



M A N S A

Newsletter Number 35 -- Fall 1997

Dedicated to the Memory of B. Marie Perinbam

The Passing of MANSA's Vice-President

Memo from MANSA President:

Most MANSA members know by now that our Vice-President B. Marie Perinbam died on Saturday June 21, 1997 at the Teranga Hotel in Dakar, Senegal. She had arrived a few hours before to attend the West African Research Association's First International Symposium on West Africa and the Global Challenge.

I delayed notifying MANSA-members for several days to be sure that Marie's immediate family received the news first from the U.S. Embassy. When I finally telephoned to the U.S. I was unable to reach MANSA secretary Laura Arntson because her mother was seriously ill, but I got through to Tim Geysbeek who passed my message to Laura and to the internet. By that time the word was out from other sources. In the following weeks I was able to personally carry the sad news to more MANSA members in Guinea and Mali. Barbara Lewis also disseminated the news as she traveled on from Dakar. However, one must assume that there might be members receiving this newsletter in West Africa and elsewhere who are not on the internet and who have not been informed by other means.

As coordinator of the West African Research segment of the WARA Symposium I was scheduled to address the general assembly of participants on Wednesday, June 25. Therefore I had time, with the help of Muhammad Saïdou N'Daou, to prepare a tribute to Marie for insertion into my previously prepared speech. My remarks about Marie clearly leave much to be desired, falling far short of what she deserved. However, of the several hundred participants at the WARA conference, there were only eleven MANSA members counting myself: Ferdinand de Jong, Cornelia Giesing, Lilyan Kesteloot, Kirsten Langeveld, Barbara Lewis, Edris Makward, Peter Mark, Muhammad Saïdou N'Daou,

David Robinson, Jeanne Tougara, (I'm glad to report that former MANSA secretary Kathy Green was also with us). There were of course many present including WARA President Edris Makward, who were old friends of Marie, but many participants were not personally acquainted with either her or our organization, and I felt that I should include a certain amount of background information for their benefit. Following is the part of my address regarding Marie:

.... Donc je pense qu'il est approprié de faire une pose ici, pour noter que notre bien aimée et collègue Marie Perinbam était Vice-Président de MANSA qu'elle avait aidé à créer.

Au début des années quatre vin, aux rencontres annuelles des Association des Etudes Africaines, certains des spécialistes du Manden avaient l'habitude de manger ensemble. Très tôt, Marie devint un personne centrale du groupe, de rassemblement favorisé par son charme personnel, son flair, et aussi sa beauté spirituelle.

En 1986 à Madison, Wisconsin, ces rencontres informelles furent transformées en MANSA, Association des Etudes Manden. Marie était l'une des dévoués de nos conférences internationales telle que celle dans laquelle nous nous retrouvons aujourd'hui; elle nous avait apporté aussi une aide indispensable à l'organisation de nos conférences internationales sur le Manden, à Bamako 1993 et au Pays Bas 1995.

Concernant ce premier symposium du WARA, je savais sans doute que Marie serait là avec nous, parce qu'elle était toujours prête à apporter des présentations de qualité et surtout sa bonne humeur contagieuse.

Je ne peux pas m'empêcher de penser que Marie n'aurait pas refuser son destin de finir sa vie en Afrique de l'Ouest, parmi nous, ses collègues qui l'ont aimée et respectée.

Marie va certainement nous manquer, mais nous ne l'oublierons jamais.

At the final session on Friday, June 27, 1997, WARA President Edris Makward dedicated the First International WARA Symposium to Marie.

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

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**MANSA-Members' Tributes
to Marie Perinbam
(In the order submitted)**

This is definitely a tragedy for us at MANSA and specially for us from Mali. Mar[ie] was a great person a very friend. Une "Chercheuse au grand coeur" left us. We are sad here. Love to everybody.

-- Mamadou Diawara, Bayreuth University

For all of us,... the death of Marie Perinbam represents a big loss. For about 20 years I have taken the habit of seeing her always impeccably dressed and elegant at the ASA annual meeting. I admired her for her charm and her strong commitment to African studies in general and the history of the middle Niger River Valley from the distant past to the present. In the world concerned with glamour, Marie symbolized the value according to which beauty is compatible with the life of the mind. We will miss her. I invite you as MANSA's President to convene a special memorial....

-- Lansiné Kaba, University of Illinois at Chicago

I first became acquainted with Marie in the early '70s when out of the blue she sent me an offprint of an article on some aspect of trade in the western Sudan and proposed that we exchange work. This collegial gesture meant more to me than she could have imagined since I was working then in extreme isolation, trying to re-educate myself as an Africanist while raising three children. Such collegial gestures, I found, were typical of Marie. She loved to bring people together to exchange ideas, and her own enthusiasms infected us all. And who can forget her dazzling sense of style -- bracelets jangling, hair, makeup and clothes impeccable in a profession known more for *basse* than haute couture! It will be hard to imagine Mande studies without her exuberant and stimulating presence.

-- Eugenia Herbert, Mount Holyoke College

Like many of you, I was shaken by the sudden death of our dear colleague last summer. I got to know Marie quite well in the spring of 1983. The setting was Bamako and I had just arrived for my first research experience in Africa. We often worked together at the National Archives in Koulouba. On one occasion we were sitting at the dusty tables in the heat of the day watching a goat wander in and out as several people around us slept. Speaking softly so as not to awaken the others, she remarked that her colleagues in European history really had no idea of the challenges of her research! Ultimately she was able to breathe more life into those dry records than anyone else I know, making it seem as though she had somehow traveled in time and spoken with the traders and founding families about whom she wrote, persuading them to talk as she had their descendants.

Another very fond memory I have occurred at the African Studies Association meeting in New Orleans when Marie orchestrated a dinner of Mande specialists at a local restaurant. A great deal of wine was consumed

along with what was probably a decent meal (though it would not have mattered). After many stories and much laughter, Marie announced that she intended to create a directory of Mande scholars. She passed around a scrap of paper for us to provide our research interests, addresses and phone numbers. To my mind, this was the first step toward the founding of MANSA the next year.

In her memory, I propose a toast: "To a scholar who was always such good company, whose laugh was so rich and genuine, you will be greatly missed."

Annual MANSA Meeting

The MANSA meeting will be held during the annual meeting of the African Studies Association at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, Columbus, Ohio. Our meeting is scheduled for Friday, November 14, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Unpaid Dues

The MANSA treasury is seriously depleted, with the balance hovering at c. \$200. This is partially due to the fact that there are an unusual number of renewals outstanding, and because it has become increasingly expensive to print and mail the newsletter and to send it to our sponsored members in West Africa. With the upcoming extra expenses of the Banjul conference, it is especially important that members do their best to stay current with dues payments. (Any more sponsors out there? How about buying a T-shirt?). Please check your mailing label, which tells you when your current membership dues expire.

**MANSA-Sponsored Panels
for ASA 1997**

EXPLORING THE COMPLEXITIES OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHANGE IN THE MANDE WORLD
Chair: Stephen Wooten, University of California at Los Angeles
Papers:

Stephen Wooten, University of California at Los Angeles

"Going to Market: Gender and Trade on the Mande Plateau (Mali)"

Adria LaViolette, University of Virginia and
Barbara Frank, SUNY-Stony Brook

"Pots For Sale: Potters' Marketing Strategies in Mali"

Rosa de Jorio, University of North Florida

"Socialist Values and Local 'Solidarities': An Examination of Wage Labor in Post-Independence Mali"

Richard Warms, Southwest Texas State University

"What to do with a Pension: Economic Strategies of Ancien Combattants in Bougouni, Mali"

Discussant: Robert Launay, Northwestern University

CONSTRUCTIONS OF POLITICAL AND
CULTURAL IDENTITY AMONG THE MANDE
AND THEIR NEIGHBORS (PART I)

Co-Chairs: David Conrad, SUNY-Oswego and
Dorothea Schulz, Frobenius Institute

Papers:

Dorothea Schulz, Frobenius Institute

"Heroes of the Mande Past Enter the Malian Broadcast
Media: The Construction of Political Identities in
Televised Oral Performances"

Lansine Kaba, University of Illinois-Chicago

"The Ancestors of Samori Touré: Religion, Trade, War,
and Identity in Baté, 1870-1955"

Peter Mark, Wesleyan University

"Changing Constructions of Luso-African Identity in
Guinea and the Cape-Verde Islands, 1500-1650"

David Conrad, SUNY-Oswego

"Identifying 'Manden': 20th-Century Maninka
Perceptions of 13th-Century Boundaries"

CONSTRUCTIONS OF POLITICAL AND
CULTURAL IDENTITY AMONG THE MANDE
AND THEIR NEIGHBORS (PART II)

Co-Chairs: David Conrad, SUNY-Oswego and
Dorothea Schulz, Frobenius Institute

Papers:

Allen Howard, Rutgers University

"Mande Identity Formation in the Economic and
Political Context of Northwestern Sierra Leone"

Stephen Belcher, Pennsylvania State University

"Using Sunjata: Fula Self-Definition in the Manden"

Lamissa Bangali, University of Illinois Champaign-
Urbana

"The Land of the Bush Spirits and the Territory of the
Nation-State: Defining the Border-Line Between Two
Malian and Burkinabe Villages"

Laura Arntson, Michigan State University

"Imagining Boundaries: Constructions of Political,
Social, and Cultural Identity"

Andreas Massing, Projet Foyers Améliorés
(Bamako)

"A Reconsideration of Wangara in the Context of Mali
and the Mande Diaspora in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire"

LEARNING AND TEACHING ORAL TRADITION:
INDIGENOUS AND FOREIGN PEDAGOGY IN
ORAL PERFORMANCE

Chair: John Johnson, Indiana University

Papers:

Jan Jansen

"The Mande School of Oral Tradition as a Total
Institution: The Case of Kela (Mali)"

John Johnson

"Perception and Oral Tradition: Learning Somali Oral
Poetry"

Dianne Oyler, Minot State University

"Re-Inventing Oral Tradition: The Modern Saga of
Souleyman Kante"

Tom Hale, Pennsylvania State University

"Learning for West African Griots"

ASA PAPERS SUBMITTED SEPARATELY:
SONGS, SOCIETY, AND HISTORY: VIEWS FROM
MANDE

Chair: Ariane Deluz, CNRS

Papers:

Ariane Deluz, CNRS

"Historical Interest of Songs by Guro Bards who are not
Jeliw"

Jeanne Tounagara, Howard University

"Lyrics, Lessons and History: Mande Songs of
Northwestern Côte d'Ivoire"

MUSLIM MOVEMENTS AND ASSOCIATIONS IN
WEST AFRICA DURING THE COLONIAL PERIOD

David Robinson (Chair), "The Transformation of
the Tijaniya Order Under the Guidance of Malik Sy"

John Hanson, Indiana University

"The Ahmadiyya Movement of Wa, Ghana"

James Gilmore, University of Illinois

"Breaking Down: From Frustration to Revelation in a
West African Town" TIRES, TEXTS, AND
THEORIES OF REPRODUCTION: CULTURAL
AND MARXIST STUDIES IN CONTEMPORARY
AFRICA

Marie Miran, Michigan State University

"The Wahabi Movement in Côte d'Ivoire: From
Sectarianism to a More Interpretive Approach Towards
the Ivoirian Muslim Community (1960-95)" ISLAM,
THE AFRICAN STATE AND SOCIETY

Thomas Basset, University of Illinois,

"The Flowering of Cotton Farmer Organizations Under
the Reign of Structural Adjustment in Côte d'Ivoire"
DECENTRALIZATION AND NATURAL
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT: CONTESTED
SPACES BETWEEN COMMUNITY, STATE, AND
POWER

Ralph Austen, University of Chicago

Discussant: SORcery, STATE, AND SOCIETY IN
CONTEMPORARY AFRICA, I

Except for its chairperson, another panel is entirely
made up of MANSA members: THE MALIAN PATH
TO DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT

Chair: R. James Bingen, Michigan State University

Papers:

David Rawson, U.S. Embassy, Bamako

"Implementing Decentralization in Democratic Mali"

James Thomson, Associates in Rural Development

"Resources, Governance, State Theory, and Practice in
Francophone Sahelian Africa: French Roots and
Perspectives"

Dolores Koenig, American University

"The Road to Democracy: Rural Political Organizations
and Peasant Involvement in Mali"

**Election of MANSA
Advisory Board Members
and Secretary-Treasurer**

At last year's meeting we discussed the election of members to the Advisory Board, but were unable to resolve various questions. The minutes to the meeting (Newsletter 33, p. 4) read:

[Jeanne Tounkara] 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.

MANSA Secretary Laura Arntson has submitted a suggested amendment to the by-laws, addressing the question of election to the Advisory Board. Her suggested additions are italicized and deleted words or phrases are in brackets. Please bring this to the meeting so we can resolve the issue as quickly and efficiently as possible.

ARTICLE IV. Advisory Board

Section 1. There shall be an Advisory Board of *at least five dues-paying members in addition to honorary members of the Board*, for the purpose of supporting the Association in its scholarly endeavors and suggesting research in areas of interest to the Association. *Elected and Honorary 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 *xx-year [?] term* [two year period]. Members of the Advisory Board are expected to make every possible effort to [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. *The Executive Committee will determine, if necessary, a limit to the number of honorary members serving on the Advisory Board.*

SECRETARY-TREASURER: Remember that we will be nominating and voting on this position for a two-year term. It was not voted on last year when the President and Vice-President were elected, because we agreed to stagger the tenure of these offices.

Sadly, we should also consider nominating and voting on an interim Vice-President if we want Marie's position filled before elections come up again next year (as of the by-laws, we now elect President and Vice-President every two years).

**International Conference on Mande Studies
Serrekunda, Gambia:
Travel Funds for African Colleagues
Residing in West Africa
(Call for Papers)**

DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 17, 1997

Note: This deadline is much earlier than the one stated below for members who are not applying for travel grants.

U.S. and European members on e-mail: If you have a West African colleague whom you would like to see compete for travel funds, please help them beat the deadline by trying to contact her/him as quickly as possible with the information provided below. Funds are available for scholars coming from Senegal, Mali, Côte d'Ivoire, and Guinea.

To our West African colleagues residing in West Africa: The availability of travel funds is limited, so expense money for travel to Banjul from various West African locations will be awarded on the basis of competition, similar to the way it was done for the 1995 conference in Leiden. You must submit your papers (in French or English) in time for them to be judged by the MANSA committee, so the winners' names can be submitted to the funding agencies before their deadline of December 15. This does not allow much time. **PAPERS FROM WEST AFRICAN SCHOLARS INTERESTED IN FUNDING FOR TRAVEL TO THE GAMBIA MUST ARRIVE BY NO LATER THAN NOVEMBER 17, 1997.**

Note: MANSA members in Bamako and Abidjan who have previously participated in Mande Studies Conferences have been notified by e-mail and separate letters wherever possible. However, West African colleagues who have never attended one of these conferences are especially encouraged to submit papers. Send your papers to: David Conrad, History Department, SUNY-Oswego, Oswego NY 13126

**International Conference on Mande Studies
Serrekunda, Gambia
(Memo)**

To: MANSA Members
From: David Conrad
Dates of conference: 12-19 June, 1998
Location: Senegambia Beach Hotel, Serrekunda, The Gambia
Suggested title/theme of conference:

**HISTORICAL MOMENTS AND SOCIAL
IDIOSYNCRACIES: CULTURE, AGENCY AND
CAUSALITY IN THE MANDE WORLD**
(Please contemplate this and offer suggestions for revisions if it does not suit you)

To participate, your MANSA membership dues must be up-to-date. As was the case with the conference in Leiden, we will be charging a registration fee of

U.S.\$25.00 per person, to help defray the expenses of the conference. You may submit this payment before leaving for The Gambia, or pay by check in Serrakunda at the beginning of the conference (make your check out to MANSA).

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF PANEL PROPOSALS AND PAPER ABSTRACTS: FEBRUARY 1, 1998.

Abstracts and presentations may be in either English or French.

For a June conference I can coordinate the panels and edit the program with this late of a deadline, however it would be helpful if you make your basic submissions earlier, in fact anytime from now on. I do not need abstracts and final/revised titles of panels & papers until February, but I would like to begin to get an idea of how many panels to plan on and what the general topics will be. If you want to organize a panel but do not have all your presenters, it will be a good idea to list your panel title in the next issue of the newsletter so potential participants can submit paper proposals to you.

RE. THE TRAVEL PACKAGE: LONDON BANJUL RETURN

The latest word from our travel agent, Kinetics Travel Services Limited (London) is as follows:

Departures:

Departing: Gatwick Friday 12th June 1998

Returning: Banjul Friday 19th June 1998

Accommodations:

Senegambia Beach Hotel, based on twin occupancy rooms on the bed and breakfast plan.

The number of available single rooms is limited.

Prices:

Price for the above accommodation will be £339 per person based on a minimum of 40 passengers travelling on an inclusive package. Air conditioning is available at £9 per room per night. An extra week at the hotel: £90 per person.

Passengers wishing to stay on for extra weeks on a flight only basis (i.e., travelling elsewhere but taking advantage of the London-Banjul special travel price), "will be quoted for on an individual basis but in principle this should be no problem."

Above prices are fully inclusive of flights, transfers, hotel accommodation, airport taxes and security charges, Air Passenger Duty and Gambia departure tax.

Deposits and terms:

Deposit required to confirm is £95 per seat (approximately \$150). Kinetics Travel has a dollar account, or you can pay by credit card.

Final numbers should be confirmed 12 weeks before departure [that means c. March 15]. At this time cancellation charges will apply at loss of deposit.

Full balance to be paid 8 weeks before departure [that would be c. April 15].

All names to be supplied no later than 8 weeks prior to departure.

Cancellations within 6 weeks of departure will be calculated as per our terms of trade as follows:

42-29 days prior to departure 50%

28-22 days prior to departure 75%

21-6 days prior to departure 90%

6-0 days prior to departure 100%

Name changes up to 7 days before departure

[presumably getting somebody to take your place] will be permitted at a rate of £15 per change. Name changes within 7 days will be considered cancellations and re-bookings and charged accordingly.

Our travel agent (Yasmeen) adds the following note:

"Participants can stay longer & we can also arrange travel within Africa but the prices will depend on what people are doing. We can send participants invoices directly on our letterhead, setting out any information needed by them."

[This is in response to my query, in case people need this for funding proposals.]

Please take special note of the fact that we must confirm our final numbers on the travel booking by the middle of March. Participants are responsible for coordinating their own room arrangements (sharing, etc.), and for making their own bookings with the agent and submitting of their deposits on time.

KINETICS TRAVEL SERVICES LIMITED, 55 Old Church Street, Chelsea, SW3 5BS, England. Tel: 071 352 4984/7970/5239. Fax: 071 376 3730.

Note: The Kinetics Travel office is going through a remodelling process that has seriously complicated communication with the agent. This delayed my receiving the information requested, which in turn delayed editing of this issue of the newsletter.

Now that this much has been accomplished, I will follow up on the question of special prices on our flights from various points of departure in the U.S. & Canada to London, as well as arrangements for day-care.

THE CONFERENCE ROOM

I've recently received a much higher price quotation from the Kairaba than I was given when in Banjul last year (possibly because they're speaking of a larger room than I planned on). The agent is checking on this, but meanwhile I'm considering facilities at the Senegambia. They don't have a conference room, but they have offered their "cinema room" that seats up to 60 people, large video screen but no projectors, microphones, etc. The price is U.S. \$250, including tea/coffee/biscuit break, which is extra & expensive at the Kairaba. Our grant from the Bremer Stiftung will nearly cover this price (we had figured on c. \$200 per day), and I will ask our colleagues in Banjul to provide slide projectors etc.

Remember, aside from the official deadline, the more time you give me to coordinate the program, the better job I can do. So please submit your paper and panel

proposals (tentative if necessary) as soon as possible, and contact potential participants on your panels NOW.

A special request for those of you who have been sending me e-mail messages through Laura: Please stop, even if I have sent you a message via her listserv. She has her hands full with the secretary/treasurer duties (especially collecting dues and keeping the membership list up-to-date) as well as other things, and she does not need the extra burden of unnecessarily sorting out and forwarding messages. Contact me directly at: dconrad@oswego.edu

Also, if a new member or anybody else indicates an interest in participating in the conference, please do not ask me to contact them. I or Laura Arntson will send a copy of the most recent newsletter on request if they want information about joining the organization, etc. Alternatively, you might wish to provide them with the basic information, and let them submit their dues and paper proposals in the prescribed manner.

I will be sending out up-dates via e-mail, but please remember that we have many members, especially those in West Africa, who are not on e-mail. I do not want to leave them out of the picture, so I need information from you to be as complete as possible so I can include it in up-coming issues of the newsletter.

PANEL TOPICS AND PAPERS SUBMITTED TO DATE

(Some titles are suggested or working versions
only & will change before the conference)

CHANGING FRONTIERS: MIGRATORY MOVEMENTS OF MANDE PEOPLES AND THEIR NEIGHBORS

Chair: Mirjam de Bruijn

THE ANCIENT MANDE LANDSCAPE: CLIMATE CHANGE AND HUMAN RESPONSE

Chair: Roderick McIntosh, Rice University

Papers:

Tereba Togola, Institut des Sciences Humaines, Bamako
Hamady Bokoum, IFAN, Dakar
Robert Vernet, Mauritania
Discussant: Joe Tainter, Forest Sciences Laboratory,
U.S. Forest Service, Albuquerque, NM

PRE-1700 MANDE AND LUSO-AFRICAN CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS ON THE ATLANTIC COAST

Chair: Peter Mark, Wesleyan University

Papers:

Peter Mark, Wesleyan University
"Mande-Portuguese Relations and Cultural Interaction
Before 1700"

GENDER IN MANDE STUDIES INTO THE 21ST CENTURY (Roundtable)

Chair: Barbara Hoffman

Papers:

Saskia Brand, University of Leiden
"Musoya: Gender Discourse Interpreted"

Lucy Duran, SOAS, University of London
"Musoya and the Impact of the Music of Oumou
Sangaré"

Barbara Frank, SUNY-Stony Brook
"Gender, Craft Specialization and Mande Art History"

Maria Grosz-Ngate, Cornell University

"Community and Gender in Sana (Mali)"

Eugenia Herbert, Mount Holyoke College

"Gender and Technology in Mande Societies"

Barbara Hoffman, Cleveland State University

"Genderizing Mande Studies: A View From Jeliya"

Rosa de Jorio, University of North Florida

"Le Bara Dance and Women's Political Participation: A
View From Segu"

"Kassim Kone, SUNY-Cortland

"Male and Female in the Manden: Covert and Overt
Rules in Excision"

CULTURAL AND POLITICAL DECENTRALIZATION IN THE MANDE WORLD Co-chairs: Clemens Zobel and Jean-Loup Amselle Papers:

Jan Jansen, Leiden University

"Inviting the Trojan Horse?: Local Traditions in Mali's
Politics of Decentralization"

CONSTRUCTIONS OF POLITICAL AND CULTURAL IDENTITY AMONG THE MANDE AND THEIR NEIGHBORS

Co-chairs: David Conrad, SUNY-Oswego and

Dorothea Schulz, Frobenius Institute

Papers:

Marie Nathalie LeBlanc, Concordia University

"From Ethnicity to Islam: Processes of Identification
Amongst Muslim Youth in Bouaké Côte d'Ivoire"

PAPERS WITH NO PANEL YET FORMED

Ralph Austen, University of Chicago

"African Autobiography in Comparative
Perspective: The Case of Laye Camara"

Ingse Skattum, University of Oslo

"Bilingual Education: On French and Bambara in
Primary School in Mali"

David Skinner, University of Santa Clara

"The Late 19th-Century Spiritual and Military
Movement of Fode Kaba"

Valentin Vydrine, "Manding Lexicography Today"

Donald Wright, "A World-Systems Approach to
Manding History"

Private Accommodations in The Gambia

The following excerpt is from a letter written by Katrin
Pfeiffer dated 3 June, 1997. She says she is not yet sure
if it will be possible for her to attend the MANSA

conference, but that she would like to offer her house to participants who cannot afford a hotel room.

The house is situated in the Kotu South Layout, quite close to the Kairaba Hotel, and is described as follows: It "has one sitting-room, one dining-room, three bedrooms (double-bed/double-bed/two small single beds), one kitchen (cooker + fridge if there is electricity) and one bathroom (shower + toilet).... It would cost \$15 per day for each person (including electricity, water and telephone inside the Gambia). The hotel is a distance of about 2 km from the compound. Either one walks on foot, or joins a cheap public 2-Dalasi taxi after a short walk, or calls a taxi from the taxi stand in front of the Kairaba Hotel."

Katrin's address is Katrin Pfeiffer, Institut für Afrikanistik und Äthiopistik, Rothenbaumchaussee 67/69, 20148 Hamburg, Germany.

Editor's question: Should these accommodations not be reserved for African colleagues who are being awarded funding from our various sources? If we reserve Katrin Pfeiffer's house for them, this would help to stretch the grant money.

**The Passing of Another Jeliw Ngara
of The Manden:
Al Hajj Balla Ba Diabate of Kela
(Barbara Hoffman)**

The great ngara Al Haji Balla Ba Diabate of Kela passed away earlier this year. He was very important in my work and in my life -- as my host father Yamuru Diabate's older brother, he was a father, and a mentor to me as well. When I heard the news from Kassim shortly after his return from Mali, I sent out the poem below on MANSA-L as an expression of my grief at his passing, my enduring respect and admiration for him, and my heartfelt gratitude for all that I have learned of jeliya from him over the years. It was from his hands that I received my karinya, and from the openness of his great heart that I was granted acceptance in the jeli community of Kela and the Mande beyond.

Mande kònò bè kasi la,
(The bird of Mande is weeping.)
Mande mògò bée nyanasisira.
(All the Mande people's faces are darkened.)
Bala Ba taar'i da.
(Balla Ba has gone to sleep.)
Kala ni jòntanya!
(The bow and the lack of slaves!)
Jòn ni mantanya!
(Slaves and the lack of leaders!)
Ala ka dayòrò sumaya!
(May Allah make his resting place cool!)

Mande kònò bè kasi la,
(The bird of Mande is weeping.)
MANSA mògò bée nyanasisira.
(The MANSA people's faces are darkened.)
Kela Bala taar'i da.

(Kela Bala has gone to sleep.)
Kala Jula Sangoyi Manumaka!
(Kala Jula Sangoyi Manumaka!)
Ala ma hinè a la!
(May Allah have pity on him!)

Mande kònò bè kasi la,
(The bird of Mande is weeping.)
Jeneba bilen, a nyanasisira.
(Jeneba the red, her face is darkened.)
Ne fa Bala taar'i da,
(My father Balla has gone to sleep.)
n'bolo tè se karinya la.
(My hand cannot play the karinya.)
Ala ka dayòrò sumaya!
(May Allah make his resting place cool!)

**Letter to the Editor
(or "whomever gets this published")**

Over the years, since issue #1 of MANSA Newsletter in the winter of 1986, many members have submitted informative, useful contributions. However, none have commented on the newsletter itself (not counting complaints about address mistakes, etc.). Some writers, mainly from Europe, have inadvertently flattered the editor by assuming that there is some sort of office with an "editorial staff" that produces the newsletter. In this case, the (apparently) anonymous (and content to remain so) editor would like to take special notice of the first ever designated "Letter to the Editor." It is from Victoria Bomba Coifman, written February 3, 1997 when she sent her dues renewal to the secretary. (It did not reach the editor until recently, so was not included in the Spring 1997 issue.) Dr. Coifman wrote:

"Treat below as a letter to the MANSA editor (or whatever the title of whomever gets this published):
"The issue of MANSA which I received today, had me on such a pendulum swing...all those obituaries and beautiful memorials...the appreciative and invaluable oral histories of the jeli families..."

"At the other end of the swing was the hilarious decentralized political authority of the MANSA group which was baldly demonstrated in the minutes concerning the bylaws and following discussions... I laughed aloud. I think someone erred in trying to impose too much centralized political authority and boundaries on MANSA. The fight against the empire/colonials is on, from the grass roots. I really love this organization! This issue is a gem!!!"

**Potential Funding for Research
(Memo from Stephan Bühnen)**

Ethnohistorical knowledge about the savanna belt extending from the Senegal-Sierra Leone coast to the Niger inland delta, is marred by wide lacunae. While some areas have been investigated in depth, others have never been visited by any researcher of whatever

academic discipline. Some of the lesser-known areas have been important historical stages. The vicissitudes of state politics, research institutions, and personal preferences have contributed to the uneven intensity of research in different regions. Thus, politics have contributed to a deficiency of research in post-colonial Guinea and neighboring regions. Some effective researchers have come and gone, and they need to be replaced, as in the cases of Arelino Teixeira da Mota and Antonio Carreira, who carried on intense research in Guinea-Bissau from the late 1940s to the 1980s. Their deaths marked a decrease in research activity in their particular areas of interest.

Another set of lacunae is ethnic. While some ethnic groups have been the focus of comparatively intense research (e.g. Bamana, Wolof, Diola), others are hardly known (e.g. Beafada, Landuma, Kissi).

Lacunae are also topical. While the collection of oral tradition is proceeding (although of course not as fast as one would wish), it has as yet been concentrated on epics. Only in a few pockets have oral histories of villages and larger polities been recorded. Other types of data are still awaiting documentation. In order to better understand local societies, their past, and the evidence, we need to get a deeper understanding of religion (both "traditional" and Islamic), of architecture and settlements, of kinship systems, and of folklore, to name a few.

The Bremer Stiftung für Geschichte is interested in promoting research in various areas. The only topical condition is that the research would need to have some bearing on the reconstruction of the precolonial past. The disciplines concerned could be history (political, economic, social); social and cultural anthropology; geography; archaeology.

While its limited funds do not allow to pay for all costs accruing, the Bremer Stiftung hopes to encourage individuals through contributing to the funding of field research. It would also help in finding topics in various fields and in defining projects.

There is no set of pre-defined categories of applicants either in academic terms or otherwise. For more information contact Stephan Bühnen, Bremer Stiftung für Geschichte, Osterdeich 49, 28203 Bremen, Germany. Tel. +49-421-75735; fax. +49-421-75736; e-mail: bsg@uni-bremen.de

Bamana Language on Video

[Editor's note: Because of an October 21st deadline in this memo from John Hutchison, as soon as it was received it was forwarded to members who are on e-mail. John's description of this important project is included in the newsletter for the information of members not connected to e-mail.]

Dear MANSA Colleagues:

Kassim Kone and I are working with a video expert from Stanford on a proposal to the Department of Education for an introductory Bambara course based on video footage filmed in Mali. The materials would also

have applications for intermediate and advanced students. It is agreed that the availability of such a course would make it possible for individuals to make significant progress in learning and practicing Bambara without necessarily being in an institution that is equipped with experts to teach Bambara. The project will also result in the upgrading of the existing Bambara teaching materials in order to have a more up-to-date version of a textbook to accompany the video materials, and to facilitate individual use of the materials. The project is encouraged and approved by the African Language Teacher's Association, and by the National Foreign Language Center's National Council of Organizations for the Less-Commonly Taught Languages, and is a priority project of the West African Language Task Force.

In order to document interest in the project and justify funding, it would be helpful to have letters of support from colleagues who are either interested in having access to such materials for their own purposes, or for the use of their students to prepare for field research or travel to Mali.

Any of you willing to write such letters of support should send them to: Richard Randell, World of Languages, Inc., 2340 Silk Road, Windsor, CA 9542. Phone/fax 707-544-4349.

Such letters of support will need to reach Richard Randell by the 21st of October in order to be useful for the application. E-mail contributions would also be welcome: rrandell@leland.stanford.edu

Letter writers should identify themselves in terms of title and institutional affiliation. Thank you. Your support would be gratefully appreciated.

--John Hutchison

Wooten at UCLA

Stephen Wooten has become Assistant Director of the James S. Coleman African Studies Center at the University of California, Los Angeles. His address at the Center is 10244 Bunche Hall, University of California, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1310. Tel (310) 825-9234.

Book, Article, and Dissertation Releases

BOOKS:

1996. Gérard Dumestre. *Le bambara du mali: essais de description linguistique* Tome I, pp. 285; Tome II, pp. 300. Published by the journal *Linguistique Africaine*. To order via e-mail: cassian@worldnet.net

1996. Lamine Sanneh. *The Crown and the Turban: Muslims and West African Pluralism*. Boulder: Westview Press.

1997. Lilyan Kesteloot and Bassirou Dieng. *Les épopées d'Afrique noire*. Paris: Karthala

1997. Donald R. Wright. *The World and a Very Small Place in Africa*. Armonk, New York and London, England: M.E. Sharp, Inc.

This book shows how global events and world systems have affected people's lives for the past eight centuries in Niumi, a small area at the mouth of the Gambia River. Trans-Saharan trade, European expansion, the rise of an Atlantic plantation complex, imperialism, colonialism, political independence, and economic dependence are among the global phenomena that have influenced the everyday lives of the inhabitants of this tiny region.

Drawing on archival and oral traditions and writing in a clear and personal style, the author connects world history with real people on a local level.

1997. Clemens Zobel. *Das Gewicht der Rede. Kulturelle Reinterpretation, Geschichte und Vermittlung bei den Mande Westafrikas*. Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang vlg. pp. 357.

Until recently a majority of literary and anthropological representations identified the jeli-bards of the Mandinka and Bamana with an inferior and marginal caste. Based on a comprehensive analysis of the self-presentations of the jeliw, their specific approach to speaking and performing, their activities as mediators in conflicts and rites of passage, this study proposes a critique of the notion of caste in the Mande context.

The dynamics of identity construction and agency within a multipolar social space are explored by applying Pierre Bordieu's concepts of practical improvisation, symbolic capital, and rites of institution, as well as segmentary and interactionist theory. A detailed investigation of the relationship between the jeliw and the subsequent political systems of post-independence Mali provides an understanding of their changing identities, the impact of mass media on their work, and their roles in the definition of leadership, national identities, and society.

ARTICLES:

1996. Mamadou Diawara, Bayreuth University. "Le griot mande à l'heure de la globalisation." *Cahiers d'Études africaines*, 144, XXXVI-4, 591-612.

1996. Jan Jansen, University of Leiden. "The Younger Brother and the Stranger: In Search of a Status Discourse for Mande." *Cahiers d'Études africaines*, 144, XXXVI-4, 659-688.

1996. Dierk Lange, Bayreuth University. "The Almoravid Expansion and the Downfall of Ghana. *Der Islam: Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kultur des islamischen Orients* Bd. 73, S. 313-351.

1996. Kathleen Slobin, North Dakota State University. "Healing Through the Use of Symbolic Technologies Among the Dogon of Mali." *High Plains Applied Anthropologist* 16 (2), 136-143.

1996. Clemens Zobel, University of Vienna. "Les génies du Kôma: Identités locales, logiques religieuses et enjeux socio-politiques dans les monts Manding du Mali." *Cahiers d'Études africaines*, 144, XXXVI-4, 625-658.

DISSERTATIONS DEFENDED

1996. Dorothea Schulz. "Praise in Times of Disenchantment: Griots, Radios, and the Politics of Communication in Mali." Yale University, Department of Anthropology.

1997. Alice Bellagamba. "Representations of the Past in a Gambian Town." University of Torino, Department of Anthropology, Archaeology, and Geographical Sciences.

1997. Stephen Wooten. "Gardens are for Cash, Grain is for Life: The Social Organization of Parallel Production Processes in a Rural Bamana Village (Mali)." Department of Anthropology, University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana.

New & Renewed MANSA Members & Address Changes

Laura Arntson, 703 Klickitat Pl., NE, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110 (note address change)

Larry Becker, Geography Department, Rm. 203 Copeland Hall, University of Nebraska, Kearney, NE 68849

Alice Bellagamba c/o Dipartimento di Scienze Antropologiche, Archeo. e Storico-Territoriali, Università degli Studi di Torino, Via Giolitti 21/E, 10123 Torino, Italy; e-mail: bellaga@vc.unipmn.it
Catherine Bogosian, 509 South 21st St., Philadelphia, PA 19146 (new address)

Jacky Boujou, SHADYC Centre de la Vieille Charité, 2 rue de la Charité, F-13002 Marseille, France

Kim Camara, 402 E. Brevard St., Apt. 7, Tallahassee, FL 32301 (address change)

Sekou Camara, Professeur d'Anglais, Lycée de Ibrahim Ly, Banankabougou, B.P. 1069 Bamako, Mali (address change)

Ferdinand de Jong, Amsterdam School of Social Research, Ouder Hoogstraat 24, 1012 CE Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Rosa de Jorio, Department of Sociology, Anthropology, & Criminal Justice, University of North Florida, 4567 St. Johns Bluff Road, Jacksonville, FL 32224-2645; e-mail: rdejorio@unf.edu (address change)

Mamadou Diawara, University of Bayreuth, Hugo Rüdel-strasse 10, Postfach 101251, D-95440 Bayreuth, Germany (address change)

Julianne E. Freeman (formerly Julianne Short), Department of Anthropology, Landrum 224, Northern Kentucky University, Highland Heights, KY 41076 (name & address change)

Gerald Gaillard, 43 Bd. Clémenceau, 59 510 HEM, France (address correction)
 Tim Geysbeek, 3691 Richmond NW, Walker, MI 49544; e-mail: tg24@juno.com (address change)
 Cornelia Giesing, c/o Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisa INEP, C.P. 112 Bissau, Guinea-Bissau. Tel/fax: 245-251125; Tel home: 245-213708
 James Gilmore, University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, 109 Davenport Hall, 607 S. Mathews Avenue, Urbana, IL 61801
 Claudie Gosselin, a/s APDF, B.P. 1740, Bamako, Mali (address change)
 Barbara Hoffman (sponsor), P.O. Box 20, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10017 (Barbara and Michael are in Kenya, and this address applies until June 1998)
 Carole Hoover, Pioneer Bible Translators, Mission Protestante, B.P. 438, Conakry, Guinea
 Specialization, Maninka discourse and tone; literacy among the Maninka in Guinea.
 Eric Huysecom, Département d'anthropologie, Université de Genève, 12 rue G.-Revilliod, 1227 Genève, Switzerland (address correction)
 Michelle Johnson, University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, Department of Anthropology, 109 Davenport Hall, MC-148, Urbana IL 61801
 Martin Klein, History Department, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5S 1A1
 Dolores Koenig (sponsor), Department of Anthropology, The American University, Washington, D.C. 20016
 Dierk Lange, Geschichte Afrikas, Universität Bayreuth, Geschwister-Scholl-Platz, Postfach 10 12 51, 8580 Bayreuth, Germany
 Marie Nathalie LeBlanc, Department of Sociology & Anthropology, Concordia University, 1455 de Maisonneuve W., Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3G 1M8 (new address)
 Edris Makward, African Languages & Literature Department, 866 Van Hise Hall, 1220 Linden Drive, Madison, WI 53706
 Mandinka oral traditions & music; French & African literatures; President of WARA.
 Pekka Masonen, Vainamoinenkatu 15 H 58, 33540 Tampere, Finland (address change)
 Andreas Massing, GTZ, B.P. 100 Bamako, Mali (address adjustment)
 Anne Mayor, Département d'anthropologie, Université de Genève, 12 rue G.-Revilliod, 1227 Genève, Switzerland (address correction)
 Bruce Penner, 114 Commonwealth Circle, Charlottesville, VA 22901; e-mail: brucepen@vivaldi.acc.virginia.edu
 Research on Mande musical culture, its interaction with other African cultures, and its influence in African-American developments.
 Molly Roth, Department of Anthropology, University of Pennsylvania, 325 University Museum, 33rd & Spruce Streets, Philadelphia, PA 19104-6398

Mamadou Lamine Sanogo, 09 BP 304 Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. Tel: 226-365349; e-mail: m.l.sanogo@minitel.org
 Michael Short (sponsor), UNEP/Nairobi, Box 20 Grand Central Station, New York 10017
 Bill Siegmann, The Brooklyn Museum, 200 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11238
 Eric Silla, 1744 N. Rhodes St., Apt. 309, Arlington, VA 22201; e-mail: esilla@erols.com
 Benjamin Soares, Committee on Human Development, University of Chicago, 5730 S. Woodlawn Blvd., Chicago, IL 60637-1603 (address change)
 Peter Weil, Anthropology Department, University of Delaware, Newark, DE 19711
 Donald Wright (sponsor), P.O. Box 2000, History Department, SUNY-Cortland, Cortland, NY 13045
 Clemens Zobel, Centre d'Etudes Africaines, EHESS, 54 bd. Raspail, F-75006 Paris, France

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. or Sarah Brett-Smith, 287A Nassau Street, Princeton, NJ 08540, U.S.A. Manuscripts from Europe should be sent to Ariane DeLuz, Laboratoire d'Anthropologie Sociologique, 52 rue du Cardinale-Lemoine, 75005 Paris, France.

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

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, 703 Klickitat Place NE, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110.~~ Members (other than sponsored African colleagues) will find the date on which their present membership expires recorded on their address labels.

Sent membership to address circled on p. 8.