



# M A N S A

Newsletter Number 29 -- Winter 1995-96

## Please Check The Date On Your Newsletter Address Label

The significance of the date on your mailing label has been changed. Formerly it indicated the last recorded month in which you paid dues. From this issue forward it will signify the date on which your present membership *expires* (or expired). Therefore, if the date is December 1995 or earlier, your membership is no longer current. **New address for submitting dues:** Laura Arntson, African Studies Center, 100 Center for International Programs, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824.

## Minutes of the 1995 Meeting of the Mande Studies Association

The new secretary tape-records the proceedings, and the transcript of the last meeting is twenty-three pages long. A summary is presented here, and the transcript is available in the MANSA files:

The total attendance surpassed forty-five, with about ten experiencing their first meeting. At the outset, the Secretary distributed New Membership/Membership Renewal forms, a list of members' e-mail addresses (the up-dated e-mail list enclosed with this issue supersedes that one), and MANSA T-shirt order forms.

The President began by expressing regret that Vice President Marie Perinbam could not attend due to a death in the family. He also introduced two African colleagues attending a MANSA meeting for the first time: Fulbrighter Mamadou Sumaré (Bradford College), and Amadou Dembele.

Announcements were made concerning "Friends of Mali" and Clarion University Malian artisan workshops, and various members suggested panel topics for next year's ASA meeting (see separate newsletter items on all three topics).

The President noted that this was the first MANSA meeting since the International Conference on Mande

Studies held at Leiden in March. He again expressed gratitude to our hosts at Leiden, and then opened the floor to discussion on the question of a future conference.

Reference was made to the meeting at SOAS between Lucy Duran, Louis Brenner, and David Conrad (for details see Newsletter #28). Louis Brenner had made several suggestions including the holding of a 25-year anniversary commemorative acknowledgement of the First Conference on Manding Studies held at SOAS in 1972, with a possible return to London for this one.

It was also acknowledged that communications had been received from colleagues in Africa offering their locations as conference sites: Barbara Lewis said she had heard from Yacouba Konaté in Abidjan proposing that location. Conrad noted that Konaté was a conspicuous participant at both the Bamako and Leiden conferences and that he might consent to organizational responsibilities in Abidjan, but that Konaté had not contacted him directly.

The President stressed the importance of having someone on site at the proposed location as we had Jan Jansen at Leiden, with the dependability, energy and supporting network to pull together the various resources necessary to carry off an international conference.

As recorded in an earlier Newsletter issue, Abdoulaye Bayo and Constance Sonko-Godwin (National Council for Arts & Culture, Museum Annex) have both contacted the President inviting MANSA to hold the next conference in Banjul. Their communications were gratefully acknowledged, while some concern was expressed as to whether Banjul has the facilities necessary for hosting an international conference. Bob Newton suggested we contact Robert Palmieri, former PAO in Banjul, for information on the feasibility of that location.

Conrad mentioned that Berend Timmer (Research School, CNWS Leiden) recently departed for Banjul, and that Donald Wright (SUNY-Cortland) will be going in March, and that he has asked each of them to report

DAVID C. CONRAD, *President*, State University of New York-Oswego

B. MARIE PERINBAM, *Vice President*, University of Maryland

LAURA ARNTSON, *Secretary-Treasurer*

### Advisory Board

ARIANE DELUZ, Laboratoire d'Anthropologie Sociologique

MAMADOU DIAWARA, Universität Bayreuth

LANSINE KABA, University of Illinois-Chicago

ROBERT LAUNAY, Northwestern University

LAMINE SANNEH, Yale University

TEREBA TOGOLA, Institut des Sciences Humaines



back to him any information they can gather on conference facilities there.

Nehemia Levitzion expressed his personal preference for an African venue, noting that while Leiden hosted an excellent international conference, he preferred the one in Bamako. He observed that by holding the conference in West Africa, in addition to a conference venue, it presented an opportunity to become acquainted with the host country, with trips to various sites of interest.

Conrad recalled the 1991 meeting he had with Museum and University staff in Conakry when they petitioned MANSA to hold a conference in Kankan, though this is presently regarded as unrealistic, owing to transportation and other problems.

Louis Brenner reminded us of Dakar as a potential venue because of the West African Research Association being there. It was noted that the West African Research Centre in Dakar is interested in scholarly exchanges and has the potential to assist in hosting an international conference. Lilyan Kesteloot of IFAN was mentioned as a potentially valuable contact, and it was agreed that Dakar is a site that should be seriously considered.

Mary Jo Arnoldi introduced the possibility of Ouagadougou as another future location, perhaps in conjunction with the film festival.

Richard Warms moved (seconded by Ralph Austen) that we hold a conference commemorating the 25th Anniversary of the SOAS Conference on Mande Studies, and that it be held at one of the locations in West Africa. The motion carried.

Jeanne Tougara suggested that a committee explore the advantages and drawbacks of each of the venues suggested. The question of dates came up briefly, but it was decided that the a venue should be established first.

Julianne Short suggested that we continue the discussion of conference dates and location over the e-mail and asked if we might create a list-serve. Barbara Hoffman said she had access to the appropriate facilities and would look into it. Jeanne Tougara, Barbara Lewis, and Lucy Duran agreed to investigate possible venues and logistics for potential conference sites.

Moving on to other business, Jeanne Tougara announced the West African Research Association (WARA) meeting to take place the following evening and encouraged MANSA members to join that organization.

The President then turned the discussion to the question of by-laws. He prefaced this with a brief account of how editorship of the newsletter and the office of President originally came to be combined. He explained that at the time of the founding meeting which resulted in MANSA, before there was any question of "officers," he agreed to attempt a newsletter for specialists in Mande studies, something that he and Tom Hale had discussed on the occasion of a "Bend in the River" roundtable at an earlier ASA meeting (as they recalled, "Second Bend in the River, fourth beer"). At the founders' meeting, once Conrad had agreed to try to produce a newsletter, Robert Launay suggested that a title be attached to the editorship, and "President" was chosen. In Orlando Conrad stressed that he has never

meant to assume that his status as such would continue indefinitely, but that until MANSA's first formal elections could take place, both he and Marie Perinbam would be grateful for a vote of confidence, and asked that the current Acting Secretary be formally confirmed in the position she had held for the past year.

Stephen Wooten moved to a vote of confidence for those currently in office, that they remain in office until such time as the by-laws are in place and an election can be held to either re-elect them or elect new officers. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

By the time discussion of the by-laws actually commenced, more than half the attending members had departed from the meeting room and the trickle of those abandoning ship continued for the remainder of the meeting. However, a skeleton-crew in ever-dwindling numbers carried on to approve the by-laws. (Ed's. note: Members who spoke during the discussion were, in the order that their names appear in the transcript: Conrad, Stephen Wooten, Barbara Hoffman, Jeanne Tougara, Nehemia Levitzion, James Jones, Stephen Belcher, Richard Warms, Laura Arntson, and Mary Jo Arnoldi, but there were others present whose names are not heard on the tape.)

Section 1 was accepted without disagreement. Following discussion on the wording in Section 4 concerning the "Executive Council," it was amended to read as it is reproduced below.

Another important amendment was made combining the offices of Secretary and Treasurer. There was a consensus that the President/Vice President terms should be staggered with that of the Secretary-Treasurer so the officers would not all change in the same year, but this was not resolved in an amendment. A proposed amendment to remedy that is appended to the by-laws below, and can be voted on at the next meeting.

Each of the proposed by-laws was briefly discussed and accepted, with some amendments. The revised document now stands as follows:

### **Mande Studies Association (MANSA) By-Laws**

**I.** The name of the organization shall be Mande Studies Association and shall be known as MANSA.

**II.** The Mande Studies Association is an independent professional society established in the United States which is open to all Mande scholars, from any nation, academic discipline and/or professional interest.

**III.** The specific aims of the organization are the following:

- A. To promote scholarly research, both within and outside Africa, in all areas and disciplines of the social sciences, natural sciences, and humanities relevant to the Mande experience and environment.
- B. To encourage international cooperation and facilitate the exchange of ideas and meaningful dialogue among persons engaged in research on Mande societies.
- C. To encourage the publication and dissemination of



scholarly and artistic works as well as primary sources on Mande studies and related topics.

D. To organize panels, symposia, and conferences on Mande Studies at meetings of regional, national and international organizations.

E. To provide the general public with information on issues of historical, cultural, and contemporary interest in Mande areas of Africa.

#### **IV. Organization of the Mande Studies Association**

##### **Article I. Executive Council**

**Section 1.** The business of the Association shall be managed by the Officer of the Association.

**Section 2.** The Executive Council shall consist of the Officers of the Association and members of the Advisory Board.

**Section 3.** Any Executive Council member may resign at any time, provided such a resignation is made in writing. Any Executive Council member may be removed by a vote of two-thirds majority of members of record.

##### **Article II. Officers**

###### **Section 1. Term Lengths.**

(a) The President shall serve for a term of two years.

(b) The Vice President shall serve for a term of two years.

(c) The Secretary-Treasurer shall serve for a term of three years

(d) A Member at Large shall serve a term of two years.

Officers must be members in good standing.

All officers may stand for re-election by the members if they so choose.

The three-year term begins upon an officer's election by the members at the annual meeting.

Any officer who expects to be unable to fulfill his/her duties adequately for a year or more shall resign with the option of standing for re-election at another time.

###### **Section 2. Officers' Duties**

(a) The President shall preside at all meetings of the members of the Executive Council and at all business meetings of the Association. She/He shall, in general, supervise and manage all the business and affairs of the Association. She/He shall have authority and power, in the name of the Association, to sign checks, drafts, notes, and orders for the payment of money by the Association. The President and/or his designee shall edit and distribute the Association Newsletter, and shall keep current the official Membership List which names all members of record.

The President shall designate committees as she/he deems necessary to carry out specific duties related to the activities of the organization. Such committees and their appointed heads shall dissolve immediately after their specific duties have been accomplished.

(b) The Vice President shall, in the absence or disability of the President, perform the duties and exercise the powers of the President.

(c) The Secretary-Treasurer shall serve as Secretary of the Association. She/He will record the minutes of both Executive Council and regular business meetings and make the minutes available to the President for distribution in the Newsletter. She/He shall perform any other duties which are delegated by members of the Executive Council.

The Secretary-Treasurer shall have custody of all funds and other valuable documents of the Association. She/He shall have authority and power to endorse, on behalf of the Association, checks, notes, and other obligations, and deposit same to the credit of the Association in such bank or banks as the Executive Council may designate. She/He shall record the income and expenditures of the Association and give a full written report of all monies received and paid out at the annual business meeting of the membership.

(d) The Member at Large shall serve on the Executive Council of the Association and assist in the decision-making process of that body.

##### **Article III. Vacancies Among Officers**

**Section 1.** If the office of any officer becomes vacant, the remaining officers, as the Executive Council, may appoint or elect any qualified person to fill such a vacancy, who shall hold such office for the unexpired term and until a successor is elected or appointed.

**Section 2.** An interim appointee named by the Executive Council may stand for office at the end of the unexpired term and will begin a regular term upon election at the annual meeting.

##### **Article IV. Advisory Board**

**Section 1.** There shall be an Advisory Board of five dues-paying members for the purpose of supporting the Association in its scholarly endeavors and suggesting research in areas of interest to the Association. Members of the Advisory Board shall be approved by the membership in attendance at the annual meeting and shall be persons acknowledged within their respective fields as scholars and authorities. Every effort should be made to select members representing gender and geographical balance, and Members of the Advisory Board shall serve for a two-year period. Members of the Advisory Board must attend the business meetings of the Association at least biennially. Out-going presidents and vice-presidents shall be honorary members of the Advisory Board.

##### **Article V. Meetings**

**Section 1.** A meeting of the members shall be held annually. At the annual meeting, any vacant post on the Executive Committee will be filled. Candidates for office shall submit brief statements for publication in the last newsletter preceding the annual meeting. Members not in attendance may vote by written proxy.

**Section 2.** Special meetings of the members, for any purpose, may be called by the President of the Association or the Executive Council. The notice for such special meetings shall state the purpose thereof.



**Section 3.** For the transaction of normal business and the election of officers and approval of members of the Advisory Board, a simple majority vote by members of record present shall suffice. For the removal of a member of the Executive Council or to change the By-Laws at the annual meeting, a vote by two-thirds of the dues-paying members of record is required.

#### **Article VI. Dues**

##### **Section 1. Membership Dues Categories**

(a) Regular and institutional dues for membership in the society shall be \$10.

(b) Student dues shall be \$5.

(c) Voluntary Sponsors of the Association shall pay dues of \$25.

#### **Article VII. Voting**

**Section 1.** Each member of record shall be entitled to one vote on each matter submitted to a vote of the members. Executive Council members and officers shall be elected by a majority of the votes cast at a meeting of the members of record. Voting for officers shall take place by secret ballot. Changes to the By-Laws require a two-thirds majority of members of record, and this quorum is needed for a vote of such changes at the annual meeting. Any other action to be taken by vote of the members shall be authorized by a majority of the votes cast at a meeting by the members of record.

#### **Article VIII. Amendment and Repeal of By-Laws**

**Section 1.** These by-laws may be amended, repealed, or adopted by two-thirds of the dues-paying members, either by mail vote or by vote at the annual meeting.

Since the revision and acceptance of the By-Laws, an amendment has been proposed that can be voted on at the next meeting. It is proposed that Section IV, Article II, Section 1. Term lengths, (c) Secretary-Treasurer be amended to read: "The Secretary-Treasurer shall serve a term of two years and shall be elected on alternate years from the President and Vice President."

This is to ensure that the Secretary-Treasurer, President and/or Vice President are not all replaced at the same time, which was the intention behind adopting a three-year term for the Secretary-Treasurer.

#### **Long-Time MANSA-Member Designated Next Ambassador to Mali**

Among his African counterparts, i.e., the people who really know what's going on in their own countries, Dave Rawson has a singular reputation for being one of the U.S. State Department's most informed and credible representatives in critical situations, including the crisis in Somalia. However, consistent with Bamana values ("My belly is my belly,") Rawson never speaks of his work beyond a word or two about his next posting.

Nevertheless, it might not be too indiscreet to note here that in Rawson's case the State Department got it

right on Africa: Having spent part of his childhood in Rwanda and later becoming an authority on the politics of that region and working his way up through the ranks of the Foreign Service, Dr. Rawson's first ambassadorial post (1993) was Rwanda. Serving as he has been at such a tragically historic time, our "insider's" information for last year is limited to a MANSA T-shirt order from Kigali. For this year it is not surprising to learn that when he was able to return to Kigali, the Ambassador's residence had been trashed. Later, just before Thanksgiving, President Jimmy and Mrs. Carter were there as houseguests as Mr. Carter was setting up a meeting of Chiefs of State for the region.

Rawson's connection to the Manden goes back more than twenty years, where he made the acquaintance of various researchers while serving in the Bamako embassy. It now appears that he is about to return: In October Rawson once again endured Senate hearings in Washington, and (as of this writing) was back in Kigali awaiting confirmation as the next Ambassador to Mali. We hope it will soon be possible to announce his change of address as "Amembassy Bamako." --Editor

#### **Conference Facilities in The Gambia**

Berend Timmer has recently returned to The Netherlands from a successful research visit to The Gambia. The following information is distilled from his remarks about potential conference facilities, and includes all the essential information that he provided:

Timmer visited the Independence Stadium where the Research and Documentation Division is located. He describes this area of the city as "a really unique place" for a conference and expresses the opinion that the "accommodation itself" is well-suited for meetings. He says the meeting hall compares favorably to the one in the Leiden Ethnological Museum [where the Leiden conference was held].

The Independence Stadium is located in Bakau, a relatively up-scale neighborhood containing many hotels and restaurants. All these are located in an area of roughly one square kilometer. The place is close to the sea and would be relatively comfortable even if the conference were held during the hot season. Transport is "no problem" in this area.

Cultural/historical attractions include: (1) The National Museum (2) Albreda, a former colonial trading post on the north bank of the Gambia River 20 km from the ferry to Banjul (3) James Island, a colonial fortress (4) Gambian dance and theater.

Timmer notes that there is a Gambian Historical and Cultural Association (he is not certain of the name) which unites "quite a number" of Gambians interested in Manding culture, and he thinks they might be interested in helping to organize a conference.

(Further note by ed.): Donald Wright will be spending the month of March in The Gambia, and he has promised to report on further details including price and quality of hotel accommodations, etc. Meanwhile, Jeanne Tougara is continuing to look at Dakar as a



possible venue in relation to WARA and the Research Center there. So far, we have no details on Abidjan as a potential venue.

### News from Colleagues in Africa

PATIENCE SONKO-GODWIN of the National Council for Arts and Culture in Banjul reported sometime ago that she had completed and submitted for publication her latest book, *Leaders of the Senegambia Region: Reactions to European Infiltration*. Ms. Sonko-Godwin spent part of 1995 in London before returning to The Gambia with plans to do research in Guinea Bissau and to begin work on her next book which will be about religion in the Senegambia region.

TEREBA TOGOLA of the Institut des Sciences Humaines in Bamako attended the Workshop on Global Change in History and Prehistory at Rice University September 4-6, 1995.

KOUFECOU ADAMA TRAORÉ reports on the work of his organization *Action Namas Volontaires* based at Narena, in Mali: "Notre O.N.G. étant une organisation non gouvernementale très jeune. Nos perspectives sont grandes diversifiées mais les moyens logistiques nous font défaut. Nous avons élaboré un projet d'appris logistiques qui s'élève à environ 50.000 dollars américains et ce ci pour les études de la mise en valeur des patrimoines culturelles du Mandé environ 35 villages entre Sibi et Niagassola en Guinée.

L'entretien de la couverture végétale de la montagne Kri Korou entre Sibi et Narena fait partie de nos préoccupations compte tenu de l'importance historique de cette montagne."

JOBBA KAMARA reports from N'Zerekore, Guinea, that he is presently employed as a secretary with the sub-office there, of the Haut Commissaria pour les Refugies (HCR), i.e., the UN High Commission for Refugees. Jobba's linguistic skills, education in Mass Communications from the University of Liberia, his background as a journalist and radio broadcaster in Monrovia before the civil war, his experience as a translator, and his computer skills combined to help him win the position over many other applicants. Jobba is eager to continue his education in the field of Journalism, and would be grateful for any information about scholarships and programs leading to a higher degree. He can be contacted at: UNHCR Sub-Office in N'Zerekore, B.P. 4158, Conakry, Guinea. Fax (224) 91-07-74.

SEKOU BERTÉ of the Institut des Sciences Humaines in Bamako (well-known to many of us who have enjoyed his able assistance and amiable companionship in our research projects) reports that he took the TOFEL examination in 1995 as part of his preparations for applying to various colleges and universities in the United States. Sekou hopes to continue his studies beyond the B.A. which he presently holds, and would much appreciate hearing from anyone affiliated with a program that could offer him a scholarship. For further communication please write to

him at L'Institut des Sciences Humaines, B.P. 159, Bamako, Mali.

OUSSEYNOU SISSOKO of Bamako reminds us that he has completed his Diplôme D'Études Approfondies at the Université de Poitiers on the subject "Histoire de la colonisation et de la décolonisation." For the past twenty years or more, Mr. Sissoko has labored on a work titled *Soumangourou Kanté: la naissance de l'Empire du Mali*. Mr. Sissoko would like to increase his knowledge of English and to pursue a Ph.D. in history in a North American university. Anyone wishing to contact him in this regard should write him at: B.P. 1673, Bamako, Republic of Mali.

### MANSA-Sponsored Panel Proposals ASA 1996, San Francisco

Despite unfavorable scheduling in some cases, all the Mansa-sponsored panels at Orlando were well-attended and impressive with the usual high-quality of their presentations. Some proposals have been made for next year's meeting. If you are interested in participating in any of these, please contact the chairperson early to give them the best possible chance of getting their submission accepted by the ASA organizers of next year's meeting. Remember that the ASA has a very early (March) deadline for panel proposals. If you wish to propose another panel, please get the word out as soon as possible. Chairpersons please remember that when you submit your proposal to the ASA, it is up to you to notify them that the panel is: Sponsored by the Mande Studies Association.

#### URBAN WOMEN AND SOCIAL RELATIONS IN THE MANDE AREA

Chair: Saskia Brand, Research School CNWS, Leiden.  
Discussant: Kassim Kone, Indiana University  
Editor's Note: This proposal is tentative. It was originally to be co-chaired with Rosa De Jorio, but Saskia Brand has notified me that Rosa is otherwise engaged, and that the panel should be cancelled because Saskia would like a co-chair and does not know who else would be willing to offer papers. However, this is a particularly desirable topic with an excellent discussant already in place, and I suggest we retain it until the spring issue of the newsletter to see if anyone is interested in helping to form this panel (Barbara Hoffman has already expressed her willingness to become involved and might co-chair it). If people have non-urban offerings and Saskia is willing, we could broaden the potential by deleting the "urban" qualification and accepting a more general collection of papers. Please contact Saskia Brand or Barbara Hoffman if you want to participate in this panel. Their e-mail addresses are on the new list.

#### MANDE MASQUERADE TRADITIONS

Proposer/Chair: Barbara Frank, SUNY-Stony Brook.



Focusing on cloth and fiber masquerades such as *cebilinke*, *nanfiri*, *jo*, and on parallel traditions among neighboring peoples (e.g. Senufo). Depending on response this could develop into a roundtable with ten-minute presentations. Suggested themes include 1) Historical relationships among different traditions. 2) The notion of particular materials as spiritually charged. 3) Performance traditions with public and private domains. Contact Barbara Frank at 516-474-2981; fax 516-632-7261; e-mail bfrank@ccmail.sunysb.edu

#### RITUAL IN MANDE

Proposer/Chair: Jan Jansen

Chair: Jan Jansen, Research School CNWS

This panel is also tentative because Jansen's participation depends on the favorable outcome of a post-doctoral grant application. Jansen has requested the participation of Ralph Austen and David Conrad, and either of them could become co-chair. In any case, the panel can go forward (perhaps with a more specific title) if the necessary number of papers are proposed. Jansen's original proposal is very general, inviting papers on rituals and ceremonies including "life cycle rituals" (baptism, marriage, burial), and various other public celebrations.

In addition: Laura Arntson reports that the African Music Caucus is interested in co-sponsoring a panel or roundtable with MANSA members, encouraging dialogue with more social scientists, art historians, dance ethnologists, historians, etc.

Dolores Koenig is willing to coordinate a panel on current AIDS research in Africa.

#### Clarion University Proposal For Exchange with Artisans from Mali

George LaRue (History) and Catherine Joslyn (Art) have written a grant proposal to bring to Clarion University Malian artisans working with traditional and modern techniques, including *bogolan*, men's narrow strip weaving, and either dyeing or pottery. They plan on several days of demonstrations of the techniques, exhibition of items made on the spot, hands-on workshops with American participants where feasible, and showing of films on Malian culture.

They also want to facilitate similar events for the artisans at other sites in the U.S., if possible. If you are interested in extending an invitation to bring the artisans to your campus, contact Mike LaRue, Clarion University, History Department, Clarion, PA 16214; Tel. (814) 226-4933 (h) or 2350. e-mail: larue@vaxa.clarion.edu

#### Friends of Mali

Eric Silla, current President of "Friends of Mali," announced at the MANSA meeting that this is an association based in Washington, originally started by Peace Corps volunteers about ten years ago. They are

interested in increasing membership. Eric says: "We put out a quarterly newsletter and if you live in the Washington area, we host events when Malian dignitaries come by.... I'm hoping that this can serve as an informal network of people who work in Mali." They are also in contact with an association of Malians based in Washington. Annual membership is \$11.00.

#### Who Speaks "Mandekan"?: A Note on Current Use of Mande Ethnonyms and Linguonyms

By Valentine Vydrine

There is a lot of variation in use of terminology for Mande peoples and languages in scholarly publications which causes a serious nuisance in any branch of knowledge and leads to all kinds of misunderstandings. I would like to take advantage of the forum provided by the MANSA Newsletter to discuss this problem in what concerns particularly the name for the cluster Mandinka-Maninka-Bamana-Jula-Dafin.

The actual situation in the use of terms is as follows: There are (at least) two main traditions - European and North-American. The principal difference is that in Europe, "Manden" (or, in French spelling, Manding, Mandingue) is used for the group including Bamana-Maninka-Mandinka-Jula-Dafin, and "Mande" - for the larger family (i.e., Manden + all other groups: South-Western Mande, Soninke-Bozo, Susu-Jalonke, Eastern Mande). The term "Manden/Manding" is by origin the name of the core zone of cultural orientation of all ethnic groups speaking mutually intelligible (or almost so) languages and having, at the same time, the idea of descent from Ancient Mali. "Mande" is an artificial creation of European scholars; it was first used in 1867 work by H. Steintal and fixed in its modern "European" meaning by Maurice Delafosse. This form is obtained by the dropping of the final nasal of the word "Manden," and is not used by speakers of these languages, except for some Bamana or Jula-Konya dialects where the final nasal can be omitted in the citation form but not in combined words. In fact, this terminology reflects the "monocentric" (from the socio-linguistic point of view) vision of the Mande family: Manden/Manding group is considered as "central" within the family, and all other languages are "peripheral," "tributaries," "not quite Manding but still Mande." However imperfect, this usage allows distinguishing between two notions, as long as the small final nasal is not disregarded.

In the "American tradition," the "core group of the Mande language family (Bamana-Maninka-Jula-Mandinka-Dafin) is named "Mandekan." This term was introduced by Charles Bird (for the first time in his 1968 article in the *Journal of West African Languages* (I am grateful to Joseph Lauer for this reference). In fact, the word "Mandekan" is an artificial creation. In any language of the group, the nasal cannot be omitted within a complex word, and before -kan the stem in question is obligatorily pronounced as "Manden."



"Mandekan" combines a real morpheme -kan "language" and an artificial word "Mande."

This would not be worth discussing (there are a lot of artificial ethno- and linguonyms in Africa), unless this dropping of the final nasal would not lead to all sorts of confusion. Now, American authors, especially non-linguists, tend to omit -kan (because they are aware that this means "language") and to use just "Mande" for the entity Maninka-Bamana-Jula-Mandinka-Dafin. When they have to mention other languages of the broader family (or ethnic groups speaking these languages), they look for something else, and often enough it is "Manden" or "Manding" which they find. So, we can observe uses which are inverse to the practice long-established in Europe. Or sometimes, "Mande" or "Mandekan" is used for the languages, and "Manding" for their speakers, which creates an illusion that the final nasal in this stem is a sort of noun-class marker, something like ba- or wa- in Bantu languages.

I repeat: this situation is especially detrimental for non-linguists who tend to get lost in the multitude of terms which resemble each other, but are employed in different (sometimes inverse) ways, especially since this level of confusion is added to what were already sufficiently confusing ethno- and linguonyms in the Mande area. An effort is necessary to unify the usage before we definitively stop understanding each other.

It is not a question of "who is right and who is wrong", but of pure convention: specialists should just agree between themselves, use terms uniformly, and stop confusing each other with eccentricities in this sphere. I see three possible ways of such unification:

1. Americans embrace the European usage: "Manden/Manding" (probably, the form Manding is preferable for the reason of the French priority) for the branch Maninka-Bamana-Jula-Mandinka-Dafin, "Mande" for the whole family (including Manding).

2. Europeans embrace the American usage: "Mandekan" for the branch Maninka-Bamana-Jula-Maninka-Dafin, and something like "Greater Mande" (?) for the whole family. However, Americans should first agree first among themselves on the exact meaning of each term.

3. The term "Manden" with all imaginable phonetic/dialectal variants (Manding, Mandingue, Mandingo, Mandekan, Mande...) is reserved for the branch Maninka-Bamana-Jula-Mandinka-Dafin, and another term is accepted for the whole family.

To my mind, the best solution would be the third one. It allows us to avoid confusion caused by the presence or absence of the final nasal and, on the other hand, subdues the "monocentrism" which has more of a socio-historic background than a linguistic one: from the linguogenetic point of view, the branch Maninka-Bamana, etc., has a status comparable to that of the South-Western Mande subgroup or the San language/dialect cluster (the latter seems to be even more internally divergent than Manding). In fact, the use of the term "Mande" for the whole family is something like if Indo-European family would be named "Germanoid" or "Celtoid" family. However, this choice

is hardly realistic: the term "Mande" is well implanted, and it would be hardly possible to convince everybody to accept a completely new one.

Therefore, the first solution seems to me the most sound ("Manding" for the continuum Bamana-Maninka-Mandinka-Jula-Dafin and Mande for the whole family; the term "Mandingo" should be avoided in scholarly publications because of its polysemy, see below). I opt for this not because I am a European myself, but for several other reasons.

First, the European usage is more venerable, and in such questions as use of terms this factor is of primary importance unless the new terminology is more harmonious and easy to handle (which, it seems to me, is not the case in the American usage under discussion).

Second, we have to recognise that even if we do not care much about languages and are mainly interested in historical processes and cultural phenomena, the ethnonyms and the most currently used classifications of ethnic groups are in fact linguistically-based. Therefore, in this field linguist's opinions (and more precisely, the opinions of specialists in comparative Mande linguistics) cannot be disregarded. Unfortunately, it is a sad truth that today in the US and Canada, research in Mande linguistics is in decline: most scholars of the first generation of American Mande linguists are now retired, and younger researchers specialize mainly in history and verbal art. In Europe, though a certain decline is also visible (and the MANSA Meeting in Leiden manifested it clearly), it is not so pronounced as in North America. To the point: the only periodical on Mande linguistics, "Mandenkan", is being published in Paris.(1)

To conclude, I shall draw a list of Manding languages and adjacent Northern Mande languages with some comments concerning problem areas where confusion is possible because of similar or even identical names for different languages.

Manding is, from the genetic point of view, a small sub-branch within the Northern (Western) group of Mande.(2) It is a linguistic continuum with linguistic distance between its extreme representatives slightly overpassing the limit of mutual intelligibility of around 90 common words in the 100-word list of Swadesh.(3) There are no clear-cut limits within this continuum, so the traditionally distinguished languages (or dialects) "Bambara, Malinke, Dioula," etc. are in fact subcontinua smoothly flowing into each other. In the contact areas of these subcontinua, linguonyms and ethnonyms often lack stability and are sometimes interchangeable. Let us overview, without going into too much detail, the five subcontinua constituting Manding (though other segmentations are also not excluded), and consider current linguonyms used for them.

Bamana (Bambara in French tradition): The problem about this ethnonym is that, in all probability, its original meaning is "heathen", and this meaning is still attested in the language; in the northern regions of Cote d'Ivoire, "Bambara" are non-islamized Senufo, as opposed to Muslim Jula who are Manden-speakers.



The North-Western subcontinuum: This includes Mandinka (also Mandinko, Mandingo) in Gambia, Senegal and Guinea-Bissau (but not in Sierra Leone and Liberia), Kakolo, Khassonka, Maninka of Eastern Senegal, and Mali to the North-West of Kita. The main distinctive feature of this subbranch is a five-vowel system (there is no opposition between the open and closed e and o), while in other Manden languages there are seven vowels. It should be added that the main criterium of grouping these languages into a distinct subcontinuum lies at the phonological level: eg., Khassonka is close to Mandinka in its phonology, while its vocabulary is much closer to Bamana.

Maninka of Guinea-Conakry and Mali (Manden region, Sibi, etc.): In fact, the Maninka dialect of the Manden region is in many points closer to the "Standard Bamana" than to Maninka-Mori of Guinea (Bamako being located on the boundary between Bamana and Maninka areas, its dialect is strongly influenced by the neighbouring Maninka dialects), and there is a tendency among Malian Maninka to identify themselves with Bamana. The most visible distinctive features of Maninka-Mori (which is growing to be a sort of "Standard Maninka" for Guinea) are: dropping of intervocalic velars (\*-g- or \*-k-); existence of the sound gb; intervocalic -d- (in variation with -r-) corresponding to -t- in Mandinka and -r- in Bamana.

The term *Jula* (Dioula): This covers several realities.

1. There is an "interethnic *Jula*" (tagbusi-kan) of Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina, only slightly different from the "Standard Bamana" and absolutely mutually intelligible with it. 2. There are about 25 local idioms in Cote d'Ivoire (*Jula* of Kong, Mauka, Nigbikan, Worodugukan, Koyagakan, Korokan...). Very variable and representing a continuum, they are generally also referred to as "*Jula*." This dialect continuum disrespects state boundaries and stretches to the Guinea forest (Konyanka) and Liberia (Manyia). 3. In Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso any speaker of any Manden language is currently called "*Jula*", and any Manden language is regarded as "*Jula*."

Marka-Dafin of the frontier region of Mali and Burkina: This is a dialect/language cluster including such idioms as Bon/Bolon, Marka, Dafin, Meeka, and also "Maninka" (which is not at all the same thing as Maninka of Guinea or of the Manding region, another possible source of confusion).

There is also a term "Mandingo" which is currently used in Liberia and Sierra Leone in just the same way as "*Jula*" in Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina, i.e., it is applied to any Manding language and Manding-speaker. Most probably, this term was transmitted by Englishmen from Gambia (or by Portuguese from Senegambia at an earlier period). This is visible from the final -o which is evidently a definite article attested in most languages of the North-Western Manden subcontinuum.

One can easily see that existing ethnonyms provide quite a lot of possibilities for confusion, even if scholars do not add more. *Jula*, in fact, is not a particular cluster from a strictly linguistic point of view, but a local term for "Manding" (linguistically,

"inter-ethnic *Jula*" should be considered as a dialect of "Standard Bamana," to which it is much closer than, e.g., the Baninko dialect of Bamana). The term "Maninka" is applied to idioms included in three different subbranches. Mandingo seems to be a local term for the Mandinka language in Guinea-Bissau, and at the same time it is the term for all Manding languages in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

The closest to Manding within the Northern (Western) group is the branch Kuranko-Lele, next to them being the Vai-Kono. Among the main criteria setting these languages apart from Manden is the correspondence "k" in Vai-Kuranko with "s" in Manden, as in nika--nisi (cow), and kila--sila/sira (road). Also, the letter "s" in Vai-Kuranko, "l" in Maninka-Mandinka-Jula, and "d" in Bamana, as in sa-la/da (put). (Kuranko-Lele are inconsequent in this relation). Besides, Vai-Kono and Kuranko-Lele have the noun morpheme -e/-i, which exists in no Manden language.

Another branch of Northern (Western) Mande which is fairly close to Manding but distinct from it is the Jogo cluster (known also as Ligbi, Numu, Hwela) in Cote d'Ivoire and Western Ghana. As for other Northern (Western) Mande languages, there seems to be no question of assimilating them to Manding, so I am not going to discuss them here: of them, only Mende is sometimes erroneously attached in non-linguistic publications to the Manding because of its sound, though it is a language of the South-Western Mande group (others include: Looma/Toma, Kpelle/Guerze, Loko, and Bandi).

I consider this short note as an invitation to discussion which hopefully will lead to uniformity of usage. To the end of January 1996, I can be reached by e-mail at <vydrine@msu.edu>. My e-mail in Russia is <azic@evrdom.spb.su> but please do not use this for very long messages because the user must pay for each kb of message.

## NOTES

1. A great deal of linguistic work on Mande languages is presently being done by African scholars in Mali, Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire, etc., but their priorities lie in more practical spheres (elaboration of vocabulary, perfecting of orthography, synchronic description of languages and dialects), and their publications concerning the whole linguistic family, over the state boundaries, are yet to come.

2. I do not touch here on the internal classification of the Mande family; see on this point a very sound article by Raimund Kastenholz "Comparative Mande Studies: State of the Art" in "Sprache und Geschichte in Afrika", 12/13 (1991/92), pp. 107-158.

3. In dissertations by K. Bimson (1978) and R. Long (1971), which are most often referred to in what concerns lexicostatistics for Mande, this figure ranges about 80 words for Manding ("Mandekan"), but their figures (especially that of Long) are always heavily understated. So, for the pair of languages "Bambara-Vai," Long provides the figure of 57 words, Bimson -



75 words (my tentative calculation is 78-79 words). For "Bamana-Maninka," Long has 94 cognates (no calculation by Bimson; my calculation for the pair "Maninka-Mori and Bamana-Bamako" is 98), etc. This underestimation of closeness between Mande languages derives, on one hand, from unreliability of data used by these authors and, on the other, from well-known deficiencies of Maurice Swadesh's lexicostatistical method, the most serious of which is the lack of clearness in the treatment of synonyms. More sophisticated lexicostatistical methods (e.g., that of Sergei Starostin) are yet to be applied to Mande.

### **Access to Ph.D. Dissertations from Universities in the U.S.A.**

We have heard that some of our European colleagues have been frustrated in their efforts to gain access to Ph.D. dissertations from the U.S.A. Bound photocopies can be purchased from: UMI Dissertation Services, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Telephone (313) 761-4700.

### **Book, Journal, and Article Releases**

#### **BOOKS**

1995. Mary Jo Arnoldi, *Playing with Time: Art and Performance in Central Mali*. Indiana University Press. Pp. xx, 227. 84 illustrations.

This book contains an account of Mande theater tradition from the interrelated vantage points of the players, the audiences, and the artists who make the masquerades and puppets. Basing her work on current theory in anthropology, art, and performance studies, the author examines in depth the processes by which Malians create an affective and dramatic vehicle that expresses their individual, social, and historical identities. Generously illustrated with field photographs and incorporating materials from the author's extensive interviews with sculptors and performers, this performance-centered study foregrounds time, change, and human agency. It recognizes the theater as a dynamic arena of artistic action and a site for the production of cultural knowledge.

1995. Samba Diop, *The Oral History and Literature of the Wolof People of Waalo, Northern Senegal: The Master of the Word (Griot) in the Wolof Tradition*. The Edwin Mellen Press: African Studies Volume 36. Pp. 389.

A revised and updated version of the author's Ph.D. dissertation, University of California at Berkeley. It contains a 975-line variant of "The Epic Tale of the Waalo Kingdom" in both Wolof and English.

#### **JOURNALS**

Valentin Vydrine calls our attention to the journal *MANDENKAN*, devoted to linguistic studies and

edited by Gérard Dumestre. Usually published semi-annually, it has been around since 1981, but it has very limited circulation and some MANSA members might not be aware of it. Vydrine reports that Professor Dumestre has not been charging any subscription fees, but that he asks that requests be limited to specialists who will "really use it." Some back issues are available, and several Africana libraries in the U.S. contain complete runs, so it would be available through inter-library loan. The MANSA Newsletter editor has a copy of the "Index Mandenkan" listing numbers 1-20, 1981-90.

### **The Forthcoming MANSA DIRECTORY**

We are hoping to send out the first edition in March, 1996. If you have not yet submitted your up-dated information, including current address and telephone numbers, e-mail address and research interests, now is the time to do so. We have members who submitted the up-date forms but instead of stating their research interests said "same as before," which was not very helpful. If you have failed to submit that information, we would like to have it for the directory. Please help us make the directory as current as possible.

### **MANSA T-Shirts**

At the MANSA meeting, in the rush to get through the most urgent business concerning a future conference and the by-laws, the chair forgot to display the T-shirt and remind members of their availability.

To order your MANSA T-shirt send \$17.40 per shirt (15.00 plus 2.40 each for mailer & postage; overseas orders please include an additional 2.50 per order) to: David Conrad, History Department, SUNY-Oswego, Oswego, NY 13126

### **New & Renewed MANSA Members & Address Changes**

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- Kim Camara, 177-07 Brittain Dr., Tallahassee, FL 32301: Florida State University, anthropology & ethnomusicology, issues of marginality, spirituality with popular musicians like Salif Keita; studying reggae music and cross-cultural exchanges between West Africa and Jamaica
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- G  rard Dumestre, INALCO, 2 rue de Lille, 75007 Paris, France
- David Dwyer, Department of Anthropology, 334 Baker Hall, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824: Anthropology & African languages and culture with emphasis on language, power and ideology. Coordinator of African Language Program at MSU.
- James Gilmore, University of Illinois, Department of Anthropology, 109 Davenport Hall, 607 S. Mathews Avenue, Urbana, IL 61801: Graduate student, primary research in gender and status issues among Mande artisans and ritual specialists.
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- Jan Jansen (notice of telephone number changes in The Netherlands) Utrecht numbers have added a "2" and Leiden numbers have added a "5". Examples using Jansen's numbers: (Home in Utrecht) 030 2870586 (Office in Leiden) 071 5272975
- Michelle C. Johnson, University of Illinois, 109 Davenport Hall, MC-148, Urbana, IL 61801: Ph.D. student in socio-cultural anthropology planning on research among the Mandingo of Northern Guinea-Bissau. Interested in ritual, secrecy and women's initiation, especially the transformation of personhood during initiation and how this at once shapes and is shaped by larger political economic, social, and ideological forces.
- James Jones, 506 Main Hall, West Chester, PA 19383
- Cherif Keita, Department of Romance Languages, Carleton College, Northfield, MN 55057
- Kassim Kon  , Department of Anthropology, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405
- Elise Levin, Northwestern University, Anthropology Department, 1810 Hinman Ave., Evanston, IL 60208: Recently completed fieldwork in Dabola, Upper Guinea on family histories, family formation and fertility practices among Maninka and Peulh. Dissertation will deal with changing fertility decisions and practices in the face of new contraceptive products.
- Nehemia Levtzion, Institute of Asian & African Studies, The Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel
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- Marie Miran, Sderot Hen 50, Tel Aviv 64167, Israel: Graduate student, University of Tel Aviv, research to be done on Islam in northern C  te d'Ivoire
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