

GODARD ON *MADE IN USA* (from a 1966 interview)

Yes, I'm making two films at the same time. The first is *Two or Three Things I Know About Her*, starring Marina Vlady; the other, *Made in USA*, with Anna Karina. They are completely different in style, and have nothing to do with each other, except perhaps that they let me indulge my passion for analyzing what is called modern living, for dissecting it like a biologist to see what goes on underneath...*Made in USA* is the fusion in my mind of three different things: I wanted to oblige a friend, to tackle the Americanization of French life, and to do something with the Ben Barka affair.

...I make my films not only when filming, but as I read, dream, even as I talk. This is why I find making two films at once so exhausting – and so exhilarating. To tell you the truth it wasn't planned that way. I was in the middle of making *Two or Three Things I Know About Her* when Georges de Beauregard, who was in financial difficulties after *La Religieuse*, asked if I couldn't run something up for him in a hurry. It was the only way to get him out of his difficulties and allow him to hang on, he said. "You're the only person who can do anything at a moment's notice." "I suppose I am," I said.

I hadn't an idea in my head when I accepted. Then I read a *Série Noire* thriller which interested me. As I had just seen *The Big Sleep* again, I thought of having the Humphrey Bogart role played by a woman – Anna Karina, as it happens. I also decided to set the action in France rather than America, and worked a marginal episode from the Ben Barka affair into the main theme. My idea was that Figon¹² was not really dead, but had fled the country and sent for his mistress to join him. She comes to the address given her, and finds him dead this time. I have set the action in 1969, two years after the parliamentary elections, which will be held in March this year. The character is called Politzer, not Figon. No one knows why he died, and the girl sets out to uncover his past. Among other things, she discovers that he has been the editor of an important Parisian weekly, which got very worked up over the Ben Barka affair, and on which she herself was a reporter. Because of her love for him she finds herself playing detective, gets tangled in a web of crooks and cops, and in the end decides to write an article about the affair. The film closes on a discussion with a journalist – Philippe Labro – in a Europe One radio station car.

**Edited and annotated by Bruce Goldstein, with Adrienne Halpern & Pelin Uzay
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