



www.revuebaobab.org

REVUE DES SCIENCES DE L'IMAGINAIRE, ARTS, LETTRES ET SCIENCES HUMAINES

Numéro Spécial :

ACTES DU COLLOQUE INTERNATIONAL

**COVID-19, LE MONDE D'APRES : DECONSTRUIRE POUR
RECONSTRUIRE LES RAPPORTS AVEC LE RESTE DU VIVANT**

ISSN : 1996-1898

23 Novembre 2021

REVUE BAOBAB

Revue des sciences de l'imaginaire, arts, lettres et sciences humaines

de l'Université Félix Houphouët-Boigny

et de l'Université Alassane Ouattara

Directeur de publication: Jean-Marie KOUAKOU,

Professeur des universités

BP V34 Abidjan 01

BP V18 Bouake 01

République de Côte d'Ivoire

Téléphone: (225) 0101018143/0506145796

Courriel: ndbaly@hotmail.com

Site Internet: www.revuebaobab.org

ISSN:1996-1898

COMITE SCIENTIFIQUE

- Mamadou Kandji, Professeur Emérite, Université Cheick Anta Diop, Dakar
- Komla Messan Nubukpo, Professeur Titulaire, Université de Lomé
- Lawrence Patrick Jackson, Distinguished Professor, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD
- Kouadio Germain N'Guessan, Professeur Titulaire, Université Félix Houphouët-Boigny (Côte d'Ivoire) ;
- Bah Henri, Professeur Titulaire, Université Alassane Ouattara
- Daouda Coulibaly, Professeur Titulaire, Université Alassane Ouattara (Côte d'Ivoire) ;
- Louis Obou, Professeur Titulaire, Université Félix Houphouët-Boigny (Côte d'Ivoire)
- Kouabenan Kossonou François, Professeur Titulaire, Université Alassane Ouattara
- Ibo Lydie, Professeur Titulaire, Université Alassane Ouattara
- Gossouhon Sékongo, Maître de Conférences, Université Alassane Ouattara (Côte d'Ivoire)
- Pierre Kramoko, Maître de Conférences, Université Alassane Ouattara (Côte d'Ivoire)
- Vamara Koné, Professeur Titulaire, Université Alassane Ouattara (Côte d'Ivoire)
- TOH Zorobi Philippe, Maître de Conférences, Université Alassane Ouattara (Côte d'Ivoire)
- Dahigo Guézé A. Aimé, Professeur Titulaire, Université Alassane Ouattara (Côte d'Ivoire)

COMITE DE LECTURE

Dr Bawa Kammampool, Université de Kara (Togo)

Dr Ehouman René KOFFI, Université Alassane Ouattara (Côte d'Ivoire)

Dr Jacques BARRO, Université Norbert ZONGO, (Burkina Faso)

Dr Klohinwele KONE, Université Félix Houphouët Boigny (Côte d'Ivoire)

Pr Kouadio Germain N'GUESSAN, Université Félix Houphouët-Boigny (Côte d'Ivoire)

Pr Kouamé ADOU, Université Alassane Ouattara (Côte d'Ivoire)

Dr Kouamé SAYNI, Université Alassane Ouattara (Côte d'Ivoire)

Dr Lambert N'GUESSAN, Université Alassane Ouattara (Côte d'Ivoire)

Dr Moussa OUATTARA, Université Péléforo Gon Coulibaly (Korhogo)

TABLE DES MATIERES

Introduction : Comprendre la crise sanitaire

Prof Coulibaly Daouda

PREMIERE PARTIE : LITTERATURE

Debasing The Body: A Metaphorical Analysis Of Covid-19 And Aids Inifeoma Chinwuba's *Merchants of Flesh*.

Dr Kouakou Guillaume YAO ; Dr Kouamé ADOU 1-12

"We Guilty...and Neither One of Us is Going to Move a Step in the Right Direction Until We Admit It": Cool Mask Off in Alice Walker's *The Third Life Of Grange Copeland*.

Dr Ahou Alphonsine N'GUESSAN 13-28

Miscegenation in André Brink's *An Instant in the Wind*: A Redefinition of the Ethic of Love in Black and White

Alama OUATTARA 29-43

Reconciling Medical Practices With the Hippocratic Oath: An Analysis of Samuel Shem's *The House Of God* in Post-Covid Era

Dr. Pierre KRAMOKO 44-57

Deconstructing Patriarchies: Womanist Reading Of Amma Darko's *Beyond The Horizon* in Covid-19 Era

Koffi Noël BRINDOU 58-75

Reconfiguration of Blackness: Strategic Essentialism in Toni Morrison's *Paradise*

Koffi Eugène N'GUESSAN 76-92

Economic Sufferings and Pandemic Stress in Philip Purser's *The Twentymen*

Ténéna Mamadou SILUE 93-108

The Covid-19 and The American Racial Disease: Anachronical Diagnosis of Racial Harassment in James Baldwin's *If Beale Street Could Talk*

Kouamé SAYNI 109-122

De l'hostilité à une coexistence pacifique dans *A Gathering of Old Men* et *Of Love and Dust* : esquisse d'une déconstruction de l'altérité raciale post COVID 19.

Bassamanan TOURÉ 123-138

DEUXIEME PARTIE : LINGUISTIQUE

Analyse sémiotique de la gestion du Covid-19 : Les leçons d'une pandémie
Jacques BARRO ; Dofini Dieudonné COULIBALY 139-155

Between Deconstruction and Construction: A Sociopragmatic Approach to Dan Fulani's *One Man Two Votes* As a Parody of Covid 2019.
Zorobi Philippe TOH ; Eder Marius BROU156-169

A Pragmatic Analysis of Political Discourse on Covid-19: The Specific Case of Boris Johnson's 23rd March Address to The Nation on Coronavirus.
Donansi Adama KOULIBALI 170-183

DECONSTRUCTING PATRIARCHIES: WOMANIST READING OF AMMA DARKO'S *BEYOND THE HORIZON* IN COVID-19 ERA

Koffi Noël BRINDOU
Université Alassane Ouattara, Côte d'Ivoire
brindouchristmas@yahoo.fr

ABSTRACT

African women are submitted to the double system of male domination and colonial system. While the women's conditions are grounded in traditional values of patriarchy, they are marginalized by the colonial system which offers preference to men's education that serves the interests of the Western colonists. COVID-19 draws its origin from nature or motherland, and it infects and confines gender and race. In reaction to such phallic systems, the women characters in Amma Darko's *Beyond the Horizon* question and deconstruct the old value system that governs them. Their actions are similar in meaning to the COVID-19 pandemic. Framed into the concept of womanism, the paper argues that both women in *Beyond the Horizon* and COVID-19 act to deconstruct traditional and colonial patriarchies.

Keywords: Colonialism, COVID-19, Deconstruction, Motherland, Patriarchy, Tradition, Womanism.

RÉSUMÉ

La femme africaine est soumise à un double système de domination masculine et coloniale. Pendant que la condition de la femme est enracinée dans une tradition patriarcale, la femme est marginalisée par le système colonial qui privilégie l'éducation masculine pour ses propres intérêts. Provenant de la nature, COVID-19 infecte et confine le genre masculin et féminin aussi bien que toute catégorie de race. Pour réagir contre le phallogentrisme de la société, les personnages féminins de *Beyond the Horizon* de Amma Darko déconstruisent la valeur de l'ancien système qui les gouverne. Les actions des personnages féminins sont similaires à la pandémie du COVID-19. Ayant pour cadre conceptuel le womanism, cette étude démontre que les personnages féminins dans *Beyond the Horizon* et la pandémie de COVID-19 déconstruisent le système de la tradition patriarcale et système colonial.

Mots Clés: Colonisation, COVID-19, Deconstruction, Nature, Patriarcat, Tradition, Womanism.

Introduction

African men enjoy some privileges in the traditional and colonial system. They are educated in order to become leaders in their respective communities. Also active in the system of production, they are instrumental to the economic interests of the western colonists who prefer them to women. In the traditional sphere dominated by men and the colonial system, the world is framed in a male-built system. The phallic society sets African women into what W.E.B. Du Bois (1903, p. xiv) calls double consciousness: “The inability to see oneself except ‘through the eyes of the others.’” This makes African women feel themselves into two-ness. They see that while being black like their men therefore being faced with colonial racism, they are looked down as weak sex. This cultivates and directs them into revolutionary self-consciousness coined by A. Walker (1984, p. xi) and C.O. Ogunyemy (2014, p. 72) as “womanism.” The Ghanaian female writer A. Darko portrays such a reality faced by African women in her debut novel *Beyond the Horizon* published in 1995. The story is about African women who, being governed and exploited by their men in Ghana and in Germany, rise into self-consciousness and pro-women’s solidarity to fight to gain back the fullness of their freedom and humanity.

If in *Beyond the Horizon*, the traditional and colonial patriarchal dominations bring African women “to devise theories and methods for human problem solving that ... take shape as ... *womanism*” (P. Layli, 2006, p. xli), mankind’s destruction of the nature brings this nature to strike mankind back through COVID-19. The current hypothesis about the origin of the COVID-19 pandemic shows that it has a “natural and zoonotic origin” (L. Mdpi *et al.*, 2020, p. 2). The present paper claims that COVID-19 infects and confines gender and race. Nature, or the Earth, is referred as motherland by negritude¹ and as matriclan by K.A. Appiah (1992, p.192) who writes that “the matriclan is ... the forest.” Thus, instead of saying that COVID-19 originates from nature, it is also possible to say that COVID-19 originates from motherland or matriclan. The deconstructive effects of COVID-19 is similar to womanist actions. It is my eagerness to argue that both women in A. Darko’s *Beyond the Horizon* and COVID-19 attack white and black people, and men and women which brings me to choose to work on the following topic: “Deconstructing Patriarchies: Womanist Reading of Amma Darko’s *Beyond the Horizon* in COVID-19 Era.”

¹ The negritude movement was spearheaded by the Guyan poet Léon Damas (1912-78), alongside the radical Martiniquan poet and politician Aimé Césaire (1913 –) and the rather more conservative Senegalese poet Léopold Sédar Senghor (1906 – 2001) (S. Newell, 2006, p. 25).

By patriarchies one needs to take into account traditional and colonial male-built systems. Deconstruction refers to COVID-19 and A. Darko's women's philosophy of breaking the male-built systems. For, P. Zima (2002, p. 4, 18) writes: "Detecting contradictions and aporias is a crucial element of deconstructive criticism." He adds: "Deconstruction in its entirety could be conceived as a discourse of radical ambivalence leading to aporia." Deconstructive womanism therefore constitutes the theoretical framework of this article. The women in *Beyond the Horizon* act as womanists to deconstruct the male-built systems; the COVID-19 acts in similar ways, in that it deconstructs the order on which the world has been founded ever since.

In a critical analysis of the novel *Beyond the Horizon* B. Kammampool (2017, p. 3) defines it as a womanist narrative, and he asserts that his essay "tries to show womanism as an outgrowth of feminism and see how it is reflected in the work of the novelist." What B. Kammampool fails to see is A. Darko's portrayal of the African woman to "recognize that, along with her consciousness of sexual issues, she must incorporate racial, cultural and economic ... considerations into her philosophy" (C.O. Ogunyemi, 2006, p. 21). Some analysts set COVID-19 in the context of patriarchy. Such an opinion is held by K. Nikisha *et al.* (2020, p. E1218) who write that "COVID-19-related lockdowns and economic shutdowns have drastically exacerbated violence against woman globally." But the confinement and infection can be read as COVID-19's acts of deconstruction of the phallic society. In this respect, the present study demonstrates that both African women in *Beyond the Horizon* and COVID-19 act as womanists in the sense of a deconstruction of the traditional and colonial patriarchies. What are the womanist strategies used by A. Darko's female characters and COVID-19 to deconstruct traditional and colonial patriarchies? Specifically, what are the womanist strategies used by women in *Beyond the Horizon* to struggle against the traditional and colonial patriarchies? How can COVID-19 be seen as womanist action that dismantles traditional and colonial patriarchies?

The work is organized in three sections with two aspects each. The first section entitled "Mothers' Resistance to Traditional Patriarchy" throws light on African mothers' use of spirituality and entrepreneurship to resist traditional patriarchy. The second section is entitled "African Women's Resistance to Colonial Patriarchy." It is concerned with African women's recourse to school education and economic investment to resist colonial patriarchy. The third section entitled "COVID-19 and the Deconstruction of Phallic Society" throws light on infection and confinement as COVID-19's womanist acts of contradicting gender and race superiorities.

1- Mothers' Resistance to Traditional Patriarchy

The bloodmother and the other-mother (non parental mother) in *Beyond the Horizon* are featured with the characteristic of mothering. T.T. Minh-ha (1997, p. 31) views mothering as “women’s status as childbearer whose lot is to conceive, bear, feed.” In the novel, the women who bear such a status of mother in the context of traditional Africa, are Mara’s bloodmother, and her other-mother Mama Kiosk. Though the two women are featured with “a set of behaviors, based on caretaking, management, nurturance, ... spiritual mediation, and dispute resolution”(P. Layli, 2006, p. xxix), their conditions of motherhood can be categorized differently. Mara’s mother lives in a polygamous marriage, while Mama Kiosk does not live a marriage life, though she has daughters like Mara’s mother. Despite their being different in marital status, the two mothers resist male supremacy and sexist oppression. Mara’s mother uses spiritual forces to resist male domination and Mama Kiosk makes recourse to capitalism to resist men’s domination.

1.1- Womanist Spirituality: Mother’s Resistance to Androcentricism and Polygyny

J.D. Hamlet (2006, p. 228) writes: “The individual is empowered through spirituality.” It is such spirituality that Mara’s bloodmother in *Beyond the Horizon* can be said to be concerned with. She lives in Naka under patriarchal governance. Her husband has the right to marry several women. He also has the right to set his daughters in arranged marriage. Mara’s mother’s spirituality gives her force to struggle against the patriarchal turmoil of her husband. Mara narrates that as her father sets her in an arrange marriage, her mother voices to her:

Your life is your road, Mara. God puts you at the start of this road and propels you to walk on, and only He knows where your road will end, but it is the road He chose for you and you must walk it with gratefulness because it’s the best for you.’ Once, before I started to walk my road all on my own, I believe mother. (A. Darko, 1995, p. 3)

If as C.J. Sanders *et al.*(2006, p. 131) put it, “sexual freedom is a sign of moral autonomy;” then, Mara is not morally autonomous. She is suppressed by her solipsistic father. Mara’s mother goes against such a traditional genderism. She nurtures and recomforts Maraby telling her that it is God’s will. Mara’s mother puts into practice the connotation of

womanism as interpreted by C.J. Sanders *et al.*, (2006, p. 128): “While its general context is the folk culture of black woman, its specific context is the intergenerational dialogue between black mothers and their daughters in an oppressive society.” Mara’s mother makes use of spirituality to instigate moral strength into Mara’s psyche. She connects spirituality to Mara’s well-being. Mara’s mother in this standpoint is in perfect line with D. S. Williams (2006, p. 121) who contends: “For the womanist, mothering and nurturing are really important.”

Mara’s mother does not try to ask Mara to resist her husband as feminists do. She simply puts her under the control of God. Mara’s mother in this condition is not a separationist. She just advocates women to love themselves. In this sense, when writing about womanist theology, D. S. Williams (2006, p. 120) asserts: “Womanist consciousness is also informed by women’s determination to love themselves.” If Mara’s father’s lack of love for Mara brings him to fit the African American T. Coates’s (2015, p. 66) black community’s saying: “Anyone can make a baby, but it takes a man to be a father,” Mara’s mother’s love for her makes her say that “anyone can make a baby, but it takes a womanist to be a mother.” Mara’s mother in this case should teach Mara’s father how to love, to satisfy the child’s needs and emotion since, for the society to get cohesion the individual must get psychic cohesion as the British psychoanalyst B. Russell (2005, p. 23) articulates: “the original mechanism of social cohesion, as it is still to be found among the most primitive races, was one which operated through individual psychology without the need of anything that could be called authority.”

Spirituality helps Mara’s mother to resist her husband’s oppressive polygyny. When Mara’s father gets married with another woman, the asymmetrical power relations between him and his old wives bring Mara’s mother to visit a medicine man in order to avoid her needs and concerns being sacrificed on the altar of the patriarchal tradition. Mara voices: “Mother had even been to the medicine man to ask him to perform a counter ju-ju and as a result was wearing heavy waist-beads of cowries and dried bones” (A. Darko, 1995, p. 28). Mara’s mother’s counter ju-ju can be interpreted in manifold. At first it shows that the father is androcentric. Then it shows that the mother ostensibly does not receive an important consideration from her husband. By making recourse to the counter ju-ju to resist her husband’s androcentricism, Mara’s mother shows her recognition to the existence of not only the spiritual force but also the power of this spiritual force to help her in her daily life.

The singularity of Mara’s mother’s affiliation with the womanist spirituality to heal her soul among the multiplicity of women shows that gender-specific expectation is deeply embedded in the tradition. While the other old wives conform with patriarchal womanhood,

Mara's mother's disentangles herself from such a grip of the traditional female consciousness. In this vein, C. Helen (2006, p. 369) goes along with Joyce Ann Ladner to mention: "In discussing the black woman from historical perspective, it is important to know that there is no monolithic concept of the black woman, but there are many models of black womanhood." While Mara's mother is a pro-monogyny, the cowives are pro-polygyny. Mara's mother's philosophy makes her fit the following standpoint of P. Layli (2006, p. xxiv): "A womanist knows oppression when she (or he) see it, and she (or he) is against it. She lives her life in such a way as to fight and dismantle oppression in whatever ways she can, individually or organized formation with others." If Mara's bloodmother has helped revealed women's resistance to traditional patriarchy, Mama Kiosk can help do so too.

1.2- A Capitalist Mother: A Challenge to Patriarchal Womanhood

In *Beyond the Horizon*, in addition to her role as a mother, Mama Kiosk is a business woman in Accra. Accra is qualified by E.A. Amoo-Adare (2006, p. 352) as a city that "has the highest rate of urbanization in Ghana and of the highest in West Africa." It follows that Mama Kiosk lives in a capitalist spatiality. Despite the fact that life in capital city is difficult, Mama Kiosk is not provided for by a husband. She does not reject childbirth as a means of resistance to patriarchal womanhood like the religious sect does in China to resist heteropatriarchy. W. Lee (2006, p. 331) writes that the religious sect in China "preached to women that marriage resistance is not morally wrong; men cannot be trusted; childbirth is a sin; celibacy is the only way to the Happy Land (paradise); and suicide is a virtue if it is committed to preserve purity and chastity." At her first encounter with Mara who is going to throw rubbish; Mama Kiosk, when asking Mara to throw hers, mentions: "Can you take mine with you? I never find the time for it, you know" (A. Darko, 1995, p. 10).

A. Darko's dissociation of Mama Kiosk's image from rubbish is interesting in another angle. The rubbish is an expression of useless thing. Attributing it to the function of Mara shows how setting women in the margin of the community is in the very fiber of patriarchal system. But the significance of the subversive narrative of patriarchal culture lies in the fact that Mama Kiosk is not interested in such a useless and non-paying activity. Mama Kiosk does not function in line with patriarchal labor division. Her philosophy does not differ from Western notion of capitalism. Contrastively to the tradition that subjugates women to men, Mama Kiosk's life is regulated by lucrative activity as Mara narrates:

I made my first friend after about six weeks. Mama Kiosk was what people called her because she owned a kiosk at the main lorry station in which she retailed cigarettes, sweets and iced water. Her home was not Alahji's but her own. It wasn't all corrugated-iron sheets but part blocks. (A. Darko, 1995, p. 10)

Unlike Akobi who rents Alahji's house, Mama Kiosk owns a kiosk and lives in her own house. She builds a house in Accra. Accra as a capitalist spatiality has nothing to do with the traditional territory where people inherit lands from their ancestors. In the capitalist spatiality one needs enough money to buy a piece of land. Despite that, Mama Kiosk buildsher house. She is thus the equals of Alahji, Akobi's landlord. She contradicts patriarchal politics criticized by O. Nnaemeka (1997, p. 5): "Patriarchy constructs the institution of motherhood while women experience it." Mama Kiosk in the standpoint of being economically self-sufficient is from class which is different from woman as classified by patriarchal men. She is from the working class. C.O. Ogunyemi (1988, p. 235) articulates working-class women as follows: "Working class includes all who work and get paid, whether they are poor or are comfortably off." In A. Darko's *Beyond the Horizon*, Women do not only fight against the traditional patriarchy, they also resist colonial patriarchy.

2- African Women's Resistance to Colonial Patriarchy

There are two categories of women in *Beyond the Horizon*. Some women are traditional while others are modern. Mara and her mother are traditional women while Comfort and her co-workers are modern women. Comfort and her colleagues work in Ministries. Mara is portrayed as a woman whose life begins in the village with her mother; she moves to the city of Accra, and finally to Germany. These two categories of African women reverse colonial patriarchy.

2.1- Intellectual Women: Challenging Colonial Patriarchal Education

In *Beyond the Horizon* African women's education shows that men are not the only gender endowed with intellectual capacity. In allusion to Akobi's hegemony, Mara states: "His bus arrived filled with 'gentlemen and ladies' co-workers like himself who saw that he knew me" (A. Darko, 1995, p. 25). Mara presents that women are Akobi's co-workers. They are educated like him.

Because the women are educated and work in the public administrations, they have the power to deconstruct the traditional and colonial patriarchal politics that institutionalizes knowledge as manly abilities. Not only do the women show that they can participate to western capitalistic world but also, they show to their traditional communities that women can

be educated like men. Though Comfort and her co-workers are women, their western school education brings Akobi in the incapacity to exert any domination upon them. When Mara asks Akobi why he does not want his co-workers in the bus to see her with him, Akobi replies: “Don’t you know that if they find out that I know you they will laugh at me?” (A. Darko, 1995, p. 26) Akobi’s own words in this passage show very well that he does not dominate the educated women. He gives a minimum of respect to the educated women. Education can therefore be said to bring Comfort and her co-workers to escape being set in other world as viewed by G.C. Spivak in *In Other World*. They are not marginalized by Akobi nor are they oppressed by him. They are rather respected and considered by him.

Like the co-workers, Comfort’s education sharply contradicts men’s superiority. Mara narrates it as follows:

Comfort was her name, a typist at the Ministries, and the truth was that Akobi was hoping that witnessing at first-hand the high esteem he enjoyed in the village would impress Comfort and get her uttering a breathless ‘Yes’ when later he proposed love to her. But it was miscalculation. A sad one, for Comfort’s admiration ended abruptly the moment they left the boundaries of Naka. And the very next day, back within the walls of the Ministries, Comfort gave him a nasty cold shoulder. Ignoring him, she elegantly disappeared into back of the silver metallic Pontiac belonging to the ugly, fat First Secretary to the Housing and Construction Minister. (A. Darko, 1995, p.6)

Like Akobi, the educated Comfort has a salary. Next, her education makes it impossible for Akobi to transform her into sexual object. She does not fall under the traditional politics of marriage. Her education results in a form of autonomy to choose her sexual partner. In the novel, women, it must be said, have defeated colonial patriarchy by achieving western education. They show that the margin -women- and the center- men - can communicate only if the two are given the opportunity to be educated in Weser school. In this vein A. Pewissi (2017, p.17) writes:

margins and centers [can] communicate through a dialogical osmosis so that the center ceases to be center because everything at the center should travel the periphery for exchange. Similarly, the margin will not be the margins in the binary set. Regarding gender divisions, womanism [thus] develops an account of the world from the perspectives of both men and women on equal footing.

Though with education women move to the center and cease to be in the margin, it is worth emphasizing that education is not the only strategy used by women to resist colonial patriarchy. Entrepreneurial actions are also undertaken by women to combat colonial patriarchy.

2.2- Entrepreneurial Women: Combatting Men's Economic Injustice

One is tempted to place Mara as a naïve girl incapable of breaking from patriarchal domination because of her illiteracy, arranged marriage and sexual exploitation. But Mara takes womanist actions to breakthrough. L. Phillips (2006, p. xxii) contends that a womanist action “is more or less a recuperation and celebration of women who have been ‘beaten down’ by the system.” Mara undertakes economic activities to change her situation. Her lucrative activities start in the village. She states: “Naturally I had to help on the farm to make up for my upkeep and shelter. And I had to sell palmwine too to make money for Alhaji’s monthly rent back in the city” (A. Darko, 1995, p. 47). Mara is a self-provider who contradicts the tradition that expects her husband to be provider in the family. In Accra, Mara keeps on being her own provider though she is still married to Akobi. She says that when she arrives in the city,

there was no time to waste The first thing I did was seek a seamstress who would teach me to sew. As to earning money, I abandoned hawking eggs and took to frying pancakes for sale at the marketplace in the afternoon because mornings I attended my sewing lessons, while nights and weekends saw me selling sweets and cigarettes in front of the cinema houses. (A. Darko, 1995, p. 47)

Mara’s lucrative activities in the city offer her capacities to reverse the patriarchal norms for which “The man brings, the woman cooks and serves” (G.C Spivak, 1987, p. 232).

When Mara migrates to Germany, she does not cease her economic activities. Though she is exploited by Akobi in sex club, she struggles to be free. She becomes an income-earning woman for her family in Ghana. Before Mara’s economic achievement, the novel tells the story of the managerial action of Kaye, another African woman in Germany. Mara describes Kaye as “an African woman” who “assisted her husband to manage Peepy” (A. Darko, 1995, p. 116). Pompey’s solidarity with Kaye echoes C.O. Ogunyemi’s (2014, p. 72) stance when she writes that womanism “ideal is for black unity where every black person has a medium of power and so can be a ‘brother’ or a ‘sister’ or a ‘father’ or a ‘mother’ to the other.” Pompey’s solidarity has been prophylactic to the progress of Kaye’s managerial skill. He is not preoccupied with the continuity of the family line like Shona men in T. Dangarembga’s *Nervous Conditions* as K. N. Brindou (2019, p. 670) puts it: “in Shona community, patriarchy is preoccupied with the continuity of the family line.”

If Pompey undertakes comradeship with Kaye, Kaye in return does not fail to bring her solidarity to Mara. Key expresses a womanish attitude toward Mara. A. Walker's (1984, p. xi) concept of "Acting womanish" refers to women who act as mothers or comrades to female children. Being the manager of Peepy sex club, Kaye is from a different class from Mara who is a sex worker who gives to Akobi the money she earns. But Kaye does not consider herself superior to Mara. She rather helps her in the struggle against sex exploitation. Mara voices that as Kaye helps her lay a careful plan: "before five weeks was up I was ready with my cash I eventually got the blessed stamp of a five-years resident's visa in my passport" (A. Darko, 1995, p. 120). In this vein, D. S. Williams (2006, p. 121) asserts: "Class hierarchy does not dwell among women who love struggle." Due to Mara's economic power, she rapidly gets her resident papers that facilitate her stay in the host country. Mara shows that women are relegated to the subordinate position because they do not implicate themselves in the economic system. The power that people gain through economic wealth as conveyed by Mara is given more credence by A. Appiah (2020, p. 156) when he paraphrases Mathew 6 verse 33 in the Bible: "Seek first the kingdom of economy and then all shall be given to you."²

As women become entrepreneur in Germany, they invest in their home country. In her conversation with Mara, Kaye voices:

My people back home now have everything they want, Mara I keep them satisfied that way and keep my peace here. And though I don't ever intend to return to them again, they don't know because I haven't told them. And I won't ever tell them. I just let them go on thinking I'll return one day. The hope alone keeps them cheerful, so I won't destroy it for them. (A. Darko, 1995, p. 117)

Kaye contributes to the development of her community in Africa. In addition, her vision is to keep the family tight. She conveys that "migration to the developed West is a relief from the economic discomfort of Africa" (T. Ojaide, 2012, p. 37). Like Kaye, Mara's economic accomplishments in Germany make her be a community builder. She eloquently describes her own contribution in the following terms:

I am also financing a cement-block house for my mother in the village. They say that it has raised her esteem so much that it has even won her back my father. Trust my father! But I am pleased for her. I have issued instructions to them to find a small cement house in town which I can buy for my two kids (A. Darko, 1995, p. 140)

² "Chercher d'abord le royaume économique et tout vous sera donné par la suite" (A. Appiah, 2020, p. 156).

Mara invests for the development of her community in Ghana. She makes African women home builders. Mara and her female relatives do not fail to achieve self-fulfillment as T. Houndjo and R. Allamagbo (2019, p. 5672) contend when they write: “There always is a feeling of incompleteness about Amma Darko’s female characters as they often succumb to the too deep wounds inflicted by their male predators.” They rather achieve a perfect self-actualization. Only, their self-actualization takes the image of, as (D.M. Ugwanyi, (2017, P. 52) writes,

the African woman on her road to self-actualization is not interested in battling with men neither is her preoccupations those of unhealthy rivalries and competition with men. The African woman is interested in self enhancement and ... ready to be heard, to be seen and fitted in all positions previously occupied by men in order to assume equality.

Women in the novel gain their place to “the human norm whose characteristics include: intelligence, rationalism, adventure and creativity; and that precisely in accordance with Frantz Fanon’s concept of self-fulfilling prophecy” (D. M.Ugwanyi,2017, Pp.50–51).Arguably, with women’s economic and diasporic investment, that is, migrants who “build communities, [by] expressing themselves [economically]” (K. Kenny, 2013, p. 14), the patriarchal politics of man being the sole community builder is *passé*. Sophisticating themselves enough in economic investment, women gain progress in the society. In this vein, using Kwame Nkruma’s stance, C. Helen (2006, p. 366) writes: ““The degree of a country’s revolutionary awareness may be measured by the political maturity of its women.”” Like women in A. Darko’s *Beyond the Horizon*, COVID-19 acts as a womanist to dismantle the phallic society.

3- Covid-19 and the Deconstruction of Phallic Society

The stake in this section is to draw the correlation between womanist actions in *Beyond the Horizon* and COVID-19. The section shows that like women’s politics in A. Darko’s novel, the confinement and infection of COVID-19 deconstructs respectively gender and race superiority established by the male-built society.

3.1-Confinement: Covid-19’s Deconstruction of Genderism

K. Nikisha *et al.* (2020, p. E1218) write that “COVID-19-related lockdowns and economic shutdowns have drastically exacerbated violence against woman globally.” For the critics, COVID-19 causes the home to become more oppressive to women than before. For them, the home as place of safety as defined by the system of confinement of COVID-19

matches the women's patriarchal expectations. However, the critics likely neglect the positive impact of the confinement of COVID-19 on the division of labour. It is because the traditional and colonial systems drive men to thrive outside of the house that they neglect housework. Now that they are confined at home, they cannot but get the elements of their growth at home. They must take care of children and the house like women. The confinement due to COVID-19 dismantles patriarchal labour division. The United Nations (2020, p.11) give credence to such a new hierarchy between men and women in the field of labour, when the organization claims that "For families where both parents are home through this period of COVID-19 they juggle work and child care."

COVID-19 brings men whose place is in the capitalist system of production to be confined at home, traditionally qualified as the place of the weaker sex. Under the confinement measures, men known as strong sex are almost 'emasculated' in such a way that they also become the weaker sex. The confinement thus deconstructs patriarchal gender hierarchy. This way of dismantling gender hierarchy is the women's fight in *Beyond the Horizon*. In Naka village, gender hierarchy is neat. According to Mara's description,

Naka was a farming village, and Akobi's father, like most men in the village, was a farmer too ... Akobi's father educates his son Akobi at the Joseph Father of Jesus Roman Catholic school, making his son the first child of Naka to earn a Form Four General Certificate ... But one thing Akobi's father did not reckon with was that his son would refuse to return to the village and farm with him. (A. Darko, 1995, p.5)

The name of the school "Joseph Father of Jesus Roman Catholic school" is not fortuitous. Jesus as mentioned in Christian religion refers to Jesus Christ born from the woman of a poor people called the Virgin Mary. Jesus, the son of God, represents the man who institutionalizes the superiority of man. Christianity is founded upon a western patriarchal institution. The term "Father" in the name of the school institution shows that men's superiority derives from a divine 'decree'.

Akobi's education strengthens the patriarchal structure in western religion. Schooling a son rather than a daughter at the missionary is encouraged by both the traditional community and the missionary institution. If Akobi's education is accounted first by his father's politics of setting his son as provider for the family in order to ensure man's superiority, Akobi's education also occurs as the result of western politics of patriarchalizing religion in order to institutionalize male supremacy for the economic interests of colonialism. The traditional and colonial systems attribute to man a superior position by privileging him as the provider for the community. The woman's unprivileged position at home accounts for that

objective in favor of the man. But such an attempt to make man superior brought to contradiction through Mara's dismantling of labour division.

Despite Akobi's missionary education, he fails to be a provider for her community. It is Mara who is not offered the privilege to be educated in school who succeeds in providing for the community. Owing to her economic success, she "finances a cement-block house ... in the village" and "cement house in town" (A. Darko, 1995, p. 140). COVID-19 and women in *Beyond the Horizon* contradict men's superiority established by traditional and colonial patriarchies. In addition to breaking men's hegemony by confining them at home, a position that compels them to share childcare and housework with women, COVID-19 dismantles racial hegemony too.

3.2- Covid-19's Infection and the Breaking of Race Superiority

The COVID-19 pandemic does not infect people regardless of their skin colour. No race shows its superiority when the disease breaks out. L. Mdpi *et al.* (2020, p. 2) write:

Today, 31st of March 2020, based on the WHO reports, we have globally 693,224 confirmed cases and 33,106 deaths, distributed as follows: Western Pacific Region 103,775 cases and 3649 deaths, European Region 392,757 cases and 29,962 deaths, South East Asia Region 4084 cases and 158 deaths, Eastern Mediterranean Region 46,329 cases and 2813 deaths, Region of the Americas 142,081 cases and 2457 deaths and in the Africa region 3486 cases and 60 deaths.

Though the Western world has health systems better than that of the African continent, white people are the most infected by COVID-19. Thus, the pandemic presents the white race as weaker than black race. COVID-19 helps to put into question the superiority of white race. In *Beyond the Horizon* women equally tend to defeat any concept of race superiority.

In the novel, as Mama Kiosk informs Mara about her lack of time to throw the rubbish, she refers to her daughters' lack of time to accomplish this type of drag: "I never find time for it, you know. And my daughters don't, either" (A. Darko, 1995, p.10). Mama Kiosk claims the intelligence of her family to perform lucrative activities. Because the white colonizers connect black people to poverty, they believe that black people are not intelligent enough to set up and run a business. Only the white race is categorized by western philosopher as the race endowed with intelligence. K.A. Appiah (1992, p. 52) writes that in the Enlightenment period of the 18th century when western philosophers build arguments about the universality of reason, they denied intellectual "capacity to people of African descent." Notwithstanding

with their black race, Mama Kiosk and her daughters break western racial categorization by showing their intelligence through their abilities to set up economic activities. Mama Kiosk's family defeats white patriarchal politics of classism.

Like Mama Kiosk, Mara who defeats poverty, challenges colonial classification of black race as poor. Mara's being blackmailed by Akobi is first and foremost caused by racism rather than genderism. Referring to Kaye, Mara voices:

This boyfriend of hers had, like Akobi, come to Europe full of dreams. But these shattered when he realized that the amount of money he was aiming for could take years upon years to raise. He saw how other men were making fast money with their girlfriends and so he, too, invested the little he had so far saved in bringing her from home to Frankfurt. Then he coerced her into prostitution, pocketed every mark she made and kept her in the trade by blackmailing her with pictures he had clandestinely taken of her in action with different men.

'You back out today, tomorrow these pictures will be on their way back to your family at home,' he had threatened whenever she mentioned her desire to get out of the business. So for a whole year and a half Kaye worked for him. And he took all the money she made. (A. Darko, 1995: 116–117)

Like the boyfriend of Kaye, Akobi has no intention to set Mara in prostitution because she is a woman. If this were the case, he would have done so while being with her in the city in Ghana. He gets her in prostitution because he is victim of discrimination in Germany. To get a residence certificate, a job, and a decent family life in Germany are difficult for Akobi who is black. Because he is unable to overcome such racial apartheid, Akobi turns Mara into prostitution for money. Thus, the woman becomes a victim of the man's victimization. C. Hudson-Weems (2006, Pp. 52-53) expresses the woman's particular condition when he writes: "Women are victimized first and foremost because they are Blacks; they are further victimized because they are women living in male-dominated society." Racial discrimination drives Mara to include racism in her resistance. Her solidarity with Kaye not only helps her break race marginalization as she gets her residency papers but also break Akobi's sexism as she escapes his domination. Gitte in *Beyond the Horizon* does not develop a politics to contradict racial domination in the way that COVID-19 and African women have done. Indeed, as a German woman, Gitte does not experience racism. Such a "race and race biases are the key issues for non-Whites and must be resolved even before gender issues if there is any hope for human survival." (C. Hudson-Weems, 2006, p.42).

CONCLUSION

The scrutiny of *Beyond the Horizon* in the age of COVID-19 through the lens of womanism has helped demonstrate that African women and COVID-19 act to deconstruct the traditional and western patriarchies. The dismantling of race and gender superiorities common to COVID-19's confinement and infection, and women's philosophy in *Beyond the Horizon* are similar in meaning in this sense. The confinement measures imposed on people due to the current pandemic, challenge men's posture as the strong sex, and put into question the traditional labour division. Men now share house chore with women. The dismantling of labour division breaks gender hierarchy, an objective that women in *Beyond the Horizon* reach by subverting traditional and colonial expectations and labour divisions. Living in a traditional society at the time of colonisation, the women characters who become active workers outside the home, respectively challenge polygamous marriage and labour division. The investigation has also proved that COVID-19 infects people regardless of race, and it does not guarantee any superior race. This defeat of racial hierarchy is also a fight that women in *Beyond the Horizon* win. Definitely, the womanist characters in *Beyond the Horizon* act in the same way as COVID-19 in that they deconstruct traditional and colonial patriarchies and build a new world order.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- AMOO-ADARE, Epifania Akosua.(2006), "Critical Spatial Literacy: A Womanist Positionality and the Spatio-temporal Construction of Black Family life (2004)", *The Womanist Reader*, Ed. Phillips Layli, New York, Routledge, 437, Pp. 347–358.
- APPIAH, Adou. (2020), *Syndicalism et Gestion des Conflicts de Travail: La Greve et la Négociation*, France, La Doxa.
- APPIAH, Kwame Anthony.(1992), *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture*, New York, Oxford University Press.
- BRINDOU, Koffi Noel. (2019), "Gender Otherness and Melancholia in Dangarembga's Novels", *Discourse and Representations of Alterity in Contemporary World*, Ed. Kouame Adou and Zorobi Philippe Toh, 1^{ère} édition, Abidjan, Nouvel Edition Balafons, 2019, Pp.667–781.

- COATES, Ta-Nehisi. (2015), *Between the World and Me*, Spiegel & Grau, New York.
- DARKO, Amma. (1995), *Beyond the Horizon*, England, Heinemann.
- DU BOIS, W.E.B. (2007), *The Souls of Black Folk*. 1903, New York, Oxford University Press.
- HAMLET, Janice D. (2006). “Assessing Womanist Thought: The Rhetoric of Susan L. Taylor (2000)”, *The Womanist Reader*, Ed. Phillips Layli, New York, Routledge, 437, Pp.213–231.
- HELEN, Charles.(2006), “The Language of Womanism: Rethinking Difference (1997)”,*The Womanist Reader*, Ed. Phillips Layli, New York, Routledge, 437, Pp. 361–378.
- HOUNDJO, Théophile and ALLAMAGBO, René-Kinée,(2019). “Mara's Rising from Total Submissiveness to Absolute Emancipation in Beyond the Horizon by Amma Darko”, *The International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Invention* Vol. 6. No. 10, Pp.5663 - 5673.
- HUDSON-WEEMS, Clenora. (2006), “Africana Women (1993)”, *The Womanist Reader*, Ed. Phillips Layli, New York, Routledge, 437, Pp.44–54.
- HUDSON-WEEMS, Clenora. (2006), “Cultural and Agenda Conflicts in Academia: Critical Issues for Africana Women’s Studies (1989)”, *The Womanist Reader*, Ed. Phillips Layli, New York, Routledge, 437, Pp.37–43.
- JAMES, King.(2006), *The Holy Bible*, Nashvill, Homan Bilble.
- KAMMAMPOAL, Bawa. (2017), “Womanist Discourse from Margin to Center: A Critical Analysis of Amma Darko's Beyond the Horizon”, *The Archivers Journal* Vol. 3. No.4, Pp.1–20.
- KENNY, Kevin. (2013). *Diaspora: A Very Short Introduction*, New York, OxfordUniversity Press.
- LAYLI, Phillips.(2006), “Womanism: On its Own,” *The Womanist Reader*, Ed. Phillips Layli, New York, Routledge, 437, Pp. xix–lv.
- LEE, Wenshu.(2006), “Kuaering Queer Theory: My Autocritography and a Race-Conscious, Womanist, Transnational Turn (2003)”, 437, Pp.327–346.

- MBEMBE, Achille.(2001), *On the Postcolony*, Berkeley, University of California Press.
- MDPI, Licensee *et al.* (14 April 2020), “Coronavirus Diseases (COVID-19) Current Status and Future Perspectives: Anrative Review,” *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17, 2690, p.1–11.
- MILIBARI, Albaraa A. (2020), “Current Situation of Coronavirus Disease: (Covid-19) Review Article”,*Health Science Journal*, Sp. Iss 1: 005, Pp.1–4.
- MINH-HA, Trinh T. (1997), “Mother’s Talk”, *The Politics of (M)othering: Womanhood, Identity, and Resistance in African Literature*, Ed. Obioma Nnaemeka, London, Routledge, Pp.26–32.
- NEWELL, Stephanie. (2006), *West African Literature: Way of Reading*, London, OxfordUniversity Press.
- NIKISHA, Khareet *al.*(13 October2020),“Reimagining Safety in a Pandemic: The Imperative to dismantle Structural Oppression in Canada”, *CMAJ*, Vol.192 issue 41, Pp. E1218-E1220.
- NNAEMEKA, Obioma. (1998), “Gender Relations and Critical Mediation: From Things Fall Apart to Anthills of the Savannah.” *Challenging Hierarchies: Issues and Themes in Colonial and Postcolonial African Literature*, Ed. Leonard A. Podis& Yakubu Saaka. New York, Peter Lang, Pp.137–160.
- OGUNYEMI, Chikwenye Okonjo. (1988), “Book Reviews”,*Research in African Literatures* Vol. 19,Pp.234-237.
- OGUNYEMI, Chikwenye Okonjo.(2006), “Womanism: The Dynamics of the Contemporary Black Femal Novel in English (1985)”,*The Womanist Reader*, Ed. Phillips Layli, New York, Routledge, 437, Pp.21–36.
- OGUNYEMI, Chikwenye Okonjo.(2014), “Womanism: The Dynamics of the Contemporary Black Female Novel in English”, *JSTOR* Vol. 11.No. 1, Pp. 63-80.
- OJAIDE, Tanure. (2012), *Comtemporary African Literature: New Approaches*, North Carolina, Carolina Academic Press.
- PEWISSI, Ataféi. (2017), *Rethinking Womanism: when difference Maps Chaos*, Ghana, Yemens Press.

- RUSSELL, Bertrand. (2005), *Authority and the Individual*, 1985, London and New York, Routledge.
- SANDERS, Cheryl J. *et al.* (2006), “Roundtable Discussion: Christian Ethics and Theology in Womanist Perspective (1989)”, *The Womanist Reader*, Ed. Phillips Layli, New York, Routledge, 437, Pp.126–157.
- SPIVAK, Gayatri Chakravorty.(1987), *In Other World: Essay in Cultural Politics*, New York and London, Methuen.
- UGWANYI, Dele Maxwell. (2017), “Subverting the Patriarchal Narrative of the Female Character in the African Novel: A Feminist Reading of Amma Darko's Novels”, *Covenant Journal of Language Studies (CJLS)* Vol. 5. No. 1, Pp.48–64.
- UNITED Nations. (9 April 2020), “Policy Brief: The Impact of Covid-19 on Women.”
- WALKER, Alice. (1984), *In Search of Our Mothers' Garden: Womanist Prose*, New York, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- WILLIAMS, Delores S. (2006), “Womanist Theology: Black Women’s Voices (1986)”, *The Womanist Reader*, Ed. Phillips Layli, New York, Routledge, 437, Pp.117–125.
- ZIMA, Peter.(2002), *Deconstruction and Critical Theory*, New York, Continuum.