



# MANSA

Newsletter Number 33 -- Winter 1996

## 11th Annual Meeting of The Mande Studies Association

The meeting was convened on Sunday, November 24 at 5:30 p.m. Members in attendance: Jan Jansen, B. Marie Perinbam, David Gamble, Eric Charry, Emily Osborn, Gregory Mann, Catherine Bogosian, Molly Roth, John Hutchison, Kate Ezra, Barbara Frank, David Henige, Carmen Coustaut, Janet Goldner, Nick Francis, Kassim Kone, Saskia Brand, Berend Timmer, Mirjam de Bruijn, Julianne Short, Lucy Durán, Stephen Belcher, Peter Mark, Ralph Austen, Nehemia Levitzion, Ariane DeLuz, Stephen Wooten, Joseph Lauer, Priscilla Colt, David Skinner, Rosa De Jorio, Alpha Bah, Jeanne Tounagara, Dianne Oyler, Sarah Brett-Smith, Alma Gottlieb, Musa Abdul Hakim, Maria Grosz-Ngaté, Cheick M. Cherif Keita, Richard Roberts, Dolores Koenig, Bob Newton, Martin Klein, David Robinson, Mohamed Saidou N'Daou, Allen Howard, Laura Arntson, David Conrad.

### Treasurer's Report (Laura Arntson)

We began the fiscal year with a balance of \$880.33 and ended (Nov. 15, 1996) with a balance of \$520.87. During the fiscal year, \$2,189.43 was paid out for supplies and expenses for the production and mailing of four newsletters and the MANSA Directory, and \$120 in monthly service charges (that will no longer be accrued). We received \$1,783.77 in dues and T-shirt sales.

The average cost for newsletter production (photocopying and supplies) and mailing is \$320.00. At three newsletters per year (this last fiscal year four were issued), we estimate \$960.00 in expenses toward the newsletter.

Fifteen new members joined during 1995-96, and our current total membership is 234. Of that number 62 are sponsored members. If members' dues are received during the fiscal year when they are due, we can anticipate receiving approximately \$1,160.00, not including sponsorships.

We closed the MANSA account with Citibank due

to too many inadequately explained debits and credits, other irregularities and poor service, plus a \$10 monthly service charge, and opened a new account with Citizens Bank of East Lansing (the staff is helpful and there is no monthly service charge because they honor our non-profit status).

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING

[Summarized from a taped transcript of the meeting]  
François Manchuelle

Recalling the death of our colleague François Manchuelle in the crash of TWA Flight 800, the President began the meeting by asking Ariane DeLuz to read aloud the following letter received from Bachir Camara, Chef Section, Arts et Culture, Direction Préfectorale de la Jeunesse, Arts et Sports of Kindia, Guinea:

Monsieur,

C'est dans une profonde douleur et un regret inestimable que j'ai appris le décès de notre collaborateur François Manchuelle, le 17 Juillet 1996 à New York, par le biais de MANSA Newsletter #32.

A travers ce message, j'adresse mes condoléances les plus attristées à la Famille du défunt, à tous les membres du MANSA et à tous les responsables du Africana Studies Program of New York University.

François Manchuelle en sa qualité d'historien avait consacré toute sa carrière à la recherche sur la culture Africaine.

Il reste encore parmi nous de par ses oeuvres. C'est pourquoi pour l'immortaliser, je propose à notre association, à Africa Family Film Foundation et au Africana Studies Program of New Yourk University, une parcelle de terrain d'environ 625 m<sup>2</sup> pour l'édification de la "Maison des Traditions Africaines François Manchuelle" à Kindia.

Cette maison, que sera orientée dans la recherche culturelle évoluera sous la gestion des organisations partenaires pour sa création. Ce n'est qu'un signe de reconnaissance pour rendre hommage à notre collaborateur et je prie toutes les personnes de bonne volonté de soutenir ce projet.

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

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

LAURA ARNTSON, *Secretary-Treasurer*, Michigan State University

### 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

TÉRÉBA TOGOLA, Institut des Sciences Humaines



Je vous prie de transmettre ce message à toutes les personnes de bonne volonté pour soutenir ce projet. Je joins à cette lettre la décision d'attribution de cette parcelle de terrain, délivrée par les autorités Préfectorales de Kindia. En cas de réaction positive, je suis prêt à vous envoyer le plan de masse et tous les détails techniques du projet.

Je vous rassure de ma parfaite disponibilité de travailler et de m'adonner à la recherche culturelle dans Mandé Studies Association et je vous offre une photo de souvenir.

Veuillez agréer Monsieur, l'expression de mes sentiments les meilleurs.

Bachir Camara

Acknowledging this kind and generous gesture from our Guinean colleagues, the President thanked Mr. Camara and the Préfet of Kindia, and called for discussion. The question was raised as to how such a building would be paid for. Ariane DeLuz noted that she had a round house of 8 meters built in Côte d'Ivoire for about \$3000.

Another question arose concerning the location of Kindia. It was noted that this city is far to the south of the Mande area near Conakry, and that Mande studies specialists would rarely, if ever have occasion to spend time in Kindia.

It was decided that once Mr. Camara's proposal has been circulated in the MANSA Newsletter, the general membership will be polled for opinions and suggestions about how we should proceed in this regard.

Next, the President called for a period of silence in memory of François Manchuelle, and the members bowed their heads in quiet contemplation and celebration of François's life and accomplishments.

Amendments to the By-Laws proposed by Secretary Laura Arntson:

Section IV, Article II: Section 1 Term Limits, Secretary-Treasurer. It has been proposed that this 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." Arntson noted that previously it was set up as three years so the Secretary would be elected on alternate years, but after six years it would no longer be alternating.

Members declined discussion and Steven Wooten moved to accept, seconded by Ralph Austen. The motion carried unanimously.

Another amendment was made in Section 2, changing the word "which" to "that," moved by Barbara Frank, seconded by Kate Ezra, and passed unanimously.

Election of President and Vice-President

The President recalled that at the previous year's meeting in Orlando, MANSA adopted By-Laws, and he thanked the members who stayed late in 1995 to finish with those. Noting that our organization is probably unique in that it had lasted so many years without ever electing its officers, the President called for election of a President and Vice-President. He excused himself from

the proceedings and left the room accompanied by Vice-President Marie Perinbam.

Laura Arntson called for nominations, saying she had prepared ballots that she would pass out because the By-Laws called for a secret ballot.

Peter Mark: "I'm not a joiner, and coming to MANSA some years ago was a new experience. I think the last time I addressed this meeting, it was to argue that we shouldn't have By-Laws. And, if you can't beat them, join them. The reason why I really, love MANSA is, clearly, David Conrad. David has done so much, of course, along with Marie. They have created the organization and it is so much David's imprint that it is the kind of place that one comes to because one is interested in meeting like-minded people, and not having a formal organization. This is not the kind of organization that exists so that we can have officers and elect ourselves officers. This is the kind of organization that I come to because substantive research gets done and very meaningful exchanges take place. And anyone who was at Leiden can attest to that. This was very much the case here too. And so, it's not only logical, but it's the only imaginable thing to do, now that he's out of the room, which is to nominate David Conrad for President."

Nehemia Levtzion asked if Marie was also nominated for Vice-President, and Peter Mark replied that if it was possible to nominate two executives with one motion, he nominated Marie Perinbam for Vice-President. Levtzion seconded the nomination. Arntson asked for further nominations. She asked if there was any problem with people nominating themselves, and Ralph Austen said "They might get elected."

Bob Newton moved to close the nominations, seconded by David Skinner, passed unanimously. Arntson then propose to pass out the ballots, but someone asked "Why waste the paper?" Stephen Belcher asked if the ballots could be dispensed with, Ralph Austen said it is possible, Richard Warms suggested it be done by acclamation. An unidentifiable member agreed and said he should so move. Richard Warms moved, Ralph Austen seconded, a vote for acclamation was called for and done. Arntson then announced that David Conrad had been elected unanimously as President for a two-year term, and Marie Perinbam as Vice-President for a two-year term, by a unanimous vote of acclamation. Conrad and Perinbam re-entered the room to applause, and were informed of the vote. Conrad thanked the members for the great honor, and the meeting continued.

Lucy Durán announced the death of Sidiki Diabaté (see the notice elsewhere in this issue, supplied by Durán), and asked that people try to collect copies of any interview tapes, etc. that they might have, to give back to his family.

The next item on the agenda concerned Article IV of the By-Laws, 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."

Noting that it is now necessary to elect an Advisory Board according to this By-Law, the President stressed his agreement in the importance of achieving a representative gender and geographical balance. However, he expressed his concern over the question of members of the board being required to attend MANSA meetings biennially. He reminded the members of the ongoing importance of recognizing outstanding African colleagues who live overseas, and he noted that so far, the best way we've had of doing that has been to maintain them as members of the Advisory Board, though they would not have been able to maintain a biennial presence at meetings. He pointed out that we presently have Advisory Board members of this description such as Tereba Togola of ISH in Bamako and Mamadou Diawara of Bayreuth University who have distinguished themselves at every opportunity, and that Yacouba Konaté of the University of Abidjan, who distinguished himself at the conferences in both Bamako and Leiden is of similar stature, though he has not been named to the Board.

The President reiterated the need to elect an Advisory Board, but asked for discussion to determine if some provision could be made so we would not lose the ability to honor African colleagues residing overseas like Tereba Togola and Mamadou Diawara.

Barbara Frank and Lucy Durán began the discussion by suggesting possible alterations to the language, e.g., removing the stipulation that someone attend biennially. Barbara pointed out that there would be a problem with creating a separate category of board members.

David Henige suggested simply increasing the number of board members, and Stephen Wooten suggested that a phrase "to make people come to the meeting" excludes some people, prefers others, and sets up differences that do not need to be there.

Barbara Frank noted a problem in terms of numbers, and the question of support from a larger board. Conrad replied that he had been concerned that "if we left it at five [and kept on certain members] it would mean that we'd only have two new board members... and I think there are more people who would like to participate."

Richard Warms asked what it is that we currently consider to be the function of the Advisory Board, and how it has functioned historically, i.e., how frequently board members have actually been asked to advise on a crucial issue. Marie Perinbam replied that Board

Members have been consulted on matters affecting the conferences.

Warms asked how important it is for Board Members to be instantly available for consultation, noting that if they are frequently consulted and have to be readily available, then there is a problem.

Nehemia Levtzion raised the question of Board Members also being members of the Executive Council, and Warms replied that the question he had asked could also be asked about the Executive Council. Levtzion said, "Then you may pose the same question about all the By-Laws," and Warms agreed. Levtzion then asked if there is a need for an Executive Council.

Marie Perinbam said that in the past we have consulted some of the Board Members by telephone, never all of them "because we've always operated informally, and we thought that if we have the majority of the people who can give an opinion on [something], then we don't necessarily go for everybody." She suggested that it might be said that for major decisions, especially those affecting conferences, the President needs to consult perhaps 2/3 of the Board Members or something to that effect."

Jeanne Tounkara suggested that we sometimes tend "to complicate these things more than they really need to be." She said the sense among us is "that we all really feel it in our hearts.... but to implement those sentiments into a set of By-Laws...poses certain complications." She suggested that we go slow, and that it might be best to return this question to a committee.

Someone [unidentified on tape] asked about the practicality of electing an entirely new board of five members every two years, suggested that this would be quite awkward to do, and wondered if staggered terms would be better. Ariane DeLuz suggested that they could serve longer than two years, and Conrad said he thought they could be renewed. He went on to say that for now we were going according to the way the By-Laws were written, but that amendments could be proposed.

Stephen Wooten reminded us that the original question involved the biennial attendance and wondered if a simple solution might not be to strike it off. Conrad asked if members felt strongly enough to increase the number of Board Members from five to eight. Rosa De Jorio said she thought the two-year rotation was a good thing so more people could share the position, with some overlapping.

Conrad said that regardless of what is decided, he hoped it would be possible to retain Mamadou Diawara and Tereba Togola as Board Members.

Laura Arntson said she thought Jeanne Tounkara had made a good point, and suggested that rather than pushing through an amendment now, we should think about how we would write it, and then publish several versions in the newsletter, and then vote on it at the next meeting.

Conrad asked if we could go ahead and elect some Board Members, and Arntson said she was speaking only of taking time to compose the amendment.



Peter Mark said that if we were going to increase Board membership we should add someone from The Gambia, and supported the idea of increasing the number of Board members. Saïdou N'Daou spoke in favor of also having a Board member from Conakry.

More discussion ensued, with contributions from Robert Newton, Richard Warms, Peter Mark, Jeanne Toungara, Saskia Brand, Stephen Wooten, Eric Charry, Saïdou N'Daou, Julianne Short, Martin Klein, and Rosa De Jorio. During that discussion, Jeanne Toungara argued that "We have an expanding group of scholars who are interested in participating in this organization and its activities," indicating her feeling that we need to find a way to incorporate them in a maximum way into the procedures. She moved to table the question of electing new members to the Advisory Board, so it could go to committee for consideration.

Peter Mark expressed the motion to be tabled: "That we increase the size of the Board provisionally to eight and instruct the new Board to modify subsequent Board size consistent with the effort actively to involve members from Africa or Europe." The vote to table that motion was 25 in favor, 10 against, 6 abstaining.

This means that we retain the status quo until next year while we discuss it on e-mail and/or name a committee to sort it out.

Secretary-Treasurer Laura Arntson announced that anyone who does not have e-mail or access to the listserv can write to her whatever they want to send, and she will see that it gets sent out. She stressed that we do not want to exclude anyone who is not connected to the internet.

#### West African Research Association (WARA)

Members were reminded of the WARA conference to be held in Dakar 23-28 June, 1997 (see notice below).

#### The Journal of Mande Studies

The President announced that a clear majority of members had voted for the title *The Journal of Mande Studies*, and that it was now time to decide if we are in fact ready to undertake such a thing. David Henige explained that we would require an editor with an editorial board that would approve articles and submit them for review, putting together five or six articles for an issue. (In later discussion that did not come through on the tape, Henige explained that the journal will not cost us anything to produce, and it will be of the highest possible quality, published at the same standard as *History in Africa*. At another point he mentioned that the publisher would print off an extra run of each issue of the journal to be sent gratis to colleagues in Africa.)

Discussion ensued with contributions by Jan Jansen, Peter Mark, David Henige, Berend Timmer, Ralph Austen, Alma Gottlieb, Tom Hale, Barbara Frank, Marie Perinbam, Richard Warms, Ariane DeLuz, Saskia Brand, Cherif Keita, Rosa DeJorio, Alpha Bah, Martin Klein, Richard Roberts, Kate Ezra, and possibly a few who could not be heard because of interruptions in tape transmission during dues collection.

It was agreed that there was plenty of production from MANSA members alone (but not exclusively) to easily fill at least one issue per year. It was decided that book reviews would not be done, and that one of the editors should be francophone so we can encourage articles in French.

MANSA members' acceptance of a journal is not unanimous, and there was some discussion about the pros and cons of issuing one.

Barbara Frank pointed out an advantage being that with an audience of Mande scholars we do not have to spend several pages of our articles explaining Mande social structure. She added later that she was initially against the idea, but that she now feels we can do this journal and also reach our colleagues in other publications. Berend Timmer spoke out completely against a journal limited to Mande studies on the grounds that a primary goal is to make our research available to a wider audience. Richard Warms expressed some reservations but feels it would be useful to have another outlet for publications. Alma Gottlieb expressed favor because of the interdisciplinary nature of a Mande studies journal. Jan Jansen, Saskia Brand, and Cherif Keita stressed the importance of providing opportunities for more African colleagues to publish.

David Henige pointed out that these were details that could be settled later, that we needed to decide on editors (both francophone and anglophone and also of various disciplines) and an editorial board. The President called for a vote, Richard Warms moved that we establish a Journal of Mande Studies, seconded by Cherif Keita. The vote passed with 2 opposed and 7 abstentions.

During discussion about locating editors, Richard Roberts and Alpha Bah both urged the importance of peer review, to which there was general consent. Alma Gottlieb stressed what a lot of work the editing would be and that they should seek institutional support, i.e., release time or an assistant. Marty Klein observed that his department would "certainly" not give release time "to look after *The Journal of Mande Studies*," and David Conrad accused him of dissing our journal before it even got started.

After much discussion, the members were pleased to find Stephen Belcher and Ariane DeLuz willing to initiate co-editorship of the new journal (later they made the welcome addition of Sarah Brett-Smith to their ranks). It was decided that the editors would begin soliciting contributions to the journal and that they would select an editorial board.

#### Panel Suggestions for Next Year's ASA Meeting

The President made his annual request that people organizing panels made up solely of MANSA members please remember to specify to the ASA that it is a MANSA-sponsored panel so the organization will receive that recognition in the ASA Meeting Program. Nearly every year we have a panel for which we do not receive credit, and it happened again this year.

Suggested panels:  
Griaule-Dieterlen Research and Writings, with an



attempt to involve Claude Meillassoux (Ariane DeLuz and Ralph Austen)  
 People in Architecture in Mande and on the Fringes of the Mande World (Peter Mark)  
 Social Organization in Communities that include not only Mande Peoples, but Jola, Serer, and Others (Berend Timmer)  
 Niger River Communities including Somono and Bozo, and involving Ethnomusicological Topics (Marie Perinbam)  
 Sources of Maninka Historiography (Lansine Kaba and David Conrad -- added later)  
 Some of these will come to fruition and some will not. Members are encouraged to develop new ideas between now and the March deadline, but please let the editor know about them for the newsletter.

#### Dates and Location of the International Conference on Mande Studies in Banjul, The Gambia

The President repeated part of what he reported in Newsletter #32 (pp. 3-4). He reminded members that the high tourist season in The Gambia is from November 1 to April 30, so the conference should be held in May or June, preferably before June 15 because this would allow participants from The Netherlands to get their best possible travel rates.

The discussion of the location focused on questions of convenience, accessibility, availability of amenities, and price. Most of the talk centered on the Kairaba (see Newsletter #32). Berend Timmer pointed out that the previous report had not mentioned the dormitory at Independence Stadium in Bakau, and Lucy Duran noted that this is a very uncomfortable place that would appeal to the more Spartan among us, while others would prefer something more convenient and better located. She pointed out that anyone who did not want to stay at the Kairaba could book a room elsewhere, just as many had done in San Francisco.

At one point Berend Timmer objected to the Kairaba on the grounds that "every big international meeting which is held in The Gambia...is held in the Kairaba," and that it is "a little above our standards." Lucy Duran responded that the reason they hold their meetings at the Kairaba is because it has all the facilities. Timmer indicated that he felt we would be compromising our integrity by meeting at the Kairaba, noting that the Museum of Ethnology in Leiden and the Islamic Cultural Center in Bamako had been ideal locations. Lucy Duran responded that there is no comparable place in Banjul, that in The Gambia one is "out in the middle of nowhere" having to take a taxi to get anyplace, and that it was better to be at the Kairaba "where at least everything's within walking distance." She said she would also prefer to be somewhere else, but that the Kairaba was the most practical location available to us. Tom Hale asked if Conrad had checked the Atlantic Hotel (it was reported on in Newsletter #32), and Duran replied that its meeting rooms fell short of what we would need.

Laura Arntson mentioned that she is working on applications for grants specifically to help us with the

conference expenses. Conrad reported that he had applied for and received a grant from a new agency in Germany. He said he had first been told that a specific and fairly substantial amount would be available, but that when the grant came through it was only \$200. He noted, however, that we are grateful for this as a beginning, and that it would pay for one day's rental of the conference room.

Conrad asked for suggestions from members about possible sources of funding. Jan Jansen said he had been asked by Mamady Dembele and Seydou Camara at ISH in Bamako for us to do everything possible to get money for transport for people in West Africa. Conrad said he had written to some of our colleagues in The Netherlands asking for their views on how we might raise travel funds for African participants because they had been so successful in doing that for the Leiden conference. (He has since been informed that Jansen, Roger Bedaux, and Walter Van Beek are looking into various possibilities).

Lucy Duran suggested that we apply to Bamani Cissoko of Air Dabya. She was asked to go ahead with that, but someone said Bamani is in jail, having been extradited from Switzerland. Peter Mark reported that the Dapper Foundation has changed its grant policy and that any African participants working in the arts might be eligible. Ariane DeLuz suggested the name of a man who could look into funding from Dapper, and promised to contact him.

On travel arrangements, Lucy Duran suggested that they be worked out with a travel agent in London where it is possible to get cheap package rates to The Gambia. (Laura Arntson is also checking with travel agents in the U.S.) Martin Klein reminded us that for a group rate it is necessary to guarantee occupation of a certain number of rooms in the hotel.

During the course of the discussion it was decided that the first choice of dates for the conference would be three or four days between June 7 - June 15, and that the next choice would be during the third week in June.

The meeting adjourned at c. 7:30 p.m.

#### **The Passing of Two Jeliw Ngaraw of The Manden: Sanassey Kouyate and Sidiki Diabate**

**Sanassey Kouyaté of Jelibakoro**  
 (D. Conrad)

In May, 1996 I made my usual visit to the University of Conakry to greet N'Fanly Kouyate, Director of External Relations and the man who, since 1991, Fulbrighters and other American researchers have had to thank for the *maison de passage* at Boulibinet in Conakry. I showed him photographs of his uncle, Sanassey Kouyate of Jelibakoro, who was one of the reasons for my being in Guinea. Having not been there since July 1994, I was shocked and deeply saddened to learn that Sanassey had died in March, 1995. This is a



particularly tragic loss, first of all for his family, friends, and everyone who knew him, because Sanassey was one of the genuinely beautiful people of the world, and also because he will be irreplaceable in his official capacity as belentigi of Jelibakoro.

Sanassey Kouyate's passing is significant to millions of readers who are familiar with the basic outline of the Jelibakoro pool of epic knowledge of which he had been the most recent guardian. Sanassey was the nephew and intellectual heir of Jeli Mamudu Kouyate, from whom Djibril Tamsir Niane collected the narrative on which he based his book *Soundjata ou l'épopée mandingue* (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1960), English translation by G.D. Pickett, *Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali* (London: Longman, 1965). Sanassey had become the belentigi of Jelibakoro upon Mamudu Kouyate's passing.

In 1994 I planned to spend time with Sanassey at Jelibakoro, but my first meeting with him was entirely accidental. In March of that year as I was moving from Kankan to Siguiri, I stopped in Jelibakoro to greet the dugutigi and find a guide to Kansana, a village lying east of Jelibakoro on the other side of the Milo River, where I had arranged to rendezvous with a jeli from Kouroussa.

In Jelibakoro I asked directions of a dignified, grey-bearded gentleman with a strikingly handsome face, who kindly accompanied me to the chief's house and sat down with us. As I explained my mission to the dugutigi and described the nature of my work, I mentioned that I hoped to return at a later date to meet Jeli Sanassey Kouyate. It was of course immediately revealed that this was the sparkling-eyed man sitting next to me. I will always regret that I did not simply stay in Jelibakoro at that time to conduct my business with Sanassey, because this would prove to be the only ideal opportunity I would ever have.

A few months later when I returned to Jelibakoro to keep an appointment with Sanassey, I found that his eldest son had suddenly died the day before. Sanassey's compound was bustling with activity as his wives and daughters prepared food for guests who had come to pay their condolences, so Sanassey told me, from as far away as Forécariah (southeast of Conakry). It could not have been a worse time for me to arrive at Sanassey's house, so after sharing a meal and offering my condolences I prepared to take my leave. However, he would not allow me to depart without something of what I had come for. Despite his personal tragedy and having a constant flow of visitors through his house, Sanassey insisted that I wait a while until he could sit down with me long enough to answer some questions.

When we had time to talk, Sanassey told me that the son who died was the one who was in line to follow him as Jelibakoro belentigi. He said this son was on the way to becoming a jeli ngara, that he knew the traditions better than he did himself, and that there was no one else nearly as worthy of taking over as belentigi after he was gone. Sanassey then expressed regret that the circumstances would not allow for the Mande epic performance we had intended to tape, but graciously

insisted that we address some of my most pressing questions. It was an exceptional act of hospitality, but by all accounts it was typical of Sanassey's style.

What with the 1994 death of Sanassey's son, the 1995 passing of this extraordinary man might well mark the end of one of the most important intellectual pools of oral tradition in the Mande world.

Perhaps the best way to remember Sanassey Kouyate is through some lines of his own artistry, reflecting his perspective on Mande jeliya and jatigiya as he addresses a Guinean host for whom he performed several years ago:

Your mother did her work very well. (Naamu)  
 If you hear a woman say:  
 "His bull is what I earned from winnowing grain,"  
 Her husband cultivated a very large farm. (Naamu)  
 Your mother did her work well.  
 The porridge that your mother prepared this morning,  
 It contained many savory bits.  
 Your mother's porridge was not watery. (Naamu)  
 We must greet you for the sake of ownership.  
 I am not a jeli of tightfisted people,  
 I am not a jeli of gluttons,  
 I am not a jeli of ungrateful people,  
 I am not a jeli of worthless people,  
 I am not a jeli of irresponsible people,  
 I am not a jeli of ordinary gumbo. (Naamu)  
 We are the jeliw of Manden. (Naamu)

### Sidiki Diabate

(Lucy Duran)

Sidiki Diabate, the Malian musician (jeli) died last September 29. He was considered by many to have been the greatest kora player of all time, and an expert on many aspects of Mande history. Although c. 73 years old, he was in remarkably good health, and his death came as a shock to friends, family, and the country as a whole. (Ironically, he died during a visit to his native home, Bansang, The Gambia, but his body was flown back to Mali at the request of the Malian Minister of Culture, and the Grand Chef des Griots. Sidiki was given a state burial at Bamako on October 5th.)

Sidiki was one of the last surviving members of a generation of pre-war kora players who were responsible for developing the repertoire and technique of the kora. Sidiki's own specialty was a remarkable and unique gift of improvisation, and detailed knowledge of Gambian Mandinka, as well as Maninka and Bamana repertoires, not just as a player but as someone who understood the "family relationships" of different melodies with the analytical mind of a trained musicologist.

In fact it is Sidiki who is acknowledged as the creator of a "Malian" style of kora playing, along with fellow musicians Jelimadi Sissoko (also of Gambian origin) and Batourou Sekou Kouyate (from Kita). Their remarkable musicianship was immortalized on the classic kora album *Cordes Anciennes* published in the famous series "Anthology of Malian Music" in 1970 by



the Malian Ministry of Culture. On the sleeve notes, the late Malian writer Massa Makan Diabate, comparing the styles of Sidiki and Batourou Sekou, remarks: "the music of Sidiki Diabate... animates the blood. The one [Batourou Sekou] addresses himself to the mind, the other to the boy... Sidiki would have followed the warriors to the battlefield, and, in the evenings, Batourou Sekou would have given them more courage..." *Cordes Anciennes* was the first recording of instrumental kora music, and it remains one of the greatest and most inspired pieces of kora playing to date. (Regrettably, a planned *Cordes Anciennes II* featuring Sidiki in duet with his eldest son Toumani, which I was to record in January 1997 in Mali, can now never happen.)

Though born in Bansang, The Gambia, Sidiki's background was in Mali. His father, Bala Diabate was from Galin (Kita) and was the first musician in the family to take up the kora (previously they had been ngoni players). In his early 20s, and already, by all accounts, a formidable player, Sidiki returned to Mali, settling in Bamako but travelling widely in Mali and Guinea with an ensemble of musicians who made songs such as Kaira famous.

After Malian independence, Sidiki Diabate began to think of moving back to The Gambia, but Modibo Keita persuaded him to stay by giving him a house in the Bamako suburb Ntomikorobougou, which remains the family home. Sidiki was a key musician in the Malian Ensemble Instrumental National through the late 60s and most of the 1970s. In 1977, when they performed at FESTAC in Lagos, Sidiki was declared "King of the kora." It was in the mid 70s that Sidiki was invited by Guinea's Sekou Toure to record with the great singer Sory Kandia Kouyate. Three albums were released of classic recordings including Sunjata, Tutu Jara, Duga, etc. earning Sidiki Diabate the Ordre National of Guinea (1974). At another time the Malian government honored Sidiki, making him a "Chevalier du Mali." Apart from one other album recorded in London during a 1987 visit with his wife the singer Mariama Kouyate, Sidiki made no other recordings.

Sidiki was a fierce traditionalist, an outspoken opponent of electric griotism and of various musical fads that have swept griot culture in Mali since the 70s. He did not suffer fools gladly, and had a reputation of being quite severe at times, not always forthcoming with foreign scholars. I was lucky enough to have been spared this treatment by being adopted as an honorary member of the family (I had studied in Gambia with his uncle, Amadu Bansang). My most treasured moments in Mali were those rare occasions when, sitting outside in the courtyard after an evening meal, Sidiki would play the kora and sing, sometimes with such poignancy, and so exquisitely, that the entire family would be in tears. To all kora players, Sidiki was a legend. His breadth of knowledge has sadly gone forever - if ever Hampate Ba's well-known observation about burning libraries applies, it is here - but his talent lives on in his two sons Momodou (now aged 16 and already a virtuoso) and

Toumani, a well-known artist in his own right, who has much of his father's style.

Toumani Diabate is currently working on a project to compile an archive of recordings, photos, etc. made by any researchers of his father. If any MANSA members know of or have any such materials, please contact either Toumani c/o the Centre Culturel Français, Bamako, or Lucy Duran at Department of Africa, SOAS, Thornhaugh St. London WC1, England

**West African Research Association  
WARA  
International Symposium on West Africa  
and the Global Challenge  
June 22 - 28, 1997  
Dakar, Senegal**

For the original call for papers, see the flyer on the back page of MANSA Newsletter #31. WARA invites faculty, researchers and graduate students involved in the study of West Africa, the Americas and the Caribbean to submit proposals for organized panels and individual presentations. To allow participants to better plan their visit to Senegal and West Africa, the symposium panels are being organized in three categories and grouped into three-day sessions throughout the week.

Part I: June 23 - 25, The African Diaspora in the Americas and the Caribbean. Panels Organizer: Dr. Sheila Walker, University of Texas at Austin

Part II: June 24 - 26, West African Research. Panels Organizer: David Conrad, SUNY-Oswego

Part III: June 26 - 28, Contemporary Issues, A Commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of Fulbright Programs: Democratization of Society, Urban Environment, Electronic Technology, and Education and Culture. Panels Organizer: Dr. Robert Fatton, University of Virginia

Topics are interdisciplinary. Contributions in the social sciences, public history, humanities and the arts are solicited. Submit an abstract (500 words max.) and pre-registration fees as soon as possible. Send to WARA, P.O. Box 742, Howard University, Washington, D.C. 20059. Registration fees: (residents of the U.S., Canada, Western Europe) members \$65, students \$45 (others) \$20.

**The Journal of Mande Studies**

The newly created Journal of Mande Studies invites submissions dealing with all aspects of the Mande world, as well as volunteers for manuscript evaluation and any other appropriate participation. Manuscripts from North America should be sent to Stephen Belcher at Department of Comparative Literature, N434 Burrowes Bldg., Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA 16802-6204, U.S.A. Manuscripts from Europe should be sent to Ariane DeLuz, Laboratoire d'Anthropologie Sociologique, 52 rue du Cardinale-Lemoine, 75005 Paris, France.



**Susan & Roderick McIntosh's  
Jenne-Jeno Archaeology  
Interactive Project Web-Site**

Our new web-site is devoted to an interactive project that will be posting material from Jenne during the period January 18-30. This can be accessed at: <http://forward/forward/ruf.rice.edu/forward/~anthforward/arch> (Click on "Mali interactive")

The students participating in this project are 4th, 5th, and 6th graders in our local school district. The material we post to the web page from Mali will in part be guided by questions the students e-mail to us in the field. The project's main objective is to provide a virtual encounter with African cultures past and present that moves beyond the romantic and stereotyped notions of Africa that American children frequently hold.

If anyone knows of web resources (on Africa, Mali, or Archaeology) appropriate for teachers or intermediate school students, please let us know so we can consider adding them as links.

Susan and Roderick McIntosh

**Book and Dissertation Releases**

**BOOKS:**

1996. Sarah Brett-Smith (trans. ed). *The Artfulness of M'Fa Jigi: An Interview with Nyamaton Diarra*. Madison: University of Wisconsin African Studies Program. Pp. 149.

In this book Brett-Smith presents the text of the fifth and last conversation between her research associate, Adama Mara, and the informant Nyamaton Diarra who is prominent in her book *The Making of Bamana Sculpture: Creativity and Gender* (Cambridge University Press, 1995).

1996. Mirjam de Bruijn and Han van Dijk. *Arid Ways: Cultural Understanding of Insecurity in Fulbe Society, Central Mali*. Amsterdam: Thesis Publishers.

This book examines how the Fulbe, an agro-pastoral tribe in the Sahel, deal with insecurity in their lives. A new interdisciplinary approach focuses on the dynamic interplay between ecological and historical realities in which ecological, social and political insecurity develops, on how the Fulbe cope with insecurity in relation to their natural and social resources and on the cultural understanding they develop of these processes and strategies.

The authors of *Arid Ways...* conclude that the Fulbe are progressively losing control of their environment and that the burden of insecurity is not borne equally by all in society. Given the complexity of the processes leading to this marginalization, the solutions proposed by governments and international aid agencies are inappropriate and only contribute to the further pauperization of pastoral people in the Sahel. More comprehensive scientific and policy initiatives are needed that recognize the insecure yet flexible nature of

life in the Sahel and the fundamental interconnection between environment, survival strategy and cultural history.

**CONTENTS (chapter titles)**

1. Introduction: Insecurity and the Study of Pastoralism
  2. The History of Natural Resource Management and Ideologies in the Hayre, 1400-1985
  3. Serma: Environment, Organization of the Village, and Drought
  4. The Pastoral Community: Sharing Milk
  5. The Muslim Community: Alsilaame'en
  6. What it Takes to be a Pullo, Al'aada and Juulde
  7. Farming and Herding Practices and the Role of Hazard
  8. The Dynamics of Agricultural and Pastoral Production
  9. The Circulation of Property at the Level of the *Wuro*
  10. The Tenure of Land and Control over Pastures
  11. Women between Kin and Affines
  12. Nobility and Survival: Coping with Poverty and Identity
  13. The Politics of Care: Coping with Illness
  14. The State, Development and Natural Resource Management
  15. Conclusion: Cultural Understandings of Insecurity
- Pp. 547. ISBN 90 5538 013 X. Price U.S.\$40. In U.S. and Canada order from: *i.b.d. Ltd.* 24 Hudson Street, Kinderhook, NY 12106. Tel. 1-800-343-3531. Fax: 518-758-1959.

1996. John Hanson. *Migration, Jihad, and Muslim Authority in West Africa*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

This revises late 19th Century colonialist assumptions about a West African Muslim social movement. Using indigenous Arabic manuscripts, travel narratives, and oral materials, Hanson assesses the meaning of a series of revolts against Islamic authority. The book investigates three political crises that took place at Nioro in the region of Karta in the upper Senegal River valley, conquered during a military jihad by Shaykh Umar Tal. Although Umar and his successors steadfastly promoted jihad, Futanke colonists, defying their leaders, opted to remain settled on the lands they had seized; instead of going to war, the colonists devoted themselves to production of foodstuffs for sale in an increasingly vital regional economy. Incisive analysis of charismatic authority and its limits, as demonstrated by Umar and his son Amadu Sheku, illuminates patterns in the unfolding relations between leaders and followers.

Pp. 224, \$39.95.

**DISSERTATION DEFENDED**

1996. Rosa De Jorio. *Women's Political Organizations in Urban Mali (West Africa)*. University of Illinois, Anthropology Department



## **International Directory of African Studies Scholars**

MANSA Secretary Laura Arntson would like to ask the members once again if there is any objection to her forwarding MANSA Membership Directory information to Joseph Caruso of the Columbia University Libraries. He is compiling an International Directory of African Studies Scholars. The Directory is available on-line via Columbia University Libraries' African Studies Resources on the world-wide web:  
<http://forward/forward/www.columbia.edu/forward/cuforward/librariesforward/indivforward/areaforward/Africaforward/>

Several members have requested that they not be included, and any others who wish to not be included in this on-line Directory should contact Laura Arntson no later than March 1, 1997: [arntson@pilot.msu.edu](mailto:arntson@pilot.msu.edu) (or) c/o Michigan State University African Studies Center, 100 Center for International Programs, East Lansing, MI 48824, tel. 517/432-0057.

If the Secretary does not receive your response by 3/1/97, she will forward Directory information to Joseph Caruso. If you have questions regarding the International Directory of African Studies Scholars, please contact Joseph Caruso: [jc93@columbia.edu](mailto:jc93@columbia.edu)

### **MANSA T-Shirts**

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**

Tavy Ahern, Art History Department (address change), Fine Arts 123, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405  
 Laura Arntson, African Studies Center, 100 International Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824-1035  
 Ralph Austen (sponsor), CAA-AS University of Chicago, 5828 S. University Avenue, Chicago, IL 60637  
 Alpha Ba, Department of History, College of Charleston, Charleston, SC 29424  
 Hannah Baldwin (sponsor), African Area Studies, Foreign Service Institute, 747 Sligo Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20910  
 Stephen Belcher (sponsor), Comparative Literature Department, N434 Burrowes Building, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA 16802-6204  
 Roger Blench, CISPAL, 8 Guest Road, Cambridge CB1 2AL, England. e-mail: [RMB5@cam.ac.uk](mailto:RMB5@cam.ac.uk)

Cassian Braconnier, 2 bis, rue Etienne Marey, 75020 Paris. Tel. +33 (0) 1 43 61 14 72. e-mail: [cassian@worldnet.net](mailto:cassian@worldnet.net)

Maitre de Conferences Universite Blaise Pascal de Clermont-Ferrand. Research/teaching: linguistics, syntax, generative grammar, African languages: Mande and Kwa (esp. Côte d'Ivoire).

Sarah Brett-Smith (sponsor), 287A Nassau Street, Princeton, NJ 08540

Stephen Bulman, Newman College, Genners Lane, Bartley Green, Birmingham B32 3NT England

David Conrad (sponsor), History Department, SUNY-Oswego, Oswego, NY 13126

Rosa De Jorio, Department of Anthropology, 109 Davenport Hall (MC 148), University of Illinois, Urbana, IL 61801

Ariane DeLuz (sponsor), Laboratoire d'Anthropologie Sociale, 52 rue du Cardinal-Lemoine, 75005 Paris, France

Mamadou Diawara, International Area Studies, Yale University, New Haven, CT 06520 (address change)

Lucy Durán, SOAS, University of London, Thornhaugh St., Russell Square, London WC1H 0XG England

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Kate Ezra, 5483 South Hyde Park Blvd., Chicago, IL 60615

Paul Folmer, Tweede Shuytstraat 76, 2517XH Den Haag, The Netherlands

Nick Francis, 3412 Newton St. #4, Mt. Rainier MD 20712. e-mail: [nfrancis@wam.umd.edu](mailto:nfrancis@wam.umd.edu)

Barbara Frank (sponsor), Department of Art, SUNY at Stony Brook, Stony Brook NY 11794-5400

Gerald Gaillard, Institut de Sociologie, Faculté des Sciences Economiques et Sociales, Université des Sciences et Technologies de Lille, 59655 Villeneuve d'Ascq Cedex, France. Research interests: Socio-cultural Anthropology. History, economy, politics and population of the Biafada and Nalou of Guinea-Conakry and Guinea-Bissau

Alma Gottlieb, Department of Anthropology, 109 Davenport, 607 S. Mathews Avenue, University of Illinois, Urbana, IL 61801

Maria Grosz-Ngaté (sponsor), 1518 Slaterville Road, Ithaca, NY 14850 (address change)

Musa Abdul Hakim, Undergraduate Library, 112 Capen Hall, University of Buffalo, Buffalo NY 14260. Tel. 716-645-2943. e-mail: [mahakim@acsu.buffalo.edu](mailto:mahakim@acsu.buffalo.edu)  
 Areas of interest: Djalia, Islamic historiography in West Africa

Thomas A. Hale, French Department, Comparative Literature, 316 Burrowes Bldg., The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA 16802

Christopher Hayden, Northwestern University, Department of History, Evanston, IL 60208. e-mail: [chayden@nwu.edu](mailto:chayden@nwu.edu)

David Henige, Memorial Library, University of Wisconsin, 728 State Street, Madison, WI 53706

Eugenia W. Herbert, Mount Holyoke College, Department of History, South Hadley, MA 01075



- Barbara Hoffman c/o Michael Short, UNEP/Nairobi, Box 20 Grand Central Station, NY 10017 (temporary address change)
- José da Silva Horta, Departamento de História, Faculdade de Letras de Lisboa, Cidade Universitária, 1699 Lisboa Codex, Portugal
- Allen Howard, Department of History, Van Dyck Hall, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ 08903. e-mail: ahoward@rci.rutgers.edu Research interests: Mande trade and traders; Mande ethnicity; urbanization in Sierra Leone and Guinea, 18th-20th centuries.
- John P. Hutchison, African Studies Center, Boston University, 270 Bay State Road, Boston, MA 02215
- John Johnson, The Folklore Institute, Indiana University, 504 N. Fess, Bloomington, IN 47405
- Lansiné Kaba, University of Illinois at Chicago, Department of African-American Studies, M/C 069, Chicago, IL 60607-7140
- Cheick M. Cherif Keita, Department of Romance Languages, Carleton College, One North College St., Northfield, MN 55057
- Mike and Julie Kelly (sponsors), 302 Forty-sixth Avenue NE, Olympia, WA 98506. e-mail: <mikek@halcyon.com> Mike is a fisheries biologist with the USFWS, Julie is a technician with the State of Washington. Research interests include the fish and fisheries of the Niger River, the birds and insects of Mali, and the natural history, anthropology, and general history of the Balanzan-Kangaba region. While serving in the Peace Corps in Balanzan, 1992-94 they kept detailed records of the birds they observed, including seasonal movements and habitat. Copies of these observations are available upon request.
- M. Kassim Koné, Department of Anthropology, Student Building 130, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405
- Frederick Lamp, The Baltimore Museum of Art, Art Museum Drive, Baltimore, MD 21218-3898
- Marie Nathalie LeBlanc, 5340 Louis Colin, Montreal, P.Q., Canada H3T 1T3. e-mail: leblmar@magellan.umontreal.ca Areas of interest: Individuals and institutions of Malian origin in Côte d'Ivoire; ethnicity and Islam; processes of identification; youth.
- Nehemia Levtzion, Institute of Asian & African Studies, The Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel
- Peter Mark, Art Department, Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT 06459-0442
- Kevin McDonald, Institute of Archaeology, University College London, 31-34 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PY, England
- Marie Miran, 2920 Woodruff, Apt. A-1, Lansing, MI 48912
- Yusuke Nakamura, s/c de l'Université de Tokyo, Département d'Anthropologie, Komaga-Meguru-ku-Tokyo, Japan. Tel. 81--3-5454-6240. e-mail: cnakayu@komaba.ecc.u-tokyo.ac.jp
- Saïdou M. N'Daou, 6308 Dupont Avenue, #302, Richfield, MN 55423. Tel. 612-861-5389
- Emily Osborn, 704 Campus Drive No. 36-E, Stanford, CA 94305. e-mail: emosborn@leland.stanford.edu
- Dianne W. Oyler, 1116 1/2 - 1st Street NW, Minot, ND 58703 (address change)
- Katrin Pfeiffer, Völkersstr. 25, 22765 Hamburg, Germany. Tel. (0) 40-39905232. University of Hamburg, research in The Gambia: Spoken art of Mande-speaking peoples, especially Mandenka folktales; Mandenka language.
- David Rawson (sponsor), AmEmbassy Bamako, Department of State, Washington, DC 20521
- Richard Roberts (sponsor), History Department, Stanford University, Stanford, CA 94305
- David Robinson (sponsor), History Department, 301 Morrill Hall, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824-1036
- Claudia Roth, Zähringerstr. 12, CH-8001 Zürich, Switzerland. Research: Zara, Bobo-Dioulasso, gender and social change.
- Patrick Royer, 424 Hillington Way, Madison, WI 53705
- Lamin Sanneh (sponsor), Yale University Divinity School, 409 Prospect St., New Haven, CT 06511
- Dorothea Schultz, Bergweg 6, 65345 Renthals, Germany (temporary address change)
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- David E. Skinner (sponsor), Department of History, Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, CA 95053
- Kalilou Tera, ILA, Université Nationale de Côte d'Ivoire, 08 B.P 887, Abidjan 08 Côte d'Ivoire
- Berend Timmer, Boerhavelaan 134, 2334 ET Leiden, The Netherlands
- Jeanne Maddox Tougara, History Department, DGH-3rd Floor, Howard University, Washington, D.C. 20059
- Richard Warms, Anthropology Department, Southwest Texas State University, San Marcos, TX 78666
- Stephen Wooten (address change), 3913 S.W. 26th Drive, Apt. A, Gainesville, FL 32608. Tel. 352-392-2183. e-mail: wooten@nervm.nerdc.ufl.edu

#### Joining MANSA and Renewing Membership

Regular and institutional membership \$10, students \$5, sponsoring membership \$25. Make check out to MANSA and (if you are joining) send your institutional affiliation and a brief description of your research interests to: Laura Arntson, African Studies Center, 100 Center for International Programs, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824. Members (other than sponsored African colleagues) will find the date on which their present membership expires recorded on their address labels.