society, its potential to move forward, grow, and contribute. The space of the bakery is disrupted not only by the war in the film's prehistory, but also by the disruptions of globalization symbolized by the bakery truck. Thus the film reminds us that war and fragmentation in Chad are not solely the product of internal forces, and that even if the conflict has ended, the external influence of disruption remains in place.

Ultimately *Daratt*, as its title suggests, explores a moment of liminality, an in-between period that characterizes not only postconflict Chad, or even postcolonial Africa, but most contemporary societies, which find themselves dominated by forces of change and disruption, riven by intergenerational conflicts, destabilized by dramatic shifts in the structure of authority. It is a quintessentially postmodern film about the in-between times, the dry seasons, when things are ending and restarting. What such seasons mean, the film reminds us, can't be determined until the arrival of the next season, in a future that can't be seen from the diegetic space in which we all move. In those times it is an act of faith to believe that peace holds, that reconciliation is possible, and that sacrifices bring redemption. We are all left waiting for the rains to start and to see what they leave behind when they end.

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Dao Abdoulaye, director. *An Uncommon Woman*. 2009. 101 minutes. French with English Subtitles. Burkina Faso. Art Mattan. $245.00.

An Uncommon Woman, directed by Dao Abdoulaye, is a critical comedy about polygamy played through a familiar changing-places setup. Mina is a *femmes d'affaires* with a philandering househusband named Dominique. While she goes off to work each day, he parades younger women through the house in full view of their anxious niece/housekeeper, Naabo. Recently, Dominique has been carrying on an affair with the neighbor's wife, Aicha. The neighbor is a senior police officer whose first wife left him some time ago, taking their two children with her. The police officer's hopes for a peaceful retirement are all riding on his new young wife and her frequently highlighted "coupé-decalé" dance.

Mina catches Dominique and Aicha in the act one day but feigns ignorance of their affair. While the secret lovers are stewing in guilt and fear that they might have been discovered, Mina suddenly announces to Dominique that she plans to bring a second husband into the home. Dominique offers various arguments to dissuade her from this plan, but they are all the standard arguments that a first wife typically makes. Thus they are deeply culturally familiar and readily dismissed.

Later in the film, Sekou, the second husband, arrives at the house. He is the fresh, younger, trustworthy, and favored husband. Sekou and Mina

appear to have raucous sex at all times of the day and night. Sounds of Mina loudly squealing and moaning from behind her bedroom door form an audial contrast to her restrained sighs of appreciation for Dominique's florid love poems. Naturally, Sekou and his monopoly on Mina's attentions drive Dominique crazy, ultimately pushing him to violence. Meanwhile, at the neighbor's house, things are not well. In an effort to cover her tracks about the illicit affair, Aicha has turned the table on her husband, the policeman, and is constantly accusing him of infidelity. At the same time, a mysterious woman has been sending the policeman clues about Aicha's affair via an illiterate boy who lives on the streets. Panties, jewelry, and other personal items belonging to his wife are brought to his attention, but this officer remains in such a deep state of denial that he doesn't connect the dots until Mina writes him a note explaining exactly what has been going on. Before that moment, his colleagues at the police station have been inventing one hilarious theory after another about the case of the lacy red g-string.

Much of the second half of the film is taken up with the relationship between the first husband and the second husband. In hilarious yet poignant dialogue, they play through themes of love, jealousy, classism, generational hierarchies, infertility, and myriad other issues that can animate the dynamics of polygamous households. Through the fights between the co-husbands, the filmmaker is able to lay bare some of the challenges and inequities that are frequently found in polygamous marriages. The film seems to ask a male audience: how would you like it if that happened to you?

The film also suggests that there is a masculinist social contract that underlies gender inequality in relationships and society. In one hilarious scene, Mina arrives at the office and one of her employees starts telling her about the family meetings he holds every weekend to keep the peace among his wives and kids. Laughing along, Amina tells him about her plan to bring a second husband into the house. Suddenly the employee is not laughing anymore. Invoking tradition, culture, and the usual suspects, he insists on why it cannot, must not, be done. Why, he exclaims, if the word gets out to other women, it would cause a civil war! Mina chuckles to herself while he stares in terror at this smiling harbinger of Armageddon, who is his boss. How strong or fragile, the scene seems to ask, are the agreements that men and women make to maintain their social systems of gender inequality?

The changing places set-up is a heavy-handed approach to dealing with gender difference and inequality, but the film does deal more subtly with issues of sexuality in contemporary Burkina. For example, when Mina comes home early from work and Dominique fears that his lover/neighbor will be discovered in the marital bedroom, he begs Naabo the housemaid to back him up on a cover story. If the wife discovers the lover in their room, Naabo is to declare that she is a lesbian and that Aicha was there to have an afternoon tryst with her. Naabo refuses, but she has opened a Pandora's box of favors and debts. He reminds her of the time she went for an abortion: "Didn't I settle it without telling a word to anyone? Now that I need a

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favor, Madame refuses!" Then the scene continues with the immediate problem of Dominique's affair rather than pausing to pathologize homosexuality or abortion. It is quite rare and refreshing to find nonhysterical references to homosexuality or to abortion in West African films. On this score, the film contradicts long-standing generalizations about innate African aversions to such matters.

In other ways the film wallows in clichés. The character of Dominique, for example, is written like a cliché of a middle-class housewife. His life consists of staying at home all day, fussing emptily over his wife when she returns from work, and going out socializing with his friends. Occasionally he takes up a new Chinese exercise routine, but for the most part he is rendered as a lazy house spouse who is too lazy, in fact, to venture any farther than the neighbor's house to find a secret lover.

The film ends on a curious note. The second husband proposition was, as Dominique divined early on, just a lesson. In the closing moments, after Dominique has shot up the house and the quartier, Sekou is revealed to be nothing more than one of Mina's cousins from the village. Sekou has grown quite comfortable in Mina's lovely home and would prefer to remain and turn the ruse into reality. But Mina will have none of it. He must go back home, having accomplished the assigned mission, while she will stay in the city with her philandering husband. Dao Abdoulaye reassures us at the end that there will be no civil war of the sexes. Everything is still under control.

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Kenneth Gyang, director. *Confusion Na Wa*. 2013. 105 minutes. English, Pidgin, and Hausa. Nigeria. Cinema Kpatakpata. Streaming on Dobox.tv.

Confusion Na Wa is great fun to watch—a blast of fresh, keen air in Nigerian filmmaking and out of the ordinary in several dimensions. It comes from Nigeria's Middle Belt. Violence in Jos, where the director, Kenneth Gyang, lives, shifted the production to Kaduna. Its two big stars, Ali Nuhu (from the Hausa film industry) and Ramsey Nouah (from Nollywood), appeal to Nigeria's cinematic north and south, while the ambience is that of the complex cultural mosaic of the country's center. The film is full of new talent: other members of the uniformly excellent cast are relatively unknown, as are Gyang, who is also the cowriter and coproducer, and Tom Rowlands-Rees, who produced and cowrote. (The director of photography, Yinka Edward, the third member of the production company, has shot several films for the leading directors Kunle Afolayan and Izu Ujukwu; he was a classmate of Gyang's at the National Film Institute in Jos.) The production is strikingly young in its personnel, subject, and outlook, and it springs from