

« Dark on Dark »

49 s

- It wasn't your university, we met at my university, at my law school when you were at Le Mirail University.
- I was at Le Mirail.
- Well I asked you something and suddenly everything started. Then I said let's go to my place... and you actually saw where I was staying. Then we didn't see each other for two, or three, even four years...
- More like four years...
- Four years without seeing each other and you recognized me even if I had changed. And this really... I thought this guy is not someone who looks... His eyes are real cameras. They don't forget. He's a filmmaker, he has no eyes, he only has cameras. Even in his life, anything he sees is a scene. He doesn't need cinema to understand what is a scene. Because everyday is a scene. Walking is a scene, speaking is a scene, talking with someone is a scene.

- Only mountains don't meet.

04 : 21 (radio)

- *« I'm buying », single from the LP « Monkeys » will be on sale. 11.53pm, the headlines today... No massive regularisation of the position of illegal immigrants, says the Minister for Immigration Brice Hortefeux*

05 : 13 (radio)

- *... Dr Nudenman's clinic is not located in Moscow but in Ekaterinburg in the Ural area. Every year thousands of patients are welcomed from all over Russia and beyond, at prices leaving the Western clinics behind. The clinic offers all types of plastic surgery by the best specialist and in the best possible conditions. Pascal's reporting.... Facial surgery, laser treatment of the skin, liposuction, breast shaping, hair transplant, corrective surgery... you'll find it all at the Cosmetology and Plastic Surgery Centre of Ekaterinburg. In Ural's capital city, 3rd in Russia, the rise of the middle class can also be seen under the scalpels and the lasers of the surgeons. The clinic is hosted in an entirely rebuilt palace, all marble, granite, warm smiles and hi-tech. This area of Russia...*

7 min 24 s

- My wife is normal, she's a... I prefer a white, blonde woman... something like that, to calm down my anger towards everybody else. It'd be nice to be with a

- white girl.
- But you're not angry !
 - Yes I am, you dumb !
 - You're not.
 - If you think so then you don't know me.
 - Ok, I know you are. A little bit.
 - But you know I'm not angry with people.
 - But what are you angry with ?
 - I'm angry ... because I'm not known for my true worth. I don't like this.
 - Moi je la reconnais ta valeur. Mais les autres aussi ! I know your true worth. And so do many others !
 - But why don't they tell me ?
 - Because they don't want to... I don't know... Because you sit on this bench and for them it's a contradiction.
 - It's not a contradiction to sit on a bench.
 - Well you have a PhD.
 - Well I don't see the PhD... all I see...Ok, they respect me. Everybody respects me.
 - They do.
 - Even Cascas or Maghid, these guys... they know.
 - They do.
 - The Arabs or anybody else, they respect me. That's it. My wife must be a free woman, a blonde. A black woman like this one, I don't think so. Look...
 - Come on...
 - She wears fake hair... Anyway black women won't like me because I'm not rich.
 - Nor would a white woman then
 - She would...
 - No !
 - Who told you that ?
 - Well because I know them too.
 - Because they know who you are. But as they know me they don't need my ... material wealth. Because they know I'm like them, I'm white too. I'm white, I'm not black. I'm not black, not really black. I'm black but normal black.
-

10 min 20

- Do you see the moon ?
- Yeah.
- I think I live on the moon. I live on Earth but in reality I live on the moon. I don't know why. I'm a man from the moon...English people... speaking like that. They're not French, they're not intelligent. If you're not French you're not intelligent. French people are intelligent, that's why I live in France. Fuck...Fuck the radio, over.

12 min 05

- I always thought you'll know where I sleep. Because there I'm fine, no one disturbs me. I always sleep there. Where you saw me sleeping, that's where I sleep. That's very good. You passed your agrégation. You know where I sleep. As long as you know where I sleep, it's ok. We'll turn right and then that's it. I'm going to take a piss, don't film when I take a piss. I take a piss because my wife isn't here yet. The King of the Arabs, a black man who became the King of the Arabs, it's strange isn't it ? I'm the only one who can defend them, the only one. They don't know who I am, they don't even know I'm the King of the Arabs, they don't even know what's an Arab. What's in there ? Bananas, in the bin ? Shit. Potatoes, fuck my kitchen is broken, I can't cook potatoes. The King of the Arabs, I wasn't expecting that. I thought I was the King of the Blacks but actually I'm the King of the Arabs. That's strange. Why am I the King of the Arabs ? I don't know. That's it. At the end I'm the King of the Arabs.

14 min 40

- Well she said the times of power (...)

Carton du film : The times of Power, a film by Eliane de Latour, with Samna MARFA and the inhabitants of TIBIRI

Sous titre du film : Doutchi administrative center of the subprefecture, December 15th

- That's not my home, Doutchi is différent. It's a subprefecture so it's a colonial place. So in fact they got everything. Because we were independent from Doutchi but because of colonialism, because of the State power, we were administratively attached to Doutchi.
- Ok
- But not anymore, today my home is like Doutchi. Now my home is an administrative centre
- Ok
- These are the other kings of the area. Maybe he's the prefect, I don't know who was prefect at the time. You see those in plain clothes. A prefect is present. My father is there, that's him. He likes glasses.
- You wore some for a while. I saw you once with glasse.
- Yeah

- The winner is given a horse, a horse. He's my father.
- Ok
- My father.
-

20 min 49

- It means : « *Holy, holy, holy, Lord, GOD of power and might. Heaven and earth are filled with Your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna to GOD in the highest. »*
- « *Humbly we pray that, partaking of the Body and Blood of christ, we may be gathered into one by the holy spirit. remember, Lord, your church, spread throughout the world, and bring her to the fullness of charity, together with our Pope and our Bishop and all the clergy. »*
- You're filming him everyday ?
- No
- *...and all the clergy...*
- Hi.
- Are you pregnant? Are you pregnant both of you?
- *Aaaa Amen... and in him, O God, almighty Father, in the unity of the holy spirit, Aaaa Amen*

22 min 38

- Ok, I'm going to bed. I'm tired. But you know what, my friend. Five days ago I woke up with a woman. Small breasts, small arse, in bed. I thought fuck I'm back. I'm back to nothing ! She talked about witchcraft.
- Shit
- I swear she talked about witchcraft. I said I believe in witchcraft.
- I don't because I believe in God.
- If you believe in God then you believe in the Devil.
- No I don't.
- Yes, you do, you want and you don't want. If you believe in good, you also believe in evil, that's logical.
- No, for me good is everywhere.
- No !
- Well here is my different conception of things.
- Ok I keep it, I keep it apart for it's the first time I hear this. You're laughing !.
- I'm not laughing, I'm crying.
- Do you remember yesterday when you told me « I cry for you », I told you No. Even I find it hard to cry for me. I cry my faith, I cry my heart and my body.
- I see what you do.
- I cry for these people, I respect them, I like them. Yes. So that means I'm a bad person.
- No you're not. I tell you you're not. You have to keep that in mind, it's a secret.

25 min 20

- Hi bro, how are you ?
- General, hi.
- How are you bro, how are you Fouzi, hasni ?
- Captain...

30 min 20

- How are you doing ? I saw Florian yesterday, he passed by...
- I don't want to hear about this guy. Alright.
- As usual.
- He'll find another punchbag somewhere else. He's going to live at the other one's flat and then he'll strangle another one too. I don't want to hear about this guy. This scumbag. This retarded. I went to look for him... When we meet he gets mad at me.
- Well it's life as a couple.
- He's not in a couple, he exploits me. That's not the same.
- You have to be patient, that's all. You need patience.
- Right...but it's been five years he thinks I'm dumb, enough.
- Five years is something, it's a lot of time five years.
- Right...I'll find another one, don't worry. I don't need someone destructive in my life.
- No, it's going to be alright.
- Yeah... he's the idiot, the dumb guy the dumb girl is supposed to understand.

32 min 45

- That's him.
- *Samna, I'd like you to tell me about your life before you reached the Chefferie ?*
- *Ok. I don't know if you are aware that I was first in the French army. For fifteen years. While I was in the army I was deployed two times in Indochina, that is to say during the war.*
- Were you horseriding as well ?

34min 08

- All those soldiers you see here. They have supernatural powers. For example you can't hit them with iron. They use a magic spell so that the knife won't pierce them. They have a secret and they gave me a lot of things. They gave me the power against iron which means the knife can't hurt me.

34 min 58

- But what were the conclusions of your PhD in Political Science ?
- Obviously, the thesis was about the foundation of the post-colonial state in the

Sub-Saharan area in Africa. I tried, I didn't try I demonstrated how colonisation was introduced in Africa. To get a better foothold colonisers started coaxing local kings like my father for example by becoming their friends. That's what colonisers did. They became friends with the kings and the different peoples and this is why there weren't any real colonial war in Black Africa, no real colonial war. Because colonisers followed tradition. Some settlers became just like black people. Like Jean Rouch for instance. They learnt to live like African people.

- So Jean Rouch 's film « The Mad Masters » is on the same topic as your thesis ?
- Yes, it shows something. What does it show ? It shows a cultural trauma. A cultural trauma meaning they were so traumatized, weren't they, by this colonial penetration that they had to claim it as spirits. For them, all of this is like spirits. Like spirits. And that's the way they express themselves. This is what the Haukas are about.
- Yeah he talks about the Haukas.
- These is what the Haukas are about. It was a way to fight against colonial power. It really got into their minds. It got into their flesh. It got into their culture.

37min 24

- *A woman fell on the ground. Magazia, a queen of Accra's prostitutes, possessed by « Madame Salma » the wife of one of the first French officers to arrive in Niger in late 19th century. « Madame Salma » received the colonial dress and helmet. She will inspect the new governor statue. Then the lieutenant breaks an egg on the head of the governor. Why an egg ? In order to imitate the plume on British governor's helmets. For this is the real governor. At the Trooping the Color parade for the opening of Parliament in Accra. The guns blaze and in this crowd Haukas came in search of their models. And if order is different here and there, the protocol is still the same one.*

38 min42

- *You refused to tell the truth, I was assigned with showing it to you so that you could inherit. White people found me on my land...*
- *The filming crew will repeat that...*
- *Let them put it all on picture and send it to the president ! Where are the white people ?*
- *They're here !*
- *I don't talk about these ones! They're not in charge of anything ! I talk about those with power, those who remained on our land. Those who dare say*

princes, commoners and slaves are equals !

41 min 00

- This is my father there. Fuck, I'm lucky. My grandfather. That's the Mercedes. I recognize it. He used to own that Mercedes. This is my father. This is my father. I don't know if he looks like me, but he does.
- I think so. A little.
- He's here but he doesn't care about Islam, he doesn't care about prayer. He's here. He knows I'm not like this. I'm a Catholic.
- Yeah I know.
- I'm a Catholic. I'm not a Muslim. It's a shame that there are some Muslims back home.
- Your home town was in fact colonised by Muslim people ?
- It actually wasn't colonised by Muslims. They fought them. I don't know how Islam came, in a strange way. Do you get it ?
- Some of it but not all !
- My father who's here, he never was a Muslim, nor will he ever be.

43 min 57

- You saw when we watched the film on the Haukas. It's very important we started to watch Jean Rouch with the Haukas. Because...anyway the Hauka movement is religious. And I like the word Jean Rouch used to describe them as a sect. Because they are extremists. You see the commander is mean, even the doctor's wife is mean. You can see the aggressiveness they suffered from became a strength in them and then a spirituality. But how come what hurt us eventually become our food ? That's what we are. We feed on that. That's it. But to truly come back on the totality of things. Jean Rouch was indeed a pioneer, not an African cinema pioneer. African cinema doesn't exist, maybe it does today but before it wasn't cinema. It was... Before there were missionaries, explorers. He was talking about Salomon. Salomon founded the capital city of Niger. He chose this town to be the capital city. He was called Governor Salomon. This is why there is Salomon's wife and all that. These colonial representations reflect the reality of the destabilisation of a population that was its own cultural, economical and social reality. Which was also the true beginning of a meeting... Hi, how are you ?
- It was the beginning of a situational meeting. Situational meeting. We see people called Docotoros. Mrs Docotoro means Doctor. Not the charlatan or the healer but the medical doctor, in the Western meaning. Which simply means that... colonisation wasn't bad for Africa. Anyhow people have to... only mountains don't meet. This colonisation had to happen to understand each other, to move forward. Because there's no denying reality. Western people were advanced at every level. This is the truth and nobody can deny that. Still

today and even tomorrow...and still the day after tomorrow. Western people are advanced people, at every level. We got a lot out of them. Only with the Doctoro. The doctor comes, there is cholera or another disease. The doctor gives you a vaccine and it's over. So what's the problem ? This is also colonisation ! No ? Actually colonisation was always described as a civilising mission. Ok, civilising is not the correct term. Maybe it was at the time...It's true there is more than meets the eye. That is to say ... the fundamental and yet hidden reasons for which Western people came. They didn't come to give us sugar. They wanted something but colonisers forgot that we took as much from them as they wanted to take from us ! After all they didn't take anything. They gave us more than they took. It's not about cocoa or gold. They didn't take anything. What they gave is stronger than what they took. This is very important. I talk to you as someone who never was colonised. I was never colonised. Everything I do is an expression of my free...freedom. My free freedom. I don't choose, I am. I don't choose to be or not to be, I am. *It's not to be or not to be, I'm what I am, I'm that I am.* I am what I am. African people are what they are. They may be in an Arabic country, in a Chinese country or in a White country, what is true in them can never be torn apart. This is the truth. It can't be. Because, unfortunately and contrary to what people think, we are prouder than any other race. Prouder !

52 min 40

- Can you call me « my brother » ? My brother.
- I call you what I call you...
- You said you weren't my brother...well it doesn't matter, this is life.
- I was only wondering...how will you make the distinction between your intimate life and your academic life ? How do you separate them ?
- Well honestly, this is the problem ! That's it. You are my friend, you too should remain discreet !
- You think a friend should remain discreet ? I'd say the contrary maybe !
- You are my friend...You are my friend...I tell you honestly...because you never hurt me. If you hurt me once then it's over. Everything else is over. I don't accept this. You hurt me once and for me there is no problem. It stays forever in my memory. The harm you did to me remains forever in my mind. Because you hurt me where it mattered ! They're not trivial actions...You did this to me...so...I say your god is dead. I fucked your god.
- But I don't have any !
- I fucked your god, he'll never get me and he can never get me. I'm not a slave. I'd tell you more, I'm not a master's slave. And above all don't forget I'm waiting for you. I'll get them...
- What ?
- I say I'll get them !

57 min 43

- Is it the first printed version of your work ?
- Yeah
- How do you feel ?
- Well it's impressive because on the USB drive you can't see anything. Like this you can see the result.
- You mean on the computer you can't fully realize ?
- You can't, here you're facing reality.
- How many years of work ?
- Three years...three years, like the thesis.

58 min 44

- The difference with Arnaud Bernard is here there's nobody, you're alone here ?
- Nobody
- Is it a voluntary choice to come to a spot where there's nobody ?
- It's not because there's nobody. Even there I was alone at the beginning. The other people came afterwards.
- Yes but it was a public square.
- Yes it was...
- Here it's more...a non-place ! You come here every night ?
- Every night.
- And you stay until ?
- Well until I finish my bottle.
- It's a bit like your clock.
- Yes. Then I go back to town, I go begging to get food, to buy rice at the African restaurant. After that I walk, I keep moving, I look for a quiet spot where I can rest until the next day.
- Ok, so you stay up late !
- That's why I virtually don't sleep.
- You sleep in the morning.
- I virtually don't sleep. Because what's the problem ? For example, a door is not closed, you get in...immediately...It's better on the weekend, because people don't get out early. But on a working day, 7.00...7.00 am, you have to go. So what can you do ? You look for another spot. Or you go to the park, a bench on your own and you sprawl on the grass... on the bench and you stay. For a while. Then you go to the library and you work. It's been like this...It's been like this for a while !

1h 02 min 17

- If you had made films, what kind would you have liked to make ?
- Well obviously I'd like to make a western movie, of course !
- A western movie
- You see, about western movies. Why western movies ? They're like documentary films. Why documentary films ? Because they try to recount, to experience again in all possible ways the time of birth of the American people. It was a very violent, uncompromising time. Well they made sure everybody knew that.

1h 09 min 45

- What disturbs you ?
- What ?
- I said I have the feeling there's something wrong with you.
- No...
- Something wrong with you, just a comment. I assume you have other worries in your mind.
- No, I was just thinking that you never asked me questions. I asked you a lot of questions all the time... you never did...
- So when you ask me questions and I give you an answer, I send you back to your question.
- Yeah, you send it back to me.
- And like this, instantly, you think.