

Fictionalized Representation of Space in Amma Darko's *Beyond The Horizon*

Lèfara Silue

Université Félix Houphouët-Boigny, Côte d'Ivoire
lefaras@yahoo.com

Abstract

*This study permits to understand that the living place of Amma Darko's *Beyond the Horizon* is an unstable and fragmented universe. The protagonists Akobi and Mara freely roam in three places in quest of happiness. The representation of the German urban area reveals that Europe is not the "Eldorado" where gold and money flow in abundance. Beyond the portrayal of Akobi, Darko satirizes and denounces the bestiality of African immigrants in Germany. These African immigrants ask their wives to join them in Europe where they are used as sex-workers. In the text, the urban area and the rural living place are two contradictory and complementary universes. Germany is then seen as a symbol of the world of immorality whereas Naka is depicted as a symbol of African solidarity.*

Keywords: space, depersonalization, immigrants, immorality, micro-environment, universe.

Résumé

Cette étude permet de comprendre que l'espace vécu de Beyond the Horizon d'Amma Darko est un univers instable et fragmenté. Les personnages Akobi et Mara se vagabondent librement dans trois espaces en quête du bonheur. La représentation de l'espace urbain allemand démontre que l'Europe n'est pas « l'Eldorado » où l'or et l'argent coulent en abondance. Au-delà de la représentation Akobi, Darko critique et dénonce la bestialité des immigrés africains en Allemagne. Ces immigrés africains vont partir leurs femmes en Europe où elles utilisées comme des travailleuses du sexe. Dans le texte, L'espace urbain et l'espace rural sont deux univers qui s'opposent et se complètent. Ainsi, l'Allemagne est perçue comme un symbole du monde de l'immoralité alors que Naka est décrit comme un symbole de la solidarité africaine.

Mots-clés: espace, dépersonnalisation, immigrés, immoralité, micro-environnement, univers.

Introduction

Amma Darko is a famous Ghanaian female writer. Her novel *Beyond the Horizon* (1995) is about the plight of a Ghanaian lady, Mara in Germany. Mara has been deceived by her husband, Akobi, into coming to Europe to live in a paradise. When she reaches Germany, she realizes that she is trapped by her beloved one. She is then forced to become a sex worker in order to meet the expectations of her village Naka. Their journey from the village (Naka) to the city (Accra) and their illegal immigration in Germany reveals the importance of the theme of space in Darko's novel. As such, the study of space and its representations are necessary for a better understanding of the quintessence of any literary work. In Gérard Genette's view the understanding of a text depends on the understanding of the "resources known as visual written forms and pagination of the existence of the book as a sort of complete object" (Genette, *Figures II*, 1969, p.45, translation mine). The reader must pay attention to the "telescopic" feature of the novel. Furthermore, each novel has a specific map which gives it a particular tone. By implication, the writer is bound to place the plot and the characters in a true imaginary space. The literary conception of "carnival" space and time is ambivalent and it comprises two different principles: a destroyer principle which destroys the established order and a regenerator principle which turns its look towards the better future of man (Collington, 2006, p.69). The living place is made of the spaces of representation. In other words, it comprises all the spaces known through images and symbols (Westphal, 2007, p.128). In a novel, the plot can take place in a unique place. The plot can also continue its performance in several places or it can scatter in every horizons. In this perspective, Goldenstein asserts that "spatiality presents diverse dimensions of opening. One finds a limited, a closed or a suffocating space when the plot and the characters use an open place which enables the heroes to move freely, to travel or to wander" (1989, p.90). In this regard, the living space is then the place of revelation of the protagonists' desires and intentions. This is the reason why Akobi easily moves in three opposed imaginary places. The village (Naka) represents a "micro-universe" which is utterly different from the urban area. In this view, the fictitious Ghanaian city is also different from the European environment. Every space is then unique in its kind and plays a specific social role. Moreover, the strolling of the characters in different places permits to understand the discontinuity or instability of the living places of Darko's narrative. The aim of this paper is to show that space can have a great impact on the actions and the words of characters in a literary work. In our analysis, semiotic criticism will be used because in the mind of the semiotics, the meaning of events, codes and cultural incidents, verbal and visual texts, songs and advertisements and all types of literary pieces are represented by codes, signs and symbols. Semiotics helps us to analyze the ways various verbal and nonverbal discourses convey meaning to our interlocutors (Agyekum, 2006, p. 123). As such, our work will center on three points: the rural living place of Naka, Akobi's slum in the Ghanaian city and German urban area.

1- The Rural Living Place of Naka

In traditional African society, the village is a symbol of paramount importance. It is regarded as the first unity which transcends the family and the clan. In this sense, the narrator introduces Naka at the very beginning of the novel. In the narrative, Naka is the birthplace of the protagonists Akobi and Mara. Darko uses the image of Naka as a pretext to re-present the Ghanaian village in the subconscious of the reader. The Ghanaian village, Darko depicts is made of several important families or "macro-universes" which harmoniously and peacefully

coexist. This peaceful cohabitation constitutes the backbone of the village's social peace. The narrator refers to Naka through the use of the noun "village" which places us in the rural imaginary environment. As such, farming appears as the daily activity of the men of Naka:

Naka was a farming village, and Akobi's father, like most men in the village, was a farmer too. [...] one thing Akobi's father did not reckon with was that his son would refuse to return to the village and farm with him. Akobi had other plans. He had tasted town life and was craving to further it to city life. And returning to Naka to become a farmer like all the rest who hadn't been to school at all, or even as undertaker like his father, was for him out of the question. Naturally, his father was very disappointed for he was looking forward to the help of the son he had invested so much in, but Akobi successfully convinced him of the urgency of his intentions, of how he wanted to get on in life which was by no means possible if he returned to live in the village. That was how, with his father's reluctant blessing, Akobi left Naka to go and live in the big city. (pp. 4-5)

This passage clearly reveals that the lives of Naka's men are strictly linked to their land. Consequently, farming is not perceived as a chore or a punishment but it is rather seen as the "raison d'être" of men. Akobi's refusal to work in the farms of his father is the first forerunner sign of the family crisis in the traditional universe. The reader can see beyond this crisis, a questioning of the patriarchal ruling system which privileges men to the detriment of women. In this patriarchal society, women are regarded as second zone beings. As such, they do not participate in the decision-making which involves the life and survival of the village. The narrator talks about Mara's forced marriage as followed:

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 hut and breathlessly told me that the 'good news'. 'Your father has found a husband for you', she gasped, 'a good man!' (p. 4).

The unconscious of the text suggests that the heroine Mara does not participate in her marriage affair. This behavior of Mara can be explained by the fact that in Naka's collective consciousness marriage is a business of the Aged. This is the reason why every man is bound to find a wife to his son and a husband to his daughter. In the text, Mara's mother is very happy to see her husband perpetuating an old social practice. The enthusiasm of Mara's mother lets appear the debasement of women to their husbands. In the rural environment of Naka social facts play a significant part in the maintenance of harmony and "class division" (John Urry, 2005, p. 23). As such, cultural facts and social events are metaphorically the ideological tools used by the men of Naka to dominate women and to preserve their power.

In the narrative, the reader also sees through the representation of Naka, the image of post-independence African society. The living place of Naka is then an image of contemporary Africa which is corroded by the strife between modernity and tradition. In this social anomy, the village symbolizes hope, hospitality and shelter for town dwellers. Akobi always refers to his village whenever he needs financial assistance to survive in the Ghanaian referential capital Accra:

So he was soon back in Naka to borrow money from his father [...] The money he went borrowing from his father, he saved, and he set about searching for cheap accommodation compatible with his pocket. Several weeks later, with his heart torn in two, he showed up unexpectedly in Naka. (p.6)

Here, space implicitly expresses different social crisis and social contradictions linked to the behaviors of social actors (Sidibé Valy, 1999, p. 96). It is through the representation of the village of Naka that Darko reveals her ideology and Ghanaian traditional world view. Furthermore, Naka is seen as the ideal place of the enactment of the village's collective consciousness. This conception of the village can be justified if one regards the Ghanaian traditional village as "men living place and primitive ideological and religious unit" (Anozie, 1970, p. 93). Beyond farming, every man plays a particular social role which contributes to the protection of social cohesion. In this view, Akobi's father can be perceived as a village undertaker:

[...] Akobi's father, like most men in the village, was a farmer too. But unlike most men in the village, he was also an undertaker. And people feared him because he was a man who seldom issued threats but pitilessly carried out those he issued. A man who once shocked the entire village and beyond when he threatened to give the dying chief's linguist a 'banana funeral' because the old man owed him eight shillings and sixpence, and who, true to his word, presented the corpse on the funeral day wrapped in two large banana leaves. (p.4)

The above passage clearly shows the rapid change of the traditional elite into an unscrupulous business man in the rural area embodied by Naka. Akobi's father is seen in the text as a neurotic who regards money as the essence of life. As such, he trampled down all the cardinal values which strongly hold the imaginary space of Naka in harmony with its environment and its deities. The respect of the dead has no room in the imaginary corrupt Ghanaian society. Thus, the refusal of Akobi's father to bury the dead of the clan with dignity reveals the malice of the thirsty for power vis-à-vis the dead. Akobi's father is also parodied as an opportunist who takes advantage of the woe of his kinsmen to make money. He uses the pandemic of cholera as an alibi to extort money from the villagers. The narrator refers to the rampant corruption of the fictitious Ghanaian society when he asserts:

And when a nasty outbreak of cholera followed in the village, claiming the lives of many and increasing his income as the only undertaker, he earned even more respect for using the money to educate 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. Of course, snide remarks were uttered that he was benefiting from the deaths of people, but who cared? The point was that his son had studied and got a certificate. They stood out in the village crowd and were held in high esteem. (p.5)

The analysis of this paragraph suggests that Akobi's father is the prototype of the Ghanaian traditional elite who uses his social status to abuse and blackmail the people. The increase of the undertaker's working time against the will of the villagers can be read as a form of corruption. This violation of tribal law by the custodian of tradition reveals the evil side of Ghanaian traditional aristocracy. In this fractured Ghanaian society, blackmail, corruption and cheating become fighting and protecting tools against the Establishment.

Every villager knows that Akobi's father does not give a damn to the squalor of Naka's inhabitants. The appearance of money in the rural area destroys Ghanaian and African togetherness. Consequently, the solidarity and unity which constitute the very lever of community life have vanished. This depersonalization of man in the rural area will be followed by the study of Akobi's slum in the Ghanaian city.

2- Akobi's Slum in the Ghanaian City

The analysis of Akobi's living place in the city is very important because as Michaël Hayat highlights, "the plot of a narrative creates an imaginary geography which portrays a real translation through interior space" (2002, p. 170). In this respect, the knowledge of Akobi's living conditions can also help the reader to understand the daily predicament of African immigrants in Europe. In the narrative, life in the urban place is totally different from the one of the rural area. When Akobi arrives in the capital Accra, he realizes that "all that glitters is not gold". In this view, the narrator asserts that "life in the city, Akobi soon realized, was not the glamorous days and nights he had seen in his dreams. Reality hit him and hit real hard (p.5)." The urban living place changes into alienation or self-destruction place for city dwellers. The narrator depicts the living place of Akobi as follows:

To say I was shocked when Akobi brought me to his home in the city would be an understatement. I was stunned. Our homes in the village were mud and leaves but no one needed to tell a visitor they were homes. Akobi had to tell me this was his home before I believed it. First, there wasn't the group of huts with compounds about them and backyard gardens that I was used to in the village, but 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 flat 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 dump. (p.8)

This paragraph suggests that Mara has come to stay with her husband Akobi in the Ghanaian capital, Accra. However the "paradise" of she dreamt about suddenly becomes a nightmare. The happiness of Mara to live the city turns into sourness. Mara is extremely shocked because Akobi lives in a shanty town ranging the capital. The architecture of the rooms is indescribable. Mara prefers life in the huts of Naka built with traditional materials. She dislikes the shacks built with bricks and covered with rotten and corrugated-iron sheet. Here, the urban area is a place of insecurity, insalubrity and pimping. Moreover, Mara ironically compares the accommodations of Akobi's suburb with hen houses. The closeness of the rubbish dump, waste waters and man waste with the accommodations exposes the dwellers of these dirty slums to dangerous diseases like cholera, fever and typhoid fever.

The insalubrity of Ghanaian urban environment permits to see the social class of the owners of the slums. In the text, all the barracks of this suburb belong to a so-called Alhaji. The pseudonym Alhaji, enables the reader to understand that only strangers coming from west Africa live in this suburb. These foreigners have come to make money in Accra. They then

live in filthy places of the capital in order to save their money. The poor image of Akobi's quarter explains the plight of the majority of Ghanaians in Darko's novel. As such, the city is portrayed as a place which comprises good and evil. The city or the urban environment is perceived as a source of happiness and sadness. It is also a place of self-knowledge and self-alienation. The depersonalization of the heroine's Mara in the urban universe can be seen in the following words of the narrator:

I, illiterate Mara, had turned into a modern woman, body and soul; a caricature pseudo-Euro-transformation that brought with it its caricature pseudo-high feel. I felt a new me. Much against my will, however (since I considered it incompatible with this new 'modern' and 'civilised' me), I visited the village medicine man a few days before my departure on the insistence of my mother. (p. 55)

In this extract, Mara regards her mental and physical alienation as a social success. This metamorphosis of the heroine can be seen through her ways of acting, dressing and speaking. Mara is very proud of her new social status of "emancipated woman" or so-called "European woman". Despite, the beauty of Accra, Mara considers the city as a kind of prison. The living place of Darko's text is then a stressing and suffocating one as seen in this paragraph:

Our room itself was just large enough for Akobi's dried-grass mattress, an old three-legged centre-table whose missing fourth leg had been substituted by a high pile of cement brick pieces, and an armchair. In one corner was Akobi's one and only portmanteau and my one and only wicker basket that served as my portmanteau. From one corner to the opposite corner was a short drying line on which Akobi always hung his grey trousers, white shirt and black tie that constituted his daily office wear, while below it his Beatles boots found their resting place. They were his pride. (pp.9-10)

Here, the poor living conditions of Akobi can be seen through the small size of his room. This room has very few things: a "dried-grass mattress", an "old three-legged table" falling apart, an "armchair", one "portmanteau", a "grey trousers," a "white shirt" and a "black tie". In the description of Akobi's living place each object of his room is mentioned once. As such, each element is then unique in its kind. The quality of the described furniture and the cloths is undesirable. Beyond this description, the narrator lays bare the misery of Akobi. The described room is compared to the accommodation of a single man or an unstable being in quest of his social references. Regarding the different elements mentioned in the above description, we note that the small size of Akobi's living place is an expression of difficult life in the city. By implication, the cohabitation of the couple seems to be much tensed. In a way, Akobi and Mara are deprived from their freedom of movement like prisoners. The precariousness of their accommodation is marked by the daily ill-treatment the "crazy husband" Akobi inflicts on Mara. The narrator highlights Mara's predicament when he argues:

'From now on you will throw Mama Kiosk's rubbish away for her and she will pay you with foodstuffs and vegetables. And since that means you need not go to the market often, I can also save by cutting down on the daily chop money I give you, you understand?' 'Yes' I replied, shaking all over. 'And sleep on your mat today. I

want to sleep on the mattress alone' he added. He hopped into bed. Seconds later, he was snoring away. I lay there on the mat spread on the hard floor, trying to tolerate the mice and cockroaches, my eyes wide open. I lay there like that until the first rays of the morning sunlight streamed through. (pp.11-12)

The analysis of this passage shows that the city is a place of social contradictions. In this imaginary "microcosm" without social norms, self-centeredness is the best way of life. It is for this reason that Akobi benefits from the submission and the naivety of Mara. He exploits and ill-treats her as he wants. Akobi undervalues Mara when he forces her to work for Mama Kiosk against food. Akobi accepts this underrating of his wife in order to save her daily food ration. As such, Mara is perpetually traumatized by Akobi. Mara trembles like a dead banana leaf whenever her husband Akobi calls her. Akobi has no consideration for his wife Mara. To show his bestiality, he compels her to sleep on the bare floor where she becomes a prey for mice, cockroaches and mosquitoes. The weight of suffering, humiliation and beating provoke in Mara's mind a yearning for returning home:

The situation was utterly depressing, the more so because I had yet to make friends with the occupations of the other shelters. 'And even though the thought of returning to the village crossed my mind, I knew it was something I could never do. Not only would I not be welcomed back into the family, but father would never be able to afford to refund my dowry, much he'd already squandered. So, come what may, I was stuck with the flies and the blood-sucking war the mosquitoes had declared on us. I was soon to discover that these would not be my only headache. (pp. 8-9)

This paragraph reveals that Mara's intention is mainly to return home. However, she knows that her father will never accept such a sudden change of the situation. Her father will not be able to refund Akobi's dowry. Mara finally decides to cope with her plight alone. As such, Mama Kiosk draws Mara's attention to the disastrous situation she is undergoing in the Ghanaian capital, Accra. In this view, Mama Kiosk tries to convince her to start selling boiled eggs. As the narrator puts it:

It was Mama Kiosk who suggested that I should take up hawking boiled eggs to travellers at the lorry station where she had her kiosk because it was a very popular snack with them. And when in the end no better alternative cropped up, I went to Akobi with this hint. He agreed that it was worth a try, and gave me the capital for my first batch of eggs plus the sieve container.[...] I began enjoying my trade very much and daily thanked Akobi in my head that he made me start work at all. (pp.18-19)

As revealed in the above extract, the urban area and its social realities force the heroine Mara to fight for her freedom and financial autonomy. In this sense, the selling of boiled eggs sets Mara free from the daily tension of their miserable single room. Every morning, she goes earlier to the lorry station where she sells her eggs. The different movements she daily performs between her living place and the lorry station help her to recover from the ill-treatment of Akobi. She then feels free whenever she is outside their house. Thus, the trade of eggs can be perceived as a source of liberation and unity for the couple who live in this very small single room like a hen house of Naka. In the text, the living

place is seen as fragmented place. In this perspective, the third part of our paper deals with German urban area.

3- German Urban Area

The fictionalized German universe of the text belongs to European referential space. In African unconsciousness, Europe is portrayed as a terrestrial paradise totally reserved to African wealthy leaders.

Europe to me was a place so special and so very, very far away, somewhere unimaginable, maybe even somewhere near Heaven, where not just anybody could go. A place where only the rich, those Ministers, the big doctors and lawyers who learned plenty of books and married white women could go. But Akobi? My own husband Akobi with this his two-by four corrugated-iron-sheet home situated by a public toilet and rubbish dump? (pp. 33-34)

In this paragraph, Mara considers Europe as a kind of “Eldorado” where African ministers, famous doctors and lawyers usually go to spend their holidays. Mara cannot imagine that poor people also live in this European referential “macro or micro-environment” (John Urry, 2005, p.89). This is the reason why she is very delighted when her husband Akobi informs her about her departure in Europe. “‘I am going to Europe to live there for just a year or two at most’ he began, and to work. Mara, do you know that there is so plenty factory and construction work waiting to be done there in Europe.” (p.34). Akobi brainwashes her parents into believing that job is waiting African immigrants in Europe. He illegally joins Germany in order to flee from the misery which corrodes contemporary Ghanaian society. Years later, he invites his wife Mara to come and stay with him in Germany. When Mara reaches Germany, she realizes that the brand image of Europe which African people can see through the press is a false representation of European social reality. In this paragraph, Osey words show that the urban space of Germany is a universe where xenophobia has become a social practice.

‘Mara, first we must tell you that life here in Germany for us black people, from Africa especially, is very very hard. In the eyes of the people here, we are several shades too black for their land. And many, not all, but many, don’t like us, because for them we are wild things that belong in the jungle. I told you they call us monkeys, didn’t I?’ [...] ‘Okay, resumed Osey, ‘it is like this: the German people, or at least those who represent them, don’t want too many of us here in their country, so they do all they can to make things very difficult for us, so that we will feel humiliated and think of returning to our homeland as a palatable alternative. Do you understand?’ (pp.76-77)

In this extract, we notice that the living conditions of African immigrants in Germany are very miserable. Furthermore, Germans treat Africans with contempt. They use the noun “monkeys” to refer to African immigrants. As such, Africans are compared to beats (monkeys) which live in German urban zone. The text also suggests that foreigners are considered as a serious threat for the social security of Germans. In addition, the qualified young Germans without job regard African immigrants as a main cause of their plight. To cope with international economic crisis, European political leaders put into force drastic measures to stop the massive coming of Africans in European. In this passage, Osey’s words show that African immigrants are not always welcomed in Europe:

‘Okay, Mara, let me put it this way. One or two monkeys about the civilized man’s house are acceptable, but when the monkeys send for their long line of relatives and friends, the “civilized” house owner begins to react. He is prepared to tolerate one or two monkeys about his house, even be kind to them to show what a good heart he has. But when the monkeys too get taken in by his pseudo-kindness and, encouraged by it, send for the others, the “civilized” man shows his real face. And it’s almost never a pleasant face, Mara. Do you get me?’ (p.76)

In a way, this text is an expression of Germans’ contempt vis-à-vis African immigrants. These immigrants are regarded as savages who pollute the peaceful atmosphere of Germany. By implication, their presence in this referential space provokes a real problem of cohabitation. African immigrants create transitional solutions to fight against xenophobia, hatred, poverty and humiliation. They use unusual methods to avoid the law against illicit immigration: organized prostitution, marriage on measure, illegal polygamy, stealing and falsehood. Additionally, the German living place reveals itself as a world of immorality. Mara’s reaction to the pornographic film highlights the bestiality of African immigrants in Europe:

The people on the screen, they were...that is to say, they were several men and women all together, about fifteen or so, among them, black women, Africans; and they were doing it there...there on the screen! They were actually doing the thing plain plain there on the screen before everybody. And there was no trace of shame or whatever on their faces. Not one bit! It was a shock for me, my first shock, my first horror. And yet, my first lesson too. It began to dawn on me that I was in a complete new society where the values were different from those at home. [...] Here, action film à la Osey, was raw obscenity. (pp. 61-62)

Here, Osey compels Mara to watch pornographic films. The lewd pictures of this film enable Mara to see German urban area as a place of self-destruction or self-alienation. Mara is then astonished to see African women who enjoy having sex with many men at the same time in the open air. As seen in these pornographic films, Africans women play very significant roles without fear or shame. This film can be regarded as a kind of initiation for sexology courses which Osey intends to implant in Mara’s mind. The objective of this movie is to prepare Mara’s mind to the working process of sex industry. Akobi turns Mara against her will into a “sex worker”. Osey’s wife Vivian helps Mara to better understand the role of African women in Germany. The unvoiced comment of Vivian’s words shows that African immigrants use fraudulent ways to bring their African wives in Europe where they used as sexual slaves. Vivian tries to encourage Mara to accept a position in the industry of sex when she asserts:

‘Mara, our life here is very hard, you know. But how can I return home empty-handed? It was Osey who made all the arrangements for me to come here. My brothers and my family only contributed to my fare. And you know the plenty money that goes into the passport. I came here full of hope and found that here, too, I have to continue depending wholly on Osey. He makes every arrangement and simply gives me orders. Even the money that I make, he controls it. I can’t buy anything without his consent, not even for my own mother at home.’

‘You work?’ I asked.

‘If what I do can be call work, then yes, I work’

‘Where do you work? What do you do? I asked.
‘I can’t tell you. Osey strictly forbids me to.’
Please, ‘I begged. ‘I won’t tell him you told me.’
‘No’, she replied firmly. And I knew that she wouldn’t tell me unless Osey ordered her to do so.

In this paragraph, German space is depicted as a world of evil where African immigrants use their wives as a means of exchange to cope with poverty. Here, Vivian is seen as a sexual object which Osey proposes to men to satisfy their sexual appetite against money. Osey believes that he can even decide the death of his wife Vivian.

Conclusion

At the end of this study, we realize that space can have a great impact on the actions and behaviors of characters. The living place of Amma Darko’s *Beyond the Horizon*, is an unstable and fragmented universe. This fragmentation of space compels the heroine Mara and her husband Akobi to travel in three different living places: the rural living place of Naka, Akobi’s slum in the Ghanaian city and German urban area. These different fictionalized places play specific social functions in the plot. Furthermore, all these spaces of representations full of imaginary and symbolism are originated from the history of the people (Lefèbvre, 1980, p.52). Amma Darko uses the representation of space to depict the bribery, the malice and the bestiality of African immigrants in Europe. Amma Darko through her narrative tries to break into pieces the patriarchal ruling system. She employs a highly subjective female standpoint which is expressed through verbal violence or language which is deflationary and condemnatory of men, including insults and curses. Mara’s realization to resist ideology is animated by her recognition of the loss of her dignity (Umezurike, 2015, p.157). Amma Darko’s text is then a quest for the restoration of women dignity and a yearning for cultural identity and democracy.

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