

## The Distinctive Features of Menzuma as a Genre of its Own and the Functions it Serve for the Muslim Community of Wollo: An Ethnographic Approach

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### Abstract

This is a study on manzuma; its attributes and roles for Wollo Muslim Community. The data collected was part of the six month participant observation for my PhD work entitled 'Ethnography of Communication of the Amharic Speaking Muslim Community of Wollo'. The first section illustrates the features of manzuma which mark it as a distinctive genre of its own kind. The basic features of lexical set, script, content, accompanying instruments, rhyme and rhythm. The second section states about the different functions of manzuma. It explores the roles of manzuma in the speech community with reference to the situation, setting/scene and the participants. Menzuma is used for different purposes in Wollo. It is part of cultural, religious and artistic rituals and performances. It is a tool for prayer, religious chant, cultural music, historic narrative, medication and so on. The people of Wollo are accustomed to expressing their culture, history, love, and overall lives through poetry and music. Songs and Menzuma are typical lifestyles of the Wollo society.

**Keywords:** Menzuma; Cultural performance; Social practice; Genre; Ethnography

### Introduction

Wollo is one of the historically and culturally rich places in Ethiopia. There are different significant values in Wollo that waits research. Historically, both Christianity and Islam have lived for long in Wollo. Of the entire Amhara region, Wollo is where a large number of Muslims live. Wollo is a place where people of different ethnic groups, beliefs and cultures are believed to have coexisted peacefully.

The four musical melodies of Ethiopia, Anchihoiyelene, Tizita, Bati, and Ambasel, are found in Wollo. Tizita was known as Wollo before it was renamed as such. The melodies are named after the names of places of Wollo. This shows that the people are accustomed to expressing their culture, history, love, and overall lives through their music. Songs and Menzuma are typical lifestyles of the Wollo society. The place of Music and Menzuma is recited in the next poem.

'ände bāzāfānu 'ände bāmānzuma once with music once with Menzuma, siyawādds ywəlall yāfqqrn zema. He commemorates love rhythms.

Menzuma is a genre of music composed for the performance of religious ceremonies. Menzuma is a major artistic work performed by Wollo 'Ulemas' (Muslim religious scholars). The people of Wollo have used Menzuma for many years for different purposes. They use it for prayer, teaching their religion, to preserve their culture, to teach moral values, used as traditional medicine and to document history. Among the well-known Wollo Menzuma performers in Wollo are Sheikh Husen Jibril, the Arsi Emebet (Yejuje), the Mersa Aba Getye, the Guna Nigus (Yejuje), the Dessie's Tengego Sheikh and the recent Sheikh Mohammed Awol. These people are known even outside of Wollo by their Menzuma chants. Menzuma as an art and cultural performance is a great contribution to both the academic and the social world. The university could contribute by promoting investigations about Menzuma to enhance "Collaborated Efforts towards Preserving Endangered Indigenous Arts".

### Study Objective

It is the purpose of this study to explore the functions and features of Manzuma as a significant communicative event in the Muslim Community of Wollo.

### Specifically, this study aims to

- Identify the marking features of Manzuma that identifies it as a genre of its own kind.
- Illustrate the functions that Manzuma serve for the Muslim Community of Wollo.

### Methodology

The Manzumas of Shekh Hussen Geta, Shekh Husein Jibril, Shekh Muhammed Awol, Shekh Ahmed Yasin, Unanimous Abegar (Female as well as male Manzuma leader) and Jano are taken for the analysis of this study. Data on the role of Manzuma for the Wollo Muslim community was collected through participant observation in the target community. Interviewing, participant observation and discussion result in identifying the functions of Manzuma for the speech group in question. For the analysis, Dell Hymes' analysis of discourse of speaking was employed. This study analyzes Manzuma from its artistic value as a genre and cultural and social value as a social practice for the target community.

### The distinctive features of Manzuma

Menzuma is a genre of music composed for the performance of

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Received April 28, 2016; Accepted May 25, 2016; Published May 31, 2016

Citation: Hassen R (2016) The Distinctive Features of Menzuma as a Genre of its Own and the Functions it Serve for the Muslim Community of Wollo: An Ethnographic Approach. Arts Social Sci J 7: 190. doi:10.4172/2151-6200.1000190

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religious ceremonies. Manzuma poem is a distinct genre in Islamic prayers [1]. It is an Ethiopian Islamic devotional chant to praise and honour Allah and the Prophet. Menzuma is a Zikr the major objective of which is to praise and honour Allah and the Prophet. It is a very common melodic panegyric for the Muslim Community of Wollo.

The features of Manzuma that makes it a genre in its own right are briefly discussed in this section. By features, we mean the marks that identify Manzuma as a distinct, marked and non-casual communicative event that holds on to a serious and significant purpose.

Among the many features that mark manzuma as a distinct genre include the lexical set, extensive use of code-mixing and code-switching, in-group code, ajemi script, distinct melody, its own chorus, distinct rhyme and rhythm, its own instrument, poetic and distinctive discourse. These marking features of especially Wollo Menzuma will be briefly discussed in the subsequent sections.

**Lexical set:** The Wollo Amharic Menzuma has its own lexical stock. The stock of lexicon or words used in Wollo Amharic Menzuma are found to be Amharic, Oromifa and Arabic which is the typical attribute of the Amharic dialect of Wollo.

**Arabic loan words:** There are many Arabic loan words used in Menzuma verses. In fact, sometimes the Arabic words outweigh the Amharic words especially when the topic is religious concept.

For example: In Shekh Ahmed Yasin Menzuma we find

- ግኝነት ያልኩህን ነብስያ በለው
- አምስቶቹ ደሞ ሰልቢያ ናቸው
- ሰባት መክኒ መክኒውያ ጋራ
- አስራራት ናቸው አስብተው አትፍራ
- መክኒውያ እነዚህ ሆኖ ዋጅብ በል
- ግልባጫቸው ደሞ ሆኖ ሙስተሂል
- መስራትና መተው እኩል ነው ላላህ
- መምኪን ነው መጠሪያው ጃኢዝ በል ቢሻህ

In these verses, the majority of the words are borrowed from Arabic. Many of them are not understood by the common people. A great deal of borrowed words is used in Menzuma. Some of the most common borrowed words from Arabic include the following Table 1.

**Amharic variety of Wollo:** In Wollo Menzuma, there are many words that are the regional Wollo variety Amharic. Some of them are shown in Table 2.

**Oromifa loan words:** A great deal of Oromifa loan words are also common in wollo manzuma. Some of the most common words include in Table 3.

The majority of the loan words do exist in the everyday language of the Muslim Community of Wollo. But not all borrowed words are there in the in-group code. There are also those borrowed words (especially

Word	Meaning	Word	Meaning	Word	Meaning	word	Meaning
ዱአ	ጸሎት	ወስዋሽ	ጎትጎት	ሂርዝ	መዳኒት/ክታብ	ሱቢህ	የፈጅር ሰላት

Table 1: Borrowed words from Arabic.

Word	Meaning	Word	Meaning	Word	Meaning
ቋንጤ	መቀመጫ	አሳቸው	አነሱ	ማግለል	ጎራ ማለት

Table 2: Wollo variety Amharic.

Word	Meaning	Word	Meaning	Word	Meaning
ዱቦርቲ	ባሉቴት	ቆሪ	የንጩት ሰህን	ገለታ	ውለታ

Table 3: Oromifa loan words.

from Arabic) that only the scholars understand. These words are not translated because they felt that to explain Islamic concepts, Arabic is just the only sufficient language.

**Code mixing and code switching:** There are different functions served by code-switching and code-mixing in each speech group. Ethnographic description recognizes this phenomenon as a dimension of communicative competence [2].

There is an extensive code mixing and code switching between Arabic and Amharic in Menzuma. Pure Amharic detached from Arabic mixing is never used in Wollo Menzuma. In fact, this is true of all communicative events of the Muslim community of Wollo. They deliberately mix extensive Arabic expressions at mainly word and sentence level.

As the speech community justify such a use, Amharic is not sufficient to explain Islam. Nor is any other language than Arabic. Mixing Arabic with the local code is used as an accommodation method to empower the local code to explain Islam.

- አላሁ-መሰሌ አላሙ-ሀመዴ (Arabic)
- አላሁ-መሰሌ አላሙ-ሀመዴ (Arabic)
- ወአሊሂ ወሰሊማለይሂ (Arabic)
- ቢሰሚላሂ ብየ ኪታቢን ልጅምር (Mixed Arabic and Amharic)
- ተውሂድ በሚሉት ፈን በሀበሽ ንግግር። (Mixed Arabic and Amharic)
- በጧትም በማታም ጌታን ላመስግነው (Amharic)
- ቢያስደሳም ቢያስከፋም ምን ግዜም ምስጉን ነው። (Amharic)
- አሰላቱ ሰላም ሚነላሂ ሰመድ (Arabic)
- ባላህ መልክተኛ ይውረድ በሙሀመድ። (Amharic)

The poem starts with Arabic, and then it shifts to Amharic. The first three verses are Arabic. It is a very popular phrasing of praising Prophet Muhammed. It is called Solowat Ale Nebi. It is honouring and praying peace and blessing for the Prophet. The fourth verse mixes both Amharic and Arabic. It begins with the name of Allah 'Bismillahi' (which means by the name of Allah). Then comes 'kitab' (which means book). These phrases, for example, have equivalent translation in Amharic but they are never translated.

After the first three Arabic verses, the poem shifts the code from Arabic to mixing Amharic and Arabic. Then, it continues to mix the two codes or shifts between Amharic and Arabic. This is typical of the manzuma poems.

**In-group code of Wollo Amharic:** The in-group code of ASMCW is a typical feature of Wollo Menzuma. The code contains loan words of Arabic and Oromifa. It also has the local variety of Wollo dialect. It contains words, phrases and sentences that reflect the communication behaviour of the speech group.

- ሴት ወንዱን አባብሎ በሱ መንገድ ዶለ
- የሰላምን ልጅ ሁላ ሰላት ከለከለ።
- የኢብሊስን ምክር ሁሉም አዳመጠ
- ትንሹም ትልቁም አዱንያን መረጠ።

ስራው ያስገርማል ከቶ ያደም ልጅ  
 ለዱንያ መንገብገብ ተወልዶ አስተያረጅ።  
 የሂሰድን ዘበኛ ጌታችን አዘዘው  
 በጎሚ ሴት ወንዱን አስበሱ አያያዘው።

The underlined terms are typical of the Wollo dialect expressions. Some are Arabic, some Oromifa and some are Amharic with regard to their origin (Table 4).

**Script:** Many of the Amharic Menzumas are written by Arabic script with the language described so far. Such writing system is known as Ajemi. The script is Arabic but the language is the local in-group code. Ajem is Amharic verses written in Arabic script [1,3-5]. As Hussien [3] and Kemal [5] stated, this is justified because of either:

- Amharic is extremely related to Christianity. The church education starting from (Priest School) begins with Amharic sounds and Alphabets. Even the word ‘Temari’ (Student) is used to refer to those who follow church education in churches. The word Amharic is used to refer to Christianity. This extreme attachment of Ethiopic script to Amharic and Amharic to Christianity forces or leaves the Muslim scholars with no choice but to abandon Amharic scripts all together to Christianity. So, the Muslim scholars especially of the olden days are ignorant of Amharic scripts.
- Islam is best explained through Arabic as every language is complete in the sense that it can best explain its cultures. This suggests that Islam is best explained with Arabic than any other language. Because of these and other reasons, the Wollo Muslim scholars are knowledgeable with Arabic scripts than Amharic or Ethiopic. But this knowledge is not disseminated and the common people do not use Arabic but Amharic. The scholars thought that for the common people to understand what they are saying, they need to use the local language or the regional dialect. The script they are familiar with is Arabic, so they accommodate Arabic scripts to write Amharic verses.

**Melodic:** Menzuma is musical with a distinctive rhythm, rhyme and Musical instruments of its own. The musical feature of Menzuma is unique and do not resemble any other non-spiritual songs. It has its own different style of music and beat.

**Chorus:** Many of the Menzumas have chorus which is called Ramsa in Wollo. The utterances produced simultaneously by a group are different according to the style of each choir or vocalist.

**For Example: Jano:** Jano has her own Ramsa. She uses the following chorus.

ወርቅየ ወርቅየ ሰላማለይኩም  
 ወዳጁ የኔ መውደድ  
 ዛቱ ጅነት ፊቱ ራህመት  
 ዘይኔ ነብየ የሀቢባላህ ሰላማለይኩም

The In-group code	The Amharic Meaning
ዶላ	ጨመረ
አዱንያን	አለም/ሀብት
ከቶ	ለመሆኑ
በጎሚ	በቂም

Table 4: Wollo dialect expressions.

**Shekh Husen:** Shekh Husein has his own chorus. Some of the most common Ramsa he uses include:

እንዴኑ እንዴኑ እንዴኑ ሙሀመድ  
 የላይ ገንዳው ዘማች  
 የሚያምረው ሙሀመድ

**Unanimous:** In live Duaes (prayers), there are many different choruses. The first of the following Ramsa is very common among females and the last two are very common among male choir in Wollo.

ኸረ አሚን ኸረ አሚን ኸረ አሚን ኸረ አሚን አሚን አሚን  
 ዘይኑ ነቢ ዘይኑ ነብየ ዘይኑ ነቢ ዘይኑ ነብየ የሀቢቢ ሰላማለይኩም  
 አላሁ መሰሌ ወስሊ ማለላ ሰይዲና መውላና ሙሀመድ ወአላ አሊ ሰይዲና ሙሀመድ

**Rhyme and Rhythm**

Rhythm is the beat, the patterned and recurring alternations of contrasting elements of sounds or speeches in music. This refers to the kind of pattern formed by a series of notes differing in duration and stress. Menzuma has its own musical beat known as ‘engurguro’, ‘dibe’, engero and so on.

Rhyme, rime or verse refers to the identity in sounds of some part especially the end of words or lines of verse. In Menzuma verse, there is a regular recurrence of sounds. This is of three types.

**All Last verses have the same rime till the chorus**

ሙሀመድል አሚን ምርኩዜ ጉልበቱ  
 የጌታ ሙሀመድ ምርኩዜ ጉልበቱ  
 ምኑው በስምዖ አለመወትወቱ  
 አንቱን ነው ያመንኩት ለጨለማው ቤቱ  
 ድንግርግር ሲለኝ ሲጠፋ ጉልበቱ  
 ዋቢየ አንቱ ነሁ መድረሻ ምኞቱ  
 ወረቱ  
 (ራምሳ)  
 ጋሻ ጦሬ አንቱ ነሁ ቆሚ ለጥላቱ  
 መሳሪያየ አንቱ ነሁ ሸጉጤ ጥይቱ  
 በክፉ ለሚያየኝ መርዝ መዳኒቱ  
 ወረቱ  
 (ራምሳ)

**All but the last verse have the same rime till the chorus and all the end verses that come immediately before the chorus have the same rime**

ወይ ንግድ አልነገድኩኝ ወይ አላረስኩ እርሻ  
 ወይ ከስብ ከስቤ አላገኘሁ ድርሻ  
 ወይ ኢልም አልቀራሁኝ ለነብሴ ማደሻ  
 እኔስ ተደናገርኩ አጣሁኝ መድረሻ  
 እሩሄ በጦይባ ጅስሜ በሀበሻ  
 ተንግዲህስ ወዳ ጌታየ ከይርሻ

ከደራሀሀ አፈር እንዳገኝ ቅምሻ  
ሂወቱን ሀያቱን ተሳቸው ጋር ባንድ  
(ራምሳ) choir  
ሰላትና ሰላም በሙሀመድ ላይ  
አትርፎታል መርጦ በአለሙ ላይ  
ይገረፉ ጧት ማታ በአለሙ ላይ  
በኩብዮችም ላይ በሰህቦችም ላይ  
ካላህ ዘንድ ግምጃ ቤት ከላይ  
የከውኑ ነገር ይቀመጥ በሆድ  
(ራምሳ)

**Every two or three verses have the same rime with the chorus or otherwise**

አንቱ ጥሩኝ እንጅ ወላሂ ላልቀር  
እንኳን በውሀና በሰላት ቢታጠር  
የመዲና ንፋስ ንፈሽ ንፈሽ  
የዛን የደግ ሰው ድካውን ይዘሽ  
ምነው ባደረገኝ ክንፍ ያለው አሞራ  
አይቸው በመጣሁ የመካን ተራራ

**Instruments**

The only common musical instrument used in Menzuma is the drum. It is often accompanied with clapping. This is typical of the hottest chorus (Ramsa). Not all Menzumas accompany drum and clapping. For the kinds of manzuma that need ‘dibe’, drum and clapping is common. However, many menzuma with chorus or otherwise do not accompany any instruments.

**Poetry**

Menzuma is organized in poetic form rather than prose or narration. Poetry is a literature in metrical form. Amharic Menzuma with the style of narration is not common at least in Wollo. There are many stories narrated through poems.

**Discourse**

The discourse of manzuma shapes and reshapes the values, attitudes and practices of the Wollo Muslims. The content of manzuma is of many. It touches up on all issues that is to do with historical, cultural and religious aspects of Islam and Muslims. Many of the menzumas are concerned with one or the other of the following themes.

- Tewhid, Zikr, Sifet of Allah
- Solawat Ale Nebi
- Sira and Kiswa of the Prophet
- Iblis
- Jihad and Advantages of the great Ulemas of Ethiopia
- Wedding
- Ahlel Bet
- Hajj, Zekah and other practices of Islam

- Other worldly and religious issues of the benefits of good deeds and the consequences of bad deeds.

Of all the themes of Wollo manzuma, the majority is dedicated to appreciating, thanking and reminding of the prophet Muhammad. In the menzumas, the prophet is presented to be the most beloved human being ever.

**The Functions of Manzuma**

Among the significant Menzuma performers are Shekh Husen Jibril, The Arsi Emebet (Yejuye), The Mersa Aba Getye, The Guna Nigus (Yejuye), The Dessie’s Tengego shekh and the recent Shekh Muhamed Awol. These people are known even outside of Wollo.

Menzuma is an Arabic term which means to appreciate and admire (Ibid). Menzuma got great acceptance among the Shekhs, the followers and even the non-Muslim people of Wollo.

The Wollo Muslims are known by their Menzumas. Menzuma has its own respectful honor given by the people. Muslims of other areas also have attraction and appreciation for the Menzumas of Wollo.

Since Menzuma is recited by a very calm, sweet and beautiful tone beat and rhymes to Appreciate Allah, Prophet Muahammed, and teaches Islam by ordering good and forbidding from bad deeds, it has the power to take away hearts and bring intensive feeling.

In Wollo, it is very common to put grass, incenses, chat and other traditional elements when Menzuma is listened or song. The psychological state becomes hot by the spiritual chant of Menzuma in Mejlises. Mejlis is a place where people gather for spiritual purpose like prayer, solat, Dua, preaching and other forms of worship.

**Women also perform Menzuma**

Women also perform manzuma. They recite Salawat upon our beloved Prophet peace be upon him. Among the very common solawat they recite include ‘Yaa Nabi Salaam ‘alayka Yaa Rasul Salaam ‘alayka Yaa Habib Salaam ‘alayka Salawaatu’llah ‘alayka.’ This means salutations on you, O Prophet Salutations on you, O Messenger Salutations on you, O Beloved Blessings of Allah be upon you. A very common Menzuma is chanting in a melodious recitation of Mawlid, praising the Prophet (Peace be upon him), and sending Salaams on him.

Menzuma serves different purpose. It serves both as a means and as an end. Some of the functions of Menzuma for the Wollo Muslim Community include the following.

**Menzuma as a social practice sustain reality**

The reality manzuma sustains is the tradition and culture of Wollo Muslim community who use it as a major social practice in their day to day activities. It helps them hold on to their cultural values and brings about spiritual fulfilment in just performing it.

In wollo, there are many respected shekhs who are said to be four-eyed who can see the past and the future, among them are Shekh Husen Jibril, Shekh Muhammed Awol, and so on. These great scholars are known by their Menzumas. They used manzuma as a means of sustaining their tradition.

Menzuma is used as a good mechanism to sustain the tradion of Wollo Muslims. This includes their values (mostly Islamic but there are cultural values as well), language and norms. Menzuma is one of the techniques that document, record and sustain the tradition of the Muslim Wollo community just like the other non-religious songs.

Menzuma is one of the most common oral tradition in Wollo. Many of the elderly people are knowledgeable with leading manzuma sessions as they hold on to the sayings of their culture.

### **Artistic value**

Menzuma is an art. It is an art of its own kind. It praises and honours Allah and the Prophet in a very beautiful and artistic way. It is a great skill and performance. It is quite an art with its unique way.

### **Moral value**

Menzuma plays a great moral value. It is the major purpose of Menzuma to order good and forbid from evil. It is the major purpose of Menzuma to disseminate moral values. Many of the olden Menzumas that are common on live manzuma sessions are directed towards general moral values.

### **Historical value**

Menzuma relates history. It is one of the functions of manzuma to narrate historical happenings. Menzuma is also used to narrate significant incidents. For example, Shekh Husein Jibril's narrative poetry relates what happens to the Wollo Ulemas and the famine in Wollo. Menzuma recorded many historical events such as About Christianizing the Muslim of Wollo, About Famine of wollo, About 'Sefera' Displacement/Resettlement of Wollo and many others. In this regard, Shekh Husein Jibril was a great person who is known by his amazing sayings. He relates those sayings that many quote him for generations during chat sessions by Menzumas.

### **Affecting the spirit/casting out devil**

Menzuma is used to cast out devil from people who are believed to have been sick by the foot step of devil. This usually accompanies chat and other cultural elements like incense, grass, chat and so on. Ramsa (chorus) is the hottest that many get cured. Not all Muslims use Menzuma particularly for this purpose. However, there are a significant number of the Wollo Muslim and Christian community who actually use Menzuma for this purpose. It usually takes place in Dorih or Mejlises.

### **Mewlid**

This is to appreciate Prophet Muhammad. The birth day of Prophet Muahammed is celebrated as a holiday in Ethiopia. People prepare food and drink to celebrate the birthday of the prophet. Manzuma is one significant element that decorates Mewlid. Menzuma is inevitable in Mewlid.

### **Wodaja**

In Wollo Wodaja is a group prayer to ask God to help them relieve sickness, give them wealth, peace, honour, and so on. It is a must to have chat in Wodaja. Often times the menzuma is performed by the Ababar (leader) of the Wodaja. The rest of the members say the chorus which is called Ramsa. Menzuma is inevitable in Wollo Wodaja.

### **Ibadah/worship**

Menzuma is assumed to be Ibadah (Worship) on its own right. Those who listen to manzuma and those who perform it consider themselves as worshipping God by mere performing it. Such menzumas include:

- Solawat Ale Nebi: saying solawat is worshipping
- Tewhid: studying the oneness of Allah is worshipping

- Sira of the Prophet: studying the story of the prophet is Worshipping

### **Medium of Teaching or Learning Islam**

Menzuma is one major local medium of teaching Islam. Menzuma serves the purpose of teaching Islam and learning it. It is a good instrument of educating the religion. While the people are entertaining themselves with it, they take the moral as well. The different themes that almost accompany all kinds of spiritual and non-spiritual good deeds are advised to be followed and the bad deeds are forbidden and advised to be abandoned through Menzuma.

### **Neshata/Mood/Preoccupation**

Menzuma brings concentration. The concentration is so high that the attention of the people is captured. Chat itself is chewed for concentration to worship Allah by Wollo Muslims. They justify chat for its power to bring about total immersion of attention to the worship of Allah. Menzuma also serves the same purpose. It draws the attention to their God as it praises and honours him.

Many also use Menzuma while chewing chat alone for concentration, having secret prayer to God, crying and having a closer relationship with God. The Menzuma will be in cassette or CD or some experienced chewers would say it themselves for themselves with a servant/maid/kadami or alone.

### **Chat accompanying (even for the non-Muslims)**

Menzuma accompanies chat. When people gather to do group prayer or even a casual talk session with chat, often times Menzuma will be there. The non-Muslims will have a cassette playing it for them. But the Muslims will have the Abegar (leader) who will lead the Menzuma and the rest will say the chorus that is known as Ramsa. Many chat sessions are hardly performed without Menzuma. It is a significant element just like the chat itself. This is true especially of group prayer with chat.

### **Expression of love (of especially Allah and Rasul)**

Menzuma serves as a major mechanism of expression of love for Allah and Prophet Muhammed. Beside writing, preaching and thinking about Allah and the Prophet, many Wollo great Shekhs perform manzuma to express their love and appreciation. It served its function best with this regard [6].

The love that the Muslim believers have for Prophet Muhammed is expressed to be a killer that makes many sick and lose their minds. Menzuma did play a significant role in showing the love of the believers for their dearly loved messenger.

### **Entertainment**

Menzuma is performed for entertainment. There is no such thing as music or any kind of non-spiritual song allowed in Islam. As a replacement for these, people use Menzuma to recreate and please themselves, sing together or listen to it. Manzuma in wollo is the Amharic version of Neshida (religious Music). Because it is musical, people like to move, stand up and make some kind of dance like movement.

### **Menzuma as an expression of identity**

Menzuma is a good means of expression of identity. The Wollo Muslims express their identity through Menzuma. Many Woloye (irrespective of their religion Islam or Christianity) consider

Menzuma as their cultural element and would like to identify it as part of their culture. They say that it is theirs and some kind of owning or belongingness is attached to it when they hear it. It is like the Muslims' way of Wollo song. Three informants are quoted.

*I am orthodox christian, but loved mezuma has great moral value in it. It touches the soul. i even felt it is in my blood. We need more mazumas, to vitalise our minds... it helped me a lot...*

*I am a Christian born and raised in Wollo amongst my Muslim brothers and sisters. Every time I hear this it gets to me just like Mezmur does to me. I Love Ethiopia. Where else in the world can you experience this.... nowhere?*

*O My God. One day, I listened to Mohamed Awel chanted this nashida while I was in my muslim friend's house. I was attracted. Then afterwards, I never stopped listening to it. I always listen to manzuma especially when I chew chat with my friends or alone. I almost never have chat session without it. Ethiopia is the icon in the world that stands for religion tolerance and co-existence. The world should learn from them. No wonder that prophet called the land a place where no one is prosecuted.*

### **Sentimental value/affecting soul or feeling**

Sentiment is feeling or affection. It brings about spiritual fulfillment. It is the complex combination of feeling and opinion as a basis for action or judgment. It is a general emotionalized attitude influenced by more of emotion than reason.

Manzuma plays sentimental function for Wollo Muslims. There is this inexpressible and unjustifiable internal feeling that makes them happy that is related to their emotion when manzuma is recited. Menzuma makes many cry, touched, affected and create intense feeling [7,8].

### **Menzuma as an expression of Power**

Menzuma empowers people. It gives honorific titles for those who

are the vocalists. Only those who are able to acquaint themselves with the knowledge of Menzuma get the position of Abegarness (leadership) in chat sessions. Abegar is the leader of the chat dua session. He or she becomes the vocalist.

### **Conclusion**

Menzuma is a genre of a kind that resembles no other but itself. It is unique and has its own attributes. The marking features of Menzuma make it different and become a genre on its own right. The features of Menzuma are briefly explained in the first section of this paper.

Menzuma serves different functions for the Muslim community of Wollo. It is a social practice. It is one of the major social practices that sustain the reality of the speech community. It plays significant roles and values for Wollo community.

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