

HUMANITIES INSTITUTE
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***Color Coffee / Une Color Coffee* (1997)**

Henri Duparc (1941-2006)

OVERVIEW

Auteur Writer-producer Henri Duparc is a Guinean-Ivorian filmmaker. He was born on December 23, 1941 in Forécariah, Guinea, and died on April 18, 2006 in Paris. Duparc's training in filmmaking first took place in 1962, at the Cinematographic Institute of Belgrade (former Yugoslavia), then at the Institut des Hautes Etudes Cinématographiques de Paris (IDHEC), between 1964 and 1966. In 1967, Duparc worked as a producer for the Ivorian government's Société Ivoirienne de Cinéma (SIC), and when the company went defunct, Duparc created his own production company Focale 13 (later known as les Films Henri Duparc), in 1983. Duparc's work can be characterized as "cinéma naïf" in the sense that it captures and caricatures the flaws of his fellow countrymen. His first source of inspiration is Côte d'Ivoire, whose traditions and everyday life he showcases and at the same time parodies with humor. Duparc has produced a number of shorts, some documentaries, a television series, *Aya* (1986), and eight features: *Abusuan/Family* (1972), *L'Herbe sauvage/Wild Grass* (1978), *Bal poussière/Dancing in the Dust* (1988), *Le Sixième doigt/The Sixth Finger* (1990), *Une Couleur café/Color Coffee* (1997), *Je m'appelle Fargass/My Name is Fargass* (2000) and *Caramel* (2005).

Film *Color Coffee* is a satire of the life of African immigrants in France, of their resistance to integration into the French social fabric, and of their life of hustling. The film's title is derived from a compliment that an Arab young man in the film makes to a black girl to whom he is attracted. The film also casts a critical look on colonization and neo-colonization, on power and patriarchy, and exoticism, among other topics. The film was awarded the Special Jury Mention and Audience Award at the 1998 Vues d'Afrique Festival in Montreal. Gabriel Zahon (Docteur) received the Best Actor Award at the 1998 Balafon Festival, in Bari (Italy). At the 1999 Pan-African Film and Art Festival in Los Angeles, *Color Coffee* received the Audience Award.

Background *Color Coffee* is a comedic drama shot in French in the French city of Montreuil and in Côte d'Ivoire. Montreuil is named the second capital of Mali for its significant population of Malian migrants. The cast of *Color Coffee* is made up of international actors, several of whom were already established at the time of the shooting. Jocelyne Nzungo (AKA Mbembo), who plays Kada is French comedian, singer, and storyteller well-known on French TV before her role in this film. *Color Coffee* is a co-production of Focale 13, Duparc's production company, and the *Organisation internationale de la Francophonie*.

CHARACTERS

Docteur An Ivorian immigrant in France, who lives a polygamous life with his two wives, Awa and Kada
Kada Docteur's second wife, who gets pregnant by her Arab lover and eventually elopes with him
Maria Docteur's French lover and who hopes that he will marry her soon

SYNOPSIS

"Docteur", as his friends call him, is an Ivorian immigrant in France, who works in a Parisian hospital as a floor cleaner. Married to Awa for many years, the couple have no children. During a vacation in Côte d'Ivoire, Docteur marries again, choosing Kada, the daughter of a friend of his father's, on his father's advice, in the hope that she will bear him children. To facilitate Kada's entry in France, Docteur passes her off to the French authorities as his daughter and enrolls her in a French high school. In France, Kada realizes that, contrary to what he had led her to believe, Docteur is a poor struggling man who lives in a cramped, dilapidated apartment with another woman, Awa. However, Kada takes comfort in the fact that Docteur, willy-nilly, has been able to enroll her in a high school to further her education. Kada and Awa try to help

their husband with the money they make on the side, Kada by selling African art and Awa by working in a sweatshop. But Docteur does not only get help from his two wives. He also has Maria, his French lover, a nurse at the hospital where he works. Maria, who is madly in love with Docteur, whom she helps financially, knows nothing of his marital situation. She has been waiting for him to propose marriage, and to give herself a better chance, she dresses like an African woman, wears African jewels around her waist to enhance her backside, and cooks African food for Docteur. When Kada discovers that Maria is Docteur's mistress, she gets angry and decides to make him pay for his disloyalty by going out with Peter, a young Arab butcher whose advances she had rejected. Kada becomes pregnant with Peter's child, and the school summons Docteur, her supposed father, to tell him the disastrous news of "his daughter's" pregnancy. But Docteur, who believes himself to be the author of Kada's pregnancy, is so overjoyed that he forgets his lie and reveals to the school counselor that he is the father of the child Kada is expecting. The authorities arrest Docteur for incest. They are not convinced by his explanation that Kada is in fact his second wife. The false papers proving that Kada is his daughter look too genuine. Docteur and all his hustler friends, intercepted during a police raid, are repatriated to their respective countries of origin. Kada finds her real birth certificate, which she had hidden in her belongings, and runs off to make a life for herself with Peter.

SCENES

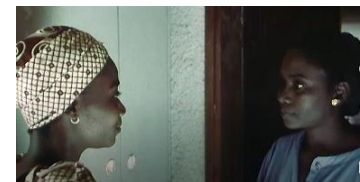
Kada is betrothed to Docteur "Docteur" works in a Parisian hospital as a floor-cleaner. Docteur says goodbye to his wife, Awa, and his friend, Sapeur, at Roissy airport in Paris. Docteur is off to Côte d'Ivoire for his vacation, but he also intends to take a second wife there. Kada's father prepares her for the arrival of Docteur. He tells her that marriage frees women from the slavery of society. He tells her that although marriage places a woman under the slavery of a man, she still finds a certain freedom at the side of her new master. He tells Kada that he has decided to give her freedom by marrying her off to his friend's son, who will soon be arriving from France. Docteur enters the village, wearing a costume and capped with an umbrella, to the mocking cheers of the children. He defends himself by chasing them away. Kada sees Docteur coming to the village store and hides behind a curtain to get a good look at him. Docteur tells Kada that in France he has a good salary and a resident card, which means that the French government knows him. He tells Kada that she belongs in Paris, not in this remote village. Kada tells Docteur that her father has a big house in the village, and that she has no intention of going to France to sleep on the grass. Docteur reassures her that he has a big house in France.



Pretending to be a daughter Docteur and Kada land at Roissy airport. Docteur instructs Kada never to reveal to the airport authorities that she is his wife. He tells her to always declare herself as his daughter. After questioning by a hostile customs official, Kada and Docteur collect their luggage and exit the airport.



Kada meets Awa In front of Docteur's building, Kada rolls her eyes. She is surprised that the houses in Paris are so dilapidated. She finds Paris to be a far cry from its reputation as a pretty city. Docteur leads Kada to his apartment, under the curious look of one of his neighbors. Awa opens the door for Docteur, happy to see her husband again. Awa's expression changes when Docteur introduces Kada as her co-wife. However, Awa greets Kada graciously and welcomes her. Kada learns from Awa that their house has only one bedroom. Kada asks Docteur how he intends to get three people to sleep in the same room. Docteur replies that the women will take turns sleeping with him in the bedroom, while the other woman will sleep in the living room on a mattress he will soon purchase.



Docteur visits Maria Docteur meets up with his French girlfriend, Maria. He tells her that he is back from vacation with his daughter. She gets upset and asks him if his reason for not being willing to have a child with her is because he already has a daughter. He reassures her that it is in fact his niece, who has been entrusted to him so that he can send her to school in France. Maria insists she wants to meet this niece. Docteur promises to introduce them soon. Docteur gives Maria some African clothes that he has had made for her, as well as beads that she has ordered to wear around her waist. Maria proudly tries on her new beaded chains. Docteur explains how much Maria means to him. He says that without her help, he would never have had a job in France and would have starved to death. Kada tells him that, in that case, Maria should come and live openly with them as his third wife, or else she will take a man. Docteur flies into a rage and says he will not sleep at home tonight. Maria gives Docteur money to buy himself a TV. She also reminds him of his promise to marry her. Docteur invites Maria to come and eat at his place on Saturday and meet his "niece" Kada. Docteur tells Maria not to forget to wear her African beads around her waist. Awa asks Docteur how he can live in Paris as if he were in his African village. She complains that they live in a basement, in a dilapidated apartment that hides the sun from them all day, and without a television to keep up with events outside. Doctor says that television shows a lot of love movies, which promote wrong ideas.



As in Africa Docteur loves Montreuil. He shows Kada around. Docteur says that Paris is hell, but Montreuil is a hell that is good to live in, because it is African. The Montreuil district where Docteur lives has been renamed "Montreuil-sur Bamako". There, white people are required by the African immigrants to have a visa if they want to enter the neighborhood.



Kada studies and works Docteur has registered Kada in a French school, passing her for his daughter. Kada is doing her homework. Docteur is in the mood for sex, and Kada is not. He wants to force himself on her. She tells him that forceful sex is forbidden by French law. Docteur gets angry and tells Kada that this is his home, this is Africa, and that he can do as he pleases. Docteur's neighbor spies on Kada and observes her comings and goings. He tells Kada that she is very pretty. Kada sells African artifacts at a stall. She also makes friends, like Fatim, a young Arab woman whose movements are controlled by her father.



Put her on the pill Maria is Docteur's guest. Maria tells Docteur that the neighbor next door thinks his niece (Kada) is very pretty. She asks Docteur to put Kada on the pill. Docteur thinks that this is a bad idea, and that if Kada gets pregnant, then it is God's will.



Yekini beats Afiba Yekini, a friend of Docteur's who sells contraband, confides in him that he has gonorrhea. Docteur asks him if he has a mistress. Yekini says no. Docteur tells him that, in that case, his wife has a lover. The next day, Yekini's wife Afiba, her eye swollen, accuses Docteur of having encouraged her husband to beat her. Docteur apologizes for his indiscretion and tells her to come to the hospital with her husband to see his friend, Doctor Diallo. The African hostel that lodges many immigrants is also a meeting place where news from the country is exchanged. Docteur finds Sapeur at the hostel reading *Fraternité Matin*, Côte d'Ivoire's state newspaper. He confesses to Docteur that he is the lover of Afiba, Yekini's wife. Docteur advises him and Afiba to go seek treatment.



Awa starts to work Sapeur finds Awa a job in a sweatshop. In class, Fatim and Kada discuss the condition of African women, who are married off at birth or traded as goods between two families. Awa hands Docteur a 100-franc bill, part of her wages. Docteur smilingly pockets the money and tells her that he did not agree to her working at first, but now he thinks she was right.



Peter visits Kada Peter, the local butcher and Fatim's cousin, comes to see Kada while Docteur is away. He tells her that Fatim gave him her address. He brings her a gift, a leg of lamb for a nice meal, but Kada refuses it. She tells him that "her father" will not approve. Kada tells Peter, the butcher, to pretend that the meat is for Docteur and that he has come to introduce himself and his butcher's services. Docteur looks at Peter warily but accepts the meat. Once the butcher has left, Docteur tells his wives that he does not trust Peter, and that he knows the butcher has come for Kada.



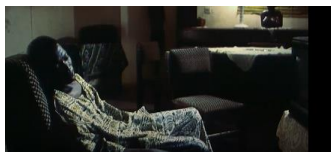
Maria seeks mystical help Maria has prepared a candlelight dinner for Docteur. She puts on her African dress and braids her hair, and Docteur finds her very beautiful. Maria even tried her hand at African cooking, preparing a green stew that Kada had made her eat. Unfortunately, instead of spinach, Maria used grass collected at the Parc des Princes (Paris soccer stadium). Docteur tells her to stop trying to become an African woman. Maria visits the soothsayer (Sapeur). She tells him that she has unequal competition with black women. That they have imposing backsides, are erotically arched, and that their gait attracts men. She wants to be like them to please her man. Sapeur gives her beads to wear around her waist in the presence of her man. Sapeur tells Afiba that he has just been paid 1,000 francs by a white woman to cast a spell on Docteur.



Peter declares his love to Kada Docteur and his wives are invited to Fatim's parents' home. Peter, the butcher and Fatim's cousin, is also there. He takes the opportunity to declare his love for Kada. Peter compliments Kada in front of everyone. He calls her "color coffee" and says that she is sweet and spicy. Docteur tells Peter not to be fooled by appearances. He tells him that Kada is a trouble-maker on top of being a big snorer. Peter says that he is ready to marry Kada as she is. Docteur gets upset and asks if this invitation was meant as a provocation. Docteur asks his wives to follow him home.



Docteur's wives go on strike Afiba reports to Awa and Kada that she has seen a white woman pay 1000 francs to the *marabout* to bewitch their husband. Docteur's two wives are furious when they understand that Maria is actually Docteur's lover, who is determined to go to great lengths to make him her husband. They decide to make Docteur pay for his betrayal. Docteur's wives stop cooking for him. They also refuse to sleep with him. Docteur feels sorry for himself. Docteur asks Awa if he is still a man. He asks her why neither she nor Kada is pregnant yet. He concludes that Doctor Diallo at the hospital where he works is right, and that it is he who is infertile.



Kada is pregnant Kada now sees Peter regularly. Kada feels unwell in class and is taken to the Infirmary. Docteur is summoned by Kada's high school counselor. She tells him that his "daughter", Kada, is pregnant.

Docteur is arrested Docteur cries with joy. The social worker wants to know why. In his euphoria, Docteur confesses that it was he who impregnated Kada. He realizes too late that he spoke too quickly and without thinking. Docteur confesses that Kada is not his daughter but his second wife. Docteur explains that he married Kada because his first wife could not give him children. He says he was afraid the family line would die out because he is his father's only son. No one believes that Kada is Docteur's wife. They accuse him of incest.

Kada explains the situation to Peter Peter feels betrayed by her, but still loves her. Maria asks Awa to tell her who Kada is to the Docteur. Awa explains the whole situation to Maria. Kada retrieves her real papers, which she had hidden in her luggage, and flees with Peter.



Docteur explains to the judge how Kada was able to enter France.

He tells him that all his attempts to obtain a residence permit for Kada from the French embassy in Côte d'Ivoire have been thwarted by French legislation. Docteur explains that his cousin, who works at the Abidjan City Hall, forged papers representing Kada as his daughter. With these papers, he established a passport for Kada and succeeded in getting her a residence permit under the family reunification program. Docteur tries to bribe the judge. He offers him money to drop the case. The judge is offended. Docteur, Awa, and Sapeur are deported to their respective countries.



CHARACTER ANALYSIS

DOCTEUR Docteur is a humorous, easy-going and pleasant man, but a backward man all the same. Although relaxed, he sees himself as the master of a house that he insists must remain closed to any French intrusion. He lives in France but refuses to follow a French lifestyle. He orders his wives around and insists that they be available to him anytime he wants to have sex.

Comic/humorous Docteur is a character with a buffoonish appearance and comical behavior. The first time he is introduced to the viewer, Docteur appears at Roissy airport in a suit too large for him, wearing a straw hat, flashing a goofy grin and speaking with grand gestures. Then, Docteur appears in an Ivorian village, sweating in his eternal suit under the African heat, this time having replaced his straw hat with a small parasol resting on his head. Even in the most difficult situations, Docteur seems to approach things with a humorous, comic posture.

Backward Docteur is a character with a backward mentality. As his first wife, Awa, reproaches him, he lives in France according to his old African ways. He is a chauvinist and an authoritarian man. He insists that his wives make themselves available to him sexually. He believes that Kada's reading and writing skills already give her all the education a woman needs, and that she has no need for further education. And if he enrolls her in high school, it is simply to pass Kada off to the authorities as his daughter, not his wife.

Pleasant It is difficult not to feel a certain empathy for Docteur. He is a character who almost always has a smile on his face, and very rarely loses his temper. He is a blundering fool, and his blunders often get his friends into trouble. However, he never hesitates to apologize, even if it means doubling down a few minutes later. In Docteur, Duparc gives us an affable character who allows us, the audience, to accept the film's harsh satire of African immigrants in France.

KADA Kada is an adaptable, resourceful and rebellious young woman. She fitted immediately into French society upon her arrival in France by making friends at school and learning French laws. She found herself an occupation and became financially independent. When her marital situation became unbearable to her, she left her husband and started dating a young Arab man.

Adaptable Kada integrated very quickly into the French environment. In fact, she fitted in much more seamlessly than Docteur. Enrolled in a French lycée, Kada soon made friends and was well ahead of Docteur when it comes to understanding French laws. When Docteur tries to take her by force, she tells him that this would be considered rape and punishable under French law, which leaves Docteur puzzled and furious.

Resourceful As soon as she arrives in France, Kada looks for a way to take care of herself and not depend on her husband, who has enough trouble making ends meet. She sells African souvenirs after school. The money she earns enables her to contribute to the household expenses. Her example inspires Awa, Docteur's first wife, who also takes a job in a sweatshop.

Rebellious When Kada learns that Maria is more than just a friend to Docteur—she is his lover—Kada tells him that she too will take a man, unless Maria comes to live in the house as his third wife and shares the responsibilities of the house with them. Kada then rebels and starts dating Peter, the local butcher. She gets pregnant and elopes with him, disregarding what her father in the village would think.

MARIA Maria is a supportive and self-doubting woman. Docteur acknowledges that life in France would have been difficult for him were it not for Maria's support. She helped him find a job and helps him financially. Maria, who has been waiting for Docteur to propose to her, thinks that she faces unfair competition from African women because she is not as curvaceous as they.

Supportive Maria is a supportive friend of Docteur. As he himself tells his wives, Maria is a special friend to whom he will always be indebted, because it was thanks to her that he got his job in France when he was in danger of becoming homeless and destitute. What Docteur deliberately omits to tell his wives is that the mattress and TV he promised them were also bought thanks to Maria's help, and that Maria gives him pocket money from time to time, cooks him tasty meals and welcomes him into her bed when he needs to escape the busy atmosphere of his household.

Self-doubting Maria loves Docteur and tells him she wants to be his wife. Aware that Maria will never accept the polygamous regime to which he subjects his two wives, Kada and Awa, Docteur ignores Maria's request. For Maria, Docteur's hesitation stems from the fact that she is not a curvaceous African woman. Maria begins to doubt her own suitability. She loses self-confidence and is ashamed of her body, which she tries to perfect, first by dressing in African clothes and then by hiring the services of Sapeur, a self-appointed African mystic, to bewitch Docteur.

THEMES

(Neo) colonization-reciprocity What happens when the inhabitants of a foreign country occupy another country and claim rights and privileges over the natives? This is precisely what happened during the French colonization of Africa, and what continues to happen under the cloak of neo-colonialism in the post-independence period. In Africa, the French colonist arrives, facing little opposition, turning the native into a foreigner on his own land. In *Color Coffee*, Duparc turns the tables and gives France the bitter taste of its own pill. The town of Montreuil, ironically referred to by the filmmaker as Montreuil-sur-Bamako (Bamako, the capital of Mali), an allusion to the large number of Malian immigrants living there, is forbidden territory for French natives. In the film, two imposing black men, posted at the entrance to the district, ask French citizens who wish to gain access to the area to show them an entry visa. The "visitors" do not argue and turn back, because they know that trying to convince the Africans that they are at home in France is a futile exercise. France is being overrun by Africans, who make their own laws, live their own cultures and enjoy their own traditions, and even transpose their own homelands there, much to the chagrin of the native French. Duparc's mirror image of France in Africa shows what Africans experience in Africa when the wave of French settlers, disdainful of the local population, build little French community pockets that are tacitly forbidden to blacks. Every African country has its French quarter, its French schools, its French chapels. Why should the mirror-image be shocking, Duparc seems to be telling us, with his trademark good humor and satire?

Cultural resistance Despite living in France, Docteur shouts to anyone who will listen that his home is Africa, and that French laws stop at his doorstep. And Africa is indeed alive and well at home in Docteur's apartment, to the point that his first wife, Awa, asks him how he can live in France as if he were back in his African village. Indeed, as soon as he returns from Côte d'Ivoire with his second wife, Docteur instructs his two wives about the rules of polygamy. One of them will sleep in the living room on a mattress he will soon buy. To avoid being caught by the French authorities (polygamy is forbidden in France), Docteur enrolls his second wife, Kada, in a high school, passing her off as his daughter. His daily meals consist of African dishes cooked with ingredients brought back from Africa or bought at the local African market. When his wives ask him to equip the apartment with a television, Docteur replies that TV conveys subversive Western ideas. Docteur eventually buys the TV, but tries, albeit unsuccessfully, to control what his wives watch. The immigrant neighborhood where Docteur lives is Africa transposed to France. Sapeur is the *marabout* (fortune-teller) whose preaching and mystical remedies punctuate the lives of his fellow Africans. Some come to see him to make their lucky star shine at the horse race; others come to him for a love charm. For all of them, Sapeur has so-called solutions, while his own life is spent in hustling and petty swindling. And on Sundays, the whole African community gathers to share stories, gossip and meals. Duparc points out a certain paradox in Africans, and perhaps in immigrants of all origins, who lie, cheat and go to great lengths

to find themselves in another country, and who, once in their host country, cling to their country of origin like drowning survivors to lifebuoys.

Cultural anxiety Maria, Docteur's French lover, is an anxious, insecure woman. Despite Docteur's attentiveness towards Maria, she is convinced that Docteur's reluctance to make her his wife stems from the fact that she lacks the physical assets of black women, their bouncy posteriors and the arch of their backs, which, as she puts it, make men notice them. To enhance her form, which she sees as unattractive, in order to better please Docteur, she orders beads from Africa to embellish her waist. She also puts on some African clothes brought back by Docteur and tries to cook him an African dish, which she botches. Docteur advises her to stop trying to look like African women, when African women themselves only want to look like French women. Maria will have none of it. She goes to see Sapeur, the *marabout*, for a charm that will make Docteur attracted to her as he is to African women. Maria refuses to believe that Docteur loves her for who she is, and although she does not yet know that he is married and a polygamist, she assumes that if he has not yet proposed marriage, it is because he cannot love her as he would an African woman.

Tradition/culture Tradition is a complex concept that must always be kept in perspective. When talking about tradition, it is important to be careful not to paint an entire nation or a vast region with a single brush stroke. In this respect, the African continent is made up of 54 nations, and no single tradition can claim to be unanimously accepted in Africa. However, when Africans find themselves in the West, homesickness causes the selective cultural practices of different origins, the way they mourn, celebrate funerals, baptisms or weddings, to spread very quickly so as to become sedimented as the "tradition" of the immigrants, themselves and, by this very fact, homogenized. The weekly gatherings that bring Docteur and his fellow African immigrants together around African food and anecdotes are the places where these new traditions are rehearsed and sedimented. It would have been desirable for these new traditions to be nourished by the habits of the host country. As it happens, the communitarianism of these immigrants alienates them from the practices of their host countries, and, as we see in *Color Coffee*, this communitarianism all too often celebrates the most abject practices, such as promiscuity, the devaluing of women, trickery, swindling and illegality, practices that stick to the bodies of immigrants as being their tradition, whereas in their respective countries of origin many of these practices are decried as anti-cultural or anti-traditional.

Patriarchy Kada's father tells her that he has decided to marry her off to Docteur, his friend's son. He tells her that marriage is liberating for women, because by making themselves the slaves of men through marriage, women free themselves from the greater injustice of being enslaved by the whole of society. Kada's objections, when she tells her father she does not even know what Docteur looks like, are to no avail. Docteur arrives in the village and returns to France with his new wife. In France, Docteur instructs Kada, as he had already done with Awa, his first wife, that he is the master of the house, and that she must make herself available to him whenever he wants her. However, Kada, who began her education at a French high school, retorts that she learned at school that a woman has rights, and that a man cannot take her sexually without her consent, otherwise he will be subjected to the rigors of the law. Docteur replies that he is the master of his palace (his apartment), and that France stops at his doorstep. Moreover, Kada realizes that the weekly gatherings of Africans serve only to reinforce the idea of the superiority of men over women. They are occasions for men to prove to their peers that they are absolute masters of their households. Eventually, Kada steers clear of the influence of the omnipotent African patriarchy represented by Docteur. She decides to settle down with her progressive Arab lover, Peter.

Power between the sexes The lecture given by Kada's father to justify his daughter's marriage to Docteur reveals the predominant place given to men in society. Kada's father portrays the husband as a despot to his wife, but an enlightened despot who will free his wife from the slavery of society. However, Duparc seems to imply through subtle imagery that this is just wishful thinking, as man is not as powerful as he likes to believe. On the first day they meet, Kada opens a bottle of Coca-Cola for Docteur using her teeth. And when Docteur marvels at the strength of Kada's jaws, she retorts, like Little Red Riding Hood to the Big Bad Wolf, that all the better to munch on him; then she asks Docteur if he knows anything about Little Red Riding Hood. Naturally, Docteur, unsophisticated as he is, replies that Paris is a big city, and it is impossible to know everyone in it. This scene foreshadows what the viewer will later see as Docteur's being

taken care of by women, and his downfall brought about by women. Indeed, Docteur can only make ends meet with money from his French girlfriend, Maria, and his two wives, Kada, who sells African souvenirs, and Awa, who is an illegal sweatshop worker. Eventually, Kada's rebellion and voluntary departure with Peter, her Arab lover, cause Docteur to lose control and reveal his manipulation of immigration laws to the French authorities. Docteur's power collapses and he is deported to his country of origin. The woman is Little Red Riding Hood, showing the man, the Big Bad Wolf, that his power is merely illusory.

Power in international relations Relations between states are also governed by a power struggle. The difficulties encountered by Ivorians--or any other African--in obtaining a French visa are a far cry from the hospitable treatment reserved to French nationals wishing to travel to Côte d'Ivoire. While the doors to Africa are generally wide open to Westerners, almost insurmountable obstacles are placed in the path of Africans seeking European visas. Orthodoxy would have us regard any Westerner visiting Africa as a potential benefactor for Africa, a contributor to Africa's development. Conversely, any African wishing to travel to the West is considered, until proven otherwise, to be an illegal immigrant, as a destabilizer of Western progress. At the heart of this perception of the movement of people lies a racial logic. Truth is on the side of the West, just as lies are on the side of Africa. Truth, we might even say, is the West, and lies Africa, in this power struggle. This logic stems from the racism of the colonial situation, where the West, by virtue of its military power which enabled it to subjugate Africa, also arrogates to itself an ontological superiority and therefore a civilizing mission. Under these conditions, it is to the benefactor Westerner that the doors of Africa must be opened, and not to the profiteer African that the doors of the West must be opened. Duparc beats the omnipotence of the West to a pulp with a Docteur and other blacks who fool France and French institutions, even if they are eventually caught up in their duplicity.

Polygamy Duparc paints a caricature of polygamy to show not only how degrading the practice is for women, but also how ill-suited it is to life as a couple. Docteur, already married to Awa, decides to take Kada as his second wife. However, he has neither the space, nor the resources, nor the astuteness to manage his new situation. Docteur lives in a cramped one-bedroom apartment. He barely earns a minimum wage working as a hospital floor-cleaner in a French hospital, and only manages to make ends meet thanks to the financial support of his French lover, Maria. It is to Maria that Docteur turns when he needs a mattress or a television. Docteur is financially insolvent, and his decision to marry a second wife was based on his sexual urges and on the desire for children, not necessarily on reason. Moreover, while Docteur thinks he is fooling the French administration by passing off Kada as his daughter, he lacks the intellectual acuity to manage the situation he creates. He loses control and becomes the plaything of his second wife. Indeed, Kada, whom he takes for a naive and harmless young African girl, is in fact a very cunning young woman, who plays him for a fool. At school, Kada makes friends with Fatim, an Arab girl, who introduces her to her cousin Peter, the local butcher. Kada cheats on Docteur with Peter, and eventually runs away with him. Kada first emancipates herself from the authority of patriarchy (her father) who has imposed Docteur as her husband, and then frees herself from the degrading situation of polygamy by finding in Peter the husband of her choice.

Marriage A recurring theme in Duparc's films is that of arranged marriage. In *Color Coffee*, Kada's marriage to Docteur falls into this category. Without consulting their children, who are strangers to each other, Kada's and Docteur's fathers arrange the marriage. Kada protests to her father do not move him. The marriage is sealed, and Doctor, on the occasion of a vacation trip to Côte d'Ivoire, meets Kada for the first time, marries her, and establishes documents allowing her to follow him to France. For Kada's father, who tells his daughter that marriage frees women from the slavery of society, his daughter emancipates herself from a greater, societal, slavery to place herself under the slavery of a single man, her husband, further sealing the friendship with Docteur's father. For Docteur's father, this marriage ensures the continuity of his lineage, given that Docteur is his only son, who until now has had no children of his own. It goes without saying, then, that in this arrangement, community and family interests, rather than individual and selfish considerations, take precedence. In such a context, anyone who marries by putting their personal interests above those of the community or extended family will be alienating themselves from these institutions and the support they provide.

Love-sexuality When the aims of marriage are more to consolidate the union of two families or to ensure the continuity of a lineage than to unite two people with compatible feelings, sex fulfils a purely pragmatic and utilitarian function, and is not passionate or erotic. In this arrangement, sex is based less on

one's love for the other and more on the need to guarantee one's lineage through procreation. Under these conditions, the sexual act falls mechanically within the logic of fulfilling a contract. By having sex, Kada and Docteur perform their familial and social contract, that of working to ensure the continuity of the bloodline. The sexual act is not based on sentimental attachment, but on moral obligation. It is with Maria, his French girlfriend, that Docteur seems to truly experience sexual pleasure devoid of familial pressure, although Maria also hopes that her relationship with Docteur will lead to marriage. And it is with her progressive Arab boyfriend, Peter, that Kada makes passionate love, with the sole aim of the fulfillment of pleasure—even if their relationship is expected to eventually fall in the practical and dutiful register of marriage. So, marriage does not necessarily imply love, even if sex is part of it, and sex does not necessarily imply pleasure. These are dissociable concepts in human relationships, the film seems to imply.

Deception/Appearance Docteur is the quintessential deceptive immigrant. The nickname he has chosen already augurs his intention to dodge with the truth. He is a floor-cleaner in a Parisian hospital, but he goes by "Docteur" in his Montreuil neighborhood. And he carries this title all the way back to his African village, declaring to anyone who will listen that he is an important man in France, known to the French authorities and the owner of a big house there. The suit Docteur wears is in itself an artifice of deception, intended to present him as something he is not. The children who make fun of Docteur when he enters the village are attentive observers, who perceive the incongruity of Docteur's attire, its zany, inappropriate aspect. Not only is it unsuited to the African heat, but the umbrella in the shape of a hat makes Docteur look like a clown. This incongruity between what one wants to appear as and what one actually is exposed as pertains not only for Docteur, but for all those who try their hand at the game of deception. Docteur's deception in posing as the father of his second wife is discovered by the French authorities, and he is repatriated to his country. The fraud of Sapeur, the charlatan, is also exposed, and he is deported. Afiba, the unfaithful wife, is exposed when she infects her husband with gonorrhea. Only Kada, who in this sea of deceptions has taken care to keep her true identity, her authentic birth certificate, in her luggage, unbeknownst to Docteur, succeeds in her escape with Peter, her lover. Duparc's message that deception never pays is perfectly clear.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do immigrants tend to cling to the habits and customs of their countries of origin?
2. Search and explain what the term 'communitarianism' means.
3. How can communitarianism hinder integration into the host country and the success of the immigrant?
4. Do you believe that host countries should intervene against certain aspects of communitarianism? Which ones and how? Elaborate on your answer.
5. What is your position about borderless countries? Explain your answer.