

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

**THE PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN FOLKTALES
AND POPULAR SAYINGS OF THE OROMO
OF EAST WOLLEGA**

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**BY
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ABSTRACT

Many scholars have revealed that various elements of folklore have emerged out of the age long human experiences. Folktales and popular sayings belong to the verbal aspects of folklore and are believed to reflect a given society's mode of thinking, tradition, attitudes, ways of life and so on. Research indicates that through the study of such forms of oral literature, it is possible to learn the political, cultural and social ideals as well as the economic realities of a given society.

The present study is aimed at exploring how women have been portrayed in some folktales and popular sayings of the Oromo of East Wollega. It has been found out that women and the feminine attributes have been portrayed negatively in most of the tales and sayings widely told in the area. In most tales and sayings, women characters in both genres are depicted as unfaithful, adulterous, cruel, ignorant, foolish and the like. However, in very few tales and sayings, women particularly one's mothers and wives are depicted as lovable, generous, wise and tactful.

Most of the folktales and popular sayings in which men and women are characterized seem to have been used for maintaining and validating patriarchy. Women's role and status in the society seem to have been diminished to such a very great extent. As the finding indicates, the society seems to have a wrong perception about women.

The paper has four chapters. In the first chapter an attempt was made to state and describe the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study and significances of the study. Besides, areas of the study, methodology and the socio-cultural background of the people under focus have been included here. In the second chapter, an attempt has been made to review the works of many scholars on oral literature in general and folktales and popular sayings in particular. The third chapter deals with the analysis of the folktales and popular sayings collected from the area under focus.

Finally, an attempt was made to conclude what has been discussed under the preceding chapters. The list of informants and the tales and sayings selected for analysis has also been appended at the end.

Afan Oromo Pronunciation Key

The letters/symbols used in Afan Oromo are pronounced as in the following English words.

I. Consonants

<u>Letter-----pronounced as in</u>	<u>Sample in Afan Oromo---meaning</u>
b ----- bad	baatii-----moon
c-----does not have English equivalent	cabbii-----ice
ch----- church	naacha-----crocodile
d----- dye	daree-----section
dh-----does not have English equivalent	dhadhaa-----butter
f----- fat	fattee-----frog
g----- goat	gaangee-----mule
h----- hut	harree-----donkey
j----- jump	jabbii-----calf
k----- current	kalee-----kidney
l----- land	laga-----river
m----- man	mana-----house
n----- narrow	nama-----man
ny-----does not have English equivalent	nyaara-----eyebrow
ph-----does not have English equivalent	qophee-----shoes
q-----does not have English equivalent	qamadii-----wheat
r----- rat	raammoo-----worm
s----- sand	sanduuqa-----box
sh----- shark	shoora-----role
t----- time	tokko-----one
w----- wine	waaqa-----God
x-----does not have English equivalent	xinnoo-----little
y----- yard	yeroo-----time

II. Vowels

a----- art	* aa--- <u>f</u> ather --- haadha---mother
e----- enemy	* ee--- <u>e</u> gg --- eegee---tail
i----- bit	* ii---she <u>e</u> t --- dhiiga---blood
o----- tot	* oo---sh <u>o</u> rt --- toora--- row
u----- cook	* uu---two --- tuuta--- set

* When the vowels are doubled, it means that the sound is longer in Afan Oromo.

Operational Definition of Terms

Popular saying

In this paper, this term is used in the sense of all well known traditional phrases including proverbs and other phrases, which the Oromos call altogether as (Mammaaksa), that are used to make comment, give advice, issue warning, state opinion or fact, ridicule something or somebody etc.

Portrayal of women

The image, impression or representation of any female human being in folktales and sayings.

Folktales

Any tale handed down from generation to generation by word of mouth rather than in written form including myths, fables, fairy tales, legends and so on.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to show how women have been portrayed in folktales and popular sayings of the Oromo of East Wollega. It consists of four chapters in which relevant points related to the topic are discussed in some details. Under this first chapter, an attempt has been made to discuss the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, methods of the study, and other related topics.

To begin with, the works of many literary scholars indicate that it is difficult to give a precise definition of folklore. As a result, it is common to see as many different definitions as possible by various scholars in various books. Yet the definitions given to folklore seem to have an underlying basis, which serves as a common ground from which all the meanings or definitions spring. That is, folklore is the traditions, customs, manners, superstitions, ballads, proverbs, stories, etc of a society that is transferred from generation to generation by word of mouth rather than in written form (Okpewho, 1992:4). Being broad by itself, the term, folklore, is said to be found under the umbrella term known as oral tradition, which refers to the verbal transmission of "history, literature and law" from one generation to the next. According to Cuddon (1998:322) "folklore consists of folksong, ballad, fairytales, drama, proverbs, riddles, charms, and legends."

Folklore is said to be a universal human heritage that every society possesses regardless of its level of development. Various works done in this area indicate that folklore reflects the mode of thinking, way of life, attitudes and other cultural aspects of a given society. Thus, folklore has been attracting

various scholars from different fields including anthropology, psychology, sociology, and so on.

The Oromo of East Wollega do possess different forms of folklore that they have been transferring orally from one generation to the next. Some scholars indicate that the range, complexity and variety of information contained in folklore has not been realized by researchers and administrators of the country (Ethiopia) yet. Based on this, the researcher, here, feels that in some folklore genres of the Oromo of East Wollega, like in folktales and popular sayings, the way women have been portrayed needs an investigation. As most of these folklore genres depict, the image of women in the society seems to have been distorted.

The Oromo society in Eastern Wollega gives more value to men than women. The male offspring gets more respect and value than the female offspring in the society beginning from the date of their birth. For example, the women, together with the midwife, ululate five times with joy if the newly born child is male, and only three times if it is female. The Oromo folklore is also rich with such sayings <mammaaksa> as:

- *Dubartii fi harreen ulee hin sodaattu. <A woman and a donkey are not afraid of stick (being beaten)>*
- *Dubartiin beektuu hin qabdu, beekaa deessi malee. <A woman has no know-how, but gives birth to a knowledgeable person>*
- *Taa'uu mannaa durba dalchuu wayya. <Fathering a daughter is better than sitting idle>*
- *Mootummaan dubartii karra cufaatti oolcha. <Women's administration leaves the corral closed for the whole day>, and so much more sayings.*

Most of the folktales in the area under focus do also seem to undermine the role of women in the society and advocate the supremacy of men over women. They also seem to propagate the wrongdoings of women to the neglect of the wrongdoings of their counterpart, men. This is not, however, accepted by

the current generation, especially by women who are struggling to maintain their equality with men in every aspect these days. As the society under focus (as in elsewhere in the country) is patriarchal, most men still resist accepting the equality of women by saying/ telling some popular sayings and tales which portray them negatively. They are still using some folkloric forms (which they inherited from their elders) to undermine the role of women in the society forgetting the world in which they are living and finding it difficult to adjust to the new way of life now days. But it seems necessary to leave behind old ways of thinking and go inline with the new ones. Concerning this, Okpewho (1992:115) states:

As society changes or grows, some of the old ways of life inevitably give way to new ones. Much of the oral literature that is performed today, or that we see preserved in books, reflects a life style that may have served the earlier generation well but would be considered outmoded or even dangerous today. Although both performer and audience may respond to the contents of the material with nostalgia and perhaps pride, it is clear to every one that things are no longer what they used to be.

Suffice it to hypothesize and speak to the point that in some folktales and popular sayings of the Oromo of East Wollega, the researcher feels that women have not been portrayed in a manner they ought to be.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Ethiopia is one of the countries where diverse ethnic groups live with their own unique cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Although some of these unique cultural heritages of the groups have been influenced by different factors during the past regimes, few of them have stood the test of time and have been reproduced and transmitted from generation to generation orally or by means of folk literature.

Many folklorists have revealed that oral literature plays a vital role in the lives of the people to which it belongs. In the past and even now a day, illiterate

and semi-literate societies use oral literature to react to the social, political, economic and historical events they experience. " It has been well said that oral literature takes the place of newspaper among non-literate people" (Finnegan, 1976:10). Folklore reflects the history, mood, beliefs, attitudes, practices, and in general, the culture of a certain society. " Folk narratives are reflections of the societies and individuals which create and transmit them; consequently, they reflect a wide range of human ideas and emotions" (Oring, 1949:133). Similarly, Courlander (1975:1) writes:

Different forms of oral literature are products of long reflections about the relations among humans, between man and woman, between human kind and the animal world; responses to the challenges of the unknown, and to the universal need to create order and reason out of chaos and accident.

Thus, studying folklore can be helpful to have a profound insight of a given society's attitudes, creative imagination and living conditions.

So far, some research works have been carried out on some forms of oral literature in different parts of the country. To mention a few, Berhanu (1986) in his thesis entitled " An Analysis of Kambatta Proverbs" came up with the conclusion that Kambatta proverbs do not have special occasions for their use, but are usually involved in every day situations and serve ethical and educational functions. Similarly, Melakneh (1990) did his M.A thesis on " The Major Themes and Motifs of Southern Agaw Folktales" with the aim of recording some of the folktales and examine their socio-cultural significance through a thematic analysis.

Moreover, Fekade (1990) has written a paper on the portrayal of women in literature and explained how the culture of a society shapes the writer to represent his/her characters in a certain way. Similarly, Abraham (2007) has written a paper on how the Jimma Oromo has been using oral narratives as an ideological weapon for subordinating women.

Besides the above works, Claude Sumner (1997) prepared an illustrated album of Oromo folktales with the aim of preserving and revealing the beauty and truth that lies at the core of the lives of the society. Moreover, in his third volume of Oromo Wisdom Literature, Claude Sumner (1996) collected and analyzed a number of folktales from the entire region. Apart from these works, there are also few articles published in journals. One article worth mentioning is Negaso's "Oromo Historical Poems and Songs: Conquest and Exploitation in Western Wollega".

Although the works done so far on different forms of folklore are encouraging, it is difficult to claim that it has been studied exhaustively throughout the country, as the country is a home for numerous nations and nationalities. Hence, the number of research works done on the reflections of some folklore genres is very limited. Especially, to the extent that I reviewed the related literature, attempts made to explore the portrayal of women in some folklore genres of this country in general and the Oromo of Eastern Wollega in particular does not seem satisfactory. In other words, many folktales and popular sayings in the area under focus have not been collected and studied well from different angles. Hence, in this paper, an attempt was made to study the images of women imbedded in some folktales and popular sayings of the society under focus.

1.3 GENERAL OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the study is to examine the way in which women have been portrayed in some folktales and popular sayings of the Oromo of East Wollega. In other words, the study is aimed at examining, identifying and revealing the embedded images of women in some folktales and popular sayings.

1.4 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

In addition to the above stated objective, the study will have the following specific objectives.

1. To collect, analyze and preserve some folktales and sayings that mainly characterize men and women.
2. To find out whether the stereotyping of women in the folktales and popular sayings are the same or different.
3. To show the perception of women in the area by the society.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

As it has been indicated above, the primary focus of this study is to reveal the embedded images of women as reflected in some folktales and popular sayings of the Oromo of East Wollega. In the course of the study attempts were made to discuss and give answer to the following main questions.

1. How are women portrayed in the folktales and popular sayings of the Oromo of East Wollega?
2. Is the image of women in the two genres of oral literature similar or different?

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study is believed to have a tri-dimensional significance. In the first place, it enables others to know what the society looks like in terms of tradition, philosophy, beliefs, attitudes and other ways of life (Boswell, 1962).

Secondly, as the study is expected to identify the image of women in the society, anybody who wants to advocate their roles or wants to prevail against the tradition might get useful insight from the result of the study.

Thirdly, the study will pave the way for other researchers who want to carry out further studies on folk literature and other related topics.

1.7 AREAS, SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study is conducted in Oromia National Regional State, East Wollega Zone, which is predominantly inhabited by the Oromos. The required data for the study was collected predominantly from four districts, namely, Jimma Arjo, Nunnu Qumba, Guto Gidda and Gidda Ayana. Still, an attempt was made to compare the folktales and sayings of the remaining districts from East Wollega Zone Culture and Tourism Office. This is because it would be impractical to try to go round all the districts in the time and budget given for carrying out the study.

It is known that folklore is an umbrella term consisting of customs, observances, manners, proverbs, riddles, folktales, folksongs, myths, legends, nursery rhymes and so on. The society in East Wollega does also possess all these invaluable and different forms of folklore. Although it is believed that these different forms of folklore may reflect the psychology, ethics, beliefs, attitudes and traditions of a society, it would be impractical to try to study the portrayal of women in all these genres of folklore for various reasons.

In general, the study has only considered folktales and popular sayings to examine how women have been portrayed in the society. The folktales and sayings examined in this thesis were also only those that characterize men and women and/or primarily focus on women by personifying animals. The two genres are selected based on the popularity they have in the area and the ample information they are hoped to provide for the study.

1.8 METHODOLOGY

The data required for the study was collected through different techniques. Predominantly, interview and observation were used as data

collecting instruments. Above all, a significant number of conversant, outspoken and thoughtful individuals were selected from four districts by means of snowball sampling and were interviewed.

Most of the information gathered from the elders was recorded on tape recorder, while others, especially the popular sayings were jotted down on notebooks. Before the selection of the informants was made, an extensive groundwork had been accomplished so as to get individuals who are good at story telling. Besides, an attempt was made to collect the data, especially the popular sayings through observation in the mead, "katikala", and "farso" houses for a number of days.

Moreover, there is an office named *East Wollega Zone Culture and Tourism Office* whose main duty is collecting and preserving various cultural heritages from the entire province. So far, the office has collected and preserved a great deal of folklore forms including proverbs, folktales, riddles, folksongs, nursery rhymes and so on in its archive. Thus, an attempt was also made to review and compare the data with what the office has collected and preserved. The data they have collected and preserved from different districts in their archives are not only similar but also seem a duplication of one another. Thus, the data gathered by the researcher from the four districts could be claimed to be representative.

Besides, students who come from all the districts in East Wollega Zone and study at Nekemte College of Teachers Education were made to collect and bring some folktales and sayings that characterize human beings through their teachers. The students were informed to collect and bring the tales and sayings with their contextual usage; that means, when and under what circumstances the tales and sayings are used among the society.

Before the analysis was made, the data collected on tape recorder were transcribed as they were in the source language, Afan Oromo, together with the

one gathered on the notebook. Then, some of them were selected and translated into English.

As far as the technique of data analysis is concerned, since it is difficult to manage if the Afan Oromo and English versions of the folktales are put together side by side, only the English versions of the folktales were considered for analysis. However, as the popular sayings are short and brief, both versions were put side by side and analyzed from descriptive and contextual points of view.

1.9 SOCIO-CULTURAL BACKGROUND

In order to understand how women are portrayed in some folktales and sayings of the Oromo of East Wollega, it seems vital to have some understanding about some socio-cultural background of the people in the area, especially about the labor division among men and women. According to some sources, the Oromo of East Wollega belong to the "Maccaa" clan of the nation (Tesema Ta'a, 1980). Although there are no written records, based on oral tradition, historians say that the "Maccaa" Oromos expanded and settled in the present day Wollega during the sixteenth century. As Tesema (ibid: 24) stated the Maccaa sub-clans "Leqa, Sibbu, Jimma, Guduru, Amuru, and Nonno" are said to have gradually conquered and settled in what is today called Wollega in the sixteenth century.

As repeatedly stated earlier, the people under focus live in the current East Wollega Zone, and exclusively speak Afan Oromo, their mother tongue, which belongs to the Cushitic language family and has a large number of speakers in East Africa. While discussing the Cushitic language families of Africa, B.W. Andrzejewski (1985:408) states, "Among the Cushitic languages, the first two from the point of view of speakers and the territorial spread are Oromo and Somali, with Oromo being spoken over a large part of Ethiopia and Northern Kenya."

The society in the area entirely depends on agriculture_ farming and herding cattle. There does not seem to be any significant cultural difference

among the Oromos who live in Wollega, Ilu Aba Bora, Jimma, Shawa and other areas. The differences merely seem more of geographical and dialectical than in their oral tradition. Hence, while discussing the folktales and sayings of the Oromo of East Wollega, it should not be considered as if they are specific to the study area only. In other words, since the Oromos all over the country share a large number of folklore forms in common with slight dialectical and lexical differences, there might exist similar tales and sayings in other areas. For example, while undermining the status of women in the society, the Oromos of Arsi, Bale, Borena, Harar and the surrounding areas say:

- “Nadheen qalbii hin qabdu.”
<Women have no conscience>
- “Beerri qalbii tokkitti qabdi, isayyuu takka dhungatan harkaa baddi” <Women have only one conscience, and they lose it upon being kissed once>

Similarly, the Oromo of Wollega, Ilu Aba Bora, Jimma and Shawa say “Dubartiin qalbii hin qabdu” a saying, which has a similar meaning with the above one and differs only in the lexis- nadheen, beerri, and dubartiin- all meaning women. There is a clear labor division among men and women in the area under study. The men are mostly responsible for works outside home, whereas women, besides works in the field, usually carry out household chores. The women in the area usually accompany men with every work outside home, but the men hardly involve themselves in household chores, such as grinding, cooking, collecting firewood, fetching water, washing clothes, milking cows, looking after children, and so on. These works are exclusively considered as women’s jobs and if men are found doing them they will be undermined by the society. Thus, in the area, it is a shame for a man to grind, cook, collect firewood, and fetch water etc.

Ploughing, erecting house and the likes are deemed to be hard works and women rarely involve directly in such activities. Since women are considered as weak, men usually let them do less labor demanding jobs, although in reality

what women perform does not seem to be less labor demanding. In addition to household chores, women in East Wollega accompany men in the field to scatter seeds, weed, harvest, collect, and winnow cereals and crops. In spite of the fact that they are busy both with indoor and outdoor chores all the time, women's work is not usually appreciated and considered worthwhile in the society. Concerning this, while discussing the socio-cultural factors that undermine the role and status of women among the Oromo of East Wollega, Temesgen Oljira (2003:43) observes:

Women, both before and after marriage, work more or less in constant association with the family but much of their works are ignored. Boys from an early age are encouraged to leave the home atmosphere and engage in outdoor and public activities. Girls, however, stay in the home and work under constant supervision of the family. This (situation) forces women to become dependent socially, economically and psychologically on men.

Surprisingly, until now women or wives are expected to wash their husband's legs before he goes to bed. While there are women at home, men do not even take water to drink from the container; they should be given by their mothers, wives, sisters, daughters or any other woman at home. Women ought to be busy all the time and are not expected to rest at home. The following two popular sayings from the area may clearly witness this fact.

- Dubartii fi gundoon hin teessu.
< A woman and a serving plate do not rest >
- Dubartiin keessummaa hin qabdu.
< Women are not guests. >

In the area, women are also not expected to sleep before men. They go to bed later than men and should wake up earlier to prepare breakfast and do other jobs while the men sleep. Apart from this, sexwise, while the males are appreciated for having sex with lots of girls, it is shame for them (girls) to lose virginity before marriage. If a bridegroom or a husband does not find her virginity upon marriage, he sends her back to her family immediately, though

recently very few do so. Anyhow it is mandatory for girls to be virgin before marriage in the area so as to get respect in the society.

Women in the area under focus are also disadvantaged economic wise. Only the male offspring has the right to inherit their family's property. While there is a man at home, women are not even seen taking bigger animals to the market for sale. They are usually seen selling smaller animals in the market like chickens and vegetables, fruits, eggs, butter, and small quantity of cereals and crops, which do not cost much money. It may be as a result of these facts and others that the society in the area says "Dubartii Waaqayyo eebbisetu dura ilma godhata" which means, "It is a blessed woman who first gives birth to a son." Traditionally, it is only the son who will remain in the family and inherit the family's property upon father's death. Concerning this Gemechu Megersa (1994:140) writes:

In traditional Oromo, male offspring are preferred to female, especially in the case of first-born child. This is because the first-born son replaces his father and becomes his legal heir. This preference for sons can be evidently explained by the fact that daughters had to be given away in marriage and could not inherit their father's estate.

In general, the Oromo women have a low status in the society and are underprivileged in every aspect due to the prevailing traditions of the society that gives priority for men. They usually do not participate in decision making with men and are usually expected to be loyal and good servants in the society. The next chapter will take us to works done on folklore in general and tales and sayings in particular.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Related Literature

2.1 The Concept of Folklore and Oral Literature

2.1.1 Definitions

The main objective of this chapter is to give the thesis a theoretical basis by reviewing materials on the study of folklore in general and tales and sayings in particular.

To begin with, literary scholars normally categorize literature into two broad genres. These are oral literature and written literature. It is obvious that the former, that is, oral literature is older than written literature. That means, people have been transferring their culture or tradition from one generation to the next orally before there was no written form of literature.

Some research works indicate that the term folklore is found under the umbrella term known as oral tradition, which is a general concept used to refer to the verbal transmission of "history, literature and law" from one generation to the next. Although the term seems ambiguous, various scholars have attempted to define it in different ways. Dorson (1972:2-3), for example, emphasizes that folklore embraces people's verbal and material arts, customs and other forms of culture. He classifies folklore into four broad categories, namely 'verbal art (oral literature), material culture, performing folk arts and social folk customs'. Similarly, Dundes (1965:6) states that folklore stands for the wide concept that embraces "myths, legends, tales, jokes, proverbs, riddles, chants, charms, blessings, curses, deaths, insults, ... greetings, customs, folk dances, folk drama, folk art, beliefs, folk medicine, folk music etc."

J.A Cuddon (1998:322) also defines folklore as "A general and some what vague term which includes folksong, ballad, fairytales, drama, proverbs, riddles or charm and legends." According to Cuddon, folklore is the creation of primitive and illiterate people and therefore, much of it belongs to oral tradition.

As put in Encyclopedia Americana (1983,V.11, P. 489r) folklore is "the part of the culture, customs, and beliefs of a society that is based on popular tradition." Tesfaye G/Mariam (1990:22) also indicates, "folklore is men's cumulative mental product as reflected in their social beliefs and values."

M.H. Abrams' (1981) understanding of the term folklore also runs as follows:

Folklore is an umbrella term which is applied to verbal materials and social rituals that have been handed down solely, or at least primarily, by word of mouth and by example, rather than in written form. It includes among other things legends, superstitions, songs, tales, proverbs, riddles, spells, nursery rhymes; pseudoscientific lore about the weather, plants, and animals; customary activities at births, marriages and deaths; and traditional dances and forms of drama which are performed on holidays or at communal gatherings. (P.66)

As far as the origin of the term is concerned, Boswell and Reaver (1962) indicate that the existence of folklore started as early as mankind himself and that William Thoms coined the term in 1846. Similarly, Elliot Oring (1949:4) confirms, "*A serious study of forms that today are labeled 'folklore' took place in Germany at the turn of eighteenth century.*"

The terms folklore and oral literature are a little bit confusing (Okpewho, 1992: 5). As he indicates, some people use both terms interchangeably, though the later is only part of the former. He adds, "Such generalizations whereby the part is made to represent the whole, are frequent in literature and are perhaps excusable" (ibid). According to Dorson, 1972:2), "oral literature is sometimes called as verbal art or expressive literature." Traditional literature, folk literature, popular literature, and orature are also terms people widely use to mean oral literature (Okpewho, 1992:1). Like folklore, hence, oral literature seems an illusive term to define.

As it has been indicated above, Dorson (1972) and Dundes (1965) consider oral literature as a part of folklore rather than as the terms used interchangeably. "Under this rubric (oral literature) fall spoken, sung, and voiced forms of traditional utterance that show repetitive patterns" (Dorson, 1972:2).

On the other hand, Nandwa and Bukenya (1983:1) as quoted by Okpewho (1992:4) define oral literature as follows.

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

In general, the term folklore seems comprehensive and encompasses the culture that people have been handling down from one generation to the other by word of mouth rather than in written form. Oral literature, on the other hand, is considered as a subset of folklore that embraces only the verbal aspects such as folktales, proverbs, sayings, riddles, chants, songs, and the like.

2.1.2 Characteristics of Oral Literature

One of the main features of oral literature is its universality. Oral literature is said to be common to all people and hence, it can be considered as a universal human heritage. As far as this notion is concerned Julie Cathy (1984) explains, "No group of people, however remote or however simple their technology, has ever been discovered which does not employ some form of folklore"

Unlike written form of literature, works under oral literature are undated and authorless. Thus many folklorists assert that various works of oral literature including myths, folktales, legends, proverbs etc are products of the folk (people) at an indefinite time in the past. Hence, in works of folklore in general and oral

literature in particular, no individual claims the right of authorship. As far as this characteristic is concerned, Sokolov (1971:10) writes:

Works of folklore are anonymous, nameless, for the reason that the names of the authors, in the vast majority of cases, have not been revealed, have not been discovered, because for the greater part they were not written down, but were preserved only in the memory of the people.

Okpewho (1992: 9) has also confirmed that each text of folklore is the common property of the community and thus, works of folklore are the products of communal authorship.

The other characteristic of folklore or narrowly oral literature is its power to reflect a given society's past experiences. Folklore or oral literature can reflect the attitudes, beliefs, mode of thinking and other aspects of the lives of people in the past as well as in the present times. As to Sokolov (1971:15) "Folklore is an echo of the past, but at the same time it is also the vigorous voice of the present."

In addition to the above features, folklorists assert that oral literature is also characterized by improvisation. As the works of oral literature are recited and performed orally, it is difficult to say that the performer (storyteller, singer, etc) can recite the contents of the works word by word with out any modification. With regard to this, P.N Sakulin (1919:8) as quoted by Sokolov (1971:21) explains, "The old poetic heritage is subject to modification: every more or less talented narrator, singer, storyteller, and so forth, leaves the imprint of his creative spirit on those works changing their forms, their composition, and in part their subject." Similarly, Coffin and Cohen (1966: xiv) state, "Folklore continually changes, varying and developing, because it is shaped by the memories, creative talents, and immediate needs of human beings in particular situations."

The other basic characteristic of oral literature is related with performance and occasion. As it is known, folklore is an oral and group activity, performed on

a certain occasion for a specific purpose. Thus, every form of oral literature becomes more meaningful when it is performed in a specific occasion. With regard to this, Ruth Finnegan (1970) explains, the significance of the actual performance is one of the basic characteristics of oral literature. According to her. "Oral literature is by definition dependent on a performer who formulates it in words on a specific occasion – there is no other way in which it can be realized as a literary product" (Ruth Finnegan, 1970:2).

Brevity is another feature of oral literature. Except few, most of the various forms of oral literature are characterized by brevity. Presumably, long ago, the folk had been composing short texts orally so as to ease memorization and /or recitation- the longer the texts, the more difficult it is for recitation.

Moreover, different forms of oral literature are characterized by natural or unscientific outlook. There does not seem any systematic way of arriving at a conclusion in most of the various forms of folklore. Hence, it seems difficult to prove scientifically what has been stated in them. The truth of this feature is mainly reflected in myths and tales.

2.1.3 Functions of Oral Literature

Folklore in general and oral literature in particular has been playing a prominent role in traditional society and is still playing a significant role in the modern society in various ways. It has been serving many of the same purposes that written literature serves now days including entertainment, moral instruction, commemoration and, in general, shaping the society to the required goal. "... it can reasonably be claimed that oral literature... is of educational value, since being exposed to it enhances the listener's verbal skills, enriches their vocabulary and enlarges their knowledge of their own society and its history" (B.W. Andrzejewski,1985:38).

Although there is an overlap in some cases with the functions they provide, different forms of folklore serve different functions. For example, based on occasions, folksongs and chants are mainly used to inspire love, courage,

persistence, respect, loyalty and so on. On the other hand, myths and legends help the youth to know something about the origin of their traditional society and other evolutionary theories. Moreover, these forms of folk literature are said to strengthen cultural ties and loyalty among the society. They can promote social stability and settle personal disputes. Regarding this, Lindfors (1977:2) mentions:

Genealogies and legends function towards the promotion of social stability because they are symbolic expressions of political power and historical truth; parables are effective in settling personal disputes due to their capacity to symbolize moral truth, and tales and riddles can entertain because of their inherent ability to unsettle reality.

As literature reveals, folktales are mainly used for entertainment and instruction. Similarly, people have been using proverbs and sayings to educate the youth in the expectations and values of the society. They have also been using riddles and tongue twisters so as to widen the scope of thinking of the youth by challenging them. Concerning the functions of oral literature, especially that of African, Courlander (1975: 1) states:

In his myths and legends he (Man) bridges back to the very dream morning of creation, while in his systems of divination he projects himself into time not yet come, in his epics he asserts the courage and worth of the human species; in his tales he ponders on what is just or unjust, up on what is feeble or courageous, what is sensible and ridiculous, on what moves the spirit to grief or to exultation; in his proverbs and sayings he capsulate the learnings of centuries about the human character and about the intricate balance between people and the world around them.

Similarly, Adams as quoted by Julie Cathy, (1884) mentions the functions of oral literature as "validation, maintaining conformity or control, escape, and education." According to him oral literature validates certain aspects of culture and justifies its rituals and institutions.

Research indicates that various forms of oral literature can teach the history, the social and cultural norms, diligence, respect, perseverance and other values of a given society. Regarding this B.W. Andrzejewski (1985:38) explains, "... oral literature contributes to the upholding of the social norms of the society in which it functions."

Broadly speaking, it can be said that oral literature has multiple functions including what folklorists call pedagogical, entertainment, cosmological, justification, protest and so on.

2.2 Folktales

2.2.1 Definition and Scope

As in folklore, the term folktale bears various definitions that literary scholars have not agreed on yet. This can be evidenced from what Coffin and Cohen (1966:1) stated. "The word folktale is not clearly defined in English usage. Rather it has always been a general term referring to the many types of traditional narrative known to the folk." Yet, many attempts have been made to define, classify and describe the term in spite of its vagueness. As to Ruth Finnegan (1970) folktale is "the prose narrative genre" of oral literature. To Harry Shaw (1972:163) a folktale is "a legend or narrative originating in, and traditional among a people, especially one forming part of an oral tradition."

Some folklorists consider that it is an inclusive term that covers all traditional prose narratives like legends, myths, fairy tales, fables and others. For example, having quoted Carl Tomlinson, Julie Cathy writes about folktales as follows. "Folktales are stories that grow out of the lives and imaginations of the people, or folk. They are a form of traditional literature which began as an attempt to explain and understand the natural and spiritual world."

M.H Abrams (1991:67) also puts his understanding of the folktales as "a short narrative in prose, of unknown authorship, which has been transmitted orally.... They include myths, fables, tales of heroes and fairy tales." Similarly, Boswell and Reaver (1962) categorize all traditional prose narratives such as tall tales, ghost

stories, legends, animal tales, fairy tales, fables, myths, anecdotes, narrative jokes, and stories about stupid man under different forms of folktales.

I.A Cuddon (1998) also indicated that folktales belong to oral tradition. According to him "they include legends, fables, tall stories, shaggy dog stories, fairy stories, ghost stories, stories of giants and saints, devils and what are known as rhozzums, short humorous tales, often about local characters." Similarly, Harry Shaw (1972) considers that the term covers "a wide range of materials from out right myths to fairy tales."

Other scholars however, limit its scope to animal tales, fairy tales, tall tales and the likes excluding myths and legends. For instance, Bernth Lindfors (1977) quoting Bascom writes about this notion as follows:

In an attempt to inductively formulate a cross-cultural classification system for prose narratives based up on indigenous taxonomies, Bascom proposes to consider myth, legend and folktale as three categories which are widely recognized. Myth is sacred, its events take place in the remote past and its major characters are gods; legends could be either sacred or secular, its actions occur in the recent past and its principal figures are human; in contrast to both forms, the folktale is secular, its actions could take place at any time and any place, and its dramatis personae are either human or nonhuman beings.

Max Luthi (1982) also discusses legends and myths as distinct forms of oral literature rather than as part and parcel of folktales.

On the whole, many agree that folktales are the largest constituents of oral literature that are usually exciting and widely used for entertainment, instruction, and other related purposes. To sum up, it is in light of the understanding that folktales are various stories composed orally and then handed down from one generation to the next by word of mouth rather than in written form (including myths, legends, fables, fairy tales, and the like) that the researcher has considered in his study.

2.2.2 Characters and Settings of Folktales

Usually, the characters in folktales include humans, animals and supernatural beings. As in short stories and novels, the characters in folktales could be specific and called by their proper nouns or could be called collectively as man, woman, child, animal, human and so on. With regard to this, Ruth Finnegan (1970:360-1) writes:

The characters in these tales are sometimes given names. Some societies have their own favorite named heroes, often of a trickster type, ---. In very many cases, however, the characters are not given names. They appear just as a certain woman, a chief, a small boy, a hunter, two twins and so on.

The animal characters in folktales are endowed with human qualities and are made to speak, think and perform any kind of work that human beings do. The animals and super natural beings interact among themselves and also communicate with human beings. It is also common to see while human beings interact freely with fierce and wild animals in folktales. Concerning this Owomoyela (1979:4) illustrates:

These tales are set in a world in which the existential barriers between humans and animals (and even non-animate things) are dispensed with so that all interact on the same plane. Even when the characters are not humans, they are endowed with human qualities and are for all practical purposes to be taken as surrogates.

The characters in folktales usually represent people with their wisdom, ability, folly and other human qualities and behaviors. Thus, they can reveal both the strong and the weak sides of human beings and can direct one to the required direction. As Owomoyela (1979:5) justifies, "Because the characters represent both positive and negative human qualities, the outcome of the conflicts in the tales indicate the values approved by that community, and thus steer members in the desirable direction."

The actions or events that take place in folktales do not have definite setting (time and place). Thus, absence of concrete setting is one of the main features of folktales. Incidents in a folktale may take place at anytime and in any place, hence the setting in folktales is mostly indefinite.

As far as the setting of storytelling of folktales is concerned, folklorists assert that there is relatively definite time and place when compared with proverbs and sayings. They say that story telling usually takes place at night when people gather together around their homes or under big trees in moonlight. Regarding this Bernth Lendfors (1977:27-28) says, "Riddling and storytelling occur during the evening hours in a central place ---. While storytelling and riddling have definite temporal and spatial features, the time and place for proverb saying is situational". Similarly, Ruth Finnegan (1966:64) while describing storytelling among the Limba people states the setting in folktales as follows:

Stories are most frequently told in the evenings, after the sun has set. There is not an explicit rule that stories should not be told in the day light hours, but in practice people are then normally occupied, especially at certain points in the farming year, and at these times it would be considered unsuitable to spend time during the day in story telling. --- the most popular time is at full moon when people go to bed late.

Generally speaking, the time and place whence folktales are narrated seem to vary from society to society. Yet, evening hours when people are not engaged in daily routines and at home near the fireside or in moonlight seem an ideal and convenient setting for storytelling.

2.2.3 Classification of Folktales

As it has been stated earlier, folktales are the most widely known and popular elements of oral literature. Some folklorists categorize various oral prose narratives under folktales. Nevertheless, others deem these oral prose narratives as independent genres. As to Boswell and Reaver (1962) all traditional prose narratives including myths, legends, animal tales, fables, anecdotes, tall tales etc

fall under the category of folktales. Oring (1949:124) also classifies prose narratives into three major categories, namely *myths, legends and tales*.

Many scholars categorize folktales based on different criteria. The characters, forms, content, functions and purposes of the tales are some of the criteria used to divide the folktales into different types. Hence, it is not common to see the same type of folktales in different works of folklorists. For example, Ruth Finnegan (1966) while dealing with Limba stories seem to have categorized the stories under three general types based on the characters in the tales. These are stories about people, stories about animals and stories about origin. Encyclopedia Americana (1985:498) also puts folktale genres as follows.

On the basis of the form, function and purpose we may distinguish various genres, more comprehensive than the types, and which promise new challenges in research. A favorite three-fold division of folklore is into myth, legend and fairy tale or *marchen*. Viewed as belief, myth is sacred truth, legend is adorned history, and fairy tale is plain fiction.

Okpewho (1992:181-2) on his part, states four ways in which the majority of tales have so far been classified. According to him tales have been classified on the basis of the protagonists in them, the purpose revealed in the content, characteristic quality of the tales and the context or occasion. Based on the protagonists in the tales, he mentions animal tales, human tales and fairy tales; in terms of the purpose revealed in the content, he states tales dealing with moralistic and didactic purposes. On the basis of the characteristic quality of the tales, he lists trickster tales, dilemma tales, historical tales and origin tales; and finally on the basis of context, he mentions moonlight tales, divination tales and hunter's tales.

In general, from what has been stated so far, it seems that there is no single and consistent way of classifying folktales. However, it can be guessed

that folklorists classify tales on the basis of various factors including form, character, context, function, distinctive features and so on.

2.2.4 Typical Features of Folktales

Folklorists identify several distinctive characteristics of folktales. Most of all their mode of transmission, flexibility, simplicity of their plots, anonymity, prevalence of trickster animals and their world view are among the universal characteristics of folktales.

When literacy was not widespread, people have been transmitting folktales orally or by word of mouth rather than in written form. This time, however, their mode of transmission is on the verge of being changed to written form since most folktales have been collected and preserved in written form. Some folktales have also begun to appear in school curriculums and hence the current and the coming generation can access them easily. In the modern world, thus, the oral nature of folktales has inevitably fallen under question, as a great deal of anthology of folktales has been published in book forms.

Unlike some forms of fiction (short stories, novels, novella etc), folktales are very brief with simple plots and few characters. According to M. Luthi (1992:25) "Only what is essential to the plot is mentioned; nothing is stated for its own sake, and nothing is amplified." The events in folktales are mostly sequential and follow one another allowing the teller to begin and finish with less difficulty. 'The plot of a folktale proceeds as a logical sequence of events... and can be further described as single stranded' (Oring, 1949:128-9). It is crystal clear that the less the number of characters and the simple the plot, the better it is to keep in memory for a long period of time and narrate easily. It seems, this is one of the characteristics or factors that allowed folktales to stand the test of time and contributed to their existence to the present time.

As in any form of oral literature, another characteristic of folktale is related with authorship. The authors of folktales are anonymous. It has not been heard so far while individuals are claiming the right of authorship on folktales. Hence, folktales have no authors; they belong to the society in which they are told than specific individuals in the society.

Since folktales are told orally, they may not follow the original version and narrators can add or omit some ideas in order to achieve their purpose. While passing from one generation to the next, folktales may gain as well as lose some aspects and they can easily be adapted to different situations through additions and omissions of certain elements. Hence, verbal variability or flexibility could be taken as one of the main characteristics of folktales.

Folktales are also characterized by their unscientific world outlook. In most cases, what folktales are concerned with is unverifiable. There does not seem anything impossible in the world of folktales. Animals can speak, reason, argue for or against and so on. Human beings can fly like birds; they can talk to super natural beings and they can perform everything as they wish. Max Luthi's (1982:76) observation of the folktales further elaborates this notion. "Thus anything is possible in the folktale. Any element is acceptable to it. It is an inclusive form that incorporates the world."

2.2.5 Significance of Folktales

Although folktales are primarily meant for entertainment, they are used for various purposes. The embedded meanings in folktales can play the role of educating the youth about moral codes. They are usually exciting and hence they are popular for entertainment and instruction. With regard to the educational value of folktales, Bernth Lindfors (1977:24) explains, "Even folktales that are regarded as fictitious recognized by Africans as important in the education of children because so many of them have moral values."

Since they are mostly embedded with moral lessons, folktales can help the youth to identify what is good and acceptable code of behavior in a society from what is not. Concerning this, Tesfaye G/Mariam (1990:88) states:

Folktales play the role of carrying moral codes with the goal of educating and maintaining social conventions. They are believed to fulfill men`s dreams and fantasies by playing the curative role for the release of tensions built up due to oppressive social codes and taboos.

Besides moral instruction, people have been using oral literature in general and folktales in particular for various purposes since time immemorial. They have been using them for praising good manners, condemning ill manners, rewarding worthwhile deeds and hailing courage. Folktales can also be used to ridicule corrupt chiefs, social and religious institutions and others directly or indirectly. People have been using folktales for expressing their love, joy, hatred and contempt in one way or another. Folktales are also believed to serve the purpose of maintaining and ensuring the continuity of cultural values.

Suffice it to say that every folktale has something to teach, be it code of conduct, history and any social value of a given society. Through folktales, social values are inculcated in to the minds of children. In general, traditional societies have been using folktales to teach, advise, warn, ridicule, entertain, protest and in short, react to what they encounter in their daily lives.

2.2.6 Reflections and Themes in Folktales

Many folklorists asserted that folktales are the creations of primitive people than contemporary writers. People have been telling narratives since time immemorial so as to achieve a certain purpose in mind, which could be entertainment, moral instruction, and other similar purpose.

Research indicates that there are great deals of images that folktales reflect. Since they are the products of people, folktales can depict or reflect the day-to-day activities and experiences of human beings. They could also reflect human fantasies and the way people perceive the world. According to Luthi (1982) folktales faithfully portray human kind and the way they perceive the world. He further stated that folktales, "in their various modes express not only a variety of universal human needs and attitudes but also a living diversity of epochs, nationalities, landscapes, social strata, and personalities"(P.125).

Folktales can reflect an individual's and community's perception of the world around. As Luthi (1982:125) explains "...when taken as a harmonious group, folktales present an encompassing images of human kind and the animal world". Folktales that have no acceptance by the community in which it is told rarely last long. Hence, the community is using a certain tale means that there is something worth in it that the community needs. According to Oring (1949: 123):

Folk narratives reflect both the individual and the community. They are reflections of the society's and individuals who create and transmit them. The narrator shapes the narratives he recreates in accordance with his own dispositions and circumstances. Yet his creativity is not unlimited. His narrations depend upon a measure of community acceptance. The recreation of a narrative relies upon a negotiation between the narrator and his audience.

In a similar manner, folktales may reflect long traditions and contemporary practices of a certain society. They may depict a society's way of life, attitudes, feelings, perception and other similar affairs. They can also show the relations among human beings and between humans and animals. As Oring (1949:132) says, "Although there exist to day many narratives which can be shown to reflect long traditions of development, innumerable narratives appear as exceedingly contemporary and do not reflect such deep historical roots [only]". Similarly, Courlander (1975) mentioned that folktales and other forms of

folklore are the products of long reflections about the relations among humans, between man and woman and between the human kind and the animal world.

Apart from this, some folklorists state that folktales can reflect class interests and struggles. They say that one can infer from folktales the long-standing struggle between the oppressors and the oppressed, the strong and the weak, the superiors and the inferiors etc. According to Ruth Finnegan (1992), although there are some disagreements among the scholars, folktales can reflect class interests and struggles when seen from Marxist perspectives.

Many scholars assert that folktales have been attracting different disciplines including anthropology, psychology, folklore and literature. Presumably it is because of the multiple images they reflect and meanings they embody that various scholars are interested in them. Regarding their popularity among the various disciplines, Luthi (1982:107) wrote:

The folktale enjoys the attention of a great range of disciplines. ...Folklorists analyze folktales as documents of culture and intellectual history and observe their role in the community. Psychologists take the narratives as an expression of internal mental processes and investigate their influence on listeners or readers. Literary scholars attempt to determine what makes a folktale a folktale; they wish to comprehend the essential art of the genre as well as of individual tale.

As in contemporary fiction, folktales deal with different types of themes. Since they reflect a wide range of human ideas and emotions, themes related with love, hatred, cruelty, deceive, faithfulness, etc are commonly observed in folktales. With regard to this Oring (1949:133) states, "Folk narratives represent themes of violence, hatred, cruelty, racism, prejudice, sexuality, obscenity, and scatology" besides the triumphs of good over evil and injustice, the sacrifices and martyrdoms in the pursuit of righteousness and so on. Similarly, Melakneh Mengistu (1990) while studying the major themes and motifs of Southern Agaw

folktales identified such themes like stubbornness, ambitiousness, tolerance vis-a-vis intolerance, gross imitation, credulity, foolishness, greed and the likes.

2.3 Popular Sayings

2.3.1 Definition and Scope

Under this sub topic attempts have been made to discuss popular sayings and other related terms, such as adages, aphorisms, proverbs and the like.

Various scholars have asserted that a saying is an umbrella term that stands for any pithy expression or utterance. The term, however, like folktales and folklore, seems to have lacked clear-cut definition. However, some literary scholars have made attempts to define the term as follows. According to Harry Shaw (1972:163), a saying is "a general term for any expression or utterance, especially one that reveals a general truth." Similarly, the editors of Webster's New Dictionary of Synonyms (1978:711) define a saying as a "brief, current or habitual expression that may be anonymous, traditional, or attributable to a specific source."

On the other hand, Paul Procter (1995:1260) stated that a saying is a well-known and wise statement that often has a meaning different from the meanings of the words it contains. Wikipedia Encyclopedia also defines the term as "a simple, direct term for any pithy expression of wisdom or truth."

Some literary scholars use the term saying synonymously with such terms like proverbs, saw, motto, epigram, apothegm, adages, aphorisms and maxims. For example, in Webster's New Dictionary of Synonyms (1978), all these terms are mentioned as synonymous and as if they can all denote a sententious expression of a general truth. On the other hand, Harry Shaw (1972) puts the terms as different kinds of sayings, not as synonymously used terms.

In most cases, scholars do not draw much distinction between a saying and a proverb. For instance, Jonathan Crowther (1995), considers both a proverb and a saying as similar terms. Thus, it seems that there are some confusions on

distinguishing a saying from other related terms. Many research works done on related topics do also reveal the difficulty of distinguishing one term from another. For example, Berhanu Mathews (1986:vi) indicates, "It sometimes becomes difficult to differentiate between proverbs, idioms and sayings." Similarly, Coffin and Cohen (1966:141) confirm, "... to distinguish the proverb from the literary aphorism, the popular comparison, the wellerism, the slogan, the conventional phrase and (other sayings) is an extremely difficult task."

Some sayings could reveal careful observations drawn from long experiences and may state general truths, as in proverbs and maxims. Others are merely careless remarks or statements made by a certain group of people and have got popularity because of their recurrent use. For example, the Oromo *mammaksa*:

"Dubartiin beektu hin qabdu, beekaa deessi malee"

<Women have no know-how, they give birth to a knowledgeable man>

is merely a popular saying which does not express universally accepted truth. It seems that it has got popularity and acceptance through long use. Hence, it is difficult to consider the above saying as a proverb, because proverbs usually carry general truths upon careful investigation. "... proverbs involve the perception of general truths, basic associations, and awareness of likeness and difference" (Coffin and Cohen, 1966:141).

As it has been stated above, it is very difficult to draw distinctions among the various forms of sayings. The Oromos do also call all their sayings as '*mammaaksaa*', a term which could be translated literally as a proverb. Regarding this, Claude Sumner (1995) has observed that there is no such distinction between sayings and proverbs among the Oromos.

Some scholars, however, try to show the distinction among the different kinds of sayings. According to Harry Shaw (1972) adages, aphorisms, apothegms, epigrams, maxims, mottos, and proverbs are all the constituents of sayings.

On the basis of authorship, these sayings could be classified in to two categories. These are sayings whose authors are often known and sayings that belong to the whole community or anonymous sayings.

Works done on sayings so far indicate that a saw, a proverb, an adage and a maxim are usually related terms and belong to the authorless group. A motto, an epigram, an aphorism and an apothegm, on the other hand seem to have a person, an institution or a period to which they are attributable (Webster's New Dictionary of Synonyms, 1978).

According to Harry Shaw, (1972) a saw is a "wise saying, a homely but sententious remark." Wikipedia Encyclopedia also defines the term as "an old homely SAYING that is well worn by repetition." In order to illustrate the term, Harry Shaw mentioned the following two examples.

- *"Beauty's but skin deep."*
- *"As you like it."*

An adage is *"a saying that has been popularly accepted over a long period of time."* (ibid). Cuddon (1998) relates the term with a maxim and a proverb. Harry Shaw (1972:6) also defines the term as a "traditional saying expressing a universal observation or experience." He further states that an adage is a "statement given credit by general acceptance and long usage...." (ibid).

An aphorism, according to Cuddon (1998:48), is a "terse statement of truth or dogma; it is a pithy generalization, which may or may not be witty." Harry Shaw (1972:26) also defines the term as "a brief, pithy, unusually concise statement of a principle, truth, or sentiment." Both Cuddon and Shaw emphasize the thought and wisdom in aphorism than its wit, and state that the term is related in meaning with proverbs, maxims, epigrams, adages, and so forth. Here are two examples of aphorisms that Harry Shaw provided in his Dictionary of Literary Terms (1972:26).

- *"Heaven for climate, hell for society"* -Mark Twain
- *"The proper study of mankind is man"* -Pope.

The other related term worth looking is an apothegm. As to Harry Shaw (1972:29) an apothegm is a "terse remark, pithy comment (and) instructive saying." Cuddon (1998) also defines the term in a similar manner as "a terse, pithy saying- akin to a proverb, maxim and aphorism." In order to illustrate the term, Cuddon forwarded the following example.

- *Hope is a good breakfast, but it is a bad supper.*

A maxim is another term which usually poses confusion with a saying and other related terms. Webster's New Dictionary of Synonyms (1978:711) defines a maxim as a term which "offers a general truth, fundamental principle, or rule of conduct often in the form of a proverb". In a similar manner Wikipedia Encyclopedia defines the term as a " general principle drawn from practical experience and serving as a rule of conduct." A good example provided by this site is "Practice what you preach." Cuddon (1998) distinguishes the term from an aphorism and relates it with a pensee, which is a thought or reflection of individuals usually put in literary forms. With regard to this, Cuddon (1998:499) explains:

A maxim is a proposition, often barely distinguishable from an aphorism and closely related to a pensee, which consists of a pithy, succinct statement (usually a sentence or two, though it may run to more) which contains a precept or general truth about human nature and human conduct.

A very closely related term with a maxim is a motto, which is usually used as "a guiding principle or an ideal of behavior." According to Cuddon (1998:522) a motto is a short sentence or phrase adopted as a representative of a person or family. Similarly, Webster's New Dictionary of Synonyms (1978) explains the term as follows. "A motto is usually a maxim or moral aphorism adopted by a person, a society, or an institution used as a guiding principle or a statement of an aim or ideal."

Another term worth briefing with a saying is an epigram. According to Wikipedia Encyclopedia an epigram is "a terse, witty, pointed statement that often has a clever twist of thought." Harry Shaw (1972:138) also defines it as a

“witty, ingenious, and pointed saying that is expressed tersely.” As to Cuddon an epigram is “a short, witty statement in verse or prose which may be complimentary, satiric or aphoristic.”

Generally speaking although some scholars have tried to explain the terms above differently, it seems too difficult to show clear-cut borderlines between the terms. Yet, it can be said that there are some similarities and differences between sayings, proverbs and other kinds of expressions. In this paper, the term saying is taken as a well-known expression or phrase that could embrace proverbs, adages, aphorisms, saws and so on. In other words, a saying could be described as a universal set under which subsets like proverbs, adages, aphorisms and the like are found.

2.3.2 Proverbs

A proverb is the most widely used term vis-à-vis a saying. Many people usually use a proverb instead of a saying and other terms with similar connotations. The Oromos exclusively and collectively use “mammaksa”, a term which could be literally translated as a proverb, for all kinds of sayings, be it adage, aphorism, saw, epigram and so forth. Regarding this Claude Sumner (1995:43) confirms, “In Oromo language, there is but one word to cover sayings, proverbs and maxims-mammaksa.” In this paper, it should be noted that not all Oromo “mammaaksa” is a proverb, because there are some Oromo ‘mammaksaa’s that do not comply with what some literary scholars have said about proverbs.

Even though defining a proverb is beyond the scope of this paper, let us begin with what some literary scholars have said. A proverb, according to Cuddon (1998:706) is “a short pithy saying which embodies a general truth.” Here a “mammaaksa” is of course, a short pithy saying but some mammaksaa’s do not embody a general truth. For example, in whatsoever context it is used, the

following Oromo *mammaksa* does not logically bear any truth in it except revealing the patriarchy of the society.

"Dubartiin mana ofiishee hin qabdu, mana dhirsu bultu malee."

<A woman has no home of her own; she stays in her husband's home>

To Roger D. Abrahams as put in Dorson (1972) proverbs are short and witty traditional expressions that arise as part of every day discourse as well as in the more highly structured situations of education and judicial proceedings. To Miguel de Cervantes as quoted by Berhanu Mathews (1986:ii) "*Proverbs are short sentences drawn from long experiences.*" Similarly to Ruth Finnegan (1970:393) a proverb is "*a saying in more or less fixed form marked by shortness, sense and salt and distinguished by the popular acceptance of the truth tersely expressed in it.*"

The more elaborate definition of a proverb seems to have been forwarded by Borua (1962:x) which says, "They (proverbs) are the observations and expressions in a concise but pregnant form of the common man, which consists of truth, founded on long experiences in different spheres of the life around."

According to Coffin and Cohen (1966) proverbs have long literary and folk traditions with an amazing ability to remain constant in form over great periods of time. They are said to occur frequently in everyday conversation and "*in oratory to embellish, conceal and hint.*" (Finnegan, 1970:391).

Many scholars have asserted that proverbs play a considerable role in traditional legal cases and in educating a society like folktales. They are also believed to 'maintain group attitudes' since they bear moral and ethical elements of a given society. With regard to this Coffin and Cohen (1966:141) state:

Among the primitive groups they (proverbs) may serve as the major ethical, educational, and legal guides, and even in a highly industrial nation they have a great deal to do with the maintenance of group attitudes.

Research indicates that unlike riddles, proverbs have no special occasion for their use. As Owomoyela (1979) explains, the universal popularity of proverbs largely depends on their employment in all spheres of discourse. Hence, it can be said that they could be used in every day-to-day communications at any time. Above all, they are believed to render variety to every day speech.

They are mostly amusing and effective in persuading individuals, and usually considered as 'diplomatic phrases'. Since they normally refer to past experiences, they can easily settle down disputes among individuals by stating that there is nothing special about the issue.

To sum up, proverbs could be described as pithy sayings that are expressed with "terseness and charm". People have been using them to convey moral values, diligences, and other codes of behavior; and to ridicule laziness, stubbornness, immorality, selfishness and other unacceptable and wicked behaviors among a society.

2.4 Some Features of Oromo Folktales and Sayings

The Oromos have a great variety of folklore forms. Some of these folklore genres include tales of different kinds like myths, fables, legends, fairy tales etc collectively known as 'durduri's or 'oduu durii', proverbs and sayings, together called as mammaaksa, riddles (ibboo), folksongs (sirba aadaa), nursery rhymes (urursaa), religious songs (faaruu amantii) and so on. Thus, the Oromos have been transferring their age-old social values, beliefs, wisdom and in general all aspects of their culture and religion through their oral literature since time immemorial.

With very slight differences, mainly dialectical, the Oromos all over the country share the same language and various forms of folklore. Thus, it can be said that the Oromos have a common folklore and language that identifies them from other nations. Concerning this Mengesha Rikitu (1992:12) illustrates:

The rich Oromo folklore, oral tradition, music, art and particularly proverbs and sayings have given this nation a sense of identity and common heritage. It becomes the way they see, understand, interpret the world and express their beliefs and values about it.

The Oromos call folktales as 'durduri's. As it has been stated above, 'durdurii' stands for all kinds of tales including myths, legends, fables, fairy tales and so on. In most cases, the 'durdurii's and 'mammaaksa's (folktales and proverbs) are told by elders to children for various purposes; yet there are many cases in which adults utilize 'durdurii's among them selves. They are mostly situational and usually not time and place bound. The 'durdurii's are predominantly narrated by male elders to children or adults. It is not common to see women and children narrating the 'durdurii's to each other. It is also very rare to see the 'durdurii's being narrated by women to children.

The characters in Oromo folktales mainly consist of wild and domestic animals, human beings and supernatural beings. Predominantly the trickster animal around East Wollega is an ape, locally known as 'hilluu'. With its wit and technique, 'hilluu' is usually observed in Oromo folktales challenging and gaining victory over such fierce and powerful animals like lions. Almost all the tales and proverbs used among the Oromos are usually attributed to the society who had lived in older times, and no one has ever been observed claiming the right of authorship.

Among the various forms of folklore, the Oromo children frequently play a riddle, which is called 'Tbboo', at night with each other, being supported by their elders. Long ago, children used to play riddles only at night, although it has become common to see them playing riddles <lbboo> during day times now days especially at school. Traditionally they used to believe that if one plays riddles at day times, he/she will bear or grow a tail like animals, and hence, for

fear of growing a tail, they play riddles solely at night. Adults and elders rarely involve in riddling except to support their children perform well.

Likewise, proverbs or 'mammaaksa' are mainly used by elders and adults in every discourse. As in many traditional societies, the Oromo children do not usually use proverbs ('mammaaksa' s) in their day-to-day conversations. As in any other proverbs, the Oromo 'mammaaksa's or proverbs occur frequently in every conversation and speech to divert attention, to strengthen idea, to value or reject opinions, etc. They have no specialized occasions for their use; they could be used in the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of any conversation. Similar to any other nation, the Oromos use proverbs or 'mammaaksa's to empower, enliven, and sweeten their speech which complies with the Nigerian saying- *Proverbs are the palm oil with which words are eaten*- The Oromos do also say "mammaaksi dubbii mi'eessa" which means ' proverbs sweeten speech.'

As it is known, folklore plays a vital role in the lives of a society in which it exists. The Oromos have been using tales or 'durduri's as a tool to teach their children every aspect of life: to ridicule wrong doings, to praise worthwhile deeds, to condemn evil and perverse attitudes, to state moral, to settle disputes, and the like. Some typical motifs and themes that recur in several folktales of traditional societies like love and hatred, cheating and faithfulness, marriage and divorce, cruelty and humbleness, honesty and dishonesty etc are also abundantly available in Oromo folktales or 'durduri's.

Like the folktales and proverbs of any people, the Oromo 'durdurii's and 'mammaaksa's express their philosophy, way of life, attitude, code of conduct (both ethical and moral codes) and so on. They can provide information on the customs, habits, religious beliefs and all other aspects of their culture. As Claude Sumner (1996:202) states, "The Oromo social background, of animal husbandry, warfare and religion in particular, has deeply marked the folktale." According to

him "the system of values is also inherent to them" ('durdurii's) and he particularly mentions the very "prevalence of the moral concern" (ibid).

In a similar manner, peoples' traditional beliefs and day-to-day activities can be depicted and realized through proverbs. As Taddese Jaleta observes (2004: 62), "[The Oromo proverbs or 'mammaaksa's] transmit customary actions and beliefs of the older generation to the younger ones. They widely portray the diversified aspects of prevailing customary practices, attitudes and beliefs."

To sum up, the Oromo folktales do exhibit some universal features of oral literature in general and folktales in particular like the prevalence of trickster animals, absence of concrete setting in the stories, cumulative creativity (anonymity), simplicity of plots, and the manifestation of unscientific world outlook and so on. On the whole, Oromo 'durduri's and 'mammaaksa's (folktales and proverbs or more properly popular sayings) could be said that they are cultural elements which are concerned with both universal and local incidents, traditions, customs, values, norms and other aspects of the society.

CHAPTER THREE

The Portrayal of Women in Some Folktales and Popular Sayings of the Oromo of East Wollega

In this chapter, an attempt has been made to identify and analyze some images of women embedded in the folktales and popular sayings selected for the purpose of this study. As the title depicts, the main objective of this study is not to identify the themes or functions of the tales and sayings. The study only focuses on how women are portrayed in the tales and sayings through descriptive and contextual analysis. In this section, the comprehensive term, *saying* is repeatedly used to denote all pithy expressions that the Oromos collectively call “mammaaksaa”, including proverbs and other short phrases.

3.1. Tales and Sayings that Portray Women Positively

3.1.1. Women as Tactful and Wise People

To begin with the definition of its root word, tact is a word used to refer to a skill employed by people “to create a favorable impression by saying or doing the right thing (Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, 1995). Tactful is an adjective used to describe a person who has or who shows tact. Similarly, wise is an adjective used to describe a person who possesses and shows “good judgment based on knowledge and experience” (ibid).

A person who is tactful and wise is usually admired unlike a foolish and unwise person. Tactful and wise people are admired, respected and have popular acceptance among the Oromo of East Wollega. It is believed that a wise and tactful person can escape from danger and can also help others to escape using the tactics and the knowledge he/she is endowed with. This is what is observed in some folktales collected from East Wollega zone. As we shall see

below, some women characters in the tales selected for analysis are depicted as tactful and wise.

For example, the women in tale 1 (The old Lady, a monkey and a hyena), is portrayed as a wise person. As the tale has it, the monkey and the hyena intimidated the lady not to speak in favor of the other. The hyena warned her that she would lose her cattle in case she supports the monkey; similarly, the monkey told her that he would destroy her cereals and crops in the field if she holds with the hyena. The lady acted wisely and told them to come the next day for the decision. On the next day, she told both of them that they are as beautiful as their fathers. Meanwhile, both the monkey and the hyena left her without touching her property. In this tale, one can say that the woman is portrayed positively as wise and tactful.

In a similar manner, the woman in tale 20 (The Poor Couple) is portrayed as tactful, although she cheated the farmer. Basically, cheating is not considered as a good quality of human being. What is worth considering here is that the farmer is so rich and the couple is leaving the country having lost anything to be eaten. Therefore, taking only one of the oxen is admirable irrespective of the fact that the farmer has lost his property. So, the image of the woman here is half positive; she is depicted as tactful, with a slight embedded cheating image.

Furthermore, the girl in "The Wise Girl's" tale is portrayed as tactful and wise. While her husband required her to give birth to a son overnight, she requested him to sow, harvest, winnow, grind and make porridge the same night.

There are also few sayings that witness or depict that women are tactful. As one of my informants said, "when a husband is confused on what to do, he is sometimes advised to ask his wife for a tactic". Women are sometimes believed

to be more tactful than men among the Oromo of East Wollega. The following two popular sayings can substantiate this idea.

- Dabartiin mala hin dhabdu.
< Women never lack a tactic> ¹
- Dubartiin mala hin wallaaltu.
< Women are not ignorant of tactics> ²

Hence, as it has been discussed above, in both the folktales and popular sayings of the Oromo of East Wollega selected for analysis, there is an impression that women have a tactful and wise image.

3.2 Women as Lovable, Tolerant and Generous

Unlike some derogatory adjectives that we shall see in detail below, lovable is used to describe somebody or something that can easily be loved. Among the Oromo of East Wollega, it is considered a big curse to be hated by people so far as living on the surface of the earth. The elders curse a naughty person by saying:

- Waaqaafi lafarratti jibbami.
<Be hated on the land and the sky> ³

So, it is quite interesting and really a big blessing for one to be loved easily by others especially for human beings.

In East Wollega, it is widely said that the Oromo men like three D's, namely:

- Damma <honey>
- Dubartii <women>
- Daadhii <mead> ⁴

In this case, women are depicted as lovable together with honey and mead, which is really so interesting and encouraging for women.

In addition to this, there is a popular saying in which one's wife is considered as someone who is better than anybody else among the Oromo of East Wollega. It says:

- Lafti lafa caalu lafa gabaati,
Fardi farada caalu farada baraaati,
Namni nama caalu haadha manaati.

< A place better than any other place is the market place >

<A horse better than any other horse is the horse of the year>

<A person better than any other person is the wife> ⁵

According to my informant, the society deems the market place as the place where one can find everything that may not be available in another place. The horse of a day (strong) is also deemed as so important that can take one where he/she needs in a short period of time. Similarly, a wife is considered as a person with whom one shares his problems and happiness. Thus, the above saying portrays a woman, particularly one's wife as the most important person that deserves respect.

Moreover, something that is loveable is hardly exchanged or lent for another person. It is either kept for ornamentation or used privately. As some sayings depict the Oromo of East Wollega also seem to love women, especially their wives more than anybody else. For example, it is widely said:

- Niitii fi eeboo hin ergisan.
<One never lends a wife and a spear> ⁶
- Qotiyyoo malee niitii walii hin ergisan.
< One never lends a wife but oxen> ⁷

Here, 'eeboo' <spear> is an instrument used as a weapon to protect oneself or one's territory from enemies in the area. Lending a spear, hence, means that exposing oneself to enemies and opening the door for outsiders. Hence, a spear is not lent; likewise, one never lends his wife to another person. On the other hand, one can lend his oxen so as to help the other person plough

his/her land. However, it is unthinkable to lend one's wife. Thus, the two sayings portray women positively as adorable and not as a material to be lent.

Furthermore, there are few sayings that depict women positively, especially wives as lovable, no matter how weak, poor, or abandoned they are. For example, it is said:

- Surree hin afatan, niitii hin hamatan.
<One never spreads trousers to sleep on and backbites a wife> ⁸
- Surre fi niitii wajjin kufu.
<One falls together with trousers and a wife> ⁹
- Mana onaa mannaa niitii ontuu wayyaa.
<An abandoned wife is better than an empty house> ¹⁰

Backbiting is considered as a bad habit; thus, let alone one's wife, the tradition does not allow one to speak about the wrongdoings of someone in the absence of that person. The second saying also bears the impression that a wife is a kind of woman that one never ignores in times of difficulties. Similarly, the third saying carries the image that it is rather better to have a wife, no matter how neglected she is than living alone in an empty house.

Moreover, there is a saying that compares a wife with clothing, which is one of the basic necessities for living. It reads:

- Niitii gaariin dhirsaaaf kafana
<A good wife is clothing for a husband> ¹¹

In one way or another, the above sayings portray women, specifically one's wife positively as if they are lovable.

There are still other sayings that depict women, particularly mothers, positively as lovable, generous, and tolerant. Usually mothers have positive image in every society. It seems a universal human behavior to love one's mother. Most sayings collected from the study area do also reflect that mothers are loved in the society. For instance, all the following sayings imply that people love their mothers whoever she is and whatever she does.

- Dheebuun duumessaa keessaa fi badiin haadhaa namatti hin dhagahamu
<One never feels the fault of a mother and thirsty on a cloudy day> ¹²
- Haadha dhabuu mannaa haadha dhabduu wayya.
<It is better to have a poor mother than miss her> ¹³
- Haati dhabduu hin qabdu.
<There is no poor mother> ¹⁴
- Hamtuu haadha ofii amaatiin hin jijjiiran.
< Even a harsh mother is never exchanged to the mother- in- law> ¹⁵

Here, all the sayings imply that there is not anyone who hates his/her mother no matter how poor and harsh she is. Below are also other sayings that carry positive image of one's mother.

- Haati harma malee harka hin guutu.
< A mother's hand never dries, but her breast> ¹⁶

Here, the saying implies that mothers are generous and always extend their hands for their offspring. It says, mothers' breast may dry up and stop giving milk; however, their hands never stop providing things that can help their offspring.

Among members of a family, mothers do also seem to have a good image. As the following saying depicts, mothers are compared with one of the most important member of a house, a pillar. It says:

- Haati utubaa manaati.
< A Mother is the pillar of a house > ¹⁷

As it is known, a pillar is an essential part of a house, especially in traditional huts, that supports the entire house. Likewise, a mother is considered as the most important member of a family, who maintains the homestead.

Below is also a saying that depicts a mother as tolerant. It says:

- Haadhaafi lafatu nama danda'a.
< A mother and a land can tolerate everything > ¹⁸

To be tolerant is one of the good qualities of a person. Thus, in this saying, a mother is portrayed positively as having that good quality.

In a tale entitled 'The Barren step mother', the mother of the lost children is also depicted as tolerant. She tolerated all the hardships (problems) her husband and his other wife had been posing to her until her children returned home after a long period of time.

In general, it is possible to say that there are few sayings that portray women, particularly one's wife and mother positively as if they possess such good qualities as generosity and tolerance. Besides, there are few sayings in which women (wives and mothers only) are depicted as somebody that deserve love and respect.

3.2 Tales and Sayings which Portray Women Negatively

3.2.1. Women as Adulterous and Unfaithful

To begin with, it is not a norm to commit adultery and to be unfaithful to a partner among the Oromo of East Wollega. The society highly condemns such kind of deeds and those individuals who commit adultery are usually disrespected and degraded. Especially among the married couples, adultery and unfaithfulness result in divorce and unnecessary loss of life. Now, let us try to see how women have been portrayed as adulterous and unfaithful in some folktales and popular sayings of the Oromo of East Wollega.

Some of the tales and popular sayings of the Oromo of East Wollega portray women as adulterous and unfaithful either directly or indirectly. These images of women are mainly observed among those who are married and have husbands. As some tales and sayings depict, women (including the wives of priests, lords, local chiefs, farmers and so on) have normally one or more lovers with whom they make sexual intercourse in the absence of their husbands.



For example, in tale 6 (The Dwarf and the Wife of the Lord), one could see how the wife of the lord urges the dwarf to make sexual intercourse with her. Here, the dwarf is not at equal status with the wife of the lord; he is a mere servant in her home. This shows that the woman under focus fails to be selective when she wants to have sex with another person. Presumably, she wanted to sleep with the dwarf because of the fact that she could not find any lover around like some women characterized in other tales we will see below. As some popular sayings in the area also indicate, women aspire to have lovers and cannot get them easily. One of such a saying runs as follows:

- ‘Yoo dhirsi argames sanyoon rakkoodha’ jette intalli jedhan.
< ‘Even if a husband is found, it is a problem to find a lover,’ said
the girl> ¹⁹

This saying is indicative of the fact that some women begin to think about a lover before marriage. It seems that some women worry not only about obtaining a good husband before marriage but also a good lover beneath the would-be husband. Thus, it may be having lost any other alternative that the wife of the lord mentioned above wanted to sleep with the dwarf.

Similarity in tale 7 (The Wife of the Priest), the woman is portrayed as if she is not faithful to her husband. According to the tale, she facilitated preconditions for her lover to come and sleep with her early in the morning when her husband would go to church to pray. It seems that she thought of a trick in advance to send her husband to the church and make the home free for her lover. The tale does not say anything about her lover of trying to seduce her. What is stated in the tale is that she has a lover whom she appointed to come early in the morning when her husband leaves for church. Besides committing adultery, the woman in the tale does also seem to adore her lover more than her husband. The tale narrates that she was making porridge for her lover when her husband arrived. Usually, in the area, porridge is not made for any layman; it is made for a respected guest or for one’s husband only. Thus, the woman in the

tale is considering her lover as her second and secret husband. She also made her husband slaughter a sheep and she fed both of them.

In addition to these tales, tale 8 (The Unfaithful Woman) also narrates about a woman who had three lovers besides her husband. In this tale, the woman appointed three of her lovers at different times within a single day, having made advantage of the absence of her husband at home. When seen intensively, the tale, of course, seems to have been created to condemn such kind of unnecessary deeds that the society hates. The embedded image of the woman in the tale is, however, blurred and may lead one not to trust any woman since it purely portrays women as adulterous and unfaithful.

In a similar manner, tale 10 (The Old Man and His Wife) narrates about a woman who had a secret lover. One can clearly see in the tale how the lady facilitated conditions for her lover to come and stay the whole night with her. According to the tale, the wife lied to her husband that she was sick and required him to go to a far place and search for the excrement of a lion that would heal her. Here, the tale clearly depicts the woman as if she thinks about a lover even in the presence of her husband. In this case, one can say that she is either bored with her husband or has a strong sexual desire that her husband could not fulfill for her, though there is nothing stated in the tale that talks about the weakness of her husband in failing to fulfill her desires. The tale also carries the impression that it is customary to have more than one sexual partner for a woman.

In tale 17 (Discuss Together) too, one can clearly observe how the woman facilitated conditions for her lover so that he visits her frequently. In this tale, the woman forced her husband to go to her lover's house and borrow some money purposefully. She devised this strategy so that her lover would frequently visit her under the pretext of asking for the money he lent them. This woman seems to be good at planning for trick. The strategy she used may enable her to have sex with her lover for a certain period of time in the future without being suspected by her husband. Even if he sees the lover at home, the husband may not suspect

him, because his attention will undoubtedly fall on the money he borrowed from him. Thus, the husband has no right to forbid his wife's lover not to come to his home as far as he could not return the money he borrowed from him. The woman under focus, thus, seems to have devised such a hidden and not easily detectable plot having thought over it carefully so as to make her lover visit her recurrently and fulfill her sexual desires.

Another tale in which a woman is portrayed as adulterous and unfaithful to her husband is the one entitled as 'The Unfortunate Lover'. Here, the wife has a lover whom she loves more than her husband. She prepares meal and feeds her lover while her husband passes most of his time in the work field with empty stomach. She is portrayed in the tale as such a lazy woman who does not care anything about her husband and future life. The tale clearly shows how much she adores her lover than her husband. She became very much happy when she heard that her husband was blind, and immediately called her lover and congratulated him. Unfortunately her lover was killed in the hands of the husband and she escaped and left her house once and for all. The society in the area has a saying in which they address such kind of woman.

- Dubartii beektuun manashee ijaarti, wallaaltuun manashee diigdi.

<A knowledgeable woman builds her house, and the ignorant demolishes it> ²⁰

According to my informant, a knowledgeable woman is the one who is faithful to her husband and clever at work. If a wife is not faithful to her husband and does not care anything about her future life, it is inevitable that the husband divorces her and marries another woman. Such a woman is usually considered as an ignorant person who disturbs her life by her self and demolishes her house unlike the knowledgeable one.

The woman in the tale entitled as 'The Burnt Lover' is also portrayed as adulterous and unfaithful to her husband. Besides committing adultery, she

made her husband slaughter his only ox to feed her lover a beef. Here, one can easily infer that she is not far sighted; she is portrayed as a kind of woman who lives only for a day. She does not seem to have thought about the future or the consequence of slaughtering the only ox they have. The only thing in her mind seems that she wanted to free the home by sending her husband to the market so that she can make her lover enjoy the beef and the day with her. Thus, regardless of the moral value wanted to be conveyed in the tale, the woman is portrayed as adulterous, unfaithful and short sighted.

The embedded image of the woman in the tale entitled as 'The Blind Man and His Wife' does not also seem good. The woman is portrayed as adulterous and extremely unfaithful. According to the tale, she took advantage of the blindness of her husband and began to live with her lovers. It seems that she lives with her blind husband for a special purpose; presumably, she wanted to inherit his property upon his death since he was very rich, or she thought that she can do whatever she needs since he was a disabled person. She became very happy when he told her that he decided to kill himself. She had not shown any sympathy for him; she rather wanted him to hang himself shortly. It may be for such a kind of lady that the Oromo of East Wollega use the sayings:

- Sanyoo argattee dhirsa jibbite.

<Hated a husband having obtained a lover > ²¹

- Reefuu tota jette niitin dhirsi duunaan, saynoo isheetiin.

<'It is more convenient now', the woman said to her lover up on her husband's death> ²²

These two popular sayings may be indicative of the fact that women value their lovers more than their husbands. As it is self explanatory, the woman in the first saying hated her husband after she obtained a lover whom she had been longing for, and in the second saying the woman had been living with her lover secretly and had expressed her happiness when he died.

The mother and the daughter in the tale entitled 'The Girl and Her Mother's Lover' are also portrayed negatively. The tale narrates how the daughter deceived both her mother and her (mother's) lover and committed adultery. The tale blurs both the image of the girl and her mother. For one thing, it shows that her mother has a lover beneath her husband, which is hated among the society under focus. Hence, the tale portrays the woman as unfaithful and adulterous. Secondly, since it is not a norm for a girl to make sex with someone who had sexual affair with her mother before, it can also portray her as adulterous and deceiver.

There are some proverbs and sayings from the area that go in line with this tale and substantiate the message.

- Haadha ilaalanii intala fuudhu.
<One scrutinizes the mother before asking the daughter for marriage> ²³
- Hantuutni gumbii uraa haadha jalatti barti.
<A young rat learns how to puncture a granary from her mother> ²⁴
- Kan haati booqaa qabdu ilmoon balaccuu hin dhabdu.
<A daughter never misses the white spot her mother possesses> ²⁵
- Amalli haadha intala hin hanqatu
<A mother's behavior never fails to reach her daughter> ²⁶

These four sayings or proverbs bear a similar message with the tale raised above. They pinpoint that if a mother is good, the daughter will also be good; if a mother has a limitation, the daughter will also never lack a limitation. The sayings altogether do not talk about the role and place of a husband in bringing up the children especially daughters. Thus, the image of a man seems neutral when compared with the image of women in the sayings. If a husband is not a good person, there is no indication in which the offspring is not good, too. According to the sayings, whatever conduct, limitation and strength the husband possesses, the society hardly considers the influence from his side. Presumably, this is because of the fact that unlike mothers, fathers in the area usually pass

little time with their daughters. Since there exists clear labor division among the society in the area gender wise, the daughters learn every thing from their mothers, not fathers.

On the other hand, the male offspring are believed to inherit their father's conduct; so, when seen from the point of view of labor division and the society's background, the sayings seem to have an element of truth in them. However, women in the sayings do not seem to have been portrayed positively because a daughter whose mother has a bad conduct may not necessarily inherit that bad conduct.

Furthermore, there are a number of proverbs and sayings in which women have been portrayed as adulterous and unfaithful to their husbands among the people under focus. For instance,

- Niitii fi qawween kan abbaa bira jiruuti.

<A wife and a gun belongs to the nearby person> ²⁷

This popular saying can easily substantiate the image of women raised in the aforementioned tales. As the saying indicates if a husband is not around, most women need another person with whom they make sexual intercourse. According to my informant, "If two persons fight each other close to a gun lying on the ground, the one nearby may take and shoot at the other; similarly, if a husband is not at home, the wife no more belongs to him."

The following proverb from the area also bears the impression that women have extra sexual partner besides their husbands.

- Abbaa mucaa haadha malee namni hin beeku.

<No one knows the father of a child except the mother> ²⁸

Here, the saying clearly depicts that women are not honest and trustworthy. It indicates that women may make sexual intercourse with another person and get pregnant even though they have husbands. Thus, according to the saying, a husband may not necessarily be the real father of the children born from his wife.

Suffice it to say that, from what has been discussed so far, one can deduce that in some tales and sayings of the Oromo of East Wollega, women seem to have a distorted image. They are portrayed as deceitful, adulterous and unfaithful creatures who give priority for their sexual gratification.

3.2.2. Women as Ignorant and shortsighted

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (1995) defines ignorant as an adjective used to describe a person who lacks education, knowledge and information for doing something. Similarly, it defines shortsighted as an adjective used to show the lack of thought for what is likely to happen in the future.

Some tales and proverbs of the Oromo of East Wollega portray women as ignorant and shortsighted persons. For instance, in the tale entitled, 'A silly Mistake' the wife is portrayed as more ignorant and shortsighted than her husband. As the tale shows the woman thought that the meal she prepared was completely eaten by the flies she saw on the cooker, while her husband insisted that it was eaten by the three men they had come across on the road before. The husband was portrayed as a person who thinks better than his wife. The woman she called for help from the neighbor is also depicted as thoughtless and shortsighted. Had she been portrayed as thoughtful, knowledgeable and far-sighted, she would not have attempted to hit the fly on the nose of the wife with an axe.

As the tale narrates, the unfortunate wife lost everything: her meal, her utensils and her life at the end. In short, in this particular tale, the two women characters are portrayed as ignorant and shortsighted while the man is depicted as slightly better than them. Although the main aim of the tale seems to state that ignorance leads to destruction it distorted the image of the women in the tale by portraying them negatively.

A number of popular sayings collected from the area under focus do also portray women as ignorant and shortsighted. Some of these sayings that bear the same image of women as in the tale above are as follows:

- Dubartiin beekumsa hin qabdu, beekaa deessii malee.
<Women have no knowledge, but give birth to a knowledgeable person> ²⁹
- Beekumsi dubartii akka fincaanshee jala yaa'a.
<A woman's knowledge flows under like her urine> ³⁰
- Beekumsi dubartii fi karaan jaldeessaa bowwaa nama buusa.
<A woman's knowledge and the road of a monkey lead one to gorge> ³¹
- Beekumsi dubartii gomjiirra hin darbu.
<The knowledge of a woman does not go beyond a stove> ³²
- Dubartiin dheertuu malee beektuu hin qabdu.
<There never exist a knowledgeable but a tall woman> ³³
- Hin bari'u seetee udaan manatti hagde.
<She thought the night will never end and defecated at homes> ³⁴
- 'Dhirsaa koon miidha' jette niitiin goondaarra teessee.
<'I (want to) hurt my husband,' the woman said sitting on the colony of ants> ³⁵

Here, in all the sayings, the patriarchal society in East Wollega seems to have undermined and neglected the knowledge of women since time immemorial. They seem to have been using such kinds of sayings to maintain patriarchy and limit women's role in the society in every sphere of life. According to Abraham Alemu (2007) these kinds of sayings are mainly used as an ideological weapon for subordinating women and to show their inferiority to men.

Surprisingly, one hardly finds a proverb that depicts a man as ignorant and unwise among the Oromo of East Wollega. Almost all the sayings depict women as thoughtless, ignorant unwise, irrational, shortsighted and

untrustworthy. Hence, one can easily see how the image of women is distorted in the folktales and popular sayings of the Oromo of East Wollega.

As they clearly show proverbs numbered 29, 32, and 33 above consider women as people lacking knowledge in birth while implying that men are more knowledgeable. Thus the proverbs may diminish women and restrict their acceptance in the society. Similarly, proverbs number 30 and 31 neglect women's knowledge and distort their image by comparing with the flow of urine and the road of a monkey. Urine is useless; it's a waste matter discharged from the body; and the road of a monkey merely leads one to the gorge or valley where the society deems unimportant places. "Likewise," according to my informant, "woman may possess little knowledge, not so much worth and if one accepts and follows it, he/she will be taken to a wrong destination." The proverbs, thus, portray women as ignorant and as people whose knowledge is not trustworthy.

By the same token, proverbs numbered 34 and 35 portray women as someone unable to visualize what will happen next and identify the harmful from the useful. In other words, the proverbs depict the women as shortsighted and totally ignorant individuals.

'The Woman and the Dead Tiger' is another tale in which the woman character is portrayed as ignorant. The woman in this tale was depicted as someone who cannot identify a dead from a living. As the tale says she threw a stone at a dead tiger and hit it and thought that she killed a living tiger. She had not, even, suspected that the tiger was dead from the beginning as she was depicted in the tale. The tale, of course, seems to imply that an ignorant person does not know what to do. However, the image of the woman in it was distorted; at least, she should have been made to think a little and escape from the living tiger which devoured her later.

Besides this tale, the following two popular sayings collected from the area do also portray women as someone who cannot differentiate two things.

- Dubartiitti gaaddidduun duumessa fakkaata.

<A cloud seems a shadow to a woman> ³⁶

- Dubartiin addeessa guyyaa seeti.

< Women assume moonlight a day> ³⁷

These two sayings fully substantiate the image of women embedded in the tale above. As the woman in the tale was depicted as someone who cannot identify a dead tiger from a living one, the women in sayings were depicted as individuals unable to differentiate a cloud from a shadow and moonlight from a day respectively, which implies their ignorance.

3.2.3 Women as Foolish Beings

Foolishness is considered as a universal feature that some people exhibit in every corner of the world. As a matter of fact, there are a number of tales and sayings that depict women as foolish human beings in East Wollega. For example, in the tale entitled "A silly Mistake", besides ignorant, the two women characters in the story could also be described as foolish or silly creatures. For one thing, it is foolish to think that flies eat and finish the whole "ittoo" in the cooker within that short period of time. Secondly, a person who is not foolish does not destroy his or her life and utensils while attempting to kill the flies with an axe. Thus, the two ladies in the tale are portrayed as both ignorant and foolish beings, lacking some qualities that people are endowed with.

'The Cheated Woman' is another folktale in which the woman character is depicted as foolish. As the tale states, as soon as she woke up from sleeping she saw her husband crawling on the ground in the dark room and was easily convinced by his response. In this tale, at least she should have suspected him and asked him why he preferred to teach her sister in the dark while it is possible to do so in the light. Moreover, she should have told him that it is better to teach the child itself when it grows up than teaching her sister in the dark. Thus, the lady in the tale is purely depicted as foolish being, who lacks the mentality to realize such minor tricks.

The woman in the tale entitled 'The Clever Guest and the Mean Couple' also seems to have been portrayed as foolish being besides mean. Unlike the wife, the husband in the tale is not depicted as foolish; his image is relatively neutral except that he is also portrayed as mean. The woman fed the guest having thought that he is her husband. As the tale shows, the woman could not identify the guest from the husband with whom she had lived for a long period of time. As one of my informants said, 'women can easily be fooled and cheated; they lack the ability to think the other way round.' The tale, hence, clearly shows the society's perception of women as narrow-minded and foolish human beings.

Another tale in which the woman is portrayed as a foolish being is the one entitled as 'The Foolish She-Monkey'. In this tale, the monkey is endowed with human qualities and made to speak, think, reason out, work, and so on. Thus, the animal characters in the tale represent human beings: the she-monkey stands for a female human being, woman; and the he-monkey stands for a male human being, man. The woman or the she-monkey is fooled twice in the tale. For one thing, without thinking over it and checking the reality she trusted the he-monkey and followed him through the forest. Secondly, the he-monkey showed her a certain rich man's compound and sent her alone to go and take some food for herself and bring some for him. Hence, one can say, the she-monkey, in this tale, as in the former two tales, is depicted as someone who cannot reason out and as a kind of person who can be cheated easily. Had she been clever, she would have asked the he-monkey to show her his home first before doing anything else. Moreover, it is foolish of her to go alone and try to take food from the compound while he, the owner, watches her from outside. As she is a guest for the area, she should have asked the owner himself to go and bring the food for her. Besides, she should have asked the man, he-monkey, why he preferred to stay out in the forest. In one way or another, the tale depicts how the patriarchal society in East Wollega perceives women and undermine their reasoning capacity.

Some sayings or proverbs collected from the area do also depict women as foolish beings. For example,

- 'Situ fide,' jette jaartiin injiraan ciniintee jedhan.

< "It is you who brought it," the lady said, having bitten a louse> ³⁸

Normally, if they are infected with lice, human beings try to avoid them by keeping (washing) their bodies and clothes clean. Some people, on the other hand, take the lice and throw them out or kill them in between their thumb fingers. It is only a monkey that collects and bites or eats lice. Thus, the woman in the saying is depicted as foolish and is made to bite the louse as monkeys do.

Besides ignorance, the saying that follows clearly portrays the woman as a foolish human being.

- 'Dhirsā koon miidha,' jette niitiin goondaarra teessee.

<'I hurt my husband,' the lady said having sat on the colony of ants> ³⁹

There is no way in which she hurts her husband by sitting on the colony of ants for herself. She is really foolish enough to believe like that; she has not even realized that the ants first hurt herself. So, the saying contains an element of foolishness in it. Similarly, the aforementioned sayings under 'women as ignorant and shortsighted' depict women as foolish and silly. For instance, in a saying which goes: <Women assume moonlight a day>, the women are considered as foolish human beings who are not able to distinguish a cloud from a shadow and moonlight from a day.

Another popular saying in which women are depicted as foolish or silly is the one which says:

- Dubartiin machoofte corroqa qaqqammatti.

<A drunken woman sits near rainwater collected in a ditch to warm herself> ⁴⁰

The patriarchal society in East wollega does not allow women to drink alcohols. Thus, it is shame for a woman to get drunk while it is a norm for men to drink in

the area. It is even believed that it is good for a man to drink alcohol. They say, "Dhiirri biqila malee hin toltu" <A man can never be good without alcohol> when they want to emphasize the importance of drinking alcohol for men. In the saying above, thus, it is possible to say that the society perceives a woman as someone who does not know what to do after drinking. They most probably want to say that women become more foolish when they drink.

Generally, in the tales and sayings collected from East Wollega, women seem to have been portrayed as if they are more foolish or sillier than men. When compared with women, men have relatively better image or have neutral image in both the folktales and popular sayings with regard to foolishness.

3.2.4. Women as Cruel and Unsympathetic

The Oromo of East Wollega highly value a person who is kind and sympathetic to others. This is clearly reflected in some traditional practices of the society. For example, it is highly condemned and considered sinful to kill a person whatever mistake he/she makes. If a person kills someone knowingly or unknowingly, he or she is not allowed to live with the society with that sinful hand. In order to live with the society, it is mandatory for the person to leave the area for a distant place, beg for some days and return with the money and ask for apologies. Begging is considered as shame in the area; it is also considered as worse than death. The society says, "kadhachuu mannaa du'uu wayya" <It is better to die than beg>

The Oromo of East Wollega, hence, have been using a number of tales and sayings that condemn a cruel and an unsympathetic person. However, the characters used in the tales and sayings to reflect cruelty and its consequence are more of women than men. For instance, in the tale entitled 'The Barren Step-Mother' the woman's image does not seem good. She took the offspring of the other woman and mercilessly threw them away in the jungle where there exist

fierce wild animals that eat human beings. She felt jealous of the man's beloved wife and cast the children pitilessly. Hence, although the tale seems to emphasize that it is immoral to do such a thing the woman's image seems to have been distorted and misrepresented.

'The Blind Man and His Wife' is another tale that portrays the woman as cruel and unsympathetic. As the tale says the wife became very happy when her husband told her that he decided to hang himself. She has not even pretended to change his mind not to kill himself. Contrary to this, she hastened to shorten the process and arranged everything for him ruthlessly. Besides being adulterous, the woman in the tale is, hence, depicted as cruel, unsympathetic and pitiless.

As the title itself clearly indicates, the woman in 'The Cruel wife' tale is also portrayed as merciless and cruel. The woman in the tale cut off her husband's neck and brought the head to the chief, while her husband refused to do the same action for getting advantage. The tale plainly indicates that the society attributes cruelty to women. Besides cruelty, the woman is also depicted as shortsighted; her mind seems to have been occupied by what the chief promised her, not on what will happen next. Contrary to the woman, in the tale, the man is represented as if he is farsighted, sympathetic and kind person.

Another tale in which a woman character is depicted as cruel and unsympathetic is the one entitled as 'The Stepmother and the Children'. In this tale, the woman hated the children her husband got from his late wife and required him to ignore them and live with her peacefully. When she realized that her husband has been fooling her, she boiled water and spilled over the children heartlessly.

In East Wollega, it is still believed that a stepmother is not as good as one's truth mother. If the mother of a certain child dies and the step mother takes the responsibility to bring up that child, anything wrong with the child is usually attributed to the stepmother in the area. Thus, it may be because of such kind of

tales that distort the image of stepmothers that children develop negative attitudes towards their stepmothers in the area.

Some sayings gathered from the area do also portray women especially, a stepmother, as cruel and unsympathetic. For example, it is widely said:

- Haati nama hin dhalin nama hin dhahin.
<A mother who did not give birth should never beat> ⁴¹
- Haati hormaa nama hin dhahin.
<The mother of another should never beat> ⁴²

As they obviously state, the sayings reflect that other women, with the exception of one's real mother, do not show any sympathy; they bear the image that other women are cruel and unsympathetic unlike one's mother. They seem to give more value to one's mother only to the neglect of other women.

The following are other sayings that depict women, especially stepmothers as cruel and unsympathetic.

- Gayyaan garaa namaa hin laaftu.
<A step mother never feels pity for the step children> ⁴³
- Gayyaan gaarii hin qabdu.
<A stepmother can never be good> ⁴⁴

As in the above tales and sayings, these two popular sayings do also portray a stepmother negatively. In both sayings, the stepmother's image seems to have been distorted. As a person who has lived and brought up in the society, I feel that stepmothers are not so cruel and pitiless as they are represented in the tales and sayings. The sayings and tales used with stepmothers seem crude generalizations that have got popularity through repetition. One of my informants has also witnessed that stepmothers are not so cruel as the sayings and the tales depict. Yet, he has not denied that people widely use the tales and sayings since they are handed down from generation to generation.

3.2.5 Women as Poor Decision-makers

As any patriarchal society, the Oromo of East Wollega hardly involve women in decision-making. Women are not encouraged to speak publicly and participate in some social gatherings. Let alone this, women do not have full right to decide over the property they own with their husbands. Even now a day, women do not take domestic animals to the market for sale except chicken and other small animals. They are usually seen selling butter, eggs, vegetables, fruits and other materials, which do not cost much money, after they get permission from their husbands. Men, without their consent, however can do everything they want; they can sell oxen, cows, sheep, goats, horse and so on and keep the money in their pocket or drink with it if they need. They can decide alone where to plough, what to sow, when to snow, and what to do with the crops and cereals.

The society perceives that women are inferior to men in every aspect. In the area, it is not recommended to consult women for doing something. The following saying can easily substantiate this perception.

- Namni dubartiin mari'atee fi namni qilleensatti hirkate tokko dha.

< A person consulted with a woman and a person leaned on the air are the same> ⁴⁵

As my informant said, "It is not worth to trust women and share one's idea to them". When he explains the saying he said, "One who tries to lean on the air will inevitably fall and, similarly, one who consults with women will not succeed in his plan."

Hence, in East Wollega, women seem to have very low status in the society when compared with their men counterparts, which seems the direct result of the sum total of some socio-cultural factors (Temesgen, 2003).

This perception of women being poor decision-makers is clearly observed in a number of folktales and popular sayings gathered from the area under focus. For example, in the tale entitled 'Akkoo Maanooyyee' the woman seems to have used her authority unwisely. For one thing, she ordered the people to summon all the elders in her territory and kill them without any convincing reason. In this case, she does not seem to have made a good decision, because there is no reason why all the elders should perish for the mistake of one or two elders, if any. Secondly, her decision of ordering the people to cover the entire land with blue color does not also seem reasonable and a wise decision. Similarly, her ambition to have a house that suspends in the air and a horse that flies in the sky also seem to have been made to make people restless. All her decisions, thus, seem to have been made unwisely, which led her to death at the end. Thus, the woman (Akkoo Maanooyyee) is depicted in the tale as if she is poor at decision-making and as someone who cannot think wisely. She is also portrayed as shortsighted and unreasonable governor.

Women's depiction of incapability in decision-making is more prevalent in the popular sayings than in the folktales. The following is one of the popular sayings that undermine the ability of women in administering.

- Manni dubartiin bulchitu ulfina hin qabu.

< A house administered by a woman has no respect> ⁴⁶

In the area, since it is widely believed that women are inferior to men, no one respects them and their homestead. If there is no husband or any big male offspring at home, the homestead of a woman is hardly respected. The children themselves are not that much afraid of their mothers; they rarely obey what their mothers order them to do. Hence the loss of a husband or absence of a big male offspring at home is considered as a great loss for a woman in East Wollega. The saying above, thus, purely depicts women as inefficient and poor administrators.

Another popular saying in which women are portrayed as poor in decision-making is the one which goes:

- Dubartiin murtii hin beektu.

< Women do not know decision> ⁴⁷

As it is self explanatory, this saying totally neglects women's knowledge in decision-making. As a result of such kind of sayings, women are not usually invited to reconcile people who quarrel in their day-to-day lives. Decision-making is normally left to men or elders among the society in East Wollega, and women's role in decision-making is mostly negligible.

The other popular saying that reflects women's weakness in administration is the one which reads:

- Mootummaan dubartii karra cufaatti oolcha.

< Women's administration leaves the corral closed for the whole day> ⁴⁸

As it has been raised in the introductory part of this paper, the Oromo of East Wollega mainly lead their livelihood by farming and herding cattle. The cattle are kept in the corral around a homestead. Unless one opens the corral and let them out, there is no means of escaping from the corral. Keeping the cattle in the corral for the whole day is just like imprisoning the cattle; it guarantees stability. If they are free, the cattle may destroy cereals and crops from the neighbors, may graze in other person's holdings, and go away from homestead. Although keeping cattle in the corral for the whole day may guarantee stability for a while it may result in destruction at the end. It is a good person who discloses the corral early in the morning and let the cattle graze in the field. The above popular saying, thus, portrays women as if they are not able to make good decisions.

Among the Oromo of East Wollega women are also not expected to dominate their husbands. It is expected of them to accept the superiority of their husbands and live under their guidance. A wife who dominates a husband in the society is not respected; she is usually portrayed as if she does not know what to do. Below are few sayings that depict this image of women.

- Niitiin abbaa warraa moote boohicha farada dhaqxi.

< A wife who dominates a husband goes to the funeral of the

horse> ⁴⁹

- Niitiin dhirsa mootu ganda bulti.

< A wife who dominates a husband stays the night out> ⁵⁰

- Nadheen dhirsa moote mataa namaatti fincoofti.

< A woman who dominates a husband urinates on the head of a person> ⁵¹

In East Wollega, let alone a dead horse, a living old horse it self is not considered worthy. In the area, horses are used only for transportation; their meat is not eaten; they are not skinned for their hides and so on. So no one cares and mourns for the dead horse. The saying above, thus, portrays the woman as if she is doing something not accustomed in the surrounding.

Similarly, by no means are women expected to stay the night out. If they do stay out, it indicates that there is no one who controls them. Staying the night out of home for no reason has a negative connotation. In the popular sayings above, hence, the women are portrayed as if they do not know what to do if they are beyond the control of their husbands.

In general in some tales and sayings of the Oromo of East Wollega, women seem to have been portrayed negatively with regard to decision-making.

3.2.6 Women as Selfish and Greedy

Selfish and greedy are derogatory adjectives used to describe a person who runs to fulfill his/her own desires first without the concern for others. They are mostly used for insulting. Among the Oromo of East Wollega, a selfish and greedy person is usually neglected. The people hardly extend their hand and share problems for such kind of people. They say, "Qofaa nyaattuun qofaa duuti" <A selfish person dies lonely> when they want to state that selfishness is not good. For fear of not being neglected, the people in the area usually share what they have, especially food.

There are a number of tales gathered from the area that condemn selfish and greedy individuals. The characters that are predominantly represented as selfish and greedy in the tales are, however, more of women than men. For example, the woman in the 'The Deceiving Woman' tale is depicted as selfish and greedy, who thinks more for herself than for her husband. As the tale says, the woman always prepares ample porridge and serves little for her husband and saves some for her self to eat later. Moreover, at the end of the story, she required the husband to go out of the home and tried to hide some porridge for later consumption.

'The Clever Guest and the Mean Couple' is another tale in which the woman character is depicted as more selfish than her husband. According to the tale, the wife told the guest that there was nothing to be eaten at home. She, however, told her husband that she would prepare the dinner after the guest sleeps. Thus, the woman in the tale seems to have conspired this to fulfill her and her husband's desire without concern for the guest.

The other tale that portrays a woman as selfish is the one entitled 'The Selfish Wife and Her Silly Husband'. In this tale, the woman is purely depicted as selfish; she always prepares 'shiro' without butter and serves the man while she always eats with butter for herself. Regardless of the message wanted to be conveyed, the woman in the tale seems to have been misrepresented.

The portrayal of women as selfish and greedy is more propagated in the folktales than in the proverbs among the Oromo of East Wollega. As we have seen earlier, contrary to selfish, women, especially real mothers are depicted as generous in the popular sayings. Yet, there are sayings which bear the image that women are selfish. One saying worth mentioning here is the one which says:

- Ofittoon nadheeni kan dhirsaa keessu nyaatti.

<A selfish woman eats what she keeps for her husband> ⁵²

As it has been stated under the introductory section, household chores, especially cooking, grinding, washing etc are exclusively carried out by women in the area. It is considered as shame for a man to cook food for himself while there is a woman at home. So, women usually prepare food and keep for their husbands when they go far away from home. And it is believed that, by no means, what is kept for the husband should never be eaten by anybody else. In the above saying, hence, the woman is portrayed as a selfish person who does not show any concern for her husband.

Besides other jobs, it is the main duty of a woman to cook food and feed the family. The wife is expected to feed her husband properly more than any member of the family. It is widely said:

- “Hamma beektu niitiin dhirsa sorti”

<A wife feeds her husband to the extent she knows> ⁵³ to show that a wife should use her potential to the maximum in order to please her husband, especially with regard to food.

The ability to prepare food is usually considered as one of the criteria used in the selection of women for marriage in the area. A woman with a limitation in preparing food is hardly welcomed and respected. The people in the area also attach more value to a woman's ability in preparing food and they say:

- Dubartii jechuun harka, saree jechuun sagalee dha.

< A woman means her hand and a dog means it sound> ⁵⁴

The 'hand' in this saying represents the woman's ability to prepare food. A dog without voice is not kept at home in the rural areas since it cannot bark and protect the homestead at night. Similarly, a woman without good knowledge for preparing food is hardly respected.

3.2.7 Women as Stubborn

As selfish and greedy, stubborn is a derogatory adjective used to describe a person who hardly changes his/her mind for the good of somebody or something. Stubbornness is not considered as a good quality of a person. The Oromo of East Wollega have been using a number of folktales and sayings that teach people not to become obstinate or stubborn in the course of their life since time immemorial. In order to warn an obstinate or a stubborn person, the elders usually say:

- Hima didduun du'a hin diddu.
< A person who refuses to accept what is being told,
never refuses death> ⁵⁵

This saying is a sort of warning which bears the message that stubbornness leads one to death. A person who seeks advice and accepts what elders tell him/her is usually appreciated and considered as a wise person in the area.

Many tales collected from the area under focus characterize woman with such kind of derogatory adjectives as stubborn. As it is self explanatory, the women in 'The Obstinate Wives' story are clearly depicted as obstinate persons. In this tale, all the women seem to have used false reason not to accept what their husband's required them to do. As the tale says, the one with a single tooth wanted to go and get her gum dyed; the one with a single hair refused to obey her husband's order under the pretext of getting her single hair made; and the one with a single finger wanted to buy a ring for her finger. Basically, the tale seems to ridicule not only obstinacy but also polygamy.

In East Wollega, some people marry more than one woman and there are cases when either of the women act and behave the way they like. In the rural areas, a dominating husband usually marries two women. As one of my informants said it is good to have more than one wife for various reasons. "For one thing, when one of the wives gives birth, the other will do the household

chores, as a husband is not expected to grind, cook, fetch water etc. "Secondly, the husband will enjoy food and sex throughout his life from different wives, as the women compete to please the husband and be loved more than the other." Moreover, it is widely believed that a wife becomes more active when the husband marries another wife over her as the following saying indicates:

- Dubartiin irratti fuudhan malee hin kaatu.

<Women never become active unless one marries over them> ⁵⁶

'Akkoo Maanooyyee's tale is another story which portrays the woman as stubborn. As the tale has it, 'Akkoo Maannooyyee', the queen, refused to accept the elders advice and began to make people restless. She exterminated the elders who used to advice her and began to show her power over the people more than any time. She had been ordering people to build house on the air for her, to cover land with blue color, and at the end she wanted to fly in the sky like a bird with a flying horse. Her life came to end while she was trying to ride on a nervous zebra.

The woman in the 'The Blind Man and His Wife' tale is also depicted as obstinate. Although her husband advised her several times to stop her adulterous deeds, she refused and continued committing adultery. At the end, being angry at her, the man hanged her cunningly. All the three tales raised above convey the message that stubbornness lead one to destruction as the saying stated above <An obstinate never refuses death>.

Some sayings collected from the area also depict women as obstinate creatures. For example, it is widely said:

- Hamii fi jallina dubartii hin gorsan.

< One never advises women to backbite and act against> ⁵⁷

- Dubartii fi jallinni waliin dhalatu.

< Women and obstinacy are born together> ⁵⁸

According to these sayings, women are obstinate by their very nature and good at backbiting. They bear the message that a person who knows how to do something from the very beginning should not be advised on how to do the same thing.

Furthermore, there is a saying which goes:

- Dubartii fi namni duudaan tokko.

<Women and a deaf person are the same> ⁵⁹ to indicate that women do not listen to what they are told. The saying carries the idea that even if they hear, women pretend deaf and refuse to accept things easily or change their mind for the good of others.

In addition to the aforementioned distorted images, the woman in the tale entitled 'Truth, Falsehood and Betrayal' does not also seem to have a good image. Because as the tale says, she bought Betrayal and took to her home while an old man took Truth and preferred to live with it throughout his life. While she has the possibility to opt for Truth, the woman in the tale neglected it and bought Betrayal.

Moreover, the woman in 'The Thief Old Lady' tale is portrayed negatively as a thief, though she used a tactic and escaped from being blamed. Similarly, the woman in 'The Reverted Speech' tale is not represented in a good manner. As the tale says, she farted for herself and wanted the child to say that he farted. Farting in front of other people is usually considered as shame in the area.

In general, all the sayings and folktales cited above do not seem to have portrayed women positively; they all bear a distorted image of woman.

3.2.8 Women as Animals and Materials

Human beings differ from other animals in many ways. But there are many cases in which human beings compare themselves with animals. Some animals have positive images in the eyes of human beings and others often carry

negative images. For example, bees are considered clever and hard working while donkeys are considered dull and lazy among the Oromo of East Wollega.

Most sayings compare women with domestic animals like dogs and donkeys that are not so much loved and respected among the society around. Dogs and donkeys have negative images in the area; they are used mainly for one purpose: the dogs to protect the homestead and crops from enemies, and donkeys only for transportation. Unlike other animals, their meat is not eaten and they are also not skinned for their hides. So, people usually consider these animals as if they are not so much important unlike cows, oxen, sheep, and goats etc, which are used for multipurpose. Here are some sayings that compare women with dogs, donkeys and horses.

- Dubartii fi saree dhaltuun tokko.
< A woman and a bitch are the same> ⁶⁰
- Dubarti fi harreen tokko.
< A woman and a donkey are the same> ⁶¹
- Nadheeni fi fardeen ganama leenjii tolchu.
< Women and horses should be trained well early> ⁶²
- Dubartii fi harreen ulee jaallatti.
< Women and donkeys like a stick (being beaten)> ⁶³
- Beerrii fi fardi waan kennaniif nyaatti.
< A woman and a horse eat what they are given> ⁶⁴
- Dubartii fi harree ba'aatu sirreessa.
< It is a load that corrects a woman and a donkey> ⁶⁵
- Nadheeni fi fardeen galgala baddi.
< Women and horses become useless at old age> ⁶⁶
- Dubarti fi harree uleetu deebisa.
< It is a stick that corrects a woman and a donkey> ⁶⁷

In the above sayings, one can easily see how the society in East Wollega compares women with dogs, horses and donkeys, that they deem are not equal to other animals. It is believed that a woman (wife) whom a husband does not beat and shows his power over her will not show respect for him. This can be substantiated with what one of my informants said. "It is must to beat and control one's wife; unless and otherwise, she does not respect and afraid of him". He added, "your wife should be afraid of you; if you do not want to beat her, you should at least slap her sometimes or speak to her angrily; that time she respects you."

Surprisingly, one of my women informants accepts the idea stated above. According to her, "Dhirsi niitiisaa yeroo tokko tokko hin reebne dhirsaa mitii, niitiidha malee; garuu reebichi akka qaba, daangaa darbuu hin qabu." <A husband who does not beat his wife sometimes is no more a husband; he is a wife for himself; but beating should not go beyond its limit>

The majority of the women I interviewed, however, do not consider beating as one of the means to get respect from their wives. They said, "Dubartii reebuun mallattoo boodatti hafumaati" which means <Beating a woman is a sign of backwardness>

Almost all my male informants, on the other hand, personally agree with the saying that goes 'A donkey and a woman like a stick'. They said, "This saying is widely accepted and practiced in the society; it is common for a husband to beat a wife; there is nothing special with us."

There is also a saying that goes:

- Durbi mammaaktee fi hoolaan albaate warraa baate. <A girl who tells a proverb and a sheep that defecates liquid faeces do not belong to the owner> ⁶⁸

According to the trend in the area, children are not expected to use proverbs in their speech. Elders, not children, usually use proverbs. A girl who tells a proverb, presumably, means that she is getting older and hence no more stays in

her family. Similarly, it is believed that a sheep that defecates liquid faeces may die, and hence the owner may lose it. Here, the girl is compared with a sheep that defecates liquid faeces; and this is really a distorted image that diminishes the image and role of women in the society.

It is also said:

- Hoolaan albaatee fi durbi garaan ciifte warraa baate.
< A girl lied on her stomach and a sheep discharging liquid
faeces do not belong to the owner> ⁶⁹

Here, it is not allowed for a girl to lie on her stomach. If she does so, it indicates that there is something behind it. It is believed that she either has made intercourse or wanted to make it, which is totally condemned before marriage. The worst of all the sayings raised so far runs as follows:

- Dubartii fi udaan xiqqoo hin qabdu.
<A woman and faeces can never be little> ⁷⁰

Here, the saying compares women with a useless and unpleasant waste matter that spoils the good. Contrary to this, it is said for male as:

- Dhiirri fi abiddi xiqqoo hin qabdu.
< Male (men) and fire can never be little> ⁷¹

This one compares men with a fire, which has a positive image in the society unlike that of faeces .

Furthermore, some sayings widely known in the area compare women with materials that can be bought, sold, and changed. For example, the following saying reveals that the man took his mother to the market for sale.

- Beerri mi'oofte jennaan haadha gabaa baase, jedhan.
< The man took his mother to the market having heard that
women become expensive> ⁷²

The saying, hence, depicts the woman as something that can be sold in the market. Similar to this, there is a proverb that says:

- Dubartifi kopheen jijjiiran tolti.

< Women and shoes are better changed> ⁷³

Here, in this saying the woman is compared with shoes, a material that can be bought and changed. As it is self explanatory, the saying suggests that it is better to change women and shoes. Most probably, that is why many men marry more than one wife in the rural areas.

Moreover, there is a saying in which women are compared to a serving basket. It says:

- Durbii fi gundoon hin geessu.

< A girl and a serving plate never rest> ⁷⁴

Basically, this saying is used to state that girls are and should be busy all the time with household chores. In this case, there is of course nothing wrong with the serving plate, but if the message was really to show busyness, it would have been better to compare them with bees and other hard working animals than with a lifeless utensil.

There are still sayings that compare girls with young crops and young oxen.

- Intala warratti, midhaan baalatti hin abdatan.

< A girl at home and a young crop should never be trusted> ⁷⁵

- Durbaa fi jiboota garaa duwwaa leenjisu.

< A girl and young oxen are better trained with empty stomach> ⁷⁶

The first saying carries the meaning that as young crops could be destroyed easily by heavy rain, snow, wind and wild animals, they should never be hoped; similarly, since girls will be married to another person, they will not stay at home through out their lives. The second one, on the other hand indicates that if young oxen are well fed, they will become powerful and, so difficult to train. Likewise, girls are expected to withstand hunger and should exercise working with empty stomach.

3.2.9 Other Embedded Images of Women in Sayings

Besides what has been pointed out so far, women scarcely have positive images as reflected in many popular sayings collected from East Wollega Zone. As it has been stated earlier, male offspring is valued more than female offspring from the very beginning. Hence, the couple usually want to have a son especially at first birth. If the first wife, as a matter of chance, loses a male offspring, the husband goes to the extent of marrying another wife. It is widely said:

- Taa'uu manna durba dalchuu wayya.
<Fathering a daughter is better than sitting idle> ⁷⁷
- Dubartii waaqayyo eebbisetu ganamaan ilma godhata.
< A blessed woman begets a son early> ⁷⁷

These sayings clearly depict that a son is preferred to a daughter for the couple. Here, a daughter is depicted as something not much necessary in the society.

There is also another saying that shows that a son is preferred to a daughter by the society.

- Kan ilma hawwe durbatti bilbila godhata.
< Whoever is desirous of a son will hang a small bell to a daughter> ⁷⁸

Here, a small bell is normally hang to a son, not to a daughter. The bell on the daughter, thus, shows that the person wanted to get a son and still wishes to get in the future.

According to the Oromo of East Wollega, it is not a tradition to admire one's child, especially girls. This is what is observed in some sayings collected from the area.

- Intalli haati jajju hin eerumtu.
< A girl whom a mother admires will never get married> ⁷⁹
- Intala warri jajan ollaan dhuufuu jaja.
< A girl whom parents admire is blamed for fart by

neighbors> ⁸⁰

Both the sayings depict that it is an external body who should evaluate and admire a girl, not her parents only. They also imply that besides parents neighbors do also know much about a girl around. Similarly, there is another saying which goes:

- Intala dura sirbaan jajan booda ulfaan jaju.

< A girl appreciated for her singing before will be blamed for pregnancy later> ⁸¹

To be pregnant before marriage is totally shame for a girl in the area. If a girl is good at singing, a number of boys want to sing with her, and there is a probability for the girl to fall in love with one of the boys, and she may make intercourse and get pregnant. The saying is, thus, a sort of warning for girls not to forget the consequence of singing, which is usually conducted at night in the area. It does not, of course, bear any distorted image of women, unlike the one which follows. When they want to undermine women, some people in the area say:

- Hojiin dubartiifi udaan hindaaqqoo burree hin dhabu.

< Women's work and chicken's excrement never lack a white spot> ⁸²

Here, the saying unnecessarily relates the work of women with the excrement of chicken, blurring their image in the society and undermining their work.

To sum up, as the analysis reveals, women seem to have a distorted image in both the popular sayings and folktales collected from East Wollega Zone. Women are portrayed negatively as adulterous, unfaithful, cruel, selfish, shortsighted, stubborn and so on. Moreover, it has been found out that there are popular sayings that compare women with animals like dogs, donkeys, horses and so on. It has also been pointed out that there are some sayings that compare women to materials that can be bought and sold in the market.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

In the foregoing discussion, attempts have been made to analyze and point out some of the embedded images of women in the folktales and popular sayings of the Oromo of East Wollega. Accordingly, it has been found out that there are very few folktales and popular sayings that portray women positively vis-à-vis the number of tales and sayings which depict women negatively.

As far as the depiction of women positively in the tales and sayings is concerned, it has been pointed out that woman, particularly one's wives and mothers are portrayed as lovable, generous and tolerant. In this case, it should be noted that most of the sayings that portray women positively are those which address exclusively one's wives and mothers. In almost all of the sayings the collective noun 'dubartii' <woman> has not been used where the depiction is positive. Instead, the names used are those which address a specific group of women (wives and mothers) excluding others.

The other positive image identified in the tales and sayings is tactfulness. Here, it has been indicated that women are widely considered as tactful among the Oromo of East Wollega. To this end, the tales and sayings collected from the study area clearly depict that women are tactful and wise in some cases.

Most studies conducted so far on the images of women in literature proved that women are portrayed negatively. A number of tales and sayings collected from East Wollega Zone do also portray women negatively. It has been found out that the image of women in most sayings and tales is presented in a distorted manner. Regardless of the themes of the tales and the contexts in which the sayings are used, women seem to have been represented in a way that diminishes their image in general and discourages their moral in particular. Here, the researcher feels that portraying women negatively like this may prohibit them from playing the role they are expected in the society.

As the analysis indicates, in the tales and sayings considered in the study area, women are depicted negatively as adulterous and unfaithful kinds of human beings. In this regard, the tales and sayings depict women as if they always think about sexual intercourse and have extra lover besides their husbands. They are characterized as deceivers who merely live for the gratification of their sexual needs.

Moreover, women are portrayed as ignorant and shortsighted persons in a number of tales and sayings. In both genres, they are depicted as unknowledgeable, unwise and thoughtless. Similarly, there are a number of instances in which women are characterized as foolish or silly persons in the tales and sayings. On the other hand, men relatively seem to have a better image or at least a neutral image in the two genres.

Furthermore, it has been pointed out that there are many tales and sayings that depict women as cruel and unsympathetic individuals. In some cases, they are characterized as merciless and pitiless persons who reach to the extent of slaughtering human beings like animals.

Besides, one can clearly see that women are portrayed negatively in the tales and sayings as selfish and greedy. As the tales indicate some women cheat their husbands and eat alone; still others are depicted as if they eat too much. In reality, however (as one of my informant said) women are not so selfish and greedy as they are characterized in the tales. *"They are rather generous"*, he added. Hence, although they distort the image of women, the tales and sayings seem to convey the message that being selfish and greedy is not an acceptable code of behavior.

Many of the tales and sayings examined in this study still portray women as if they are poor at decision-making. They clearly indicate that women make unwise decisions and bear the message that women should never assume positions for administrations. In the tales and sayings, women are depicted as if they lack the necessary knowledge or mental ability for holding "positions of

authority and leadership." As Abraham Alemu (2007) stated, "This ideological definition of women enables the dominant male to justify and maintain the subordinate status of women."

There are also a number of tales and sayings in which women are depicted as stubborn persons. As stated before, in most tales, the aim is normally not to indicate that women are truly obstinate or stubborn in the society. It rather seems to teach that obstinacy and stubbornness lead one to destruction. In so doing, however, the embedded images of women inevitably get distorted. Anyhow, there is an impression that the tales and sayings seem to have been used as 'ideological weapon' to make women docile and keep them under control.

Furthermore, there are sayings that compare women with some animals that are not deemed so important in the society. Mainly women are compared to dogs (bitch) and donkey. In some cases, the sayings directly relate a woman with a bitch as in 'A woman and a bitch are the same', which in whatever context it is used is considered as an insult in the society.

Still there are sayings in which women are depicted as a material to be sold in the market. In one way or another, the embedded images of women in the tales and saying selected for analysis does not seem positive when seen from different perspectives.

In general, in most of the folktales and popular sayings of the Oromo of East Wollega, women are characterized as adulterous, unfaithful, cruel, selfish, unsympathetic, ignorant, shortsighted, stubborn and so on. Moreover, many folktales and popular saying depict them as if they are poor decision makers and unwise administrators.

On the whole, while there are negligible number of tales and sayings that depict women positively, a large number of them portray them negatively. In most of the tales and sayings, women are characterized as if they are subordinate

to men, lacking some good qualities of human beings. Suffice it to say that women in the study area are portrayed negatively in both genres of folklore under discussion.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Popular Sayings/Proverbs

1. 'Achii qoqi' jette intalli abiddatti fincoofte. 'Groan from there,' the girl said having urinated on the fire>
2. 'Ani heeruma koo kana koora gidduu gahu malee hin amanu,' jette intalli. <'I do not believe my wedding until I sit on a saddle,' the girl said>
3. 'Deega dahoo godhattee nadheen namo'atte,' jedhe namichi. < 'Women dominated me under the cover of poverty,' the man said>
4. 'Dhiira hata'uu diinqa haqufa'u' jette niitiin. <'Let him be a male and cough at home,' the woman said>
5. 'Dhirsaa koon miidha,' jette niitiin goondaarra teesse. "I hurt my husband," the woman said, sitting on a colony of ants>
6. 'Kan kanarraa fayyaan ha nyaatu' jette jaartiin bixxillee kudhan fixxe jedhan. < 'Let the healthy eat the remaining,' the woman said having finished ten loaves of bread>
7. 'Ofdagattee dhirsatu na gate,' jette niitiin jedhan. < 'My husband ignored me,' the wife said, overlooking herself>
8. 'Situ fide,' jette jaartiin injiraan ciniintee jedhan. < 'It is you who brought it,' the lady said, having bitten a louse>
9. Abbaa mucaa haadha malee namni hin beeku. <It is only a mother who knows the father of a child>
10. Amalli haadhaa hintala hin hanqatu. <A mother's behavior never fails to reach her daughter>
11. Bakka waalluun baay'attetti raafuun hin bilchaatu. <Cabbage is not cooked well where there are many women> = Too many cooks spoil the broth.
12. Bareedde jennaan hintalli ija babaafte. < The girl opened her eyes wider and wider when told beautiful>
13. Beekumsa dubartii dhiqattee fincoofti. <Urinating after being washed is knowledge to a woman>

14. Beekumsi dubartii gomjiirra hindarbu. <The knowledge of a woman does not go beyond a stove>
15. Beekumsi dubartii abbaa manaa oliiqe, boolla nama buusa. <A woman's knowledge greater than her husband puts one into gully>
16. Beekumsi dubartii fi karaan jaldeessaa bowwaa nama buusa. <A woman's knowledge and the road of a monkey lead one to gorge>
17. Beerri mi'oofte jennaan haadha gabaa baase. <Having heard that women have become expensive, the man took his mother to the market>
18. Beerrii fi fardi waan kennaniif nyaatti. <A woman and a horse eat what they are given>
19. Bekkumsi dubartii akka fincaanshee jala yaa'a. <A woman's knowledge flows under like their urine>
20. Bor hin beekneen dubartii qoda bukoonshee sagal. <The dough container of the lady who does not know the future is nine>
21. Dheebuu duumessaa keessaa fi badiin haadhaa namatti hin dhagahamu. <One never feels the fault of a mother and thirsty in cloudy day>
22. Dhibeen niitii garbicha nama gooti. <A wife's illness makes one a slave>
23. Dubartii deessuu fi Waaqa roobu keessaa waa argatu. <One gets something from a fertile woman and the sky that rains>
24. Dubartii dheertuun dhuma dhangaa hin beektu. <A tall woman does not know the finishing of a special meal>
25. Dubartii dheertuun dhuma midhaanii hin beektu. <A tall woman does not know the finishing of the kernel in store>
26. Dubartii fi duudaan tokko. <A woman and a deaf person are the same>
27. Dubartii fi harreen ulee jaallatti. <A woman and a donkey like a stick (to be beaten)>
28. Dubartii fi jallinni waliin dhalatu. <Women and obstinacy are born together>
29. Dubartii fi kopheen jijjiiran tolti. <Women and shoes are better changed>
30. Dubartii fi saree dhaltuun tokko. <A woman and a bitch are the same>
31. Dubartii fi udaan xiqqoo hin qabdu. <Women and faeces can never be little>

32. Dubartii gamni gabaa galtee ashaboo liqii dhaqxi. <A shroud woman goes to borrow salt after (she returns from) a market>
33. Dubartii jechaan harka, saree jechaan sagaleedha. <A woman means her hand and a dog means its sound>
34. Dubartii lama yaaddu gabaa hin ergin; yookan mi'a gatti, yookan immoo ofii baddi. <Do not send a woman who thinks two things; she either loses a material or be lost for herself>
35. Dubartiifi harree ba'aatu sirreessa. <It is a load that corrects a woman and a donkey>
36. Dubartiifi harree uleetu deebisa. <It is a stick which corrects a woman and a donkey>
37. Dubartiifi harreen tokko. <A woman and a donkey are same>
38. Dubartiifi okkoon jilbaa gaditti. <A woman and a walking stick should be held below a knee>
39. Dubartiin addressa guyyaa seeti jedhan. <A woman thinks moonlight a day>
40. Dubartiin beekaa dessimalee beektuu hin qabdu. <A woman has no knowledge, but gives birth to a knowledgeable man>
41. Dubartiin beektuun manashee ijaarti; wallaaltun manashee diigdi. <A knowledgeable woman builds her house, and the ignorant demolishes it>
42. Dubartiin dheertuu malee beektuu hin qabdu. <There never exist knowledgeable but tall woman>
43. Dubartiin dhugaa qabda yoo jedhan ni boossi. <Women lament if they told they are right>
44. Dubartiin furdoo malee guddoo hinqabdu. <Women could never be great but fat>
45. Dubartiin irratti fuudhaan malee hin kaatu. <Women never become active unless one marries over them>
46. Dubartiin keessummaa hin qabdu. <Women should never be guests>
47. Dubartiin machoofte corroqa qaqqaammatti iedhan. <A drunken woman sits near the rainwater collected in a ditch to warm herself>
48. Dubartiin mala hin dhabdu. <Women never lack a tactic>



49. Dubartiin murtii hinbeektu. <Women donot know decision >
50. Dubartiin nama qoccultuu fi manni dhimmisu tokko. < A nagging woman and a leaking house are the same>
51. Dubartiin ofii qooqxee dhirsa soorti jedhan. <A woman feeds her husband being empty for herself>
52. Dubartiin sabbata nyaatti. < Women eat their waist tie>
53. Dubartiin tola hin jaallattu. <Women never like unchallenged>
54. Dubartiin xiqqoo hinqabdu. <Women could never be kid>
55. Dubartiitti gaaddidduun duumessa fakkaata. <A cloud seems a shadow to a woman>
56. Dubbiin dubartii fi udaan indaaqqoo burree hin dhabu. <Women's speech and chicken's excrement have always a white spot>
57. Durbaa bareeddu fi hagadaa bira hin darban. < A beautiful girl and a cane are not overlooked >
58. Durbaa fi dhagaa daakuu laga ofiitii baafatu. <A girl and a grinding stone are obtained from the local river>
59. Durbaa fi jiboota garaa duwwaa leenjisu. < A girl and young oxen are better trained with empty stomach>
60. Durbi mammaaktee fi hoolaan albaate warraa baate. < A girl who tells a proverb and a sheep who defecates liquid faeces do not belong to the owner>
61. Durbii fi gundoon hin teessu. <A girl and a serving basket never get rest>
62. Gaafa haftuun eerumtu galaanni guuta. < A river overflows on the day a girl past the age marries>
63. Gaafa harreen loon dura galtuu fi nadheen dhiira dura raftu gaarii hin ta'u. <The day a donkey comes to home ahead of a cow, and a woman sleeps before a husband is not good>
64. Gadi badiin nadheenii kan dhirsa keesse nyaatti. <A degradable woman eats what she saved for her husband>
65. Garbittiin gargaarsa barte majii dhoksiti. <A servant habituated to assistance hides a grinding mill>
66. Gayyaan gaarii hin qabdu. <A step mother can never be good>

67. Gayyaan garaa hin laaftu. <A step-mother never shows sympathy>
68. Gursummaan gaafa eerumte moonyee qoraafu waggaasaatti ollaa qoraafu. < A widow who fumigates a pounder on her marriage day will fumigate neighbors a year later>
69. Haadha dhabuu mannaa haadha dhabduu wayya. < It is better to have a poor mother than miss her>
70. Haadha ilaalanii hintala fuudhu. < One scrutinizes the mother before asking the daughter for marriage>
71. Haadha manaa malee abiddi hinboba'u jedhan. <Fire never burns without the wife (owner of the house)>
72. Haadhaaf lafatu nama danda'a. <A mother and a land tolerate everything>
73. Haati dhabduu hin qabdu. <There is no poor mother>
74. Haati harma malee harka hin guutu. < A mother's hand never hand never dries, but her breast>
75. Haati hattuun ilmoo hin amantu. <A thief mother does not trust her daughter>
76. Haati hormaa nama hin dhahin. < The mother of another should never beat>
77. Haati nama hin dhalin nama hin dhahin. <A mother who did not give birth should never beat>
78. Haati nama hin hattu, kan qabduyyuu namaa laatti. <A mother does not deceive, she shares what she owns>
79. Haati utubaa manaati. < A mother is the pillar of a house>
80. Hamii fi jallina dubartii hin gorsani. <One never advises women how to backbite and act against>
81. Hamma beektu niitiin dhirsa soorti. <A wife feeds her husband to the extent she knows>
82. Hamtuu haadha ofii amaatiin hin jijjiiran. <Even a harsh mother is never exchanged to the mother- in- law>
83. Hantuutni gumbii uraa haadha jalatti barti. < A young rat learns how to puncture a granary from her mother>
84. Har'allee waa'ee kiyya hindubbatanii jette haftuun heerumtee. <The girl married lately and said, "No one talks about me today.">

85. Harki taa'u deega jedhee jaarsi jaartii haboote. <Saying the motionless hand brings forth poverty, the old man hit the old woman>
86. Harreen mooraa hinqabdu mooraa loonii ganti; nadheen mana hinqadu mana dhiiraa ganti. <A donkey has no compound of her own but lives in a cow's; a woman has no home of her own but stays in her husband's>
87. Hima didduun du'a hin diddu. <Someone who refuses to accept what is being told never refuses death>
88. Hin bari'u seetee udaan mantti hagde. <She thought the night will never end and defecated at home>
89. Hintala duubaan dhaqxe warri keessaa hin qabu. <The parents disregard the girl who went to the boy's home (for marriage) without their consent>
90. Hojiin dubartii fi udaan hindaanqoo burree hin dhabu. <The work of women and the excrement of chicken never lack a speck>
91. Hoolaa fi dubartiin dahoo jaallatti. <A woman and a sheep like a hidden place>
92. Hoolaan albaatee fi durbi garaan ciifte warraa baate. <A girl lied on her stomach and a sheep discharging liquid faeces do not belong to the owner>
93. Ibiddi nadheeniifi ijoolleen qabsiifte hindhaamu. <A fire caught by women and children will not be put off easily>
94. Icciiitii dhirsaa fi niitii mata dhooftuutu beeka. <It is the hair maker who knows the secret of the husband and the wife>
95. Ijoolleen haadha qabdu nama rukkuttee boossi. <Children who have a mother beat others and cry themselves>
96. ✓ Ijoolleen quufnee hin beektu, dubartiin gabbannee hin beektu. <Children do not say 'we are satisfied', and women do not say 'we are fat'>
97. Ilma haati guddiftee fi hintalli akkoon guddifte horii hin ta'an. <A son brought up by a mother and a daughter brought by a grandmother are not worthy>
98. Intala daakuu beektu daakuu hin hatan. <It is impossible to steal flour from a girl who knows how to grind well>
99. Intala dura sirbaan jajan booda ulfaan jaju. <A girl appreciated for her singing before will be blamed for pregnancy later>

100. Intala warratti, midhaan baalatti hin abdatan. < A girl at home and a young crop should not be hoped>
101. Intala warri jajan ollaan dhuufuu jaja. < A girl whom parents admire is blamed for fart by neighbors>
102. Intalli garaa laaftu garaa duwwaa hin eerumtu. <A meek girl is never married with an empty uterus>
103. Intalli garaa laaftu obboleessa isheerraa ulfoofti. <A sympathetic girl becomes pregnant from her brother>
104. Intalli haadha baddi, ilmi eessuma bada. < A bad girl results from her mother and a bad son from his uncle>
105. Intalli haati jajju hin eerumtu. <A girl admired by her mother will never get married>
106. Jaartiin aannan barte ammaa amma gaggabdi. < An old lady accustomed to milk faints time and again>
107. Jiidha hindhabin jette niitiin dhirsatti fincooftee. <A wife urinated on her husband and said, always get wetted>
108. Kan caamaan soqolattu gaafa roobu qullaa buufti. <A lady who turns her dress up in dry time will go bare when it rains>
109. Kan dandeessu dhaani jennaan gowwaan galee niitii reebe. <Upon told to beat whomever he can, the foolish beat his wife>
110. Kan durbaan boonee fi kan bosoqqee dhaabbate tokko. < Whoever is proud of a girl and planted 'bosoqqee'* are the same.
- * 'Bosoqqee' is a kind of plant which blossoms and wears out/ deteriorate immediately.
111. Kan gabaan namaa gootu haati namaa hin gootu. <A mother can not give what a market can give>
112. Kan haadhatti barte amaatiitti.... <Habituated to a mother and took to the mother-in-law>
113. Kan haati booqaa qabdu ilmoon balaccuu hin dhabdu. <A daughter never misses the white spot her mother possesses>

114. Kan ilma hawwe durbatti bilbila godhata. <Whoever is desirous of a son will hang a bell to a daughter>
115. Kan ol kaa'an gaariidha jette jaartiin durbummaan haftee. < 'Something saved is good' the old lady said, being left virgin>
116. Kan teessee fincooftu kan manaa baasu kan teessee hagdu fuudha. < One who divorces a woman who passes out her urine sitting, will marry the one who defecates sleeping>
117. Kan ulfaan daakuu nyaattu gaafa deesse daaraa nyaatti. < A lady who eats flour during pregnancy will eat ash after delivery>
118. Kokkoolfaa ulfooftee boowaa deessi. <Women laugh upon conception and cry whiling delivering a child>
119. Lafa dubartiin baay'atte wacatu baay'ata. <Where there are too many women, there is a noise>
120. Mana dubartiin bulchitu ulfina hin qabu. <A house administered by a woman has no respect>
121. Mana onaa mannaa niitii ontuu wayya. < It is better to have an abandoned wife rather than a deserted house>
122. Mootummaan dubartii karra cufaatti oolcha. <Women's administration leaves the corral closed for the whole day>
123. Nadheen akkuma harmishee rarra'u qalbiin ishees rarra'a. <A woman's conscience suspends just like her breast>
124. Nadheen dhirsa moote mataa namaatti fincoofti. <A wife who dominates a husband urinates on the head of others>
125. Nadheen lama hin beektu, tokko hin wallaaltu. <Women do not know two, and are not ignorant of one>
126. Nadheeni fi fardeen galgala baddi. < Women and horses become useless at old age>
127. Nadheeni fi fardeen ganama leenjii tolchu. <Women and horses should be trained well early>
128. Nama Waaqayyo eebbisetu ganamaan ilma godhata. < A blessed person begets a son early>

129. Namni dubartiin mari'atee fi namni qilleensatti hirkate tokko dha. <A person consulted with a woman and a person leaned on the air are the same>
130. Namni durba da'e nama soogidda nagade. <A person who begets a daughter is like a person who merchandizes salt>
131. Niitii deessuu fi maasaa dallaa keessaa hin tuffatan. < A fertile women and a garden are not neglectful>
132. Niitii dhirsatu beeka. < It is the husband who knows the wife>
133. Niitii fi eeboo hin ergisan. <One never lends a wife and a spear>
134. Niitii fi qawween kan abbaa bira jiruuti. <A wife and a gun belongs to the nearby person >
135. Niitii gaariin dhirsaaaf kafana. <A good wife is clothing for a husband>
136. Niitii hamtuun dhirsa ofii qaanessiti. < A harsh wife humiliates her husband>
137. Niitii waa torbaaf fuudhu; garuu waan tokkoof wajjin jiraatu. <One marries a woman for seven things, but lives with her only for one thing>
138. Niitiifi jiruu ganama mo'atu. < A wife and a job are better overcome early>
139. Niitiifi sangaa fardaa abbaatu fe'ata. <'It is the owner who uploads a wife and a male horse' the man said>
140. Niitiin abbaa warraa hin qabnee fi fardi takkaallaa hin qabne tokko. <A woman without a husband and a free horse are the same>
141. Niitiin abbaa warraa moote booyicha fardaa dhaqxi. < A wife who dominates a husband goes to the funeral of the horse>
142. Niitiin abbaan manaa mana hin jirre du'a gahii fardaa dhaqxi. < A wife whose husband is not at home will go to the funeral of a dead horse>
143. Niitiin dhirsa moote soqolattee gandarra kaati jedhaan. <A woman who dominates her husband wonders in the village turning her dress up>
144. Niitiin dhirsa mootu ganda bulti. < A wife who dominates a husband stays the night out>
145. Ofittoon dhirsa koo hin jettu. < A selfish woman will not say for my husband>

146. Ofjajjuu nadheenii manni ona. < A boasting woman's home is empty>
147. Ofsoba gursummaa loon abbaa qabuun kiyya jetti. <A widow who cheats her self claims a cow which has the owner>
148. Ofttoon nadheenii kan dhirsaa keessu nyaatti. <A selfish woman eats what she keeps for her husband>
149. Qamaleen somboo bartee fi nadheen ijoollee barte tokko. <A woman habituated to youth and an ape habituated to an oak is the same>
150. Qotiyyoo malee niitii walii hin ergisan. <One never lends a wife but an ox>
151. Reef ta'e jette niitiin daaratti fincooftee. <'It is better now', the woman said, having passed out her urine at ash>
152. Reefuu tola jette niitiin dhirsi duunaan, sanyoo isheetiin. < It is more convenient now, the woman said to her lover, upon her husband's death>
153. Salphoon nadheeni dhirsa hamatti. < A degradable woman backbites her husband>
154. Sanyoo argitee dhirsa jibbite. <Hated a husband having obtained a lover>
155. Si'achan nama ta'aa jette jaartiin gabaa keessatti albbatee. < 'I am not worth hereafter,' the old lady said, having defecated in the market>
156. Surree fi niitii wajjin kufu. <One falls together with trousers and a wife>
157. Surree hin afatan niitii hin hamatan. < One never spreads trousers to sleep on and backbite a wife>
158. Taa'uu mannaa durba dhalchuu wayya. <Fathering a daughter is better than sitting idle>
159. Waaqni beeraa beera. <The God of a woman is woman>
160. 'Yoo dhirsi argames sanyoon rakkoodha,' jette hintalli. <'It is difficult to get a lover even if a husband is found,' the girl said>

Appendix B_ Folktales

I. Tales Which Portray Women Positively

Tale 1 – The old Lady, a monkey and a hyena

Long ago, there lived an old lady who owned a lot of cattle, cereals and crops. She used to live alone in an area where there were monkeys and hyenas. One day a monkey and a hyena debated on who is more beautiful or attractive. The monkeys said, “It was me who is more beautiful than the hyena.” The hyena claimed that he was more beautiful than the monkey. Unable to agree on the motion, they took the case to the old lady, who used to live around. The monkey warned the lady not to speak in favor of the hyena. He said, “If you support the hyena, I will destroy all your cereals and crops outside.” The hyena also warned her not to hold with the monkey. “If you do so,” the hyena said, “I will eat your cattle one by one.” Both the monkey and the hyena spoke to her ear so that one does not hear the other’s warnings. The woman being afraid of them did not decide on the spot. She told them that she would think over it and appointed both of them to the next day. When the animals came to her home the next day, she told them “Both of you are as beautiful as your fathers.” It was said that this way the old lady saved her property from destruction.

Tale 2- The He-monkey and the Lioness

Once up on a time, a lion left his wife (a lioness) at home and went for hunting. That day, a monkey saw him and went to his home to make the lioness his mistress. The monkey reached the home and wanted to talk to the lioness. As she saw him, the lioness began to ask him the following questions turn by turn.

Lioness: Who are you?

Monkey: “When they undermine me, they call me ‘Jalduu’ <monkey>.

Lioness: What made your buttock like that?

Monkey: I like riding on a horseback; I rarely walk on foot. Thus, it was the horseback which made it so.

Lioness: What about your fingers? They are too coarse.

Monkey: I make a saddle; I am hard working: I work day and night. That is why it

became too coarse.

Lioness: How would you compare your self with my husband?

Monkey: Your husband knows very well. I am brave.

Lioness: How would you evaluate my husband?

Monkey: "He is bull sheet; I compare him to this saliva" he said and spat.

Then, the lioness appointed him to come the next day for everything. When her husband came back home, she told him everything the monkey said to her. The lion became very angry at the monkey and waited him at home the next day. When the monkey arrived, the lioness told him to enter and sit down. Meanwhile, the lion appeared, and the monkey became nervous and farted.

The lion cooled him down and began to ask him the previous questions the lioness asked.

Lion: who are you?

Monkey: 'Jaldeessa' < Monkey>

Lion: What made your buttock like that?

Monkey: Crawling on the trees, being afraid of you.

Lion: What about your fingers?

Monkey: Digging the ground in search of insects to eat.

Lion: How would you consider yourself with me?

Monkey: So stupid, and coward.

Lion: With what do you compare me?

Monkey: With a mountain.

Lion: And yourself?

Monkey: Spat and said, "to this saliva". Then, the lion looked at him fiercely and knocked him down to the ground. Meanwhile, the monkey farted and begged the lion to let him go. The lion warned him not to come to his home again let him go.

Tale 3 – The Wise Girl

Once up on a time, there lived a boy whose age reached for marriage. He wanted to marry and told his father to make arrangements for the marriage. The father agreed and made all the necessary preconditions. Then, when the date of the marriage had come, the boy planned to tempt his would be wife. Accordingly, on the night of his marriage day, he made sexual intercourse with the girl and inquired her to beget a child the next day.

“The child you beget should be a son,” he added. The girl thought over it and responded, “That is alright, but I need to eat a porridge before that.” She gave him some barely, and said, “You should sow this barely, harvest, winnow, grind and make porridge tonight.” Then, the boy nodded his head and discovered how much wise she was.

Tale 4 - THE AMBITIOUS MOUSE

Once up on a time, a mouse gave birth to eight sons. Amongst them was one with a white forehead. Then the mother said to the male mouse. “What name shall we give our son?” he answered: “ We’ll call him Sun.” She replied: “What!” He declared: “It can’t be anything else but Sun.” Once this son was grown up, the father said: “Let’s find a wife for him. The mother answered: “Whose daughter shall we select for him?” And he said: “We’ll select for him the daughter of our equal, the frog or the mole!” “No, this cannot be!” he insisted. He mounted the horse and went up to the house of the sky .He said to the sky: “Give me your daughter for my son.” The sky replied: “ I feared the cloud: go and ask the cloud.” So, he went and asked the family of the Cloud. The Cloud replied, “I fear the family of the Wind: go and ask the family of the Wind.” So, he went and asked the family of the wind .The Wind replied: “ I fear only the mountain: go and ask the family of the Mountain.” So, he went and asked the family of the mountain. The mountain replied: “ I fear only the mole.” Thereupon he came back home and said to his wife: “Come, give me some milk. I’m exhausted!” and she gave him some milk. When he finished drinking, she said to him,” Well, What have you done?” “You have said the truth, O my wife; you told me to ask for the daughter of our equal, the Mole! We’ll now select for our son the daughter of the Mole.” He left the place where his wife was, and called on the mole. And the mole said, “That is fine.” Then the son of the mouse married the daughter of the Mole, and they had many little ones.

II. Tales Which Portray Women Negatively

Tale 5- The Deceiving Woman

Long ago, there lived a husband and a wife who do not trust each other. The wife used to prepare porridge and serve the husband most of the time. But the husband did not eat the porridge to his fill always, thought he always observe her using a lot of water and

flour while making the porridge. As a result, he became angry at her all the time. One day, he told his friend about the case and sought advice from him on what to do next. His friend told him that she hides and save some porridge in the cooker < xuwwee> to eat after he goes to bed or leave the home. Thus, he advised him to cut the leaf of cucumber and put under the cooking material when she pours water in it to heat. The husband did as he was advised by his friend. Then, the wife poured a large quantity of flour in the hot water as usual and prepared ample porridge. Finally, she completed making the porridge and wanted to hide some as usual. But the husband was watching carefully. Then she pretended to serve all on a plate and bent down the material. Mean while, the whole porridge fell on the palate with the leaf and she was surprised. Having wanted to hide some porridge still, she told her husband that the porridge doubled (begotten) unusually and asked him to go out of home and ululate. The husband, however, said "My wife, I will do it here" and began to ululate being where he was it is said.

Tale 6 – The Dwarf and the Wife of The Lord

Once up on a time, a lord saw a dwarf on the road and asked what his job was. The dwarf responded, "My height is only what you see and I will do whatever any body orders me to do." "What about your conduct," the lord inquired again. The dwarf said "I do not cheat, steal, lie, betray; I am extremely faithful," he said. "But, I do not pass over any body with out visiting him/her," he added. Then the lord took him to his home and told him to look after his house and property until he goes and come back from the warfront. The lord went to the warfront and the dwarf began to do as he was ordered. The lord has a wife and a child. One day the wife of the lord told the dwarf that she needed to sleep with a man and asked him to sleep with her. The dwarf, however, refused to sleep with her being afraid of his promise to the lord. Another day she forced him again to sleep with her. That night, however, her husband was on the way returning from the warfront. When she saw his arrival, she immediately scratched and blooded her face with different materials and told the lord that it was the dwarf who made her so, pretending to be faithful to him. Then, the lord, being angry, wrote a letter secretly and gave the dwarf to take it to the soldiers in the warfront. He made his son to accompany the dwarf to the place. The letter was read as "Bury alive a person who gives you this letter." Then, the

dwarf saw a certain house near the road and visited it. He asked the owners to give him some food and water as he was hungry and thirsty. Being angry with the dwarf, the son of the lord told the dwarf to give him the letter that his father gave him. The dwarf handed it to him. Then, the son of the lord took the letter to the soldiers and delivered to them. Meanwhile, the soldiers read the letter and buried the son of the lord alive unknowingly. Then, the dwarf returned home while the son of the lord was buried. The lord asked the dwarf where his son was. "The soldiers buried him," the dwarf responded. The lord again asked, "Have not you ever betrayed after you promised so far?" "No never," the dwarf replied. Then, the lord realized that the mistake was his wife's, and made his servants to dig the ground and bury her. The servants did as they were told; and the dwarf said to the woman "You entered the grave you dug yourself".

Tale 7 – The wife of the Priest

Many years ago, it was said that a priest had a wife who was not faithful to him. The wife had a secret lover from outside and one day she appointed him to come early in the morning on Sunday when her husband would go to church to pray. That day, she woke up early and told the priest (her husband) that it was getting late to go to church. Having thought that it was true, the priest woke up hurriedly and went to the church to pray. As soon as he left the house, his wife's lover came and entered. When the priest reached the church, there was no one around. He immediately returned home and saw his wife while she was preparing porridge for her lover. The lover saw him and quickly hid himself under the bed. Although she was preparing it for her secret lover, she lied to him that she was making the porridge for him as it was too cold then. "That was really very kind of you, my love," the priest said. Then she made it ready to serve him on the bed and told him to lie on it. She knew that her secret lover was under the bed. Then having fed her husband once with her hand, she slowly seized her hand full of porridge under the bed for her secret lover. Soon, her lover thought that the priest was seizing his hand to catch him, he sprang and lifted the bed up and the priest became shocked and fell over. After that the man ran and hid himself under the sheep. Later, having thought that it was a devil, the priest followed him to his place. There he caught the scrotum of the man and called his wife to hold until he would go and bring a knife to cut with. Then she came and

held for a while and let him escape, holding the scrotum of a sheep. He again went and hid himself under the bed. Unknowingly, the husband came and cut the scrotum of a sheep. Soon the sheep fell over and cried; and the wife told him to slaughter it immediately before it dies. The unfortunate husband slaughtered and gave the meat to his wife to prepare and serve him. Finally, she prepared a good meal and served him. Her husband ate and went to the church again. After that she gave the remaining meal for her lover, and slept with him till the morning.

Tale 8- The Unfaithful Woman

Long ago, there lived a husband and a wife. The wife was not faithful to him. She had three secret lovers other than her husband. One day she appointed three of them at different times when her husband went for hunting. The one appointed in the morning arrived on time and they passed a good time with each other. However, the second appointee came early and entered the house. Soon, she told the former that her husband has arrived and quickly hid him under a bed. Then began to chat with the second one. Meanwhile, the third lover came and entered the house. In a similar manner, she told the second person that her husband has arrived and hid him on the roof. Now she began to chat with the third one. After a while, she heard her husband coughing from outside returning from hunting. Now, she hid the third lover under a table. The husband had, however, heard her talking with someone from outside. He entered the house and sat on the table putting down his spears and gun. He asked her with whom she was talking and where he was. "No one is at home; I was talking alone," she insisted. She wanted to change his attention and asked him whether he was successful or not in his hunting. The husband responded, "No, I am not successful today." "Would you go again for hunting the next day?" she continued. Meanwhile, the husband took his spear, pointed up and said, "He who is above knows it." Then the one who hid himself in the roof shocked and said "I am sorry sir, I do not know; there is someone who knows better than me under the table." Then, the one under the table said, "The person under the bed knows much better than me." And the one under the bed said, "They are lying; they know everything." That way the husband caught three of them and punished severely. Later, he abandoned his wife and married another wife.

Tale 9- The Careless Wife

Long ago, there lived a man who married a wife who did not like to wash herself and clean the utensils. They lived together for some years and the husband began to complain about her uncleanliness. One day, he decided to change her with another wife. After a day, he brought a new wife to home and began to enjoy life with her. Yet, she is also not that much better than the former. But the old wife had some cows, and the new one did not have anything at the moment. Then her relative advised her to wash and perfume herself and the utensils very well. Besides, she told her to prepare a good meal and feed him to his fill. "Arrange the bed and make it ready the way it attracts him," she added. The old wife did as she was told. Finally, the husband came to tell her that he needed some cows for the new wife. He entered the house and saw the change; he was surprised at what went on in his former house and the change he observed in his former wife. She fed him and told him to lie on the bed and take rest. Finally, the husband was attracted by her and told her that he adored her more than his new wife. Then after, both began to live together happily, ignoring the new wife: later, the new wife went back to her family.

Tale 10- The old man and his wife

Long ago, there lived an old man who married a young lady after his former wife's death. This young lady hated the life she leads with the old man and began to live with a secret lover who was as young as she was. One day, she wanted to enjoy her secret lover the whole night and lied her husband that she was sick seriously. Then the husband asked her what was better and what was better and what she needed to recover from her illness. She told him that the excrement of a lion would heal her. The husband went to search for the excrement of the lion in the forest which takes more than two days from his home. He left her alone and continued his journey to the forest in search for the excrement. On his way to the forest, he came across a certain man and told him why and where he was going. The man told the old man that his wife was lying him and assured him that he experienced such a case before. Then, he immediately devised a mechanism in which he would show the old man that she lied him and began the return journey. He

told him that he pretends to be a guest who wanted to stay the night at her home. When they reached the home, he hid the husband in a sack and asked her to stay the night at her home. She showed her willingness and allowed him to stay outside of home in the compound. The wise man put the sack in the home and went out to stay the night and observe what would happen. A bit later her secret lover arrived and asked her what the man outside was doing. She responded him that he was a guest and that he would not enter the house. Then, her husband came out the sack and began to observe what they were doing. She prepared a delicious meal and served her secret lover. Being angry with her, the husband killed both of them on the bed.

Tale 11- A Silly Mistake

Many years ago, there lived a husband and a wife. One day they agreed to slaughter a sheep to make a nice 'ittoo' a traditional food that resembles sauce. Then, the husband slaughtered the sheep and gave the meat to his wife. She took it and made a nice "wot" and told him that it was ready to be eaten. But, since there was no water at home, she went to fetch from the river before serving, and told her husband to take the hide to a nearby tanner until she would come back. Since the home of the tanner was on the way to the river, they began the journey together and came across three people walking towards their home. The couple told them that they slaughtered a sheep and made a nice 'wot' and did not eat till then. They asked the three men to look after their house until they would come back. After they disappeared from view, the three men entered the couple's house and ate all the meal prepared and left immediately. When they came back home, nothing was left in the cooker except a number of flies on the edge. She told her husband that the 'ittoo' was eaten by flies. But her husband insisted that the earlier three men they came across ate it. Being annoyed at them, he took his spear and followed the men. Meanwhile, she called a certain woman from the neighbor and told her all the case. The woman agreed that the 'ittoo' was eaten by flies. Then, they began to hit the flies with an axe to kill them all. First, they saw a fly on the pot and hit it; the fly escaped and the pot was broken. Then, the fly sat on the kettle and they hit it and killed the fly; but the kettle was also broken. Finally, another fly came and sat on the nose of the wife. The wife slowly pointed to the fly on her nose and asked the woman to hit it. The woman seized

the axe and hit the nose of the wife. Immediately, the woman's nose began to bleed and she died after a while.

Tale 12- The Barren Step Mother

Long ago, it was said that a man had two wives. One had two children and the other did not have any; she was barren. One of the children had a sun on his face; and the other had a star on his teeth. The husband used to love more the one who had children. As a result, the barren wanted to make her husband hate this wife. One day, she took the two children far away from home and threw them in the forest where there are wild animals like lions, tigers. Fortunately, a certain rich man got the children and took them to his home. There, they were brought up in a good manner and the rich man made them his heir upon his death. Then, the barren told her husband that the wife whom he loves more ate her two children; she began to backbite the mother of the children. The husband having thought it was true, hated the mother of the children, whom he used to love more before. A day before his death, the man who brought the children up told them that their step mother, being jealous of their mother, threw them in the forest and he got them from there and brought them up. At that moment, the man also told them who their true mother was, what she was doing and where she was living. He told them that their true mother was living as a servant in their father's house. The next day, the man died and the two children inherited his property. They began to search for their true parents, and one day they succeeded and reached the home. They told their parents that they were guests and wanted to stay the night with them. The one had the sun on his forehead hid it until it gets dark, and the one who had a star on his teeth also hid it. When it gets darker, they uncovered their signs and the house became brighter. Then the mother and father of the children became very happy and welcomed them. Meanwhile, their stepmother lost her self and fell over. Finally the children changed the situation at home sharing their true mother all the property they inherited. They forgave their stepmother for her deed, but told her to leave the area for treating them and their mother badly and cruelly.

Tale 13- Truth, Falsehood and Betrayal

It was said that many years ago, truth, falsehood and betrayal used to live together. One day, having found it difficult to afford the cost of living in their area, they

discussed together and decided to go to the market to be sold and serve human beings. As soon as they reached the market, falsehood was sold immediately. It was an expert who bought it. After a while, betrayal was sold; this time it was a woman who bought it. Now, it was only truth who was left alone in the market. Truth could not find anyone to buy him and stayed in the market to the last minute. At the end, he lost hope and began his journey back to home. On the way to his home, he came across an old man. The old man asked him who he was and where he was coming from. The Truth told the man about himself one by one. Finally, the old man took truth to his home, and then after they began to live together.

Tale 14- The Reverted Speech

Once upon a time, two respected guests arrived at a certain man's house to ask his daughter for marriage for the other man's son. The two men were welcomed and given a chair. Then the wife was asked to make coffee soon. While she was roasting coffee from inside, she farted loudly and became ashamed of it. Then she wanted to divert attention and sent the child who was sitting beneath her to the guests to tell them that it was he who farted then. She warned the child to say directly, "It was me who farted now." No more word! The child, however, worsened the situation. He honestly reported, mum said that it was her who farted then.

Tale 15- The Cheated Woman

Long ago, there lived a husband and his wife. Once in time, they begot a child and called the sister of the wife to their home so that she would help the wife (her sister) in taking care of the child. One night, after he had checked that his wife was sleeping, the husband stood up from bed slowly and went to sleep with his sister-in-law. While he was struggling with the girl, the newborn child cried suddenly. Immediately, the wife woke up and switched on the lamp. Meanwhile, she saw her husband crawling to the bed and asked him what he was doing. "Are you mad man, tell me what you are doing?" she insisted. Then, the husband replied, "I am showing your sister how to teach crawling our baby."

Then, she kept quiet thinking that it was true. That is the way the man deceived his wife and saved himself from being blamed, it was said.

Tale 16- The Clever Guest & the Mean Couple

Once upon a time, a man became tired after a long journey and wanted to stay the night in a certain house. He asked the owners (husband and wife) to let him stay the night with them. Since he was very hungry, he also inquired them to give him some food. The wife told him that there was not anything to be eaten at home. However, they allowed him to stay the night with them. They gave him a stick to keep away a calf in case it comes to him in the evening. She persuaded her husband that she would prepare the dinner after the man sleeps. The husband agreed and accepted her idea. The guest, however, had heard this conspiracy. Then, they slept and so did the guest. After a while, the wife stood up and began to make porridge. The husband was, however, sleeping. Meanwhile, the guest was listening to what she was doing. When he was sure that she made it ready, he stood up slowly, went to the bed and pretended sleeping beneath her husband. The wife went to the bed to wake her husband up for the dinner. Since it was dark, she touched the guest and woke him up thinking that he was her husband. Then, the guest hurriedly woke up and ate his dinner with the wife while her husband was sleeping. When he ate to his fill, he whispered to the wife to give him water. She gave him the water and made him wash his hands. Then she went to the kitchen to put the dish. Meanwhile, he slowly returned to his former place (bed). Finally, she went to the bed and lied on the bed embracing her husband with her wet hands. The husband now woke up and asked her why her hands were so wet. She told him that she washed her hands after the meal. "Which meal are you talking about?" he asked her. "The one we ate now together," she replied. He told her that he did not eat any thing. Then, she stood up and approached the man (guest) to sniff his hands incase he had cheated her. Meanwhile, the guest beat her with the stick he had been provided to keep the calf away from him before. That was how the guest ate his dinner cheating the mean couples, it was said.

Tale 17- Discuss Together

Long ago, there lived a husband and a wife. They had no enough property and they live by working for others to cope with the then cost of living. They sometimes borrow money from their neighbors until they get their wage. The wife had a secret lover who leads a better life than them. One day, the wife urged her husband to go and borrow

some money from her lover, purposefully, so that her lover visits her frequently under the pretext of asking for his money. Being unaware of this plot, the husband went to his wife's lover home and asked to lend him some money. The person happily welcomed him and gave him the money he needed. The husband could not refund the money on time. As a result, the lover began to visit the couple's house for dual purposes. If the husband is at home, he merely asks his money and returns home complaining. If the husband is not at home, he enjoys the wife and returns home without any query about his money. As usual, one day, he went to visit his mistress thinking that her husband was not around. Unfortunately, the husband was at home, sleeping on the bed. Soon he reached home, the lover lifted up his mistress and took her to the bed to sleep with her. There, he saw the husband on the bed and became nervous. The husband asked him what he was doing. He responded, "I brought her here with you so that you discuss together and give me back the money you borrowed."

Tale 18- A False Dream

Long ago, there lived a girl and her boy friend. They love each other too much, and hence they sometimes stay the night together secretly. One day, the girl appointed her friend to come and stay the night with her around their home when her parents sleep. She warned him not to call her loudly, and even not to whisper through a hole so as to declare his arrival when he comes. She told him that she would tie a rope on her leg and leave the tip of the rope outside so that when he arrives he would pull the rope to wake her up and indicate his arrival. Her friend agreed and promised to do as she told him. That night, the girl and her parents slept on time. Unfortunately, while she was sleeping, her father woke up and went out to pass out his urine. On his way out, he was obstructed by the rope and fell down. Meanwhile, the rope was pulled and the girl woke up and went out hurriedly thinking that it was her boy friend who arrived. She opened the door quietly and without realizing the person, she embraced and began to kiss him. As he was so nervous, her father could not breathe a word. After a while, he asked what has happened to her. When she realized that it was her father, she fainted and said, "so... sorry father, I was in a dream".

Tale 19- The Unfortunate Lover

Once upon a time, there lived a husband and a wife. The husband was so clever that he would go to the field in the morning and return at dusk. But the wife was so lazy that she would not even prepare meal when he returns from work; rather she has a lover whom she feeds very well when her husband was not at home. One day, the husband became very angry and inquired her why she did not prepare him a lunch. She insulted him in response, and told him to prepare for himself if he needed. The husband, however, did not say anything, and the next day, he went to a certain old man, who was believed to be good at solving the problem between a husband and a wife and consulted him. The man advised him to pretend a blind man after that day onwards to check her love to him. He accepted the advice and went back home. As soon as he reached home, he told his wife that he became blind unknowingly. Then she became very happy and declared the news to her lover. She called her lover to see the reality on the spot. Her lover came and tried to check whether he could see or not. Since her husband was good at pretending, he could not disprove; thus, he said that he was truly blind. Then he slowly and quietly lifted his mistress and took her to the bed. Soon, the husband opened his eyes and caught both of them red-handed. Finally, he stabbed the man with his knife and killed him on the bed and she escaped while he was fighting with the man.

Tale 20- The Poor Couple

Long ago, there lived a husband and a wife. Since they were so poor, they found it difficult to afford the cost of living. Hence, one day, they decided to leave their area in search for a better life. They began their journey and after a day they came across a certain rich farmer who was ploughing a land with a pair of oxen. As she saw the farmer, the wife immediately changed her mind and told her husband that she would fool the farmer and take one of his oxen. "How would you fool him," her husband inquired. She responded, "I will take off my clothes, stand near that tree and dance." "Hopefully, he would stop plowing and come to ask what was wrong with me." "At that time, you quickly go and release one of the oxen and take it away through this forest," She added. Then, she took off her clothes and began to sing wondering here and there. Soon, the farmer stopped plowing and went to ask what happened to her. Meanwhile, the husband

released one of the oxen and took it away through the forest. The farmer asked the woman, "What is wrong with you. Why do you dance on bare body?" She replied, "Why do you plough a land with a single ox your self?" "Do you have a problem?" she added. When he looked back at his farmland, one of his oxen was missing. Being confused, he left her alone and went in the forest in the other direction to check the missing ox around. Then, the woman disappeared in the forest quickly and joined her husband. That was the way the woman fooled the farmer and took the ox.

Tale 21 – In Search for Virginity

Once up on a time, there lived a rich man who had only one son. The son has reached the age at which he marries. As a result, his father wanted him to marry a girl. He warned him, "If you marry a girl who is not virgin, you will not inherit my property." In order to tell me that the girl you married is virgin, you wear a white cloth and go out that night. "That time, I will fire a bullet in the sky to congratulate you and the neighbors," he added. The boy agreed and began to search for a wife. One day, he got a beautiful girl, and made arrangements for the marriage. He married and slept with her that night. He discovered that she was not virgin. He immediately sent her back to her family. After a short time, he married another girl. Still, he was not successful; she was not virgin. He became so embarrassed and generalized that it was his fate. He sent her back to her family again. For the third time, he married another girl. Now, he became lucky; she was virgin. He wore a white cloth and appeared to his father. His father became very happy and fired a bullet in the sky. Finally, the boy succeeded in inheriting his father's property by marrying a virgin girl.

Tale 22- The Shameless Bride

Long ago, there lived an old lady who had a son. Since she was getting older and older, she needed someone to help her with the household chores at home. She told her son to search and marry a girl who is clever at work. Then, the boy found a beautiful girl and sent two elders to the girl's parents to ask their daughter for him. When the day had come, the boy being accompanied by his friends went and brought the bride to home. After they stayed together for a short period of time, he discovered that she was a kind of girl who likes sleeping. One day, he went for farming in the morning while she was sleeping. When he came back in the afternoon, he observed her lying on the bed. The

other day, he went for hunting while she was sleeping. He again found her lying on the bed without preparing anything for him. He became angry and asked her why she did not prepare him meal. She responded, "That is my nature, I can not help you." Then the boy decided to divorce and marry another girl. His mother, however, cooled him down, and promised to advise her so that she would correct her behavior. His mother advised her time and again, but there was no change in behavior with the bride. Then the mother devised a strategy in which she would initiate the bride to work. She said to her boy, "Tomorrow morning, I will wake up early and start cleaning the room; meanwhile, you do also wake up and pretend you will help me: this time, she feels shame and stand to clean herself." "Let us try then," the son said. The next morning, the boy and his mother tried the tactic while she was sleeping. They began to converse loudly, "stop", "No," "I'll clean...." The wife heard them and said, "Ushi...do not shout at me; I am sleeping." "If you need, clean the room turn by turn; one of you today and the other tomorrow," she added. Finally, having lost his patience, the boy divorced her and married another hardworking girl.

Tale 23- The Burnt Lover

Once up on a time, there lived a husband and a wife. They had only one ox. The wife had a secret lover beneath him (her husband). She likes her lover more than she does her husband. One day, she wanted to send her husband to the market and stay the day with her lover. She had also the intention to feed him (lover) beef. Thus, she said to her husband, "Yesterday, I heard people saying the hide of an ox was sold worth 2000 birr." "I think you had better slaughter our ox and take its hide to the market so as to duplicate our ox," she added. At that time, the whole ox itself does not cost more than 500 birr. "That is really good news, we can buy four oxen with that money," the foolish husband said. Without any hesitation, he slaughtered his only oxen and took its hide to the market. When he took the hide to the market, he could not find any one to ask him. Every body began to laugh at him since it is not common to sell a hide at that time. That day, his wife passed a good day with her lover; she prepared beef and 'faros' – a local beer – and beautifully enjoyed the day with her lover. At the end, while returning home, the husband saw a certain man coming out of the house and entering an empty granary to hide himself. He kept quite, entered his house and sat down. The wife asked him why he did

not sell the hide. "It is not a hide which costs 2000 birr today, it is the ash of the granary," he responded. "I will burn it and take its ash to the market," he added. Then, he took the fire and burnt the container and her lover together. Later, he caught and stabbed her with a knife. While he was struggling to kill her, the neighbors came and helped her to escape.

Tale 24- The Blind Man and His Wife

Long ago, there lived a blind man and his wife. He was so rich and his wife was not as blind as he is. The couple were equal in height. The wife was very sexy; she had a number of lovers. Her blind husband knew everything about her. He told her repeatedly to stop her deeds. She, however, refused and continued committing adultery. As a result, her husband decided to kill her. Since he was disabled, he plotted to hang her tactically. He told her that he preferred to hang himself rather than live with her under such circumstances. When she heard this, she became very happy and said, "That is really a good decision." Then, he asked her to make ready the rope with which he would hang himself. She brought the rope and gave to him. Then, he told her, "Tie the rope on the roof and suspend it." She did and said, I have tied it up." Then he asked her to bring a table on which he would stand to reach the rope. She brought the table and laid down. Finally, he asked her to step on the table and tie the rope on her neck and show him whether the suspended rope is to his height or not. "Since we are equal in height, I can show you," she said and tied the rope on her neck stepping on the table. Meanwhile, her husband pulled the table quickly and she was left on the rope being suspended. That was the way the blind man hung his adulterous wife, it was said.

Tale 25- The Patient Boy

Once up on a time, there lived a boy. He loved a girl and asked her for marriage. She, however, refused to marry him. She did not love him. In spite of her unwillingness, he continued persuading her for marriage patiently. Yet, the girl refused to change her mind. One day, he asked her for the last time. This time, she showed her willingness on condition that he would fold the earth and show her. Then, the boy went to a local seer's house and demanded help on how to fold the earth. He told the seer what she has said to him. Then, the seer advised him to pretend that he was ready to fold it. He advised him to

go and tell her that he was ready to fold the earth as she demanded. As he was advised, the boy went to her and said, "My love, I am ready to fold the earth; leave the ground and escape; unless and otherwise you will be folded together." This time, the girl begged him to stop folding the earth and agreed to marry him.

Tale 26- The Obstinate Wives

Long ago, there lived a man who had three wives. One of the wives had only one tooth; the other had only one hair, and the third had only one finger. They were obstinate and did not obey what their husband used to inquire them to do. One day, their husband wanted to go to the market to buy clothes for himself. He ordered the one who had only one tooth to look after the cattle until he would go to the market and return. She told him that she would not stay at home that day. She said, "I will go and get the gum of my teeth dyed." Then the husband asked the one who had only one hair to stay at home. She also refused to stay at home and said, "I will go and get my hair made." Finally, the man asked the third one, who had only one finger. She also refused him. She told him that she would go to the market to buy a ring for her finger. Finally, the man became annoyed and cancelled his intention of going to the market and stayed at home for himself. When they returned from where they went at dusk, the man quarreled them and refused to let them into his house and sent them away.

Tale 27- The Foolish She-monkey

Once up on a time, there lived a monkey who had no wife. He was poor, too. While he was wondering in search for a female, one day, he came across a she-monkey who was weeding in her garden alone. Her husband died a year before; she was alone. Then, the he-monkey approached and asked her, "Why do you suffer that much (weeding alone) while it is possible to sit and eat without any work?" The she-monkey reacted, "How and where is it possible to sit and eat without working?" The monkey told her that he had lots of property that is suffice not only for her but also for others. In reality, he even had nothing to eat for himself. He persuaded her to accompany him to his home through the forest. She was convinced and followed him. He mated her in the forest and told her to stay there for some days. She agreed but asked him to give her something to be eaten as she was too hungry. Being on the tree, he showed her a certain rich man's

compound and told her that it belonged to him. He, then, told her to go and take some food and bring some for him. Thinking that it was true, she went to the compound to eat some food.

There, the owners caught her and beat seriously. She cried and called to him why he would keep quiet while they were beating her. He said, " Sorry, madam, I can not help you." Finally, he ran away and escaped, leaving her in the hands of the enemy.

Tale 28- The Cruel Wife

Once up on time, there lived a husband and a wife who used to quarrel every time. One day, they accused each other of being cruel and brought the case to a local chief. The wife told the chief that her husband beat her and the children cruelly all the time and sometimes boast that he was not afraid of anyone in the village. The husband, on his part, told the chief that she was the harshest, stupidest and cruelest of all the women. He added that she nags him day and night and sometimes seizes a knife to kill him. The chief listened to the couples and asked them to come to him for advice turn by turn. He wanted to check who is right and devised a means of checking it. First he told the husband to cut off his wife's neck and bring to him so that he would give him his daughter and a certain plot of land. He also promised the wife that he would marry her and make his own if she cuts off her husband's neck and bring the head to him. The husband thought over it and refused to do so and kept quiet. The wife, however, one day, gave him a poison with a local drink. The husband drank it and died soon. Then she cut off his neck and brought the head to the chief. As soon as he saw the head of the man, the chief shocked and became very sympathetic to the man. Soon, he ordered his guards to whip her 40 times and take her out of his sight.

Tale 29 – The Thief old Lady

Once up on a time, an old lady stole onions from the garden of her neighbors to make 'ittoo' with it. The owners thought that their onions were stolen by somebody around and began to search the thief. But they do not know who really stole their onions. They called their neighbors together and began to sniff everybody to identify the thief by smell. Having sniffed all, they reached near the old lady, who stole the onions. As soon as

they approached her, the lady said, "Stop; I am not young to be sniffed; I was sniffed once when I was young. I will never be sniffed twice." Finally the victims left her without sniffing and that was the way she saved herself.

Tale 30- The Girl and Her Mother's Lover

Once upon a time, the woman was weeding in the garden, while her daughter was preparing food inside the house. Meanwhile, the lover of the mother came and entered the house. He asked the girl, "Where is your mother?" She told him that she was weeding in the garden. Then the man requested her to call for him. The girl called her mother and told that her secret man had arrived. The mother became happy and told her to go to the river and fetch some water so that she would be free. The girl, however, told the man to accompany her to the river and wait for her there. The man did as he was told. When they reached near the river, the girl told the man that her mother was waiting for another lover. The man became very angry and wanted to go back immediately and see the reality. Soon the girl embraced the man and kissed him once. Then, the man took her to the nearby forest and slept with her. After she returned from the river, the girl told her mother that the man hated her. She said, "The man told me that he came to inform you that he did not need you." Finally, the mother became angry and said, "Who begged him to come first?"

Tale 31- The Selfish Wife and Her Silly Husband

Long ago there lived, a silly farmer who married a clever wife. Having observed her husband's stupidity, the wife cheated him several times. She used to prepare food and eat alone most of the time. One day she prepared 'shiro' and gave him to eat while she melted some butter to eat with for herself later. She used to cheat him that she preferred to eat with clear water than with 'shiro'. She repeatedly cheated the man by saying, "I do not like to eat with 'shiro' but with clear water". One day her husband went to visit a friend and told him that his wife did not like to eat with 'shiro' except clear water." Then his friend asked him, "Have you checked whether it is truly water or not?" "Of course not," the silly man responded. "Listen, my friend, your wife is deceiving you!" After all, when she will tell you, "I dine with this water", you do also say, "I too will dine like you with this water, and eat what she eats," his friend advised. That day, he came back home

thinking: "very well, my friend has given me a good advice!" His wife, believing it was like the other days, melted some butter for herself and served the "shiro" to her husband. She said: "I will eat my bread with this water" and she started to eat. He too said: "I will also eat with you." "How would I ever eat this 'shiro' while you eat water all the time?" he added and began to eat with her. He dipped his bread in the dish and realized that it was butter indeed, as his friend told him. Soon he caught his wife and began to beat her with a whip. When her whole body was bleeding, he left and let her go. After that day onwards, he told her to leave his home and go to her parents.

Tale 32- The Step Mother and Children

Once upon a time, there lived a husband and a wife who had two children. One day, the wife became sick and died unexpectedly. After some times, the husband married another wife and brought to his home. He did not tell her that he had two children from the former wife. The new wife arrived at home and saw the children. She asked him, "Whose children are they?" The man responded, "They are mine." Then, she told him that she would not live with him unless he threw them out. The next day, she went to the river to fetch some water, warning the man, "I do not want to see these children when I come back from the river." The man nodded his head and said, "That is all right; I shall throw them out." But he did not really want to miss his children. He devised a mechanism in which he would keep the children at home for some days. Soon, he put the children in the granary and ordered them not to speak any word for some days. He promised that he would provide them meal in the granary as necessary. When she returned from the river, he wanted to fool her and said, "Some minutes before your arrival, the god of my father told me that he is living in the granary." "He warned me to give him food three times a day: on breakfast, lunch and dinner," he added. The man warned his wife not look in the granary for some five days. "Very well," said the wife and began to throw some food in the granary three times per day. One day, a certain woman came at the new wife's home to get her hair made. While they were gossiping, the stepmother said, "My husband has taken his children away from me and I have no one to take care of." "But he told me to provide his father's god, who lives in the granary, with some food three times a day," she added. The woman with whom she was talking told her that her husband was fooling her.

She told her that he was making her feed his children in the granary; and advised her to check whether it was true or false. As she was advised, the stepmother immediately went to the granary and discovered the children inside. Soon she boiled water and spilled in the granary and killed the two children there.

Tale 33- The Woman and A Dead Tiger

Once up on a time, there lived a woman whose house was near a king's palace. One day, while she was returning from the market, she saw a dead tiger lying on the road. She did not realize that the tiger was dead. She threw a stone at the dead tiger and hit it. Since it was dead, the tiger did not respond. She collected some stones from the ground and struck it several times. Later, she thought that she killed it and came close to the tiger and took it in her hands. "I shall give it to the king", she said. She skinned it and brought the hide to the king; "I have killed a tiger alive and I have brought the hide to you," she said. The king gave her clothes, sheep and oxen in return. A week later, she came across another tiger, alive now, lying on the road. She said to herself, "I shall kill this one again and take the hide to the king as before." She collected some stones and began to throw at the tiger. Meanwhile, the tiger became angry at the lady, sprang up and devoured her.

Tale 34-Akkoo Maanooyyee

Long ago there lived a queen named Akkoo Maanooyyee. It was said that she had unlimited power and highly dictatorial. During her reign, people had suffered a lot, as she used to order them to do everything including the impossible ones. She used to enjoy challenging people, and as a result, people became restless under her dictatorial reign. Even though the elders advised not to behave unusually, she neglected their idea and continued her deeds. Later, the elders began to advise the people not to accept her orders. As a result, she hated the elders and wanted to exterminate them all who try to divert her work scheme. One day, she ordered the people to collect together and kill all the elders in her territory. The people agreed and killed the elders in the country. However, one of the elders begged them not to kill him so that he would be a medicine for them in times of difficulties. The people agreed and kept him secretly without telling Akkoo Maanooyyee. After a while, Akkoo Maanooyyee ordered the people to cover the land in her territory with blue color. Then the people went to the remaining elder and asked what to do. The

man advised them to burn all the vegetation on the ground at night and show her in the morning. The people did burn the vegetation and showed her in the morning. "Who told you to do so?" the queen asked them. "We did it ourselves," the people said. Then the queen ordered them to build a house for her, suspending on the on the air. Having been confused, the people again went to the old man to seek for advice. Then, the elder told them to collect all the materials for making a house and make it ready. "After that, call her and ask to lay a foundation for her house, as it is the owner who first lays a base for his/her house," he said. The people did as the old man advised them. As she realized that it is impossible to make a house on the air, she told them to leave and go back to their homes. The next day, she summoned the people and ordered them to search and bring her a horse that flies in the sky like a bird. The people asked her, "From where can we get this flying horse, our queen?" "Explore the entire world and bring to me; I cannot tell you where such a horse is found," she responded. Then, the people thought over it and went to the old man for advice again. The old man advised them to go to the dessert, catch a zebra and bring to her. "After that, you put the queen on the back of the zebra, tie her down and leave; soon the zebra will run away and take her to the dessert," he said. The people did as they were told. Meanwhile, the zebra became nervous, ran away through the dessert and killed the queen.