

**Gender and Ethiopian Politics: the Case of  
Birtukan Midekesa**

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## **Abstract**

The thesis is conducted as a case study of an opposition political party leader in Ethiopia, Birtukan Midekesa, who is currently serving life imprisonment in Ethiopian using the frames of intersectionality and visual analysis in qualitative research field of gender studies. The goal of this thesis is to examine the political biography of Birtukan Midekesa in order to find out categories that played significant role and to see how these categories interact in the making of Birtukan Midekesa as public figure in Ethiopia. The study is situated within the field of gender and politics in the body of literature on women's as political actors. The study mainly aimed at filling the gap of literature on gender and politics in Ethiopia. The findings of the intersectionality analysis indicated that factors that played a role in the making of Birtukan as a public figure are gender, ethnicity age and profession. It is also showed that in the ethnic based Ethiopian political system gender is instrumentalized to serve as the symbol of the nation in order to overthrow the ethnic based government. The finding of the visual analysis indicated that even if Birtukan is portrayed as a woman, some of her visual representation assumes masculine images.

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## **Introduction**

Birtukan Midkesa, the first woman opposition political party leader, a standing politician in Ethiopia entered in party politics in the year 2005. After joining politics, she is able to draw the attention of national and international community who are interested in East African politics in general and in Ethiopian politics in particular. Birtukan is often referred as “a courageous”, “a fearless” and the “Nelson Mandela of Ethiopia.” (Ethiomeia, 2009)

Many suggest that her extraordinary popularity is linked with her gender and ethnicity which serve the purpose of being the symbol of the nation. (Jimmatimes, 2009) Others say her political image is linked with her age and profession which is able to attract the attention of particular groups in the society. (Azezew, 2009) In this regard, I believe that the popularity of Birtukan is the combined effect of all the above mentioned factors.

Those who argue that the political image of Birtukan is linked with her gender and ethnicity state that Birtukan is the first woman who is able to reach the level of party leadership in Ethiopia. Moreover, Birtukan is the only woman politician who emerged from the opposition side. Thus, they argue her popularity is the result of this pattern in Ethiopia. On the other hand, they also claim that her popularity is linked with her ethnic identity. The ethnic identity of Birtukan is perceived as substantial factor for her popularity due to the current ethnic based political system in Ethiopia. Ethiopia is a multiethnic state which is comprises more than 70 different ethnic groups. Birtukan belongs to the two ethnic groups: Oromo, the largest ethnic group in the country and Amhara, the second largest ethnic group. (Jimmatimes, 2009) Thus, her body takes the image of Ethiopia, a country with multiethnic composition.

Those who based their argument on her age and profession, on the other hand, claim that Birtukan is among few young politicians in the world who reached the level of party leadership; hence, her extraordinary political popularity is the outcome of her young age. Being a lawyer, especially a judge in the court of law is also taken by some, as a factor which produced the image of Birtukan as an extraordinary politician. (Azezew, 2009) Thus, these arguments lift up an interesting academic challenge of analyzing a problem which includes different categories. The complexity in the political career of Birtukan demands a special methodology of intersectionality and visual research method.

The life story of Birtukan Midekesa imposes theoretical, methodological and political challenges. The theoretical challenge that the political career of Birtukan Mideksa imposes is concerning the efficiency of theories on women's political participation to address complex relations of categories in the making of successful women politicians. For example, if we look the case of Birtukan Midekesa, she is a young middle class woman with mixed ethnic identity, which together constitute 75% of the total population. Hence, the theoretical challenge is how these theories explain the relationship between these categories in the making of Birtukan Midekesa as important political figure. I want to approach Birtukan's life story from the theory of gender and politics theories because, her life story has not been done from this theoretical perspective. In addition, she became a public figure by being a political actor. Therefore, I have approached her life based on gender and political theory on women political participation.

The life story equally imposes a methodological challenge within the existing realm of gender and politics. I assume Birtukan's political popularity is a combination of various categories. These categories are profession, age, gender, ethnicity and political context. Thus,

there is a need of analyzing each category using intersectionality research method in order to examine whether these categories interact or not.

Therefore, the central goal of this thesis is to investigate the relationship of these categories using intersectionality research method and to contrast the results of the intersectional analysis using visual research methodology. Both analyses depend on gender and politics theories which describes about factors that affect women's political representation.

No one has written about the political story of Birtukan Midekesa, a woman who has an extraordinary political popularity in the history of Ethiopian politics. There are also few accounts concerning her career. Therefore, this would be a great opportunity for me to take both the lead and the risk of speaking about her in my thesis. The opportunity this story offers is to investigate different contexts which produce women politicians. The case of Birtukan will give us an insight to different contexts which produce leaders in this elderly male dominated public space. The thesis also fills the existing gap of literature on gender and politics in Ethiopia.

On the other hand the risk the thesis imposes is a political challenge. As she is a contemporary political topic in the country, the outcome of the thesis may have consequences. In particular, if the outcome of the research is not acceptable by the current government, I may face different problems because freedom of speech is very limited in Ethiopia.

In addition to the fact that the research topic is new, Birtukan is very extraordinary woman, which I personally met years ago as a visitor while she was in prison. I was motivated to visit her due to the extraordinary political image she had than her other male associates. Thus, she also became a very interesting research subject for my MA study. Therefore, these reasons together make me to dedicate this thesis on the life of Birtukan Midekesa.

The thesis contains the following sections. First, the thesis provides the general frame work of the study, the Ethiopian political context, which will deal with factors that affect the state structure, electoral system and party politics. The main goal of this section is to examine the political context that produced Birtukan as a visible politician in the country. The concepts discussed under this section are basis for other discussions made in the thesis. Second, the thesis examines the biography of Birtukan Midekesa in order to see the factors that enabled her to join Ethiopian politics. In addition the section also investigates how Birtukan became the country's major opposition political party leader with five years stay in the politics. The section that follows is responsible to discuss the gender and political theories on women's political representation in Ethiopia in general and the case of Birtukan in particular. The goal of this section is to provide the analysis on factors that shaped Birtukan's way to politics with in the general political context in Ethiopia. The part on intersectionality, on the other hand, examines the interaction between factors that made Birtukan a visible politician in the country. The section on the visual analysis will look into how the categories which made Birtukan, a visible politician are visually constructed. Finally, the thesis provides the findings of the study in the conclusion part.

## 1. Ethiopian political context

This section provides the general frame work of the thesis which is the Ethiopian political context. The political context of Ethiopia in this section primarily refers to the political history, the party system, the state structure and the nature of election. This section argues that ethnicity is a category which influenced the Ethiopian politics since 1991. And the 2005 election, which Birtukan appeared as the opposition political candidate for the parliament was a failed attempt to change this ethnic based politics. Hence, the central goal of this section is to provide discussion of the political context that produced Birtukan as leader in an elderly male dominated politics in Ethiopia.

If we look into the current Ethiopian politics, we can understand that ethnicity plays a significant role in determining party system, state structure and in shaping the results of elections. Ethiopia is composed of various ethnic groups which identify themselves with specific cultural identities such as language and manner of dress. Such specific cultural identities are used by ethnic groups for their collective existence, and, as a means of differentiating themselves from each other as well. An ethnic group in Ethiopia share culture, origin and language as fundamental common set of tradition. In Ethiopia, there is religions homogeneity among the ethnic groups.

However, ethnicity did not served as a category in determining state structure, party system and identity of individuals in Ethiopian political history prior to 1991. Rather, in the Ethiopian political history single national identity, Ethiopianism was used as the base for determining political structure in Ethiopian by the previous rulers despite of the multiethnic

composition in the country. Ethiopiansim refers to a set of identity of individuals within the border of Ethiopia who share the cultural traditional and political values imposed by rulers. (Joireman, 1997)

In the year 1991 the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), a rebel group, took political power from the military regime through a military struggle and transformed the country's political system from unitary or centralized governance in to an ethnic based Federal State. This political system redefined citizenship, politics and identity based on ethnicity. After EPDRF took power, Ethiopia is divided into different states based on ethnic identities. EPRDF itself is established by ethnic based coalition. The ethnic based parties which formed EPRDF are Amhara National Democratic Movement or ANDM which represents the ethnic identity Amhara, Oromo People's Democratic Organization or OPDO which represents the ethnic identity Oromo, Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) which represents the ethnic identity "Tigrae" and the Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Front (SEPDF) which represents several ethnic groups located in the southern part of the nation. (Teshome, 2009)

This ethnic based government adopted constitution in the year 1995 which confirmed the number of political changes brought by EPRDF. The constitution defined the countries structure based on ethnicity to nine regions and two federally administered cities –states. The nine ethnic based regions are, Tigray, Afar, Amhara, Oromia, and Somali, Benshangul /Gumuz/, Southern people and Hariari. The two cities which are administered by the Federal State are Addis Ababa and Dirredawa. (Representatives T. H., 1994) The constitution which defined regions based on ethnicity also established a bicameral parliament the House of People's Representatives and the House of Federation. The House of People's Representatives is the lower house with 547 members directly elected for five years. The House of Federation with 108 representatives of the

ethnic groups on the other hand is elected by each regional state parliament. (Representatives T. H., 1994) Thus, the current political structure promotes ethnic based identity politics which is divergent from the previous political structures which used to promote the single identity politics under the umbrella of Ethiopianism. (Joireman, 1997)

The current political system founded in 1991 resulted in two major political blocks in the country: pro and anti ethnic identity politics blocks. The first block which opposes the current ethnic identity politics proposes a political agenda which promotes single national identity Ethiopianism like the previous rulers in Ethiopia. On the other hand, the other political block which supports ethnic identity politics propose political agendas and programs which promote this ethnic identity politics.

However, the political parties under each block have ideological differences among themselves. Some political parties which support ethnic identity politics accuse the present government for the imperfect federalism in the country. They claim the regional states have only symbolic power while the federal government has the autonomous power. And they state that the federal state structure is symbolic. Moreover, these parties also argue that critical federal governmental power is dominated by one ethnic group. And among the parties which formed EPRDF, only one party (TPLF) which represents the ethnic identity “Tigrae”<sup>1</sup> is powerful while all the others are marionette of this party. As the result, they claim, the current political structure is similar to the historical political context except the change in the dominant ethnic group.

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<sup>1</sup> Tigrae is an ethnic group located in the northern part of Ethiopia with population nearly five million. This ethnic group is represented by TPLF (Tigray People’s Liberation Front in EPRDF. Many argue that this ethnic group dominates the governmental powers. The current Ethiopian Prime Minister belongs to this ethnic group.

In response to this claim , the government states there is equal right and equal protection for all ethnic groups and this accusation is nothing but a result of “thrust of political power”.<sup>2</sup> The other block, on the other hand is characterized by a fragmented political struggle. Parties on these blocks have disagreements on the means of political struggle. Besides, they are challenged by the other block primarily by the government for trying to bring the superiority of a single ethnic group (the Amhara) which is claimed as ethnic group ruled the country for over centuries. The government calls these groups, “ inheritors the old regimes” and “ feudal”.<sup>3</sup>

Even if this political tension between these two blocks due to the ethnic identity politics existed in the country since the coming in to power of EPRDF in the year 1991, it detonated in the election held in the year 2005. (Ishiyama, 2007) During the 2005 election, the political group which was advocating for Ethiopianism or advocating against identity politics were represented by the Coalition or the CUD, which was chaired by Mr. Hailu Shawel, a “former military government bureaucrat”. The party was organized other parties under its umbrella and drew support primarily from “urban, educated and ethnic Amhara consistencies.” (Ishiyama, 2007) The other opposition which was named as United Ethiopian Democratic Forces (UEDF) which was composed of five domestic and nine exiled parties led by Addis Ababa University professors, Dr. Merara Gudiana of the Oromo National Congress (ONC) and Professor Beyne Petros of the Ethiopian Social Democratic Federal party.(ESDFP), on the other hand, advocated for ethnic federalism. This party was basically composed of parties from the Southern and Oromia regions. (Ishiyama, 2007) These parties belong to the block which stands for ethnic identity politics. In the election, they were accusing the government for imperfect federalism. Of

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<sup>2</sup> This term is mainly used by Ethiopian government in the various media against the political parties which accuse the government for its undemocratic rule.

<sup>3</sup> This is also a term used by the governmental owned media to refer the opposition parties which advocate for Ethiopiansim.

course, there was also the ruling party which holds the political power in Ethiopia since 1991, which latter declared as the winner of this election.

If we examine the voting behavior in the country, the anti ethnic identity block primarily draws support from the Amhara ethnic, the second largest ethnic group in Ethiopia.<sup>4</sup> All rulers in Ethiopian until 1991 belong to this group; hence the political ideology of Ethiopianism is deeply rooted in this ethnic group. On the other hand the party on the other block primarily draws support from the Oromo ethnic group, the largest ethnic group in Ethiopia which political ideology is deeply rooted in the identity politics. (Ishiyama, 2007)<sup>5</sup> It is in this situation that CUD appointed Birtukan as a vice chair person of CUD, some argue that her nomination is basically aimed to attract Oromo voters for CUD. (Shaw, 2005) Shaw argues that the main aim to bring Birtukan to this position in CUD was her mixed identity which the leaders of CUD want to use it as a means of winning the election. (Shaw, 2005)

The 2005 election is one of the historical moments in Ethiopian political history. This election is described as an election which started in democratic way and ended up in the opposite. (J.Abbink, 2006; Lyons, 2006)As Abbink (2006) explains in the pre election period they were political debates among political parties which were registered for the election. Besides, the debate among the political parties, there was also a public participation in the political debates through press. In general, the pre election period was characterized by democratic electoral practices. (J.Abbink, 2006)Nevertheless, the post election period, on the contrary, was characterized by undemocratic practices such as torture, violence and

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<sup>4</sup> The Amhara ethnic group is located in the northern part of the country. It is widely argued that the Amhara's have been Ethiopia's ruling elite for centuries until 1974. The year, a communist party took power.

<sup>5</sup> The Oromo ethnic group is the largest ethnic group in Ethiopia with nearly 40 million number of population. It is mainly argued that the Oromo ethnic group had been under the suppressive rule by different rulers in Ethiopia which also include the current government.

imprisonment of opposition political party leaders, members as well as supporters. (Lyons, 2006)The cause for the post election conflict was the controversy over the election results. The Ethiopian National Election Board announced that the ruling party (EPRDF) have won 367 seats in the parliament while the oppositions (CUD, UEDF, OFDM) won 172 seats. (Ishiyama, 2007) The opposition parties contested this result; some called it “daylight robbery”. (Ishiyama, 2007) After the announcement of election results, the political parties were highly engaged in meeting with the public to decide to whether to boycott their seats in the parliament as a form of opposing the election result or to take their seat and continue the peaceful struggle. (Lyons, 2006) Those who suggested taking their seat claim that, “escalating violence, would only play in to the hands of EPRDF, which had overwhelming military dominance.” (Lyons, 2006, p. 4)Others, on the contrary, argue joining the parliament is accepting the results of the election which was scammed by the ruling party. (Lyons, 2006) When the parliament “conveyed” in October 11, 2005 some from the opposition like UEDF, which belongs to the block that supports the identity politics joined the parliament. In addition, some member of CUD which belong to the anti ethnic identity politics also joined the parliament. However, most CUD leaders boycotted their seats. (Lyons, 2006)Thus, Birtukan is among CUD leaders who boycotted their seats. Following this political process, CUD gradually disintegrated due to difference within the party. Some join the parliament and many of the leaders were imprisoned. The disintegration of the party was further accelerated after the release of the leaders in the year 2007. This disintegration of the party was followed by aggravated public rivalry between Hailu Shawel, the leader of the party and the Birtukan Midekesa, the vice chair of the party due to differences on the future the party. This end the very existence of the party and Birtukan, which is then considered as “a true inheritor of the CUD objective” by the majority of the supports of CUD, established her own party named as

Unity for Democracy and Justice (UDJ) in August 2008. (Report, 2009) This party, unlike the older CUD which is basically “dominated by Amahra ethnic group, is less Amahra dominated and further composed of other groups like Gurages’s and Oromo’s which are mixed with the Amhara ethnic group” like Birtukan herself. (Report, 2009) Thus, it is in this political context that Birtukan emerged from the opposition political block which advocated the concept of Ethiopianism.

Based on this general context, the thesis aimed to discuss factors that made Birtukan a public figure. Hence first, the thesis will discuss the place gender using theories on gender and political representation. Second, the thesis will examine the impact of ethnicity in the making of Birtukan using Yuval-Davis theory on gender and nationalism. But, before discussing about the above points, the thesis will look into the biography of Birtukan Mideksa, who holds a symbolic power in this political context.

## 2. Biography of Birtukan Mideksa

*“There will be no agreement with anybody to release Birtukan.*

*Ever. Full stop!”*

Melese Zenawi<sup>6</sup>

Who is this woman that the prime Minister of Ethiopia, the man who has been in power for the past 20 years and who ensured his political power for the coming five years through the election held in May, 2010 by 99.6% vote speaking about? This section is responsible to look into the biography of Birtukan Midekesa. The discussion on Birtukan’s biography is based on an official website dedicated for the campaign “Free Birtukan Midekesa” and other official sites which belongs to the opposition. I was forced to use source from the opposition because the government or the ruling party is silent with regards to Birtukan’s case. The Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Meles Zenawi had a press conference held in the capital city Addis Ababa around the beginning of this year concerning different political issues in the country. In this press conference, he mentioned that Birtukan’s issue is a dead issue. (McLure, 2009) Thus, this is a clear indication of the government strategy to silence her which is one part of silencing opposition politics in the country. Therefore, I have relied on only the available websites regarding her life story which entirely belong to the opposition side which is political motivated to lobby for the release of Birtukan.

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<sup>6</sup> Ethiopian Prime Minister (McLure, 2009)

The existing accounts on Birtukan's biography only focus on her life after entering in the realm of politics in general and after her arrest in particular. This imposed difficulties to articulate Birtukan's way to politics. Nevertheless, I have managed to gather information about her biography from two groups of sources. The first group of sources refers to the group of sources which are important to look in Birtukan's pre-political life. Under this group of sources, I have used her interviews, interview of her mother and articles which focus on the early life of Birtukan. The second categories of my sources are those which are important to understand the life of Birtukan after joining politics. Under this category, I have primarily used the works political analysts who are pro Birtukan Midekesa.

Her life story on the website dedicated to the campaign "Free Birtukan Midekesa" states, Birtukan entered the realm of politics as a member of an opposition political party which was registered to run for the second round national election in the year 2005. (Ayele, 2009) Before joining this party, Birtukan was serving as a Judge in the High Court of Addis Ababa. (Ayele, 2009)The party in which Birtukan became a member is CUD, (Coalition for Unity and Democracy) one of the popular parties during election 2005 along with EPRDF (Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front). Soon after she became a member of CUD in the year 2005, in the same year, she was appointed as the Vice chair person for the party. (Ayele, 2009) Her becoming of the vice chair of the party is explained by the rhetoric of hard working and committed politician. (Ayele, 2009)However, others argue this is a political strategy by the CUD in order to win votes from the Oromo's. (Shaw, 2005) I also share this view; otherwise, the good politician explanation does not justify Birtukan's nomination in the presence of other senior male politician in the party. The young woman way to politics was then further developed to the extent of establishing her political party in the year 2008. (Ayele, 2009) In the year 2006,

following the post election crisis which brought an end to CUD, resulted in the establishment of Unity for Democracy and Justice (UDJ) in August 2008. (Ayele, 2009) This party is considered an inheritor of CUD. (Ishima, 2008) Being considered as the true inheritor of CUD can have number of effects. For example it can bring the supporters of CUD to this party. As Professor Ayele explains Birtukan was elected by the former members of CUD who took part in the disintegration of the party as “she was the most favorite politician in the party”. (Ayele, 2009) Hence, the rhetoric of favorite politician is also used during the selection process as a chair of this party.

Birtukan Midekesa was born in 1974 in the capital city of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa from a lower class family. (Ayele, 2009) Her mother explained this in one interview as, “even if our economic status was very low, we raised Birtukan with a special care and doting as our only daughter. (Ayele, 2009) Her father was a member of the military during one of the regimes in Ethiopia before the current government, who later died after Birtukan Joined Addis Ababa University, Law faculty for her undergraduate study. (Ayele, 2009) Due to her parents economic status Birtukan attended her education in one of the public schools in Addis Ababa where education is offered for free. Her mother explained that “Birtukan was one of the top and clever students in the public school she attended which made us proud.” (Ayele, 2009) After completing high school, she joined Addis Ababa University, the first and the largest University in Ethiopia. As Professor Ayele explains in his article in the official web page of “free Birtukan Midekesa”, Birtukan had a dream of joining department which will enable her to serve the public. Accordingly, Medical and Law faculties of Addis Ababa University were in her short list. Latter Birtukan Joined Addis Ababa University Law Faculty. (Ayele, 2009) Professor Ayele explains in her stay in the Faculty of Law, Birtukan had very good relations with her colleges

and professors. She was the only female graduate in the year 1989 from the Law faculty and she was known for her “positive and friendly disposition towards all she encountered.” (Ayele, 2009)After her graduation, she was appointed as a Judge in the first instance court in Addis Ababa where she served with competence and equanimity for six years as a judge. (Ayele, 2009) While she was a judge she become famous for the case involved corruption of high officials in Ethiopia including the Minister of Defense. It is argued by some she gave independent judgment to this despite of the absence of judicial independence in the country. (Ayele, 2009)Nevertheless, with the appeal taken by the government, the Defense Minister was imprisoned for six years. After his release from the prison, he issues a statement about Birtukan as” a courageous and fearless woman” Seye Abraha, up on his release from the prison became a member of the opposition political party. (Ayele, 2009) Professor Ayele claims that Birtukan as a judge was well respected and even were confronting the government while enforcing her professional duties. However due to the pressure from the government like a warning she received from the government after this decision , she decided to resign from judgeship and started to practice law as a private advocate. (Ayele, 2009)

Her political life which started in the year 2005 by joining the opposition political party for the second round election in the country hosted imprisonment in the year 2007. After the election she was jailed along with other politicians in November, 7, 2005. (Report, 2009) Birtukan and the other political leaders were accused and found guilty by the court of law for causing the post election crisis which caused death and injury on many people as well as a destruction of property in the country. The cause for this post election conflict was opposition of the election results by the opposition leaders as well as many citizens of the nation. Latter Birtukan along with after a

negotiation led by the local elders and the government to free these prisoners, Birtukan was released along with the other prisoners. (Ayele, 2009)

After the political leaders were released by the pardon of the government, as professor Ayele explains the leadership was frustrated due to the difference in the political ideologies, it is during this time that Mrs. Birtukan emerged as the “overwhelming favorite woman to head a new opposition party named as Unity for Democracy and Justice (UDJ) in the year 2008”. (Ayele, 2009)

As a political party leader Birtukan was touring in different part of the world like United States of America, Canada and Sweden in order to introduce the party agenda (program) and to build the capacity the political party. The government accused her of denying the pardon given to her by the government after the negotiations made by the local elders in her message for Ethiopian Diaspora in Sweden. As the result she was sent back to the prison in December 2008. (Ethiofact, 2008) Currently she is serving a life sentence and chairing her party in prison. Thus, the five years career makes Birtukan a visible politician in the country. Her short political career has brought number of political successes; being the vice chair person and a chair of two major opposition political party. In addition she is also a political prisoner, and refereed by the name of some famous political figures like “the Nelson Mandela”, the South African former president who was jailed for twenty seven years by the then apartheid regime. (Ethiomeia, 2009)

In conclusion, the biography of Birtukan imposes a theoretical and a methodological challenge for analysis. On the theoretical level, different theories that discuss about women and politics suggest that women’s way to politics is affected by four primary factors, namely, personal ambition, socio-economic - cultural factors and political factors hence; I will analyze

these theories in light of Birtukan's biography. Furthermore, the theories on gender and politics are not sufficient to explain the enigma of the noticeable gap between woman political participation from the ruling side which is very sufficient with the level of women status in the country and the opposition side where there are very few women, not to say none The following section will provide the methodological approach of the thesis.

### **3. Methodology**

This thesis is developed as a case study of the political image Birtukan Midekesa, woman political party leader in Ethiopia using the frames of intersectionality and visual analysis research methods. In this section, I will explain these research methods that I employed to analyze the political image of Birtukan Midekesa. The section first will discuss the two research methods and proceed to explain how and why they are used in this thesis.

#### ***3.1. Intersectionality***

The first part of my research is conducted using intersectionality method in order to examine the interaction of the factors that made Birtukan a political figure. For studying the interactions of these categories I have used McCall's theory on intersectionality as a research methodology. McCall explain that in a feminist research, the limitation of making gender as a single category of analysis is recognized as a limitation and to solve this limitation; the research method of intersectionality is introduced in the feminist academia. (McCall, 2005) She argues, in order to study the relationship between multiple categories and subject formations; there is a need to have the specific research method of intersectionality. (McCall, 2005)

Accordingly, McCall outlines different types of intersectionality research methods which are employed to study the relationship of multiple categories. These methods are; anticategorical, intracategorical and, categorical which is also known as intercategory. (McCall, 2005) In my thesis, I will use categorical to refer to this methodology. Among the above types of intersectionality research methods, I used categorical research method, a method, which McCall describes as a method which begins with "the observation that there are relationships of

inequality among already constituted social groups, as imperfect and as ever changing as they are and takes those relationships as the center of analysis.” (McCall, 2005, p. 15) McCall’s explanation (2005) of the categorical approach indicates as that this method gives recognition of the existence of categories in the making of a subject and it allows the researcher to use these categories explicitly. In my case, I have recognized the existence of different categories in the making of Birtukan from the Ethiopian political context and her biography. The categories I recognized are gender, professionalism, ethnicity, age and current political context. In my analysis, I have used these categories expressly in order to understand how they interact or not in the making of the political image of Birtukan Midekesa. In addition, I have also recognized the in equal relationship among different categories from the life story of Birtukan Midkesa. For instance, there is a difference between man and woman in Ethiopian politics in general and in the opposition politics in particular. It is clear from her life story that the Ethiopian politics is dominated by men. Thus, I have used the categorical approach to study the intersections between the categories exist in the life of Birtukan Midekesa. The categorical research method does not allow the adding of categories in producing certain effect, rather, the method requires going beyond of adding categories and use “interactions” and “multilevel” relations among categories. (McCall, 2005) In the study of my case, I have applied these two methodological requirements in categorical analysis.

Using this research method in my thesis was both important and challenging. The importance that this method offered for the case study was the opportunity to examine the overall context which produced the image of Birtukan Midekesa. The method helped me to analyze how different categories like the social categories of gender, professionalism, age and ethnicity as well as, the structural category which is the political context of the Ethiopia interacted in the

making of Birtukan Midekesa. The challenge in using this method was the difficulty to interact categories in a multilevel.

### **3.2. Visual Analysis**

The second part of my thesis is conducted using visual analysis research method. Visual research qualitative research methodology is one of the research methods which contributed for the development of social science research. To mention few instances, looking the research method in comparison with word or text in the social science field of research;

While words or texts contain natural units of meaning such as sentence or paragraphs and are written in a language which are often encountered or read in a strictly predictable and linear fashion and direction. On the contrary, than words and texts which force the reader to follow the constructed meanings, visual research, offers the viewer the chance to interpret immediately after looking the image or the picture. (Perlmutter, 1994)

Perlmutter (1994) argues that Visual documents result in the difficult of forecasting meanings. He states “the path of reception is difficult to predict.”(Perlmutter, 1994, p.27) Nevertheless, the methodological significance of Visual documents is also challenged as a simpler form of communication, whereas, words are perceived as the complex form of communication. (Perlmutter, 1994, p. 27) Moreover, it is also argued that, while “words can state abstract ideas or projection of future actions, image can only show objects, actions, and forms of existing in a sort of perpetual present.” (Perlmutter, 1994, p. 27) Despite of the above critiques, Perlmutter claims that “image show narrow particulars in time and space, it can also fix the mind’s attention and suggest or be taken as summarize a generalized condition.” (Perlmutter, 1994, p. 27) I used this research method in order to contrast the results of my intersectional analysis which is based different data. In doing, I found the visual

materials communicating strong messages regarding the categories analyzed in the intersectionality analysis.

I collected the images from various websites which are pro Birtukan Midekesa, this year, after I decided to employ the visual research as a research methodology to my MA thesis. I collected images from pro Birtukan Midekesa sources because I am particularly interested to examine factors behind the making of Birtukan as visible political figure. The images that mock Birtukan are not important to answer my research question. Thus, I have only collected and used images from pro Birtukan Midekesa sources.

The limitation I encountered while using this research method to analyze the making of Birtukan Midekesa is described by two levels. The first level is the level of the collection of pictures. The second level is the level of the interpretation of the pictures.

The problems I encountered during the collection of the pictures were the problem of choosing the pictures among many available. At this level the major problem was the selection of the best pictures which can serve the purpose of analyzing the image of Birtukan. The major I took to solve this problem was organizing the pictures based on themes. After organizing the pictures by themes, I was able to solve this problem to some extent.

The major problem I have encountered is the problem during the interpretation of the pictures. The interpretation of the pictures collected was a problem because it was very difficult to articulate their meaning while they were produced. As Perlmutter explains, while interpreting picture for the purpose of visual analysis, the context that produced the image should be taken into consideration. (Perlmutter, 1994) In this regard, due to the difficulty of contacting a person and the condition to understand the context during the production of the images, I used different

context that is helpful to interpret the images. The contexts are; political context, socio-economic and cultural contexts. Among all, I have primarily used the political context which is very necessary to articulate the meanings of the pictures.

Problem of copy right is also another problem of visual photography research. Perlmutter (1994) he explains, guarantee of copy right permission is part of publication process of research conducted using visual analysis as a source. In this regard, I did not secure copy right to use the images for this thesis because the images were at different websites and the holder of the copy right is not also sated. Thus, in order to solve this problem to some extent I have cited the sources which I collected the images.

I would also like to mention bias in using visual analysis and in the whole process of the thesis was my Political position. As a citizen of Ethiopia, I have my own political position which was reflected during the times of my interpretation of pictures and images. My interpretations to the visual accounts were influenced by my own political position and my social standing which shaped by my ethnic identity.

In conclusion, besides, the above detailed methodological limitation, the methodological problem of case study was another also one limitation for this thesis. As Stake points out, single case or few cases is poor representation of certain process. (Stake, 1995)

#### **4. Gender and Politics in Ethiopia: theory and practice**

The aim of this chapter is to look into gender and politics in Ethiopia in light with theories that explains about women in political representation. In this section, first, I will explain the theories and proceed to discuss their applications in the case of Ethiopia in general and in the case of Birtukan Midekesa.

The case study of Birtukan Midekesa is conducted within the frames of political science and gender studies disciplines. Hence, in this section I have used theories from the two fields in order to see the place of these theories in the Ethiopian women's political representation in general and to examine their place in the making of Birtukan Mideksa as a visible women politician in Ethiopia.

Among the vast group of literatures in the field of gender and politics, this thesis, is placed within a group of literature on factors that shape women's way to politics. The works under this category are primarily engaged in the discussion of favorable conditions to increase women's political participation. Thus, in this regard, I will use the theories on women political representation. (Kenworthy & Malami, 1999; Norris, 1997; Matland, 1998). These theories suggest that the major factors which affect women's political participation are personal ambition, socio-economic and cultural and political factors. Thus, I will discuss theories on each factor and examine the Ethiopian context in general and the case of Birtukan in particular.

#### ***4.1. Personal ambition***

The first factor that determines women's political participation is personal desire to take part in politics. (Matland, 1998)She describes personal ambition as the "first stage" in the legislative recruitment process. (Matland, 1998, p. 234)Women's decisions to take part in politics is influenced by "opportunities to run for office" (Matland, 1998, p. 234) Personal ambition by itself is not a sufficient ground to take part in politics, rather, there should be positive environment, otherwise called, good opportunities in a country. These good opportunities are "friendly political environment for woman candidate" and an estimation of resource; she can generate to help her camping." (Matland, 1998, p. 234) For Matland, the most important factor to create the good opportunities for woman candidate is the existence of strong women's organization or movement focusing specifically on women's issues. (Matland, 1998) Thus, a woman can become a successful candidate to run for office if she has the personal ambition and financial support as well as other supports like public settings from women's organization which will make her a "viable candidate" by political parties. (Matland, 1998, p. 234)

It is very difficult to know the level personal ambitions of other politicians in Ethiopia due to the absence of any other work concerning this issue. In addition, the scope of the study itself does not oblige to study the level of this factor on other women politicians. In one of her interviews, Birtukan mentions her motive of joining politics is the violation of human rights by the current government. In the interview she mentioned that she has the hope of changing this circumstance in the country by taking part in the politics. Matland's (1998) argument on the importance of women's organization in assisting women candidates during election campaign

does not apply for Birtukan's political career because there is no strong women's organization in Ethiopia which assist women's political campaign. The part on political context will provide a discussion on women's organization in Ethiopia. In addition, I argue that the theory on personal ambition should also contain the importance of social position and class in creating good opportunity for women's political participation. If we look the case of Birtukan Midekesa, there is a possibility of creating opportunity to take part in politics due to her profession and class. Birtukan is a lawyer, a profession which contributes for building capacity to take part in politics. Her class, on the other hand can support her financial need which can assist her to facilitate her campaign. Therefore, the theory on personal ambition should also include other factors like class and social position besides strong women's organization as factors which can create better environment for women's political participation. In this regard, Birtukan was able to articulate her personal ambition in a human rights frame work. The reason for personal ambition of Birtukan to join politics was narrated in a video found in the "free Birtukan Midekesa" as Birtukan was able to observe the human rights violation in Ethiopia while she was serving as a judge in the court of law. (Ayele, 2009) Thus, professionalism plays a very significant role in articulating personal ambition of a woman politician which will create good opportunity to them to take part as well as to be visible in politics.

#### ***4.2. Socio-economic and cultural factors***

The socio-economic and cultural factors are mainly concerned with women's level of education, social status and cultural attitudes towards women's political participation. In this regard, scholars in the field of gender and politics claim that the major factors that affect women political participation is the societal attitudes on women's political participation and their success outside of politics, such as (Kenworthy & Malami, 1999; Matland, 1998) Kenworthy and

Malami for example claim that women's progress in political representation in politics in a given country is largely dependent on the socio-economic and cultural contexts within that country. (Kenworthy & Malami, 1999) Socio-economic and cultural factor that affects women political representation, according to these scholars have various components. (Kenworthy & Malami, 1999; Matland, 1998) The first component of the socio-economic contexts is women's progress in other professions outside of politics. For instance, their progress in education is argued by Kenworthy and Malami as one of the "substantial factor in enhancing women's participation in politics." (Kenworthy & Malami, 1999, p. 239) It is also argued by Norris that some "women professionals, like lawyers, educators, journalists and business women are in a better position to join politics and they are well represented in politics compared to their number in the general population."(Norris 1996, p.188-190) Kenworthy and Malami also argue such specific work career can result in enhanced confidence and independence which will create a greater sense of political efficiency. Moreover, they argue that these professionals are more likely to be "well-educated, practiced in public speaking, and more familiar with the political system and the law." (Kenworthy & Malami, 1999, p. 240) Matland also claims that the increase of women's labor has a direct impact on the increase of women's representation by creating political conscious citizens. (Matland, 1998)

The second component of socio-economic and cultural context is the existence of strong women's movement in the country. (Kenworthy & Malami, 1999) Strong women's movement in a country will press the social, economic and political agenda which will bring equality of men and women in taking part in politics. (Kenworthy & Malami, 1999) This factor is also mentioned as one of the political factors that affect women political participation. Therefore, I will discuss the level of this factor in Ethiopia in the next section together with political context.

The third component of the socio-economic and cultural context is the liberality of a society. (Kenworthy & Malami, 1999) As argued by Kenworthy and Malami women may win a greater political representation in a country where there is more liberal attitude towards the rise of women in politics prevails than any other society. (Kenworthy & Malami, 1999) Matland also argues in a society where women are seen as equal with men's in political sphere, there is better women's representation than any other society. (Matland, 1998) Furthermore, in a society where politics is seen as an appropriate vocation for women, women will be more willing to stand for office, and more likely to be chosen by party leaders, and more likely to be chosen by voters. (Kenworthy & Malami, 1999)

If we look into the level of the socio-economic and cultural factors, the level of this factor is different in the case of Birtukan in comparison to many of the women politicians in the country. As it is discussed in the theoretical section, socio economic factors include cultural attitudes, the social status of women's, which is primarily measured by their educational status and professional engagement. These theories suggest that such factors will enable women to have the necessary awareness and information about politics. Birtukan was a lawyer who served as a judge and a private advocate before entering in to the realm of politics. Thus, according to the above theory, Birtukan has good social standing which will support her personal ambition to involve in politics. Furthermore, as it is learned from her life story, she resigned her position as judge due to the pressure of the government. This pressure from the government was very extensive after she passed decision in a case which involved higher officials of the government. In this case Birtukan's decision was made against the will of the government which is not obvious in Ethiopian where there is no judicial independence. Thus, the type of professional

engagement is not a favorable condition for the general women's political participation in Ethiopia with little exception from the ruling party and for Birtukan Midekesa.

On the other hand concerning the cultural contexts, in Ethiopia, the cultural context is not supportive to women's political participation in general and politics is viewed as a men's place. Ethiopian society can be characterized as traditional patriarchal society which undermines the role of woman in the public space. However, if we look in to the life story of Birtukan, it is very interesting to see how her becoming of vice chair person and party leader is narrated. This instance invites in the final section to analyze how she become a figure in a men dominated political environment.

If we look into the level of socio-economic factors in the case of others women politicians in the country, as it is indicated in Table 1, among 116 women MPs from the House of Peoples Representatives only 14.65% completed their first degree in various professions like law and in the field of social science and Humanities. The rest of women MPs which constitute more than 85.3 % in the parliament, are holders of diploma and below diploma which is the lower educational level in the country. (Ethiopia T. P., 2005-2009) Thus, women MPs have lower educational status. This is also an indicator of professional engagement. Therefore, the socio-economic and cultural contexts are not favorable to women's political representation. Hence, this factor does not played a role in bringing women to politics in general; however, this level has played a great role in the making of Birtukan Midekesa.

### ***4.3. Political factors***

The political factors include electoral systems, the presence of quotas and strong women's organizations to promote women's participation in the public sphere. In this regard, scholars such as Matland, Norris and Studlar suggest that women are better represented under PR system

than a single member district system. (Norris, 1997; Studlar & Matland, 1996; Matland, 1998) Norris defines electoral system as “a process of translating votes in to seats.” (Norris, 1997, p. 299) Norris classifies electoral systems in to four groups. The electoral systems are Majoritarian formulas, Semi-proportional systems, and Proportional representation and Mixed systems. From the above four types of electoral system Proportional system can bring far better representation of women. (Norris, 1997; Studlar & Matland, 1996; Matland, 1998) Matland claims that proportional representation is better than a single member district system because a party in a PR system nominates several candidates than in a single member district which allows parties only to nominate a single candidate. Thus, in a single member district, the zero sum nature of nominating decision will let the female candidate to must compete against the existing interests within the party that are represented by men. On the other hand, in PR systems, the party is much more conscious of balancing its ticket to attract support from different constituencies. Thus, in PR a woman candidate can be a beneficiary to the ticket by attracting voters. (Matland, 1998, p. 113) Furthermore, women are expected to make greater headway in politics in a nation where voters choose among party lists in a multiple district rather than among individual candidate in a single member –district in which case voters are selecting parties’ not individual representatives. (Norris, 1997, p. 129) This system will give wider power to central party organization a considerable influence over the nomination of candidate. Accordingly, if they are committed to include women, they have the option to come up with women candidates, if not committed, and they may still want to come up with male candidates. (Norris, 1997, p. 129) By contrast, in electoral systems where votes are cast for individual candidate, due to the unfavorable attitude toward women as politician, the party leaders may be able to tend to come up with male candidate. (Norris, 1997) The key feature of electoral system, as argued by Norris,

is not only proportional representation but the use of party lists in a multi district system. (Norris, 1997) In addition to the above electoral features, the number of seats per district is also a determining factor for the representation. Accordingly, as the number of seats gets smaller, the fewer the seats, the more identity of the individual on party lists will matter to voters and the party leaders will tend to elect individual that can win this votes. Thus, a smaller seat district in less advantageous to women's electoral fortunes. (Matland, 1998)

The other political factor that affects women's political participation is the strong women's organization. Matland argues besides the electoral politics, the existence of strong women's organization is very decisive to bring better representation of women in politics. (Matland, 1998)

In Ethiopia, there is no such strong women's organization which lobbies for the increase of women in politics. However, some initiatives in this regard are taken by the Ministry of Women's Affairs which is established under the Prime Minister and the Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association (EWLA) which has been working since 1995. The Ministry of Women Affairs have established Women's Affairs Bureau at regional and lower levels following its Ministerial functioning structure like other sectors. Ethiopian Women Lawyers association, on the other hand, has been working since the year 1995 to raise awareness of women's legal rights in Ethiopia using various methods.

Quota for women politicians is also an important political factor that can influence women's political representation in a country. (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2005; Studlar & Matland, 1996; Dahlerup, 2006)It is claimed by the above scholars that the core aim behind gender quota system is to increase the number of women politics in a large mass. Dahlerup argues that gender quota system is introduced in various countries of the world in various

different forms to solve the huge gender gap existing in the legislative. She explains, only 16 percent of the world parliament is occupied by women. (Dahlerup, 2006, pp. 1-2)

As outlined by Norris and Dahlerup, there are three types of Quota systems used to increase women's political participation. (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2005) This three types of Quota systems are, Reserved seat (constitutional and legislative), Legal candidate Quotas which can be constitutional and legislative, and, political party or voluntary quota. (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2005)The first type of quota system refers to quota system which is binding to all political parties in a country and it reserves some percent of seat in the parliament. This kind of quota system is largely introduced in countries where quota is introduced recently. The second type of quota system, on the other hand, refers to quota which is introduced at individual party level. In this type of quota system, political parties include quota regulation in their own by law, requiring a certain minimum proportion of women on the party's candidate list. (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2005, p. 32) According to Dahlerup and Freidenvall, there are more than fifty countries who introduced this type of quota this type of quotas exist in a countries where there is no legal rules. The third type of quota system shares some common element from each type of quota systems. This type of quota system, similar to the first type bound all political parties to extend quota for women. However, unlike the first system which reserves some seat in the parliament, it requires, similar to the second system, political parties to have a minimum portion of women on the party's candidate list. (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2005)

Quota system can also be grouped in to two major categories depending on the time it consumes to increase political participation of women. Claim quota can be fast track or incremental track. (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2005) The fast track type of the quota represents the recent expansion of quota provision throughout the world, which is contrary to the incremental

track which represents the historical quota system. (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2005) Fast track quota is a quota systems which is exists in countries where there is strong base of women participation of women and its aim is to bring fastest change in women's political representation. On the contrary, the incremental quota exists in countries with strong base of women's political participation. (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2005) For instance, Dahlerup and Fridenvall make a comparison between Costa Rica and Denmark in order to show the difference between the two types of quotas. In Costa Rica where there is fast track quota, women participation increased from 19 % to 35% in a very short time by a single election, according to them" in overnight". On the contrary, in Denmark, where there is incremental quota, 38% of women political participation is achieved in twenty years over eight elections. (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2005, p. 27) In addition, they also explain that the fast track quota is also introduced in countries where there is undemocratic election, mass female illiteracy and a strict patriarchal regime is sufficient to bring change. (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2005) Thus, according to their explanation may result in insufficiency on the system. (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2005)

Scholars such as Matland, Dahlerup argue there is a relationship between quota and electoral systems and proportional system is a favorable electoral system for adopting quota system. (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2005; Studlar & Matland, 1996) Further they argue, it is appropriate to use the reserved quota system in election system in which the candidate name is presented for voters, whereas, candidate quotas both legal and voluntary in cases where the voters elect political parties than an individual candidate. (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2005; Studlar & Matland, 1996)

The first component of the political context, the electoral system, suggests that women are better represented in Proportional representation than a single district system. (Matland, 1998;

Norris, 1997; Studlar & Matland, 1996) In Ethiopia the House of People's Representative (HPR), which is the highest authority of the federal government on all matters of federal jurisdiction, members of the house are elected for five years term through majoritarian system. The members of the house are elected on the bases of the majority of votes cast in a single member constituency. The election system in Ethiopia is often referred to as "first past the post system" under which candidate who receives more votes than any other competitors with in the constituency is declared the winner. (Ethiopia N. E., 2005) As indicated in table 2, there are 116 women MPs in this house out of 546. Out of these 116 woman MPs, only one belongs to the opposition party and all others belong to the ruling party. (Ethiopia T. P., 2005-2009)Therefore, these women MPs made it the parliament despite of the electoral system which is, according to these theories, is unfavorable to women's representation in politics. However, there is a need to further examine the issue of having predominately women MPS from the ruling party. In addition, the number of women MPs is relatively high in comparison with the previous two terms of the parliament with no change in the electoral system. In this case the electoral system cannot be a sufficient explanation to show women's political participation. The question on the electoral system will lead us to the next political context which is the quota system. In Ethiopia, EPRDF (Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democracy Front) or the ruling party introduced party quota system which obliges the party to list 30%of candidate in the party's list with the view of increasing women's political participation within the party. (Quotas, 2009) This quota system is only confined to this party and there is no other party with quota for women. Thus, this can be an explanation to the gap between the ruling party and the opposition regarding the number of women represented in the parliament. However, I argue, the quota is one acceptable reason to

show the gap between the ruling party and the opposition; it is not a sufficient reason to explain the huge gap in Ethiopian parliament between the parties.

In addition, the party quota system of the ruling party may not also be a favorable condition, if we look in to the relationship between the quotas system which oblige the party to have 30% of women candidate list and the electoral system which is single district magnitude. In this electoral system women compete with other male candidate to win in a district; voters may prefer the male candidate. The quota system which is appropriate in case of Ethiopian electoral politics is the quota which requires reserved seat despite of the results in election.

In the case of Birtukan, her way to politics is different in number of ways from the same women entered in to politics in the year 2005 to the federal parliament. The first difference with the majority of the MPs is her political party membership. Out of 116 women MPs 111 belong to the ruling party and its affiliated parties. However, Birtukan, in the year 2005 was a member and a vice chair person of an opposition. It is true that women from the ruling party are politically in a better position than her or other members of the opposition. The voluntary quota adopted by the ruling party is the primary favorable condition for women who belong to the ruling parties. In addition, their party have govern the country since 1991 which will able the party to have better resource to mobilize and support them to compete in elections. On the contrary, the Birtukan's political party was established on the eve of the election which makes it difficult for the party to encourage women candidates for the election because of the need to make various activities to encourage the participation of woman in the parties in the patriarchal Ethiopian society.

In conclusion, the levels of all factors for political participation of women in Ethiopia are not favorable in general and in the case of Birtukan in particular. Among the factors discussed

above the only factor which appears as favorable in the political journey of Birtukan is professionalism. I argue that professionalism alone is not enough to explain the success of a woman while all others factor like political context is not favorable to women's political participation. If this is the case then what explains Birtukan's way and success in Ethiopian politics. The discussions on the Ethiopian political context and the biography of Birtukan, it is indicated that ethnicity plays the major role in Ethiopian politics. Ethnicity is the base of political struggle either peaceful through election or military struggle. On the other hand, as it is discussed in this section, the Ethiopian society is a patriarchal society which does not encourage the participation of women in the public domain. Besides, the Ethiopian society opposes single mother hood form of parenthood. For instance, there is a cultural practice called as "Wurse" which literally means succession in English. In this practice if a husband dies leaving Childers and wife, his younger brother marry the woman in order to take care of the children's as well as the woman. As mentioned in the biography section, Birtukan is a single mother who has a daughter whose father is unknown. In addition, politics is also seen as the domain of elderly people in the Ethiopian society. It is this context that produced Birtukan as a visible politician and the theories that I have discussed are not enough to explain this context. Therefore, I offer intersectionality as a solution in order to explain how gender, ethnicity, age, political context and professionalism play a role in the making of Birtukan Midekesa. The following section is devoted to discuss how these factors interact in the life story of Birtukan.

## 5. Intersectionality

“Nelson Mandela of Ethiopia” is a name given by Dr Merara Gudina to Birtukan Midekesa, the first women political party leader who is sentenced for life. (Ethiomeia, 2009) Nelson Mandela is the father of the South African struggle on Apartheid. He is often referred to as a point as a symbol of courage, strengthen, patience and wise political leadership. Nelson Mandela was one of the founders of African National Congress or ANC, a party which over thrown Apartheid and took political power since 1991. Besides being a founder, Mandela is known for “transforming the movement of ANC in to a mass movement.” Nelson Mandela was imprisoned for twenty Seven years and latter become the first President of the Republic of South Africa after the overthrown of the Apartheid regime. (AfricanNationalcongress)

Birtukan’s comparison to Nelson Mandela invites to examine how she assumed this political image. This is particularly interesting because Dr. Merara Gudina, who called her ” Nelson Mandela of Ethiopia”, is an Associate professor in the Political Science Department of Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia. Besides, Dr. Merara Gudina is a much respected politician who is a leader of political party and a member of the parliament as well. Moreover, even if they does not make a direct comparison between Birtukan and Nelson Mandela, she is also called as a “Courageous women”, “Optimist leader”, “Inspirational “and a Role model.” (Ethiomeia, 2009)

Hence, the objective of this chapter is to examine factors behind the making of Birtukan Midsekesa a famous and an important political figure in Ethiopian political history. By looking at the Ethiopian political context, the biography of Birtukan and theories on participation of women’s in politics, I argue that factors that played a role in the making of Birtukan are personal

ambition, gender, political context, ethnicity and profession. Thus, in this section, I will look into how these categories interact or not in the making of Birtukan as a public figure.

### ***5.1. The intersections between factors in the making of Birtukan Midekesa***

In this section, I will examine the intersections between the categories that make Birtukan a visible woman politician in Ethiopian politics. Scholars like McCall, Davis in the field of gender studies argue that the concept of intersectionality is a very useful concept in the field of gender studies and it represents a forward move in feminist theories. (Davis, 2006; Crenshaw, 1991; McCall, 2005) Davis also defines intersectionality as “the interaction between gender, race, and other categories of difference in individual lives, social practices, institutional arrangement, and cultural ideologies and the outcomes of these interactions in terms of power.” (Davis, 2006, p. 68) Intersectionality was originally coined to address the issues of African American women who fall between the sphere of feminism and anti-racist projects. (Davis, 2006; Crenshaw, 1991) Nevertheless, the concept did not only confined to the investigating the black women’s experience in the United States, rather it turned in to one of the most debated issues in women’s studies around the globe. (Davis, 2006) As Davis (2006) explains, currently intersectionality is offered in women studies, seminars and other similar events in women’s studies.

The categorical intersectionality method does not allow the adding of categories in producing certain effect. (McCall, 2005) In my case, as I am following the categorical intersectionality research method, I cannot add these categories and conclude that these categories together make Birtukan a visible politician. Rather this method requires going beyond of adding categories and use “interactions” and” multilevel “relations among categories. (McCall, 2005) In my case, I have applied these two methodological requirements in categorical analysis.

Accordingly, in the given undemocratic political context in Ethiopia, there is no risk to become a member of the ruling party due to the absence of any disadvantages instead, it will bring a privilege. The government also motivates and forces persons to become a member in the ruling party to stay in power for years. On the contrary, it is very difficult to be a member of opposition political group because there is undue pressure which includes torture on members and supporters of opposition political groups. Thus, there is a difference between woman politicians in terms of visibility depending on the party they join despite of other categories, like ethnicity, professionalism, age or religion. For instance, there are women MPs who are more educated, young than Birtukan. However, these women politicians are not public figures.

If we break the above difference between women in the ruling party and the opposition by concentrating only on women members of the opposition parties, then what will happen in this case? In such case, if we have two women who differ in terms of profession, one being professional and the other non professional. In this case, the professional woman will be more visible in order to play the rhetoric of capable politician which is assumed to be the quality of a good politician.

If we continue our analysis, what will happen to women who are in the similar professional standard? In this case the category of ethnicity will come to make a difference between women's. A woman who belongs to an ethnic identity which is the majority or like the case of Birtukan, a mixed identity, which together constitutes a majority, this woman will be made more visible than the woman who belong to the minority ethnic group. But what if this woman who belongs to the majority is non-professional and the other who belongs to the minority is a professional woman? In this case, I argue that the ethnic identity plays a significant role because if we look into the case of Birtukan, the political struggle is dependant in identity politics. On the other hand the

place of professionalism played the rhetoric of good politician in the making of Birtukan. Therefore, the woman who belong to the majority will be preferred than the professional woman who belong to the minority group.

If we move to another factor, age, what will happen to women who are in similar ethnic identity which belong to the majority? In this case, I argue that the young woman will be selected as political figure. The selection of Birtukan indicates that age also plays a crucial role in politics.

Thus, the result of my findings indicates that gender interacts with ethnicity and the current political context. Gender and ethnicity interact in Birtukan's representation of the Amhara ethnic identity. Nirra Yuval-Davis provides a framework for the intersection of gender and ethnicity. (Yuval-Davis, 1997) Davis explains ethnicity as an "imaginary nation" which is guided by "symbolic guards." These symbolic guards serve as a differentiating line between members of that group from others. (Yuval-Davis, 1997) This symbolic guards are "specific cultural codes of style of dress and the behavior as well as to more elaborate bodies of custom, religion, literacy and artistic modes of production and, of course language." Accordingly, ethnicity in Davis's approach is the collection of people who share custom, religion, literacy, language and other values and who use the above symbolic guards for identifying themselves from others who they live with as well. (Yuval-Davis, 1997)

In countries where there are many ethnic groups with different culture, identity politics is used as a means struggle to political power. Subordinate groups, according to Yuval-Davis use the means of identity politics in order to authorize themselves in politics of the nation. (Yuval-Davis, 1997) Thus, this identity politics in countries which encompass various ethnic group

results in ethnic politics. Different groups which are formed based on ethnicity will use politics of identity in order to take power. In this identity politics, each and every individual carries the burden of representation which will ensure the success of the politics.

Among all individuals, the majority of the burden rests on women. Women are especially required to carry out this burden of representation. (Yuval-Davis, 1997) She points out that a figure of a woman often refers to as a mother, this symbol of motherhood symbolizes the spirit of collectivity in many cultures. For instance, Davis mentions the case of “Mother Russia”, “Mother Ireland” and “Mother India” (Yuval-Davis, 1997, p. 45) According to Davis, women’s burden of representation can be seen from two points of view, firstly, women are expected to represent the current “collective identity”, secondly, women are expected to represent the “future destiny” of that specific group. (Yuval-Davis, 1997) In this regard, Birtukan’s body is used to symbolize “Ethiopia”. Her gender by intersecting with her ethnic identity is used to symbolize Ethiopia, a country which is the home of various ethnic groups.

According to my finding ethnicity relates with Ethiopian political context which is based on ethnic identity politics. As it is explained in the section which discussed Ethiopian political context, the Ethiopian government is accused by those who support ethnic identity politics as being dominated by single ethnic group and all the other ethnic groups are discriminated in many aspects.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, the groups who oppose the ethnic identity politics accuse the government for introducing ethnic politics in the country which they believe will end the very existence of Ethiopia which stand as one nation for over centuries. (Ishiyama, 2007)

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<sup>7</sup> See the section on the Ethiopian political context.

The puzzle of ethnicity in Birtukan's political career is her mixed identity. Birtukan's father Mr. Midekesa is a member of an ethnic Oromo, which political interest fall under the block which advocates for identity politics and her mother, Ms. Alamz, from an ethnic Amhara, which advocates against anti identity politics. Thus, some people argue that she draws support from these two ethnic groups which together makeup 75% of the total population. (Jimmatimes, 2009) Besides, some prominent Oromo ethnic based political party leader called her as hero despite of the huge political ideology difference between her political party and the party they lead. For instance, Mr. Bulcha Demekesa, chairman of the Oromo Federalist Democratic Movement called her "Charismatic, Young, Smart and Courageous Women." (Rice, 2010) The other prominent political leader Dr Merera Gudina called her "Nelson Mandela of Ethiopia." (Ethiomeia, 2009)

It is also worth mentioning that in Ethiopia, an individual's identity is drawn from her or his fathers' ethnic identity and a mother ethnic identity does not have a place in any official identity. This have a great impact on individual identify her or his ethnic identity. Therefore, Birtukan's official ethnic identity is Oromo, which is her father's ethnic identity. However, the political stand of Birtukan does not promote the interest of her father's ethnic identity or the Oromo's.

The political history of Oromo people indicates the group had been fighting against the concept of Ethiopianism which neglects and subordinates the group from political and economic benefits. Oromo's are the majority among all the ethnic groups in the country and had been under the suppressive rule of groups which aimed to bring a national identity or Ethiopianism. In addition, in the current politics, all political organizations which stand for the rights of Oromo people base their struggle on ethnic identity politics. Hence, it is very difficult to conclude that Birtukan draws support from this ethnic group. And then again, due to the presence of a

numerous challenge on the government from parties which belong to both blocks, it is also possible to assume that, parties and people may desire for political change in the country. In this process, the Oromo ethnic group members may assume Birtukan as a favorite candidate to bring this change because she holds the identity and she also has a support from other group which is a very good possibility to bring political change. Birtukan is seen as a hope for throwing the current government by bringing these two ethnic groups together .Her body which symbolizes Ethiopia is used by both blocks for a political purpose of overthrowing the government

According to my finding professionalism interact with age and gender. Birtukan's profession was necessary in order to subvert the gender and age stereotypes in the society. The public domain in general and politics in specific is seen as a male space in Ethiopia. On the other hand, Birtukan was a judge. Judgeship is among the highly respected professions. Thus, the use of the professionalism rhetoric is to subvert the stereotype that assumes women and young people as incapable of doing politics.

My finding also indicates that, Birtukan's age is used as one factor in her becoming a visible politician in the country. This shows that it is only young women who are assumed as desired politician in the country. Thus, this pattern indicated that the Ethiopian politics had no place for elderly woman.

## 6. Visual analysis

In this chapter, I will examine how categories which made Birtukan a visible woman politician discussed in the above section are constructed through visual representation. As I showed above the factors that made Birtukan a public figure are gender, ethnicity, political context and profession. These factors are constructed through visual images in various media which opposes the ruling party. As the making of Birtukan, a public figure is a political project by the opposition, the source for the visual representation is media which belongs to the opposition side.

Among the several images, I will start with a powerful image which represents Birtukan as an angel. In this image Birtukan takes the male androgyny. (Figure 1) This is a very powerful image which represents Birtukan as St Michael with the coat of arms in the Ethiopian Orthodox church, the church which has 43.5% followers from the total population in Ethiopia. In addition, the Ethiopian Orthodox church was the official state religion from 4<sup>th</sup> c AD until 1974, the year where a communist party took power from the Orthodox dynasty. The image of Birtukan is among spiritual images used by the church to explain the defeat of Satan which represent evil character and who rebelled against God, the creator and the good, by St Michael, the patron saint. In this image, the current Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi is represented as the Satan. The country takes the image of God. This image is very powerful with regard to two categories which are connected to each other: religion and ethnicity.

On the part of religion, it is very clear that the image represents Birtukan as a male patron saint of the country. This visual representation creates the image of good, patron saint that is

saving the country from the Satan who wants to destroy the country. For any member of the Orthodox Christian church in Ethiopia, this image communicates the above message about her. In addition, due to the domination of the Orthodox Christian church in the country, the image of Saint Michael is famous among the followers of other religions on one hand, and new religions like Protestants on the other hand, which constitute 18.6% of the total population are prevalently the converts of Orthodox Christianity which will make the communication of the image beyond the Ethiopian Orthodox church followers. (Selamta, 2010) Hence, this image makes Birtukan the good, patron saint of the country by communicating this image to the vast Ethiopian population.

The other very interesting communication of this image is its message of ethnic politics. The Prime Minister's party EPRDF (Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front) is the first political party which defined citizenship based on ethnic identity. The Ethiopian constitution which was enacted in 1995 came up with the state structure based on ethnic divisions. (Representatives T. E., 1995) Prior to that Ethiopia was a unitary State which is defined by a single national identity which was Ethiopians. (Joireman, 1997)

Even if, the existing constitution which incorporates the State structure based on ethnicity is the first document to give recognition to the politics of ethnicity, the geographical location itself indicates ethnic groups: the North and the South. The North is primarily the follower of Orthodox Christian religion; on the contrary, the South is primarily the follower Islam and other local religions like Waaqeffannaa among the Oromo's, the largest ethnic groups in the country. (Megalommatis, 2008) The north especially, the Amahra had been politically dominant group until 1974. (Joireman, 1997) The political dominance of the north includes religious and cultural hegemony. However, in the current Ethiopian politics this hegemony does not exist following the

political change after the year 1995. The year the Ethiopian constitution which ensures the cultural and religious rights to each ethnic group was enacted.

This political change brings an end to the Amahra political, cultural, and religious domination. The political domination which was based on a single national identity is seen by the South as a means of domination and control by the north. On the contrary, the northerners see identity politics which is based on ethnicity as a threat to the disintegration of Ethiopia, a country which stand as one nation for over centuries. The CUD (Coalition for Unity and Democracy), the party which Birtukan first joined, was advocating for the political ideology of the North. Besides, the party was dominated by the Northerners. Similarly, Birtukan's party is seen as inheritor of the CUD ideology which opposes the ethnic identity politics.

In this regard, figure 1 portrays Birtukan as an angel of the north which is defeating the ethnic identity politics represented by the Prime Minister. This image communicates Ethiopianism as good and strong. On the contrary, it presents the current ethnic based politics as evil and destroying political ideology in the country. Even if Birtukan is praised as a woman politician, this image presents Birtukan with masculine image of St Michael.

Figure 2 is other powerful image among the visual representations of Birtukan. In figure 2, Birtukan is represented in a boxing ring with the Ethiopian Prime Minister Melese Zenawi. In the boxing ring there are spectators which are part of the international community with white skin color. Among all the USA Secretary of State, Hilary Clinton is near to the boxing ring.

The image presents Birtukan with a smile after knocking down the Prime Minister. This picture communicates a number of messages. The present Ethiopian government is primarily supported by United States of America. During the George Bush administration, for instance,

United States of America was the supporter of Prime Minister Zenawi's regime more than any other country in the world. (Rice S. G., 2007; Research, 2007)

Political analysts suggest that the major reason for this support is part US campaign against terrorism. Ethiopia is the neighbor of the unstable Somali which is one of the countries listed by USA as a host of terrorists. Hence, the Ethiopian government receives support from the American government for the role it plays in Somali. (Rice S. G., 2007) For example, the Ethiopian government sends soldiers to Somali in order to fight terrorist groups. (Research, 2007)

Such government measure which is primarily taken to get the blessings of the American government is opposed by other political parties like Birtukan's and by political analysts for many reasons. For example, its impact on Ethiopian security and future existence. These political parties and political analysts believe that citizens and different political groups in Somali and the Ethiopian Somali's which occupy one third of Ethiopian land are developing hate towards Ethiopia. (Slavin, 2007)

In the picture the Prime Minister wears the name of "McCain" which communicates the message that he receives financial support from the Republicans. On the contrary, Birtukan wears "Hope" which was part of Obama's campaign. In addition the image includes the international community including Hillary Clinton, state secretary of USA. Having this people at the back has a political message of support to the American government.

This image presents the support of USA to Birtukan through Hilary Clinton at the back. This picture also presents the Ethiopian community in front of Birtukan. Even if the picture does not visualize the Ethiopian community, the smile Birtukan offers in the picture up on her victory

is there to show the Ethiopian community. Thus, this image communicates the international political position of Ethiopia which has a critical role in the domestic politics.

Thirdly, I will analyze the image on the themes of young politician, woman politician, professionalism, personal ambition and ethnic identity.

The theme that presents Birtukan as a young politician provides Birtukan as the exception to the stereotype that politics is a public domain of elderly people. Figure 3, 4, 5 and 6 present Birtukan with elderly male politicians. Among image under this theme, figure 3 is a very powerful image. In this image, Professor Mesfin Wolde Mariam is seen bowing to Birtukan while giving her greetings. Professor Mesfin Wolde Mariam is 80 year old man and famous human right activists who founded Ethiopian Human Right Council. (Ayele, 2006) He had been one of persons who had been politically active and served as a defender of Human Rights in the country since the early 1990's. (Ayele, 2006) In addition, he is a member of Birtukan's party. It is very interesting to see how this elderly politician bows for the young woman who is not even half his age. This image is the opposite of the expectations in politics with regard to age and experience.

The expectation in politics is that the young and new politicians are supposed to follow the footsteps of elderly politicians. In other words, it would not have been surprising if Birtukan bows for the professor. Thus, this picture communicates the image that young politicians are accepted and followed by the old once if they are like Birtukan who is portrayed as heroic politician for taking risk like prison in younger age.

The other powerful image with regard to age is figure 4. In this image Birtukan is giving a statement for the press concerning her party during its establishment. In the picture, Birtukan is

occupied by elderly men politicians like Engineer Gizachew Tefera(On the left) and three men at her back who stood as a guard, Mr. Temesegn Zewdie , who is a member of the parliament, Professor Hailu Araya, who is the other famous politician in the country are among the men who stood behind Birtukan. This image presents the young woman, Birtukan as a leader of the elderly men politician. In particular, this image is very interesting in the relation to the three men politicians at the back of Birtukan who stood as a guard.

The above images which present Birtukan as the young politician are also applicable in the case of gender. In all of the above images Birtukan is presented as the only woman politician. These images prove the domination of the political space by men. (Figure 3, 4, 5, 6) Similar to the case of age, the male politicians who are known political figures are presented in these images as the followers of the woman politician. This is a new phenomenon in a country where there are few women politicians in general and there is no woman politician from the opposition. I argue these images indicate how the image of uniqueness is visually constructed. The construction of uniqueness through this image made Birtukan the visible politician.

The other theme presents Birtukan as a professional. Pictures under this theme, on the other hand, support the rhetoric of the political capability of Birtukan. These visual representations make Birtukan visible politician by showing her as a capable politician to handle the political responsibilities. (7 and 8, 9)

The first image, figure 7 present Birtukan with her judge's uniform in the court room. This image is a very powerful in communicating the message of fearless, powerful, fair and knowledgeable person. The presence of these personal characteristics makes a politician preferable and visible. The other two figures, figure 8 and 9, on the other hand, show Birtukan's

political office career. In these pictures Birtukan is seen while holding a pen and concentrating on work. These pictures communicate the message of hard working politician which makes play significant role in the making of Birtukan as a public figure. This figure presents Birtukan with a masculine image. In the Ethiopian society judgeship is seen as men's space. For instance, in the Ethiopian society traditional arbitration system, women are not appointed as judges or elders to settle dispute. Thus, the judge uniform masculinizes Birtukan's image.

The final theme visualizes construct ethnic identity politics, a major factor which plays significant role in Ethiopian politics. In Ethiopia, one aspect of identity politics is a manner of dress which refereed as cultural dress. Each ethnic group has its own cultural dress which represents that particular identity and way of life.

Prior to this government, the Ethiopian cultural dress was often only refers to the cultural dress of the particular group in the north which is known as Amahra. Due to the long political dominance of this particular group Ethiopian cultural dress was often referred to the dress of this particular group. Nevertheless, after the coming of the current government, one of the major political projects the government engaged is deconstructing this notion of Ethiopian dresses. This is part of the identity politics campaign which the current government is criticized by those who advocates for single Ethiopian identity which should be defined by the common culture among all peoples of Ethiopia.

In this theme Birtukan is visualized through her dress as an Ethiopian Nationalist who stands for the single identity of the country in figure 10 and 11. The dress Birtukan wears the dress which belongs to the thinking of Ethiopianism.

In addition to the dress, the Ethiopian flag in which Birtukan is visually represented is also part of the identity politics. (Figure 12, 13, 14) The Ethiopian flag is red, green and yellow which were used for national flag since 1897, a year after Ethiopian victory over the colonial power, Italy. (Heime, 2001) After the victory, this flag was used as a symbol of victory in the country until 1991. The current Ethiopian constitution under article 3 states, the Ethiopian flag besides the above colors, there should be a symbol in the middle which represents the equality among the ethnic groups. In addition, the constitution also gives the right to each ethnic group to have their own flag and symbol. Accordingly, each group has its own flags with a particular symbol on it. However, if we look in to the images where Birtukan is presented refers to the flag that was used before the enactment of the constitution by different governments who ruled the country under unitary system. For instance, in figure 12, the old Ethiopian flag which represent the notion of one Ethiopia is at Birtukan's back. (Representatives, 1995)

This picture communicates the message that Birtukan stands for the unity of Ethiopia and is part of the political project which tries to get over the ethnic division to the extent of letting ethnic groups to have their own flags. The other image, figure 13 shows Birtukan's picture while making speech at the back of a table which is covered by the old Ethiopian flag. This picture also communicates the notion of one Ethiopia. It is not questionable that, a person who makes speech under that condition would communicate other message contrary to the political notion of one Ethiopiansim.

## Conclusion

The goal of this thesis was examining different categories which made Birtukan Mideksa, the first woman opposition political party leader in Ethiopia, a public figure. In this thesis, I have showed how these categories interact in the making of Birtukan. The thesis has addressed factors that determine women's political representation in undemocratic states like Ethiopia. In order to achieve this goal firstly, I looked into the general political context of Ethiopia in order to understand the context that produced a young woman leader in the elderly male dominated Ethiopian politics. Secondly, I examined the biography of Birtukan Midekesa in order to find out the factors that influenced her way to politics and to examine the process which enabled her to assume political party leadership. Thirdly, I looked into the theories on factors which affect women's political representation and investigated their application in the case of Ethiopian women political participation in general and in Birtukan's political life in particular in order to examine whether Birtukan's way to politics is the result of different factors which are forwarded by these theories as a favorable condition for women's political participation.

The result of the analysis shows that Birtukan entered in to party politics at the time when an attempt to overthrow the current ethnic identity politics through election in the year 2005. Birtukan was lifted by those who desired to replace the ethnic identity politics by Ethiopianism, the Ethiopian nationalism. She was brought to the opposition politics due to her gender, age and mixed identity and profession in a context where the political system is not favorable to women's political participation. In this ethnic politics, Birtukan's body has been instrumentalized as a symbol of the nation to and used as a means to overthrow the undemocratic government whose political structure is deeply rooted in ethnic identity politics. The findings of the visual analysis

showed Birtukan in some cases are presented with a masculine images and some of the visual representation of Birtukan also indicates some aspect of international politics.

The findings of this research showed that the reason for the gap between women's political participation in ruling and opposition party is explained by the quota system in the country. In Ethiopia, the quota system is party quota system adopted by the ruling party. Thus, this party quota system is the main reason that created a gap between women's political participation in the ruling and the opposition party.

The findings of the study showed the gap in theories in gender and politics regarding political participation of women in undemocratic political structures like the case in Ethiopia. Thus, this thesis offered one case to explain about the place of gender in undemocratic governance. The gender and political theories on participation of woman primarily work for democratic election. This thesis showed that these theories do not explain factors that affect women's political participation in undemocratic states.

With respect of future studies, I hope this thesis will encourage others to examine political context that produce women leaders. This thesis will be an innovation for those who are interested in gender and politics in undemocratic governance.

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## Appendix

### Images

Figure1. Source( <http://www.abugidainfo.com/?p=12820>)



Figure2. Source (<http://www.abugidainfo.com/?p=12820>)



Figure3. Source ([http://ethioborsaye.blogspot.com/2008\\_12\\_01\\_archive.html](http://ethioborsaye.blogspot.com/2008_12_01_archive.html))



Figure 4.Source ([http://ethioborsaye.blogspot.com/2008\\_12\\_01\\_archive.html](http://ethioborsaye.blogspot.com/2008_12_01_archive.html))



**Figure 5.**Source (<http://www.andinet.org/category/free-birtukan-mideksa/page/2/>)



**Figure 6.**Source (Source <http://www.andinet.org/category/free-birtukan-mideksa/page/2/>)



**Figure 7.**Source ([http://www.ethiomeia.com/courier/birtukan\\_honored.html](http://www.ethiomeia.com/courier/birtukan_honored.html))



**Figure 8.**Source ([http://www.ethiomeia.com/courier/birtukan\\_honored.html](http://www.ethiomeia.com/courier/birtukan_honored.html))



**Figure9.** (Source <http://ecadforum.com/blog/?s=affairs&paged=2>)

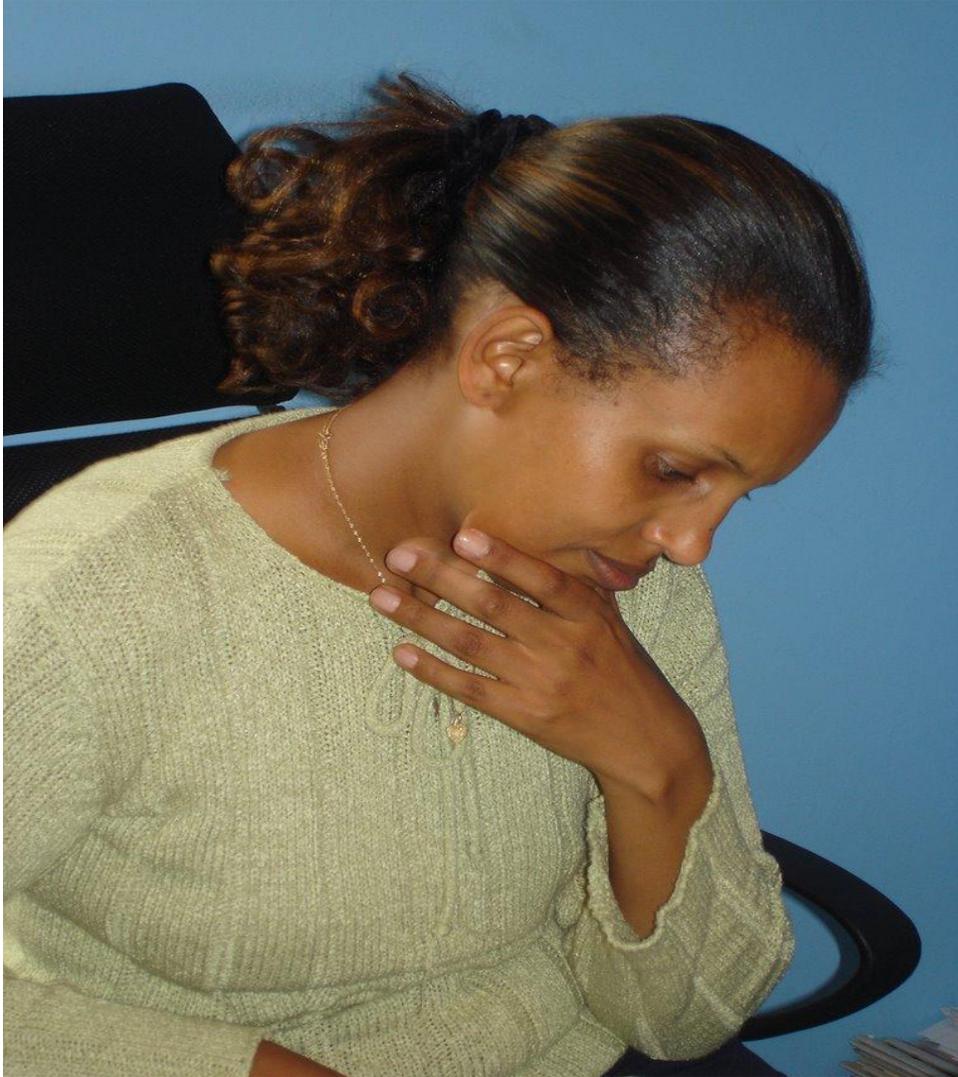


Figure10. Source (<http://nazret.com/blog/index.php>)



Figure11. (Source <http://kinijitla.org/>)



**Figure12. Source (<http://nazret.com/blog/index.php?blog=15&m=200901>)**



**Figure. 13** Source (<http://www.ethiosun.com/ethiopia-abusing-leaders-rights/>)



**Figure .14 Source (<http://www.andinet.org/category/free-birtukan-mideksa/page/2/>)**



Table 1. Women members of the Parliament and their educational status

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage
MA/ MSc	6	5.17
BA/BSc	11	9.48
LLB	1	0.86
Diploma	45	38.79
12+1	21	18.10
12+0	13	11.21
10+1	1	0.86
7-10+0	3	2.59
Not Specified	15	12.93
Total	116	100.00

**Source** (Ethiopia, 2005-2009)

Table 2. Women Member of the Federal and regional parliament

No.	Region	For Federal Parliament				For Regional Council			
		Male	Female	Total	F %	Male	Female	Total	F %
1	Addis Ababa	21	2	23	8.70	120	18	138	13.04
2	Afar	7	1	8	12.5	80	7	87	8.05
3	Amhara	109	29	138	21.01	211	83	294	28.23
4	Benshangul Gumuz	8	1	9	11.11	89	10	99	10.10
5	Gambella	3	0	3	0.00	70	12	82	14.63
6	Harari	2	0	2	0.00	24	12	36	33.33
7	Oromiya	138	39	177	22.03	349	188	537	35.01
8	SNNPR	94	29	123	23.58	261	87	348	25.00
9	Tigray	24	14	38	36.84	79	73	152	48.03
10	Somali	22	1	23	4.35	181	2	183	1.09
11	Dire Dawa	2	0	2	0.00	.....	.....	.....	.....
<b>Total</b>		<b>430</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>546</b>	<b>21.25</b>	<b>1464</b>	<b>492</b>	<b>1956</b>	