

ART AND ARTISTS IN MODERN
AMHARIC LITERATURE

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ART AND ARTISTS IN MODERN
AMHARIC LITERATURE

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Abstract

Writers that appeared during and after the 1960s started drifting towards the discussion and portrayal of art and artists. However despite such growing efforts on the part of writers in communicating their experience to the reader, few among Ethiopians who have extensively written on modern Amharic literature have ventured to appraise matters pertaining to art and artists.

The aim of this thesis is, therefore, to study different literary works which portray artists as characters and raise questions of art as themes of their novels, short stories, plays and poems; paying equal attention to the reasons why writers focus their attention on their life and craft.

In doing so, this research deals with relevant Amharic novels, short stories, plays and poems of different writers starting from 1960 onwards. In this study, the views artists reflect, the values they cherish and the motives that impel them to be what they are in life are dealt with consecutively in three chapters.

In the first chapter, attempt has been made to consider the views of writers on poetry, as well as the views of artist characters on their respective field of creativity and on art in general. Here the views mostly reflect the achievements and rigor artists face in their areas of creativity.

The values artist's consider beneficial to their well being is what the second chapter consists of. Here the discussion revolves mainly on major values that most human beings consciously or unconsciously react to, such as the self, materialism, work, sexual activity and success and failure. The dynamic properties reflected by artist characters here, in turn provides us with a cue in the preceding chapter.

The last chapter is where artists and their motivation is presented. Here the focus is basically on the reasons for the creativity of artist characters considered in this study. Whether their intention, their goal, or desire/aversion or

other proclivity is related to psychological, genetic, historical, cultural, social or economic factors.

As observed in the study, artists lay more emphasis on the discipline and the creation of a work of art than on the routine of daily life. That is why they raise and expound issues related to the particular field of their creativity, their needs and their problems. In their works, artists also challenge their predecessors in introducing taboo subjects such as sexual openness and reforms in religious conceptions which are considered as defiance of the established conventions.

Writers of modern Amharic literature are also credited for portraying artist characters and for dealing with art as a theme in their works. Moreover, by looking inward into their life and works, they have paved the way towards understanding the nature of the "self" and its role in shaping the future.

PRONUNCIATION KEY

Pronunciation Symbols	English	Amharic
bā as in	fu <u>r</u>	tāsfa
bu as in	to <u>o</u>	Kuul
bi as in	se <u>e</u>	Semmetaw <u>i</u>
ba as in	ba <u>t</u>	Wázza
be as in	the <u>n</u>	Mahilet
bā as in	Jun <u>e</u>	Lājennät
bo as in	bo <u>a</u> t	Gittemo <u>c</u>

The Following unique Amharic sounds have been transcribed as follows:

Pronunciation Symbols	English	Amharic
k' as in	ko <u>r</u> an	makoya
ñ as in	o <u>n</u> ion	tattanaw
j as in	jo <u>k</u> e	majamaria
c' as in	ch <u>u</u> rch	gittimoc
č' as in	ch*	co <u>r</u> a
s' as in	s*	da <u>m</u> se
š as in	sh <u>i</u> rt	šibat
t' as in	t*	t'at't'anaw

* followed by an explosive release of air

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Introduction

In the past, Amharic literature was overwhelmed by the flow of crude didacticism and a lingering tradition. Most creative works of that time reflected stereotyped themes whose central ideas go about preaching religious and moralistic subjects as well as praising heroic and benevolent deeds of the ruling dynasty and its squirearchy.

However, the modern aspect of Amharic literature is different. As Molvaer states: "Amharic literature reflects a broad and many-faceted view of social and cultural phenomena in modern Ethiopia" (1980,243). This fact of change and development is further claimed by Assefa Aregahegn (1981:ii) to be significant in its form and content.

This transformation which Kane expresses as "...a gradual increase in the level of sophistication and mastery of the art of writing on the part of the authors" resulted in "the declining of the number of moralistic pamphlets while attempts were made to expand the range of the literature" (1975,14).

In the middle-class society that came into existence after the Italian aggression, the arts lost much of the well-defined function they had in the religious and social institutions of previous ages.

That is why writers well equipped with modern education and western ideas broke the narrow path of their predecessors

and extended their imagination to incorporate the life and problems of their time. In doing so, they showed a sense of commitment and obligation towards influencing and shaping individual as well as community life.

A remarkable number of writers of this period ceased to be normative and started to show their concern through various historical, social, political, cultural and other themes. Besides dealing with a variety of themes, they also depict significant characters which were meant to set up standards of exemplary behaviour. Assefa Aregahegne briefly mentions this fact as follows:

Modern writers are no more normative but analytical, attempting to grasp the complexities inherent in the changing Ethiopian society (1981,22).

Along with their other themes, writers of this period also started drifting towards the discussion and portrayal of art and the artist. Since then, this pattern of turning inwards, upon the medium of their own craft is noticed in the creative works of an increasing number of writers.

Despite such growing efforts on the part of writers in communicating their experience to the reader, few, among Ethiopians who have written extensively on modern Amharic Literature, have ventured to discuss matters pertaining to art and artists. Alemayehu Guta's B.A thesis (1979), which focuses on "writer characters in Baalu Girma's work," raises issues mainly on the qualities of the characters and the role they play in the fictional world they exist in. Fekade Azeze's

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(1974) article on "Post- Revolution Novels" and Taye Assefa's paper: " The Post-Revolution Amharic Novels(1966-1975)", highlight the basic thematic and formal features of the Amharic novels of this period. In addition, Daniel Fanta's B.A. thesis (1972) on "Aberra Lemma and His Works" and Birhane Meskel Dejene's B.A. thesis (1982) on "Gebre Kirstos Desta and His Works" deal basically with the biography and themes of each fictional work of the aforementioned authors. However, a small part of their research is also devoted to the subject of art and artists considered in the works of the writers.

The aim of this thesis is, therefore , to study the different fictional works which portray artists and raise questions of art as

themes of their novels, short stories, plays and poems, paying also equal attention to establishing the reasons why writers focus their attention upon their life and craft.

Although few creative works go back to the late 1950s, the bulk that deal with artists and their art start mushrooming from 1960 onwards. The initial period chosen as suitable for inclusion in this study, therefore, starts with the publication of Seifu Metaferias, yä täsfa igär bīrat (1960). In addition to Seifu's poem, the works of twenty-three other writers are selected as the basis for this research, ending with Tsehai Melaku's novel, anguz.

This span of time, which is indicated as "modern" in this research, refers not to a way of acting and behaving but to the use of the term as a device for historical periodization.

Most researchers who have worked on the development of Amharic literature in general and Assefa Aregahegne in particular consider writers who appeared during and after 1960 as the new generation.

Concerning the question: "What is art?" it seems simple to give a straight-forward definition. But this is not an easy task. AS stated in The New Encyclopedia Britannica "art is a name given to a realm so vast and indefinite as to embrace literature, music, theater, and other equally diverse activities, no particular definition commands an overall consensus" (1986,107). Hence, Daiches's definition of art seems useful to our purpose.

Art is a form of communication in which every artist endeavours to communicate a private vision to his public. The literary artist makes his communication through the medium of words; the painter through colour and form ; the musician through musical sounds and the other artists through other media of communication (1964,71).

This definition is not consistent with other broader ones that also imply technical meanings but since it lays emphasis on the artist's mission and his medium, its dual value makes it a necessary choice.

The primary sources for this study are poems, novels, short stories and plays that deal with artists namely: writers, painters, musicians as characters, as well as those that deal with art: literature, music, painting etc. as their themes.

Except for a few cases, almost in all of the works, the theme and portrayal of artists is either presented as part of a collection of poems and short stories or as significant characters in the respective fictional work. Thus, annotations are provided in the appendix to acquaint the reader with their standing in relation to the whole.

This thesis is divided into three chapters: The first surveys the view that artists have on literature, painting and music. Chapter two is about artists and the values cherished by them. Since values are links between need and action, it is particularly relevant to analyze the dynamics reflected by the artists.

The third chapter deals with artists and their motivation. In this section, the study focuses on reasons that account for their 'itch' to create. The conclusion tries to sum up the three chapters.

It is obvious that translating a poem from Amharic into English is next to impossible for the researcher as the rules that apply to Amharic poetry can't be directly applied to English. Therefore an attempt has been made to keep as close as possible to the sense of the contents only of the original poems. Each original Amharic poem considered in this investigation is included in the appendix.

Finally, unless identified separately, all translations are by the researcher, and all calendars used are Julian (Ethiopian).



Chapter One

I. Artists and Their Views:

The attempt in this section is to show how distinct views concerning art and artists are reflected in the creative works of a successive number of modern Ethiopian writers.

Obviously, the writer's candid views on art according to Ayo Mamadu in his 'Reflections in a pool...', "can be found in his if dead; diaries, note books, or if alive; in his essays or interviews. Since most writers prefer silence to discussing their works and, some have no personal contact with critics or interviewers they rather choose to explore artists and their world in their works of art" (1985,514).

The focus of this chapter is, therefore, mainly on what is stated in various poems, plays, novels and short stories; regarding literature, music and painting.

1.1 On Poetry (Literature)

Among the different genres, poetry is the most deeply rooted in our literary tradition. Though it is a time-honoured literary form, the medium remained for the most part oral and didactic.

However, through the years Amharic poetry displayed a marked shift from its earlier settled purpose of praising and preaching religious and moralistic subjects. The change towards an awareness of the agonizing social realities of the day has enabled modern writers to be more and more realistic.

This tendency of understanding and reflecting the life and problems of their time in their works started, according to Kane(1975) with the publication of Solomon Deressa's- lǎǎnnät(1963), whereas the appearance of modern poetry goes back, as Assefa (1981,88) puts it, to the publication of Mengistu Lemma's Yägittim gubäe (1956). The latter's assertion seems to carry more weight than that of Kane's, in that, contemporaries of Mengistu such as Gebrekristos Desta and others also produced a number of modern poems in the late 1950s.

The number of poems that specifically refer to the concept of poetry are eleven, namely: "Yädäs Gittim fikär" (Passion for a New Poem); 'Biär ändäwäzza' (Unpremeditated Poetry); 'guma lällo' (Phrase in a Traditional Song); 'bälle k'innew' (The Poet); 'balle k'innena yägädäl mamitto' (The Poet and An Echo); 'ballä wärk' kinf' (With a Golden Wing); 'yä biär amwawwat lella' (The Death of a Poem is Different); 'yä balle k'inne' (That Poet), 'sänne gittim' (Poetry), 'yä menfäs billen' (The Core of Spiritual Life). 'bäsinnigñ sisäkrru (Getting Drunk on Poetry).

As we discern from the above list, most of the poems express the feelings and life of the poet or about the concept

of poetry in general. Since most of the poems include the experiences of the poets, it is hardly possible to separate one from the other. Therefore, our discussion takes into account not only poetry, but also the poets.

In his "yädîs gättim fikîr" (Passion for a New Poem), Seifu Metaferia elucidates, with short and clear lines, the complexity encountered at the beginning of writing an actual poem. According to him a poem starts with a fermenting in one's mind of some detail or occasion. With such ferment in his mind, the inspired poet struggles between expressing his subjective experience in an objective way, and tries to draw a harmonious pattern. Seifu likens a new poem, symbolically, to a colt, which is not yet tamed, full of energy and hard to control.

A finished work,
 Like consumed food, done for.
Whereas a new poem
 Is an ungroomed stallion,
 Ready to gallop and run.
 But the poet says,
 Sit and wait.
 Engrossed in a new thought,
 Which has no nut and bolt
 Pursuing its own ends,
 Demands to be articulated.
 This challenge,
 This tension,
 Is the satisfaction.
 That makes the poet
 The master of script.
 (1960,132)

As we realize from this poem, starting and completing a poem needs a lot of energy and patience. In this process of actualizing his experience the poet has to pass through

periods of encounter, absorption and engagement before moving to a higher level of awareness and creativity.

Regarding this process Eliot remarks as follows "poetic originality is largely an original way of assembling the most disparate and unlikely material to make a new whole, something again one cannot plan" (qtd. in Waterman, 1982, 8).

In order to create a new poem, one can't have a clear cut design or a calculated course in one's imagination. As indicated above, several details probably scattered in one's actual life have to be fused together so as to give birth to an original work.

As Andrew Waterman mentions in his 'Writing Poetry' "Life is a paradoxical mix of boredom and stimulations which both in their way help poetry. The stimuli arise not only from immediate incidents one comes across in one's imagination but also from a sense of wonder at the world around us" (1982,10). This is almost a synoptic notion indicated in the poem of Mamo Wodineh's 'biir indawazza'- (Unpremeditated Poetry). In this poem Mamo expounds his idea about poetry to be the record of the happiest and saddest moments of one's life. He shares the views of Shelley in relating his record "to the best and happiest moments," (qtd. in Goetz,1986,106) while differing in including the experience encountered in the dark moments of one's life. Mamo further indicates the encounter to be non-voluntary.

Without deliberation,
 abruptly,
 upon nature's call.
 ...comes
 melancholy,
 pleasure,
 annoyance,
 a passing mood,
 these-and-all others.
 Hem the pen in,
 until they drip in
 with beauty.

(1960,1)

Mamo also says poetry is powerful, timeless, and universal, a force to be reckoned with.

Every where on the planet,
 on land,
 across the seas, and, sky.
 we detect the poem,
 in abundance.
 The pen and ink,
 the paper and

 Their commander

the finger
 what monument they fashion
 from time immemorial,
 up to the present,
 is unshakable.

(1960,3)

In Mamo's view, poems created in moments of intense engagement are so powerful as to remain ageless and unshakable.

Another modern poet, Ayalneh Mulat, in his 's'inne gitt'im' (Poetry) shares the view of Mamo, in giving poetry a timeless and universal nature,

poetry, eternal and free, as air,
 is ageless from generation to generation.
 (1984,72)

In Wendye Ali's Poem, 'basinneñ sisäkrru' - (Getting Drunk on Poetry) poetry is depicted as water cascading down hill. In this symbolic representation Wendye compares the

The death of a poem,
is dissimilar to
the death of a poet
whose heart beat ceases.
It will rise like the sun,
shining and burning.
It will never pass,
into nothingness.
(1968, 37)

In this poem, Tsegaye expresses his deepest feelings of sorrow for the passing away of the poet as a human being, and at the same time indicates the poet's immortality through his creativity. He warns us not to accept the news about the departure of the demigod, the poet. In his view the death of the poet comes not with the passing of life, but with the dying of the inner fire; with the loss of inspiration.

In the same way, Ayalneh Mulatu and Aberra Lemma, in their poems: 'sanne gättim' (Poetry) and "yá mánfäs bállen" (The Core of Spiritual Life) underscore this basic idea.

The poet never, never dies,
he achieves eternity,
through his poems.
If his poems reflect the truth,
death will not knock at his door.
(1984, 72)

The role of poetry is to interpret experience for us and thus bring meaning into it. Likewise, in the life of the poet there is reborn, as Yeats says, "an idea something intended, complete and thereby, through that life, nature becomes intelligible not for the poet alone but for all of us... to the degree that we are able to share in the life of the poet."
(qtd. in Olney, 1982, 460)

Aberra, on his part communicates his confidence in those poets and artists who remain committed to their community and the individual's well being as follows:

I bestow upon you
 the place of immortals
 For the sole reason that
 I view myself,
 in your creation,
 How I envy you.
 (1974,43)

In his "gáttamiwu" (The Poet) Aberra Lemma expresses his appreciation of the poet. According to him everything comes after the Poet, even natural phenomena such as the sun, summer, and Heaven. The reason he gives is that the poet is the only one that can translate dreams into reality.

I deem it a great honor,
 to give the poet,
 a prime place,
 ahead of the Sun,
 Summer, Heaven and the rest.
 For translating a dream
 into reality.
 To all intents and purposes
 I can't find his match.
 (1967,88)

Like others, Aberra has great respect for poets. He dedicates this poem to Tsegaye G/Medhin- one of the famous modern poets.

Besides his 'yädīs gáttám fīkīr', Seifu also wrote 'bällä kīnnew' (The Poet). In this poem, he reveals the creative experience of the poet. Every poet testifies to the fact that will is not enough in writing a poem. It needs an intense encounter with the world around him, an encounter which may occasionally border on insanity.

The Poet,
 call him a versifier
 if you like.
 But I call him crazy.
 (1964,22)

When we consider this approach, it would be wise to refer to current psychoanalytical theories of creativity. According to Rollo May this theory has two characteristics. The first one is "reductive," meaning "reducing creativity to some other process," while the second one specifically makes it "an expression of neurotic patterns" (1959,262). But this does not at all mean that creativity itself is the product of illness. The implication that talent is a disease and creativity a neurosis is a misconception based on false understanding.

So what is the significance behind Seifu's naming the artist as "crazy"? A poet might sometimes gaze for hours in rapt concentration at something of interest to him, or might spend much of his working day gaping emptily at the sky, or might become violently indignant or happily enthusiastic over a new bud or a shriveled flower. The attitude of the poet is expressed by Seifu as:

Enraptured as a lover, and-
 forgetting his whereabouts,
 his soul falls apart.
 Smiling with the blossoms,
 crying with the shriveled flowers,
 laughing and/or crying.
 The crazy poet is
 a prisoner who plays the game,
 scratching words on a paper.
 (1964,22).



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Amid life's disorderly occurrences the poet attempts to create harmony by imaginative perspective. The sincere poet, even if it makes him look crazy, prefers to find the impulse to write something in its precise and expressive exactness.

Kebede Mikael, a seasoned poet, has a couple of poems on the experience and life of the poet: "bälle kinnena yägädäl mamitto". (The poet and An Echo), and "bällä wärk kinf": (With a Golden Wing). In the first, Kebede deals with the poet and his imagination. In this fantasy world, the poet stands in between two valleys alone communicating with the echo of his voice. In the last couple of lines the poet requests the assistance of this echo in the task of creativity.

Ahead of me soars
 a high mountain.
 On my right,
 a deep precipice,
 on my left,
 a great abyss.
 In the middle of which
 I stand creating my poems.
 Never to worry, and
 To feel contented
 let the two of us be alone.
 For you know nothing
 of betrayal
 dishonesty
 or wickedness
 So, in my attempt
 to create poetry
 I need you,
 on my side.

(1965, 35)

The echo is the poet's alter ego with whom he confers to transmit his observations more accurately, more vividly and in a great variety of ways.

Kebede's second poem, "bällä wärk' kinf", (With a Golden Wing) is also about a poet. Kebede's poet is not interested in earthly matters, but in flying beyond the moon and the sun to an unknown destination where he may feel exalted, where ordinary things are left far behind.

The diligent Poet,
with a golden wing,
soars to the sky.
His soul in a chariot,
goes beyond the clouds,
leaving behind
the soiled world
to the sun and the moon.
(1965, 36).

Kebede's thoughts and ideals are far from the objective reality and the day to day life of the people; which we encounter in works of other modern poets. Kebede's works are exceptional in that their emphasis is on the metaphysical.

Among modern poets, Solomon Deressa is prominent in abandoning the established conventions and in trying out his own daring experimentation. He tried to set aside the rigid and sacrosanct tradition of Amharic metric composition.

The publication of lǎǰännät (Childhood) heralded that something new in Amharic poetry had happened. In this collection of poems Solomon proved his main mission. In the introductory part of his book he clearly states his view on poetry:

A poem's form is not only born from words in metric alignment. Though the purpose of life is not as definite as the price of a match, we can however perceive its presence from the day to day struggle of

mankind. Therefore poetry's task is to ponder and show this struggle of the individual along with the negligence of the world as sometimes observed. Poetry should not be valued by what it communicates as a medium but by what it actually is. Poetry should not be a means to pass over or preach a certain philosophy or some mere abstract message. However it can express it by chance.

(1963,9)

The autonomy of the poem is acknowledged , but it doesn't mean that it is entirely free from the reality surrounding it. Solomon says stop staring upwards and look down at the mess under your feet and write.

Let's examine his poem 'gumma lallo'. The title is taken from a phrase in a traditional song. In this poem we observe Solomon's anti-establishment views.

Kinne is stated
to be fundamental.
Tied to parchment words.
You say Kine is fundamental
as if Saints were not born
from emotion,
clanging rhyme with rhyme.

(1963,41)

Solomon reasserts his belief in greater freedom and no restriction; in spontaneous language and down to earth poetry.

Without counting pebbles,
without negotiating about words.
without worrying about versification.

I am a poem,
I am language.

So what?

(1963,43)

Solomon ferrets meaning out of disorderly patterned words. We feel his urgency. In a way, he seems to say, let my poems be as real and life-like as possible, blowing hot and cold. He throws his challenge in the face of the reader. Thus:

What if my fancy starts
with the drum?
with the flute of the Shepherd.
with the peasant girl?
What if I make lamentation
the signature of my vision?
What if I make a girl's tongue
the cord for my execution?
So what!
(1963,42)

Solomon's attempt to free style and content from the cluttering rules of the elite demonstrates a bringing down to earth of the transcendental notion of poetry. His poems reflect the anxiety and bitterness of the changing sentiments of the time. In Gerard's view (1981 G.C), it is the result of "the slow but steady growth of education "as well as" the coup of December 1960 held against Haile Sellasie that opened the eyes of the young to change" (1981,21).

Solomon met with strong opposition in some quarters. His departure from the traditional style sparked great controversy. Among the opposition, Abbe Gubegna was most notable. In his collection of poems māskot (Window) we notice a purposeful defiance of the ideas and styles of modern writers. In the introductory part of this poem and in 'ārretna mār' (Aloes and Honey) (1965) Abbe insisted on the refined tradition that was safe, secure and sanctioned for a long time.

For Abbe and his colleagues poetry is purposeful, an expression of deeply felt emotion. Poetry is food for the soul, a disciplined craft that requires skill, patient practice and polish. In Abbes' words:

Jumbling in the name of modernity and abandoning the traditional forms calling them "wornout" is not justifiable. Where as it would be wise for them to go back and dig deep into their rich heritage. As for me, I cannot get along with these, rather I make sure of myself writing most of my poems in a rhymed way.

(1965, 8)

Abbe's outburst is found in the introduction of his two collections mentioned above. Even though Abbe insists on being formal in everything, both camps have their own followers. Assefa Gebremariam's poem 'yä bälle k'inne' (That poet) is a demand for variety in style and content.

In this poem, Assefa declares his dissatisfaction with the stereotyped pattern of writing poetry and aspires for the day when poems which locate themselves in the world of the actual; which are authentic to experience; and which adjust to the change in the human condition will be forthcoming.

When will that day come?
 The day when we listen
 to a different poem;
 Different in its form and rhythm.
 The poems we have at present
 are so similar and boring.
 We are desperate for the inspired poet,
 with rich and novel expression,
 with simple and straight articulation.
 we are sick of
 the same form,
 the same rhythm,
 the same rhyme.

The years advance, but
the poems don't mature.
The poetry of other countries
is diverse, while ours
remains unchanged.

(1971,20).

Seamus Heaney's statement on what he expects from good poetry enhances Assefa's view.

You want it to touch you at the
melting point below the
breastbone and the beginning
of the Solar Plexus. You want
something sweetening and at
the same time something
unexpected, something that has
come through constraint into
felicity.

(qtd. in Kennedy, 1990, 398).

This creation of the new is what a reader of good taste seeks and also what Assefa hopes for.

1.2 On Prose Fiction (Literature)

Writers have expressed their views on literature through different genre: novels, short stories, plays and poems. We shall examine these views in Baalu Girma's Kāadmäss Bāšāger (1962); Yā kāy Kokāb tīrrī (1972)' dārāsīw (1972); 'yā fīsāmew mājāmāriya' (1975); Aberra Lemma's 'mānāšša lā dirsāt' (1981); Fekade Yohannes's sānsällāt (1983); Tsehai Melaku's anguz (1984); Seyoum Teferra's hāmus (1977); Tezerra Woubishet's, mälāda (1983); Berhanu Zerihun's tāttāñāw tāwānāy' (1975); and Afework Yohannes's poem 'Dārsēt' (1967).

Just as the reading public has changed, from the royal circle and intellectual elite to a larger mass of half-

educated people, so has the writer's attitude to his art. There has been literature of affirmation; and on the other side literature of negation.

Although the views of a writer may vary with the times, his true aim must be to see life steadily and see it wholly. Regarding truth in art almost all of the writers agree on this issue. As Emmailaf, a playwright character says in *Ye Qay Kokeb Tiri* "Art can not exist without truth.... The major cause for the failure of art in our society is lack of an attempt to state the truth" (1972,82). Finot, an admirer and follower of Emmailaf, herself has the same belief, she expresses her opinion in this way: "The writer's hunger and thirst is for truth and beauty." (1972,147).

Sirak, a writer character in darasiw, has a broader view. His idea of truth and beauty is based on humanity. The purpose of literature is to show the two sides of life: the optimistic and the pessimistic. First, "to show that life is not worthwhile because life holds more evil than good-the pessimist side." Secondly, "to show that man can change himself and the world for the better, and with his labor can give meaning and a bright hope to life - the optimist side" (1972,117).

Sirak's belief is that, before starting any literary work, the writer should clearly define his outlook regarding man and his world. His decisions on this matter will assist the writer in attaining his goals and in producing a serious work. Therefore, there could be no third alternative besides

these two opposing views. Literature reflects either of the two notions. This view of his is the basis for his advice and criticism to Eskindir's helter-skelter novel.

We can't simply write for the sake of writing. The passion for literature alone is not enough, there must be a purpose. In his effort to actualize his dreams into reality, the basic focus for the writer should be human beings (1972,118).

Sirak's view on literature is also revealed in the advice he further gives to the aspiring writer Eskindir. After evaluating his book, Sirak reached the following conclusion which he forwarded to the author.

Good diction will not be enough to write a successful novel; form alone will not suffice. Therefore, the basic thing should be the content. The concept to be expressed should be simple, clear and timely.
(1972, 109).

In this comment, Sirak pointed out the harmony that should be maintained in any literary work. The form and content should be united in order to give meaning to the reader.

Afework Yohannes is a poet who reflects his views on literature in his poem 'därsät' (A Composition). In this poem Afework tries to give meaning and function to literature. Literature, according to him, is a product of hard work and imagination, a product which stimulates the mind and kindles vision.

From the depth of desire
 and the stretch of imagination.
 From serious thought,
 and taxing labour.
 Literature is
 A stimulant for the mind
 that gives hope to the world
 (1967,61)

Afework further states the function of literature as follows:

To witness truth,
 To fight for love,
 To eradicate hatred.
 To discard laziness,
 To help blossom good things
 in plenty.
 To prevent humanity
 from depleting its resources,
 Literature is
 to this world its succour and support.
 (1967,62)

Gebeyehu, a playwright character, in mäläda, (Early in the Morning) and Ameha an actor in hämus (Thursday) have similar views regarding the role and meaning of a play. Both react seriously to the comments forwarded by their respective neighbours regarding the meaning of a play.

Both Ameha and Gebeyehu oppose the view that a play is an art form which stands only for entertainment or laughter. Ameha's understanding of the meaning and role of a play goes far beyond entertainment. His replay to Doctor Silesy affirms this fact:

It seems that you have decided that the main characteristics of a play are its quality to create fun and laughter. Am I mistaken? In my view its essence is its capacity to show simple things that the lay man ignores. Its challenge is to show your problems in a new perspective so that you can have a better understanding of them (1977,20).

Ameha rejects the Doctor's notion of a play and sums up its role as revealing the truth and the reality of felt experience.

Gebeyehu on his part refutes major Retta's argument as obsolete:

Those who consider plays as instruments of fun or dogma are entertaining an out of date notion. They at the same time never forget its commercial angle(1983,41).

In elucidating this lack of understanding, Ato Gebeyehu shows

his concern in correcting this naive polarization. In his view:

a play is an art which gives meaning to human experience. It should not be a medium for message-mongering. It should also reflect the truth of the society(1983,42).

Harmony of meaning is essential in preserving the true feelings and experience of the playwright. The meaning must be grasped within the context of the work without abstracting from it. Otherwise it will lead the audience or the reader to alter the experiential insight of the author.

Most of the characters we are discussing here are aware of the fact that it is necessary for any literary work to have an intensified perception of human life. Experience is not a fixed thing. It varies with the individual's power of perception. Hence, the advice of Henry James, "Try to be one of the people on whom nothing is lost!" (qtd. in Engle,

1982,348), echoes the views of Sirak, Girmachew, Sintayehu, Hailemariam, Sinework and Kidist.

According to Sirak, "A writer should be ready to read and analyse the relationship between things. He should strive to gain additional Knowledge from the world around him" (1972,118). Girmachew a writer character in 'mäk'oya' on his part has the conviction that, "one needs to have knowledge to write a simple letter, leave alone, the complex novel..." (1981,16), Sintayehu in ya fisamew majamaria emphasizes the need to be observant, "... a writer who is not able to understand a new aspect of human life is a dead one." (1975,11).

Sinework, a writer character in sänsälät (The Chain), claims that perception of human life for him is a gradual development and achievement. At first, he can't be sure of the reason why his writing does not progress. He finds it difficult to identify himself with the character he portays. The contradiction between his desire to develop his main character and his lack of knowledge torments him. That is why he tells Fikirte, " ... when words were boiling inside me , I used to think of myself as an author; but I think I am mistaken" (1983,172).

Fikirte's comment , "... though, I am not considering myself as an authority on this matter, I think closer interaction with different people will assist you in your writing" (1983,174). This and Hussein Jillo's advice on observing people in various situations opened his eyes:

A writer should not limit himself to city life. He has to leave the glamorous life and move closer to nature. One has to be able to discover the rural life,... the untouched forests with its freely roaming wild animals and birds. He has to see the peasant toiling in the fields. You have to experience life under the thatched roofs of the peasant without electricity, running water and so on. It is then that you can have a balanced and matured view in your writings (1983,305).

It is after he takes the case of Dr. Nahom and visits Bale Goba that Sinework realizes his lack of knowledge about the country side and decides to complete his novel.

Kidist, a writer character in anguz, also agrees with Hussein, on the usefulness of having the knowledge and experience of life in the countryside. After completing higher education in Europe, she refuses to accept a new position and salary increment for the only reason that her desire is field work. Her intention is to gain understanding of different communities through field work. That is why she says "...I see field work as an opportunity to acquaint myself with different cultures and environments, an untapped source for my writing" (1984,244).

Henry James reinforces this fact as follows:

A young writer should always base his work on his own proved experience, but before he could do this he must learn to bring into his consciousness as much and as heightened an experience as possible
(qtd. in Engle,1982,348).

One other quality that is stressed by these writers is sincerity. In Emmailaf's judgement a sincere literary work is

clearly distinguished in its objective approach. According to him, "...one ought not to be an opportunist in his literary work, because, a writer who cannot be true to his emotions cannot please" (1972,142).

Finot also emphasizes the importance of being honest: "Any writer must revise his writing, time and again until he is sure that he is expressing the truth" (1972, 146).

Aldous Huxley asserts, "All literature, all art, best seller or worst, must be sincere, if it is to be successful... A man cannot successfully be anything but himself" (1960,52).

To sincerity, Sirak adds originality. The writer needs first and foremost "originality and the capacity to communicate it effectively" (1972,178) Sintayehu a writer character in "yā Fīsamew Mājāmāriā" has a similar view on this issue . In his opinion, a writer should avoid repetition and should extend the creative thrust of his work.

A writer's drive is worthwhile as far as he tries to create new things. What I am against is, with writers who reproduce the same thing again and again and spend their own as well as their audience's time and energy. I admire those writers who understand their shortcomings and abstain from such waste (1975,11).

When it comes to character portrayal, Sirak, Emmailaf, Girmachew and Gebeyehu have similar views. Their common stand is based upon the conviction that characters should not be drawn like puppets. They are to be independent to lead their own lives. This can be proved by the answer Emmailaf gives:

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The characters I create in this story have life of their own. They are the ones who lead me to their destination. My part in this is only to follow and write what they feel, think and decide. (1972,83)

Girmachew is another writer character who takes the same path in the portrayal of his characters. In his opinion, every writer needs to have a deep knowledge of the people he is going to write about. Without background knowledge, it would be difficult to give depth to a character. That is why he says, "Imaginative writing is a complicated effort. Without prior knowledge of the characters, nothing of value could be written. What could be said, about whom you don't know much?" (1981,16)

Sirak realizes the complexity of characterization. Because characters have to be viewed with their weaknesses and strengths as a whole, which is difficult to achieve.

The characters in a novel or a story exist only within the special world created by the author. In doing so, he should design them in a way that corresponds to that world. Harmony should be achieved in their actions and personalities. A weakness in this respect leads to loss of credibility. This is Sirak's criticism of Eskindir's novel:

The characters in your story are speaking the same language. They have no personality of their own which differentiates them from one another.... putting the progressive on one side and the regressive on the other is not enough...." (1972,110).

1.3 On Painting

Painting, like poetry, is also rooted in Ethiopia's ancient past. Through this medium artists have been striving to convey their vision to the public. Just as the writer expresses his ideas by arranging words in meaningful combination, so does the artist by manipulating line and color into meaningful relationships.

We find painters in a variety of modern Amharic literature. Gebre Kirstos Desta deals with them in his Poem, 'On painting, (1960), Dagnachew Worku in adäfräs (1962), Assefa Guya in rähimätto (1981), Sisay Nigussu in gardoš (1981) and Asseffa Guya in his Poems' bäräkäta birruš' as well as 'yäkinnat zär' (1984).

Ato Kibret in adäfräs learnt his art in France. Rahmatto in rähimätto and Estifanos in "mähillät" receive their education from the Arts School in Addis.

Right from the start, we find Kibret being absorbed by the scene in front of him. He tries to interpret this observation of life in terms of color, tone and imagery.

Look at the curve that cock performed in its flight and its motion after it landed....the harmony of colors seen during the quivering of the wings, the contrast produced by the blending of light and shade;...what do you think of the perspective, the contrast?

(1962,48)

This scene gives the artist a new meaning of life. A life free from the forces of darkness with a bright and optimistic future.

Roger Fry, in commenting upon the characteristic features of modern painting, says:

Almost any turn of the Kaleidoscope of nature may set up in the artist a detached and esthetic vision, and as he contemplates the particular field of vision, the (aesthetically) chaotic and accidental contemplation of forms and colors begin to crystallize into a harmony...certain relations of line become for him full of meaning, he apprehends them no longer curiously but passionately...(qtd. in Davey, 1934,86).

Ato Kibret's view tallies with Roger Fry's:
Are you joking?...There is no more need for further preparation, continue your argument with Adefris...Let show your inner fire and out your inner fire, your determination. Let me see it on your face. (1962,49).

What the artist is trying to capture on his canvas is not, in his own words, life-less portraits of young men. What he is after is their real emotions, their vitality. He seems not to be interested by the object in the picture, but by what it represents - youth.

The artistic representation of the simple life form which we easily detect around us, proves difficult to grasp for the ordinary man, Belay. That is why he says, "Oh! Ato Kibret, this picture doesn't look like us...I can't grasp it." Then he adds, "...here is a part of a face and there is another part of it. The mouth and the ear are scattered in different places. The eyes, and the feet are misplaced. The rest of the canvas is smeared with paint..." (1962,53).

What we realize from Belay's statement is that people who feel little or no emotion for pure form find themselves at a

loss. They lack the power to apprehend it. Regarding this problem, Clive Bell states:

When confronted by a picture instinctively they refer back its forms to the world from which they came. They treat created form as though it were imitated form, a picture as though it were a photograph...People who can not feel pure esthetic emotion remember pictures by their subjects...not by the shapes of forms and the relations and quantities of color.

(qtd. in Hospers 1946,99).

Belay's desire is to have his "real" portrait. But in Kibret's opinion the time for a straight forward portrait had passed with the change in taste. "Few clues are enough to express my impression of the youth. The smeared paint is to indicate the general atmosphere, the trend of the time" (1962, 50).

Assefa Guya's Rahmatto started painting early in life. But he dedicated his life to its pursuit after he joined the university. He even decries his two years spent in the arts school. The importance of the arts school his expressed as follows:

Going to arts school saves the gifted artist from unnecessary effort and practice. He can also obtain the stored knowledge of generations before him. He **can acquire with out much effort the basic rules and techniques needed in his art.** What is really important besides all these, is his being gifted and his day to day application.

(1981,29).

In addition to painting, Rahmatto manifests a multiplicity of talents. He plays a stringed musical

instrument, "kīrār," and writes poems. He shifts from one field to another without persevering long enough in one pursuit. In his opinion it is good to shift from one to another until he finds his true calling. He argues: "A man whose desires cease is a man on his way to death. Therefore, until such time comes as to force him to focus on a single creative field, it would be meaningless not to taste from the buffet of life " (1981,30).

Once pledged to the "call of the brush", he promises, "I've to depict with my brush this boundless life; this complex but beautiful world." (1981,24).

In doing so, he realizes the hardship awaiting him, and the difficulty he has to face. He expresses this fact as follows:

An artist who overcomes every kind of obstacle on his own generates genuine **passion in himself and can be capable of achieving his goal.** Those who try to create with an eye to the material rewards are vulnerable to failure and humiliation (1981 , 35).

His decision to leave the university and his struggles to earn his livelihood clearly reveal his devotion to his chosen path of life.

Rahmatto further states what enables an artist to persist in his creative efforts as follows:

In general a painter needs a suitable work room in which he is able to create or hold an exhibition. He needs the tools of his trade in plenty and the support of museums are necessary for his work. Lack of these things leads to demoralization....He needs patience. The artist should not expect

quick success. Instead, he has to struggle to create even if it takes months and years. Besides personality, art demands an incessant endeavour (1981,35).

Rahmatto realizes his dream and holds an exhibition at the Cityhall. His works bear the titles: - "mišit" (Night); "niġat" (Dawn); "diłdiy" (Bridge); "diñbär" (Border); "mäkdälla"; and "adwa".

These pictures reflect his thoughts about the secret that lies between two opposite phenomena. Due to his unusual way of presentation, the audience is unable to grasp what is depicted. Therefore, Rahmatto realizes the need to reach out and share his experience with the people.

Rahmatto believes that to be a dedicated artist one has to produce serious work. His devotion to work makes him neglect the needs of his wife.

Painter Estifanos is a character in the short story, "mähillet". He is a teacher in the Arts school. His whole attention is focused on capturing the nude portrait of Mahlet on canvas. What inspired him is the beauty and the shape of her lips. In his attempt to sketch her portrait he insists on her remaining in one position, without any movement. From his repeated request and his comments, we realize his intention to capture the quality of stillness in life. The title he give to his painting, "Pictures on Pieces of Canvas," conveys to us his intention to capture life in its syncopated state.

Aberra is our fourth painter character. He is a bit different from the preceding ones. Unlike them, he neither

has the training for his craft nor lives the life of an artist. He is seen wavering between fulfilling the wishes of his family and dedicating his life to the arts. In his childhood, he was denied the opportunity to try his hand at drawing. It is this buried talent that erupts and makes him restless.

His interest is aroused as a result of the sketches he draws in his spare hours in his office. His sketches are mostly criticism aimed at his fellow office employees. They are satirical. The first sketch is called "sirra bizu" (Miss Busy), about a typist who usually sits behind her type writer and knits. The second one is named, "tillik yá háláfinnat sîmmet" (The Feeling of Responsibility), and it is about employees who spend their time drinking coffee and gossiping. The third sketch, "yá tãgosãkollẽ aimirro" (A Disturbed Mind), is about a man with a big forehead with a stack of office paper in front of him.

The lines give the impression of being lifeless... the light and shade are a bit magnified to the extent of the rest. We find no relation between Senayit and her type writer. She could be anyone. The other pictures also tell us nothing about responsibility or the disturbance of mind.... The pictures seem to be begging for more life (1962,66).

In Aberra's view, a picture should depict the real situation wholly. The artist also should be satisfied with what he has created, when it expresses his vision to the public.

Ermias is a painter character in girdoš (Veil). Just like Rahmatto, he too starts painting late in life. He reaches this decision after he has joined the department of psychology.

After he leaves the university, Ermias is employed in an advertising agency. Soon after, he establishes his own studio. Ermias's view on painting is revealed in the response he gives to Tiwusit, who in confusion asks him, "I've posed continuously almost for two hours, but you have distorted everything; what do you mean? (1982,251). His response is brief:

It is a good question. You see! the art of painting is not the same as photography. If you want to know the secret of painting, move back a little bit... (1981,252).

Her sole desire is to display her beautiful portrait at home. But Ermias's intention is to express his deep hatred for her.

We understand Ermias's view on painting from his favourite work he christened 'Eve 1991'. In this portrait of a female, he tries to embody his ideal values. In this picture, Ermias does not clothe the woman in elegant and fashionable costume. This covering according to him is a disguise which is unfair to the true character of the person.

'Eve 1991' is a new name given to the new lady. A woman far different from ladies of our time. Her true self has to be brought out. It is then that one could, if necessary, portray her under a garment. (1981,39)

Ermias and Kibret are similar in their views of exposing the inner qualities. They believe in taking time to do portraits. That is why they don't go for hasty, emotional and artificial paintings.

Gebre Kiristos was a versatile artist, who expressed his feelings in poetry. Let us start with his poem on painting.

In his poem, 'mänäša lä siil' (To Painting) and which Solomon Deressa translated in 1967 G.C. he clearly presented a painter's task in creating a picture.

This journey has no end.
 Simulate, translate
 Swimming the colours
 playing with lines
 Crushing into light
 Occupying the unoccupied
 to experience, to create.
 To search
 To search
 The uncreated to create
 Baiting a dialogue
 with the invisible.
 Interrogating life
 Questioning thought
 Questioning the universe
 To move
 To go to go
 Beyond the moon, beyond the stars,
 beyond the sky
 Journey to the unknown
 to occupy the unoccupied.
 By thought and in thought hidden
 To search, to bring out!
 This journey to no end.
 (1967,164)

This poem has a personal line. It expresses the artist's dual experience as a poet and as an artist. In it we can glimpse into the world of the dual artist.

Assefa Guya is another artist with a talent for painting and poetry. Like Gebrekiristos, he has tried to show his

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Assefa Guya is another artist with a talent for painting and poetry. Like Gebrekiristos, he has tried to show his

experience of the painter in his poems; 'bäräkätta bäršuš' (The Gift of the Brush) and 'yäkinnät zär' (The Muse of Inspiration).

In his first poem his focus is mainly on the unfolding change seen in the sphere of creativity from the time of the caveman up to the present. In the first and second stanzas the poet tells us about the origin and birth of painting. According to him the birth place of painting is found on the walls of primitive man's cave dwellings where he left his creative imprints:

Out of evolution
primitive man
surrenders to the pull of
the unknown - mystery
Out of taste for work,
he sharpens stones and wood.
Gradually in the cave,
primitive man starts,
expressing his fears,
his delight,
by sketching on the walls
This heralds the birth of art.
(1984,32)

Aseffa clearly states his view on painting as an art form whose goal is to depict life and the beauty of nature. As an art form, painting has the quality of refurbishing the soul. This view of his is illustrated in the following lines:

Brush!
Through its journey in time,
dipping into beauty
and sprinkling it into the world
Brush!
through its journey in life,
refining art and heightening it
healing the body
and enriching the soul.
(1984,33)

In expressing the role of poetry in society, Aseffa affirms its duty of shedding light on the present and on the future. If it fails to do this, it has to be discarded and thrown back to its primitive cavern.

Brush!
 If it fails to give light
 and shine to its public
 and fails to reflect the future,
 with the mirror of the past,
 it ought to be thrown back
 to the timeless past,
 where it started from.
 (1984,34)

His second poem, 'yä kännät Zär' (The Muse of Inspiration) deals with inspiration. The painter, in order to produce a work of art, needs an idea. After making himself ready to paint and the idea suddenly deserts him, what will the painter feel at that moment? Anger, frustration and emptiness. But what if it again sparks and ignites his imagination?

After stretching his
 canvas,
 and ready with his pencil and brush,
 What if inspiration
 deserts him?
 A fleeting shadow of
 anger will give way to emptiness.
 But as abruptly,
 a fresh and clear idea
 may present itself.
 What will his reaction be then?
 How will he depict it?
 (1984,37)

This momentary lapse of creativity may lead him to lack of interest in his work which finally results in anxiety and emotional upsets. But the lapse may be brief and it will again charge his creativity.

1.4 On Music

Under this topic we shall examine Gebrekiristos Desta's poem 'yä musika dimse' (1960); Aseffa Gebre Mariam's 'musika' (1971); Debebe Seifu's 'musika yämičč Medhänät (1980); Seifu Metaferia's 'yä pianno läy mait' and 'muso la amadios mozart' (1981); and Mulugeta Gudeta's short story 'yä suräfel itta' (1981).

GebreKiristos Desta's poem 'Yä Musica Dimtse' (Sound of Music), which Solomon Deressa translated in the Ethiopian Observer Magazine (1967 G.C) communicates his views on Music.

It shows the close relationship between nature and music. Along with the rising and the setting sun, we observe and detect the tune of different musical sounds.

The trees bough is the tune of harp
That the Zigzagging wind plays on.
Clapping hands
The leaves amplify the melody
Birds embracing the whole scale,
The river bouncing
Moving on, recoiling like a whip
The sea heaving
Stretching to maul the shore,
In anger the sky is bellowing.
Music is
born Creation has
convened to sign a
song.

(1967, 168).

GebreKiristos not only uses nature in expressing the sound of music, but also resorts to man made items and modern technology.

Just like Assefa, Debebe also thinks that music has a soothing and releasing effect:

David's harp gives colour to my cheek
 heals my sinful soul,
 unloads my burden.
 How can I relate
 my anguish and sorrow to you?
 You are my only choice,
 My healer and redeemer
 Willingly I pass onto you my past
 and my tearful present
 Without your assistance
 and your fellowship
 one can not survive
 the clamor of life.
 (1980,10)

Seifu Metaferia is another poet who considers music as an act of art which emerges from the depth of his soul. We perceive this view of him from the poem 'yā p̄ano läi mäit' (Strian over a Piano).

In this poem Seifu illustrates in a clear and imaginative manner the strain which the musician has to pass through in the process of creating a melody.

"'Din'... 'Din' again 'Din!'"
 "Din' - Din' - 'Din!' again 'Din"
 The same note again and again.
 To start the melody
 clamouring to be expressed
 Oh! why can't it follow smoothly?
 Or else why can't it stop altogether?
 Something one craves for
 Something that one cannot get rid of,
 Something that squeezes the soul...
 (1981,36)

In the above poem, we observe Seifu's effort to express the patience of the musician in his creative endeavours.

Seifu's appreciation of this effort is revealed by the following poem he dedicated to Mozart:

Like a jewel
 Like a ray of light
 Like the setting sun.
 Amadeos, Good bye.
 Notes upon notes of
 Melodious sound
 Penetrating harmony
 Amadeos
 Good bye Amadeos
 Death gave you rest
 Death took you away
 from music, from yourself
 But you still exist, for us.
 Famous Amadeos
 never to be forgotten,
 But to be remembered
 Forever and ever and ever
 For the taste of your sound
 (1981,53)

Besides poetry, the view on Music is also reflected in Mulugeta Gudeta's short story entitled 'yä suräfel itta' (The Destiny of Surafel).

Surafel sings in the Wabi Shebele Hotel with his entire being, summoning forth the music as if for the first time. His sound and body movement capture the audience.

Huxley observes that the exclusive quality of music:

is its capacity to evoke
 experience as perfect wholes
 (perfect or wholes, that is to
 say, in respect to each
 listener's capacity to have any
 given experience), however
 partial, however obscurely
 confused may have been the
 originals thus recalled
 (1965,319).

By the quality of his song, 'yamäkäbir ečoññäye' (My Dead Fiancee) Surafel evokes the picture of mourning in Trufat's mind. Tirufat, one of the audience, sheds her tears because she is carried away by his interpretation.

For Surafel the qualities of good music are:

...not only those which express love; but also the beauty of nature, and benevolence. Even if it is about love, it should be love in its loftier sense: about love between mother and child; between man and God... about life and death... (1981,143).

Upto now we have seen the views different writers of modern Amharic literature tries to communicate to the reader through their novels, short stories, poems and plays; regarding literature, painting and music. The next chapter is concerned with artist characters and prominent values they cherish.

Chapter Two

2. Artists and Their Values:

It is apparent that value is what individuals consider good or beneficial to their well being. Hatterer defines value as:-

a degree of worth the individual ascribes to his own or to another person's activities, thoughts, or emotions reflected in conscious and unconscious behaviour (1965,62).

It is important here to make clear the fact that standards are necessary for the personality of the artist. Standards are also the basis for the hopes of tomorrow. Therefore, when we speak about standards we are indirectly referring to values, because as Earl C. Kelly says:

Standards are the products of values held and of the life that has been led. Even though standards are not the same for everyone, the better the quality of the life that has been experienced, the better the values held and the standards which result from these values (1967,408).

Concerning values psychologists like Stephen Pepper and Hatterer more or less agree on major values that most human beings intentionally or unintentionally react to. Pepper in his The Sources of value (1958) summarizes these values into three parts which are: conative (desire, liking), achievement (success versus frustration) and affective (pleasure versus unpleasantness). Hatterer on his part states that these values are primarily "the self, materialism, work, sexual activity... and success and failure" (1965,62). Hence we

consider these values as the basis for our investigation of artists and their values.

2.1 Self Values

Before going into the discussion of self value, it will perhaps be helpful to attempt to say what the "self" means. As Kelly wrote in his article "The Fully Functioning Self":

The self consists, in part at least, of the accumulated experiential background, or backlog, of the individual. It is what has been built, since his life began, through unique experience and unique purpose, on the individual's unique biological structure. The self is therefore unique to the individual.
(1967,403)

Even though the self is unique to the individual, it would not mean that the individual is leading an isolated life. No one is an 'island' by himself. Therefore, the self can not develop in the absence of the others. As a social being there must be continuous interaction between the individual and the community. Therefore the self is to be understood in terms of its social background.

In order to understand the self-value of artists, it is important to start from the process of becoming. In his effort to actualize his dreams, the artist above everything else has to have a purpose in life, a task at hand.

In this respect, in relation to their self-value, what is

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the purpose reflected among the many artists considered under this investigation?

Since the artist's whole conception of self-worth is determined by his objective, we observe many artist characters exhibiting selfless love for others and a dedication to their mission.

Sirak, a writer character in dārāsīw, is among those artists whose self value we observe in his unfinished novel as well as in the major literary world which encompasses him.

As a writer, Sirak dedicates himself to the life of an artist. His whole life is directed towards the good of mankind. That is why he declares that his main purpose in life is to show "human beings prevailing over evil; and that man can change himself and the world for the better" (1972,117).

Sirak's optimism and belief in people is revealed in the response he gives to his friend Eskindir. Sirak considers identifying one's objective as a basic criterion for becoming a successful writer. According to him, "the main concern of a writer should be mankind" (1972,117). Similarly we observe the writer affirming the dignity of the human spirit in his conversation with his wife, Tsege. For Sirak "building a home and running after his own luxury are secondary. What he deems important is voicing the soul of the community. Especially the low class community which the aristocrats sneer at and look down upon" (1972,34).

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Sirak's commitment to this great cause is like a one-man

rebellion. We see this in two ways. First, in his decision to remain in Ethiopia despite the political turmoil of the time and despite the losses of his wife and son. By doing so, he steers clear of the temptation of a comfortable life in England, and stays behind to pursue his purpose in life and to sing the hymn of freedom with the multitudes in chains.

His second decision is his rejection of Tsege's suggestion to leave the house they are currently living in and change to a 'decent' neighbourhood. Here also his devotion is reflected in his insistence on remaining among the poverty stricken masses and on experiencing their misery:

My dear, all the garbage, the rot and the faeces you see outside; the leper, the blind beggar, the lame one, all of these and -illiteracy, poverty, the rags; the corroded tin roofs, the rain-washed bone-like protruding walls, the unpaved roads, and others- all of them are part of us. We are also part of this world... I don't like or wish my child to be like those people who build an island in the middle of all this misery. I don't want to create a dream world in order to escape from reality (1972,35).

Even though his devotion to the masses is sincere, it is not without its problems. The road he follows is full of thorns. He is constantly pricked by his wife, his ex-landlord, and also by his colleagues at his work place. This continuous challenge and pressure at times throws him into confusion and self-assessment. In his search for the meaning of life his interactions with his wife and his colleagues help

him to understand himself and make peace with others.

From this becoming notion of himself and the freedom he gets from the pressure hindering him before, he finally develops full confidence to start his work with full determination.

...when he finally-started writing, he felt like a retired soldier returning to the war-front. The flow of his pen was like a stream gushing and glowing with ideas. It was as if life became a new discovery, a new opportunity for creativity. (1972,211).

Other artist characters such as Hailemariam, Gebeyehu, Misganaw, Sinework and Kidist, all just like Sirak believe in the indestructible greatness of man and strive to cling to the faith and light that never dies. Among all these artists we observe a collective cry for the human soul to glow with the light of vision. For instance, Hailemariam expresses "... his readiness and will to intensify and enrich the human spirit" (1962,49). Gebeyehu in mälāda is seen fighting against the decline of moral standards in his community and tries to save young girls from death by abortion. Misganaw, an actor character in t'at't'añaw tawānāy, is assassinated on the stage while acting the part of a genuine and devoted member of the community in exposing corruption.

Sinework's unique personality is manifested by his rejection of his father's corrupted way of life and by his handing him over to be tried by law. Sinework's respect for and faith in people is also realized by his decision to defend Dr. Nahom. During a visit to his imprisoned client, his

outburst confirms his stand:

...whether you like it or not I choose to be your attorney. You have to know the fact that I am not defending you because of the fee or your sister's plea. The only reason is the truth. The truth that you are trying to bury within yourself. I can't allow truth to be further undermined (1983,188).

Ato Riesom's testimony of Sinework's integrity "He is a real advocate of truth, with a clear conscience. We lost a genuine man." (1983,155) is an additional proof.

Sinework's resignation from his profession and short lived return to it as well as his creative urge is seen in the light of his desire to be a part of the process of creation. He exults in being a part of the life process which is in constant motion and state of becoming.

Kidist, as the first woman novelist character in Amharic literature, is also one of these dedicated artists with a high self regard and mission in life. Being the first woman novelist she has no referable tradition to fall back on. While it is advantageous not to be shackled by tradition, it poses a great difficulty for her to establish her artistic identity.

Her artistic pursuits entail constant challenges from friends and people around her. Notwithstanding the fact of her isolation, her diligence and perseverance are surprising. It is only with grim determination and careful manoeuvring that she emerges free to follow her chosen course.

One condition for Kidist's artistic endeavour is freedom

from too many commitments. Being a young woman artist continuous demands and pressure from her friend and family is strong. Therefore her only alternative is to break away from her former relationships.

Since her pursuit of success is fierce and single minded, she doesn't allow anyone to interfere with her interest. That is why she says,

I am prepared to completely devote myself to the call of my life. I am ready to the extent of sacrificing myself for it. Till then I am ready to go it alone. (1984,155)

Most of the time Kidist turns to her women friends for companionship and support. It is with strong confidence in herself that she completes her book and presents it to her father together with the fruit of her womb. Both of which, she claims, are the products of her free mind and body.

Among the artist characters the singer Surafel and Ameha the actor also reveal in their respective roles their dedication to their mission and their loyalty to mankind. Surafel's explanation of his public role, to his admirer friend Tirufat signifies his choice of the public interest over his as more important. The response he gives to Tirufat's invitation to dance with him is to stick to his role as a singer on the stage: "Here our major responsibility is to give satisfaction to the public" (1981,151).

Ameha on his part is also perplexed by the paradox of

his life on and away from the stage. While he is acting on the stage the audience is eager to listen to his words. But in his personal life beyond the stage, particularly in his neighbourhood, he meets with indifference. However, he never shrinks from commitment to the public. On the contrary, we see Ameha's concern to the audience than Elfinesh's sickness:

Rather than offending thousands of eagerly waiting people at the theater, I prefer vexing my lover who is at this moment hospitalized. It is easier to apologize to her than to so many (1977,27)

Similarly, Ameha's decision to break off his relationship with Elfinesh reflects his undivided dedication to the public.

On the other hand, we find artist characters such as Aberra and Rahmatto who are continuously in search of their self identity and mission in life. Aberra Werku, a painter character in kāadmas bāšagar, is an artist who can't determine his mission in life or his choice of career. Even though a trained civil servant, he is unsatisfied. So he moves from one job to another. The source of his dissatisfaction is his desire to be a painter, long buried since his childhood. His indecision and lack of commitment arises from the pressure imposed on him by his family and his friend Hailemariam.

Except for his temporary marriage with Lulit, Aberra has no sense of purpose or direction. This uneasiness reflects his search for artistic identity. Once standing in his parlour, he glances in every direction and finds nothing attractive. In this mood asks himself: " Who am I? Am I a

thing without value? A rotten thing without value? What makes me be me? " (1964,8). This confusion clears a bit after he is put in jail and all the strings that attach him to his family and his spouse are cut down.

Rahmatto on his part is in continuous search of his self. Despite his early start in painting, he can't organize his one interest. Repeatedly he shifts, from painting, to writing, from writing to music and vice-versa. This wavering started in his student years, when he left school without completing his course of studies.

It did not cease until, after great personal effort, he succeeded standing among fellow artists, at an exhibition he arranged in the city hall.

2.2 Materialistic Values

The tendency to give too much recognition and acceptance to material things such as wealth and bodily comfort over the spiritual and intellectual things refers to materialistic value. Hatterer defines this concept as follows:

The importance attributed to status objects, money and things and their acquisition, as distinguished from the values attributed to the human beings, ideas, creative practices and the products thereof.

(1965,65)

In fact, in a society where materialism motivates much behavior, money is bound to play an important role. In such

a way therefore money can affect the choice and development of an artist's creative process. If not all, some artists create solely on the basis of their need to make money. Whereas for others money may play only a secondary role in their act of creation.

As a matter of fact, most artists have little regard for material objects or money, and for that matter assert that this factor has little significance in their growth and necessity to create. Most artists won't allow their material goals to interfere with creativity. For them their art is the only satisfactory way to achieve an identity and to produce a desirable and rewarding work. Therefore, they often have little in the way of economic status.

Artist characters identified by their creative drive rather than their materialistic concerns are Sirak, Emmailaf, Hailemariam, and Sinework.

These characters are determined enough to protect themselves from being swallowed up by a commercial approach to their art. For instance, Sirak is well aware of the corroding effect of money as a threat to his creative personality. Even though he leads a married life, his first concern is for his art rather than for his family. The fundamental cause for the conflict between Tsege and Sirak is their view on materialistic values. His wife often insists that he should not involve himself in such a wasteful, expensive and time consuming hobby as writing. She would rather prefer his being engaged in some other work which can provide more money to

improve their standard of living.

Sirak totally rejects this demand of his wife. For him "writing for the sake of money is to become a businessman not an artist. Art is not a commodity, to be computed only in terms of money. It must be valued by its mission" (1972,193).

Hailemariam too has little regard for money or for the comfortable way of life. At his home books are the only visible properties seen apart from his bed, and writing table. His commitment extends as far as sacrificing his earnings for the sake of his painter friend Aberra. Hailemariam advises his friend to quit his job and give his full attention to art. In suggesting this move he also "expresses his willingness to share his salary with him" (1962,47).

Sinework, even though a government employee once, now lives on his own. However, before he quit his professional career, as a lawyer, we observe an incident which reveals his attitude towards money. In conversation with another member of the profession, Sinework the prosecutor rejects an offer made to him in compensation for favouring the offender. His response is sharp and shocking.

...sorry! I am very sorry to hear such disgusting preaching from you about theft and robbery! As a young man I really felt bad to listen to such words from an elderly and experienced professional like you. I regret to waste your time and mine. I am sorry again, to be invited to sell my conscience for three thousand birr. If you win this case, I will borrow this and offer it to you! As for the culprit, I have for him an article which

imposes a 15 year sentence (1983,162).

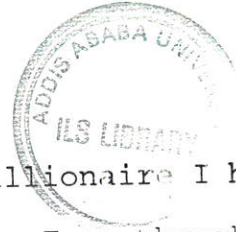
This integrity is revealed throughout the novel not only in his former career but also in his later one as an artist. His simple way of life and lack of interest in materialistic pursuits also causes a confrontation between himself and his father.

Emmailaf, a playwright character in yá káy kokáb t'irri, is an earnest artist who lives on his own. Although it may appear strange, he presents his maiden work to the audience free of charge. Emmailaf's nonmaterialistic orientation to life is clearly revealed by his friend and admirer, Finot. She expresses his marginal and free style of life as follows "Emmailaf's home is furnished with only a chair, a table and a bed. The only property he considers valuable are his books" (1972,144).

Gebeyehu, another playwright character in maláda, is practical regarding materialistic values. Like Sirak he is married. However, he has no problem with his family. He leads an orderly way of life and has a stable family. A certain character approaches him to borrow money. But Gebeyehu refuses to listen to such a demand. His response is:

Money is a matter of handling. In fact one respects those that respect it. It is not that difficult, one must learn from life.... If one can't plan, save and lead a programmed life, one will definitely face problems. So no one should pity the careless (1983,40).

Gebeyehu thinks this way: my purse is full enough only



for myself and my family. Since I am not a millionaire I have no money to spare and pass to friends in need. Even though he does not seem that way, there lurks in him a hidden fear of failure. Gebeyehu is not indifferent to money like the rest, but at the same time we don't see him compromising his talent for the sake of gaining. He is trying to balance the two extremes.

Estifanos and Rahmatto, both painters, also try to keep the balance between creativity and its monetary reward. Since they do not have permanent employment, they must find some sort of financial sustenance for their survival. Ideally this would be based upon the work they produce. Unfortunately, Rahmatto is not as lucky as Estifanos in earning his livelihood. He spends on the assistance of his friend Kello. his getting married early also results in the deterioration of his income. Despite being in such a mess, his concern for money is not excessive. His opinion on the creative versus the commercial is, "Art should not be exchanged for fame or money. If so, it results in a fiasco (1981,35). Whereas Estifanos is somewhat better than Rahmatto in making his life orderly, his training as a psychologist might have been of additional help to him in balancing his creative energy with his financial urge. He is wise enough to open his own studio which enables him to give full time to his artistic pursuits. In working for an advertising agency on contract basis he makes a partial compromise. But this is necessary for his income. Without deviating into total commercialism, Estifanos

becomes successful in solving his dilemma. Due to this amalgam of creative and commercial activity, he leads a stable and moderate life.

Surafel, a musician character in mākoya, is also attracted to this profession by his survival needs. Though he has to earn the means of his livelihood as an employee of the Wabi Shebelle Band, he is not that aggressive in compromising his career. His intention and desire is to get himself free of the exploitation of the band owners and at the same time to improve his ability as a singer. His style of life is moderate and manifests his indifference to material concerns.

On the contrary, Demirre, an actor in the play tättāñāw tawāñāy, is the best example of the artist who totally compromises his creative integrity. Demirre side steps his role of exposing corruption and involves himself with defending the morally pervert member of his community. He finally quits his role due to the money offered to him. His attempt to delay and finally to stop the play from being produced is not successful and his continuous involvement as an out cast artist.

2.3 Sexual Values

This term expresses the concept that is related to the activity and belief in a person's sex life. Hatterer defines it this way:

Sexual value pertains to the worth a

person places on his sexual activity, and are measured by his attitude toward monogamy, promiscuity, homosexuality, masturbation and celibacy (1965,69).

Based on this explanation, sexual activity can be a faithful and tender relationship or an aggressive and selfish one. In their physical and emotional expression some individuals may also exploit their partners by using them as a means to get rid of their anxiety, depression or anger. This practice would undoubtedly rob the warmth and mutual affection and would impersonalize it.

Concerning the artists considered in this dissertation, it is possible to classify them in three broad categories as regards their sex value. The first is a group of unmarried persons who live independently; the second a group of married artists; and the third, a group of artists who live together without formalizing their relationship. Even though this classification is not perfect, it brings us closest to our culture and tradition as depicted in our fictional works. To further elucidate this fact we can go back to Hatterer's definition which includes "homosexuality," and "masturbation" that are yet unexplored in our literature, but a fact of life in the more liberated literatures of the West.

Except for Kidist, virtually all of the artist characters portrayed in the fictional works considered in this study are male, which in turn shows male domination. The publication of anguz is, therefore, a singular event which gives attention to the views and place of women in print.

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The majority of these artists are unmarried. Except for a few similarities, their sex values differ from each other. For instance, Aberra and Hailemariam are more open and moderate in their sexual practice than the rest, while Sinework is shy. Estifanos, Surafel and Emmailaf are active in their sex life but not outspoken.

Among artists who lead a married life, Sirak is unfaithful to his spouse. On the contrary, we find the fidelity of Gebeyehu.

In the third group we encounter the concept of the single parent family practiced by Kidist. We also find Rahmatto as her male counterpart cohabiting with his partner without legal sanction.

To start with the first group, Aberra's view of sex is in its extreme form which is far from the stable and enduring one-to-one love relationship. Aberra sees sex as recreation. He is liberal and he is promiscuous. He has sexual relationships with different women such as Tiringo, the maid of his childhood years; Suzan Rose, an American Peace Corps Volunteer; Lulit and many prostitutes.

Aberra's free attitude towards women and his attraction to them seems to have developed from his late childhood. At his early age Aberra was seduced by the maid employed at his parent's home. He was exposed to sexual petting and desire in its crude form while still living with his parents. However his behavior showed a tremendous change after he went on a scholarship to America. While studying there, he developed a

free and liberal attitude like most college students of the time. During his stay in the States, he felt free enough to pass over a girl whom he had dated to his shy friend Hailemariam.

Aberra's quick erotic impulse seems his only way to make an emotional contact with the opposite sex. Since he can't exclusively devote his life to art, it might also be his only means to fill this void and occupy himself, and to find acceptance and recognition. Regarding this Hatterer says, "some artists use sexual activity to distract or pacify themselves when they are unable to create" (1965,69). Aberra considers sex as food for the soul. In his effort to convince his friend, Hailemariam, to join him on Easter eve at Genet Hotel, his major concern is sex. In justifying his proposal, he tells him: "Ask you will get and knock it will be opened" (1962,28). Aberra is always ready to attract women but not for a lasting relationship. It is because of this that the American Peace Corps Volunteer, Suzan Rose, criticizes him for "his lack of interest in marriage" (1962,10). Even Elfinesh's appeal can't move him to consider marriage. It is only at the end that he is forced by Lulit's determination and the pressure of his family to accept her as his spouse.

Hailemariam and Sinework also share a promiscuous way of life like Aberra. Even though they are not as free and active as he is, both don't feel guilty for having sex with prostitutes. One trait both artists share is their shyness.

Hailemariam is not as fashionable as Aberra, and spends little time on sex fantasies and practice. Since his main interest lies in his creative work, he usually seeks sexual satisfaction which takes little time and effort. We realize this fact from what he relates as his overnight exploit. "As a change I have passed last night with a maid. I am fed-up with prostitutes and their scent. I am tired of them" (1962,15).

Hailemariam's need for sex seems to be based on getting a casual release for his tensions. According to him "the satisfaction one gets from a maid or a high class lady is the same except for the bias one attaches to their social position" (1962,15).

Sinework also is indiscriminate. However, he is extremely reserved. Though he meets with many women due to his previous legal profession, he is tongue-tied to express his desire. All these years he is lonely, without a loving girl friend. Sinework feels inferior to the opposite sex because of his low image of himself. He always feels "among young ladies as if he were clumsy; among pretty girls as if he were a Gorilla; among smart and fashionable guys as if he were a simpleton. It is with vengeance that he runs to prostitutes" (1983,176).

The cause for Sinework's inferiority complex is the rejection of the girl he loved in his freshman year at college. "It was after this incident that he felt confused and inferior. He started to consider women as something

beyond his reach. As a result, he fell short of approaching them in any meaningful sexual or love relationship" (1983,374).

In the same way, Estifanos, Surafel and Emmailaf are not openly lascivious. All of them have no steady sexual relationships. In spite of the fact that they are indiscriminate, they spend less time on sexual affairs than on their creative endeavours.

An ideal representative for the second group is Sirak, who leads a married life. As a matter of fact Sirak is married twice. His first wife is from a noble family. However, his second wife is a peasant girl turned prostitute whom he visited frequently while living with his first wife.

Sirak's first marriage was caused by their common interest in literature and books in general. This common interest grew into mutual understanding and love which finally ended with their being man and wife. However, their marriage at the time was considered by every one as a "marriage of unequals". Sirak felt trapped by the life of the upper class. Because of this and his lack of time and a stable state of mind, he failed to realize his dream of writing novels.

To escape this trap, he started to visit the 'red-light district', where he found a simplicity of life that was absent in the upper class. He rationalized his visit to the red-light district by his intention to get a first hand experience about the life of the down-trodden people which will be useful

material for his future writing.

Sirak's unfaithfulness is not only to his first wife, he also exercises it while living with his second wife, Tsege. Again Sirak cannot find the right atmosphere for creative work. His wife's concern for earning a good income and his desire to sit down and write clash. He mentions this fact as follows:

Do you know why I love Seblework, it is because I get peace of mind with her.... If you remember it is precisely this need that created the attachment between us.... It is not that you lack love or honesty but you don't respect or value my work. This is what disturbs me most (1972,200).

Even though his intention is to find the peace that he covets his attachment to Seblework is a gradual development which he intentionally cultivates. Sirak's sex values are clearly expressed in his conversation with her.

Sex is not only the spice of life, but also its source. Sex is basic and a necessity like bread, water and air. You can think of the millions running every night in search of sex. Many of whom pass an enjoyable night while others suffer without warmth, feeling lonely. Everybody thinks of and enjoys sex, but no one dares to speak or write about it. It is taboo. On my part I am ready to sing, dance and write about it! (1972,75).

Sirak is more straight forward than other artists in his frank expression of his attitude toward sex. His values on sex are not only expressed in his personal life, but also in the erotic novel he wrote: 'koblây inda tilla' (As a Fleeting Shadow).

Gebeyehu's sex value; on the other hand, strikes a balance between the call of the artist and the call of the married man. Gebeyehu next to his artistic pursuits, gives priority to the needs of his family. He also expects his wife to play the role of the traditional housewife responsible for house keeping.

Gebeyehu's belief and attitude toward sex is clearly seen in the way he rears up his children. In his relationship with his daughter, he prefers her to be self reliant and resourceful rather than unquestioningly obedient.

We can easily realize this fact in his daughter's conversation with her boyfriend. Rosa says:

Don't worry. I can easily introduce you to my parents. My father has told me to choose the man I love and introduce him to the family. What he demands from my boyfriend is understanding, honesty and frankness (1983,25).

It is easy to discern that Gebeyehu's view on sex is quite modern. Instead of arranging marriage, he leaves the decision to those concerned. According to him a young couple can have the freedom to date unchaperoned, and have the option to decide to marry or to break off.

Gebeyehu's attitude toward sex and his concern to the society are seen in his effort (by writing a play) to fight abortion. The death of a young girl from his neighborhood strikes him as a double loss of life:

I am very much disappointed to listen to such sad news, especially before I complete my play on abortion. In such a backward country where medical services and economic standards are very low, the loss of a woman and her baby is a matter of concern which needs special attention (1983,44).

Kidist is an artist who chooses neither the state of bachelorhood nor the married state of life. Her sexual value is one of secondary importance to her. Her dedication to the life of the artist has made her defensive towards a steady relationship.

Kidist's intention to be career - minded is not something to be easily assumed. She faces opposition from her father and her would be fiance, Eshetu. Her father's desire is to convince Kidist to follow the culturally defined norms and accept the role of a wife and a mother, while Eshetu's effort is to win her over to be his partner for life. Her response is direct and premeditated:

I can't listen to what my conscience does not allow me to listen to. It is hardly possible to commit oneself to what one's conscience does not allow. It is not difficult to pretend but I refuse to do so (1984,151).

Kidist rejects the traditional and 'natural' role designated for women by most people, and chooses to be autonomous. She wants to use her full energy to its utmost instead of letting it be tapped by humdrum living.

Along with her artistic ideals, Kidist pledges to lead the life of single parenthood rather than that of the

traditionally accepted nuclear family. Her decision to live without a spouse is consistent with her initial rejection of arbitrary and often unreasonable considerations of family obligations. This strong resolve of Kidist's is supported by her friend, Aregash:

Eventhough Kidist follows one of the modern world's mode of life which is single-parenthood and which is also contrary to our culture, I would stand with her as long as it is suitable for her career and as long as she brings up her child (1984,308).

This new woman artist seeking a new place in her society is mentioned by Deirdre Lapain in her article 'Women in African Literature' as follows:-

with the advent of literature wholly conceived and composed for the press, the African heroine underwent further re-examination.... As women began to enter the ranks of published authors, they took the old images, prised them apart, examined them critically, and frequently denied them outright. In their work wives, mothers, and courtesans moved through a world charged with fresh possibilities and there awakened to inner talents that would forever alter their sense of self. A new 'sweetness' was coming into being, one that would read just the inequalities perceived in the old (qtd in Hay, 1965,112).

Rahmatto, the painter character in rahimatto, lives together with Martha. Due to mistreatment by her parents, Martha leaves her home and starts to live with Rahmatto. Their situation does not allow them to be governed by traditional norms and rules. Therefore, they decide to keep up their relationship as realistically as possible. Due to their

financial constraints, lack of space and privacy, their whole effort is based on satisfying current needs.

However, their living together is not without its problems. A gap is created between Rahmatto's need to work on his painting for long hours into the night and Martha's need to be loved and looked after. Regarding this Martha says, "I am feeling lonely. You are always thinking of your painting and you have forgotten me. You only converse with your painting and you do not listen to me" (1984,87).

G.B Shaw justifies Rahmatto's single mindedness as follows:

The artist will let his wife starve, his children go barefoot, his mother drudge for his living at seventy, sooner than work at anything but his art (qtd. in scott, 1970,146).

Martha's need for his undivided attention creates turmoil. She breaks his brushes and other painting materials. But this action of her's further aggravates the already existing problems between them. Rahmatto's reaction is expressed in anger, "...I was mistaken, I shouldn't have started this relationship with you at all. I was deceived by your looks. There is no common ground between us" (1981,95).

Rahmatto's need for emotional and sexual gratification and Martha's need for love and care which she was denied by her parents can not be fulfilled. Finally, she leaves him for good and Rahmatto is left alone.

From this we can conclude that Rahmatto's sexual values are secondary to his work, and his desire to gain respect and recognition.

2.4 Work Values

Here work refers not to the usual occupation related with employment or running a business. It refers to the creative aspect in the domain of art. As Albert Camus puts it, "Art is an activity which exalts and denies simultaneously... artistic creation is a demand for unity and a rejection of the world," (qtd. in scott 1970,147).

Work in the realm of art is directly related to creativity, and it is different from productivity in other spheres. Elliot Jaques shows the difference between employment work and creative work as follows:

Creative work is... wholly symbolic; the finished product is symbolic; and the work itself touches upon and derives from the deepest layers of the mind, unaided by any objective and concrete point of reference. In employment work, there is always an external framework to guide and assess the symbolic work; hence symbolic work does not touch so deeply or so completely upon the unconscious processes. Running a business is intermediate; there is an external framework, but it requires symbolic work to discover it; and failure to conform to it results in a gradual loss of business, and not in an external direct criticism as from an employer. (1970,65).

Regarding the value artists give to their creative activity, Hatterer asserts:-

work value pertains to the worth a person places on disciplined creative, and survival work, done alone or with another person or group, and to the worth that one places on pleasurable, abandoned, and sensual living. A true measure of these values is contained in the amount of time - quantitatively and qualitatively - one spends at work or pleasure (1965,71).

In regard to the value artists give to their work, single-mindedness is observed. Artist characters Ermias, Kidist, Ameha, Gebeyehu, Hailemariam and Surafel are few examples.

The painter Ermias, Kidist the writer, the playwright Gebeyehu and the musician Surafel are characterized by their full concentration on their work. These characters shun other distracting activities in order to achieve their purpose. For instance, Ermias as a full time painter engages himself the whole day in his studio. Only the arrival of Zenebech (his niece) from school interrupts him.

Ermias's single-mindedness is illustrated by the following quotation:

It is after solving his problems and achieving his objectives that his mind relaxes;... and returns with gusto to work on his painting. (1981,271).

Even though he sometimes engages himself with non-creative work by accepting contracts from different organizations, much of his time is spent on disciplined creative tasks. His pleasure derives from the success of his own creations.

Kidist's single-mindedness of purpose is also reflected in her values of work. Along side of her studies at the university (in Europe) she works on her novel day and night. She always carries with her a writing pad and a pen. Her pleasure seeking activities are very rare. She spends almost all of her time scribbling. Even when her father and her admirers try to share her time, she tactfully avoids them. Graham Green comments on the nature of the writer like this:

... at heart, the writer is a subterranean kind of creature. Obsessive, mole like, evasive, often resourceful in avoiding mundane aspects of life..., enjoying his emotions and ideas in a private orgy of creative pleasure.
(qtd. in Boss, 1979 ,29)

The playwright Gebeyehu's zest for his creative work is expressed by other characters. Baye says: "It is better if he stopped his writing and rested for a while" and Zenebu: "His drive for work is not healthy, working day and night, really this has the devil's push." (1983,40)

The singer Surafel is also a serious and disciplined artist. Driven by the applause he receives at his nightly performances, he practices all day to up-grade and develop his virtuosity.

Sirak, Sinework and Aberra try to find pretexts to avoid fallow periods or when their creative efforts do not move with ease. Sirak starts a sexual relationship with Seblework. Sinework returns to his legal profession when his novel stops progressing.

Aberra creates pretext after pretext rather than follow his inner urge to paint. His frequent attachment different women is due to his lack of self-confidence.

The other factor associated with work value is the working environment. Some prefer working alone, others in the company of others. Some follow haphazard hours, others work during well regulated hours.

All artists considered in this study except Sirak, Girmachaw, and Gebeyehu shy away from meeting human schedules and normal routines. Many of them seem to be unskilled in dealing with the outside world. Their commitment is to art rather than to intimate human relations. In commenting on this peculiar malady of the artist, Malcolm Bosse says,

Loneliness is an occupational disease that plagues the writer... by virtue of his aesthetic activity, the writer tends to be split in his human experiences between the person experiencing and the person observing. Many writers - among whom Goethe, Stendhal, Kafka and Joyce, have commented on this condition which isolates the writer from his life even as he is in the midst of living it. (1979,29)

Hailemariam, for instance, like other artist characters who live alone, finds his isolation necessary to realize his objectives and to observe the lives of others. In his view, "one can't be committed to two mistresses - art and a wife, at the same time" (1964,83).

Emmailaf, Eskindir, Sintayehu, Kidist, Surafel, Estifanos, Ermias, Sinework and Kibret all lead solitary lives. They prefer art to wedlock. In Emmailaf's opinion,

"... a dedicated writer should not even for a moment take himself away from his creative endeavors..." (1972,144).

All the artist characters seem to agree on the need for a good working environment. Either they have their own study room like Girmachew and Ermias or they arrange a suitable time to write. This is in fact normal for the writer, because a suitable environment helps the artist to concentrate and use his creative resources in a much better way. The concept is further elaborated by Hatterer, "...the artist is more creative when his sensory and mental apparatus is highly flexible and able to move back and forth between different levels of consciousness." (1965,29).

Most of the artist characters face the problem of how to create and still survive. Hailemariam says to his friend Aberra.

Don't bother about your salary. What I earn will be enough for both of us. Of course, it is obvious that we won't live in comfort.... We have to pay for what we have to gain. It is surprising that our fears... always revolve around bread (1964,48).

Emmailaf also believes in the demanding nature of art. It is not an easy task to carry the weight of creativity. He compares the life of the artist with the pain and uneasiness of a pregnant woman.

Creating a work of art is painful. However, it has its own compensations. Creating gives joy and a sense of completeness. The author is like a pregnant woman who after great pain gives birth and becomes joyous (1972,144).

2.5 Success and Failure Values

Regarding these diametrically opposite values success and failure, Hatterer states "success-failure values refer to the need for an image of one-self as a success or failure in personal life and work." He further asserts: "Most people tend to use the criteria of money, status, and popularity to measure these values. The artist uses reactions to his creative work and his sustained creative productivity" (1965,90).

Among the artist characters who have experienced failure in their work are Eskindir and the unknown writer in därasiw, Aberra in Käadmäs Bašaqär, Emmailaf in Yä kay Kokäb tirri; and Rahmatto in Rähimatto while those that achieve success in their work are Surafel, Kidist, Ermias, and Sirak.

The negative reaction artist characters manifest due to their failure in their work is expressed profoundly by Sirak in the following way:

When artists fail to create they tend to engage themselves in destructive behavior. First of all they become their own adversary. They will hit bottom and be drunk or indulge in excessive sexual activity. Those who go to the extreme even commit suicide, few also disappear like crazed people. (1972,122)

In this regard we can take Eskindir as an example of the drunk. After completing the draft of his first novel he invites Sirak to comment. What he expected was praise rather than criticism. Therefore, his reaction to Sirak's opinion was indeed one of shock.

My dream to be a writer is shattered. My sweet dream has come to an end. In fact it was an empty dream. Do you know, what I feel now? Hollowness (1972,114)

The sincere opinion of Sirak produced an irrational reaction in Eskindir. When Sirak went to visit him in his residence he found him alone soaked in whisky. Eskindir's drunken response to Sirak's visit is:-

If you want to drink, join me. You can soak yourself in whisky too. Ok! Let literature go to hell! I want peace now, I don't want to listen to literature or to an author. (1972,131)

Rahmatto, the painter character, is also an artist who is not ready to accept his weakness. When at his exhibition he hears such comments from the viewers: "I can't understand it;" "It is mediocre;" "It is too costly." (1981, 37) he gets depressed. He can't come to terms with his interest in painting again. His desire to be recognized and accepted as a gifted painter vanishes. This lack of recognition drives him to seek love and solace from the opposite sex.

But Rahmatto's temporary love affair with Martha does not progress. He starts wavering between his interest to paint and his love for Martha. In the mean time, Martha leaves him for good and ultimately he can't bear the loss of both his career and his beloved and ends up in madness.

Emmailaf, a playwright character in yä kây kokâb tîrri, finally commits suicide due to his dissatisfaction with the society and his work in general. In the confession he leaves to Finot, an admirer friend of his, Emmailaf gives these reasons:

I can't reflect truth. After watching my play as an audience member I felt nauseated. I asked myself why I wrote such a play? I have now come to realize that I wrote it for fame and money. I really feel ashamed of myself. I hate myself (1972,82).

It has become meaningless to Emmailaf to lead the life of an unsuccessful artist. That is why he concludes, "... If I can't give happiness to people through my plays, so what is the meaning of living? It is like cheating oneself, I can't live feeling empty" (1972,142).

Artist characters with the orientation of success value are Surafel, Kidist, Ermias, Gebeyehu and Sirak.

Surafel's success as a singer breeds admirers as well as opponents. His bright future however is cut short by the bullet of an assassin. As expressed by one bartender:

Many artists have also been assassinated before. Those that don't have talent are **always jealous** of the successful ones. Surafel's case is not different (1981,154).

Kidist, the writer character in anguz, succeeds in achieving her goal of writing a novel with great determination. The ultimate success which excites and fills her heart with pride is the presentation of the last draft of her novel along with her baby to her father.

My dear father, I have kept my promise. Here are two of my children. The first one is the product of my brain, while the second is that of my womb, so bless them (1984,365).

Chapter Three

Ermias, the painter in Girdosh, is also success oriented. His values are based on carrying out his responsibilities to the public. In drawing the portrait of Tiwusit, he achieves his goal of exposing her malice. The portrait is successful in that she begs to be pardoned.

I have accepted my wrong doing. I am defeated. I am ready to do whatever you wish. But I want this portrait to be burned down. (1981,255).

Sirak, the writer character in Darasiw, had authored a couple of novels. However, he is still energetic enough to continue with yet another novel.

After making peace with his wife and colleagues, Sirak resume his work with alacrity. We conclude success orientation with the novelist's beautiful words:

His fears were unfounded. His pen flowed with teeming ideas... like a stream cascading down hill. Inspiration... like the dawn heralding the morn,.... (1972,121)

The discussion on the values of artist characters mentioned in this study ends here, and the third chapter focuses on the reasons or motives these characters manifest.

Chapter Three

3. Artists and Their Motivation:

Before assessing the different causes of the writer's urge, let us define what is meant by "motivation". According to Rom Harre and Roger Lamb (eds.)

...reasons for acting, desires and aversions, goals or intentions, sudden impulse and abiding proclivities as well as more or less transitory moods and emotions may all count as motivational, in as much as they allegedly move or could move people to act in one way instead of another (1983,402).

The reasons for the creativity of artists according to Hatterer are: "Psychological (both normal and abnormal), genetic, historical, cultural, social and economic" (1965,25). Martin Maloney has more details in his 'The Writer's Itch':

- . To become rich, like Mickey Spillane.
- . To become famous, like Horace, Shakespeare, and Hemingway.
- . to escape from bourgeois morality, like to choose a safe, dead example - Lord Byron.
- . to get revenge on your friends and enemies by portraying them as they really are, like Dante Aligheri and Thomas Wolfe.
- . To dispose of your personal problems by means of a self-administered psychoanalysis, like Somerset Maugham.
- . To save the world itself, like Upton Sinclair.
- . To demonstrate to the world that, by Gad, you really are a character, like Truman Capote.
- . To amuse your family, like Thomas Mann.

- 4. To pass time which you might otherwise have to spend twiddling your fingers, like Edgar Rice Burroughs.
- 5. To scratch a spiritual itch which cannot be attended to, save with the ink of a pen, the point of a pencil, or the space bar of a typewriter (1959,402).

This seems enough to cover the whole range of motives for artists. When we focus on artist characters found in modern Amharic literature, what motives explain the case of authors, painters, and musicians covered in this study?

3.1 Authors

When we see the case of writer characters, it gets difficult to pin-point the roots or the factors that arouse and direct them to be what they are in life. We can only mention some factors which we infer from their past experiences, their physical capabilities and the environment in which we find them.

If we take the cases of Hailemariam, Sirak, Emmailaf and Sintayehu, they all come from poor family backgrounds. They suffered a lot in their up-bringing. They had lost either some or all members of their families and were exposed to loneliness. They had tasted hunger and penury. Therefore, what they reflect in their lives reveal their desire to see a better and brighter world.

For instance, Hailemariam had lost the whole of his family and grew up in hunger, poverty and loneliness. In spite of this, he says:

My aim is to write about the beauty of this world, the basic nobility of man as well as the hindrance which man himself creates to upset his well being. In this, poverty and loneliness are secondary (1964,49).

Hailemariam's optimism arises from his desire not to see people suffer the way he did in his childhood. Therefore, in his writing, he avoids the darker side of life and focuses on the brighter one. Hailemariam writes to dispose of his personal problems by means of self-administered psychoanalysis. That is why he says "writing is the only reason for my life" (1964,33).

Sirak also chooses the life of the writer to depict the people in their struggle to change the world for the better. He says: "my topic is man, my weapons are words, ...words that reflect struggle and victory...words that voice my trust in the human heart," (1972,115). Just like Hailemariam, he too doesn't want to see the next generation suffer from lack of basic needs.

Sintayehu and Emmailaf have the same motives. They have no other ambition except living the life of a writer and fighting against destitution. One reason why Emmailaf killed himself is because "he didn't give pleasure to people through his writings" (1972,142).

When we sum up the urge behind these writer characters, we find it to be the gratification they get by sharing their experience with the reader. Their reward is communicating with the audience and expanding consciousness.

Kidist's and Sinework's case is a bit different. Their reason is the challenge to face hardship and to overcome it. Kidist's primary motive is to prove to herself and her father that she can succeed in defying the society's norms by leading the life of a writer. It is because of this that she tells her father:

I attach great value to my freedom. Indeed for the sake of it I will pay any sacrifice. I will not succumb to religious and cultural dogmas and accept outright servility. Anyhow I promise to deliver my twin children in your life time (1984, 161).



Sinework is another writer character who sacrifices the promise of a luxurious life to become a writer. As a lawyer, money is at his disposal, whether in the form of bribes or honest work. However, he prefers the challenge of becoming an author. He is determined never to return to his former profession because of the corruption prevailing there. He bitterly says: "I will not go back to being a prosecutor. Even if I fail as a writer, I will try to be a journalist or a reporter " (1983,172). Sinework's decision to become a writer arises also due to his anger at his father's action in divorcing his mother for the sake of money. Violating the law for financial gain creates in him an aversion for practising it. In a way it is to revenge himself on his father and corrupt colleagues by portraying them as they are that he turns to literature.

3.2 Painters

The reasons for painter characters to persist in their creativity is also not far from those of the writers. Sharing their experience is their reward. But their motives differ one from the other. For instance, Rahamatto's desire appears from his need to be loved. His mother died at his own birth. By looking at her photograph, a deep desire to retrieve her was implanted in him. That is why "he draws the picture of the Black Madonna " (1981,22) since his early years. Later, after the failure of his exhibition, he turns to his fiancée to console him. Even his last painting which won the O.A.U. award is about a pregnant woman. By so doing, he tries to substitute the love he was denied by the death of his mother. At the same time, he sublimates his piteous childhood by painting children who grow up full of love of their parents.

For Estifanos, the painter character in "mahillet", his preference to paint nudes might come from over idealization of the female figure. From the story, we understand that he is

obsessed with painting lips. He admires the lips of Mahlet and pays her a hundred birr to sit as a model. At the same time we are informed by Mahlet that his lips are big, black and ugly. After she tears up the painting, he places the untorn part of the lip underneath her feet symbolizing his release from his fixation. Thus, painting serves as a therapeutic device for Estifanos.

Kibret's motive arises from his conflict with the society. Therefore his paintings are his protest. For instance, he paints St. Michael black using the face of the peasant Aya Ajibe as a model, and his landlady W/o Asegash's face as a model for the satan's (1962,174). Hatterer comments on such powerful rejection of the social conventions as determinants of the birth of an artist and his art:

If conflicts exist in the artist, it need not always be personal and psychological. It can represent a conflict with the values of the society in which he lives. He develops an imperative desire to reflect the society as he experiences them, and occasionally attempts to create an entirely new world or a view of the world favouring the harmonious and the humanistic (1965,34).

Ermias, a painter character in gārdoš, also shares the bitter experience of growing up without the love of his parents. His father's promiscuity had resulted in his mother's running away from home in anger and frustration. This and the lack of attention from his father leaves a scar on his mind.

However, his relatives in Addis Ababa take up the responsibility of rearing and educating him. It is after he joins the University that he comes to realize his emotional and psychological problems. It is not only his avid reading and maturity that rehabilitates his emotional stability, but painting also. It becomes the primary outlet for the release of his pent-up emotions. "Painting does not only have a

therapeutic effect on him, but is also his source of income " (1981,187).

Aberra's motive differs from the aforementioned artists. Though his talent was obvious since childhood, restrictions from his family hindered it from developing. His interest surfaced late after he matured. The reasons for his urge as an artist is the pressure exerted on him by his writer friend Hailemariam. He defies the authoritative demand of his brother and the incessant nagging of the whole family to force him to marry and turns his attention to painting to bring out his inner feelings and to follow the correct path in life.

3.3 Musician Surafel

In examining the factors that determine Surafel's career, we come to find that money plays an important role, although he is not consciously aggressive to gain it. While still in high school, Surafel dislikes academic work. As he has no proper qualification his chances for gainful employment are rare. So, he tries his hand as an entertainer in bars. There, he discovers his talent for singing. He is on his way to forming his band and attaining independence when his hopes were dashed by an assassin's bullet.

CONCLUSION

In the preceding chapters, we have tried to see the views that are reflected and the values that are cherished as well as the motives that help artists put their creative capabilities into use.

As observed, most artist characters cherish certain values more than the others. In doing so, these artists give more weight to the discipline of creative activity than the day-to-day routine. Clement Greenberg in commenting upon this issue says: "... In turning his attention away from the subject matter of common experience, the poet or artist turns it in upon the medium of his own craft.... These themselves become the subject matter of art and literature" (1961:6). In Greenberg's discussion, artists such as Picasso, Kandinsky, and Cezanne obtain their inspiration from the medium they work in. Not only painters but also poets such as Rimbaud, Malarme and Valery appear to focus on the effort to create poetry and on their moments of inspiration than on the experience to be converted into poetry. The best example for the purpose of our research is the novel about the writing of a novel, The Counterfeiters by Andre Gide. We can also cite some of Ayi Kwei Armah's works such as Two Thousand Seasons, Fragments, and Why Are We So Blest? that deal with the life and craft of the artist.

Similarly this search for the secrets of artistic craft is also revealed in Amharic novels, short stories, poems and

plays that appeared after 1960. Writers started to put aside the preconceived themes that involve religion, authority and tradition.

Writers like Dagnachew Werku, Baalu Girma, Assefa Guya, Aberra Lemma, Sisay Nigussu, Adam Reta, Mulugeta Gudetta, Fekade Yohannes, Tsehai Melaku, Birhanu Zerihun, Tezera Woubishet and Seyoum Teferra created artist characters in their novels, short stories and plays to depict their aesthetic experience in the world of art. On the other hand, poets such as Seifu Metaferia, Solomon Derassa, Gebrekirestos Desta and Tsegaye G/Medhin used their deeply felt experiences for the subject matter of their poems.

These writers, painters and musicians discuss the subject of their interest and the problems they encounter in their areas of creativity. In this, they consider the complexities of real life in our changing society. They raise universal problems which every artist encounters, such as the isolation that comes with creative work, the need for self knowledge, the question of truth and beauty, the importance of the power of perception and the lack of constructive criticism which are all essential for the work of the artist. In addition to this, problems that are peculiar to our country regarding the material needs of the artists, lack of support from publishing and distributing agencies as well as museums, are pointed out as hindrances to the development of art in our society.

Characters like Sirak, Kibret, and Estifanos introduce

here-to-fore taboo subjects such as sexual openness and religious reforms.

When we take the authors into consideration, we find them reflecting their own experiences as writers and painters. For instance, Seifu Metaferia had been teaching at the Ethiopian Languages and Literature Department of A.A.U. for a long time before he retired, and is a well known poet. Aberra Lemma is also a graduate of Ethiopian Languages and Literature of A.A.U., Baalu Girma and Dagnachew Werku are popular authors with considerable experience as writers. Gebre Kiristos Desta and Assefa Guya are well known painters who also try to express their experience in words as well as in paint. The portrayal of the first woman novelist in modern Amharic literature is also an element which might reflect the experiences of the woman writer Tsehai Melaku herself. In conclusion, we can say that these authors have turned towards themselves in portraying artist characters. Though they have created these characters and treated subjects related to art and the artist, it doesn't mean that they have either avoided esthetic distance or totally neglected other themes. Of course, many characters are free of their 'creators' interference and also many topics are included in their works. However other topics are outside the scope of this study. By looking inward into their lives and works, these authors have opened new vistas for Amharic Literature. They have tried their best to show that man can change himself and the world around him for the better.

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APPENDIX I

Chapter One

1.1 On Poetry

ከ ያዲስ ግጥም ፍቅር

ያለቀለትማ አልቆለታል
 የሞተ እህል ሆኖዋል።
 እዲሱ ግጥም ግን ድንገተኛ ፈረስ
 ልጋልብ ልጋልብ ይላል
 ሸምጥ
 ገጣሚ ቆይ ይላል
 ተቀመጥ
 ተስተካክል።።
 ገጣሚ ይመሰግል
 ትግሉ።።
 ታዲያን ላዲስ ግጥም
 ሐሳብ
 ሐሳብ ይኖርና
 እንዴት እንደሚባል ይጠፋና
 እይ ምጥ
 እይ ፈተና
 ይሄ ፈተና ነው የፍቅር ምንጭ
 ወረቀቱን በብዕር የሚያስጨንቅ።።
 (ገጽ 3)

ከ ብዕር እንደሞኘ

ሳያስበው ድንገት
 ተፈጥሮ አስገድዶት
 ትካዜ
 ደስታ
 ብስጭት
 የውልታ አባዜ
 ሌላም - ሌላ - ሁሉ
 ብዕርን ለንጉት
 ጣልጣል ያደርጋል
 የቀለምን ውብት
 (ገጽ 45)

...

ዓለምን በንዞራት
 በመራት
 በባሕር በአየር በጠረፍ
 በብዕር ትካዜ
 ምልቷል እስከአጽናፍ
 ብዕርና ቀለም
 ወረቀትና ጣት
 ከጥንት ጀምሮ
 የቀረጹት ሐውልት
 እይነታንቅም
 (ገጽ 5)

ከ ሥነ ግጥም

ሥነ ግጥም ህያው ነው ነፃም ነው እንደአየር
ምንጊዜም የሚኖር ትውልድ ሲቀያየር።
(ገጽ 5)

ከ በስንኝ ሲሰክሩ

የገደል ፋፋቴ!
የገደል ፋፋቴ!
 መልካም አፈሳሰስ!... ወድቆ ማይለበር!
 ፊሶ የማይደፋ!... ጮኸ ማያሸብር!
እንዲህ ነው ምስጢሩ!
በስንኝ ሲሰክሩ።
ከንን ወደ ግድም... አግድሙን ተልጎ
ከአናት ወደ ግርጌ... ሸርተቴ ተንዶ!
 ... አግድም መሰበቁ
 ... ቁልቁል መደቅደቁ!
ከዚያ ጉን - እዚያ ጉን... ድረሱን መሰበቅ!
ውስጠ - ውጭ - ፍልቀቃ... ከሩሕ መተናነቅ!
እንዲህ ነው ምስጢሩ
በስንኝ ሲሰክሩ።
(ገጽ 5-6)

ከ የብዕር አሟሟት ሌላ

የቃለ-ልግን ቅመሙ
የባለቅኔ ቀለሙ
ነጠበ እንጂ ፊሰሰ እንበል! ቢዘነበል እንኳ ደሙ
ሰከነ እንጂ ከለለ እንበል! ቢከለከስ እንኳን አፅሙ
የቃለ እሳት ነበልባሉ
አልባከነምና ውሉ
የዘር-ንድፋ የፊደሉ
ቢምት እንኳን ምተ አትበሉ።
የብዕር አሟሟት ሌላ!
ሲፈስ የብሌት ኪላ
የፊደል መቅረዝ አሟሟት
ከውስጥ ነው እንደጋን መብራት
በቁም ነው እንደቁም ፍትሐት
የሚያልም የንፍስ እሳት!
እንጂ ብዕር ምተ አትበሉ! እሳቱን ሳያስለመልም
ነበልባሉን ሳያከስም
ውጋጋኑን ሳያጨልም!
(ገጽ 6)

ከ ሥነ-ግጥም

ገጣሚም ምንጊዜም አይምትም ጨርሶ
ይፈጥረዋል ግጥሙ መልሶ መላልሶ
ዘለዓለማዊ እርጉ እንደገና አድሱ።
የፈጠረው ግጥሙ ለእውነት ከተዋጋ
ባለቅኔ አይምትም ምት የለም ከእሱ ጋ!
(ገጽ 7)

ከ የመንፈስ ብሉን

እኔ ግን ምንጊዜም፣ በሕያው መሰልኩህ
ባንተው ጥበብ ጀርባ፣ ሕይወቴን ሳይበህ
ልዩ አዚም አለህ፣ ታስቀናማኛለህ፣
(ገጽ 8)

ከ ገጣሚው

አስልቻለሁ ሁሉን በቆጠርኩ ጊዜ
አሐዱ - ገጣሚው - ከዚያም ፀሐይ -
ከረምት - ከዚያም ገነት የእግዚአብሔር -
እና ደግሞም፣ ዝርዝር ተሠርቷል!
ህልምን ርቱዕ ለማድረግ
ብዕርን አሹሉ፣ ላንድ ሩቅ ነገር በማደግደግ
ገጣሚው አቻ አጣሁልህ፣ ብሬልግ ባስፈልግ።
(ገጽ 8)

ከ ባለቅኔው

ባለቅኔው
ገጣሚም ነው በለው
እንዳሻህ፣
ያን ዕብድ ማለቴ ነው።
(ገጽ 8)

...

እንደ ፍቅር ይዞ
በውስጣዊ ተልመዝምዞ
ፈዞ
እየራቀው፣ እኔነቱ ተመዞ
ባበቦቹ መሣቅ
ባበቦቹ መድረቅ
የንስቅስቅ
ሲያለቅስ ሲሰቅ።
በምትሸኝ ውብት
አያውቃት
እንደ ባያት።
ዕብዱ ባንዳች ውብት።
ከዚያን እግር ከወርች
አስረኛ ነው፣ ሳይለለች
የሚጫወት
የቃላት ገበጣ፣ በወረቀት።
(ገጽ 9)

ከ ባለቅኔና የገደል ማሚቶ

ከፊቴ የቆመው ከፍ ያለ ተራራ
ከቀኝ ገመገም እጅግ የሚያስፈራ
ከበስተግራዬም ለለ ትልቅ ገደል
ቅኔ እቀኛለሁ ቆሜ ከመካከል
ማንንም ሳልሻ ወዳጅም ዳደኛ
ፈልጌያለሁና ለመሆን ብቸኛ።
ሲጋት እንዳይገባኝ ልቤም እንዲረጋ
አንቺና እኔ ብቻ እባክሽ እናውጋ።

መከዳትም መሸፈጥ ለከፋት መቸኮል
የለም ባንቺ ዘንድ ሀሰትና ተንኮል።
ስለዚህ እነሆ ቆሜ ከዚህ ስፍራ
ሳርም ሳስተካክል ድርሰቴን ሳጣራ
እባክሽ እግዢኝ ርጂኝ በዚህ ስራ።
(ገጽ 10)

ከ ባለወርቅ ክንፍ

ትጉህ ባለቅኔ ባለወርቅ ክንፍ
ከደመና በላይ ሰማይ ነው ጠረፋ
በነፍስ በስሜት ባሳብ ሠረገላ
ምድራዊ ዓለምን ከተወ በጋላ
ተጉዞ በመሄድ ገስግሶ ዘለቃ
ከፀሐይ የሚደርስ አልፎ ከጨረቃ
(ገጽ 11)

ከ ልጅነት

የግጥም ቅርጽ ቃላትን ለከፋ ከመደርደር ብቻ አይወለድም። የኑር ዓላማ
እንደከብሪት ዋጋ ቁርጡ ባይገለጥልንም ዓላማ ለመናፍቅ የፍጡር ከዕለት
ወደዕለት መፍጨርጨር በቂ ጠቋሚ ነው። የግጥም ፋንታ ይህን ግላዊ
መፍጨርጨር ከዚህ ዓለም ችላ ባይነት ጋር እያይዞ ማብላላት
ይመስለኛል። የግጥም ዋና መልዕክቱ እግጥሙ ውስጥ የተሸነቀረ ሳይሆን
ግጥሙ ራሱ እንዲሆን ስለሚያሻ ግጥም የፍልስፍና ማስተላለፊያ መስበኪያ
ወይንም የምስጢር ጉተራ አይደለም። እንዲጋጣሚ እነዚህን ሁሉ ሊናታከክ
ይችላል።
(ገጽ 11)

ከ ጉማላሉ

ቅኔ ነው ተባለ መሰረቱ
በብራና ቃላት መታሰር፤
ቅኔ ነው አላችሁ መሰረቱ
ሰማእታት ከስሜት እንዳልተወለዱ፤
ቤትና ቤት፤ መምታታቱ፤

...

ድንጋይ ሳልቆጥር
ቃላት ሳልቆጥር
ስንኝ ሳላዛውር
ግጥም ነው ቋንቋ ነኝ
ምን ታረጉኝ

...

ከቦር ነው ብልስ መነሻዬ
የረኛ ዋሽንት መጓዣዬ
ያረረ ለቅሶ የራእይ ፊርማዬ፤
የኮረዳ ምላስ መስቀያዬ
ብልስ?
ምን ትሆኑ?
(ገጽ 12)

ከ እሬትና ማር

በዘመናዊነት ስም ለራሳቸው እንኳን የማይገባቸውን ቅጥት ግጥም ነው እያሉ ከሚያቀርቡና ሌላውን «ያረጅ ልማድ» እያሉ ከሚተቹ ወደጋላ መለስ ብለው የበለፀገ ታሪካቸውን ቢያጤኑ ይመረጣል፤ በእርግጠኛውም እንደዚያ ለመሥራት ከማይችሉ ጋር ባለመስማማት ከግጥምቹ ብዙዎቹን በንብር መንገድ ጽፌያለሁ።

(ገጽ 13)

ከ ያ ባለቅኔ

መቼ ይሆን ቀኑ
መነሻው ዘመኑ
ያ ባለቅኔ ያ ግጥም ገጣሚ
ልዩ ዓይነት ዜማ እስደሳች ለሰሚ
ቅኝት ስልት እውጥቶ
የሚያሰማን ከቶ?
ያሁኑ ግጥማችን እንድ ዓይነት ሆነና
ችክ ምርር አለን ቅያሬ ጠፋና
ወዝ ለዛ እጣ
ሆነብን ኮምጣጣ!
ያ ባለቅኔ ቶሎ በተነሣ
ግጥማችን ታድሳ እንደሌላው ሁላ
ቅኔ ተፈልሰፎ
በታየ ተዘርፎ
መንፈስ የሚያሸብር ሃሳብ የሚነሣ
ለሰስ ቀዝቀዝ ብሎ ስሜት የሚያረካ
«ገ.ገ.ት.ት.» ሆኖ የግጥማችን ምቱ
«ው.ው.ኧ.ኧ.» ሆኖ የቅኔያችን ስልቱ
«ሸ.ሸ.ር.ር.» ሆኖ የዜማችን ቤቱ
ድፍት ጉትት ሆኖ የንባቡ ዜማ
ወጣቱ ሰለቸ ጠፋ የሚሰማ
ዘመን እያረጀ
ቅኔው እየጸጀ
የሌሎቹ ቅኔ ብዙ ዓይነት ሆኖ
ምነው የኛ ቀረ ባንድ ተወሰኖ።
(ገጽ 14)

1.2 On Literature

ከ ደራሲው

ለመጻፍ ስለፈለግን ብቻ መጻፍ እንችልም፤ የድርሰት ፍቅር ብቻም እየበቃም። ድርሰት ተልዕኮ አላት። አየህ! እንድ ደራሲ በድርሰቱ ውስጥ በአቢይነት አጉልቶ ማሳየት የሚገባው ዋነኛው አርዕስተ ጉዳይ የለው ልጅ መሆን አለበት።

(ገጽ 16)

የጽንፁው ጥራትና ውበት ብቻ እንደን ድርሰት የወጣለት ድርሰት ሊያደርገው አይችልም። ቅርጽ ብቻውን ዋጋ የለውም። ወሳኙ ጉዳይ መሆን ያለበት ይዘት ነው። ይዘቱም ወቅታዊና ግልጽ መሆን አለበት።

(ገጽ 16)

ከ የፍጥረት መጀመሪያ

እዲስ ነገር ለማለት ወይም ለመፍጠር እስከቻሉ ድረስ ቢቀጥሉ ጥሩ ነው። እኔን የሚያሳዝነኝ ምንም እዲስ ነገር ለማለት ወይም ለመፍጠር ሳይችሉ ለመተጠል የሚፈልጉ ድሎች ናቸው። ጥቅሙ ምንድን ነው? እዲስ ነገር ለማበርከት የማይችሉ መሆናቸውን ተረድተው ዝምታን የሚመርጡ ብልህች ብቻ ናቸው።

(ገጽ 22)

ከ የቀይ ኮከብ ጥሪ

የፈጠርኩዎቸው ገፀባህርያት ከተፈጠሩ በኋላ የየራሳቸው ህልውና አላቸው። ወደሚፈልጉት አቀጣጫ ይመሩኛል እንደ እኔ እንዳላሻገንሁት አልጫወትባቸውም። የኔ ሚና የነሱን አስተሳሰብ ስሜት ፍላጎትና ውሳኔ ተከትሎ መጸፍ ነው።

(ገጽ 22)

ከ ደራሲው

መጽሃፉ ውስጥ ያሉት ባህርያት ሁሉም በማንብብን እንደ ቋንቋ የሚናገሩ እንደ ከሌላው ተለይተው የሚታወቅበት ባህርያት እምብዛም የማይታይባቸው ናቸው... ተራማጆችን በእንደ ፊት አድሃሪዎችን በሌላ በኩል አለልፎ ማዋጋት ለእንደ ልብወለድ ድርሰት መሠረት ሊሆን አይችልም።

(ገጽ 23)

13 On Painting

ከ አደፍርስ

እየው እንዴት ያለ 'ኩርብ' ይመስልሃል? ያ እውራ ዶር የሰራው ካረፈ ወዲያ ደግሞ ያሳየው ንቅቄ 'ሙሽማው' የተከተለው መሥመር ደግሞ 'ሊኙ' እንዴት ያለ የማያደናግር ቀጥታ ነው። ወደዋናው ትርኢት ወደመልዕክቱ የሚያመራ! በከንፎቹ ውዝዋዜ ጊዜ ደግሞ ያሳየው የቀለም ትርግርታ 'አርምኒው' እንዴት ይመስላችኋል። ከተገኙ ጋር አዋሐዱ 'ኮንትራስቱ' አስተራረፉ 'ፔርስፔክቲቭ' እንዴት ይመስላችኋል?

(ገጽ 24)

ከ አደፍርስ

ትቀልዳለህ ልበል... ከዚህ በላይ ዝግጅት የለም። ቀጥሎ ከርከራችሁን... ይታወቅ የዘመኑ ወጣት፣ በናንተ ውስጣዊ ዓመት... በስሜት ተምባልቦሉ የምንት እገታችሁን ብሬታችሁ ይነበብ

(ገጽ 24)

ከ ራህማቱ

የሰዕል ተሰጥኦ ላለው ሰው ሰዕል ት/ቤት መግባት ከአመታት የግል ድግግም መከራና ድካመ ሊያድነው ይችላል። በተላሉና በአጭር ጊዜ ውስጥ የብዙ ዓመታትን የጥበብ ከምችት መሰብሰብ ይቻለዋል። ቴክኒኮችንና ዋና ዋናውን ህግጋት ያለብዙ ልፋት የራሱ ማድረግ ይቀለዋል።...ተሰጥኦ የግል የየአለት ጥረትና የማይምት የሙያ ፍቅር ናቸው ማለቴ ነው ወሳኞቹ።

(ገጽ 25-26)

...

በራሱ ጥረት ችግርን ተጋፍጦና ፈተናን ደፍጥጦ ያለፈ የጥበብ ሰው የማይናድ መንፈስንና የማይበርድ ጥበቃዊ ስሜት በውስጡ መፍጠር የሚችል ነውና ያቀደውን መሙላት ያለመውን መምታት ይችላል። ጥበብን ለዝናና ለገንዘብ ረድኤት ብቻ ያነሳት ከመሃል ተኮላሽቶ ይቀራል።

(ገጽ 26)

...

በደፈናው አንድ ሰዓሊ ሥራዎቹን የሚያሠራበትና ለተመልካች የሚያቀርብበት ምቹ ስፍራ ያስፈልገዋል። ከምላ ጉደል የመስሪያ ቁሳቁሶች እጥረትና እጦት ባያጋጥመው መልካም ነው። ሙዚየሞች አንጻንድ ስራዎቹን ቢለበስቡለት ይበረታታል። ዳሩ ግን ይህንና መሰል ነገሮችን ያጣ ሰዓሊ ሁሉም ባይሆን የምራል መነካት ብሎም የሥራ መጫጫት ያጋጥመዋል።...የጥበብ ሰው ለአዎንታዊ ውጤት መንሰፍሰፍ የለበትም። በተለይም ለአጭርና በተላሉ ሰሚናድ ዝና። የጥበብ ሰው የጥበብን ጽንሰ ለአመታት ማርገዝ ለወራት ማማጥ አለበት። ህይወትን ፈልቅቶ ሁል ጊዜ አዲስና እውነትን ለመሻት የማይታከትና የማይታጠፍ መንፈስ ሊኖር ይገባል።

(ገጽ 27)

ከ ከአድማስ ባሻገር

መስመሮቹ ህይወት የላቸውም። በየሰዕሉ ላይ የሚታየው ጥላና ብርሃን አብዛኛውን ጊዜ ዝናብ እንዳረገዝ ጉም ስለሚከብድ ሌላውን ነገር ይጫንና ለብቻው እምባገንን የሆናል። ነገር ግን በሰናይትና በመኪናው መካከል ሊኖር የሚገባው ግንኙነት በሰዕሉ ላይ አይታይም። ከጽህፈት መኩናው ደርባ የተቀመጠችው ማንም ሴት ልትሆን ትችላለች። ሁለተኛውም ሰዕል ተመሳሳይ ጉድለት አለው። ሰዕሉ ስለሀላፊነትም ሆነ ስለተገባቸው ህሊና የሚናገረው አንዳችም ነገር የለውም። እፍጠው ሲመለከቱት ተጨማሪ ህይወት የሚለምኑ ይመስላሉ። የፈጠርኪቸው ሳይሆን እንግዳ መስዩ እታያቸዋለሁ።

(ገጽ 28)

ከ ግርዶሽ

ይኼ እንኳን ጥሩ ጥያቄ ነው።... እየሽ የሰዕል ጥበብ እንደካሚራ አይደለም። የሰዕሉን ምስጢር እንድንግርሽ ከፈለግሽ ራት ብለሽ ቆሚ...

(ገጽ 29)

...

«ዛና» ቢቆምለት
የገም ሊታሰበው የነበር አስቦት
ለዚያ ለለግሊ ጎረ ምን ተሰማው?
ይህን ጠለቅ ውብት እንደምን ቀረጸው?
(ገጽ 32)

1.4 On Music

ከ ሙዚቃ

ዓለሜን ለጊዜው
እንድረሳው ብላ
ድንገት ሳላስበው
ልብ አይኔን አፍገዛ
ይዛኝ ጭልጥ አለኝ
ብዙ ለገር አቋርጣ!
(ገጽ 34)

ከ ሙዚቃ የምች መድሃኒት

የላዊት በገና ጉንጨን ብታቀላ
ሳላላዊ ነፍሴን ቀለሌን አድን ብላ
ሽከሜን አቀል ብላ።
ያለብኝን ጭንቁን
ምሬቱን ሐዘኑን
እንዴት ላዋይሽ?
ይህም ሁሉ ሆኖ!
እየተጠራጠርኩ ማመኔም አልቀረ
ታዳጊዬ እንደሆንሽ ከኔ አልተወደረ።
በይ እንግዲህ
የትላንቱን እንቺ
የጭንቅ ግማሽ
በይ እንግዲህ በርቺ
የዛሬዬም ላንቺ
የእንባዬ ስላሽ።
እንዲህ ካልተራዱ ካንቺ ቢጤዎች
አጣድፎ ይገድላል የህይወት ፀሐይ ምች።
(ገጽ 35)

ከ ፒያኖ ላይ ምጥ

«ድን!» እየመለሰ፣ እየመለሰ «ድን!»
«ድን ድን!-ድን!» እና «ድን!»
እንዲቀዋን ኖታ ብቻ
መባቻ
መጣሁ መጣሁ ለሚለው ዜማ መከፈቻ።
ወይ ተከታትሎ አይመጣው
ዜማው
ተከታትሎ
ንብራድማፁን በጉልህ አለናስሉ፣
ወይ አየቀረው
አይጠፋው
ጨርሶ

ታስቦ እንዳልነበረ ያህል ተደምስሶ
 ካሳብ
 በሆነ ሆነ፣ ለምሳሌ፣ በምቢያለኝ ሰብ።
 ዕርፍ ብሎ እንዲቀመጥ ዕርፍ ብሎ
 ሰው
 በማይወጣው የስንከን ምጥ መሠቃየቱ ቀርቶ።
 (ገጽ 35)

ከ ሙሾ ላማዲያስ ሞዛርት

አልግዝ ንጥር
 ጭራ ሥርሥር
 ምራብ ጀምበር
 አማዴውስ
 አዲዎስ።
 ደምፅ ንጥር
 ኅብረት ሥርሥር
 ናታ ድርድር
 አማዴውስ
 አዲዎስ።
 ሞት ዕረፍተህ
 ራሱዋን ሆነህ
 ሙዚቃን
 ብርቅ ዕቃን
 ብትሞትም አለህ።
 አማዴውስ ገናና
 መቼ ትረሳና
 ለዘላለማለሙ
 በኅብረ - ሆታህ ጣዕሙ።
 (ገጽ 36)

ከ የተከፋፈለ ልብ

ወደፊት ብዙ ጥሩ ጥሩ ሙዚቃ ለመድረስ አላማ አለኝ... የፍቅር ብቻ
 ሳይሆን ሌላም... ስለተፈጥሮ ውብት፣ ስለደግነት፣ ስለፍቅርም ቢሆን
 እንደዚሁ በጠባቡ ሳይሆን ባስፋት በእናትና በልጅ በሰውና በተፈጥሮ፣
 በእንስሳት በቤተሰብ መካከል ስላለው ፍቅር ስለህይወትና ሞት ሁሉ...
 (ገጽ 37)

Chapter Two

2.1 Self Values

ከ ደራሲው

ስሚ የኔ እመቤት፣ ያ ውጭ ያለው ግማት - ቅርናት - የቆሻሻ ኮረብታ-
 ይነምድር ከምር - ያ ሁሉ፣ ያ ውጭ ቁጭ ብሎ የሚለምነው እንጭና
 አፍንጫ የሌለው፣ ላንቃውና ሰርኑ የሚታየው ቆማጣ እሱም - ያ
 አየነሰውር ለማኝ - እሱም - ያ አንካሳው ለማኝ - ያ ለምጻም ላሊበላ
 እነሱ ሁሉ - ድንቁርናው - ጉብቁልናው - በትቶው - ምን ልበልሽ -
 ማይምነቱ - የቆቆርው ዝገት - የግድግዳው ሽንቁር - ምርጊቱ ፊርሶ
 እንደ ጣዕረምት ያገጠጠው ግድግዳ - እሳት የማይጤስበት ምድጃ - እህል
 ያልዘረበት አፍ - ኮረኮንቹ ጭምር ዝገቱ - ሻጋታው ሁሉ እነዚያ ሁሉ የኛ
 ተቀጽላዎች ናቸው። እኛም የነሱ እካል ነን። እንቺም ልጅም ሁላችንም...

እና ከዚህ ተለይተን የት እንሂድ? ወይስ እንጻጻፍ በራሳችው የህልም
ዓለም ውስጥ እንደሚኖሩ ሰዎች - በጉብዓትናው ዓለም ውስጥ ደሴት
ፈጥረው... እንደነሱ እንሆንም። ልዩንም ደሴት ከሆነ ቤት ደሴት ወደሆነ
ት/ቤት ሳመላልስ አልገኝም። አላማችን ይኸው ነው። እና አወደዋልሁ።
(ገጽ 41)

...

ወረቀቶችን አዲሱ ጠረጴዛ ላይ ዘርግቶ ብዕሩን ሲያወጣ የቆየ ጠረኛ
ወደጦር ሚና ሲመለስ የሚለማው ስሜት ዓይነት ነበር የተለማው፤... ብዕሩ
አልነከሰም ቀለሙ እንደደረሰ ነበር የሚረዳው፤ ሀሳቡ ተያይዞ በመዋብ
አየሂደ አየነጉደ እንደጠዋቁ አየበራ አየነደደ አየበራ ጭጋጋ ለውጋጋ-
ውጋጋን ለብርሃን ቦታውን እየለቀቀ ነበር።
(ገጽ 42)

ከ ሰንሰለት

...ብትወድም ብትጠላም እኔ ያንተ ሕይወት ጠበቃ ነኝ። ይህን የማደርገው
ለገንዘብ አይደለም። እህትህ ስለሰሙነችኝም አይደለም። ለእውነት ስል ብቻ
ነው። እውስጥ አንድ እውነት ይዘህ እንድትቀበር አልረጋልም። ተሸራርፋ
ካለቀች እውነታችን እንተም ድርሻህን እንድትሸርፍ አልሻም።...
(ገጽ 42)

ከ ለገጉዝ

...ለነፍሴ ቁራኛ ለደራሲነት ምኞቴ ባንድ ቀልብ እገዛለታለሁ።
እቃጠልለታለሁ። በቃጠሉዬ ፀዳል በነበልባሉ ውስጥ የሚከለተውን ቁም
ነገር ለማየት እስከምችል የሚመቸኝን መንገድ ብቻዬን አራመዳለሁ።
(ገጽ 44)

ከ ሀሙስ

በጉጉት የሚጠብቀኝን በሺ የሚቆጠር ቴአትር አፍቃሪ ከማሳዘን፤ አንድ
ፍቅረኛዬን ባስቀይም እመርጣለሁ። ለይቅርታ ስለምትቀርቧኝ።
(ገጽ 44)

2.2 Materialistic Values

ከ ሰንሰለት

አዝናለሁ! በጣም አዝናለሁ! እኛ ወጣቶች ልምድ ካካበቱ ባሙያዎች
ስለዝርፊያና ስርቆት ስንሰበክ አዝናለሁ።... ጊዜዎንና ጊዜዬን በማባከኔ
አዝናለሁ። ሕሊናዬን በሦስት ሺህ ብር እንድሸጠው በመጋበዜም
አዝናለሁ።... እውነቴን ነው ተከራክረው ቢያሸንፉኝ ተቤድሬም ቢሆን ሦስት
ሺህ ብር እሰጥዎታለሁ! የሚሉትን ዘራፊ ግን እስከ 15 ዓመት
ሊያስቀፈድደው የሚችል አንቀጽ ጠቅሼበታለሁ።...
(ገጽ 48)

ከ ማለፍ

ገንዘብ እንደተጠቃሚው ነው። ገንዘብ የሚያከብሩትን አከባሪ ነው። ካልቆጠቡትና ካልያዙት ችግር ላይ የሚጥል መሆኑን መገንዘብ እምብዛም አዳጋች አይደለም። ከኑሮና ከዕድሜ መማር ይቻላል። የሰው ልጅ ካልቆጠና በኘርግራም ኑሮውን ካልመራ በውድቀት ጉዳይ ላይ እንዳለ ማወቅ አለበት። ለዝርዝር ማንም አያዝንም።

(ገጽ 49)

2.3 Sexual Values

ከ ደራሲው

ለምን እንደምወጣት ልንገርሽ? ሰላም ስለምትሰጠኝ ነው። ሁለታችንም በቤታችን ያጣነውን ሰላም ስንፈልግ ነው የተገናኘነው። ሌላ አይደለም። ካንቺም ጋር ያገናኘን ይኸው ፍላጎት ነበር። ሌላ አልነበረም። ፍቅርና ታማኝነት አንሰሽ ሳይሆን የምወደውን ሰላም ትንፍረኛለሽ። ስራዬን ባትወጂውም አከብርት ልትንፍረው አይገባም።

(ገጽ 56)

...

...ፍቅር የህይወት ምንጭ የህይወት ቅመም ነው። ለሰው ልጅ ፍቅር እንደእንጅራ እንደውሃ እንደአየር ያስፈልገዋል። ስንት ሚሊዮን ሰዎች በየምሽቱ ፍቅርን ፍለጋ በጨለማ ውስጥ እንደሚደናበሩ ማሰብ ትችያለሽ? ስንቱ የፍቅር ርካታ አግኝቶ በደስታ ሲዋኝ? ስንቱ ፍቅር አጥቶ በደረቅ ሌሊት ሲያፈጥ ሲያቃስት? ሁሉም ስለፍቅር ያስገባል! ያደርጋል! ግን ማንም ስለፍቅር መናገርና መጻፍ አይፈልግም። ጤናማ አመለካከት አይደለም። ፍቅር ህይወት ነው። የህይወት ምንጭ ነው። እኔ ስለፍቅር አዜማለሁ! አዘፍናለሁ! እጽፋለሁ።

(ገጽ 56-57)

ከ ማለፍ

አትጨነቅ እሱ ዘንድ ጣጣ የለም። ተደግፎ ለመኖር ጠባይና ግልጽነት! ለፍቀር አውነተኛና ታማኝ የሆነ ፍቅረኛ ካገኘሽ እስተዋውቂኝ ስላለ ችግር የለም።

(ገጽ 57)

...

ይች ጽንሰ አስወጣለሁ ብላ የሞተችዋ እኔ ስለአላስፈላጊ ጽንሰ በመጻፍ ላይ እንዳለሁ የሱዋ በዚህ ምክንያት መምት በጣም ነው ያሳዘነኝ። የህዝቡ ብዛት ከኢኮኖሚው ጋር ባልተመጣጠነበት ጊላቀር አገር በህክምና እጦት ባላስፈላጊ ጽንሰ ሁለት ህይወት ባንድ ጊዜ ማጣት በጣሙን ሊታሰቡበትና ዋናት ሊደረግበት ይገባል።

(ገጽ 58)

ከ ለንጉዝ

ሀሊናዬ ያልተናገረውን ሰዎች ስለተናገሩት አለሰማውም። ሕሊናም ላልተቀበለው ሁኔታ ራስን ማስገዛት አይቻልም። ማስመሰል ባያዳግትም አልሞክረውም። (ገጽ 58)

...

ቅድስት የመረጠችው በሰለጠነው ዓለም ከመደበኛ የህይወት ወገኖች አንደአንዱ ተቀጥሮ የተለመደው የነጠላ ቤተሰብ ምስረታ በአገሯና በባህሏ አዲስና የሚያስገቅፍ በመሆኑ ቅሬታዋ ባይተርም ራስዋን መተካትዋን አልጠላችውም። (ገጽ 59)

2.4 Work Values

ከ ገርዶሽ

ኢርሚያስ ዓላማዎቹን መትቶ ከጨረሰ በኋላ ተወጥሮ የቆየው ጭንቅላቱ ተፍታታለት።...በተስፋና በጉጉት እየጠበቀ አዕምሮውን ወደስዕል ስራው መለሰ። (ገጽ 62)

ከ ከአድማስ ባሻገር

ስለሉ (ደምዝ) አታስብ። የኔ ደምዝ ለሁለታችን ይበቃል። አገርጥ ነው፤ እንዳሁኑ በምቶት ልንኖር አንችልም ይሆናል። ትንጠትን መሰናበት ይኖርብናል።...ቅድም እንዳልኩት ማንነታችንን ለማወቅ ትንሽ መሞት ያስፈልገናል። የሚገርመው ነገር ፍልስፍናችንም ሆነ ፍርሃታችን ደስታና ሀዘናችን ከሆኑ ርቆ አይሄድም። (ገጽ 65)

ከ የቀይ ኮከብ ጥሪ

ድርሰት ስቃይ ነው። ምጥ ነው። ወልደ መሳሙ ደስ ይላል። ደራሲና ወላድ ይመሳሰላሉ። (ገጽ 65)

2.5 Success and Failure Values

ከ ደራሲው

የኪነት ሰዎች መፍጠር ሲያቅታቸው ማፍረስ ይጀምራሉ። ህይወት ምስጢርዋን ከጉያዋ ውስጥ ደብቃ አልጠገር ስትላቸው ከሁሉም ነገር ጋር መጣላት ይቀናቸዋል። በመጀመሪያ አደገኛ ጠላት የሚሆኑ ለራሳቸው ነው። አብዛኛዎቹ ጠጪዎች ይሆናሉ። እንዳንዶቹ ቁጭታቸውን በምግብ ይወጣሉ። ሌሎች ደግሞ ሴሰኞች ይሆናሉ። የባሰባቸውም ራሳቸውን ይገድላሉ። እንደእብድ ተነስተው የሚጠፉም አሉ። (ገጽ 66)

...

Chapter Three

3.1 Authors

ከ ከአድማስ ባሻገር

...መፃፍ የምረጠው ስለዓለም ውብትና ስለሰው ተፈጥሮ መሠረታዊ ጥሩነት፣ እንዲሁም ሰው በራሱ የራሱን ደህንነት እንዳያገኝ ስለሚያደናቅፉት ሁኔታዎችና አካባቢዎች ነው። በዚህ ውጥን ውስጥ ችግርና ብቸኝነት አንስተኛውን ሥፍራ ይዘው ይገኛሉ።

(ገጽ 71)

ከ ለገጉዝ

አባባ ፍፁም ነፃነት አረጋጋለሁ። ለዚያ ነፃነት ስለ የሚያጋጥመኝ ግንኙነትም መሰናከል ጠንከራ አሻገራለሁ። በሃይማኖት ህግጋትና ትዕዛዝ፣ በባህልና በወግ ጫና ለሌቶች የተሰጡትን የታዘዥነት፣ የአገልጋይነት፣ የመገልገያነት ደንብ አልተበላቸውም። ለግንኙነትም በህይወት እያሉ መንትያ ልጆቼን አቅፈው እንዲባርካቸው አደርጋለሁ።

(ገጽ 72)

Appendix II

1. adāfris - Dagnachew Werku, 1962 - is about the two prominent outlooks of the 1960's, which on the one hand, is represented by the modern Adefris and other learned figures and on the other hand, by the tradition bound landlady W/o Asegah, her family and tenants. Among these characters who reflect the modern way of life as a better path to the future is the painter, Ato Kibret.
2. kāadmās bäsāger - Baalu Girma, 1962 - is a novel about the search for identity on the part of learned men. Among these learned figures we find two artist characters. Aberra the painter and Hailemariam the writer. Both try to actualize their dreams into reality. However, the needs of the old generation represented by Aberra's brother and his family clash with the interest and realities of the time. For this reason we observe conflict of interest between the continuation of the family line and following one's call in life.
3. yā kāy kokāb tirri - Baalu Girma, 1972 - is a novel which depicts the reality or situation of the late 1970's in Addis Ababa. this period is marked by revolution in which two forces struggle with each other. Among these

forces of change and counter change, we come across the artist character Emmailaf. As a playwright, Emmailaf is seen depicting the reality of the time in his play.

4. darasiw - Baalu Girma, 1972 - is wholly about literature, criticism and the life of the writer in society. The characters portrayed here are writers such as Sirak, Eskindir and the anonymous one. The story winds around these artists their colleagues and spouses.
5. rahimatto - Assefa Guya, 1981 - The central theme of this novel is about the love that children need from their parents in their upbringing. This also reflects on the painter character Rahmatto, whose mother died his childhood. The artist is seen trying to achieve success in his work and at the same time balancing this loss in his life time.
6. girdos - Sisay Nigussu, 1983 - This novel is also about the need for parent love which is essential for the rearing up of children. The painter Ermias also faces the loss of his mother. We see him trying to search for her love, but he can't avoid the scar. In his matured years, we see him fighting this lack in his works.
7. sansalat - Fekade Yohannes, 1983 - This novel weaves a crime story along with the urge of a writer to express

the reality of his society. In this novel we get Sinework, an ex-lawyer, converted to a writer.

8. anguz - Tsehai Melaku, 1984 - Most of the story revolves around the life of women in Addis Ababa. Among these women, Kidist is the writer whose determination is proved by her success in producing a novel. anguz tries to depict a new course which women should follow in their development toward self-reliance.
9. tattañaw tawanai - Birhanu Zerhiun, 1975 - This is a play written at the time of the revolution. It depicts artists who stood for and against corruption and art respectively. We see here the actor Misganaw reflecting his rational interpretation of acting and a play while Demirre compromises his career.
10. malada - Tezerra Woubishet, 1983 - is a play about the need to have sex education in schools. In this play we find the playwright Gebeyehu trying to reflect the life of the artist as well as his effort in fighting back the loss of life by abortion.
11. hamus - Seyoum Teferra, 1977 - is a play reflecting the life of an actor on and off the stage. Ameha's life as an actor on the stage at the theatre and as a member of his community in his neighbourhood are depicted as a


paradox. The acceptance on the stage and the indifference among his neighbours is what is reflected in the play.

12. "ya fisamew majamaria" - Yekatit, Baalu Girma, 1975 - This short story is about a writer character in conversation with his own conscience, portrayed as his friend. Their conversation revolves around the writer character's life. It is almost like self appraisal or the search for the self.
13. "ya surafel itta" - yatakafafale lib, Mulugeta Gudetta, 1981 - This short story deals with the singer character Surafel. It narrates his life and development as an artist.
14. "manasha la dirsat" - makoya, Aberra Lemma, No year - This story is about a writer character's effort to construct a story from a letter sent by his friend from Yemen. The story reflects the life of Girmachew as a writer character.
15. "mahilet" - mahilet, Adam Retta, 1981 - Estifanos is the painter character in this short story. Besides his life as an art teacher, he paints on his own. This story revolves around the painting of a woman's lips.

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my work and that all sources of material used for this thesis have been duly acknowledged.

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