

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Violence, Defiance and Determination as Morally Justified Traits: a Cognitive Poetic Study of Women's Representation in the Novel *Tiqurua Pilot*

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Abstract

The fundamental subject of morality is wellbeing; one's own wellbeing and the wellbeing of others if possible. This happens when an experience of well-being regularly coincides with another experience 'X', hence, there shall be a sensible assumption that we will develop a metaphor with the form of Morality is 'X'. Then, it follows that every thought and act is moral and virtuous as long as it ensures one's own wellbeing and the wellbeing of others, given the standard with which we measure things as moral or otherwise is protection of wellbeing by any means possible. Accordingly, the researcher investigated how Biruk Kebede uniquely portrayed Rosy (an Ethiopian emigrant in Bremen, Germany) in his novel. Consequently, this study found out that Rosy is exceptionally represented as a Violent, defiant and determinative woman in contrary to the submissive behavior of women in Ethiopia and their usual portrayal in the work of arts as beautiful, emotional and irrational beings.

Keywords: *Morality, Immorality, Wellbeing, Cognitive Poetic, Representation*

Background of the Study

People of the same origin and their descendants with the shared sentiment of common ancestry and homeland, and oftentimes with the plan to return to that homeland are usually referred to as the Diasporas. The origin of the word Diaspora is in the Greek translation of the bible to refer to the exile of the Jews in Babylon (Ehrlich, 2009). Though it refers today to all people of the world who are living outside of what they believe is their homeland. The following section deals with the historical background of the highly dispersed races of humankind and (their descendants who share common ancestral roots and homeland—the Ethiopians in the diaspora (Van Sertima, 1987 and Diop, 1974).

History of Ethiopian Diaspora

Diasporic history of Ethiopia goes almost back to the origin of humanity. Some 55,000 years ago homo Saipan (the last advanced man with the brain size we have today) migrated to Europe which dropped its pigmentation within the space of 10, 000 years (Van Sertima, 1987). Ethiopians (black people in general) were also the earliest residents of the Indian sub-continent and the entire Asia in general. Again, Ethiopians were the first settlers of the Americas even though the fake version of our history tells us that Europeans are the first to set foot in this part of the world (Sertima, 1976 and Osmanacigh, 2017). Many writers of the classical Greek (Homer, Aristotle, Herodotus, Aeschylus, Euripides) and many others mentioned Ethiopia recurrently in their works. Even scholars

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like Drusilla Huston argue that the classical Greek and Roman civilization is a copy of the ancient Egyptian civilization (Clark, 1998, Huston 2004).

However, Ethiopian Diaspora in its current sense emerged, after the overthrow of the imperial regime due to the creation of a consistent Diaspora producing political environment immediately after. In November 1974, General Aman Andom, chairman of the provisional military council (which took over the whole power from Emperor Haile Silasie I), was killed. In February 1977, the *Red Terror* and *Netsa Ermija* (free measure) were declared, a declaration that gave members of the military government to take whatever measure they would like, including mass executions. In December 1978, the Derg made another repressive declaration called *Afesa* (Mass detention), which would give the Dergs the right to keep in custody anyone whom they believe is a counter revolutionary. As a result, 30, 000 youth and intellectuals were killed within two years (1977-1978) in Addis Ababa alone and their bodies were dumped on the streets of the capital, where, parents of the dead had also to pay 100 birrs to collect their children's corpus to bury (Solomon, 2007). Here, (Solomon, 2007) estimated that Ethiopia had produced 1,066,300 refugees in neighboring countries.

In addition to the ruthless nature of Mengistu's regime, mass migration out of Ethiopia had also been fueled by Aliyah (Jewish immigration to Israel) since the 1990s. As written in the Encyclopedia of the Jewish Diaspora the Israelis acknowledged the Beta Israelis as "members of the lost tribes of Dan" and declared in 1973 "that they can be accepted as lost Israelites and thereby return to their historic homeland" (Ehrlich, 2009). Though it is relatively a recent phenomenon, better payment from the Middle Eastern countries has also attracted a large number of Ethiopians, primarily of less skilled young women. As the report of the Maastricht Graduate School of Governance conducted in 2009 shows, illegal migration of youth mainly women between the age of 18-24 who are high school dropouts from poor families in Addis Ababa and its environs fled in mass to Middle East countries. This may be attributed to the popular belief held by many young women that a better payment from the Arab employers can help them quickly realize their dream of economic prosperity.

This continuous flow of Ethiopians for decades due to political discomfort and economic dissatisfaction has formed around two million Diasporas, according to the estimation made by (Belai, 2007:55). Many members of the Ethiopian Diaspora on the other hand recorded their lived experiences in many forms. Some recollected the ways they passed through in the form of memoirs and travelogues. Others produced their own autobiographies in a way that effectively mirrored their diasporic experiences. Yet, many others produced it in the form of creative and imaginative literature, primarily in the form of novels. The collection of such works of literature about the lives of Ethiopians abroad, therefore, has formed a new genre of Ethiopian literature called Ethiopian Diaspora literature.

Statement of the Problem

Even though we have some excellent works of literature by Ethiopian Diaspora, they seem to be less appreciated by home audience and under researched by domestic scholars. Except the novel *Eshokamaw Work* written by Saada Mohammed, which was narrated by Ethiopian Radio National Service, none of the works of the Ethiopian Diaspora are communicated by any means of mass communication. Very few scholarly researches are conducted on them, according to the evidences the researcher has gathered round; especially those produced in Amharic seem totally overlooked. It seems due to this fact that

the experiences, world views and behavioral shifts of the Ethiopian Diaspora communities appear to remain unknown to home audiences.

A number of factors limited the accessibility of Ethiopian diaspora literature from being appreciated and researched by domestic scholars and generally the home audience in general that resulted in the concealment of the true facets of diasporic life, like shifting in worldviews and moral standards. Firstly, many of the works of the Ethiopian Diaspora are produced in English, and they are accessible only for elites who are competent to read and appreciate English. Secondly, many Diaspora authors produce and publish their works overseas. Hence, it has become virtually impossible for the general mass to access such works, as the means of marketing books from abroad for Ethiopians at home are much problematic, and for them there is no international visa card to speak of. Even the home-published Amharic novels are not approached as a class of Diaspora literature, may be the brand (Ethiopian Diaspora Literature) is a very new-fangled trend unknown to many. All these factors coupled with the researcher's keen interest to know the impact of diasporic life in shaping worldviews and moral standards as reflected in *Tiqurua Pilot*, a novel that mirrors the lives of Ethiopians in Bremen, Germany, forced the researcher to take up this task. This study, therefore, is generally interested to answer the following questions:

1. How women are portrayed in *Tiqurua Pilot*?
2. What are the root causes of behavioral-shifts of women in *Tiqurua Pilot*?
3. What are the moral justifications of the unique behavioral patterns of characters in *Tiqurua Pilot*?

Methods

This study adopted a qualitative approach on two accounts. First, the primary data analyzed are excerpts from the novel which can never be quantified and calculated meaningfully, because the researcher may take longer texts at a time and shorter ones at another time depending on the demand of the context. Second, the act of quantifying excerpts from the novel does not have any significance for the accomplishment of the objective of the study; given the extracts primarily need qualitative interpretations not quantitative descriptions. Hence, the fundamental approach in this study is textual description, analysis and interpretation.

Theoretical Framework

The analytical framework selected for this study is the Neuro-Circuitry Approach to Human Brain discovered by George Lakoff. The sole authority of my theoretical framework is George Lakoff for two reasons. One, the Neuro-Circuitry Approach to Human Brain is scientific in nature which is formulated through evidences after decades of experimentation. Hence, reviewing the views of various scholars is unnecessary, given the fact that the issue is a result of experimentation but not of argumentation.

According to George Lakoff (2015), we think in terms of three neural structures that are physically hardwired in our brains. The first categories of neural structures that we think in terms of are frames. According to George Lakoff, frames are mental structures, which we think in terms of (Lakoff, 2008). They are neural structures that are physically there in our brain, but located in different places because our experiences of the real world are found hardwired in different localities in the brain (Lakoff, 2013). As Lakoff, further explains, we have tens of thousands of frames in our brain as we always form a frame when-

ever we come across new experiences both imaginatively and physically (Lakoff, 2013). This is because neural circuits fire both when we think about things and when we perceive them; thinking about something is the same as perceiving it for a very simple reason that the same brain region gets fired and activated not just when we think about it but also when we see, hear, smell, touch and taste it (Lakoff, 2011).

The second group of neural structures which we think in terms of is cultural narratives which are frame sequences and unconsciously shape the way we think and believe on how things should be in the real world. One of the additional structures that we can find in cultural narratives but not in frames is the presence of a protagonist whose point of view is accepted by members of the same cultural community. The second extra structure that Lakoff identified in narratives is the happening of good and bad things. For example, in every narrative we find some evil things happening on an individual who is considered a hero or a victim by a certain community (Lakoff 2005). The third structure of a cultural narrative identified by Lakoff is the attachment of appropriate emotions to those incidents happened in the narrative. We feel anger when the hero is wronged and treated unjustly, having fear and anxiety as and when he loses the fight and triumphant when he wins as Lakoff explains further.

The third classes of neural structures with which human brain thinks are metaphors. Metaphors are neural circuits that are formed between two different localities in the brain due to co-activation of those regions for a longer period (Lakoff, 2008 & 2011). According to Lakoff (2011), two different brain areas of a child fire together when he/she sees his/her mother pouring water in to a glass; regions for quantity and verticality get co-activated, because the level of the water in the glass goes up whenever the amount of water poured in increases. As this experience happens repeatedly, for a longer period, the shortest possible circuit will be formed between those areas of our brain, and this circuit is the metaphor 'more is up' and 'less is down'. As a result, Lakoff concludes that "[neurons that fire together wire together]" (Lakoff, 2008, p.83).

We, therefore, not only map experiences from the known to the unknown, but also apply moral judgments to a phenomenon that is new for us simply because it co-occurs with something that guarantees wellbeing. In this regard, Lakoff writes that the subject matter of morality is wellbeing and "if an experience of well-being regularly occurs together with another experience, X, then there will be a reasonable probability that we will acquire a metaphor of the form Morality is X" (Lakoff, 2008, p. 94). This is because, our sense of well-being and ill-being co-occur metaphorically on a regular base since our childhood. Consequently, Lakoff developed a formula with which morality and immorality can be calculated. The formula is "you are better off if you have X" which suggests that morality is having 'X' and immorality is not having 'X.'

Accordingly, this neuro-circuitry approach is adopted for this study as an analytical framework for two major reasons. One because the researcher believes that it enables to analyze and interpret the excerpts from the novel selected for this study deeply. Second, the researcher also believes that it is the best approach to mark and interpret the moral standards used in the novel to rate things as right/wrong, good/bad desirable/desirable/non-desirable dichotomies.

Review of Related Literature

The pioneering work that approached diaspora literature as a unique brand of Ethiopian literature is Endalkachew Hailu's MA thesis conducted in (2008) under the title of "The Predicament of the Diaspora as Reflected in the Texture of Dreams and the Beautiful Things that Heaven Bears". Endalkachew identified the woes of the homeland and the woes in the host land as major themes of the novels he studied.

The other study that is exclusively conducted on Ethiopian Diaspora literature is Haftu Kabsay's MA thesis entitled "The Ideological Plane in Selected Ethiopian Diasporic Prose Narratives: A Comparative Study of Political Philosophy" conducted in (2012). To accomplish this, Haftom selected four Diaspora novels written in English. These are: *Beneath the Lion's Gaze* by Maaza Mengistie, *Give Me a Dog's Life Any Day: African Absurdities II* by Hama Tuma, *Held at a Distance: My Rediscovery of Ethiopia* by Rebecca Haile and *Notes from the Hayena's Belly* by Nega Mezlekia. Then, he found out feudal-capitalism, Marxism-Leninism, nationalism, anarchism, and liberalism as major ideologies reflected in the selected novels.

Another extensive study on Ethiopian diaspora writings is (Mesfin Adinew's, 2006) Ph.D dissertation with the title "A Thematic Study of Selected Prose Fictional and Non-Fictional Writings of Ethiopian Diaspora in English". Mesfin selected six diaspora prose writings (both fiction and non-fiction) for his study. They are: *Give Me a Dog's Life Any Day: African Absurdities II* (2004), by Hama Tuma, *The Beautiful Things that Heaven Bears* (2007) by Dinaw Mengestu, *The Texture of Dreams* (2007) by Fasil Yitbarek, *Held at a Distance: My Rediscovery of Ethiopia* (2007) by Rebecca G. Haile, *How to Read the Air* (2010) by Dinaw Mengestu and *Beneath the Lion's Gaze* (2010), by Maaza Mengistie.

Consequently, Mesfin identified five major and recurrent themes of Diaspora writings in the works he studied through descriptive and comparative analysis. These are: disillusionment, a visit to the past painful memories, racial prejudice, interest to take part in domestic affairs, and the traumas of immigrants. Of these, racial discrimination, conflict or crisis of identity and revisit to the past (past traumas) stand out most.

An MA thesis by Gedefaw Abie entitled "Narrative Time in the Beautiful Things That Heaven Bears" also discovered that the presentation of the novel begins in the middle of the story and the narration goes back and forth, although most of the incidents presented in analepsis (a technique of reinforcing and extending the meaning of a narrated event) method. Gedefaw's finding also shows that most of the durational schedules in the novel are presented in summarized forms, except at times when the narrator deliberately slows down the pace to augment the readers' understanding of the events presented.

Similarly, Tari Bonaya conducted another narratological study on the same novel under the title of "Narrative Situation in the Beautiful Things That Heaven Bears". Tari's study was carried out with the objective of investigating whether the text actually follows the limitations and expectations of the major narrative situation throughout the story and whether there is a shift to the direction of the adjacent narrative situations. Then, he discovered the following that the novel is narrated in first person narrative situation, even though the situation does move toward the pole of figural narrative situation in many parts of the novel.

However, the current study differs in many ways from the literatures reviewed above and

is believed to bridge many gaps that are not addressed before. First, this study is conducted on a novel written in Amharic, a sub-brand name of Ethiopian Diaspora literature which was almost totally left untouched by the previous studies. Second, this study focuses primarily on a novel that properly mirrors the lives of Ethiopians abroad, as the researcher's understanding of Diaspora literature is not based on authorship and language, but on the content and the message of the work. The Ethiopian Diaspora literature, therefore, is not necessarily written by an Ethiopian living abroad for not all works produced by Ethiopians overseas portray Diaspora life. The third difference between this research and the previous ones is that this study focuses on the portrayal of women unlike many of the previous studies that were primarily interested in stylistics and ideological matters.

Analysis

Tikurua Pilot is mainly about the lives of two Ethiopian immigrants, Yohannes and Rosy, in the city of Bremen, Germany. Both Rosy and Yohannes went to Germany to escape the persecution of the then military government of Ethiopia as they were members of EPRP the major opposition party at the time. Then, Yohannes became a night shift taxi driver in the city of Bremen and Rosy quickly followed his path; she herself became a night shift driver. So, the novel basically shows the lives of these two Ethiopian immigrants and ends with Rosy's trip to America and the death of Yohannes in a prison cell.

Accordingly, this paper tries to analyze how Rosy (the major character in the novel) is portrayed in the novel, and to identify the fundamental reasons for her unexpected behavioral shifts and to show the moral bases of her new beliefs and acts. The study focuses only on Rosy's life simply because the researcher is interested only on the portrayal of women in the novel and thus, Yohannes's life is purposely excluded from this study.

To begin with, Rosy was the last daughter of a *Fitawrari* (which means the leader of the front flank, one of the higher military ranks in the old Ethiopian military hierarchy) and a member of the imperial parliament. However, Fitawrari Asrat (Rosy's father) lost his position as a member of the imperial parliament and his vast arable land in the former Sidamo governorate general due to the fall of the imperial regime and its declaration of the new policy of the Military government 'land to the tiller'.

As clearly characterized in the novel, Rosy is an extremely spoiled child for three reasons. One, she is the last daughter of her family which naturally necessitates an over-solicitous care from the members of her family and friends and relatives of her family. Two, she is from the highly esteemed family, a daughter of *Fitawirari* Asrat who was one of the highest-ranking military officials and a member of the imperial parliament. So, it was normal and expected for a child born to such a higher social class to be spoiled and overindulged with the highest degree of care, especially in the era of feudalism, being given the social system in itself would welcome such behaviors of children and descendants of feudal lords. Three, she is a daughter by supplication. As recurrently mentioned in the novel, her mother prayed to saint Gabriel for a longer period of time to get a child. Again, it is normal for a child born with supplications and prayers to receive the highest degree of care and concern which usually results in the over-spoiling of the child.

Consequently, Rosy would dream high since her childhood onwards. For instance, she would dream to be a pilot right from her early age. Indeed, she missed the chance to be a hostess in Ethiopian airlines, because she was not happy with a job of such a lower status and her father would believe that being a hostess means being a prostitute on the air as plainly talked about in the novel. She also would dream to be a lawyer, a job which

was also her father’s choice. Her migration to Germany, therefore, was not just a journey to escape persecution of the military government but also to actualize all her dreams of having a high-esteemed job.

Nevertheless, she came across a reality which is exactly opposite of her expectation. As indicated above, she travelled to Germany with the dream of having an easy access to education and making as much money as she needs for the rest of her life within a shorter period of time. In fact, she ironically described such unexpected reality as follows:

አዎን ጀርመን ገንዘብ የሚታፈስበት ገነት፣ ትምህርት የሚቀሰምበት ዩኒቨርሲቲ፣ ፈረንጅ አገር፣ ባህር ማዶ የሰንቱን ቀልብ የገፈፈ ምኞት፡፡

Yes, Germany the paradise, where money can be easily amassed, a university where one can have an easy access to education; a wish for life in the Western world and life overseas; a desire which many are obsessed with (p. 65).

Rosy made this monologue at a time when she was assessing the discrepancies between her fellow Ethiopians’ expectations before traveling abroad and the actual life they lead in the Western world. Ethiopians suffer a lot to get themselves in one of the Western countries as outlined in Rosy’s monologue, anticipating a better life in their destinations. They, for instance, line up for a longer period of time at the gates of the embassies of Western nations in Addis Ababa. They pay a huge sum of money to bribe embassy officials as explained in the novel, so that their case can get quickly deliberated and their entry permit to Western countries can be issued in a shorter period of time.

They pay all these prices to actualize their dream of economic and intellectual prosperity or, to borrow Rosy’s words, to quickly amass as much money as they need and have an easy access to education. This view of the Western world according to Rosy is not an individual one but a socially shared cognition as indicated by her phrase “a desire which many are obsessed with”, which clearly suggests a larger section of Ethiopian society believes that anyone who succeeded to arrive in Europe or America can quickly prosper materially and enjoy an easy access to education.

However, she seems to counter this popular view of her society as her final judgment of life of Ethiopians in the Western world is finishing up as “የፈረንጅ ስሃን አጣቢ” (dishwasher of the Whites) (p.65). In view of that, her descriptions of Germany as a paradise, where money and education can be easily accessed are mock realities and her statements are ironic as she herself could not actualize her longstanding dream of studying law because she could not have enough savings to cover her education fee even though she worked for years in the country. So, the over-romanticized images of Germany indicated in the monologue above do not match with the reality on the ground, but with Ethiopians’ view of the country while they are at home, given the judgment she has of life in Germany is “ዘቃጭ” (residual) to mean that the life she is leading in Germany is a destitute one.

However, Rosy remained determined to realize her dreams by any means possible. After realizing the fact that both money and education are only accessible for those who are working hard, she planned to engage herself in a sector which is not only disesteemed but also dangerous. She became a night shift taxi driver. She decided to drive taxi at night with the purpose of having enough savings within the shorter period of time so that she can easily cover her education fee and actualize her age-old dream of studying law.

Such a commitment to engage oneself in such a dangerous sector is uncommon for Ethio-

pian women both in the real and fictional worlds. Except a few writers, like Ba'alu Girma, women in Ethiopian literature are generally portrayed as beautiful, emotional, irrational and weak beings that cannot pass through challenging circumstances. Nevertheless, Rosy is portrayed as a strong-willed woman determined to materialize her dream even through dangerous means including driving taxi at night in a foreign land.

She engaged herself in such a sector making a complete shift from her view of life she had while she was at home and she is doing her job of driving taxi at night in the city of Bremen with the maximum degree of grievances and animosity as clearly stated in the following excerpt:

ሁሉን መሆን ተመኝታ በመጨረሻ የናቀችውን ሙያ በመያዝ እድሷን ረገመች፡፡

She cursed her fate as she finished up being a taxi driver (a profession she would disrespect while she was at home) after aspiring to achieve many things (p. 18).

Regarding Rosy's old dream, the narrator brings her experience in the novel via flashback and tells us her view of drivers and of driving as a profession as follows: One day a man approached Rosy and asked her where Gojjam Veranda (a neighborhood in the city of Addis Ababa) is. Realizing that she did not know the exact location of the place mentioned, and she contemptuously told the man to ask taxi drivers; however, later in the novel, she became herself a night shift taxi driver in Germany. This is how far she could go after so many years of hard work and traveling so many miles to one of the most advanced parts of the world. Her present reality can be regarded as a marked failure because people who lived for some years in such country as Germany are generally expected to achieve more than that, especially by Ethiopians at home, imagining that the Western world is generally viewed as a land of opportunities.

Therefore, it seems due to such a paradoxical happening that the narrator reported Rosy's situation as: “ሁሉን መሆን ተመኝታ በመጨረሻ የናቀችውን ሙያ በመያዝ እድሷን ረገመች፡፡ She cursed her fate as she finished up being a taxi driver, a profession she would disdain after aspiring to achieve many things” (p. 18). Rosy herself evaluated her life in Germany as “ዝቃጭ ህይወት” (a residual life) to mean that her life as a taxi driver is the least in the hierarchy of social prestige that can stem from one's own occupation. Consequently, she criticizes Ethiopians' effort, like bribing embassy officials and lining up at the gates of Western embassies to travel abroad since the end result is becoming “የፈረንጅ ስሃን አጣቢ” (a dish washer of the Whites) or leading a residual life (p. 65) as discussed above.

This commitment to work in a less esteemed and dangerous sector is not just a shift in profession and worldview but also a shift in her moral standards and understanding of wellbeing. The sector is dangerous, especially for women, because she might end up being raped by her customers, given it is a night time, and many of her customers are drunkards and ill-mannered individuals as described in the novel.

According to George Lakoff (2008) the subject matter of morality is wellbeing; one's own wellbeing and the wellbeing of others. So, it seems due to this reality that Rosy engaged herself in a sector which she would view as something disgraceful while she was at her homeland for it will maintain her wellbeing by earning more money to cover her educational fee. Accordingly, we can understand that her judgment of morality is calculated with the formula of “you are better off if you have more money by any means possible (which can include working in a dangerous and less dignified sectors) than if you have not. Therefore, morality is having more money and immorality is not having more money.

Her preference to engage herself in a sector that she does not like, therefore, can be viewed not only as a shift in profession but also as a shift in standards of measuring things as moral or otherwise.

Having women with such courage to face harsh-realities is uncommon in Ethiopian literature which is generally attributable to the patriarchal nature of the society. So, women in Ethiopia are expected to do household chores even at day times. Thus, a woman who attempts to work at night will certainly be viewed as someone who is ill-mannered and immoral. It, therefore, seems due to this fact that we do not have many women with such a strong and courageous character trait, seeing that literature is a reflection of the real world.

Rosy not only decided to work in a dangerous sector but to work harder as stated in the following excerpt:

ርዚ በደንብ ባትተኛም በስዓቱ ተነሳች። ለእርሷ የቀን ቦቃ የለውም። ...ያለረፍት ሰባቱንም ቀን ትሰራለች።
Rosy waked up on time though she did not sleep well. There is no a unique day for her...She works seven days a week (p. 28).

The experience of Rosy indicated above again, shows another shift in her understanding of morality, especially when it is viewed in the light of moral judgments in Ethiopia. Even though working hard is a morally just behavior in Ethiopia and anywhere in the world, working seven days a week without having enough sleep with the purpose of getting much money reduces an individual to a purely material being who certainly is immoral. However, Rosy seems to adhere to the standard that “morality is having more money and immorality is failing to have more money” which can be understood as a marked shift in her measurement of right/wrong, because she was not interested in having much money as she was from a well to do family as talked about earlier.

Rosy is portrayed not only as a hard worker and courageous woman but also as a woman of violence who tries to secure her interest even by force which makes her one of the unique women in Ethiopian literature. As discussed earlier in this section, only few writers like Ba’alu Girma have strong women characters (Lulit in the novel *Kadmas Bashager* and Fiameta Gilay in *Oromay*). Otherwise, the majority of Ethiopian writers represent women as weak, submissive, and fearful beings, because the society is patriarchal, and strength, commitment, and courageousness are traits generally reserved for male characters.

Quite contrary to this culture, Rosy is portrayed as courageous, aggressive and even violent woman as indicated in the following text:

ይህችን አሁን የወጣችውን ጥቁር ታውቂያታለሽ?
አዎ አውቃታለሁ። የታክሲ ሹፌር ናት።
ጠባይዋ ነጭናጫ ነው። ሰው ታመናጭቃለች። ባለፈው ጊዜ አሳፍራኝ አርባ ሳንቲም ጉርሻ ብለጣት
<< እኔ ለማኝ አይደለሁም >> ብላ ሳንቲሞቹን እፈቱ ላይ በተነቻቸው።
Do you know this black? [Emphasis mine]. The one who left the room right now?
Yes, I know her. She is a taxi driver.
She is very quick-tempered and mistreats people. Last time I tipped her forty cents after traveling by her taxi. However, she threw the coins to my face and shouted ‘I am not a beggar!’ (p. 249).

As plainly stated in this excerpt and elsewhere in the novel, Rosy is a hot-tempered woman who speaks whatever she feels and does whatever she wants to do. She, for example,

insults anyone including her bosses and Mr. Harold (the owner of the taxi company in which she is working) whenever she feels to do so. She slammed her Turkish coworker in broad daylight in an attempt to avenge the Turkish woman who had an affair with Rosy's boyfriend. Again, she attacked Murat (her other Turkish coworker) on his private parts with a knife with the purpose of avenging her Turkish coworkers who were planning an attack on her as a response to her attack on their country women who had an affair with Rosy's boy friend.

Conclusions

All these behavioral shifts of Rosy discussed in the analysis can sensibly lead us to three major conclusions. The first one is that the unexpected and painful nature of diasporic life causes a behavioral change on Rosy, because her behavior was a completely different one while she was at her homeland. The second conclusion we can arrive at is that our moral standards change as our circumstances change. As indicated in the novel, Rosy was a spoiled and a decent woman who was born to a decent family which was over-solicitous to her. Nevertheless, she became quick-tempered, hard-working, aggressive and a violent woman after migrating to Europe. Such behavioral shifts of Rosy thus are sensibly attributable to the painful nature of life in Diaspora. Her standards of morality are also changed accordingly which can be accounted in Lakoff's terms as "you are better off if you are strong, aggressive and violent", a reality which safely suggests that strength, aggressiveness and violent reactions are moralities and weakness, mildness and passive reactions are immoralities. The third conclusion that we can make from Rosy's behavioral shifts is that she is one of the few women with unique character traits contrary to the mainstream culture in Ethiopian literature. As repeatedly talked about throughout this section, Rosy is a woman portrayed with a unique nature, worldview and moral standards. She is a courageous, aggressive, and violent woman. Her courage is reflected in her capability of performing even dangerous tasks; her aggressive and violent nature are manifested in her cursing and abusing of others even those who tipped her, and in her act of attacking a man with a knife. These make her a different woman character as we often times see women represented as weak, wimp, and submissive in Ethiopian literature.

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