

---

---

## **Zar Expressions in Arsi Fərək'əsa Of Oromia**

Zinawork Assefa<sup>1</sup>

### **Abstract**

This study is an attempt made to discuss Zar expressions in Arsi Fərək'əsa of Oromo. The expressions include verbal and nonverbal expressions. The non-verbal expressions are objects of symbolic representation which include clothes, sacrifice animals colours etc. Verbal expressions include phonological complexity, glossolalia, literal and poetic expressions. Carriers, devotees and shamans believe that carriers in altered state speak languages which they never speak normal state. However, researchers suggested that carriers in altered state utter a deformed language (Leslau 1949). Such claims were part of statements of the present study whose objective is exploring linguistic and non- linguistic expression of Zar, and analysing the data using qualitative method. The main findings of the research is carriers in altered state utter phonologically complex words, mixed phrases, non-existing or unknown languages (Glossolalia). Although some things are taken as shared dues of all Zars, each Zar has also a unique demand. Carriers, devotees and shamans have shared knowledge of the dues. The oral and poetic expressions during rites focus on reciting phrases that show the supremacy of Momina's Zar and that of her ancestors. Finally, the relation between spirit possession and gender differences are remaining issues that need further investigation, this is because female carriers possessed by male Zars have low pitch.

Key words: Zar, Glossolalia and, Verbal Express

---

<sup>1</sup> Addis Ababa University, Academy of Ethiopian Languages and Cultures  
[zinawork.assefa@aau.edu.et](mailto:zinawork.assefa@aau.edu.et)

## 1. Introduction

Fərək'əsa<sup>2</sup> is located in the Arsi zone of Oromia (Ethiopia). It is 22 Kms away from Abbomsa, the capital of Merti Woreda, and 225 Kms southeast of Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia. Fərək'əsa is a pilgrimage centre founded by Ayyo Momina<sup>3</sup>, who was born to a Christian family of yəjju in Wollo. Towards the end of the 19th century, she settled in Arsi and was converted to Islam, Richard Pankhurst (2005). But her early life of religious background is debatable in that not all writers agree that she was Christian, Muslim or Pagan. Gemmechu Jemal (2007:1) states that “her early life and religious background is controversial, and an attempt will be made to look into the various aspects of the life and deeds of this controversial and significant woman, who died in 1929”. Before she arrived at Arsi-Fərək'əsa she had settled in Harar and in other parts of the country. She is also known as “Giftii Arusii ” in Afan-Oromo or “jə-arusiwa imməbet”<sup>4</sup> in Amharic. Before she was recognized by as jə-arusiwa imməbet and Ayyo Momina, she was called “jubaf wərk'jīmər”. jubaf means ‘young’, her father gave this name because she was the last daughter to her parents. She was popular among the local people and others from different areas that knew her story and call her in different names in their language. These people are predominantly from Amhara and Oromo ethnic groups.

Momina previously settled in Galama in 1873 (E.C) where she built her Mosque. In 1880 (E.C), she moved to “Guna gənnəte” and built another Mosque. Five years later (1885 E.c) she arrived at Fərək'əsa and built another Mosque. She has a daughter named Bəjjənətf who has two sons and one daughter, named Getahun Məfəfa, K'ənzmatf Taje Məfəfa and Bəilfīl indələ. k'ənzmatf Taje məfəfa was a bodyguard of Emperor Haile Sillassie. He was possessed by his grandmother's (Momina) Zar and like

---

<sup>2</sup>Fərək'əsa is a name of a place, it has different forms- fereqasa , ferekesa , fereqesa Gemmechu Jemal (2007 )

<sup>3</sup> Ayyo Momina Ayyo – means ‘mother’ in Afan –Oromo and Ayo-Momina is the name given to the woman by the local people

<sup>4</sup> Giftii arusi or yə arusiwa imməbet- means lady of Arsi

her he was converted to Islam. He changed his name to Səid Nur Ahməd and built his own Mosque three to five kms away from Momina's Mosque at Fərək'əsa and he died later. Next to him was his son (Hajji Siraj or Sirak) converted to Islam after he was possessed by his father's Zar (Səid Nur Ahməd) and he took charge of the whole activities of the mosque. He is called Hajji Siraj or Sirak. Muslims call him Hajji Siraj whereas Christians call him Hajji Sirak.

At Fərək'əsa, devotees meet four times a year: first on T'ik'imt 19(October27-28), second, on Tahsas 19(December 26-27), third, on Gĩnbot 19 (May 26 or 27) and fourth on Səne 19(June 25-26). T'ik'imt 19(October27-28), is a big day for devotees, shamans and others because, it is the anniversary of Momina. The date is also associated with St. Gabriel which is celebrated on the same day.

People have various reasons to meet and attend these ceremonies: (1). Zar spirit gets recognitions or gets assigned to carriers by a Zar doctor. A Zar may be new or one transferred from a family member, such as mother or father to a daughter or son. (2) People come to visit (Ziyyera) to receive or pay their annual dues. Any devotee or carrier comes to pray dues. Carriers stay mostly in state of trance until their Zar receives dues from the mosque. These are orders of dancing performances assigned by the Zar doctor after which perfumes are given out. This takes place on (T'ik'imt 19) during the evening around 5:30 Pm. (3) To negotiate with their Zar, if the latter has caused illness to the carrier. To get relief from the illness, carriers go to annual gatherings. (4) Silet (vow), these groups go to give whatever they had promised the previous year and to make another vow for the future. Others may attend the ceremonies as simple enthusiasts. During the festive occasions, Zar reveals itself in many ways such as speaking a different type of language and performing dances of different movements.

## **2. Statement of the problem**

This section presents the main reasons why the researcher wants to do a study on "Zar expressions and their contexts". It is believed that the argot

or slang of possessed groups and the whole activities of possessed people or individuals are highly ambiguous or indistinct, because during rites of possession, people are in a state of trance and their activity is *esoteric* (very *unusual*). The following examples may illustrate this.

- (a) Unclear speech:                    ናን ውላል ውላህል ወይ?  
   nan wɪlɪl wɪb-h-ɪl    wəj  
   stay 2SM            Q  
   ‘Have you stayed the day in peace?’
- (b) Simple repetitions of syllables:    chi chi chi chi
- (c) Using loan words:    shayiida (Arabic) kunoo (Afan-Oromo)  
   fajida                    kuno  
   Witness’                ‘this is it’  
   ‘This is a witness’

And others are taken as criteria for Zar solicitations. Some researchers have stated the same about Zar expressions. Leslau (1949) and Messing (1958) said that Zar expressions include argot, composed of deformed Amharic paraphrases, and foreign loan word.

A few researches have been conducted on Zar expressions; their nature and forms. The present research attempts to study expressions of people who are possessed by Zar. Their expressions may comprise linguistic elements such as phonemes, morphemes, lexemes and phrases used in the context of Zar rites. In addition, speaking tongues known as ‘Glossolalia’ and speaking foreign languages ‘Xenolalia’ are considered as they occur during the rites of Zar.

### 3. Objectives of the Study

#### 3.1. General Objective

This thesis attempts to explore verbal and nonverbal expressions of Zar. Expressions are linguistic and non- linguistic such as performances intertwined and expressed by possessed women and men.

### **3.2. Specific Objectives**

The specific objectives of the thesis are the following:

1. To describe literal expressions and nonverbal expression types, such as clothes, sacrifice animals and colours.
2. To explain the phonological, morphological, lexical and phrasal elements of Zar expressions as compared to other expressions of day- to- day use.
3. To clarify the glossolalia<sup>5</sup> or xenolalia<sup>6</sup> nature of Zar expressions.

### **4. Methodology**

In this section, I introduce the methodology used to do the research. To achieve the objectives of the research, the methodologies and methods need to be harmonized. This research is based on data gathered from field through observations and recordings. The researcher focuses on the linguistic and non- linguistic forms of Zar expressions. The qualitative method is employed to analyse the data. To collect the data, participant observations and semi-structured interviews have been used. According to Berg ( 2004: 5) “By combining several lines of site, researchers obtain a better, more substantive picture of reality; a richer, more complete array of symbols and theoretical concepts; and a means of verifying many of these elements”.

For this research, observation is used to get expressions as they are uttered in specific situations. To do this, the researcher immerses himself into the groups of people where Zar expressions are uttered by people in trance. These are not artificial group: most of them are people possessed by Zar who are in a state of trance during rites. Throughout the Zar spell, the

---

<sup>5</sup> Glossolalia – the term has been formed from the Greek *glossa-* ‘tongues’ and *lalia* – ‘speaking’ or ‘chatter’. Glossolalia is speaking tongues, a speech behaviour occasionally associated with religious experience and its significance is debatable, Elvira koic et al. (2005)

<sup>6</sup> Xenolalia- derived from Greek word ‘*xenos*’- foreign and *lalia* - speaking. Xenolalia means foreign language, it indicates a conscious use of an existing language Elvira koic et al. (2005:307)

researcher acts as a devotee because any individual can join and observe what is happening. According to Bryman (2004) the participant observer engages himself or herself in a certain group for a certain period of time to observe their behaviour by listening to what they say, record their speech, etc. The researcher makes himself a member of the group and observes things as they happen. Carriers, devotees and shamans use chat, coffee and music about Zars. The researcher uses high quality voice recorder. This may help the researcher to record expressions of possessed people in their spell. At this time, the researcher desists himself from reflecting personal feelings during the rite. He records expressions from men or women who are in trance.

Interviews have been conducted with a few people to get supportive information from the followers of shamans<sup>7</sup>. The data gathered in this way is used as support to the data collected through participant observations. The researcher believes that interviews are not always successful in obtaining information. However, in this research, semi-structured interviews have been carried out. According to Dawson (2002:28), a semi-structured interview is the most commonly used tool in qualitative research. Using this tool, the researcher collected data from devotees, shamans and carriers. He asked eight questions to each interviewee. This helps crosscheck the responses of groups and individuals who have been interviewed

The researcher uses tape recorder and high quality voice recorder during interviews and participant observations. These tools help to collect the utterances of carriers who are in trance. These tools are highly selective and useful for recording linguistic elements such as deformed and complex utterances from carriers in altered state. Devotees, carriers and Zar doctors or shamans are not allowed to get their utterances recorded. At this time, the

---

<sup>7</sup> Shaman (Zar doctor) – is a term equivalent to the Amharic word “Awaki” or the Arabic word “woliy” Young (1975). Such a person does diagnosis for those newly possessed by Zar spirit.

researcher desists from using these tools because, the setting is not an artificial and devotees<sup>8</sup> and carriers are highly sensitive to the rites.

Therefore, in order to avoid interferences the researcher had to use these tools secretly. This helps to record the natural utterances of the carriers<sup>9</sup> who are in trance. Qualitative methodology has been used, because the nature of the data from the site is not quantifiable. Qualitative analysis method begins with a complete set of collected data in the form of texts. There are many types of qualitative data analysis methods but the researcher has used thematic qualitative data analysis.

Thematic analysis method allows the process of data collection and the data analysis to take place simultaneously Dawson (2002:115). Such texts are verbal and non-verbal expressions of Zar rites. Based on this method, the researcher analysed data while he was making the site observations, because the researcher has possibilities to observe repeatedly. This increases the quality of the research because the researcher has possibilities to check errors and evaluate the adequacy of the data.

## **5. Literature Review**

### **5.1. Conceptual Framework**

Zar is a spirit possessing of an individual who is attractive, has beautiful voice, psychological and social stress, etc. Researchers attempt to classify spirit into *evil* and *good spirit*. Why do these differences exist among groups? What is the reality about the concept of Zar? The researcher addresses these two questions in this sub-section.

Torrey (1966:52) said that 'most students described Zar as a spirit or devil but some students of health science describe it as a disease or psychological

---

<sup>8</sup> Devotees- Refers to the followers of Zar doctor or just to carriers.

<sup>9</sup> Carriers – is a term equivalent to the Amharic word “balə Zar” meaning ‘*the owner of Zar*’ or “jə Zar fərəs” meaning ‘*the horse of Zar*’.

sicknesses'. Torrey conducted a research when he was teaching at Addis Ababa University and he collected data from health science students. The students came from different cultures and societies .Most students believed that Zar is evil spirit and some of them reported that 'it was a psychological sicknesses' just to satisfy their teacher.

In addition, Boddy (1989) states that Zar refers to types of spirit, the spirit can cause sickness to people for which a ritual of conciliation is necessary. Her definitions are somehow similar to that of Torrey's premises. These include rites of reunion or negotiations between a Zar spirit and its carrier. But in both cases it is assumed that Zar is a spirit that can cause sickness.

In contrast, Zar possession can transfer from mother to daughter, Messing (1958), because the spirit is claimed to be a guardian of its carrier. These divergent opinions about Zar are due to cultural, social, academic differences and lack of adequate data on its nature. However, the meaning of the word 'Zar' in Cushitic languages and in Arabic dose not refer to illness, evils, or a symbol of goodness, Natvig (1987). In Cushitic languages, specifically in Afan- Oromo, Zar is called "dzari" which means 'sky and God'. In Arabic, the term Zar refers to visitation, which implies that when a Zar spirit wants certain things it visits its carrier, Ahmed Al-Shahi (1984). The other concept of Zar is derived from the word *Zahar*, which implies that the spirit appears commonly through dreams. Both definitions indicate that the term Zar refers 'to visitation by spirit.'

So, how does a Zar spirit acquire meaning of evil or demons<sup>10</sup>? Zar spirit acquired its current meaning from Abyssinian Christians, Natvig (1987). Hence, the word dzari refers to sky and God, the word is originally from Cushitic languages, because it is almost the same across Cushitic. Amharic borrowed it from these languages and it acquired the meaning of evil spirit

---

<sup>10</sup> Carriers, devotees and Zar doctors do not use the term Zar in the context of Zar rites, because commonly they associate it with evil spirit. Instead of "Zar" they call it "Wik'abi" or "ʔawliya". "Wik'abi" or "ʔawliya" refers to a spirit which protects from bad things.



## **Zar Expressions in Arsi Fərək'əsa Of Oromia - Zinawork Assefa**

---

from Abyssinia Christians. This was also proposed by Cerulli and Littmann. Finally, Cushitic languages borrow the term Zar from Amharic. In Somali, the word Zar refers to evil spirit/demon. Zar has a period of solicitation and rites. A rite is called a *Zar cult*. But it lacks clear definitions. Its indistinct nature is due to cosmological and ritual dissimilarity across places. However, Natvig (1987) gave the following definition of Zar cult:

Zar cult may be defined as referring to a religious group of the cult type, where the basis of recruitment of members is Zar spirit possession and where meaningful long-term relationships with the spirits are cultivated by the means of ceremonially provoked spirit possession on a regular basis. (p. 670)

From the definition, Zar cult refers to a group of people who have shared enrolment and rituals. These rituals recur at regular times and the members attend the rituals on the basis of certain events. In the Ethiopian context, groups are mainly from the Amhara, Oromo and Tigre ethnic groups who can be both Christian and Muslim carriers. They have long term relations and regular times of rites. Fərək'əsa is one of the biggest pilgrimage centers, where devotees and shamans regularly meet on the anniversary of Momina, which coincides with the celebration of St. Gabriel, on T'ik'imt 19 E.C.

Zar expressions have no single linguistic theory. However, for this research theories are taken from sister domains such as argot, slang, Xenolalia and glossolalia. Zar expressions are accompanied by extra grammatical things such as deformed expressions, glossolalia, Xenolalia, symbolic representations of sacrifices such as animals, days of solicitations, and clothes, etc. Therefore, interaction theory, hypnosis theory and symbolic interactionism theory are selected to analyse the data.

### **5.1.1. Sociological Characteristics of Zar**

Zar cult or Zar spirit is a part of folk belief. Folk belief is accepted as true without hard evidence that passed down through generations without the

sanction of official institutions. The transmissions contain different activities performed by the first generation, like a day of celebrations, sacrifices, demands and others. These sociological characteristics are transmitted to generations based on practice and narration. The researcher presents the most common sociological characteristics of Zar below.

### **5.1.2. When does Zar visit a carrier?**

Zar has common solicitation period, Zar rituals take place after the rainy season. Devotees and possessed individuals agree on solicitation times. Possessions of Zar spirit is mainly found in the rural part of Ethiopia, and more than half of the rural people are agrarian and their source of income is based on agricultural products. Cereal and cash crops are collected after the rainy seasons because most farmers do not use irrigations for crop productions. After this season, the farmers change their cash crops and cereals to money and they use the money to buy different things that the Zar demands. At this period, a Zar visits his /her carrier from October to January. The reason is that possessed people and devotees are ready to fulfil their promises to the Zar spirit. Leslau (1949) states that, Zar appears at a specific period of time, especially during the festivals of Məsk'əl which marks the end of the rainy season. After or before the season, devotees and possessed people do not provide appropriate sacrifice, instead they put little money aside and they carry out the promise at a given period.

### **5.1.3. What kind of things does Zar like?**

Zar cult is found in Somali, Ethiopia, Egypt and Arabia etc, Natvig (1987), the cult is not unitary. This means that there are rituals and cosmological differences throughout these countries, but in some, there is a basic shared rite like possessed women or men to be clean, to wear clean and colourful clothes and perfumes etc. According to Ahmed Al-Shahi (1984:33) “women who come in black clothes are turned away” because black represents darkness and in order to avoid gloominess or obscurity of the rite, possessed groups and devotees wear clean and white clothes. However, during the solicitations, possessed individuals and devotees do not always buy new

clothes. Specifically preparing new or clean clothes are done depending on the income of the possessed individuals.

Other activities performed during Zar solicitations vary depending on Zar types. In the context of this research, more than three types of dominant Zar carriers do unique activities to one another. The dominant Zars are called Adal Moti, T'ək'war and Wəsən (see section 6). These have different demands, whatsoever they ask is for the benefit of the possessed individuals. Zars are highly sensitive in relation to their demands, therefore devotees and possessed individuals are anxious to meet the demands of the Zar spirit, Ahmed Al-Shahi (1984). But if the demands are not met, devotees and possessed individuals do what is called "korma makom<sup>11</sup>". Once these demands are met in such a way the relations between the Zar and the carrier becomes smooth.

#### **5.1.4. Relations between Zar and Gender**

Zar affects mainly women. Various scholars discussed the relations between Zar and gender. According to Ahmed Al-shahi (1984), women, less commonly men, are possessed by spirit. There are many reasons why women are possessed. According to Messing (1958), any individual can be favoured by Zar for reasons of weak personality, hereditary transfer from mother to daughter, illness, attractive qualities like beauty etc. According to Messing's discussions, women are more selected than male. Mothers transfer the spirit to daughters but not to sons and among the daughters the most beautiful and weak ones are selected more than others. Leslau (1949) says that in former days, women and young girls were not allowed to move from place to place without servants accompanying them for they fall ill of Zar.

---

<sup>11</sup> 'korma makom - means the possessed person if he/she doesn't have money to buy those things demanded, they put aside some money. This money is a guarantee for the promise between the Zar and the carrier. Then for the coming period of solicitations, the Zar carrier or devotees buy those demands for the spirit according to their promise.

On the basis gender, Zar is classified into male and female. A female Zar is considered very dangerous and it affects mostly male and vice versa, Leslau (1949). The numbers of male Zars are greater than that of female Zars. This indicates that women are dominantly affected by Zar spirit, because possessions of Zar spirit mainly occurs between the sexes and the spirit may have sexual intercourse with their victim, Messing (1958:1122). In the context of this research only two types of female Zars are reported, against five male Zars. Female Zars reveal themselves by forcing a man to change his biological characteristics like forcing him to wear women's dresses, act like females etc. On the other hand, a male Zar has a power to predict or to tell the future of individuals, people, countries etc. Torrey (1966). As we seen from the discussions the degree of harm varies according to gender, as female Zars are dangerous.

## **6. Data Analysis and Findings**

### **6.1. Major Types of Zar**

In the context of this research, there are seven Zars known to carriers. These are:

1. T'ək'war Anbæsso
2. ጎadal Moti
3. Wəsən
4. Təkolaገ Eyyasu
5. Marami
6. Somale
7. dzejilani

The first three are male and Təkolaገ and Marami are female Zars, and Somale and dzejilani are Muslim Zars, as will be shown later.

Devotees and carriers have their own assumptions about the number of Zars. Some believe that there are 44 Zars, but they do not know all the names. Others believe the number is not known. From the observation and interviews, the above seven Zars are believed to affect more than 85 % of

carriers. People affected by female Zars are few in number. One reason for this is that, mostly, a female Zar affects a male person, though males are not easily affected by female Zars.

## **6.2. Symbolic representations of different types of clothes**

As presented in chapter two, symbolic interactionism focuses on how people interact through cultural objects such as clothes, Blumer (1969). A symbol is representation of people or ethnic groups that have shared knowledge of the objects, especially clothes represent a shared identity of groups. Zars may prefer clothes of certain colours and each Zar may be identified by its specific colour. Carriers know the specific type of colour their spirit wants and are hence careful in making the right choice of colour when buying clothes

From the observations and interviews with carriers, each Zar has a specific colour to its liking. But the colours are not the same across carriers. For example, Alemu associates yellow and green with Adal Moti and Feyisa associate only green with Adal Moti whereas Sindu associates red with Adal Moti. However, from the observation, green is common with Adal Moti. Carriers of T’ək’war say that the two colours, red and black, are used on either sides of a shawl.

The clothes have a common function: making the carrier attractive. Alemu underlined that Adal Moti does not come if he (the carrier) is not attractive and W/o Sindu says (2e) “አውልያ ቆንጂ ይውዳል ቤተክርስቲያን እና አውልያ አንድ ነው ንጹህ ነገር ስለሚወድ ነው” / ገawilija k’onjo jiwəddal betəkristijan inna ገawilija ገand nəw nis’uh nəgər jiwəddalu/ ‘*Zar and church are the same in that both like neat and beautiful things.*’ Ahmed Al –Shahi (1984) also states the same thing about the function of clothes during the rites of Zar.

Why a certain colour is associated with a certain Zar has no good answer except that this is practiced following advice from Zar solicitors, who are individuals leading the rituals. What is common to all Zars is neatness. Each

Zar wants its carrier to be neat during the rituals. This is obvious from Alemu's statement “ልክ ስወጣ እንደሙሽራ መስዩ ካልወጣሁ አይቀርብም።” likk siwət'a muffra məsijsje kalwət't'ahu ʔajk'ərbim/ 'I have to be neat and well dressed like a bridegroom if the Zar is to be solicited.' Neatness may be restricted to appearing in white clothes irrespective the colour of the hem. Failure to satisfy the requirements of a Zar will lead to problems such as serious illness.

Symbolic associations of colours are found in Exodus (10:15), I King(14:23) that green is associated with natural growth, life, forgiveness and peace. This colour is associated with Adal Moti which is known for its forgiveness. According to Ezekiel (1:4; 1:27-28; 8:2) the colour yellow is symbolic of brightness and glory. Carriers believe that they should appear bright and glorious to satisfy the Zar. This requirement can transfer from parents to children. This is stated by W/ro Mamite<sup>12</sup>, a 68- year old resource person who said (2f) “ማንኛውም ሰው ደጋጎቹ ያስጨበጡትን እናትና አባቱ የሰጡትን በአግባቡ ከካደመ አውልያውም አይጥለውም አዱኛም ይሰጠዋል።”/mannijjajawm səw dəgagotfifu jasc'əbət'utn innatu inna ʔabbatu jəsət't'utn bagbabu kəkaddəmə ʔawiljawm ʔajt'ləwm ʔaddujnam jisət'əwal. 'Anyone who executes properly what he/she has got from parents, the Zar will not forget him/her and may give wealth.' Appearing neat and colourful is one of the requirements a Zar like Adal Moti wants.

According to Isaiah (63:2) and II Kings (3:22), red represents blood in war and vengeance. Təkolaʔ and Wəsən are known to have a desire for 'red' both of them are known for their being ruthless. Təkolaʔ is a female Zar whose carriers are mostly male, who have to remain unmarried because she is jealous, while a carrier of Wəsən may be forced to change his or her religion. The colour black is symbolic of things like disease, famine etc. Job (6 :15 -16 and Job 30:30), and it represents 'judgment' Jeremiah (14:2). As stated above this colour is associated with T'ək'war which also likes red.

---

<sup>12</sup> All the names mentioned in this study is fictional name

### **6.3. Annual periods or days of rites**

Annual days of rites are determined on the basis of carriers' income. There are two months in which offerings are made to Zars. These are September and January. According to Alemu

/ʔaddis zəmən bəməhonu jik'k'əbəlal kəwəratu kalləfə ʔajik'k'əbbəlīm. gizew sajdərs tahsas bittadərg wəjnīm ʔasalifeh mijazija bittadərg ʔajik'k'əbəlīm nəgərgin hullunm maləte ʔajdəlləm sənem jəmmisət' ʔallə ində ʔawiljaw ʔajnet jiwwəsənal. gin wannawotfu zəmən məlləwəc'a inna t'irra laj nəw. t'irra sajalik' wədə Mikael inna Gəbrel ʔakkababi nəw. jəʔaddis zəmən dəgmo k'iddus jəh'ans ʔarb kəhonə k'idame jisət't'al jək'idame ink'an c'ida jəlləwm hamus kəwalə t'iru nəw, maksəjjo kəwalə t'iru nəw ʔarb inna irob kəwalə bəmagstu jitarredal./

At the beginning of a new year, Zars want offering from their carrier. The offering should not be made before and after the specified time. Not all Zars want offerings on the New Year. There are offerings in January or June. Most offerings are made in September and January. The offering in January takes place on the day of St. Michael, January 12(Ec) or the day of St. Gabriel, 19th January (Ec). If the New Year falls on a Saturday, offerings are postponed to the following day. Saturday is not good time for offerings. It is also forbidden to make offerings on Wednesdays and Fridays as these are fasting days, Tuesday and Thursday are good days.

Ato Shiferaw, a 52- year old carrier states the following:

/bə T'ək'war sim jəzəmen mələwwəc'alət t'əwat jissət't'al. iskə sost k'ən kəggibi ʔajiwwət't'am lək'som binor lək'sobota ʔajikkedm. bəsostəjjanaw k'ən t'əwat guzg'azun t'ərgo libsun k'əjjiro kezih wədija sət't'al wədəsrəw jiwət'al/

In the name of T'ək'war on a New Year morning, a blaze sheep is slaughtered, for three days I will not move out of my

house, if there is also a mourning, I will not go there, after three days, I have to change my clothes and go to work.

From both respondents, it is clear that annual offerings are made on the basis of the Zar type. In (3.2.a) Zar takes annual dues in September and January. In January, the days are the 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> which are advisable to make offerings. The two days are associated with the two saints, Michael and Gabriel. Not all days are good for offering. The fasting days, Wednesday and Friday, are excluded as slaughtering is not allowed. Saturday is not a good day either because it is a market day. Some carriers are traders and cannot miss it. The best days are Tuesday and Thursday. First, the month of September is favoured for the rites because it is the first month of the New Year and the first day of the New Year is what most Zars want to have their annual dues. Second, January is selected for those who have made promises of offerings in this month and for those who could not make it in September. January is also a month of festivals like epiphany and as the saying goes there is no poverty in January, for it is a time of abundance. In addition Ato Shiferaw says:

mīnalbat idzɔdʒe ʔatət biło t'ik'ur buhawn madræg kaltʃalku  
gənzəb ɪndəkorma ʔak'umlɪŋŋ ɪlna ʔask'əmt'alləhu. Kəza  
jət't'ir dəh jəlləwɪm jan jask'əmt'kut gənzəb laj lela bɪr  
bəməc'c'əmmər t'ik'ur buhawɪn gəztʃe ɪsət'alehu./

Unfortunately, if I do not have money to buy a blaze sheep, I have to put a little money aside as a guarantee. Then in January by adding some more money to it, I have to buy the blaze sheep.

January is selected for economic reasons. According to my respondent most carriers are farmers and the harvest is ready in December and January. In January, almost all farmers get money to buy what the Zar spirit wants. This is the main reasons why they postpone rituals to January. On the other hand, some Zar spirits take annual demands in June, but these are very few in number.



To conclude the discussion, even if annual demands are stated by Zar doctors or shamans, carriers make their own arrangements for the rite on the basis of their means of income. But making arrangements without negotiation with Zar doctors is impossible, because the spirit may not agree to what a carrier decides. Therefore, a carrier negotiates with a spirit with the help of a shaman something of value to be set as a bailout.

#### **6.4. Animals selected for sacrifice**

Animals of different colours are used as sacrifices to Zar. The animals are mostly sheep and chicken. The colours vary depending on the type of Zar. The reason for this is that all Zars do not like the same colour. According to Alemu:

ʔadal Moti daləʔtʃa bəg jissət'əwal jəmmisət't'əwm ʔamət  
ʔallef nəw. malətm lə T'ək'war buhawn kəhuləttu doroʔf  
kək'ej wənd inna kək'əj set doro gara ʔabrre isət'ahul  
ləmik'ət'ləw ʔamət hultəttun doroʔf kəgəbsma wənd doro  
gara ʔabrre isət'alləhu. j+h daləʔtʃabəg dəgmo bəmik'ət'ləw  
ʔamət lədiṃr jissət'al/

To Adal Moti, a gray sheep is slaughtered every two years, which means, if I offer a blaze sheep to T'ək'war with two reddish brown chickens and a rooster, the following year I will offer the two chickens with a grayish rooster. This gray sheep, I offer the following year, during the Məsk'əl festival.

According to Ato Shiferaw:

jəne ləjjət jəmmiləw t'ikur buha bəg bə T'ək'war siṃjezəmən  
mələwwəc'a t'əwat isət'alləhu jəmsət'əwm kək'əjj set inna  
kək'əj wənd doro gar ʔabrre nəw. t'ələm, nugm bak'ela  
ʔafuk' jidəragna bəsrʔat ibete dəgfe isət'aləhu.

Mine differs from others: I slaughter a blaze sheep in the name of T'ək'war on the first day of the new year morning (September 1<sup>st</sup> in E.c) I also offer a reddish brown chicken

and rooster. In addition, roasted beans, local beer (t'əla), Araki, mashed oil seeds etc.

According to Ato Feyisa:

T'ək'war buha bəg jik'erblətal Wəsən dalətfə bəg ine  
jəmmawk'əw innəjihn nəw bete sɪllalu

A blaze sheep offered to T'ək'war and a gray one to Wəsən I  
know of these two because I carry out the rite of Wəsən and  
T'ək'war'

As we can see, in (4a) and (4b) a blaze sheep, reddish brown chicken and rooster, and a greyish rooster are common requirements. A blaze sheep and a greyish rooster are interchangeable. A carrier who slaughtered a blaze sheep does not offer a greyish rooster in the same year. Inversely, carriers who slaughter a greyish rooster do not offer a blaze sheep in the same year. This arrangement is based on the income of carriers. In contrast, it is possible to offer both sheep and rooster depending on the income of carriers.

In (4a) Adal Moti's demand is a gray sheep. This sheep is offered every two years especially by those who are possessed by two or more Zars. Because if a carrier slaughters a gray sheep with a reddish brown chicken and a rooster this year, he/she cannot offer the same in the next year. T'ək'war's blaze sheep is equal to a greyish rooster and Adal Moti's gray sheep is equal to a white- brown spotted rooster (nəc'c'wəsera). This rooster is slaughtered in the absence of a gray sheep. Wəsən's demands are the same as Adal Moti but there is a slight difference between them (4c). The difference is that instead of the gray sheep a reddish brown rooster (k'əjw əsəra) can be slaughtered for Wəsən.

Reddish brown chicken and rooster are common to almost all Zars. These chickens are commonly offered. On the other hand, based on ethnic differences of Zars, carriers are not allowed to offer sacrifices of chicken and goat. Goat is never used because it is a symbols of "demon". Chickens

## **Zar Expressions in Arsi Fəṛək'əsa Of Oromia - Zinawork Assefa**

---

are common demands, but based on ethnic differences they are not offered according to *w/ro* Sindu:

jəne Zar jəʔoromo nəw doro ʔalbəlam fiʃjel ʔalbəlam bəg  
nəw jəmməbəlaw doro inna fiʃjel jəmmaḄəbəlaw ʔabbate,  
ʔajate siḄəmmajbəlu nəw

My Zar is an Oromo, so I do not eat chicken and goat (meat),  
I eat lamb only. Because, both my father and grandfather did  
not eat chicken and goat meat

A demand prescribed by a Zar doctor or shaman as transferred from ancestor's practice is taken into consideration. For example, Sindu does not eat chicken and goat's meat because her ancestors did not eat but she is a carrier of the same Zars, T'ək'war and Adal Moti. Others possessed by T'ək'war and Adal Moti eat chicken and they also offer the same. But this is during the days of rituals only, for after and before that, carriers do not eat goat meat.

In general, symbolic representations of different colours of chicken and sheep vary according to each Zar's preference and carriers' ancestral practice. But these differences do not have clear-cut boundaries between them because in all types of Zar, reddish brown hen and rooster are common.

### **6.5. Religious differences of Zar**

There are two religious categories of Zar: Islam and Christian Zars. Any Zar can affect both Christians and Muslims. Alemu says:

ʔawon T'ək'war innəsu gar malətim muslimotf gar  
ʔajməddəbim wəjm ʔajssət'atfəwim muslimotf dʒəjlan,  
sumale jəmmibalu ʔal'watfəw T'ək'war dawit dəgami nəw  
ʔask'əddaf nəw/

Yes, there is difference; T'ək'war does not associate with Muslims because T'ək'war is Christian. On the other hand, Jeylan and Somale are Muslim Zars.

According to Ato shiferaw:

ጎawilja ጎawilja nəw. k'wank'waw jiləjjaj indzi ጎand nəw ጎadal Moti bəጎat'əraru innəsuga jiləjj indzi ጎand nəw. Misale gəbrəጎel ጎna sinnil innəsuga dægmo dʒbril jilallu. bək'wan k'aw'nəw indzi jətələjjəw ጎawlja jaw ጎand nəw . irgit' jemuslim ጎawlja ጎallə bəramədan jas's'omal bəsəlamu gize billa sajkələkkil, nəgər ጎin bətaməsabət gize ləbtʃjaw nəw.

Zar is Zar, the difference is language, we call the name of Adal moti others in other languages may call him by a different name. Example st. Gabriel is called Gibril by Muslims. Even if Zar is common there is a Muslim Zar fasting during Ramadan<sup>13</sup>, outside solicitation periods if a carrier is a Christian he has to go to church and eat Christian food, but when the Zar is solicited the carrier cannot eat Christian food.

Carriers believe that there is difference between Muslim and Christian Zars. The different languages of carriers are taken as cause differences. Even if Zar differs in name based on the language, but they believe most Zars are the same (7b). However, a Zar like T'ək'war does not deal with Muslims carriers because T'ək'war is Christina Zar (7a). On the other hand, Jeylan and Somale are commonly considered as Muslim Zars. In addition, some Zars like Wəsən and Adal Somale force their carries to change their religion during the rites. These Zars possessed both Christians and Muslims. Unfortunately if the Zar religion is Islam, the Christian carrier is forced to

---

<sup>13</sup> Muslim Zars affect both Christians and Muslims, Christians possessed by Muslim Zars, if the Zar is very powerful they may be forced to change his/her religion or kill the carrier himself or his family.. On the other hand, if the Zar is not powerful only the carriers forced to change his/her religion during the rites and on some common Muslim festivals. Mostly these carriers are Christians therefore they avoid alcohol like beer (t'əla) and (tedʒ) and Christian foods during the rites. But after the rites she/he goes back to Christian diet.

change his/her religion during the rites. To conclude the discussion, Muslim Zars affect both Christians and Muslims. The Christian carriers affected by Muslim Zar follow dogmatic principles of Islam. In contrast Christian Zar does not affect Muslims carriers. However, both Christian and Muslim Zars, during the rite, use shared Arabic words. Both of them have equal knowledge of Arabic and other foreign languages as if often claimed to which we now consider.

### **6.6. Linguistic ability of carriers**

Researchers, devotees and shamans state ideas about the linguistic abilities of Zar carriers. Devotees and shaman believe that carriers have ability to speak any existing languages during a rite. On the other hand, researchers believe that Zar language is esoteric or deformed expressions as Leslau (1949) said. However, there is a gap here, since no adequate research has been done on the issues of linguistic ability of Zar carriers. Leslau's research may be the only one that deals with the language of Zar. Even if devotees and shamans believe that carriers speak existing but foreign languages (xenolalia) during the rite, there is no sufficient evidence that they speak such a language during rites.

During solicitation of Zar, carriers change from a normal state of consciousness to unusual state of consciousness. According to Zinberg (1977), this change is called altered state of consciousness (ASC). Rossi (1986) adds that any one is never entirely free from altered state of consciousness and it is like day-to-day activity. There are various variables in altered state of consciousness. As has been discussed in the above, shamanistic is one of the variables in the productions of altered state of consciousness and it is treated under hypnosis theory. Devotees, carriers, doctors use stimulants like coffee, chat or k'at etc. in a rite of Zar. The spirit itself does not get solicited without coffee and chat, which are shared demands of Zar spirits. (8a) “ጭቱን ቅጥቦ ቡና ጠጥቶ መለመን ነው የሰውን ትቶ” /C'atun k'imo bunna t'ət'to mələmən nəw jəsəwn tito/ *'Forgetting people, pleading to the spirit by chewing chat and drinking coffee suffice.'* The

expression refers to carriers who use coffee and chat to solicit a spirit and get into a trance state.

The ability to speak glossolalia or xenolalia comes in a state of trance. Carriers do not know anything about themselves in such a state. Alemu says:

ine ?ahun ?awilja bəljə bəmmik'ərbəbbət wək't mīn indəhənə  
ja k'uc' jaləw səw dəhnəppaw jawk' indəhənə indzi ine  
jəmmawik'əw mīnimm nəgər jələm

When I am possessed and in trance, I do not know anything maybe other people not possessed know about what is happening.

Zar carriers have a common feature when they are in a trance or possessed by Zar in a rite like speaking a unique languages (Glossolalia or Xenolalia), shouting, laughing, hymns etc.

### 6.6.1. Glossolalia vs Xenolalia

Glossolalia refers to speaking or uttering non existing language in a state of trance and it occurs in cases where there is a predominance of the unconscious state, Goodman (2008). Xenolalia refers to speaking a foreign language during trance but the carriers never speak it in a normal state of consciousness. In a context of Zar, devotees and Zar doctors believe that the spirit speaks an existing language. The language may vary according to the Zar type. A Zar may speak Somali or Arabic etc. but the carriers do not speak either of the languages in their normal state. According to Alemu:

/?adal Moti islamu laj biwət'a jaw bək'wank'watftfəw nəw  
jəmmitt'əkəməw. maləttm k'ur?an bəmmik'ərubbbət  
bə?arəb?na nəw jəmminnagərew. bələla bəkkul dəgmo  
kirstijanu laj jəmmiwət'aw ?awilja bəmmik'ərbəbbət gize  
jəzzan hibrətəsəb k'wank'wa jinnagəral . ləmsale inelaj ?adal  
moti ?alləb?na ?awlijaw bəmmiṣabij wək't bə?amar?na  
ləbətəbotftfə indəmmiṣagər kəhed bəh'wala bətəsebotftfə  
jinnəgruppəl. ?awilja inna ?awilja jigbabal bəmannijjawim

k'wank'wa məgbabat jittflalu . nəgərgin ʔandande lelaw bəmajawk'əw k'wank'wa jigbabalu bəməhakəlatʃfəw tʃiggir jəlləm. ʔandande dəgmo ʔawiljaw bəʔarəbjna jinnagər inna məlliso ləkadamiw bəmigəbaw k'wank'wa jifətal. Tadija jih balə ʔawlija bədəhnaw gize fəs's'imo ʔarəbjna mənagər ʔajtʃilim./

A carrier of Adal Moti, who is a Muslim, speaks in Arabic. And if the carrier is a Christian, he speaks the language of the society. Example, I am the carrier of Adal Moti when in trance, the spirit speaks to my family in Amharic and they tell me this after the trance. Zar spirits communicate to each other in any language and sometimes they communicate in a unique language which devotees may not understand under the normal circumstances. There is no problem of understanding between spirits. Sometimes, a spirit speaks in Arabic and translates it into the language of the devotee. But the carrier may never speak Arabic after a trance.

However the data collected from the site indicate the opposite of the above statement of the carriers and the data shows that carriers do not speak a new language during a trance (xenolalia). Rather a spirit repeatedly utters very few familiar Arabic words. These words may be uttered either by themselves, neighbours or carriers friends. Some of the carriers speak a pure non-existing language (Glossolalia) and the others speak a mixed glossolalia.

#### **6.6.2. Pure glossolalia**

In a rite of Zar, carriers speak purely non-existing language. It means that the language is non-existing in the carriers environment. They do not utter the words and phrases in normal state of consciousness and they do not repeat them once they have uttered them. The following data show pure glossolalia :

- (a).Cry14: la ጎnas  
(b).Cry: ጎajnuhare kodaas jilo hጎaጎino ጎajloha dጎiiri ጎno ጎasaፋ laጎihi  
naጎorajis  
(c).Cry: kaጎadጎo naጎala ፋdi  
(d).Cry: kaጎajጎiri ጎi niጎara ጎalo ፋomi  
(e).Cry: pa ጎana ጎanindጎis jo ጎajno ጎajጎo ጎalo ጎasada ጎalnasጎis  
(f).Cry: jibunas jiጎunah naጎalasidi  
(g).Cry: Fak’ano ፋajጎis  
(h).Cry: ጎaፋፋira naጎofa ጎjilesi la ጎaraጎ  
(I).Cry: taጎaጎጎjulis ጎjinoጎ ጎajno ጎaፋፋa  
(J).Cry: ጎanua lalia ፋadis  
(k). Cry :il lጎፋko lalhedaፋ ጎፋፋilawal wifጎwan  
Carrier A: aጎጎri jotiጎaninጎtra  
Carrier B: haጎde fiጎጎida haጎe

The data is an example of pure glossolalia in a Zar trance. It is common in Pentecostal churches and it is known as ‘lisan’ or speaking in tongues<sup>15</sup>. The difference is that Zar carriers do not use only glossolalia continuously: they mix it with existing words of different languages. The glottal stop and tone are shared characteristics of Zar carriers.

Many researchers have tried to identify the phonological and morphological features, syntactic structures, the semantics and pragmatics of expressions of Pentecostal glossolalia, but no adequate structures have been reported, H.A. Osser etal (1972).

Likewise glossolalia of carriers do not have clear structure and as we observe from the above data here there are some patterns identified linguistically for example, the glottal stop “ʔ” commonly occurs at the

---

<sup>14</sup> Cry Refers to shouts, carriers in altered state sometimes produce as introductory to utter non- words or phrases.

<sup>15</sup> In religious contexts, and especially in Christian charismatic settings, glossolalia is a highly respected phenomenon. It is connected with the idea of being possessed by the Holy Spirit and the communication is with God. Elvira Koice etal (2005)



beginning and middle of utterances. The semi vowel “j” repeatedly comes in the middle and at the end of utterances and at the beginning of utterances there is some high pitch or cry or shouting.

In addition, carries utter some very familiar words found in their speech. The word “sii” and “ʔabfira” is found in Afan-Oromo and Arabic dictionary. “sii” refers to ‘you’ and “ʔabfira” refers to ‘an agreement’, in addition to these two words, there are other words and phrases which are non-existent. To conclude the presentation carriers glossolalia do not have syntactic structures, semantic interpretations and pragmatic use.

### **6.6.3. Mixed glossolalia**

Mixed glossolalia refers to utterances of non-existing words mixed with some familiar words. The underlined utterances below are a mix of Amharic, Afan-Oromo and Arabic expressions:

1. ʔawmeram haʔiləla bakidani ʔilalah ʔana mahij ʔanasida imaje fiasida ʔailəlah imajen fiasida ʔiləlahwəi ʔanadilafum
2. ʔeche mek'e ʔaha ʔaha ʔekerekimwa ʔemilaw mogas ʔekejera, jəsumale lidz nəj jətəmarəkubət, fira delise, ʔajo heʔe heʔe mek'e Ayyo kotta demmi ela jəsələlew gala naguma saiada jənen k'əank'əa man ʔabatu indajtawək' jəmifəligəw
3. Cry: lahi lahi bbbbb ʔabbbb wədəza lahila ʔiləlah! atimtaŋ lahilaila ʔiləlah, lahila ʔiləlah ha! lahibb lahibb lahibbbbb lahila ʔiləlah lahila ʔiləlah zəraf
4. ʔe garbichaa mamu oh anni garbichaa ək mindinəh ʔawljanəh oliyaa tattu hirəbəfu oliyaa tattu ək maali atti? maali atti? wəralia wət'adzja wərə gəndə hasu kijai rekstorfrulai
5. Cry .fiarafarafar fiaraj inate mōmina wəlahi bilahi –
6. wəlahi bilahi fiara fiara... wodzila, homβa homβa ʔsalamaliχum woχj woχj
7. halo halo halo fialo fialo fialo χala χla χala χala jəwliħ χala χala χala χalaj gəbren inədʒdʒsilhaləhu filahn kəfələk

8. ጎሐወ səidina ma kabi iansa etinəta kodunisis jətədalje girf iko nəጎ indih
9. inate momina hadrala fahida hadra
10. inate jərajaw wəmbəde ጎጥ ጥፋ nukute natabo ጎጥ nəw nəw nəw mam mam mam mərhaban mərhaban mərhaban

In (1) the carrier speaks glossolalia with Amharic and Arabic words. “imaje” is Amharic meaning ‘mother’. In the context of this research, ‘mother’ refers to Momina, the founder of the shrine. The other words are Arabic and these are very familiar to Muslims “lailaጎailəlah” meaning ‘Allah is the only God’. In (2) the speaker inserts words and phrases into the glossolalia utterances. The words are from Amharic and Afan Oromo. “jəsumale lidጎ nəጎ jətəmarəkubət” is an Amharic phrase meaning ‘I am a child of Somale who has been conquered’. It refers to the woman who is the carrier of the Adal Somale spirit. “ጎajjo kota demi” and “naguma” are Afan Oromo words meaning ‘mother come and go’. The word “ጎajjo” mother again represents Ayo Momina or ‘mother Momina’. During rites carriers ask for the mercy of the spirit. “naggumaa” meaning ‘fine’ and “jəsələlew” is Amharic meaning ‘Selale’s Oromo’ this may refer to the place where the carrier comes from.

In (3) Amharic and Arabic words are inserted into the glossolalia. “attimtajጎ” and “zəraf” are Amharic words. “attimtajጎ” meaning ‘don’t hit me’ and “zəraf” is ‘an expression of courage’. In (4) the carrier mixes Amharic and Afan Oromo. “garbichaa”, “maali atti”, “ጎolijan tatu hirəbəfu” and “garbichaa” are Afan Oromo Phrases. “Anni garbichaa” meaning ‘servant’ refers to the fact that she is the servant of Momina hence she has power to know if somebody has been newly possessed by a spirit. , “maali atti” meaning ‘who are you’ and “oliyaa tattu hirəbəfu” meaning ‘if you are a Zar spirit don’t disturb the others’. “mindnəጎ ጎawljanəጎ” is Amharic for the same question ‘who are you? Are you a Zar spirits’ These carriers mix at least two languages at the same time. Those words taken from Arabic are very familiar to most people and listeners can easily understand their meaning. Other carriers who mix Amharic and Afan-

Oromo are bilingual in the two languages (4). And others know very few common words like in (2) though they do not pronounce them properly.

#### **6.6.4. Code mixing**

Carriers mostly use code mixing during the rite of Zar. Amharic speakers insert words from Afan-Oromo and Arabic into Amharic. On the other hand, for those Afan-Oromo speakers, Afan-Oromo is a matrix language into which Amharic and Arabic words are inserted. Example of insertion of Amharic, Afan-Oromo and Arabic words in utterances:

1. Kan manaan loolamu kan ristiin loolamu  
*'One who has problem both in and outside the home'*
2. Yaahabashaa qaalin rabbīn moo kattabamtee jirti.  
*'Abesh, the word of God has been written'*
3. Mana ayyantu dhaqxee salaamsattaa  
*'She goes to a wise woman's home and greets'*
4. Kuni ilee ilmaan rakkatee jirtii walaahi. Ati ilman rakatee hinjirtu?  
*'In the name of Allah she is in trouble with children. Don't you?'*
5. Tariikaa haadha kenyatii  
*'The history of our mother'*
6. Anaan shaydaa Mominaantiyya.  
*'Molina is my witness'*
7. Kaafana Ziyyaara Abiyoon hin micamnee ta'eetti  
*'A cloth of pilgrims to Abiyo (Shekena Hussien) not washed'*
8. kaadhadhee manaas ijaree, kadhadhee yemuxiinyi jedhee  
*'I pray and build home, I pray and stick'*
9. kan achi dubbatus rabuma kadhachaa jiraa damoozumaaf addan baasne  
*'A person/group talks from there, pray to GOD only, we grouped for a reward'*
10. ?aləngə indet inate dirri laj jigebal  
*'How can a whip be drawn into my mother's dwelling'*
11. muarterna, fərrəna ?ahal jijazlif  
*'May Allah protect you from envious and ill-wishers'*

Code mixing in the context of Zar rite may be categorized into various types. One core function of code mixing is to magnify the power of the Zar spirit. Specially inserting words from Arabic is familiar in Zar rites. Using familiar Arabic words does not show religious differences. In (4) “wəllahi” is an Arabic word meaning ‘*in the name of Allah*’. This word is inserted into Afan-Oromo structure by an Afan-Oromo speaking carrier. But this word has the equivalent in Afan-Oromo “maqaa waaqayootiin”. The word “wəllahi” is familiar to Muslims but this word is not uttered by only Muslim carriers. In (11) the word “wəllahi” is inserted into Amharic matrix structure uttered by Amharic speaking Christian carrier and Christian Zar like T’ək’war’. In (6), (7) and (10) words from Arabic are inserted in one of the matrix (Afan -Oromo or Amharic) structures but the carriers are from both religions.

The frequency of insertion from Afan- Oromo into Amharic is less than that from Amharic in to Afan -Oromo. This may be due to the long contact of the two languages. However, the process of insertion from Arabic into Afan- Oromo, and Amharic into Afan – Oromo is quite different. The process of insertion from Arabic to Afan- Oromo doesn’t lead to phonological changes but in the process of insertion of Amharic into Afan – Oromo leads to various phonological processes.

In (1) “qaalin” /k’al-in / meaning ‘word’ the form of this word in Amharic is /k’al-u / or /k’al-ua/. The inflectional morpheme “-u” indicates 3SM and “-ua” indicates 3SF. But in Afan –Oromo the inflectional morpheme “-in” is a postpositional clitic .In (5), the word “risti-in” is similar to (1). In (5), “tarikaa” /tarik-aa/ meaning ‘history of her/him’ the form of this word in Amharic is /tarik-u/ or /tarik-ua/. In Afan – Oromo “-aa” is nominalise, but in Amharic “-u” refers to 3SM and “-ua” to 3SF. In (9) “damoozumaaf” /dəmooz-u-ma-af/ whose contextual meaning is ‘for a reward’ and the Amharic equivalent is /lə -dəmoz/ ‘for salary’. The Amharic preposition “lə-” is replaced by the postpositional clitic the “-af” in Afan- Oromo.

To conclude the discussion, code mixing has the role of magnifying the linguistic ability and power of Zar carriers. Even if these words are familiar and simple, some carriers do not use them in their day- to- day communication based on their religion. Zar rites may be taken as an intersection area of Muslim and Christian carriers in the use of words irrespective of religious differences.

## **7. Conclusion**

The practice of Zar rites is common all over Ethiopia. Fərək'əsa is one of the biggest pilgrimage centers. The founder of the center is called Ayyo Momina. She Arrived at Fərək'əsa and built her mosque in 1885. Momina was both a carrier and doctor of Zar spirit. After Momina died in 1929 her spirit was transferred to her son Taye Meshesha. After the death of Taye Meshehsa, Hajji Siraj became in charge of the whole activities of the mosque. In the last three decades, carriers, devotees and Zar doctors have met regularly four times a year to celebrate the Zar rites.

Data were collected from the site that is from Momina's shrine. To collect the data semi-structured interviews were prepared and participant observations were also done. During interviews and observations a high quality voice recorder was used to record utterances of carriers, devotees and shamans. After the data collection, qualitative analysis method was selected to analyse and interpret the data. Subsequently, the main findings of the research include verbal expressions and nonverbal objects of symbolic representations. These are used as parts of the expressions in Zar rites.

First, nonverbal expressions include clothes and scarifies of animals required by different Zar spirits. As can be seen in data presentation, animals and clothes of different colours are preferred by each Zar type. Carriers, devotees and shaman have shared knowledge about these. The demands of Zar spirits are classified into shared and unique demands.

Second, in verbal expressions, when carriers get into an altered state of consciousness their Zar speaks to devotees, Zar doctors and other Zars in a common language like Amharic for example, which is familiar to devotees, carriers and doctors. However, Zars commonly utter non-existing words and/or utterances mixed with existing words. This linguistic ability helps a Zar to get acceptance by carriers and devotees, simply because he uses utterances not understandable to others.

Even if a Zar utters ‘glossolalia’ or non-existing words, devotees and carriers believe that the Zar (carrier in altered state of consciousness) speaks Arabic, Somali, and Afan-Oromo etc. But in their normal state of consciousness, such carriers may never speak the language that he/she has spoken during the altered state.

**References**

- Al-Shahi, Ahmed. 1984. Spirit Possession and Healing: The ZAR among the Shaygiyya of the Northern Sudan. *Bulletin (British Society for Middle Eastern Studies)*, 11, 1: 28-44.
- Berg, Bruce L. 2004. *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*. Boston: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Black, Max. 1993. *Metaphor and Thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University press.
- Blumer, Herbert. 1969. *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method*. California: California University Press.
- Body, Janice. 1989. *Wombs and Alien Spirits: Women, Men, and the Zar Cult in Northern Sudan*. Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press.
- Bryman, Alan. 2004. *Social Research Methods*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Dawson, Catherine. 2002. *Practical Research Methods*. Oxford: How To Books Ltd.
- Degun-Mather, Marcia. 2006. *Hypnosis, Dissociation and Survivors of Child Abuse: understanding and Treatment*. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Gemechu Jemal. 2007. *The Faraqasa Indigenous Pilgrimage Center: History and Ritual Practices*. M.A thesis, Tromsø University.
- Goodman, Felicitas D. 2008. *Speaking in Tongues: Across –Cultural Study of Glossolalia*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Holy Bible. 1999. *Old Testament*. King James Version. New York: American Bible society.
- , 1999. *New Testament*. King James Version. New York: American Bible society
- Kapteijns, Lidwien and Jay Spaulding. 1996. Women of the Zar and Middle-Class Sensibilities Colonial Aden, 1923-1932. *The Culture of Language in North-East Africa*, 3: 171-189.
- Koic, E. Filakovice, Pavo, Nad, Sanea and Celic, Ivan. 2005. Glossolalia. *Collegium Antropologicum*. 29, 1: 307-313
- Kokoszka, Andrzej. 2007. *State of Consciousness: Models for Psychology and Psychotherapy*. New York: Springer Science+Business Media, LLC, 233 Spring Street.
- Leslau, Wolf. 1949. An Ethiopian Argot of People Possessed by a Spirit. *Journal of the International African Institute*, 19, 3: 204-212.
- Ludwig, A. M. 1966. Altered States of Consciousness. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 15:225–234.
- Muysken, Pieter. 2000. *Bilingual Speech: Typology of Code Mixing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University press.
- Messing, D. 1958. Group Therapy and Social Status in the Zar Cult of Ethiopia. *American Anthropologist, New Series*, 60, 6: 1120-1126.

- Natvig, Richard .1987. Oromos, Slaves, and the Zar Spirits: A Contribution to the History of the Zar Cult. *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 20, 4 : 669-689
- Nöth, Winfried .1990. *Handbook of semiotics*. North Morton: Indiana University Press.
- Orne, M. T. and D. F. Dinges. 1988. Hypnosis. In: States of Brain and Mind. *Readings from the Encyclopedia of Neurosciences*. Boston: Birhhauser Boston Inc., 42–43.
- Osser , H.A., Ostwald, P.F., Whinney, B.Mac, Casey, R.L. 1972. Glossolalia Speech from Psycholinguistics Perspective. *Journal of Psycholinguistics*, 2, 9-19.
- Pankhurst, Richard. 2005. Faraqasa. *Encyclopaedia of Aethiopia*. Siegbert, Uhlig (ed), Wiesbaden Harrassowitz, Volume II, 493-494
- Rossi, E. 1986. Altered States of Consciousness in Everyday Life: The Ultradian Rhythms. In B. Wolman and M.Ullman. (eds.). *Handbook of States of Consciousness*. New York: Van Reinhold Nostrand Comp.
- Shumaker, John F. 1995. *The Corruption Reality: A Unified Theory of Religion, Hypnosis and Psycho Pathology*. New York: Prometheus Books.
- Torrey, E. Fuller.1966. The Zar Cult in Ethiopia. *Proceedings of the Third International Conference of Ethiopian studies*, Volume III, 50-59.
- Young, Allan. 1975. Why Amhara Get "kureynya:" Sickness and Possession in an Ethiopian "Zar" Cult. *American Ethnologist*, 2, 3:567-584.
- Zinberg, N. E. (ed.) 1977. *Alternate States of Consciousness*. New York: The Free Pre