



Revue ECD

ESPACES, LANGUES, SCIENCES
HUMAINES ET SOCIALES



ECOLE DOCTORALE PLURIDISCIPLINAIRE ESPACES, CULTURES ET
DÉVELOPPEMENT (EDP-ECD)



- ▶ **Géographie et Environnement**
- ▶ **Sociologie, Anthropologie et Philosophie**
- ▶ **Lettres, Langues et Communications**
- ▶ **Archéologie, Histoire, Arts et Civilisation**
- ▶ **Psychologie et Sciences de l'Éducation**

Volume1, Numéro 3, Décembre 2020



Université d'Abomey-Calavi

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Ecole Doctorale Pluridisciplinaire

**Espaces, Cultures et Développement
(EDP-ECD)**

“Ad Majorem Scientiae Gloriam”



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MOT DU DIRECTEUR DE PUBLICATION

EDITORIAL

Tant que les chercheurs continueront par produire, il est du devoir des institutions de les promouvoir et de soumettre leurs œuvres à la communauté afin qu'elle s'en serve pour bâtir.

La publication de cette revue, loin d'être un acte de plus, est le signe de la maturité d'une institution de formation de l'enseignement supérieur qui a le sens du partage et de l'échange en vue de susciter la réflexion créatrice d'idées novatrices qui fixent les balises d'un développement assuré et à visage humain.

En initiant la Revue de l'Ecole doctorale pluridisciplinaire « Espaces, Cultures et Développement » (Revue ECD), l'équipe dirigeante ainsi que l'équipe de rédaction qui s'est spontanément constituée envisage d'en faire une revue scientifique, semestrielle et multidisciplinaire qui réponde aux besoins des scientifiques et de tous autres acteurs de la recherche scientifique soucieux de valoriser les résultats de recherche scientifique, de partager des connaissances ou des points de vue scientifiques sur divers sujets de développement. La revue vise donc à :

- faciliter la communication entre chercheurs, décideurs, et toute la communauté scientifique ;
- assurer la diffusion et la valorisation des résultats de recherches effectuées par les scientifiques, les laboratoires de recherche, les doctorants, etc., au profit des décideurs et communautés ;
- produire des publications de qualité, en vue d'une meilleure promotion de la recherche scientifique dans l'espace CAMES.

Certes, il y a déjà des revues et partout ailleurs. Mais la « Revue ECD » est destinée à la publication de tous types de travaux se rapportant aux différents

domaines scientifiques notamment : sciences de la vie et de la terre, sciences de l'ingénieur, sciences humaines et sociales, sciences de l'environnement. Elle se consacre également à la restitution de travaux bien ciblés sur la recherche utilitaire pour mettre à la disposition des décideurs, des usagers divers et du public, des outils de compréhension et/ou d'aide à la décision.

Elle comportera dans un avenir proche, plusieurs volumes dont :

- Géographie et environnement ;
- Sociologie, Anthropologie et Philosophie ;
- Lettres, langues et communication ;
- Archéologie, Histoires, Arts et Civilisations ;
- Psychologie et Sciences de l'Education.

C'est dire que la présente revue offre une grande ouverture en même temps qu'elle promeut la diversité de la pensée et de l'action de recherche. Le lecteur est donc appelé à saisir cette opportunité pour engranger des informations utiles pour la construction de la pensée et l'action éclairante en vue du développement du Bénin en particulier et de toutes les nations que l'action de la recherche pourrait concerner. Bonne lecture et vivement le feedback des lecteurs !

Professeur Placide F.G.A. CLEDJO

Directeur de publication

Directeur de l'Ecole Doctorale Pluridisciplinaire

REPUBLIQUE DU BENIN

Université d'Abomey-Calavi

Revue Espaces, Cultures et Développement (Revue ECD)

**Ecole Doctorale Espaces, Cultures et Développement de l'Université
d'Abomey-Calavi,**

Instructions aux auteurs**CONDITIONS DE PUBLICATION**

La Revue de l'Ecole Doctorale Espaces, Cultures et Développement (Revue ECD) est une revue scientifique, semestrielle et multidisciplinaire. Elle vient répondre aux besoins des scientifiques et de tous autres acteurs de la recherche scientifique soucieux de valoriser les résultats de recherche scientifique, de partager des connaissances ou des points de vue scientifiques sur divers sujets de développement. La revue vise donc à :

- faciliter la communication entre chercheurs, décideurs, et toute la communauté scientifique ;
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- produire des publications de qualité, en vue d'une meilleure promotion de la recherche scientifique dans l'espace CAMES.

La « Revue ECD » publie tous types de travaux se rapportant aux différents domaines scientifiques notamment : sciences de la vie et de la terre, sciences de l'ingénieur, sciences humaines et sociales, sciences de l'environnement ... et à la restitution de travaux bien ciblés sur la recherche utilitaire pour mettre à

la disposition des décideurs, des usagers divers et du public, des outils de compréhension et/ou d'aide à la décision.

Elle comporte plusieurs volumes que sont :

- Géographie et Environnement ;
- Sociologie, Anthropologie et Philosophie ;
- Lettres, Langues et Communication ;
- Archéologie, Histoires, Arts et Civilisations ;
- Psychologie et Sciences de l'Education.

Chaque volume est publié en ligne avec un ISSN format papier et un ISSN électronique.

Le Comité de rédaction publie le présent appel à contributions pour les numéros 01 (décembre 2019) (format numérique) de cette revue. Les contributions sont attendues jusqu'au **06 octobre 2020**.

Les manuscrits sont envoyés exclusivement à l'adresse suivante : revue.escude@gmail.com

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Les manuscrits doivent :

- ✓ être originaux ;
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- ✓ ne pas avoir été publié auparavant ;
- ✓ être écrits en français ou en anglais ;
- ✓ comporter 12 pages y compris les notes, la bibliographie, les annexes, les tableaux et graphiques;
- ✓ contenir obligatoirement un titre en anglais pour les articles écrits en français et vice versa;
- ✓ respecter la méthode de présentation IMRED et contenir un résumé en

français et en anglais de 10 à 20 lignes ;

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accompagnés de mots- clés (français et anglais, 7 au maximum) et de
la classification JEL (5 références au maximum) éventuellement.

Les manuscrits numériques au format A4 doivent être envoyés au format .doc (97/2003) ou .rtf. Le texte, en style normal, est justifié, sans retrait de paragraphe, sans césure, sans puce, sans saut de page. Il est composé en Time New Roman 10, espace simple. Les tableaux, graphiques, schémas et cartes mesurent au maximum 12 cm² et sont alignés sur le texte. Ils sont présentés, ainsi que les formules mathématiques, sous Word, éventuellement au format image, et ne sont pas scannés. Le titre de l'article, prénom et nom de l'auteur, titre, institution, adresses personnelle et professionnelle, adresse électronique sont mentionnés en début d'article. Les notes de bas de page sont numérotées par ordre croissant en chiffres arabes en times new roman normal 9. Dans le texte, les références d'auteurs doivent respecter les normes du CAMES ci-après détaillées. À leur première utilisation, les sigles et acronymes sont développés. La hiérarchie et le format des titres seront la suivante :

Titre de premier ordre : (1) **MAJUSCULE GRAS** justifié à gauche

Titre de 2ème ordre : (1-1) **Minuscule gras** justifié à gauche

Titre de 3ème ordre : (1-1-1) *Minuscule gras italique* justifié à gauche

Titre de 4ème ordre: (1-1-1-1) Minuscule maigre ou puces.

- Titres : toutes les sections doivent être numérotées, y compris l'introduction et la conclusion.
- Langue et conventions typographiques : Les auteurs respecteront les conventions typographiques usuelles de la langue dans laquelle ils rédigent (ponctuation, guillemets, accents, etc.). Si vous écrivez dans une langue qui n'est pas la vôtre, la publication est conditionnée par une relecture par un locuteur natif.

- Équations : pour les articles au format Word, générer les formules au moyen de l'éditeur d'équations de Word. Dans tous les cas, joindre un fichier PDF de l'article.
- Notes de bas de page : les notes de bas de page ne se réduiront pas à un appel de référence : elles sont réservées à des commentaires ou incises.
- Abréviations : Il est demandé aux auteurs de ne recourir à aucune abréviation qui ne soit pas explicitée à sa première occurrence.
- Les Figures, Tableaux et Photos doivent être intégrés dans le corps du texte (les scanner le cas échéant) à l'endroit le plus approprié et en mode aligné sur le texte. Il faudra fournir des documents originaux ou des tirages photos d'une bonne résolution. Les appels des Figures et Tableaux dans le texte sont écrits en toutes lettres, (exemple, Figure 1, Tableau 2). Les légendes accompagnant ces illustrations doivent être placées en dessous pour une Figure, et pour un Tableau au-dessus.
- Références : Indiquer spécifiquement les références internes au document.
- Autorisations : L'auteur doit s'assurer qu'il dispose des droits de reproduction pour les illustrations/tableaux, figures, ou autres éléments qui ont déjà été publiés ailleurs ; il doit faire mention de l'autorisation de reproduction du titulaire du droit d'auteur.
- Remerciements : les remerciements de personnes, organismes, projets ou autres doivent faire l'objet d'une sous-section non numérotée en fin d'article (avant les références).
- A la fin de l'article : les références sont classées par ordre alphabétique d'auteurs en suivant le style Harvard International. Toute bibliographie non conforme aux normes devra être reprise par les

auteurs et risquera de contribuer à retarder le délai de parution de l'article.

- Les auteurs doivent attester du non soumission de l'article à une autre revue de langue française ou autre, par le biais de l'adresse de la revue.
- Les auteurs doivent déclarer les éventuels liens ou conflits d'intérêts en lien avec le texte.

Le comité de rédaction peut être amené à faire des modifications de forme mineures avant l'impression.

Toute étude portant sur un groupe de patients doit suivre les principes exprimés dans la déclaration d'Helsinki.

Après acceptation de leur article, les auteurs doivent en préparer la version finale conformément aux recommandations ci-dessus. Pour toute question technique, merci de contacter le secrétariat de rédaction par écrit à l'adresse email : revue.escude@gmail.com.

PROCÉDURE D'ÉVALUATION DES ARTICLES

Chaque article reçu est évalué selon le processus d'évaluation par les pairs. Ces derniers sont identifiés parmi les experts au niveau national ou international. La publication ou non d'un article est fonction de la décision du comité de rédaction suite à son expertise par les pairs.

SOUSSION DE NUMÉROS THÉMATIQUES

Les ouvrages thématiques peuvent être édités en lien avec un colloque ou *ad hoc*. Ils sont publiés sous la responsabilité scientifique d'un(e) ou plusieurs responsables scientifiques. Ils ne sont publiés qu'à partir d'un appel à contributions. Les articles sont présélectionnés par le/la ou les éditeurs scientifiques. Ils sont évalués suivant la procédure habituelle, éventuellement adaptée si les articles ont été présélectionnés de façon anonyme dans le cadre

d'un colloque. La rédaction de la revue procède à une évaluation globale du volume avant l'acceptation finale de sa publication.

CONTRIBUTION DES AUTEURS

La revue ECD est libre d'accès, mais elle n'est pas gratuite vu les nombreuses charges auxquelles doit faire face le Comité de rédaction. Pour ce faire, une contribution forfaitaire de 75.000 FCFA, soit 115 euros est exigée pour tout article accepté, et ce avant la publication de l'article.

EXTRAIT DES NORMES D'EDITION DES REVUES DE LETTRES ET SCIENCES HUMAINES DANS LE SYSTEME CAMES (NORCAMES/LSH)

Adopté par le CTS/LSH, le 18 juillet 2016 à Bamako, 38^{ème} session des CCI

Les organes de publications scientifiques concernées par les présentes dispositions pour la normalisation et la reconnaissance des revues sont ceux qui relèvent des spécialités et des domaines de lettres et sciences humaines. Dans l'esprit de la *Charte de Lomé sur la gouvernance des organes de publication scientifique en Afrique*, adoptée par les éditeurs de revues de l'espace CAMES, le 03 juin 2015, les dispositions qui suivent, règlementent les profils éditoriaux des revues de lettres et sciences humaines, harmonisent les normes scientifiques et éthiques de leur édition.

1. Des normes éditoriales d'une revue de lettres ou sciences humaines
 - 1.1. Aucune revue ne peut publier un article dont la rédaction n'est pas conforme aux normes éditoriales (NORCAMES). Les normes typographiques, quant à elles, sont fixées par chaque revue.
 - 1.2. La structure d'un article, doit être conforme aux règles de rédaction scientifique, selon que l'article relève d'une contribution théorique ou résulte d'une recherche de terrain.

- 1.3. La structure d'un article scientifique en lettres et sciences humaines se présente comme suit :
- Pour un article qui est une contribution théorique et fondamentale : Titre, Prénom et Nom de l'auteur, Institution d'attache, adresse électronique, Résumé en Français, Mots clés, Abstract, Key words, Introduction (justification du thème, problématique, hypothèses/objectifs scientifiques, approche), Développement articulé, Conclusion, Bibliographie.
 - Pour un article qui résulte d'une recherche de terrain : Titre, Prénom et Nom de l'auteur, Institution d'attache, adresse électronique, Résumé en Français, Mots clés, Abstract, Key words, Introduction, Méthodologie, Résultats et Discussion, Conclusion, Bibliographie.
 - Les articulations d'un article, à l'exception de l'introduction, de la conclusion, de la bibliographie, doivent être titrées, et numérotées par des chiffres (exemples : 1. ; 1.1. ; 1.2 ; 2. ; 2.2. ; 2.2.1 ; 2.2.2. ; 3. ; etc.).
- 1.4. Les passages cités sont présentés en romain et entre guillemets. Lorsque la phrase citant et la citation dépassent trois lignes, il faut aller à la ligne, pour présenter la citation (interligne 1) en romain et en retrait, en diminuant la taille de police d'un point.
- 1.5. Les références de citation sont intégrées au texte citant, selon les cas, des façons suivantes :
- (Initiale (s) du Prénom ou des Prénoms et de l'Auteur, année de publication, pages citées) ;
 - Initiale (s) du Prénom ou des Prénoms et de l'Auteur (année de publication, pages citées).

Exemples :

- En effet, le but poursuivi par M. Ascher (1998, p. 223), est « d'élargir l'histoire des mathématiques de telle sorte qu'elle acquière une perspective multiculturelle et globale (...), d'accroître le domaine des mathématiques : alors qu'elle s'est pour l'essentiel occupé du groupe

professionnel occidental que l'on appelle les mathématiciens (...) »

- Pour dire plus amplement ce qu'est cette capacité de la société civile, qui dans son déploiement effectif, atteste qu'elle peut porter le développement et l'histoire, S. B. Diagne (1991, p. 2) écrit :

Qu'on ne s'y trompe pas : de toute manière, les populations ont toujours su opposer à la philosophie de l'encadrement et à son volontarisme leurs propres stratégies de contournements. Celles-là, par exemple, sont lisibles dans le dynamisme, ou à tout le moins, dans la créativité dont sait preuve ce que l'on désigne sous le nom de secteur informel et à qui il faudra donner l'appellation positive d'économie populaire.

- Le philosophe ivoirien a raison, dans une certaine mesure, de lire, dans ce choc déstabilisateur, le processus du sous-développement. Ainsi qu'il le dit :

le processus du sous-développement résultant de ce choc est vécu concrètement par les populations concernées comme une crise globale : crise socio-économique (exploitation brutale, chômage permanent, exode accéléré et douloureux), mais aussi crise socio-culturelle et de civilisation traduisant une impréparation socio-historique et une inadaptation des cultures et des comportements humains aux formes de vie imposées par les technologies étrangères. (S. Diakité, 1985, p. 105).

1.6. Les sources historiques, les références d'informations orales et les notes explicatives sont numérotées en série continue et présentées en bas de page.

1.7. Les divers éléments d'une référence bibliographique sont présentés comme suit :

NOM et Prénom (s) de l'auteur, Année de publication, Zone titre, Lieu de publication, Zone Editeur, les pages (pp.) des articles pour une revue.

Dans la zone titre, le titre d'un article est présenté en romain et entre guillemets, celui d'un ouvrage, d'un mémoire ou d'une thèse, d'un rapport, d'une revue ou d'un journal est présenté en italique. Dans la zone Editeur, on indique la Maison d'édition (pour un ouvrage), le Nom et le numéro/volume de la revue (pour un article). Au cas où un ouvrage est

une traduction et/ou une réédition, il faut préciser après le titre le nom du traducteur et/ou l'édition (ex : 2nde éd.).

- 1.8. Les références bibliographiques sont présentées par ordre alphabétique des noms d'auteur. Par exemple :

Bibliographie

AMIN Samir, 1996, *Les défis de la mondialisation*, Paris, L'Harmattan.

AUDARD Cathérine, 2009, *Qu'est-ce que le libéralisme ? Ethique, politique, société*, Paris, Gallimard.

BERGER Gaston, 1967, *L'homme moderne et son éducation*, Paris, PUF.

DIAGNE Souleymane Bachir, 2003, « Islam et philosophie. Leçons d'une rencontre », *Diogenès*, 202, p. 145-151.

DIAKITE Sidiki, 1985, *Violence technologique et développement. La question africaine du développement*, Paris, L'Harmattan.

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LETTRES, LANGUES ET COMMUNICATIONS

**EXPLORING THE VULNERABILITY OF WOMEN AND THEIR
RESISTANCE TO MALE OPPRESSION IN POST-COLONIAL
AFRICA: A CASE STUDY OF AMMA DARKO'S *BEYOND THE
HORIZON*.**

**Célestin Gbaguidi¹
&
Adolphe Kadoukpè Kassin²**

Abstract

African women in a contemporary male-dominated society face many challenges due to some social stereotypes shaped to keep them in submission and in the back row. This paper addresses the issue of African women's vulnerability and their resistance to male oppression as a substantial theme in Amma Darko's *Beyond the Horizon*. The African woman, considered as vulnerable or as the weaker sex, has been woefully degraded, dehumanized, abused and oppressed by her male counterpart. The committed Ghanaian authoress catechizes the African woman's freedom facing a debasing and oppressive patriarchal system. The paper highlights the actions of the heroin reflecting both submissive and rebellious attitudes in a phallogocentric African culture she finds herself in. Using post-colonialism and feminism as a bedrock, the vulnerable status of the African woman as well as her resistant attitudes to male oppression in the focus novel are dissected and reviewed in a patriarchal context.

Key words: female vulnerability, subjectivity, sexual exploitation, resistance, objectification

Resumé

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Les femmes africaines dans une société contemporaine dominée par les hommes sont confrontées à de nombreux défis en raison de certains stéréotypes sociaux façonnés pour les maintenir dans la soumission et au dernier rang. Cet article aborde la question de la vulnérabilité des femmes africaines et leur résistance à l'oppression masculine dans *Beyond the Horizon* d'Amma Darko. La femme africaine, considérée comme vulnérable ou comme le sexe faible, a été extrêmement dégradée, déshumanisée, maltraitée et opprimée par son homologue masculin. L'auteure ghanéenne engagée remet en question la liberté de la femme africaine face à un système patriarcal avilissant et oppressant. Le présent article met en évidence les actions de l'héroïne reflétant à la fois des attitudes de soumission et de rébellion dans une culture africaine phallocentrique dans laquelle elle se trouve. En adoptant le post-colonialisme et le féminisme comme fondement, le statut vulnérable de la femme africaine et ses attitudes de résistance, face à l'oppression masculine dans le roman en étude, sont disséqués et examinés dans un contexte hautement patriarcal.

Mots-clés: vulnérabilité féminine, subjectivité, exploitation sexuelle, résistance, objectivation

1- Introduction

The evolution of the African societies is now the concern of many committed African writers. Difficulties in human life appear as a key element of survival and adaptation. Creative writings take that evolution as their preoccupation, especially the contemporary ones. Contemporary writers, especially the African female ones, depict women's social conditions in the modern life through their works. These modern African women are generally confronted with the problems of comfort and economic independence – among others – in the African society.

Amma Darko, a Ghanaian female writer focuses on the social metamorphosis and ills in modern Ghanaian society, especially as they

concern and affect women. Darko has, in most of her works, concentrated on women's social condition. She generally creates a fiction that explores the tension between African women's traditional roles and the often tragic results of their attempts to improve their status.

Knowledgeable observers rightfully believe that early African fiction relegates female characters to a position of secondary importance. To denounce that, works of some African female writers such as: Ama Ata Aidoo, Aminata Sow Fall, Mariama Ba, Zeynab Alkali, Buchi Emecheta, and Naa Otoa present situations in which women endure difficult social conditions.

The authoress, in *Beyond the Horizon*, deals with issues relating to difficult situations faced by women as well as their attempts to reverse this awful condition. The writer pinpoints how male power maintains women under his control and how women try to resist this domination. The aim of this paper is to show how Darko sheds a light on the way men dominate women by rendering them vulnerable and how women resist by breaking that barrier of submission. The theoretical approaches used within the framework of this study are post-colonialism and feminism. While post-colonialist theory "...deals with the effects of colonisation on cultures and societies" (Ashcroft, et al.,2007, p. 168), the "feminist criticism seeks on the one hand to investigate and analyze the differing representations of women and men in literary texts and, on the other hand, to rethink literary history by exploring an often marginalized tradition of women's writing (Bennett and Royle, 2004, p. 291).

This paper is structured around two main sections with two subsections each. The first section deals with women's vulnerability in a patriarchal society with specific emphasis on men's domination over women as well as their submission in a patriarchal sphere. The second section addresses awakening of women about their situation and the rebellion actions they carry out for their freedom.

2- VULNERABILITY OF WOMEN IN AMMA DARKO'S *BEYOND THE HORIZON*

In *Beyond the Horizon*, the feminist Ghanaian woman writer (Ugwanyi, 2017, p. 50), Amma Darko, tackles some contemporary gender-based issues among which the salient one is about women's vulnerability versus men's hegemony. Vulnerability is the feature of being vulnerable. According to the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (2009), vulnerable means "someone who can easily be harmed or hurt" (p. 1963). Women's vulnerability is depicted through the naïve female character, Mara, wrapped up in a patriarchal society which is highly dominated by men. The opposition of women's vulnerability and men's hegemony makes women citizens of the second class subjected to cruelty, violence, and other forms of submission. Indeed, "hegemony describes the kind of cultural power wielded by the dominant ideas of a culture or society..." (Klages, 2012, p.35). It appears, clearly, that Darko, through her narrative portrays the status of African women condemned to silence under men's rule. This section will shed light on women's vulnerability and men's hegemony in the novel under scrutiny with specific emphasis on men domination of love and consent between the spouses on the one hand and on the arranged or forced marriage, on the other.

2.1- Women as no decision makers in a patriarchal society

African women in the fictitious Ghanaian societies in *Beyond the Horizon* are excluded from decision making and remain hidden behind the curtain. As a matter of fact, in that novel, many female characters are not associated in the areas where decisions concerning the whole village are taken. The result is that they are destined to male characters who are far above their age while they are still too young with no skill to bring up a child or take care of a husband. This female objectification is reproduced through the character of Mara who has no word to say about her marriage. The autodiegetic narrator is aware that her marriage is an adult concern and her

feelings do not matter. Her early marriage is planned without seeking her consent. Darko begins to develop the relationship between Mara and her imposed husband through the arrangement made by their parents. Then Akobi himself, his father and Mara's father become the quintessential archetypes of the male species. Akobi is an exploitative, heartless and brutish character. Obviously, Mara's father knows nothing except his zeal to marry off his under-age daughters, taking more into consideration "the number of cows coming as the bride price than the character of the man"(Darko, 1995, p.4). Mara, like many other girls in Naka, has to obey her father's will and any objection can bring a curse or an abdication of the parental responsibility toward her. Whether the bridegroom fits her or not, she has to say "yes". This form of treatment is merely an objectification. According to *The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2000)*, "objectification is the act of treating people as if they are mere object, without rights or feelings of their own" (p.1005). This generally occurs in a society ruled by men and in which men impose their will on women. In patriarchal communities in which this kind of consideration prevails men make women carry the burden of overwork. Therefore, they reduce women to "less than human" status. Hence, women are objects and spit cups for men.

Clearly, the fact that women or girls cannot decide by their own is the root of their social conditions. It becomes worse when women accept that state of things as normal rule. Indeed, for the female character Mara, abuses and domination have become routine, they are parts of the daily regime of her portion as a wife, so much so that when Akobi has eventually left for Europe, instead of relief, there is rather emptiness in her. She cries endlessly to fill that void because his physical violence, reprimands and degradations have become a permanent feature of their marital relationship. The Ghanaian novelist presents here two antithetical pictures of these partners: the male partner as oppressor and the female partner as a vulnerable victim. Whereas the male partner is possessed by a spirit of violence and abuse without any human compassion, the female partner, in

spite of her suffering, continues to show love and affection. The autodiegetic narrator thus declares: "I had grown used to Akobi [...] to his bullying, to the strength he possessed over me. I didn't like what he meted out to me with that strength and yet, at the same time, that strength made me acknowledge him as my husband" (Darko, 1995, p.44). Definitely, Mara reluctantly accepts her submission and even seems to find it normal. This representation of women in contemporary Ghanaian literature is in perfect connection with the patriarchal nature of traditional societies where men have the last word and rule without sharing.

Women's vulnerability has been deeply revealed through the arranged and early marriage of Mara. Marriage is a basic institution in every human society. It is a recognized social institution, not only for establishing and maintaining the family, but also for creating and sustaining the ties of kinship. On this basis, some parents while tying relationships with other families, do not consider the suffering their daughters may face. That is what Mara father exhibits as behaviour. His ultimate goal by marrying his daughters off is to get a lot of profits through bride price. Though Mara is a girl full of hope, in her village, she has been sent into a forced marriage by her father, who took her bride price to remarry. In *Beyond the Horizon*, the narratee can notice that Mara is not involved at all in the process which seals her marriage with Akobi. As one of the main key players, she has left out of the decision; she simply has to comply with what her father, backed up by her mother, decides. This is what usually happens in traditional African societies. The intradiegetic narrator herself alleges: "But father had used the goats, the cows to remarry" (Darko, 1995, p.8). From this passage, it is plain that Mara's father is not seeking his daughter happiness by sending her into early marriage but for the sake of the bride price he will collect to get a new wife. Lucidly speaking, Mara's father is not concerned about the problems his daughter would be confronted with; his priority is the bride price, which will eventually lead his daughter into a destitute life. This marriage is the beginning of Mara's life problems. The man who has been chosen as her husband threatens her a lot, maybe it is his manner to

say “let me collect my bride price back” for he too is forced by his father to marry the girl. Many other girls like Mara are suffering somewhere without being able to take decision. They live in this condition in silence, because they are not able to report it for fear of the reprisals from their husband or the society. What can Mara do if the man she is living with does not love her or marry her against his will? Actually, Akobi has his lover in the city, a lady he really loves and is able to do everything for her. He has been under her control for long. On the eve of his departure for Germany, Akobi chooses to spend his last night with her, and does his best to stop Mara from seeing him off at the airport. The latter reports:

I know without being told that if I wasn't welcome at the farewell party two days ago then I wasn't welcome at the airport either even though in the past he never left messages for me when he was going out in my absence, I felt that since this involved a journey, he definitely would make an exception of it [...] and when the clock ticked 11p.m. the time I knew his plane would be taking off. (Darko, 1995, p.43)

This is a proof that Akobi, Mara's chosen husband, has been in love with another lady not with his chosen wife. Actually one cannot be forced to love somebody. If Mara's father has thought about his daughter, he will have analysed his way of doing. But her father is so blind with the material things that he does not even care for his daughters' future. To express his hegemony in his family, Mara's father chooses a husband for his daughters without caring for their feeling or point of view as Mara declares: “I remember the day clearly. I returned from the village well with my fourth bucket of water of the day when mother excitedly beckoned to me in all my wetness and muddiness, dragged me into her hurt and breathlessly told me the ‘good news’. Your father has found a husband for you; she gasped ‘a good man!’” (Darko, 1995, pp.3-4) As the narrator confesses, her father chooses a good man for her but she knows her father does not care about the character of the chosen man but cares only for the number of cows coming as the bride price instead. Mara's mother cannot go against her

husband's decision and is not entitled to choose a husband for her daughters either. She just has to content with her husband's choice. For Mara's father, the position the groom occupies in the society is main point. Indeed, the social status of the groom counts a lot. And when this kind of person comes into negotiation, he cannot refuse the marriage proposals, because he thinks of what he will gain after all. Obviously, Mara's father cannot refuse the demand of Akobi's father because he is thinking of himself, how he can pay his debts which are forcefully claimed; and he is flattered that the first Naka son with school certificate chooses his daughter as wife. His reflections stop when he realizes it. In some postcolonial African societies, the materials destroy reflections as it does with Mara's father. When the man is rich, parents automatically welcome his demand, this is how many parents draw their daughters into suffering like: ill-treatment, abuses and many other bad conditions. As for Mara, she ends up as a prostitute, she is selling her soul for the devil, because her father forces her to marry Akobi, who has destroyed her life at a tender age. Voiceless as most of women in her society, she is living her pain in silence for back home in Ghana she does not reveal the truth to her family and gains society's admiration on account of the money and other things she regularly sends home. One wonders what her mother, the rest of her family, the society and even her father would say if the truth of her condition is to be revealed to them. Forced marriage is generally profitable for its organizers making the bride a "no-decision maker" who undergoes many drawbacks. The feminist authoress, through Mara's case, is showing us the suffering that men's hegemony over women can cause. Akobi, though he does not love Mara, is obliged to accept her as wife to comply with his parents' decision. Likewise, Mara has married Akobi to satisfy her father's will. Even though she does not love him, she does not have a choice because she is a woman and as such she must stick with him. This shows anyhow the limits of traditional African education which consists of being submissive towards parents and husband without claiming.

This state of affairs is favoured by the patriarchal system which consists social and cultural barriers for women's emancipation. Defining patriarchy, it explains the reasons for women's oppression through ages. Patriarchy not only explains how a postcolonial society functions but also how it controls women. Patriarchy is defined as "a system of domination of man over women, which transcends different economic systems, eras, regions and class" (Boonzaaier & Sharp, 1988, p. 154). The ideology of patriarchy emphasizes male importance, his dominance and his superiority to enslave women and make them second-class citizens. Obviously, the culture of many African societies is based on male ascendancy. Men have power and control over women.

Patriarchy is seen in its naked nature in *Beyond the Horizon* through Mara's father who can be perceived as the prototype of male chauvinism. Traditionally, the African family is an extended one and the father is the only breadwinner of children and wives. He is also the decision maker in relation to their lives. Truly, Mara's father is a patriarch who does not give any consideration to his wife and female children. In addition to that, he does not take care of them. He sees his daughters as mere properties and treats them as mere slaves. They are even seen as useless nuisance to get rid of by means of forced marriages. As evidence, the female character Mara "was given away to this man [Akobi] who paid two white cows, four healthy goats, four lengths of cloth, beads, gold jewellery and bottles of London Dry Gin" (Darko, 1995, p. 3). The low status and value generally attributed to women in a patriarchal society is a key determination factor for the way they are treated. The traditional system of socialisation perceives female human being as weak people who need to be guided.

Mara's father argues that young girls must be sent into early marriage to a man who is not necessarily their choice. Mara as a matter of fact has not been surprised when her mother has broken the news: "your father has found a husband for you" (Darko, 1995, p. 4). She is aware that has been

the case with her sister. In a word, girls are to be given to men that their parents have often chosen for them. The result is that girls are destined to men who generally do not take good care of them. Through their lifetime, social stereotypes are struck on women because of their vulnerability. They are imprisoned and limited in their actions. Consequently, patriarchal system has legitimized men's domination over women in every sphere. Moreover, myths are raised to oppress women and condemn them as subhuman beings.

Sometimes, some women help men to perpetrate the infamy on the female counterparts. As a matter of fact, the female character Comfort is the perfect partner in crime impeached in the degradation of another woman. As we can see, patriarchy needs traitors to perpetuate its domination against women and Comfort is characterized by these traits. She also collaborates indirectly with the coloniser in exploiting her own blood. This manner of acquiring wealth finally compromises her integrity. For the sake of justice, she is deported to Nigeria. No doubt, the expulsion of Comfort back to Nigeria is her punishment for having instigated Mara's deportation to Germany.

Mara's mother also is not far from this role of co-conspirator. Mara's mother is absolutely a traditional woman who has no contact with the urban or modern world. She too has been subjected to similar conditions of marriage by her parents. Consequently, she must not break the chain and must pass it onto her female children. Actually she is not acting intentionally to hurt her daughters but she operates within the dictate of the cultures and more importantly within the scope of patriarchy.

Then, Mara, a daughter who is traditionally brought up, has to follow at the letter her mother's advice to be subservient and a good daughter. When Mara's father finishes negotiating the arrangement of marriage, he first informs his wife who has to deliver the news to Mara. The father is aware of the role she has played in the game. And she proves that through her qualification of Akobi: "a good man".

Mara's mother, a purely traditional African woman, educates her daughter in such a way that only the marks of her traditional education and trainings remain in her brain. The trainings are done in a way that daughters of such setting are made dumb and doomed. Mara's mother succeeds in doing that in accordance with the cultural norms of the village Naka, the prototype of patriarchal societies. Sadly, by doing so, Mara's mother connives with the ruling system that contributes to sell off her daughter in an early marriage. She always remembers that "mother had taught me [Mara] that a woman was there for a man for one thing, and that thing was to ensure his well-being..." (Darko, 1995, p. 13).

Logically, a patriarchal system promotes a male-dominated world where certain conditions have been made for women. Men maintain women in a status which appears pitiful to some extent. In such a society, women's activities are limited whereas men have all venues opened to them. Women are just invisible and their common place of activities is generally home, farms and market. During their marital life, women cannot take important decisions even those concerning their own life, this being men's task. In a patriarchal system, the rule is "obey and worship your husband." (Darko, 1995, p. 13). This state of affairs favours the various type of discrimination, violence and subjectivity women face.

2.2- Discrimination and violence against women

Discrimination stands for the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of race, age, or sex. In this context, it refers to unjust or prejudicial treatments afflicted to women in various fields. Women's discrimination in African societies is characterized by sharp contrasts. While there has been major progress against racial segregation in some countries, gender inequality remains widespread. Also the growing number of workers seeking better employment opportunities abroad has engendered hostility and anxiety in societies resulting in greater discriminatory practices. One of the main actions that lead to the empowerment of women is the influence over the decisions that affect their

lives. This is the advocacy of feminists who have been able to forward more equitable policies and outcomes. In this context, women's decision-making power is a key to liberation.

The lack of education and poverty continue to affect women's status in African societies. Women who have been prevented from having access to education are very often affected by social established rules which most of the time favour men. This certainly contributes to women's backwardness and exposition to abuse by irresponsible men. Violence on women is not only physical but it is also moral. Moral violence is a sort of violence that has impact on women's psychology affecting them or reducing them to inferior creatures.

This kind of violence is more incipient and is engaged in probably without much thought. There is a systematic form of violence that is against and which is experienced by every woman by the fact of her gender in various and different ways especially in the domestic arena. Right from childhood, there is a type of gender stereotyping which is patriarchal. Women are expected, to submit to patriarchal authority and this is reflected in the way children are treated at home. The girl takes the role of serving while the boy is normally served. Psychologically, the boy builds a patriarchal ego while the girl knows her position as that of service. Even in society the situation is not better. The contribution of oral literature to violence against women is already outlined. Anything to do with shyness, weakness, emotionality, cowardice and those negative attributes is associated with women. In this vein, Okonwko's father is called "Agbala" in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* comparing his laziness and cowardice to a woman's status. Courage and strength refer to men. This socialization process promotes inequality and lack of respect for women's dignity. This is mainly the reason why women are often abused, segregated and used only as sex objects in society.

Traditionally, women are considered less important than men. Women have specific role to play in society. That is surely what Oladele Taiwo (1984) emphasizes in *Female Novelists of Africa* when he writes: "a girl is inferior

to a boy; a wife is valuable only as source of producing children; [...] the word of a man is law [...] and woman exists only to serve his pleasure and obey his command” (p.103). This conception of woman is discriminatory as it reduces her to an object. This aspect of women’s discrimination is sustained in Darko’s fiction through the status of Mara in *Beyond the Horizon*. In her married life, Mara has always been considered less important by her husband. And she is aware that Akobi is the master. The first-person narrator obsequiously declares: “He is my lord, master and my pimp. And like the other women on my left and right, I am his pawn, his slave and his property. What he orders, I do” (Darko, 1995, p.25). As the above passage shows Mara does not have the same privilege as her husband. And this is how women and girls in African social settings suffer the humiliation throughout their lives because they depend on men for their financial support. Deprivation of necessities such as food and the basics like clothing and school fees for girls is a manifestation of economic violation. Akobi is sent to school but Mara and her sister are not. These two characters confirm that women and men do not have the same privilege according to the established social rules. Their rights as human being are not the same. Akobi has the right to go to an office while he sometimes prevents Mara from going to the station to sell her eggs. This shows no equality between man and woman in terms of employment.

Traditionally, the man is expected to go to farm or hunt while the woman is expected to cook and care for children at home. In many modern African societies, the incompatibility between positive and customary justice systems may reinforce discrimination, especially against marginal groups. In some cases, customary law may even reinforce certain inequalities, involving women, such as the denial of their rights to property or other assets.

In addition to traditional forms of discrimination, other forms of discrimination include social isolation, violence and verbal harassment or abuse. Indeed, much has been said about the issue of violence and abuses against women in Amma Darko’s *Beyond the Horizon*. The authoress

strongly shows that her imaginary Ghanaian society is a male-dominated world where certain conditions of inequality and justice have been made for women. Men do not care for their wives and do not love them tenderly. They are rather portrayed as irresponsible and brutal men that maintain their wives in a status which appears pitiful. Most of the time, wives are victims of brutality from indelicate men.

Actually, Mara suffers a lot in her marital life. In an analeptic account, Mara confronts a reflection of her battered self in an oval mirror, a result of several years of physical abuse by men, especially her husband. As the story unfolds, it easily collapses into an allegory in which Akobi, the male protagonist, personifies vice while Mara, the female protagonist, personifies virtue wrapped in the garb of innocence, naivety and vulnerability. And she courts the reader's pity and support through the overly sentimental and lyrical narration of her experiences, first with Akobi in Accra, and then with Akobi and his accomplices in Germany where she is forced into prostitution. In fact, Mara never deserves Akobi's care. This latter simply ill-treats his wife. Moreover, Mara is presented as a young, innocent, illiterate, trusting, unassuming woman trapped in a violent and exploitative relationship. She bears all the caprice of her husband as she narrates:

When I didn't bring him the bowl of water and soap in time for washing his hands before and after eating, I received a nasty kick in the knee. When I forgot the chewing stick for his teeth, which he always demanded be placed neatly beside his bowl of served food, I got a slap in the face. And when the napkin was not at hand when he howled for it, I received a knuckle knock on my forehead (Darko, 1995, p.19).

As the above passage plainly shows, any mistake done by Mara corresponds to a corporal punishment. This leads then to infer that Akobi is a kind of husband who is callous, brutish, sadistic and exploitative. Indeed, the greater part of the story in *Beyond the Horizon* is devoted to Akobi's capacity for violence on the one hand, and Mara's extraordinary capacity

for endurance, on the other. Akobi is so consumed by a passion for violence that most of the time the reasons why he resorts to such a behaviour are shocking. This is the case when his wife becomes pregnant of their first child. Any normal man will rejoice with such news, but Akobi appears rather furious and asks her wife: "... why did you get pregnant?" (Darko, 1995, p.17) When the bewildered Mara has no answer for the rather surprising question, Akobi beats her up. This is the account given by the narrator Mara herself:

I thought I couldn't have heard right. 'Pardon?' I replied spontaneously, and before I knew what was happening...Wham! first slap ... wham! wham! wham! three more in succession. And I scurried into what had now become my favourite corner, slumping to floor. What had I done wrong? But I was to be given neither reasons nor explanations (Darko, 1995, p.66).

The ordeal Mara has known in her marital life is a mixture of sorrow, abuse, and any form of violence. Mara can remember the way Akobi ill-treats her just after their arranged marriage. "He [Akobi] roared, landing me [Mara] slap on one cheek. I scurried into one corner and slumped on the floor, my burning face buried in my hand. I understood the world no more." (Darko, 1995, p.4). All these confessions by Mara prove that men are somehow proud of their domination over women and do not waste time brutalising. Like Akobi, some irresponsible husbands are used to beating their wives to show their supremacy.

Apart from beating and physical injuries, prostitution and sexual abuse are also part of the violence and humiliation undergone by Mara. Sex is a physical activity that two persons especially a man and a woman have in order to have child or for pleasure. When it is done for money or any interest purpose, it is called prostitution and when it is by force or against the will of the partner, we refer to it as abuse or rape. In the novel under study, the phenomenon of sex and prostitution gets talked about. Mara's life story in *Beyond the Horizon* is a vivid example. First, she is raped by her own husband as wife and then by other men, her clients, when she is

forced to prostitute herself once in Germany. As for her husband, he never shows tenderness toward her while making love with her. He just jumps on her to satisfy his desire and then asks her to get down from the bed. Mara is regularly objectified by her husband Akobi. Mara explains her very first experience as follows: “Wordlessly, he stripped off my clothes, he stripped off his trousers, turned my back to him and entered me. Then he ordered me off the mattress to go and lay out my mat because he wanted to sleep alone” (Darko, 1995, p.22). The above passage shows the way Mara has been sexually objectified by her own husband. The word “wordlessly” here implies that there have been no communication, no feelings exchanges. She has just been an object desire satisfaction. This practice is simply an objectification of a sexual partner called wife.

Moreover, Akobi complots with his friend Osey and allows him to attempt to seduce his wife. Osey and Mara board a train and Osey looks around at different compartments until they find one with only one person in it. Osey looks around at the different people and he ends up sitting with someone that he knows who will succumb to his awkward grins. Mara is so naïve that she has no idea why they are sitting in a compartment with only one person and cannot understand why Osey keeps staring at an older woman. This aged woman is in the same compartment with them. Mara also finds it shocking when the woman gathers her things and leaves them alone. When Mara wonders why the woman leaves, Osey answers that "she fears monkey grin." (Darko, 1995, p.64). Later when asked by a woman if the seats are free Osey tells her that they are being occupied by their family who has all gone to the bathroom. But Mara still does not understand why and cannot see that Osey is trying to get them stay alone.

When Osey gets them alone, he attempts to seduce Mara. She protests by saying that he shall remember who she is, and that she will tell her husband of what he is trying to do. Mara does not understand that her husband is the reason why this is happening to her. Finally, she asks Osey and he says that is part of the fees to bring her to Germany and if Akobi does not want her to be seduced he will have to pay the extra fees, but he deliberately does

not pay the "full fee." When Osey fails to have sex with Mara, he acts so that Mara gets somewhat offended. This whole situation is a test with Mara to see how she will react to strange men touching her and trying to take advantage of her. Osey sees that she is too "green" and needs improvement and coaching. He declares: "you are not a dab-looking chicken, I must say, but you are too green, and such greenness kills my appetite. Maybe next time, another time in the near future after you've received enough coaching and improvement" (Darko, 1995, p.66). This violence becomes more frequent when women try to challenge men. This is seen through the way Mara is abused by Osey and he happens to be her husband's friend while trying to have sexual intercourse with her in the train taking them from the airport of Accra to Germany. It then appears that men are not ready to lose their patriarchal privileges. They are ready to develop different methods to achieve their aim. If not who can imagine that Mara's own husband is capable of changing her into a prostitute in Europe. Moreover, it seems that all African marriages are the same in Germany. Osey fights with Vivian, her wife, when he fails to know where she has been for two hours. He beats her just like Akobi beats Mara.

In this novel, we see men who are exploiting their wives without showing any love. As a matter of fact, the relations between Akobi and his wife Mara, Osey and his wife Vivian, and Kaye and her boyfriend are profit-driven. They have shown consistently that they do not have feeling for their wives as they treat them with scorn. Akobi and Osey bring their wives from their various countries and make them work in brothels to acquire wealth for themselves. Kaye's case is a bit different. He is only a boyfriend who lies that he is studying Engineering at the University. Like Akobi and Osey, he comes to Germany with hope and full of dreams. But when he realizes that the amount of money he is aiming for can take him years to be raised, he invests the little money he has in bringing Kaye to Germany. As a consequence, the money earned by these women from their prostitution deals is improperly used by their husbands on other women. For instance,

Akobi spends all the money Mara gains on his mistress, Comfort. Mara narrates her misadventure:

I felt drained, so drained that I had asked for a glass of water. My husband brings me from home to a foreign land and puts me in a brothel to work, and what money I make, he uses to pay the rent on his lover's apartment, and to renovate a house for her in her village back home. I came to Gerhardt expecting the worst, but this was even worse than I had conceived of (Darko, 1995, pp.137-38).

Vivian also confesses that “Even the money that I [Vivian] make, he [Osey] controls it. I can't buy anything without his consent, not even for my own mother at home” (Darko, 1995, p.89). Still in the stream of their sexual exploitation, Mara states her torture in a flashback: “I am in brief silky red underpants so I'm virtually naked, but that is not why I feel so cold because this coldness I feel does not grip my body so much as it does my soul. It's deep inside me that feels this chilliness, from the dejected soul my body harbours, a soul grown old from the much use of its shelter” (Darko, 1995, p.1).

In this first section, we have dealt with the submissive and vulnerable status of women in a society ruled by men's hegemony on the first hand and violence and abuse of men's oppression against women on the other hand. The next section will emphasize on the resistance women developed to face men's oppression.

3- WOMEN'S RESISTANCE TO MALE OPPRESSION IN AMMA DARKO'S *BEYOND THE HORIZON*

Resistance is the refusal to accept or comply with something. Within the framework of this study, it refers to the state of women to face the injustice and bad treatment men inflict upon them. Women's vulnerability and oppression in *Beyond the Horizon* express the degree of their submission in a male-dominated society. But the enduring of suffering will finally lead to the awakening and resistance of women. Women come to realize that they have been deprived of their right and act to establish equality.

3.1- Awakening of oppressed women

Awakening is an act or moment of becoming suddenly aware of something. Talking of awakening of women, we, most of the time, refer to some facts of awareness that lead them to awareness of the bad conditions they are going through. First of all Mara has been disappointed of her husband's dwelling place in the city. It was a total disillusion. She will have to live in a

...a cluster of shabbily-constructed corrugated-iron sheet shelters that looked like chicken houses, while all about and between them shallow, open gutters wound their way. In these gutters; due to the lack of any drainage system, all the water from dirty washing and bathing, and urine too, collected and stayed until it evaporated. And since the rate of evaporation was slower than the rate at which the waste waters collected, the resulting standing water not only stank but also bred nasty shades of algae and generations of large fat mosquitoes that greedily fed on our blood at night. As if that wasn't enough, barely fifty yards away there was an unhygienic public toilet beside which was the area's only public rubbish dump. I was soon to learn that the rubbish was collected only once every two months or so. And so this also not only brought in swarms of flies in their thousands but polluted the surrounding air so intensely that one hardly ever woke up in the morning without either a splitting headache or a bleeding nose". (Darko, 1995, p. 8)

This way of perceiving by Mara is already a psychological rejection of the marital house. It is a total despair when the woman brought from a village finds that her dwelling place in the city is not suitable for human beings in a way that she compares them with chicken houses. The awareness of one's conditions can leave one to change or to retaliate.

Moreover, other's pieces of advice or help can also lead to awakening. Mama Kiosk, a woman who thrives in the marketplace and participates in her community, offers Mara an alternative. She is the one who helps Mara to become independent economically when Akobi refuses to share his

salary. Mara confesses, “This my growing self-confidence Akobi didn't like ...In his search for answers he sought somewhere to put the blame. Not surprisingly he landed on Mama Kiosk” (Darko, 1995, p. 24). The female solidarity is the beginning of women's awakening. As a matter of act, economic independence is one of the major factors for women's emancipation. But Mara's eventual rebellion is not overt at first. She merely resists internally but finds it difficult to be done. When Mara attempts to leave Akobi and return to her village, she is “met with very little sympathy” (*Ibid.*, p. 28). Another self-dependence advice is when Akobi has smuggled to Europe. After Akobi's departure to Europe, Mama Kiosk, deeply disappointed, does hide her feelings and approaches Mara. With a feminist attitude and a good heart of mother she advises:

..., if I was you, now that he's gone I would forget him and start thinking wholly about yourself and your son. That is what you must do. These men they always leave for Europe and say they'll be back in one two or three years. 'I am only going there to work and make money and return' is what they all say, but they go and they never return again. You must forget him (Darko 1995, pp. 45-46).

Through this advice, we can read a kind of psychological preparation. Even though Mara is not ready for, all these gathered will eventually contribute to her emancipation.

The readers can see through the position of Mama Kiosk, a substitute mother for Mara. And consequently, the latter becomes more and more emotionally dependent on Mama Kiosk who affectionately calls her “Johnnie-just-come” or “villager in town”. One could easily be misled and take her as a supporter of the patriarchal system, however the contrast is utterly sharp. Mama Kiosk strikes again by disclosing after having heard of the trials of Mara with the hand of her husband:

Your husband is one of those men who have no respect for village people,' she said once. Tradition requests that the wife to respect, obey and worship her husband but it asks, in return, care, good care of the wife. Your husband neglects you and yet

demands respect and complete worship from you. That is not normal (Darko, 1995, p. 13).

The above passage pinpoints that Mara is in the school of life and Mama Kiosk acts as the teacher. She teaches the greenhorn what marital life should be. Mama Kiosk draws the analogy between living a martial better life and the respect a husband should have to his wife. Then likewise, when a man buys a cloth for himself, he must buy it for his wife if he wants really to care for her and be part of her life. This never happens with Akobi and Mara has been recorded all this.

Mara tries a delayed physical transformation thinking it can change the direction of her fate with her master. Then she develops a standard she hopes will make him be proud of her. The standard goes this way:

I needed plenty changes outside me still, I knew, but I had started and made significant strides and was content with my steady progress. For instance, I no longer wore African clothes, neither new nor old. No! I wore dresses, European dresses [...] You know, it sounds nothing special, said just simply: I no longer wore dresses. But it was something special. It was an outward transformation and it was a thrill, a very special and subjective thrill. [...] She looks at herself in a mirror and she asks herself, why didn't I do this before? That was what I asked myself too: why didn't I start wearing dresses when Akobi was here? It was such a transformation and I would have passed better into his world, his modern world. It probably would have made him take me to his farewell party and to the airport and there probably would never have been the need for Comfort's intrusion into his life (Darko, 1995, 48-9).

An overdue dressing standard cannot change her inferior social position attributed to her by society. For Akobi, Mara does not fit him and it is definitely his final decision from the beginning. A slave cannot suit a master's bed, but just in a corner for some minutes' fun. That is surely why the master (Akobi) calls for a woman (Comfort) suitable and comfortable to his class in his eyes. Mara has lost right from the start by being made

wife of a man who does not love her. She is dispossessed at the very time her mother begs her to accept the man.

One of the awakening actions at Mara's side is her self-appraisal. The only that comes out of it is her destruction and misleading. Her pain becomes more vivid and searing when she ponders over her situation and over the disgusting bruises on her body. Her little finger, for example, is "bent. Its bone's been displaced and it looks weird" (Darko, 1995, p.2). Likewise, when she thinks of her mother she wonders:

What my poor mother back home in black Africa would say to these hideous traces of bites and scratches all over my neck, should she ever have the misfortune of seeing them, I fear to imagine. They extend even far beyond the back of my ears, several bruises and scars left generously there by the sadistic hands of my best payers, my best spenders. And even back down my spine too run a couple more – horrendous ones which I fortunately do not suffer the distaste of seeing vividly like those on my neck, and so I care less about them (Darko, 1995, p.2).

The awareness of her situation is no doubt at the basis of decision to follow others' advice and guidance to gain her freedom. She wouldn't like to continue with a pitiful life, a life which is full of hope before her marriage. The very first situation that proves that Mara will finally rebel occurs when her husband sells off her clothes and valuables. The dialogue between her and her husband is quarrelsome:

'Where are they?' I said at last.

'I have sold them!' He replied, still looking at the ceiling, 'You what?' I said, making a grab at the armchair for support.

'I sold them. And now go and see my porridge' He ordered...

'Can you tell me why you sold them?' I screamed. What did you do with the money? Did you buy a bus? Some land? Or maybe a house?'

But he remained surprisingly calm.

‘No,’ he replied, I deposited the money for my passport and a ticket. I am travelling to Europe... ‘Please answer me truly, Akobi’ I pleaded.

‘Didn’t you hear? Go and see to my porridge!’

‘No!! I didn’t hear, Akobi,’ I screamed back so stubbornly and defiantly that I could read shock on his face (Darko, 1995, p.33).

The passage above depicts enough Mara’s courage to oppose her husband to whom she has always been submissive. She is vulnerable of course but she can also be stubborn and defiant while addressing him.

Mara lives now with Akobi and her rival Gitte, the German woman, in the same flat. Mara is really introduced to Gitte as Akobi’s sister. In Germany, Akobi can cook food in turn with his wife and even serve the dish. This is surprising and striking for Mara. While having discussion with Akobi, Osey, and Vivian, Mara always reacts in an intelligent way, which foretells that she is smart and endowed with audacity that can make her rebel at any time. Several times, she demonstrates that through her sensible replies intelligently, she most of the time asks rational questions especially to Osey and Akobi. These elements are factual hints that Mara will eventually rebel for her emancipation. In Naka, men are entitled with right of having more than one wife. When Akobi takes a second wife without informing Mara’s family, the latter reproaches that her husband.

‘Your second wife?’ I asked weakly. ‘You have taken on a second wife and you didn’t tell my family back home? Our tradition demanded it. It was a sign of respect to the first wife and her family. When a man took on a second wife without informing the first wife or her family, it showed an indifference towards his in-laws, which in itself was considered disrespectful and humiliating’ (Darko, 1995, p.79)

As a matter of fact, making this kind of reproach is the expression of disagreement and claim at the same time. Mara has proved through the above passage her intelligence and courage as well. She reminds her

husband that she is aware of the custom and the tradition and knows how it functions.

In Europe, Gitte uses her nationality to afford her power over Akobi: she issues him orders, reproaches him for disobedience, and reiterates racist stereotypes of African men. She puts it, “When I first met your brother, Mara, he was very lazy, a very lazy African man. At first I didn't understand, because here we hear always that African people are hard workers and love hard work because God made them especially for the hard work of the world” (Darko, 1995, pp. 98-99). Gitte's conclusion is that Akobi “is not a proper African man” (Darko, 1995, p. 99). Finally, Mara confesses to Gitte that she is Akobi's wife but does not tell her about how Akobi has coerced her into prostitution. Their mutual solidarity and understanding are never achieved. However, Gitte's solidarity with Mara is precluded by ignorance. Gitte's view of Africa is seen through the prism of touristic fantasy: she anticipates a luxurious house being built for her by the Ghanaian seaside and she “dreams of life in Africa: warm weather, palm trees, fresh fruits, and ten thousand bambinis attending to her wishes” (Darko, 1995, p. 81).

Kaye happens to be an angel for Mara in her attempts and acts of freedom. The video showing her sexual sequence with a multitude of white men changes her decision to be remained ‘green’. Kaye is an African woman and “a stunning black beauty and the wife of the good-looking man who was the owner of Peepy” (Darko, 1995, p.116). The narrator reveals no further information about her education. She is likely a wife to Pompey. She becomes a professional prostitute “when time and interest allowed” (Darko, 1995, p.116). Kaye is there as Mara's day and night bodyguard to teach her the skills of the job and then watches over her. Curiously, Kaye and Mara have a similar smuggling history with Mara with a slight difference. Kaye always manages to let her people believe that she finds a well-paid job and that she will return home very soon, yet she sends them all that they ask for to feel at ease.

Besides, she becomes a good and Mara's trustee friend in the sense that her encounter provokes in Mara a real sense of transformation. Kaye, through her help and support, symbolizes an angel of God in the sense that she becomes Mara's accomplice and thinks that the risks are worth taking to be liberated from the bondage. Just like Mama Kiosk in miniature, Kaye is a good counsellor though in her robe of whore. She is the only one to encourage Mara to stick to her focus to run away from Hamburg to another horizon. As a result, Kaye has induced a complete change in her friend of misfortune and finally says one day: "You are no more you, Mara. You've changed" and Mara replies "No, Kaye. I'm still me. I have just understood the world better" (Darko, 1995, p.127). This understanding of the world by Mara is the result of long coaching, guidance, and advice giving. The change Kaye is talking about here is not physical, but psychological. That is to say that Mara takes definitely control of her psyche, a decision which induces her better understanding of the situation and the world of course. And when one becomes aware of one's situation, one can take necessary actions to take control.

Besides, male characters' depiction in Amma Darko's *Beyond the Horizon* can be seen as an implied call for women's revolution. Darko for instance depicts Mara as a naïve woman and Akobi as callous, brutish and violent husband who does not care for his wife. Through her characterisation, the reader can see the stand of Darko against women's oppression. That is why she uses her feminist approach to depict her male characters as poisonous, pitiless, dangerous and macho so much so that it is urgent for women not to be any more all giving and all pardoning.

3.2- Resistant actions against men: Akobi's downfall

Mara, from the village to the Europe, has witnessed the lack of consideration with which Akobi treats her and she has been getting ready to react. Mara becomes a professional whore at Peepy. She hosts up to three men a day. Those men come to sleep with her for money but unfortunately the money, she earns through her whoring, is paid into Akobi's bank

account. Mara alerts in the following lines: “Every day, apart from Sunday, I took on at least three, what they paid me went to Akobi. And Osey, too, I guess, had arranged his cut with Akobi. Men torment and distort poor Mara’s body mainly her genitals but it is other people who enjoy the money from it. She says ‘the body being used and misused belonged to me.’” (Darko, 1995, p.118). Mara starts seeking for the way out. She narrates her whole history to Kaye for a solution.

When Kaye is told about Mara’s situation, she takes the decision to help her. The problem is that she must find a smooth method because “Pompey ... a rigidly disciplined businessman” (Darko, 1995, p.119) is very difficult to convince in terms of business and money. She convinces her husband that Mara must reduce the number of men that she receives a day, telling lies that Mara has received an Italian who has harshly destroyed her. But it does not happen as planned before, that is to reduce the number of men she receives. The number of daily clients is increased instead. Mara herself confesses: “our plan was put in to motion. I didn’t reduce my daily customers to one as Kaye had told Pompey. I increased them to seven” (Darko, 1995, p. 119). The purpose of this plan is to enable Mara to make enough money so as to pay a German guy for a bogus marriage. But it is as being in hell because she endures a lot of suffering. She states how painful it has been for her to cope with: “When I wasn’t sleeping with a man I was crouching over a bucket of steaming hot water diluted with camphor and alum. Sometimes, the treatment left me with a numb vagina, so that I even felt nothing than pain” (Darko, 1995, p. 120).

There is no doubt that Mara that suffers indeed before making money. However, the plan put in place and intelligently carried out is a brilliant success as she is informing the reader in the following passage. “Only when I had my period did I get some rest. But even before five weeks was up I was ready with my cash to pay some German guy to marry me, so that I could get my resident papers” (Darko, 1995, p. 120). And Mara has really raised the required amount of money and her accomplice Kaye has made the arrangement for the marriage. As a matter of fact, Kaye knows the right

people and the right contacts for such a thing. It is a “business marriage”, no need to see whether they love each other. Each of them is looking for a specific profit. The man will collect his money and Mara will get her resident papers. Of course, everything is ready within three months and Mara has all the necessary papers mainly “the blessed stamps of five-year resident’s visa in her passport” (Darko, 1995, pp. 120-23).

Mara has succeeded in meeting Gitte at an ice-cream parlour. They reveal to each other what Akobi has been, what he has done to them. As a whole, Akobi has cheated both Mara and Gitte. The latter describes Comfort as a “sophisticated” woman. After the meeting some changes occur in their respective lives mainly Mara’s.

Kaye is the courageous woman who elaborates and puts into motion with Mara a plan to escape from their prison like business in which they gain nothing than physical and emotional sufferings. Both can quit the stranglehold of their pseudo husbands, these rigid men who love only the flowing cash that their sex work yields. Their wives’ bodies suffering under other men’s foot kicks, spitting, slaps and all sorts of violence do not seem to draw a slightest emotion and a single attention. This implies her convincing Pompey to accept Mara’s fake body destruction. With the help of the “stunning black beauty”, Kaye, Mara has ceased working at Peepy. By this way she has prevented Akobi from getting money from her whoring yields. This is a terrible coup to Akobi as he has never foreseen such a retaliation from his Mara, the village girl he has brought to the city and Europe. The time of Mara’s revenge over Akobi has finally come. Akobi’s situation is not good at all in the end. He has started paying for his ill-treatments of Mara and his cheating on both Mara and Gitte, two ladies who have been loyal and faithful to him. He has ended up in jail as the following passage depicts: “Akobi is in jail here in Germany. He attempted to sneak out while still owing money to the bank and a couple of mail order houses and was caught. I am sure that he was wanting to follow Comfort when she got deported. Everything he and Gitte owned has been taken by the bank. Gitte has divorced him and returned to her family” (Darko, 1995,

pp. 138-139). Akobi has had a sudden spill. Actually, he has never established a solid background and financial autonomy for himself as a man. In addition to this, he has been taken surprisingly by Mara's destructive plan.

Working as a prostitute, Mara has got her sense of independence and selfhood. She finally frees herself from her husband as she comes to the evidence that she is now 'a modern woman'. Mara has already freed herself by raising money and getting married to a German man, a bogus marriage of course. This situation enables her to live freely in Germany owing to her marriage certificate and the five-year visa resulting from this marriage. When talking with Kaye, she starts her own examination, a kind of stock taking of her deeds. Her conclusion is to continue whoring. She really continues whoring at Oves' and she thinks she is well at ease continuing it. She concludes that she cannot change and she will not change. She is so accustomed to the environment of whoring that for her it is and it will be impossible to go back to her life of greenhorn, faithful and submissive woman. Here is her confession: "At Oves' brothel, I have planned into my profession down to the marrow in my bones. There is no turning back for me now. I am so much a whore that I can no longer remember or imagine what being a non-whore is. I have problems recollecting what I was like before I turned into what I was like before I turned into what I am now" (Darko, 1995, p. 139).

Mara confirms that she cannot return to a normal life. She is clear enough through the sentence "there is no turning back for me now" (Darko, 1995, p. 139). She, as some other whores, sniffs into a place hotter than hell in order to be able to stand, to avoid sinking relatively soon. She is ashamed so that she hides the truths from her intimate friend and mother-like, Mama Kiosk and her whole family. Mama Kiosk thinks that Mara is working as a waitress in an African restaurant although it is through her that she sends money and goods to her family in Naka. She volunteers to do better for her people. Mara is doing quite well in that business and is not ready to change for another one. She is now planning to buy a cement house for her two

kids in the city and has already given instructions for it. She says that “material things are all she can offer them [...] as for myself, there is nothing dignified and decent left of me to give them” (Darko, 1995, p. 140). Mara is aware of what she has become morally, there is nothing left of her. She thinks that her going to Europe will change her life positively but it has been a failure as being exploited by a materialistic Akobi.

For sure, Darko has chosen Mara’s example purposefully. It is a good sensitization directed mainly to the female gender to bring them to the awareness of the dangers of the lures of Europe. The final resolve of Mara is the heartfelt expression of an inner feeling of disappointment, despair and disillusionment. She instructs:

Sometimes I am not sure whether I did the right thing or not in coming here but thank God, here at Oves’. I don’t have time to worry and regret it. That doesn’t mean that I consider myself totally blameless either. After all, I was also party to it all even if involuntary. And I guess that my punishment for it, is that I am stuck with Oves for the rest of my life. I have decided to stop thinking about ever going home (Darko, 1995, p. 139).

Through Mara’s conclusion, it is plain that great effort made by some women in search of freedom from men’s oppression, sexual exploitation, and domination has never been enough to scar the deep wound inflicted on them in a very patriarchal structured society. Even Kaye and Vivian have both undergone the same bleak experience.

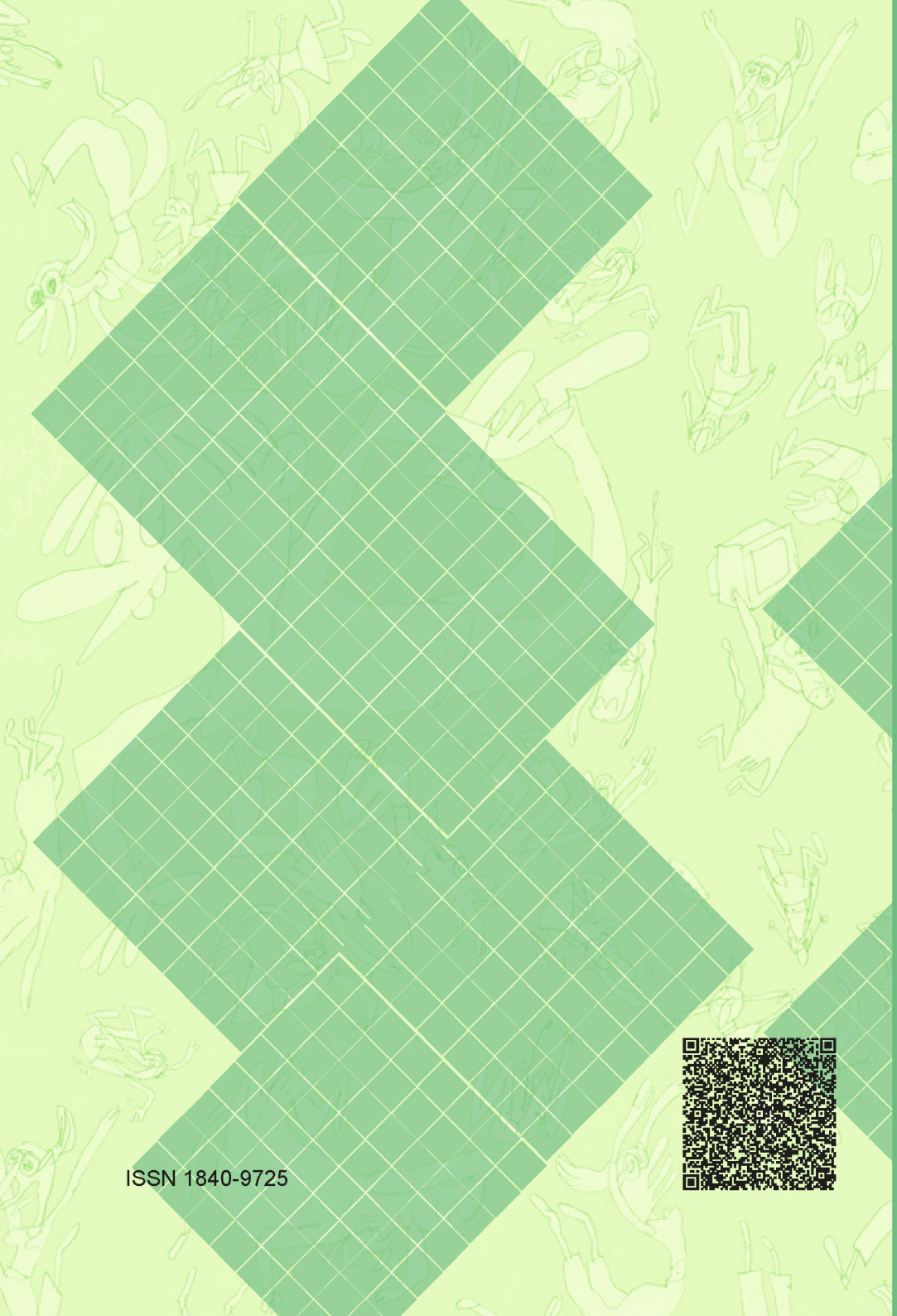
4- Conclusion

This paper has dealt with the issue of women’s vulnerability and their resistance to male oppression in Amma Darko’s *Beyond the Horizon*. It has been demonstrated that women, in the novel under study, are totally vulnerable in a highly men dominated society. They have been subjected, objectified, raped, and violated psychologically and physically because they are considered as the “weaker sex”. Women’s vulnerability shaped in postcolonial African societies is a social blocking to their emancipation and

freedom. It has also been proved that the resistance of women stems from the ill-treatment they have undergone. Their awakening is basically from the fact that they take awareness that they do not deserve such a bad treatment. Moreover, it has been demonstrated that the vulnerable women have changed and taken revenge over men through rebellion actions and self-decisions against their male counterparts. This paper, by highlighting the unjust treatment inflicted upon women, opts for a fairer society where women are empowered and free to make their own decisions. Our analysis have showed that internal struggle of women could induce self-awareness which could in turn incite them to contest their oppression.

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