recorded at a farmer’s house, noticeably reflects the outlook of the society towards modernization, i.e. a wish to see someone at the actualization of financial and material wealth. All the material wealth wished to be secured above is related to modern life. According to the researcher’s *tuftäñña* informants, it can also be considered as a hyperbole to wish embellished prosperity for their host, of course a farmer.

In general, *Shänäčča* poems recited in *Rayya Qobbo* to bless someone for wealth has not specific and limited focus. Rather the blessing can target different aspects of wealth and prosperity, whatever traditional or modern. This is evidently reflected in the foregoing poems and the following poem can also give a succinct summery of this notion.

(6) እንደ አላ ጎሊና፤

/አሜን/

ክረምትና ቢጋ፤

/አሜን/

ጣይና ጨረቃ፤

/አሜን/

ያድርግህ እዝጌር።

/አሜን/

ሲያጡም አግኝ፤

/አሜን/

ሲያገኙም አግኝ።

/አሜን/

Like the Alla and Gollina,

/Amen/

The summer and rainy season,

/Amen/

The sun and the Moon,

/Amen/

May God make you bright and full.

/Amen/

Be wealthy even when others are going poor;

/Amen/

Still be wealthy when they are gaining wealth.

/Amen/

In the above *Shänäčča* poem, the *tuftäñña* in his recitation used words like “*Alla*”, “*Gollina*”, “rainy season”, “summer”, “sun” and “moon” which are representations of nature. The use of these words in the poem above is certainly to create metaphor that can magnify the message in the poem.

To begin with, in the first line of the poem, *Alla* and *Golina* are names of rivers which are found in *Rayya Qobbo*. These rivers are always full of water and never dry or even dwindled, whatever it is rainy or dry season. Besides, these rivers are also used extensively for irrigation by farmers of the area throughout the year. As the above poem is recorded from a recitation at a *Shänäčča* performance in *Qobbo* wereda, the speaker’s use of these words by and large is to create an analogy between the nature of the rivers and the wealth that he is wishing to his host.

The speaker used the analogy created through metaphor to wish his host a wealth that cannot be diminished by any circumstances, like the water in these rivers. Furthermore, in this metaphor charity is also sounded; since the rivers are used for irrigation, and perhaps this man has to become a pride for the people around him.

Correspondingly, in the second line the speaker also used the words summer and rainy season in relation with his host’s wealth. In the Ethiopian context, the rainy season, July and August, is a time in which the earth becomes beautiful, farm and grazing lands become green and farmers enjoy watching fresh green shoots of the sprouting of grains on their farmlands. Consequently, this season is considered as a season of hope. The summer season is also a time of harvest in which farmers collect their yield from their farm lands. Therefore, the speaker in the poem, perhaps, the *tuftäñña*, is wishing his host to become source of hope like the rainy season and source of yield like the summer. In other words, the blessing is for a wealth that can be poured on others like the rain and prosperity which is of abundant like the yield from the farmlands.

By the same token, in the third line of this *Shänäčča* poem there is also a metaphor created through an analogy made between nature (the sun and the moon) and man (the host). Thus, the analogy goes like this: the sun and the moon are sources of light, and light and energy respectively, which is eternal and cannot be substituted or interfered by human beings. In this context, the wish made by this *tuftäñña* is a wealth that cannot be diminished or interfered by any circumstances like the light of the sun and the moon. This is also evidently stated in the last two lines of the poems as the speaker wishes a wealth for his host whenever it is, at time of yield and even at times of bankruptcy and loss.

To put the issue in a nutshell, in the foregoing analysis it is revealed how people in *Rayya Qobbo* used *Shänäčča* folk poetry to bless others for wealth. As it is reflected in the above poems and discussions, blessing for wealth focuses on particular local matters like harvest and cattle herding, and also on modern aspects of properties and life.

5.1.2 Blessing for Power and Fame

In *Shänäčča* rituals, a *tuftäñña* may also bless people for power and fame. In *Rayya Qobbo*, as it is elsewhere in Ethiopia, wealth, power and fame are inextricably bounded aspects of human experiences. In most cases, the wealthy are powerful and famous, those in power are famous and wealthy and the famous are wealthy and powerful.

The following *Shänäčča* poems are typical examples that prove how *Shänäčča* folk poetry functions to bless someone for power and fame.

(7)	<i>ተጠርተሀ ተሾም፣</i>	<i>May you be:</i>
	<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>Called for promotion,</i>
	<i>ተሾም ተሸለም፣</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>
	<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>Reigned and prized,</i>
		<i>/Amen/</i>

<i>እዘዘው አናዘው፤</i>	<i>May you have full control of your rivals, And even to confess them;</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>
<i>እንዳህያ ጫነው፤</i>	<i>May you load them like a donkey;</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>
<i>እንደ ፈረስ ጋለበው፤</i>	<i>And ride them like a horse;</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>
<i>መጋረጃ ግለጥ፤</i>	<i>May you open the curtains of the kingdom;</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>
<i>ዙፋን ርገጥ፤</i>	<i>And sit on the throne;</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>
<i>አለም ይወቅህ፤</i>	<i>May the world knows you,</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>
<i>በላ አይነቅንቅህ ።</i>	<i>And, no conspirers challenge your kingship.</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>

As it can be seen in the above poem, the speaker wants his host to be reined and appointed as a king. In this particular *Shānācča* poem, the *tuftāñña* seems in need of an unexpected glory for his host; for he says “may you be called for ...” Which echoed the fact that the prize and kingship is not a demand from his host rather a proposal from the people or may be from those who are in power too.

Besides, the *tuftāñña* wishes his host’s kingship to be stable and unchallenged by conspirers. And he further maintains that his host has to be known, famous and powerful for he sits on a throne that cannot be obstructed by any circumstances.

Furthermore, the pursuit is for an authoritative power, which enable this man to have full authority over everyone and can order and confess his enemies and even able to load them like a donkey or ride them like a horse:

a metaphor which signifies his authoritative kingship with a Godly power over his enemies.

According to the *tuftäññas*, that the researcher has interviewed, such poems are recited at the homes of those who have blood line relation with aristocrats and or landlords, and sometimes intellectuals and administrative officials at the lower levels too.

In *Rayya Qobbo*, blessing through *Shänäčča* for power and fame is not also related only to kingship and authority. It rather is inextricably bound with other socio-economic realities of the society, like wealth, charity, luck, wit, and so on. The following poems can illustrate the issue in hand.

<p>(8) <i>ጋሪያ ሁን ተራራ፤</i> <i>/አሜን/</i> <i>እንደ አባይ ተራራ፤</i> <i>/አሜን/</i> <i>ፊት እንደ መነቻ፤</i> <i>/አሜን/</i> <i>ላይ እንደ ኮርቻ ፤</i> <i>/አሜን/</i> <i>ኮንተር መመልከቻ፤</i> <i>/አሜን/</i> <i>አውድማ ማምረቻ፤</i> <i>/አሜን/</i> <i>ገበያ መሸመቻ ፤</i> <i>/አሜን/</i> <i>ውርቱ መሸፈቻ፤</i> <i>/አሜን/</i> <i>ችሎት መግገቻ።</i> <i>/አሜን/</i></p>	<p><i>May you:</i> <i>Rise like a mountain,</i> <i>/Amen/</i> <i>Be furious like Abay,</i> <i>/Amen/</i> <i>Go front like a forelock,</i> <i>/Amen/</i> <i>And like a saddle, on top,</i> <i>/Amen/</i> <i>Be a view point as a hill,</i> <i>/Amen/</i> <i>Threshing-floor for yield,</i> <i>/Amen/</i> <i>A market for traders,</i> <i>/Amen/</i> <i>A forest for rebels,</i> <i>/Amen/</i> <i>And, a court for cases.</i> <i>/Amen/</i></p>
---	---

In this piece of *Shänäčča* poem, the persona metaphorically expresses power and fame in terms of natural phenomena and social experiences.

To begin with, in the first line of this *Shänäčča* poem, the speaker wants his host to rise like a mountain; for mountains metaphorically symbolize power and respect. Perhaps, a mountain is something big which everyone can see it from everywhere, know its name and difficult to climb on it. Hence, the speaker exploits these points to wish power and fame for his host; in which everyone knows his name, talks about him, and no one undermines his power.

In the second line of the poem the analogy is between *Abay* (Blue Nile), a big famous Ethiopian river, and the one who is in possession of the blessing through *Shänäčča* by the *tuftäññas*. *Abay*, as a big river is fearful; its flood can carry and takeaway whatever gets in it and also as the same time famous. Therefore, the blessing is to wish the host to become as fearful and famous as *Abay*.

In the third and fourth lines of the poem, the persona also metaphorically elucidates his wish in terms of forelock and saddle. Forelock is a tool shed which is made of animal skin and iron-sheets, and used by horsemen and cavalymen to protect their horses from archery and spears in wars. In addition a forelock also makes a horse fearful and graceful. On the other hand, the saddle is also something in which horsemen put on a horses back and sit on it. In this context, the forelock symbolizes dignity and protection, whereas, the saddle represents power and high position. Therefore, it is possible to claim that the blessing in this *Shänäčča* poem is for power and dignity too.

In the last five lines of the poem, the persona also similarly used metaphorical expressions to signify his wish and blessing to his host to have power and fame in terms of hill, threshing-floor, market, forest and court

room. In this context, hill symbolizes dignity and power as does the mountain. Besides, the *tuftäñña* stresses on the point that his blessing is to make his host a point of view for the people around him, like a hill serves people to look clearly from its top to all directions. Threshing-floor also serves farmers to collect their yield and this also signifies wealth. Likewise, a market also symbolizes wealth for it is possible to find whatever people want to buy in it. In the last two lines of this *Shänäčča* poem the blessing also goes to the extent that the *tuftäñña* wants his host to become a pride for the rebels and a court for cases, since forest symbolizes habitat and court house symbolizes power. Therefore from all these, it is possible to deduce that, this *Shänäčča* poem serves to bless the host for power and fame.

Blessing for power and fame through *Shänäčča* sometimes also reflected in connection with luck. According to the researcher's informants, whatever power, fame, wealth, or victory is all about luck. And perhaps, the blessing through *Shänäčča* is also to bring about luck. The following poems reflect this outlook of the society.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>(9) ጊዜው ያንተ ይሁን፤
 /አሜን/
 ወቅቱ ያንተ ይሁን፤
 /አሜን/
 ከነፈሰው ነፋስ ፣
 /አሜን/
 ከነገሰው ንጉስ፤
 /አሜን/
 ይግጠምሁ።
 /አሜን/</p> | <p><i>May this be your lucky time;
 /Amen/
 May this be your lucky season;
 /Amen/
 May you be, in peace with,
 /Amen/
 The situation in hand, and
 /Amen/
 Those who are in power.
 /Amen/</i></p> |
| <p>(10) የሰው መውደዱን፤
 /አሜን/
 ቀና መንገዱን፤
 /አሜን/</p> | <p><i>Love of the people,
 /Amen/
 Peaceful ways,
 /Amen/</i></p> |

የልኩል ገዳግ ፣	<i>Luck of a prince,</i>
/አሜን/	/ <i>Amen</i> /
የአንበሳ ጉልበቱን፣	<i>Power of a lion,</i>
/አሜን/	/ <i>Amen</i> /
የንጉሥ አንደበቱን፣	<i>Eloquence of a king,</i>
/አሜን/	/ <i>Amen</i> /
ይስጥህ ።	<i>May all these be yours.</i>
/አሜን/	/ <i>Amen</i> /

The speaker of poem (9) makes the point that, what matters in life is luck and time. In this poem it is stressed that power and fame are gifts of luck and time. In line four and five, the wish is to bring about harmony between the host and a particular situation and, or with those who are in power; for a man who is supported by a particular situation and by those who hold the power, it is plainly possible to grasp power and fame.

The tenth poem also resonates about luck. The blessing in this particular *Shänäčča* poem is for someone, perhaps the host, to be cherished by his people, which will make his ways to power and fame plain. Besides, “luck of a prince”, “power of a lion” and “eloquence of a king” are all claimed or wished to this man. Perhaps, all the three represents power and fame; a prince is ‘a would be king’ and is lucky for that, a lion metaphorically represents a very powerful man. Particularly, in the Ethiopian context a lion is symbol for kingship and even for the country. In addition to this, the ear catching power of kings’ speech is also wished to the man in possession of the blessing through the *Shänäčča* poem above.

As it is stated earlier, in *Rayya Qobbo*, *Shänäčča* ceremonies mainly performed for male hosts. Deviating from this fact, sometimes females, particularly wife and children of the target host, may also be blessed by *tuftäññas* in such rituals. Poem (11) can be taken as a good example for this.

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| (11) በዘለቀች ባዩናት፣ | <i>May you have the luck, which others say,</i> |
| /አሜን/ | /Amen/ |
| በተናገረች በሰማናት፣ | <i>Let she come and we watch her,</i> |
| /አሜን/ | /Amen/ |
| የሚያሰኝ እድል ይስጥሽ። | <i>Let she speak and listen to her.</i> |
| /አሜን/ | /Amen/ |

In this particular *Shänäčča* poem, the blessing is for power and fame too. The persona in this poem wishes this woman (a wife of the host) to have the luck which calls for the respect of the people. As it is bluntly depicted in this poem, the blessing is to wish this woman power as well as fame which make her influential in her society.

According to the researcher’s informant *tuftäññas*, no man is careless for power and fame. The entire search in human life is for dignity. The *tuftäññas* in the middle of *Shänäčča* recitations say “ጉልበትና ስም ካለህ ሀይል እንኳ በእኩል ሌሊት ታበራለሃለች።” to mean “If you are powerful and famous, even the sun will rise for you at midnight”. The following *Shänäčča* poem is all about the foregoing point.

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------------------|
| (12) በፊት በኋላ፣ | <i>The sun and the moon,</i> |
| /አሜን/ | /Amen/ |
| በቀኝ በግራ፣ | <i>Which are risen,</i> |
| /አሜን/ | /Amen/ |
| የወጣው ፀሃይ፣ | <i>From front and back,</i> |
| /አሜን/ | /Amen/ |
| የወጣው ጨረቃ፣ | <i>The left and the right,</i> |
| /አሜን/ | /Amen/ |
| ላንተ ያብራ። | <i>May both shine for you.</i> |
| /አሜን/ | /Amen/ |

In this marvelous *Shänäčča* poem, the claim, metaphorically, is for power and fame. As it clearly stated in the foregoing saying of the *tuftäññas*, for

those who hold power and fame, the whole lot stands with them. In this context, the sun and the moon metaphorically represent better future, hope, power and the likes; for both sun and moon are sources of light. Here the central point is blessing the host for power and fame, and then will follow the support from everyone.

To sum up, in *Rayya Qobbo*, *Shānāčča* serves to bless people for power and fame. According to this society, men fight for their dignity, power and fame. The struggle in life, most of the time, is for these social aspects of human experiences. As it is echoed in the above analysis, most of the *Shānāčča* poems express these issues with metaphors which could bring vivid images to our mind. And perhaps, one of the purposes of *Shānāčča* is to bless people for these sentimental social desires of man.

5.1.3 Blessing for Victory

Life is a struggle – struggle for success, freedom, etc. Struggle, most of the time, also followed by victory or defeat. In *Rayya Qobbo*, as it is elsewhere, people fight for their rights, fight wars as soldiers in national duty, fight with other ethnic groups for farming and grazing lands, and so on. In such social phenomena there always is victory and defect. For any society defeat is as bitter as death and no man celebrates it.

In *Rayya Qobbo*, when there come war and conflict in the society, those who will partake in the battle will be blessed through *Shānāčča* to bring about victory. Surprisingly, the researcher also witnessed that, poems of such kind also recited in other occasions. Whatever the case may be, blessing for success, according to the *tuftāññas*, is blessing for victory.

In this context historical events and war places are also recited in *Shānāčča* poems. The following examples elaborate the issue in hand.

- (13) አንተማ ጠላትህን
 በጫማ ጠቅጥቀው፤ Trampled your enemy with your feet;
 /አሜን/
 በወረንጦ መንጥቀው፤ Pull him out with tweezers;
 /አሜን/
 የጎመጅ አሞራ፤ And let the vultures of Gomäjj,
 /አሜን/
 አጥንቱን ይጋጠው። Snatch on his corpus.
 /አሜን/
 /አሜን/

In poem (13) the speaker makes two points. The first is a blessing for absolute victory and the other is the circumstance of the death of the foe. In the first three lines of this *Shänäčča* poem, superiority over ones enemy is echoed; for the speaker says “tramped on your enemy ...” which reflects an absolute victory over his rival. In the last two lines it is also the circumstance of the death of the host’s enemy which is stated in relation with historical event and place. According to the researcher’s informants, this place, *Gommäjj*, is a historical site in which wars between nomads of the Afar and peasants of *Rayya* were fought for grazing lands in earlier times. The speaker uses this historical phenomenon to create a vivid image in his recitation of the poem to show the circumstance that he wish to the death of his host’s enemy; i.e. his corpus will not be buried, rather it will be left to vultures. Thus, victory over ones enemy is the message that this *Shänäčča* poem is conveyed.

- (14) እረ ወዲያ!
 ግዳይህ ወልዲያ፤ Hurrah!
 /አሜን/
 ከመኪናው ማግለያ፤ May your trophy be at Wäldäya,
 /አሜን/
 ግዳይህ ቆቦ፤ At the bus station;
 /አሜን/
 /አሜን/ Your mission at Gobbo,
 /አሜን/

ባለወርቅ ባምቦ፣	To kill someone with a golden bomb;
/አሜን/	/Amen/
ግዳይህ ኮረም፣	Your trophy at Korräm,
/አሜን/	/Amen/
ሮቢ ላላው ሲያሆም፣	When the war planes bombard;
/አሜን/	/Amen/
ግዳይህ ወለህ፣	Your mission at Wälläh,
/አሜን/	/Amen/
በጭቃ ታዘህ።	Oh! You were sent through the marsh.
/አሜን/	/Amen/

Similarly in poem (14), one can also find names of places which are used to glorify the nature of the victory celebrated through the *Shänäčča* poem. The *tuftäññas* in blessing his host address the situations and places that he wishes his host accomplished his mission. In doing so, the *tuftäñña* begins his blessing by claiming a trophy for his host at the bus station of *Wälldäya* (the capital of North *Wällo* Zone), which is a highly populated site to publicize the trophy. He also further continues blessing his host to have a victory at *Qobbo* by killing someone having a bomb made of gold; for such a man is famous and the victory will make his host famous too.

The blessing for victory in this poem also goes further in relation with historical places in the last lines. At this point, it is *Koräm* and *Wälläh* which come in to the fore in the poem. According to the researcher's informant *tuftäññas*, *Koräm* has been bombarded by war planes of the Italian invaders during the 1930s, and *Wälläh* is the place where the known Ethiopian hero, *Hailu Käbädä*, perhaps, the first Ethiopian Military General, martyred defending his country from the Italian invaders. This place, as the researcher has learned from his informants is marshy and even troublesome for warriors.

It is this historical fact which is reflected through the poem. In this poem, the *tuftäñña* addresses these historical facts and places to wish a trophy for his host that can be remembered and celebrated like the above stated ones. In some occasions of recitations of such *Shänäčča* poems, the researcher has also observed that *tuftäññas* conclude the foregoing poem with lines of the following type.

(15) *ያንተ ግዳይ ግን ከቤትህ ይሁን።* *May your trophy be at home.*
/አሜን/ */Amen/*

As it is bluntly discussed above, the victory claimed through poem (14) is of a national matter. But sometimes such blessings also used to wish victory which is personal. It is this desire of the society which is reflected through the above line or piece of *Shänäčča* poem. Whatever the case may be, the message transmitted through the foregoing poems is victory over ones enemy and the poems served to bless hosts to have victory over their rivals.

Blessing for victory, also sometimes viewed in relation with successful marriage and fertility. Apparently, *tuftäññas* also wish children for their hosts who can fetch victory for their family. This belief of the society can be witnessed by the following *Shänäčča* poem.

(16) *አንተህ ውለድ መንታ፤* *May you give birth to twins;*
/አሜን/ */Amen/*
መንታ፣ መንታ፤ *Oh! Twins;*
/አሜን/ */Amen/*
አንዱ በስርአት የሚረታ፤ *The one who can win court cases;*
/አሜን/ */Amen/*
አንዱ በመንዶ የሚመታ። *The other who can kick with a stick.*
/አሜን/ */Amen/*

In *Rayya Qobbo*, having many children is considered as an asset. Particularly, giving birth to boys is regarded as a source of pride and victory; for it is believed that males can defend their family properly. This is bluntly

reflected in the above poem, as the *tuftäñña* wishes twin boys for his host who can be source of victory whatever through legal courts or fights. Thus, the blessing through the foregoing poem is for victory too.

5.1.4 Blessing for Successful Marriage

Marriage, in *Rayya Qobbo*, as it is everywhere in Ethiopia, is one of the defining moments in life. As a crucial moment, it is also familiar to see expressions about marriage in *Shänäčča*. That is why, the people of *Rayya Qobbo*, reflect their wishes and blessings through *Shänäčča* folk poetry for the successfulness of one's marriage.

Blessing for successful marriage in *Rayya Qobbo* has two features. One is a wish for a good marriage partner for a matured girl or boy; and the other is blessing newly married couples for success and children (fertility) in their future life. The following poems are reflections of these aspects of the societies' outlook.

- | | | |
|------|--|---|
| (17) | ግጠማት ትግጠምህ፤
/አሜን/
ትግጠምህ ግጠማት፤
/አሜን/
የኔ ዓለም ስትልህ።
/አሜን/
አይናለም የምትላት።
/አሜን/ | May someone confide you,
/Amen/
You to her;
/Amen/
Which you think yourself as her
world,
/Amen/
And, she yours.
/Amen/ |
|------|--|---|

Shänäčča poem (17) is recited in a house of a farmer, who has a son matured enough for marriage. The blessing is for this young man to wish a wife which could comfort him, and this man to her. This is depicted in the first two lines of the poem, as the persona wishes him a girl who could confide him, this man to her. The *tuftäñña* also prolonged his blessing in the last two lines of the poem by stating the kind of relationship he wishes this

man and his wished wife to have. In this context, the speaker states the couples as a world for each other. Thus the message in this poem is blessing for successful marriage.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>(18) ሚስትህ ትውደድህ።
/አሜን/
እንቅልፍ ይውሰድህ።
/አሜን/</p> | <p><i>May your wife loves you,</i>
<i>/Amen/</i>
<i>And you, make delight with a sleep.</i>
<i>/Amen/</i></p> |
| <p>(19) ባልሽን እንደ ድመት፣
/አሜን/
አንኝን ወተት ያርግሽ፣
/አሜን/
ሌቱን አብሮሽ አድሮ፣
/አሜን/
ጧት ሚያው እንዲልልሽ።
/አሜን/</p> | <p><i>May your husband be your pet,</i>
<i>/Amen/</i>
<i>And you, his feast (milk);</i>
<i>/Amen/</i>
<i>Nice and well, that he,</i>
<i>/Amen/</i>
<i>Keeps guard of your heart.</i>
<i>/Amen/</i></p> |

Poem (18) and (19) are recitations of *Shānāčča* folk poetry to a newly married couple to wish them success and bliss in their future life. In poem (18) the persona focuses on two particular points, i.e. love and sleep. From this poem one can learn that, to be loved by a wife grants peaceful asleep for a husband. In this context, sleep symbolizes peace and happiness; for such conditions fill marriage with joy and delight.

As it can be seen bluntly, poem (19) is a continuation of recitation from poem (18) and is particularly recited for a woman, perhaps, a wife of the man who has been blessed in poem (17). In this poem, the husband and the wife are represented with pet and feast (which is milk) respectively. This metaphor creates a flamboyant image of the kind of relationship that they are wished to have; cats are fond of milk, and no pet is ignorant of such a feast. Therefore, the persona exploits this incident and wishes this woman a

heartfelt love from her husband. The blessing, in general is to wish this woman a selfless love from her husband like pets have for milk.

To put the issue in a nut shell, poems (17), (18) and (19) are all about wishing bliss and happiness in marriage. From this entire analysis, one can claim that the message in the foregoing poems is blessing for successful marriage, and the function of these poems is blessing a marriage to make it successful.

5.1.5 Blessing for Health, Long Life and Righteousness

Blessing through *Shānāčča* folk poetry, in *Rayya Qobbo*, focuses on subject matters which the society bestow great value. Health, long age and righteousness are also among the issues that everyone in the community concerned about. According to the researcher's informants, health is the base for every achievement, long age a pave to enjoy the fruit of success and righteousness the final goal. The following poems are typical reflections of this notion.

- | | | |
|------|---|---|
| (20) | እድሜና ጤና፣
/አሜን/
ሃብትና እንጀራ፣
/አሜን/
ይስጣችሁ።
/አሜን/ | <i>May health, wealth,
/Amen/
And, all the blessings of life,
/Amen/
Be yours.
/Amen/</i> |
| (21) | እድሜህ መቶ ሰባ፣
/አሜን/
ጽድቅህ ላሊበላይሁን።
/አሜን/ | <i>May you live hundreds of years,
/Amen/
And, become righteous like Lalibela.
/Amen/</i> |

(22) በምድር ምጽት፣

/አሜን/

በሰማይ ገነትን ያልበሳችሁ።

/አሜን/

May you be granted with the joy of
the earth,

/Amen/

And the garden of the Heaven.

/Amen/

As it can be seen from poem (20) long age and health are the central points in the blessing and the wish is to secure them. In poem (21) the speaker expresses his wish to his host to live long for hundreds of years. Similarly, in the first line of poem (22), it is also luxurious life which is wished for the *tuftäñña*'s host.

Furthermore, the societies' belief about life after death is also reflected in the second line of the poem as the *tuftäñña* wishes his host to secure righteousness like Lalibela (according to the Orthodox Christianity, Lalibela is a saint and a king which built the rock hewn churches of Lalibela). In addition to this, life after death is also reflected in the second line of poem (22), as the speaker wishes Heaven for the soul of his host.

5.2 Curse

In recitations of *Shänäčča* poems *tuftäññas* bless their hosts for success and also curse their rivals or enemies for failure. In this context, blessing can be seen as a wish for success, but curse is a wish for someone's failure.

By using *Shänäčča* folk poems the people of *Rayya Qobbo* (particularly *tuftäñnas*) curse their enemies or rivals of their hosts. The following poems can be good examples to this category.

(23) አንተ ግም በል፣

/አሜን/

አይበጅህ አልም ይበል።

/አሜን/

አንተ ጅር በል፣

/አሜን/

May you succeed,

/Amen/

Your foes disappeared.

/Amen/

May you flourished,

/Amen/

<i>አይበጅህ አንገር ይበል።</i>	<i>While, your enemy goes down.</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>
<i>አንተ ነጋ፣</i>	<i>May you become fine,</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>
<i>አይበጅህ ይለጋ።</i>	<i>While your enemy decline.</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>
<i>ቦልቦል ቀዳ፣</i>	<i>May you become prosperous,</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>
<i>አይበጅህ ካንጋዳ።</i>	<i>And, your enemy worthless.</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>

In the above *Shänäčča* poem blessing and curse appeared overlapped. In this poem the *tuftäñña* at the same time blesses his host and curse his rival. The poem is composed in such a way that one line (beginning from the first one) is used for blessing and the following for cursing. However, the poem is used to bless the host for success, health and prosperity and cursing his foe for failure, i.e., disappearance, failure, declination and worthlessness are all wished for the host's enemy.

In the following three poems it is the failure of the host's rival which is also accentuated throughout the lines.

(24) <i>ያንተ ባላጋራ፣</i>	<i>May your enemy,</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>
<i>መኝታው አመድ፣</i>	<i>Rest on the ash,</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>
<i>ማሰሪያው ገመድ፣</i>	<i>His tie, of a rope;</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>
<i>አይኑ ጨለማ፣</i>	<i>His vision goes away,</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>
<i>ጉልበቱ ቁጠማ፣</i>	<i>His power, of a sedge,</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>

የግመል ላይ ጭንቁላ፣
/አሜን/
ከወደቀ የማይነሳ ይሁን።
/አሜን/

And become dust at his fall,
/Amen/
Like a pot fallen from a heap
of a camel.
/Amen/

As it can be seen in the foregoing poem the failure of the host's enemy is celebrated. The speaker in this poem curses his host's rival by relating his life with wicked and evil matters.

To begin with, in the second line of the poem, the man's (the rival's) rest is claimed to be on the ash. In *Rayya Qobbo*, places which are dumped with ash are considered as devilish or hosts for evil spirits. In this context, the curse is to expose the hosts rival to evil spirit. On the other hand, ash also metaphorically symbolizes death; for the Bible says "Ashes to Ashes" (Genesis; 3, 19). Therefore, it is also possible to deduce that the death of this man is wished in this line of the poem. Similarly, in the third line of the poem it is the downfall and death of the host's foe, which is marked metaphorically. According to the *tuftāññas*, rope metaphorically symbolizes death and failure, for people used it to hang themselves and also to shrouded a corpus.

In the fourth line it is also blindness which is wished to this enemy of the *tuftāñña's* host. Besides, in the fifth line the speaker claims his host's rival's strength to lack stamina and become something like "sedge". Sedge is a stick like growing grass which is loose and weak. Therefore, metaphorically the rival's weakling is celebrated in this line of the poem too. And finally, in the last two lines of the poem the speaker expresses the downfall of the host's rival metaphorically relating it to the fall of a pot from a hump of a camel. Definitely, a pot which falls from that high will be changed not only into small pieces but also to dust. It is this point which is explored by the speaker in the poem and the wish is to see the failure of the host's rival, which is a failure to the worst.

The following poem also shares similar subject matters with the foregoing ones.

(25) <i>ያንተ ባላጋራ፣</i>	<i>May your rival,</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>
<i>እየበላ እየታነቀ፣</i>	<i>Struggled while eating,</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>
<i>እየሮጠ እየወደቀ፣</i>	<i>Falls while running,</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>
<i>የቁልቁለት ውሻ</i>	<i>Like a dog which runs downward,</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>
<i>ሲሄድ ዘረጥ ዘረጥ፣</i>	<i>Farting while running,</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>
<i>የሌለው መድረሻ፣</i>	<i>Got no place for his rest,</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>
<i>ደግሞም መመለሻ፣</i>	<i>And, yet no way for his return,</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>
<i>እንዳይወልድ ቁላው ሞቶ፣</i>	<i>He cannot give birth for he is</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>impotent,</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>
<i>እንዳይጠግብ ሰብሉን ዘግቶ።</i>	<i>And cannot feed himself for he</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>cannot harvest.</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i>	<i>/Amen/</i>

In *Rayya Qobbo*, as it is in other societies, the downfall of an enemy is considered as a success for the other. This is thoroughly reflected in the above poem. The main focus of the speaker in this poem is on celebrating the demise of his host's foe. For this reason, the *tuftäñña* wishes every kind of failure in all aspects of this man's life. To begin with, in the second and third lines of the poem hindrances that make the host's rival strangled while he eats and walks are wished. This on the other hand, reflects the speakers wish to see the possible obstacles in the life of his host's enemy.

In the middle of the poem, beginning from the fourth line up to the seventh, the host's rival's failure has also got expression in comparison with a dog which runs in a sloppy downward. The point is, when dogs run downward on a very sloppy way, they could not control their speed and will slide till they find something to collide with. Furthermore, in such conditions it is impossible for dogs to return back to their ways, for dogs are weak to climb back such roads. The *tuftāñña* in this poem exploits this notion and metaphorically create a vivid image of the man's fate which is desired to end with a complete failure.

In the final two lines of the poem, failure of the *tuftāñña*'s foe in establishing family and harvesting is also celebrated in an astonishing manner. Firstly, the foe is depicted as an impotent person. As it is clearly stated in the foregoing sections, in *Rayya Qobbo*, having many children is considered as an asset. Besides, sterility is also considered as something wicked. Therefore, the wish at this point is to make this person a loser. Finally, in the last line of the poem the man's incapability in harvesting and feeding himself also got expressions; and the fate of such persons is to be considered as worthless in the society. Thus, from all these, one can claim that the overall message transmitted through the above poem is curse over one's enemy.

In general, in the foregoing analysis, it is observed that curse is among the particular themes of *Shānāčča* folk poetry; and people in *Rayya Qobbo* used the folk custom to curse their enemies. Besides, it is also reflected that, in cursing their host's enemy *tuftāññas* also focuses on the weak sides and bad qualities of their targets.

5.3 Praise

Praise is among the common subject matters raised and functions served through *Shānāčča* folk poetry. *Tuftāññas* compose and recite *Shānāčča* poems to glorify their hosts. Most of the time the subject matters of such poems related to the host's generosity, prosperity, heroic deed and other similar aspects of social experiences. Most of the poems recited to praise hosts did not focus on particular issues, rather on different aspects of good qualities of the hosts. The following poems can be taken as typical examples to elaborate this notion.

- | | | |
|------|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| (26) | <i>ዘንግሀ ሰባሪ፣</i> | <i>Your stick is detrimental,</i> |
| | <i>/አሜን/</i> | <i>/Amen/</i> |
| | <i>ኮርማሀ ሰራሪ፣</i> | <i>Your bull is fertile,</i> |
| | <i>/አሜን/</i> | <i>/Amen/</i> |
| | <i>በሬሀ ሰጋሪ፣</i> | <i>Your ox is swift,</i> |
| | <i>/አሜን/</i> | <i>/Amen/</i> |
| | <i>እርሻሀ ተራራሽ፣</i> | <i>Your farm is fertile,</i> |
| | <i>/አሜን/</i> | <i>/Amen/</i> |
| | <i>ገበሬሀ አራሽ፣</i> | <i>Your servant is cleaver,</i> |
| | <i>/አሜን/</i> | <i>/Amen/</i> |
| | <i>ላምሀ ጋታማ፣</i> | <i>Your cow is with big udder,</i> |
| | <i>/አሜን/</i> | <i>/Amen/</i> |
| | <i>በሬሀ ሻኛማ፣</i> | <i>Your ox is with big hump,</i> |
| | <i>/አሜን/</i> | <i>/Amen/</i> |
| | <i>ምርትሀ አቦላ፣</i> | <i>Your yield is abola,</i> |
| | <i>/አሜን/</i> | <i>/Amen/</i> |
| | <i>ሚስትሀ ወዘላ፣</i> | <i>Your wife is fortunate,</i> |
| | <i>/አሜን/</i> | <i>/Amen/</i> |
| | <i>አንተ ቦይላ።</i> | <i>And you are compassionate.</i> |
| | <i>/አሜን/</i> | <i>/Amen/</i> |

- Abola = a type of sorghum with high quality, which is harvested in Raya.

In the above *Shänäčča* poem good qualities of the host are accentuated. The *tuftäñña* in the first line begins his praise by emphasizing the ruinous nature of the host's stick, which symbolizes and glorifies the heroic deed of this man. In doing so, the persona claims that his host's stick is too powerful, even to break ones bones.

On the other hand, through the middle eight lines of the poem – beginning from the second line- the host's wealth has also got expressions in vigorous manners. Perhaps, a fertile bull, a swift ox, a fertile farmland, a clever servant, a cow with big udder, an ox with big hump and yield which is *abola*; all symbolizes prosperity. In *Rayya Qobbo*, people who secure such matters are always considered as affluent. Thus, through these lines, one can find the host praised for his affluence.

In the last two lines of this poem, one can also discover the host praised for his luck and generosity. Firstly, the host's wife is praised for she is source of luck and fortune for her husband. According to the researcher's informants and the custom in the society, it is believed that success is all about luck; and those who married a fortunate wife will also succeed in accumulating wealth. Secondly, in the last line of the poem the generosity of this man is also accentuated in straight words. Therefore, from all this it can be noted that the heroic deed, prosperity and generosity of the host find expressions in poem (14).

(27) ካንተ ቤት፣	To your home:
/አሜን/	/Amen/
የታረዘው መጣ፣	Here comes the raggedly dressed;
/አሜን/	/Amen/
ለብሶ ወጣ።	You dress them as they like.
/አሜን/	/Amen/
የተራበው መጣ፣	Here come the needy;
/አሜን/	/Amen/

በልቶ ወጣ።

/አሜን/

የተጠግው መጣ፤

/አሜን/

እስኪጠግብ ጠጣ።

/አሜን/

Fed till they are satisfied.

/Amen/

Here come the thirsted,

/Amen/

Drink till they are satiated.

/Amen/

(28) *ታዛ ነህ መጠለያ፤*

/አሜን/

መንገድ ነህ ማግለያ፤

/አሜን/

ባንክ ነህ መበደሪያ፤

/አሜን/

ድንኳን ነህ ማረፊያ።

/አሜን/

You are an eaves which others shelter;

/Amen/

You are a road for those who are in search of ways;

/Amen/

You are like a bank for those in need of money;

/Amen/

And you are a canvas that everyone can rest in it.

/Amen/

In poem (27) the *tuftäñña* celebrates the role of his host in helping the needy in terms of different aspects of charity. The speaker in this poem admires his host, for his charity which is of limitless and all sided. This is evidently depicted throughout the poem and the speaker in the poem emphasizes that all the raggedly dressed were given clothes by this man, those who were hungry were fed till satisfied and also those who were thirsted were drunk till they satiated in this man's house too.

By the same token, in poem (28) this man's generosity also finds expression in comparison with porch, road, bank, and canvas. A porch or eaves is something that people used to take shelter or protect themselves from rain or burning sun; road is a way for those who crave to ran away from danger; a bank is an institution that people borrow money for their needs; and

canvas also serves as a shelter for the needy. Consequently, the speaker uses all this to create metaphors which signify the generosity of this man. In other words, this man is depicted as protection for the troubled, shelter for the homeless and a hand for the poor. In general, in this poem the legacy of the host is accentuated through metaphorical expressions.

To sum up, the *Shānāčča* folk poems (26), (27) and (28) have identified the decisive role of the host in defending the weak, and helping the poor. In these poems the heroic deed, wealth and charity of the man (the host) are praised.

5.4 Socio-political Commentary

People use literature, whatever written or oral, for different purposes, including commenting on the socio-political realities they face. In this context, *Shānāčča*, which is one form of folk poetry, is not a different case. In *Rayya Qobbo*, the reaction of the society towards socio-political moves finds expressions in *Shānāčča* folk poetry.

5.4.1. Social Commentary

Through *Shānāčča* folk poetry the *tuftāñña* of *Rayya Qobbo* comments and criticizes on the manner of the society. Particularly in this category, one can find that *tuftāññas* criticizing envy and malevolent.

5.4.1.1. Critique of Envy

In any society, people condemn what they think morally wrong according to the norm they establish and also appreciate what they feel morally right. Accordingly, in *Rayya Qobbo*, *Shānāčča* folk poetry is used to correct some acts which the society claim wrong. Consequently, envy is among the acts which people criticize in most cases. The following poems are reflections of this outlook of the society.

- | | | |
|------|--|---|
| (29) | በሉ ጠጡ፣
/አሜን/
አደረጉ አገጠ፣
/አሜን/
የሚልን ወዲያ።
/አሜን/ | Those who jealous of your success,
/Amen/
And your prosperity,
/Amen/
Shall go down.
/Amen/ |
| (30) | የጎረቤት ፈትፋች፣
/አሜን/
የዘመድ ምቀኛ፣
/አሜን/
የባልንጀራ ወልባዳ፣
/አሜን/
የሜዳ አንጋዳ፣
/አሜን/
ይሄን ወዲያ።
/አሜን/ | A neighbor who is intrusive,
/Amen/
A relative who is envious,
/Amen/
A friend who is backbiter,
/Amen/
A walkway with a hidden trap,
/Amen/
All these, shall head off.
/Amen/ |

In *Shānācča* poem (29), it is envy against ones wealth and success which is criticized by the speaker. In *Shānācča* poem (30), various issues are raised in connection with envy. The *tuftāñña* in this poem addresses the different directions in which envy manifests itself. In the first line of the poem it is an intrusive neighbor which is condemned by the speaker. In the second line the target is an envious relative. In the third line, it is also a friend that bad-mouthing his relative, which is criticized by the *tuftāñña*. In the fourth line all these are related and compared with a hidden ditch on a plain walkway which can cause harm for those who walk on it. The point is, envy from such relatives will destroy someone like a hidden hole on a walkway which can suck him up accidentally. According to the researcher's *tuftāñña* informants, an envious relative is like a vermin in underwear, which can attack a lot before it is identified.

To sum up, poem (29) and (30) functions to comment on acts of the *Rayya Qobbo* society which they think are morally wrong. Therefore, from this one can claim that the message in the above poem is criticizing envy.

5.4.1.2 Critique of Malevolence

The other aspect of social act which finds expressions in *Shänäčča* folk poetry is malevolence. People in *Rayya Qobbo* used *Shänäčča* folk poetry to criticize and condemn malevolence which is related to bad practices and magic. The following poem echoed this openly.

(31) አይነ ሱመኛ፣	The evil eyes,
/አሜን/	/Amen/
ቀልበ ሸረኛ፣	The conspirers,
/አሜን/	/Amen/
ወረቀት ጫሪ፣	The evil doers,
/አሜን/	/Amen/
ድንጋይ ወርዋሪ፣	The sorcerers,
/አሜን/	/Amen/
ስር ማሽ፣	The malevolent,
/አሜን/	/Amen/
ቅጠል በጣሽ፣	The magicians,
/አሜን/	/Amen/
ይህን ወዲያ።	All this shall vanished away from us.
/አሜን/	/Amen/

In this particular *Shänäčča* poem, it is the ill-natured act of the society which is condemned by the speaker. According to the researcher's informants, there are some members of the society who consult sorcerers and evil-doers to dirt others life with evil spirit. It is this particular issue which gets expression in this poem. Hence, the *tuftäñña* in the foregoing poem criticizes such act of the society by claiming its extinction. Therefore the target point in this *Shänäčča* poem is criticizing malevolent, which is a morally wrong act of the society.

5.4.2 Protest against Political Power

Reflecting hatred and protest against political power, according to Finnegan (1977) and Okpewho (1992), is one of the many functions and themes of oral traditions and other literary forms. In this context, *Shänäčča* folk poetry is not exceptional. In *Rayya Qobbo*, people reflect their feelings towards a certain political power using *Shänäčča* folk poetry. Analysis of the following three poems reveals the people's protest against some political moves of the current government.

- (32) መሬት በገመድ፣ *Those who measure farmlands with a rope,*
/አሜን/ */Amen/*
ስልጣን በዘመድ፣ *And come in to power through blood line,*
/አሜን/ */Amen/*
ይሄን ወዲያ። *Shall fall down.*
/አሜን/ */Amen/*
- (33) ህዝብ ቀምቶ፣ *Those who snatch from the mass,*
/አሜን/ */Amen/*
ቢራ የሚጠጣ፣ *And spend it on beer,*
/አሜን/ */Amen/*
በደካማ ኪስ፣ *Live with comfort,*
/አሜን/ */Amen/*
የሚቀናጣ፣ *And prosperity,*
/አሜን/ */Amen/*
መውደቂያው ከበሩ ይሁን። *May their fall be at their gate.*
/አሜን/ */Amen/*

(34)	ፍርድ ኃይለ፣	Let the time be
	/አሜን/	/Amen/
	ሰው ተበደለ፣	For those who are kin on justice,
	/አሜን/	/Amen/
	የሚል ገዢ ይሆጣ።	But not otherwise.
	/አሜን/	/Amen/

In poem (32) the speaker made two pints. In the first line of the poem it is the land distribution strategy of the current government which is criticized by the *tuftäñña*. During the beginning of the 1990s, when the EPRDF came in to power, land has been shared between the farmers measured by rope. This poem is recited in a farmer’s house on April, 2010, with other poems which are analyzed earlier. What is surprising about this poem is, even after nearly twenty years the farmers reflect their protest against the land distribution which has been done by the current government.

In the second line of this *Shänäčča* poem it is corruption which calls for the speaker’s objection. The *tuftäñña* in this poem is against the corrupted ways in which individuals promoted in to power and different governmental positions. The persona in the poem resonates that it is through blood-line relationship that people are coming in to power than profession and performance. What is underlined by the speaker here is the corrupted ways officials follow to step up on the power ladder of the current government.

In general, in poem (32), according to the researcher’s informants also, the *tuftäñña* condemns the 1990s land distribution strategy of the current government and the corrupted systems of bringing officials in to power, which is still active.

In *Shänäčča* poem (33), it is also corruption which is depicted openly. In this poem the focus of the speaker is on corrupted government officials who live leisurely by snatching money from the poor. Apparently the wish is to see the dawn fall of these officials.

Shänäčča poem (34) is also about protest against a certain political power. At this particular point, the wish is not limited only to the downfall of corrupted officials rather goes further to see them replaced by administrators who can fight for the right of the people. This is straightforwardly reflected as the *tuftäñña*, in the first line of *Shänäčča* poem (34), wishes for another political power which can sense the oppression of the people. And in the second line it is also the speaker's wish to see the corrupted ones replaced by those who can fight for justice.

In general, the message transmitted through the foregoing *Shänäčča* poems is protest against a particular government. It is also substantiated as the *tuftäñnas* refuse land distribution strategy of the government, and the different types of corruptions practiced and overburdened them. Thus, one can claim that, the foregoing poems reflect the people's protest against different political moves of the current government.

5.5 Recording History

Shänäčča folk poetry, like the other oral traditions, is composed out of experience of the society, and history also is recorded in it. The people of *Rayya Qobbo*, as any society, record, preserve and transmit their history through their oral traditions in general and *Shänäčča* folk poetry in particular. The following *Shänäčča* poems are recordings of historical facts.

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| (35) ግዳይህ ኮረም፣
/አሜን/ | <i>May your victory be at Koräm,
/Amen/</i> |
| ሮቢላው ሲያሆም፣
/አሜን/ | <i>Where the warplanes bombard;
/Amen/</i> |
| ግዳይህ ወለህ፣
/አሜን/ | <i>May your victory be at Wälläh,
/Amen/</i> |
| በጭቃ ታዘህ፣
/አሜን/ | <i>Oh! You were sent through the
marsh;
/Amen/</i> |
| ሰላቶ አናዘህ።
/አሜን/ | <i>To confess an Italian invader.
/Amen/</i> |

The historical event in *Shänäčča* poem (35) takes one back to the 1930s Italian occupation and the patriotic movement by Ethiopians to defend their country. According to the researcher's informants, as it has been discussed earlier, *Korām* is one of the war sites and has been bombed by war planes of the invaders at those war times. Besides, *Wälläh*, which is a swampy area in *Wag Hīmūra* Zone of the Amhara National Regional State, is a historical site for the first Ethiopian Military General, *Hailu Kābädä*, martyred there defending his country from the invaders. It is these historical facts which are recorded in this *Shänäčča* poem. On the other hand, the poem seems to serve to bless someone for victory. But, whatever the case may be, this *Shänäčča* poem also serves to record, transmit and print historical facts in the minds of the younger generation.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>(36) ጨሌ ከውዬ፣
 /አሜን/
 እንጉዳይ ትኩዬ፣
 /አሜን/
 ፈልቃ ዘገዬ፣
 /አሜን/
 ያድርግሽ አንድዬ።
 /አሜን/</p> | <p><i>May God bless you like:</i>
 <i>Chäle Käwyäe,</i>
 /<i>Amen/</i>
 <i>Enguday Tīkuyye,</i>
 /<i>Amen/</i>
 <i>And, Fälka Zägäyye.</i>
 /<i>Amen/</i></p> |
| <p>(37) አርባት ስንዬ ሰገድ፣
 /አሜን/
 ቆባ መዛረድ፣
 /አሜን/
 መቅደላ ዘወልድ፣
 /አሜን/
 የነሱን ስም ይሰጥህ።
 /አሜን/</p> | <p><i>May your name called like:</i>
 <i>Sīnyye Sägäd of Arbät,</i>
 /<i>Amen/</i>
 <i>Mäzaräd of Kobba,</i>
 /<i>Amen/</i>
 <i>And, Zäwäld of Mäkdäla.</i>
 /<i>Amen/</i></p> |

In *Shänäčča* poems (36) and (37), one can find names of women and men in the two poems respectively. The recitations of these names in the poems, is not without reasons. In poem (36) three women, named as *Chäle Käwyye*, *Enguday Tilkuyye* and *Fälka Zägäyye* are brought in to the recitation for they are considered people considered them as assets and icons for the different roles they have played in administrative and conflict management activities, in *Rayya Qobbo*, in earlier times. Similarly, *Zäawäld*, *Sñyye Sägäd* and *Mäzaräd* were traditional leaders and powerful men in different provinces of *Rayya Qobbo* and Lasta (a neighboring province) in early times too. Therefore, it is the history of these powerful women and men which is depicted and reflected in these poems.

Apparently, like poem (35), the *Shänäčča* poems, (36) and (37) also seem about blessing someone for power and fame. On the other hand, it is obvious that historical facts are also recorded in these poems. Therefore, from this it is possible to claim that these poems serve immense roles in recording history.

5.6 Cherishing Patriarchy

By using *Shänäčča* folk poetry, the people of *Rayya Qobbo* express their outlooks and desires to maintain the stability of socially accepted attitudes, institutions, and in general cultural heritages. By doing so, they manage to preserve their beliefs and aspirations from direct attack and change. Perhaps, this also helps the society to insure conformity to the accepted cultural norms and continuity from generation to generation.

The ideologies and institutions that the people of *Rayya Qobbo* favor through *Shänäčča* folk poetry are of different types; some of them in favor of one group, the others which concern the whole society. In this category, patriarchy is appeared being the main focuses of the *tuftännñas*.

The following *Shänäčča* poems are typical examples which reflect male supremacy in the society.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>(38) አባወራው በላይ፣
/አሜን/
እንዲይበላው ተባይ።
/አሜን/</p> | <p><i>Let the husband be on top,
/Amen/
To keep him from the bite of vermin.
/Amen/</i></p> |
| <p>(39) ያባትህን አንሳ፣
/አሜን/
የናትህን እርሳ።
/አሜን/</p> | <p><i>Follow the foot of your father's,
/Amen/
And forget your mother's.
/Amen/</i></p> |

As it can be seen from the above three poems, the superiority of men is celebrated in different contexts. In *Shänäčča* poem (38), the *tuftäñña* express the position in which his host has to sleep in contrast with his wife; that is on the top. In the second line, protecting the husband from the bite of vermin is given as a reason. The top position metaphorically symbolizes male dominance and the message in this poem is male supremacy at the cost of women's autonomy.

In poem (39) the speaker, in the first line, declares that men have to follow the trace of their fathers'. In this context, the claim is that, whatever it is "fathers' ways" are paths to success. In the second line of this *Shänäčča* poem, the *tuftäñña* requests his host to ignore his mother's ways of thinking and doing things. According to the researcher's *tuftäñña* informants, those who follow mothers' ways are considered as cowards, for the society considers women as submissive and dependent. The following poem better reflects how women are perceived in the society.

(40) ጧታ አስተማሪ፤

/አሜን/

ማታ ሰብሳቢ፤

/አሜን/

ባልሽን ጠባቂ፤

/አሜን/

ያድርግሽ ፈጣሪ።

/አሜን/

May God make you:

A dispatcher in the morning,

/Amen/

A gatherer in the evening,

/Amen/

And, a mistress of your house.

/Amen/

In this poem, the speaker seems to bless and wish the woman to succeed in managing her duties. But, on the other way round, she is hard-pressed to accept her husband's supremacy. In the first two lines of the poem the wish is to restrict her duty to household activities. Besides, in the third line of the poem, the speaker puts a ceiling on the responsibility of this woman which diminishes her duties to the level of only carrying her husband.

In general, the above poems mirror the attitude of the society towards the two sexes and how the society is built patriarchally. From all these, it is possible to infer that, the message transmitted through these poems is supremacy of men over women; and the *Shänäčča* poems serve to cherishing the patriarchal ideology of the society.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

Folk poetry as verbal expression of feelings, ideas and thoughts using versified language, can be seen as a means through which people reflect and refract their socio-economic, political, psychological and religious assumptions. This on the other hand reveals that, folk poetry has got certain ends or social functions to meet.

One of the forms of folk poetry which functions people to mirror their thoughts, feelings and aspirations is *Shänäčča* folk poetry. *Shänäčča* is a form of folk poetry composed and recited in a folk custom called *tufñta*, in which elderly men (*tufññas*) gather and pray by reciting folk poems for the well being of the society, cattle, and successful harvest.

In this study, it has been found out there are five major occasions of *Shänäčča* folk poetry recital in *Rayya Qobbo*. Though, there is no specific season or time for the recitation of *Shänäčča* folk poetry, wedding (*särīg*) Traditional Conflict Management (*Zäwäld ĩrīg*), communal labour (*däbo*), harvesting and ploughing season, and construction of new houses are identified as major performance occasions.

Concerning the social functions it serve, it has been found out that *Shänäčča* folk poetry, in *Rayya Qobbo*, deals with six major categories. Consequently, blessing, curse, praise, socio-political commentary, historical record and cherishing patriarchy are identified as major social functions served through *Shänäčča* folk poetry with different sub functions, as well as themes, under each category.

Among the different social functions of *Shänäčča* folk poetry blessing is branded as the most common and predominant function (as well as theme) served through this particular form of folk poetry. Of the many reasons that the people of *Rayya Qobbo* perform *Shänäčča* is to bless a fellow for success.

And in this category blessing for wealth, blessing for power and fame, blessing for victory, blessing for successful marriage and blessing for health, long age and righteousness are identified as the main focuses of the *tuftāññas*. All these aspects of human experiences, in *Rayya Qobbo*, are considered as final achievements in one's life and, according to the social folk custom in this area, the blessing through *Shānāčča* is to succeed in all these. In contrast with blessing, it has also been found that curse is one of the social functions that *Shānāčča* folk poetry serves in *Rayya Qobbo*. In this context, this study revealed that, people in this area use curse to wish the downfall and failure of their enemies or rivals. In doing so, weak sides of their foes have got expressions.

In addition to the above roles praise has also been found as one of the major social functions, and also themes, of *Shānāčča* folk poetry. As it is marked through the analysis, *tuftāññas*, in *Rayya Qobbo*, praise people to encourage them to succeed in whatever activities or missions they engaged in. In this category, strong sides of people, like generosity, wealth and heroic deeds have been found as main focuses of the people to be praised.

With regard to socio-political commentary, two specific functions of *Shānāčča* folk poetry are identified. These are social commentary and protest against political power. The *Shānāčča* poems that criticize the different acts of the society has been found focusing on activities which the society consider as morally wrong, like envy and malevolence. Furthermore, the *Shānāčča* poems which are analyzed in this category also revealed the peoples protest against the current government's land distributing strategy and the different types of corruptions overburdened the society.

The other social function of *Shānāčča* folk poetry that has been identified in this study is the role it played in recording historical facts and places. In this category it has been found *Shānāčča* poems which record names of heroes, the different victories they have brought to the society and the

heroic deeds that they have performed in early times. Furthermore, historical places and events are also found recorded in *Shānāčča* folk poetry.

The final element that has been identified as the social function of *Shānāčča* oral poetry is also its role in maintaining conformity to the socially accepted attitudes and philosophies of the society. In this regard, it has been also found out that, *Shānāčča* folk poetry functions in preserving and maintaining conformity to male supremacy by cherishing the patriarchal ideology in the society.

To sum up, *Shānāčča* folk poetry, in *Rayya Qobbo*, has been found serving the people diverse functions. This on the other hand, implies the potential capability of this asset -*Shānāčča* folk poetry- in giving insight about the society's socio-economic, political, religious and psychological attitudes, its philosophies, aspirations, beliefs and the like. Therefore, the study of such assets undeniably can be seen as the study of the society and a further research on other forms of folk poetry and folkloric items hopefully will help for better understanding of the society. Thus, documenting and popularizing this heritage is inexorably advisable and researchers in anthropological and cultural studies can hopefully use the implications in this study to explore the social customs and beliefs to better exploit these heritages and understand the society. Besides, it is the researcher's belief that, studies on how to protect such assets from oblivion will indirectly help in preserving the society's identity, culture and history in general and its merit in the field of literature and folklore in particular.

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Appendix I: The Classified Collection of *Shänäčča* Folk Poetry

In conducting this research, more than seventy *Shänäčča* folk poems have been collected. Conversely, those which have similar and repeated themes and functions were omitted to manage redundancy, and finally, forty *Shänäčča* folk poems have been analyzed and also appended for ease of reference.

1 Blessing

In this category, poems that are used to bless hosts for wealth, power and fame, victory, successful marriage, and health, long age and righteousness are included.

1.1 Blessing for Wealth

- | | | |
|-----|--|---|
| (1) | <i>ሃብታም ገበሬ ሁን፣</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i> | <i>May you become a wealthy farmer,</i>
<i>/Amen/</i> |
| | <i>ሃብታም ገበሬ ሁን፣</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i> | <i>May you become a wealthy farmer,</i>
<i>/Amen/</i> |
| | <i>የጊደር ወተቱን፣</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i> | <i>May God give you:</i>
<i>Milk, from your heifer,</i>
<i>/Amen/</i> |
| | <i>የወይሬን እሸቱን፣</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i> | <i>Fruit, from the farming of your bull,</i>
<i>/Amen/</i> |
| | <i>የምኩት ደረቱን ይስጥሁ።</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i> | <i>And Beef, from your fattened goat.</i>
<i>/Amen/</i> |
| | | <i>May god make:</i> |
| (2) | <i>እላቢህ ጊደር፣</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i> | <i>Your dairy cow, a heifer,</i>
<i>/Amen/</i> |
| | <i>ጠብመንጃህ መውኬር፣</i>
<i>/አሜን/</i> | <i>Your gun, a Mouzer,</i> |

ያርግልኝ እዝጌር።

/አሜን/

ኮርማው ያግሳ፤

/አሜን/

በቁሎው ይፍሳ።

/አሜን/

የምቦሳ ጫጫታ፤

/አሜን/

የካርፎ ጋጋታ፤

/አሜን/

ከዚህ ቤት አይጥፋ።

/አሜን/

May your bulls roar,

/Amen/

Your mules fart at home.

/Amen/

The babbling of calves,

/Amen/

Concatenation of milk-canes,

/Amen/

Be at your home.

/Amen/

(3) ከራያ ጤፋን፤

/አሜን/

ከላሲታ ገበሱን፤

/አሜን/

ከዋድላ በጉን ይስጥህ።

/አሜን/

እራሽህ አማያ፤

/አሜን/

የምትጭነው ማኛ፤

/አሜን/

ለዚያ መጫኛ፤

/አሜን/

ቡላ አሀያ ይስጠህ።

/አሜን/

አገርህ ዞብል፤

/አሜን/

የምትጭነው ሳሙን፤

/አሜን/

የምትበላው ማር፤

/አሜን/

ያርግልኝ እዝጌር።

/አሜን/

May God give you:

Teff, from Raya,

/Amen/

Barley, from Lasta,

/Amen/

Sheep, from Wadla,

/Amen/

Your farm at Amaya,

/Amen/

What you harvest is “Mañña”,

/Amen/

For the bundles to load,

/Amen/

May God give you gray donkeys.

/Amen/

Your home is at Zobil,

/Amen/

Your ride is “Samun”,

/Amen/

Honey is your meal.

/Amen/

(4) ደላላሽ ልባም ይሁን፤
 /አሜን/
 ሱቅሽ ከበርሽ ይሁን፤
 /አሜን/
 ገበያሽ ከቤትሽ ይሁን፤
 /አሜን/
 አደናክር አይንሳሽ፤
 /አሜን/
 ገበያ አዳኛ አይንሳሽ።
 /አሜን/

May your broker be wise;
 /Amen/
 And your shop at your gate;
 /Amen/
 And your sell at your home;
 /Amen/
 May bankruptcy go away;
 /Amen/
 And may fortune and wealth be with
 you.
 /Amen/

(5) በሰማይ የበረረ፤
 /አሜን/
 በምድር የተሸከረከረ፤
 /አሜን/
 ባህር የተሻገረ፤
 /አሜን/
 ወቅት ያወጣው ዘመን ያመጣው፤
 /አሜን/
 ያንተ ይሁን።
 /አሜን/

The airplanes,
 /Amen/
 The Lories and cars,
 /Amen/
 The boats and ships,
 /Amen/
 And all the modern products,
 /Amen/
 May all these be yours.
 /Amen/

(6) እንደ አላ ንሊና፤
 /አሜን/
 ክረምትና በጋ፤
 /አሜን/
 ጣይና ጨረቃ፤
 /አሜን/
 ያድርግህ እዝጌር።
 /አሜን/

Like the Alla and Gollina,
 /Amen/
 The summer and rainy season,
 /Amen/
 The sun and the Moon,
 /Amen/
 May God make you bright and full.
 /Amen/

ሲያያውም አግኝ፤

/አሜን/

ሲያገኙም አግኝ።

/አሜን/

Be grateful when others are ungrateful;

/Amen/

As you should still be when they are gratified.

/Amen/

1.2 Blessing for Power and Fame

(7) ተጠርተህ ተሾም፤

/አሜን/

ተሾም ተሸለም፤

/አሜን/

እዘዘው አናዘው፤

/አሜን/

እንዳህያ ጫነው፤

/አሜን/

እንደ ፈረስ ጋልበው።

/አሜን/

መጋረጃ ግለጥ፤

/አሜን/

ዙፋን ርገጥ፤

/አሜን/

አለም ይወቅህ፤

/አሜን/

በላ አይነቅንቅህ።

/አሜን/

(8) ጋራያ ሁን ተራራ፤

/አሜን/

እንደ አባይ ተፈራ፤

/አሜን/

May you be:

Called for promotion,

/Amen/

Reigned and prized,

/Amen/

May you have full control of your rivals, And even to confess them,

/Amen/

May you load them like a donkey,

/Amen/

And ride them like a horse.

/Amen/

May you open the curtains of the kingdom,

/Amen/

And sit on the throne

/Amen/

May the world knows you

/Amen/

And, no conspirers challenge your kingship.

/Amen/

May you:

Rise like a mountain,

/Amen/

Be furious like Abay,

/Amen/

ፊት እንደ መነቻ፤

/አሜን/

ላይ እንደ ኮርቻ ፤

/አሜን/

ኮንተር መመልከቻ፤

/አሜን/

አውድማ ማምረቻ፤

/አሜን/

ገበያ መሸመቻ ፤

/አሜን/

ውርቴ መሸፈቻ፤

/አሜን/

ችሎት መግገቻ።

/አሜን/

Go front like a forelock,

/Amen/

And like a saddle, on top,

/Amen/

Be a view point as a hill,

/Amen/

Threshing-floor for yield,

/Amen/

A market for traders,

/Amen/

A forest for rebels,

/Amen/

And, a court for cases.

/Amen/

(9) ጊዜው ያንተ ይሁን፤

/አሜን/

ወቅቱ ያንተ ይሁን፤

/አሜን/

ከነፈሰው ነፋስ ፤

/አሜን/

ከነገሰው ንጉስ፤

/አሜን/

ይግጠምሁ።

/አሜን/

May this be your lucky time;

/Amen/

May this be your lucky season;

/Amen/

May you be, in peace with,

/Amen/

The situation in hand, and

/Amen/

Those who are in power.

/Amen/

(10) የሰው መውደዱን፤

/አሜን/

ቀና መንገዱን፤

/አሜን/

የልሱል ገዱን ፤

/አሜን/

Love of the people,

/Amen/

Peaceful ways,

/Amen/

Luck of a prince,

/Amen/

የአንበሳ ጉልበቱን፣
/አሜን/

Power of a lion,
/Amen/

የንጉሥ አንደበቱን፣
/አሜን/

Eloquence of a king,
/Amen/

ይስጥህ ።
/አሜን/

May all these be yours.
/Amen/

(11) በዘለቀች ባየናት፣
/አሜን/

May you have the luck, which others say,
/Amen/

በተናገረች በሰማናት፣
/አሜን/

Let she come and we watch her,
/Amen/

የሚያሰኝ እድል ይስጥሽ።
/አሜን/

Let she speak and listen to her.
/Amen/

(12) በፊት በኋላ፣
/አሜን/

The sun and the moon,
/Amen/

በቀኝ በግራ፣
/አሜን/

Which are risen,
/Amen/

የወጣው ፀሃይ፣
/አሜን/

From front and back,
/Amen/

የወጣው ጨረቃ፣
/አሜን/

The left and the right,
/Amen/

ላንተ ያበራ።
/አሜን/

May both shine for you.
/Amen/

1.3 Blessing for Victory

(13) አንተማ ጠላትህን

በጫማ ጠቅጥቀው፤
/አሜን/

Trampled your enemy with your feet;
/Amen/

በወረንጦ መንጥቀው፤
/አሜን/

Pull him out with tweezers;
/Amen/

የጎመጅ አጥራ፣
/አሜን/

And let the vultures of Gomäjj,
/Amen/

	አጥንቱን ይጋጠው።	Snatch on his corpus.
	/አሚን/	/Amen/
(14)	እረ ወዲያ!	Hurrah!
	ግዳይህ ወልዲያ፣	May your trophy be at Wäldäya,
	/አሚን/	/Amen/
	ከመኪናው ማግለያ፣	At the bus station;
	/አሚን/	/Amen/
	ግዳይህ ቆቦ፣	Your mission at Kobbo,
	/አሚን/	/Amen/
	ባለወርቅ ባምቦ፣	To kill someone with a golden bomb;
	/አሚን/	/Amen/
	ግዳይህ ኮረም፣	Your trophy at Korräm,
	/አሚን/	/Amen/
	ሮቢላላው ሲያሆም፣	When the war planes bombard;
	/አሚን/	/Amen/
	ግዳይህ ወለሀ፣	Your mission at Wälläh,
	/አሚን/	/Amen/
	በጭቃ ታዘሀ።	Oh! You were sent through the marsh.
	/አሚን/	/Amen/
(15)	ያንተ ግዳይ ግን ከቤትህ ይሁን።	May your trophy be at home.
	/አሚን/	/Amen/
(16)	አንተማ ውለድ መንታ፣	May you give birth to twins;
	/አሚን/	/Amen/
	መንታ ፣ መንታ፣	Oh! Twins;
	/አሚን/	/Amen/
	አንዱ በስርአት የሚረታ፣	The one who can win court cases;
	/አሚን/	/Amen/
	አንዱ በመንዶ የሚመታ።	The other who can kick with a stick.
	/አሚን/	/Amen/

(21) እድሜህ መቶ ሰባ፣
 /አሜን/
 ጽድቅህ ላሊበላይሁን።
 /አሜን/

May you live hundreds of years,
 /Amen/
 And, become righteous like Lalibela.
 /Amen/

(22) በምድር ምጥጥን፣
 /አሜን/
 በሰማይ ገነትን ያልበሳችሁ።
 /አሜን/

May you be granted with the joy of
 the earth,
 /Amen/
 And the garden of Heaven.
 /Amen/

2 Curse

(23) አንተ ግም በል፣
 /አሜን/
 አይበጅህ እልም ይበል።
 /አሜን/
 አንተ ጀር በል፣
 /አሜን/
 አይበጅህ አንገር ይበል።
 /አሜን/
 አንተ ነጋ፣
 /አሜን/
 አይበጅህ ይለጋ።
 /አሜን/
 ቦልቦል ቀዳ፣
 /አሜን/
 አይበጅህ ካንጋዳ።
 /አሜን/

May you succeed,
 /Amen/
 Your foes disappeared.
 /Amen/
 May you flourished,
 /Amen/
 While, your enemy goes down.
 /Amen/
 May you become fine,
 /Amen/
 While your enemy decline.
 /Amen/
 May you become prosperous,
 /Amen/
 And, your enemy worthless.
 /Amen/

(24) ያንተ ባላጋራ፣
 /አሜን/

May your enemy,
 /Amen/

መኝታው አመድ፣	Rest on the ash,
/አሜን/	/Amen/
ማሰሪያው ገመድ፣	His tie of a rope;
/አሜን/	/Amen/
አይኑ ጨለማ፣	His vision goes away,
/አሜን/	/Amen/
ጉልበቱ ቁጠማ፣	His power of a sedge,
/አሜን/	/Amen/
የግመል ላይ ጭንቁላ፣	And become dust at his fall,
/አሜን/	/Amen/
ከወደቀ የማይነሳ ይሁን።	Like a pot fallen from a heap of a camel.
/አሜን/	/Amen/

(25) ያንተ ባላጋራ፣	May your rival,
/አሜን/	/Amen/
እየበላ እየታነቀ፣	Struggled while eating,
/አሜን/	/Amen/
እየሮጠ እየወደቀ፣	Falls while running,
/አሜን/	/Amen/
የቁልቁለት ውሻ	Like a dog which runs downward,
/አሜን/	/Amen/
ሲሄድ ዘረጥ ዘረጥ፣	Farting while running,
/አሜን/	/Amen/
የሌለው መድረሻ፣	Got no place for his rest,
/አሜን/	/Amen/
ደግሞም መመለሻ፣	And, yet no way for his return,
/አሜን/	/Amen/
እንዳይወልድ ቁላው ሞቶ፣	He cannot give birth for he is impotent,
/አሜን/	/Amen/
እንዳይጠግብ ሰብሱን ዘግቶ።	And cannot feed himself for he cannot harvest.
/አሜን/	/Amen/

5.3 Praise

- (26) *ዘንገህ ሰባሪ፤*
/አሜን/
ኮርግህ ሰራሪ፤
/አሜን/
በሬህ ሰጋሪ፤
/አሜን/
እርሻህ ተራራሽ፤
/አሜን/
ገበሬህ አራሽ፤
/አሜን/
ላምህ ጋታማ፤
/አሜን/
በሬህ ሻኛማ፤
/አሜን/
ምርትህ አቦላ፤
/አሜን/
ሚስትህ ወዘላ፤
/አሜን/
አንተ ቢይላ።
/አሜን/
- Your stick is detrimental,*
/Amen/
Your bull is fertile,
/Amen/
Your ox is swift,
/Amen/
Your farm is fertile,
/Amen/
Your servant is cleaver,
/Amen/
Your cow is with big udder,
/Amen/
Your ox is with big hump,
/Amen/
Your yield is abola,
/Amen/
Your wife is fortunate,
/Amen/
And you are compassionate.
/Amen/
- (27) *ካንተ ቤት፤*
/አሜን/
የታረዘው መጣ፤
/አሜን/
ለብሶ ወጣ።
/አሜን/
የተራበው መጣ፤
/አሜን/
በልቶ ወጣ።
/አሜን/
- To your home:*
/Amen/
Here comes the raggedly dressed;
/Amen/
You dress them as they like.
/Amen/
Here come the needy;
/Amen/
Fed till they are satisfied.
/Amen/

የተጠማው መጣ፤

/አሜን/

እስኪጠግብ ጠጣ።

/አሜን/

Here come the thirsted,

/Amen/

Drink till they are satiated.

/Amen/

(28) ታሳ ነህ መጠለያ፤

/አሜን/

መንገድ ነህ ማግለያ፤

/አሜን/

ባንክ ነህ መበደሪያ፤

/አሜን/

ድንኳን ነህ ማረፊያ።

/አሜን/

You are an eaves which others shelter;

/Amen/

You are a road for those who are in search of ways;

/Amen/

You are like a bank for those in need of money;

/Amen/

And you are a canvas that everyone can rest in it.

/Amen/

4 Socio-political Commentary

In this section two major points are identified. These are social commentary and protest against political power.

4.1 Social Commentary

In this category it is also critique of envy and malevolent which are identified as the major themes of *Shānāčča* folk poetry.

4.1.1 Critique of Envy

(29) በሉ ጠጡ፤

/አሜን/

አደረጉ አጌጡ፤

/አሜን/

Those who jealous of your success,

/Amen/

And your prosperity,

/Amen/

የሚልን ወዲያ።
/አሜን/

Shall go down.
/Amen/

(30) የጎረቤት ፈትፋች፤
/አሜን/

A neighbor who is intrusive,
/Amen/

የዘመድ ምቀኛ፤
/አሜን/

A relative who is envious,
/Amen/

የባልንጀራ ወልባዳ፤
/አሜን/

A friend who is backbiter,
/Amen/

የሚዳ አንጋዳ፤
/አሜን/

A walkway with a hidden trap,
/Amen/

ይህን ወዲያ።
/አሜን/

All these, shall head off.
/Amen/

4.1.2 Critique of Malevolent

(31) አይነ ሱመኛ፤
/አሜን/

The evil eyes,
/Amen/

ቀልበ ሸረኛ፤
/አሜን/

The conspirers,
/Amen/

ወረቀት ጫሪ፤
/አሜን/

The evil doers,
/Amen/

ድንጋይ ወርዋሪ፤
/አሜን/

The sorcerers,
/Amen/

ስር ማሻ፤
/አሜን/

The malevolent,
/Amen/

ቅጠል በጣሻ፤
/አሜን/

The magicians,
/Amen/

ይህን ወዲያ።
/አሜን/

All this shall away from us.
/Amen/

4.2 Protest against Political Power

(32) መሬት በገመድ፣

/አሜን/

ስልጣን በዘመድ፣

/አሜን/

ይሄን ወዲያ።

/አሜን/

Those who measure
farmlands with a rope,

/Amen/

And come in to power through
blood line,

/Amen/

Shall fall down.

/Amen/

(33) ህዝብ ቀምቶ፣

/አሜን/

ቢራ የሚጠጣ፣

/አሜን/

በደካማ ኪስ፣

/አሜን/

የሚቀናጣ፣

/አሜን/

መውደቂያው ከበሩ ይሁን።

/አሜን/

Those who snatch from the
mass,

/Amen/

And spend it on beer,

/Amen/

Live with comfort,

/Amen/

And prosperity,

/Amen/

May their fall be at their gate.

/Amen/

(34) ፍርድ ጎደለ፣

/አሜን/

ሰው ተበደለ፣

/አሜን/

የሚል ገዢ ይምጣ።

/አሜን/

Let the time be

/Amen/

For those who are kin on
justice,

/Amen/

But not otherwise.

/Amen/

5 Recording History

- (35) *ግዳይህ ኮረም፣*
/አሚን/
ሮቢላው ሲያሆም፣
/አሚን/
ግዳይህ ወለሀ፣
/አሚን/
በጭቃ ታዘህ፣
marsh;
/አሚን/
ሰላቶ አናዘህ።
/አሚን/
- May your victory be at Korem,*
/Amen/
Where the warplanes bombard;
/Amen/
May your victory be at Walah,
/Amen/
Oh! You were sent through the
marsh;
/Amen/
To confess an Italian invader.
/Amen/
- (36) *ጨሌ ከውዬ፣*
/አሚን/
እንጉዳይ ትኩዬ፣
/አሚን/
ፈልቃ ዘገዬ፣
/አሚን/
ያድርግሽ አንድዬ።
/አሚን/
- May God bless you like:*
Chäle Käwyäe,
/Amen/
Enguday Tikuyye,
/Amen/
And, Fälka Zägäyye.
/Amen/
- (37) *አርበት ስንዬ ስገድ፣*
/አሚን/
ቆባ መሣረድ፣
/አሚን/
መቅደላ ዘወልድ፣
/አሚን/
የነሱን ስም ይስጥህ።
/አሚን/
- May your name called like:*
Sinyye Sägäd of Arbät,
/Amen/
Mäzaräd of Kobba,
/Amen/
And, Zäwäld of Mäkdäla.
/Amen/

6 Cherishing Patriarchy

(38) አባወራው በላይ፣

/አሜን/

እንዲያበላው ተባይ።

/አሜን/

Let the husband be on top,

/Amen/

*To keep him from the bite of
vermin.*

/Amen/

(39) ያባትህን አንሳ፣

/አሜን/

ያናትህን እርሳ።

/አሜን/

*Follow the foot of your
father's,*

/Amen/

And forget your mother's.

/Amen/

(40) ዉት አስተማሪ፣

/አሜን/

ማታ ሰብሳቢ፣

/አሜን/

ባልሽን ጠባቂ፣

/አሜን/

ያድርግሽ ፈጣሪ።

/አሜን/

May God make you:

A dispatcher in the morning,

/Amen/

A gatherer in evening,

/Amen/

And, a mistress of your house.

/Amen/

Appendix – II: Interview Questions

The interview was mainly informal, but contents of the questions were by and large similar to the following ones. Thus, the questions were translated to Amharic and presented to informants. The questions were used to collect *Shänäčča* folk poems, identify major performance occasions and to identify the major themes and functions.

1. Would you tell me your full name?
2. What can you tell me about the folk customs in *Rayya Qobbo*?
3. What do you know about *Shänäčča* ?
4. When and where do you think *Shänäčča* is performed?
5. What do you think about the roles that *Shänäčča* play in your society?
6. Have you ever recite *Shänäčča* folk poetry?
7. May you recite me some *Shänäčča* folk poems?

Appendix – III: Interview Questions in Amharic

The following questions were presented to informants to gather information.

1. መላ ስምዎትን ቢነግሩኝ?
2. በአካባቢችሁ ስለሚገኙ ባህላዊ እሴቶችና ቃላዊ ግጥሞች የተወሰኑ ነገሮችን ቢያብራሩልኝ?
3. ስለ ሸነቻ ምን ያህል ያውቃሉ?
4. ሸነቻ መቼ እና የት እንደሚከወን ሊያብራሩልኝ ይችላሉ?
5. ሸነቻ ለማህበረሰቡ ያሉት ጥቅሞች ምን ምን ናቸው?
6. የሸነቻ ግጥሞችን ያውቃሉ?
7. የተወሰኑ የሸነቻ የቃል ግጥሞችን ቢጠቅሱልኝ?

Appendix IV: Name of Informants

No.	Name of Informants	Age (Approximately)	Occupation	Cultural Position
1	<i>Mengesha Sämau</i>	63	Farmer	<i>tuftäñña</i>
2	<i>Mäkonän Laqäw</i>	80	Farmer	<i>Tuftäñña</i>
3	<i>Maerägu Kibrät</i>	82	Farmer	<i>Tuftäñña</i>
4	<i>Tadässä Nīgusse</i>	53	Farmer	<i>Tuftäñña</i>
5	<i>Mogäs Täsfaw</i>	48	Farmer	<i>Tuftäñña</i>
6	<i>Zäwdu Aläqa</i>	74	Farmer	<i>Tuftäñña</i>
7	<i>Däräbä Amarä</i>	59	Farmer	<i>Tuftäñña</i>
8	<i>Bäyänä Bishaw</i>	72	Farmer	<i>Tuftäñña</i>
9	<i>Abära Adissu</i>	50	Farmer	<i>Tuftäñña</i>
10	<i>Aduññaw Getanäh</i>	49	Farmer	<i>Host</i>
11	<i>Ayänä Shufäre</i>	56	Farmer	<i>Elder</i>
12	<i>Asnakä Tässäma</i>	81	Farmer	<i>Elder</i>
13	<i>Dubalä Endäshaw</i>	79	Farmer	<i>Tuftäñña</i>
14	<i>Amarä Iyasu</i>	74	Farmer	<i>Tuftäñña</i>
15	<i>Bäyänä Korra</i>	43	Head of the wereda Culture and Tourism Bureau	Expert

Appendix – V: Photos of Informants and the Ceremony of *Shānāčča*



Photo 1. Interview with a *tuftēñña*,



Photo 2.

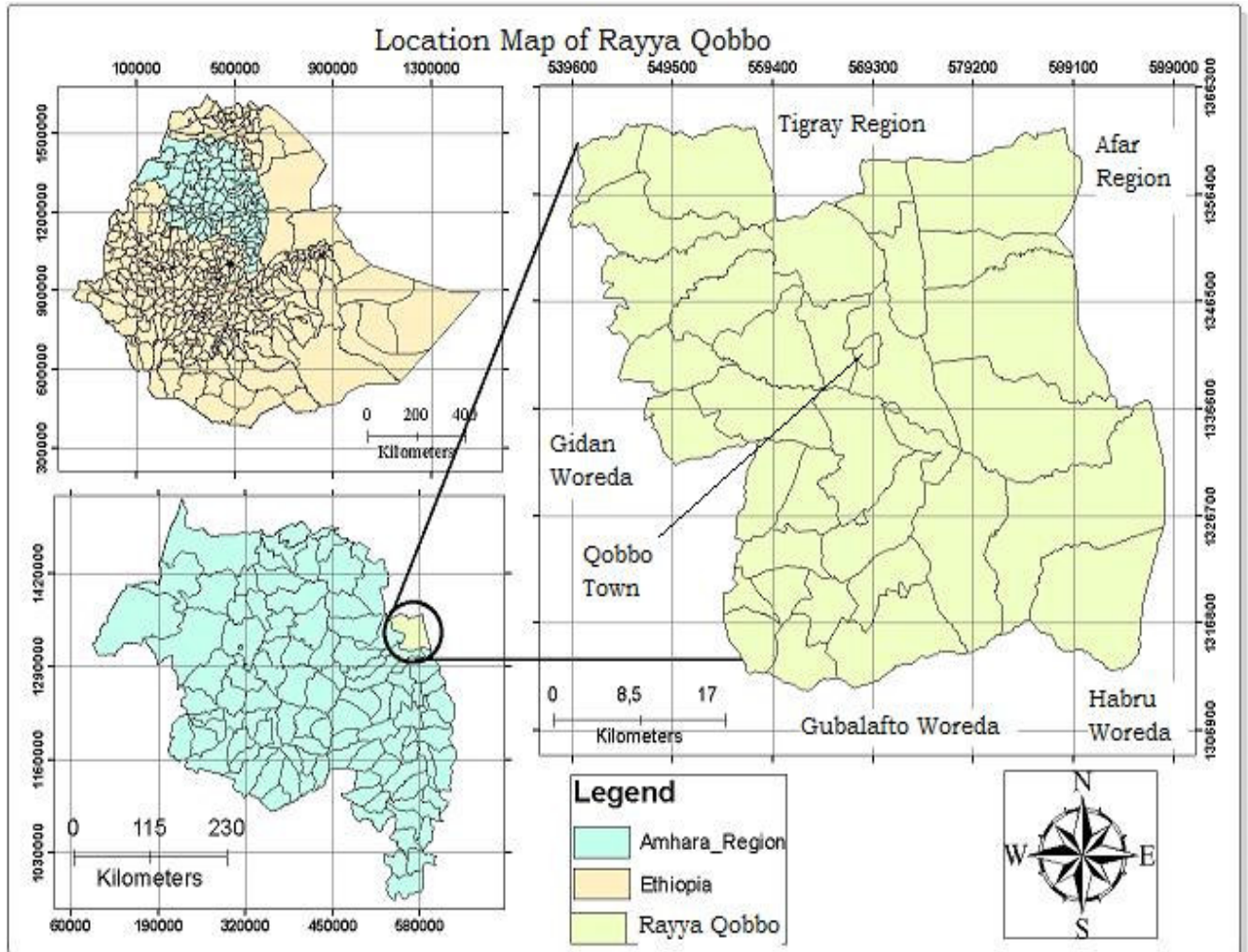


Photoes 2 and 3. *Tufteññas* reciting *Shänäčča* folk poetry.



Photo 4. *Tufteññas* served local food and drink.

Appendix VI: Location Map of *Rayya Qobbo*



Source: Ethio-GIS (Modified).

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work, it has not been presented before in any university. Moreover, I declare that all the sources of materials used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as the university advisor.

Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____