

A Question of Faith

Voza Rivers: It's not religion as such, but it's about faith. It is about understanding. It's also about conflict and resolution. All of those emotions and experiences are very much a part of this production. And it gives the audience members an opportunity to be reflective. We . . . I know that I was brought up in the Catholic faith, and there used to be certain doctrine that the only true religion of God is the Catholic faith, and I used to hear these things—and you couldn't eat fish on Fridays—a lot of things that were said. And as we get older, you know, we start questioning those values that were given to us as part of the doctrine. And there are questioning of values when they change, I mean, and there's been this big rift in the Catholic church about some of the changes that have happened. Does man make those changes, or are they ordained, and they should not be changed? Those are some of the questions that come up. And when there is a conflict that happened during Tierno Bokar's time about the religious doctrine, there became this split between ideology within his followers. The French—because it was during the colonialism . . . colonial period of the French going into West Africa, specially Mali—saw this and decided to take advantage of this opportunity between the two factors, one saying, "Let's stick with tradition," and the other saying, "Well we can change." And so you see this. And I think it's a modern day tale to that extent. You're talking about the early 1900s, but it still exists today.