

Newsletter Number 63-Fall 2008

23rd Annual MANSA Meeting

The annual meeting of the Mande Studies Association will take place during the annual meeting of the African Studies Association at the Sheraton Chicago Hotel and Towers on Friday, November 14th from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

MANSA Secretary-Treasurer's Update

Approximately 110 people attended the International Conference on Mande Studies held in Lisbon, Portugal 23rd – 28th June, 2008. This number includes trailing spouses, ISCTE student volunteers, and the President of the African Studies Center of ISCTE, in addition to current MANSA members. The conference provided a boost to our membership and many members were able to catch up on their MANSA dues.

MANSA was able to sponsor 5 African colleagues, thanks to a generous donation of 3,000 Euros from our Portuguese hosts and 42 MANSA members who collectively donated \$7,154 toward the African Scholars' Travel Fund

We currently have 394 names in the MANSA membership database, representing 32 countries. Of these, 184 (63%) are current, duespaying members, 92 (32%) are sponsored members, and 15 (5%) are institutions that receive the newsletter gratis. Among the duespaying members, we currently have 52 sponsoring members (18% at the \$40 rate or above), 104 (36%) regular members, and 28 students. About 40% of our current members are in the US and 26% reside in the U.K.,

Slovenia). African countries represented in our membership include: Senegal, Gambia, Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe.

With the rising costs of postage (the newsletter now costs about \$3.00 an issue to produce and mail) and the cost of the Mande Studies Journal currently at \$18.00, we are running a deficit of about \$600 per year (this comes to a deficit of close to \$2,000 per year if we are generous in mailing out newsletters to members who are only 1 or 2 years behind on their dues). In the interest of continuing our commitment to our African sponsored colleagues, we may find it necessary to revisit the MANSA membership dues schedule and/or consider replacing the print copy of the newsletter with an electronic newsletter.

MANSA Election Statements of Candidacy

Presidential Candidate JAN JANSEN:

MANSA is a flourishing organization whose members form a network of people with an academic background who like to share their knowledge with others and who strive to be helpful to those in less established positions, such as many scholars from (West-)Africa and students with interests in the Mande World, in Africa and beyond. The first and main task of a MANSA president is to support this network and these practices. My primary goal as a MANSA president would therefore be a continuation of

David C. Conrad, President, State University of New York-Oswego Kassim Koné, Vice-President, State University of New York-Cortland Laura Arntson, Secretary-Treasurer, USAID Advisory Board

Seydou Camara, Institut des Sciences Humaines, Bamako P.F. de Moraes Farias, Birmingham University, U.K. Allen Howard, Rutgers University Barbara Hoffman, Cleveland State University Dolores Koenig, American University Valentine Vydrine, St. Petersburg, Russia

MANSA Election Statements of Candidacy

the current state of affairs. MANSA's achievements are linked to David Conrad's personal efforts and stamina to such an extent, that his successor should first get a grip on his heritage; the attitude of an apprentice is required! Thus, most of my energy would be dedicated to supporting communication among MANSA members and close collaboration with the treasurer/secretary and vice-president so as to keep all our members in the organization - quite a challenge for a group of permanently moving and migrating independent minds! The main tools available for a MANSA president to assure the organization's continued success are: a website and a list; international conferences (every three years); the journal Mande Studies; and panels at the ASA.

I believe that I am in a good position to know what MANSA members share, think, and wish. I have been a member since I was an MA student, and I have many strong and long-lasting relationships with MANSA members. These are in good part the result of my activities on behalf of the organization. In 1995 and 2002 I coorganized Mande Studies International Conferences in Leiden, and I attended those in Bamako (1993), Banjul (1997), and Lisbon (2008); in Spring 2005 our third son had just been born, hence my absence from Conakry-Kankan. Moreover, I have attended the ASA meetings annually since 1996 (except 1999 and 2004) and therefore MANSA's annual meeting. I co-organized several MANSA sponsored panels at the ASA, and was guest editor of two issues of Mande Studies. In addition, I am a co-editor of the series Mande Worlds (published by Lit Verlag, Münster), and African Sources for African History (published by Brill, Leiden/Boston). Moreover, I have some experiences with organizations for academics. since I hold - since 2002 - the office of secretary in the Netherlands Association for Anthropologists.

My institutional affiliation is also fortunate for involvement in Mande studies. I am a tenured Lecturer in the Department of Cultural Anthropology and Development Sociology at

Leiden University, where there is a wellestablished concern for the Mande world. Our Department closely collaborates with the Leiden African Studies Center (the only one in the Netherlands) as well as the local National Museum of Ethnology (RMV). The ASC and the RMV generously sponsored the 1995 and 2002 MANSA conferences. As a supervisor of MA students in Anthropology, I visit Mali and The Gambia every year.

My degrees include MA's in Medieval History and Cultural Anthropology from the University of Utrecht as well as a PhD from Leiden (1995) based upon a study of Kela griots. I have published ethnographic accounts, historical studies and co-authored several bi-lingual text editions. My scholarly interests (Mande oral traditions, fieldwork in the 'Mande heartland') are interdisciplinary and this has brought me into contact with a wide range of Mande specialists. My future research (together with Brahima Camara), on 'memories of gold', will make me visit both Mali and Guinea on a regular basis.

Fieldwork in Mande has been very rewarding for me, both as a scholar and a human being. From MANSA I have gained friendship, knowledge, and organizational experience. I would be honored to repay some of this debt by a good performance as a MANSA president.

Jan Jansen's Vice-Presidential Candidate Brahima Camara (submitted by David Conrad) Brahima Camara, a long-time MANSA member, holds a Ph.D. from the University of Bayreuth, and his teaching duties at the Université du Mali include German language subjects. In the past decade or so, several MANSAdenw have had the advantage of working with Brahima on various projects, and it's always a pleasure to meet with him in his office at the university. Brahima is Jan Jansen's jatigi in Bamako and regularly assists Jan on various projects including the series "African Sources for African History" published by Brill. All publications in that series are required to include the original language text, and when the text is Bamana or Maninka, Brahima has served as the main proof-reader for those languages in the series. In fact, he performed that duty surprisingly quickly and efficiently on my

book Somono Bala of the Upper Niger. I'm also grateful for his reading of the Maninka text of the epic of Al-Hadj 'Umar Tal, in my Safiyatu and Laji Umaru (not yet published). Brahima has done similar work for several other MANSAdenw, and I believe they've all found him to be a wonderful colleague and a great pleasure to work with. Since finishing his graduate studies in Germany some years ago, Brahima has continued to be active internationally, attending the 2002 Mande Studies Conference in Leiden. Unfortunately, illness prevented him from joining us for the 2005 Guinea sessions. He also hoped to attend the 2008 conference in Lisbon, but that plan was ended by a request to perform a mission for the Malian government, which clearly indicates their recognition of his talents and accomplishments. Brahima Camara is one of MANSA's most accomplished Malian members and is held in high esteem by all of us who know him and have worked with him. He is, moreover, one of our most active Malian academic colleagues who will doubtless play a leading organizing role the next time a Mande studies conference is held in his country.

Presidential Candidate Kassim Kone

Dear Mansadenw

I am happy to present my candidacy for the presidency of our intellectually vibrant organization, the Mande Studies Association (MANSA). I have been encouraged by many members to run for President. I have served as Vice-President for seven years now, so I have a very clear sense of the magnitude of the job. David Conrad's shoes are too big to fill; the dedication and leadership he has offered MANSA for 22 years will never be surpassed. I am, nonetheless, willing to offer my best energies to the stewardship and further growth of this association of academics present and upcoming, ours is a big, growing, and diverse family. As such, its management requires a collegial and balanced approach that I feel I have demonstrated as Vice-President.

During this time, I have attempted to serve as a bridge between the various Mande and scholarly communities to which I belong. If elected President, I would like to continue these efforts by expanding the networking that our association already provides through its listsery

and newsletter. This includes information sharing about backgrounds and interests both among academics and students on all continents in addition to maintaining and developing relations with public officials, administrators and researchers based in West African countries where MANSA scholars do research and spend time.

I would like to strengthen the participation of the Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer and Advisory Board in the running of MANSA. For example, Advisory Board members in and out of Africa could be given assignments that reflect their academic backgrounds and interests, geographic location, and capacity to network on behalf of the association and the membership, especially student members.

I very much would like to extend and increase the participation of African members in the intellectual exchanges of the association through individual and institutional memberships, through encouragement of submission of papers to the Mande Studies journal, and through greater participation at both our international conferences as well as at the annual African Studies Association meetings. I would like to work on ways to offer intellectual support for expatriate Mande scholars doing research in the Mande world, made possible by creating a database of academics in West Africa with their respective fields of research and their local African institutional affiliations. As under David's presidency, I will encourage members to continue in their educational endeavors that benefit African students and academics as well as African educational institutions. These efforts include facilitating the distribution of books to African libraries and facilitating collaborative relationships with African scholars.

I officially joined MANSA in the late 1980s when I was a college student in Bamako. I feel however that I have been working on behalf of Mande Studies long before MANSA was created. I met and worked with David Conrad when I was a teenager. I began fieldwork at age 13 and I have been involved in numerous doctoral research efforts from beginning to end (in addition to my own) since I was in the 7th grade: anthropology, ethnomusicology, history, art history, ethnolinguistics and agricultural economics.

As a graduate student at Indiana University and Brandeis, I taught many students who later became great Mande scholars on their own. My academic interests are broad: everything Mande and their neighbors – from the cultural aspects of language, to various aspects of cultural practices.

I have also directed my energies towards the empowerment of my people through work that is intended to enhance literacy in local languages, by publishing several texts in Bamana. I have worked with many individuals and groups engaged in projects that promote literacy in native languages in the Mande and neighboring areas. Mande protocol requires some humility; however, it must be said that there are few fields that I have not explored in some capacity in the Mande world.

I hold three MA Degrees: Linguistics (1991) and Sociocultural Anthropology (1995) from Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana; Development Anthropology (1996) Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts. My Ph.D. is in Anthropological Linguistics (1996), Indiana University, Bloomington. At present, I am an Associate Professor of Anthropology in the Sociology/Anthropology Department of SUNY Cortland.

I would also like to formally nominate Barbara Hoffman for Vice-President. I have personally asked Barbara to run to be my Vice-President. I have known and worked with her for nearly 25 years and more recently on MANSA matters as she served on the Advisory Board working tirelessly on the by-laws, amongst other things. I believe Barbara Hoffman will complement my presidency and help move our association to a bright future.

Vice-Presidential Candidate Barbara Hoffman

The day I first heard of the creation of the Mande Studies Association, I was working in my Bamako office with Kassim Kone on one of the several projects we have collaborated on over the years. At that time, he was still an undergraduate college student, and I was in my fourth year of living, working, and doing research in Bamako with Kassim as my principal research assistant. I signed both of us up for membership immediately. From that moment, we began to participate in the life of this organization as it grew from a fledgling group of fewer than 50 to

the nearly 400 members of record belonging to it today.

In all that time, David Conrad has been the organization's President and leader, our MANSA Mansa. Now our Mansa, who has given the best of his energies for the last 22 years to growing this body of diverse scholars, is ready to turn over the reigns to the next leader. No one is better suited to assume the leadership of this organization than the one who has been his right-hand over the last 7 years as Vice President of MANSA – Kassim Kone.

As a member of the MANSA Advisory Board during the last 3 years, I have been involved in many of the day to day workings of the organization, such as reviewing the financial reports and budgets, communicating with the publisher of our Mande Studies journal, reviewing and revising the bylaws, assisting with the programming of the Lisbon conference, and establishing an organizational business identity so that our bank account can belong to the organization rather than to an individual. It has been a great pleasure to serve MANSA in that capacity during the last years of David's presidency.

I can think of no better way to serve MANSA over the next few years than to be the right-hand to its next President. As Kassim Kone's Vice-President, my emphasis will be on providing both the foreground and background support to the initiatives Kassim will propose. Some of them will require communication with our parent organization, the African Studies Association. I will work with him to negotiate the optimal conditions for our organizational participation in the ASA's annual meetings. MANSA is THE international organization for scholars of the Mande world of all disciplines, and all countries. In our next iteration under new leadership, we will continue the spirit of inclusiveness so prominent in all of David Conrad's efforts over the years and adapt them to the technological capacities available to us now and in the future.

Our MANSA has grown out of its infancy and youth under David Conrad's devoted stewardship. It is now ready for initiation into adulthood in the 21st century. Our membership has grown throughout the world. We currently have members from 31 different countries. One of the principal challenges of MANSA's

leadership now is to find new ways to empower our members' participation in the life of the organization wherever they reside, regardless of whether they can attend the annual business meetings at the ASA. The capacities of the internet make virtual participation in the decision making processes of the organization accessible from any computer anywhere in the world. One of the most pressing tasks of the MANSA leadership is to help transform both the bylaws of the organization and its pragmatic culture so that this kind of access and world-wide participation becomes a reality. I stand ready to bring to these tasks the knowledge and skills I have acquired through being the webtigi for my department, the President of an NGO focused on the education of African women, and an anthropological linguist actively engaged in research, teaching, and ethnographic filmmaking.

Next year will mark a quarter of a century that I have known and collaborated with Kassim Kone on a wide variety of endeavors. Like so many MANSA members, my path to becoming a professional scholar was facilitated by Kassim's able and generous assistance. That he would ask me to be his Vice President was immensely gratifying in itself. To actually serve in that capacity would be profoundly rewarding. I would be grateful for the opportunity, if the MANSA membership expresses its desire to have Kassim and myself as President and Vice President for the next few years.

N'ko Conference, 2009

La communauté des utilisateurs de l'Alphabet N'ko fêtera le soixantième anniversaire de l'invention de l'écriture N'ko en Guinée. En outre des festivités, l'organisation d'un colloque international sur le bilan scientifique et culturel de l'écriture N'ko est en pré-étude. La communauté scientifique internationale y sera cordialement invitée et je crois que ce sera l'occasion d'un échange enrichissant entre les spécialistes et chercheurs occidentaux d'une part et la communauté N'ko d'autre part. Le colloque qui doit avoir lieu à la mi avril 2009 en Guinée est l'initiative conjointe et tripartite de l'Organisation Académique de l'Alphabet N'ko(N'ko Doumbou), de la Librairie N'ko(N'ko Lerada), de l'Union des tradithérapeutes de Guinée. Des concertations sont en cours d'être entamées avec les membres de la communauté

N'ko d'Afrique de l'Ouest, ainsi qu'avec certains centres culturels occidentaux à Conakry(centre culturel franco guinéen, american center) et la maison de production française harmattan pour une publication des communications du colloque. Donc, chers collegues de MANSA, vous êtes considérés comme associés à part entière de ce colloque et de ce fait, toute communication sur le N'ko et les thèmes Mandés seront les bien-venus. Ibrahima Sory Condé.

Membre de la librairie et del'Académie N'ko ainsi que de MANSA

Update on MANSA Members' Activities
NOEMI ARAZI has been offered a job with a
company based in Brussels that does salvage
archaeology in Africa. Her work would involve
negotiating contracts with big companies
specialized in infrastructure work (roads, petrol,
dams, etc) in order to protect the cultural heritage
or at least record it before constructions are
starting that might damage or destroy
archaeological/historic sites. She reports,
moreover, that on a recent pipeline project from
Chad to Cameroon, archaeologists found 465 new
sites that offers a prospect of future employment
for archaeologists from inside and outside the
continent.

DENISE DIAS BARROS' 2004 book Itinerários da Loucura em Territórios Dogon (Madness Itineraries in Dogon Realms), which is accompanied by a video (Jon jongu-ne: Território da Loucura), has won a prize in Brazil. SEKOU BERTE reports that the office of the nongovernmental organization he has founded in Bamako, the Agence du Patrimoine Culturel du Mali-SARL has been relocated to Baco-Djicoroni ACI Sud. Berté describes one of his goals as construction of a national register of archaeological sites and historical places (Sikasso, Kayes and Koulikoro regions) to foster the visibility of archaeological landscapes, historical places, natural reserves and the pairing of expressive culture. He also hopes it will be possible to combine Senufo Jegele and Festival Triangle du Balafon.

IBRAHIMA SORY CONDE, OUMOU DIABY KASSAMBA, FATOUMATA KEITA, and MAMADOU FAGANDA KEITA who were the winners of the competition for funding to the 7th

International Conference on Mande Studies in Lisbon, sent the following note:

Nous les quatre collègues africains vivant en afrique de l'ouest venons respectueusement aupres de vos hautes bienveillances, présenter nos sinceres remerciements à l'équipe dirigeante de Mansa, à nos sponsors et aux organisateurs du colloque de Lisbonne qui n'ont ménagé aucun effort pour nous rendre le sejour agréable. Nos remerciements s'adressent particulièrement à David Conrad, Kassim Koné, Laura Arntson, Valentin Vydrine et à tous les autres participants. Nous ne saurons terminer ce message sans saluer l'inestimable vivacité des organisateurs comme Eduardo Costa Dias ou de Jose Da Silva Horta qui se sont investis corps et âme pour donner à l'événement tout son éclat. En fin, nous remercions tous les anonymes, sponsors connus et inconnus qui ont contribué pour notre sejour. Cela nous touche à bien des egards d'autant que nous savons que le monde actuel est secoué par une conjoncture financière très difficile. Que ceux qui n'ont pas vu leur nom dans ce message de remeriement n'y voient pas un oubli ou une ingratitude de notre part, nous pensons à tout le monde et leur souhaite bon travail ou congé dans leurs pays respectifs.

GRAEME COUNSEL won a British Library Endangered Archives Preservation grant, and will be working in Guinea for several months to create an archive of all Syliphone recordings at the Bibliotheque Nationale in Conakry.

JANET GOLDNER has an exhibit, Steel

Sculptures on the Wall, September 21—October 26 (Monday to Saturday 10 a.m. – 10 p.m.) at II Trapezio Gallery, 120 Franklin Avenue, Nutley, N.J.

PASCAL IMPERATO was installed as the Founding Dean of the SUNY Downstate Medical Center School of Public Health on April 11, 2008. The school has an enrollment of 115 master level ad 10 doctoral level students.

CANDACE KELLER has recently commenced a joint tenure-track Assistant Professor appointment at Michigan State University in the Department of Art and Art History and the Residential College in the Arts and Humanities. ABDOULAYE KONATE, MARY JO ARNOLDI and JANET GOLDNER participated in a roundtable discussion "Global Conversations in the Arts on September 27, 2008 at the Kansas

City Artists Coalition, 201 Wyandotte, Kansas City, MO.

TREVOR MARCHAND reports that his book The Masons of Djenné (including detailed portrayals of the shifting fortunes and social lives of Djenné's masons) is scheduled for publication by Indiana University Press in April, 2009. CRAIG TOWER is currently a visiting assistant professor in the anthropology department at Loyola University Chicago and is planning a trip to Mali in December to conduct further research. He will also be assisting with a health care project in the Koutiala area by an organization called Mali Midwives, which enhances continuing education opportunities for rural midwives. MANSA members are welcome to contact him about the organization and its activities at ctower@luc.edu. BRUCE WHITEHOUSE is now assistant professor of anthropology at Lehigh University and will have an article coming out in the January 2009 issue (vol. 9) of Global Networks, "Transnational childrearing and the preservation of transnational identity in Brazzaville, Congo" about childrearing practices of Mande migrants living in Central Africa and their efforts to foster lasting attachments to their places of origin. STEPHEN WOOTEN has submitted the finished manuscript of his book The Art of Livelihood: Creating Expressive Agri/Culture in Rural Mali to Indiana University Press.

A Suggestion Regarding MANSA Research Files

by Nicholas Hopkins I propose that those who are ready, communicate to the Mande Studies Association what provisions they have made for their notes and related materials (tapes, videos, ephemeral documents, etc.) after they have finished working with them. MANSA then could use the website to maintain a file of such present or intended deposits, so that the younger generations of researchers would know where to look. On the one hand, we need to encourage people to make sure that their personal notes and related material are taken care of, at least in terms of future planning, and on the other, we could give people some idea of what the alternatives are by hearing what others have worked out. Each person will want to make an individual choice, but we should

share information.

(Editor's Note): I will check with Rich Warms about establishing a section on our web site to be dedicated to this purpose -- DCC

NEW RELEASES Books, Journal, Articles, CD/DVDs, Dissertations

BOOKS

Pascal James Imperato and Gavin H. Imperato (eds.). 2008. *Historical Dictionary of Mali*. 4th edition. Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press. 457 pp. ISBN 978-0-8108-5603-5.

Molly Roth, 2008. *Ma parole s'achète - Money, Identity and Meaning in Malian Jeliya* (Mande Worlds vol. 4). Munster: LIT Verlag.

V. Vydrin (ed.). 2008. Mande Languages and Linguistics: Abstracts and Papers of the 2nd International Conference, St. Petersburg (Russia), September 15-17. V. Vydrin (ed.). St. Petersburg, pp. 150.

Valentin Vydrin. 2008. Bamana Language. St. Petersburg: St. Petersburg State University, pp. 204 (in Russian, a language manual for Russian university students).

Stephen Belcher, Jan Jansen, Mohamed N'Daou (eds.) 2008. Mande Mansa: Essays in Honor of David C. Conrad. (Mande Worlds vol. 2). Munster: LIT Verlag.
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N'Daou)

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(Mary Jo Arnoldi and Elisabeth den Otter)

The Problem of the Mande Creation Myth (Ralph A. Austen)

Beyond Excavation - The Dia Archaeological Project (Rogier M.A. Bedaux and Annette M. Schmidt)

Deconstructing the Conradian Modus Operandi (Louise Bedichek)

Some Observations on the Textualization of the 'Charte de Kouroukan Fougan' (Stephen Belcher)

'Si Allah le Veut' - A Tribute to David Conrad (Louise M. Bourgault)

Homage to Daouda Conde (Brahima Camara)

The African Intellectual in the Court of Public Opinion: A Critical Reflection (Mamadou Diawara)

Nansa Doumbia: Matriarch, Artist, and Guardian of Tradition (Barbara E. Frank)

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Trade, Identity and the Linkages between Freetown and the Mande Heartland (Allen M. Howard and David E. Skinner)

Mali by Stamps - An Inquiry into a Country's Image (Jan Jansen)

Words of Power: Magical Spells of the Mande Hunters (Agnes Kedzierska-Manzon)

Deep Discourses - A Tour of the Mande Power Landscape (Roderick J. McIntosh)

Mediations: Tayiru Banbera and David Conrad (Paulo F. de Moraes Farias)

Djibril Tamsir Niane and David Conrad: Collaborative Re-imagining of the Mande Past Across the Atlantic (Mohamed Saidou N'Daou)

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To Be Respectful in Mande - Where Does Maninka Honorific Vocabulary Come From? (Valentin Vydrine)

Publications by David C. Conrad

JOURNAL

Canadian Journal of African Studies Revue Canadienne des Études Africaines Volume 42 Number 1 / Numéro 1 2008 Special Issue / Numéro speciale

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Memories of Nehemia Martin Klein

Remembering Nehemia: Personal Tributes Roland Oliver, William F.S. Miles, E. Ann McDougall, Naomi Chazan

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"Islamic Music in Africa" as a Tool for African Studies Michael Frishkopf

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Resurgent Islamic Fundamentalism as an Integrative Factor in the Politics of Africa and the Middle East Nehemia Levtzion

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(eds.). Inscribing Meaning: African Arts of Communication Washington, D. C.: Five Continents Press, 70-82.

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Luso-African representations of the Guinean
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James A. Jones. 2008. "Ousmane Sembene" in Annett Busch & Max Annas (eds.), *Ousmane* Sembene Interviews. Jackson, Miss.: University Press of Mississippi (225pp. USBN#978-1934110-86-7) pp. 143-150.

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DVD & CD

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DISSERTATIONS

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RENEWED MEMBERS

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MEMBERSHIP UPDATES

Stephen Wooten

Clemens Zobel

Valentin Vydrine

New e-mail address: vydrine@gmail.com

Lianne Holten

New e-mail address: Lholten@fsw.leidenuniv.nl

Esther Kuhn

New address: 60 Harbord St., #342D, Toronto,

Ontario Canada M5S 3L1

NEW MEMBERS

Mustafa Abdalla

Address not available

Acacio Almeida (sponsor)

Address not available

Karin Barber (CWAS, U. Birmingham)
136 Greenfield Rd, Harborne, Birmingham UK
B15 2TT Research Interests: Yoruba oral
poetry, African literature, popular culture, and
history.

Denise Dias Barros (Casa das Áfricas, Univ. São Paulo, Brazil) Research Interests: Dogon region; notions of "madness" and practices of mental healing in non-Western cultures.

yadene@gmail.com

Dianna Bell (Florida State University)
2731 S. Blairstore Rd., #29, Tallahassee, FL
32301 USA Research Interests: Christianity
and Islam among the Mande; syncretism of
folk traditions with world religions.
Idkb08@fsu.edu

Clara Carvalho

ISCTE, Av. Forças Armadasm 1649-026
Lisboa, Portugal Research Interests: traditional authority, migration and health in Guinea-Bissau clara.carvalho@iscte.pt

Riccardo Ciavolella (CEAF/EHESS and Univ. of Milan, Bicocca)

20, rue Arthur Groussier, 75010 Paris, France *Research Interests:* Mauritania; the Fulbe, nomadic life, local development, and social exclusion <u>riccardo.ciavolella@gmail.com</u>

Oumou Koultoum Diaby-Kassamba s/c Mmr. Oumou Nao, BP 1192 SNTB Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

Kevin Dumouchelle (Columbia University)
370 Manhattan Ave., Apt. 6K, New York, NY
10026 Research Interests: art-historical
traditions of figurative sculpture on the
peripheries of the empire
KDD2104@columbia.edu

Maria Eugénia Francisco (Univ. of Lisbon)
Rua Branca Gonta Colaco No. 12 - 2Dto., 1700
Lisbon, Portugal Research Interests:
Archaeology, art, history
m.e.francisco@hotmail.com

Paolo Gaibazzi
PGaibazzi@yahoo.it

Marc Ghysels
81 rue Franz Merjay, B-1050 Brussels,
Belgium marc.ghysels@skynet.be
Jordi Tomas Guilera (Centro de Estudos
Africanos, ISCTE)

Calabria, 71 3-3, 08015 Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain Research Interests: cultural identity, nationalism, traditional authorities, sacred kingship, and traditional religion in the *joola* area (Casamance-Senegal, and Guinea Bissau) jtomasguilera@yahoo.com

Ndèye Sokhna Guèye

124 Raymond Ave., Box 554, Poughkeepsie, NY 12604 USA <u>ndeye.gueye@orange.sn</u>

Philip Havik

R. Fernão de Magalhães, Iote 7, 4° esq, 2775-573 Carcavelos, Portugal

Alexandra Huddleston (Santa Fe Community College)

42 Bluestem Dr., Santa Fe, NM 8750 Research & Teaching interests: Photography (photojournalism); Mali; Islamic education Adh2103@yahoo.com

Charlotte Joy

29 Approach Road, London UK E2 9LY joycharlotte@gmail.com

Maria Konoshenko

Leningradskaya Str., 9, apt. 18, 196608 St. Petersburg, Russia *Research Interests:* Mande language and linguistics <u>eleiteria@gmail.com</u>

Brandon Lundy (SUNY Buffalo and Univ. des Sciences et Technologies de Lille)

274 Fairways Blvd., Williamsville, NY 14221 USA

Research Interests: Ethno-economics, autosubsistence and trade relations in a small frontier community of Guinea-Bissau; Nalú and Balanta ethnicity, cooperation, competition, production, distribution, consumption, and marginality bdlundy@buffalo.edu

Sabine Luning

Leiden U. Dept of Cultural Anthropology, P.O. Box 9555, 2300 RB Leiden, Netherlands Research Interests: Host-stranger relations; gold, money, and gold mining sluning@fsw.leidenuniv.nl

Laura M.-Alvarez (Univ. of Oslo)
Fagerborggate 44, 0360 Oslo, Norway
la ma ba@yahoo.no

Trevor Marchand (SOAS)

Research Interests: Mud architecture, artisanal craftsmanship and apprenticeship

TM6@soas.ac.uk

Sophie Mew

sophienmew@hotmail.com
Daniela Moreau (sponsor; Casa das Áfricas,

Univ. São Paulo)

Rua Ourania 420, Sao Paolo – SP 05445-030, Brazil <u>Danmor57@gmail.com</u>

Bodil Birkebæk Olesen

97 Baildon Street, London SE8 4BQ UK etnobbo@hotmail.com

Cristiana Panella (Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale, Tervuren)

Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale, Leuvensesteen 13, 3080 Tervuren, Belgium Research Interests: Social memory, identify formation, cultural heritage, and art markets Cristiana.panella@africamuseum.be

Miriam Phillips

PMB 260, 775 E. Blithedale Ave., Mill Valley, CA 94941-1554 USA Research Interests: dance ethnography miriamphillips@comcast.net

Anita Schroven (Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology)

Max Planck Institute, Advokatenweg 36, 06114 Halle/Saale, Germany schroven@eth.mpg.de

Francis Simonis (CEMAf, Univ. de Provence)
CEMAf, BP 647, 13092 Aix-en-Provence
cedex 2, France Research Interests: Colonial
administration, local politics, and historical
discourses simonis@mmsh.univ-aix.fr

Maria João Soares

Address not available

Susan Sutton (Univ. of East Anglia)
83A Constable Terrace (ART), Univ. of East
Anglia, Norfolk, Norwich UK NR4 7TJ
Susan.Sutton@uea.ac.uk

Abdou Karim Tandjigora
2 bis rue de la Poterie, 91.100

Corbeil_Essonnes, France Research Interests: colonial power in Soninke society of the Senegal river valley; historical consequences and indigenous strategies aktandjigora@gmail.com

Marina Temudo

Address not available

Maria Manuel Torrão (Instituto de Investigação Científica Tropical, Lisbon)

Inst. de Investigação Científica Tropical, Rua da Junqueira, n°30, 1349-007 Lisbon, Portugal mmanueltorrao@hotmail.com

Bruce Whitehouse

Department of Sociology and Anthropology 681 Taylor Street, Lehigh University Bethlehem, PA 18015 USA Tel. (610) 758-4821

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The journal of the Mande Studies Association, *Mande Studies*, welcomes articles on all aspects of the Mande world and the peoples and cultures that compose it. Submissions will be peerreviewed before acceptance. The journal will accept and publish manuscripts in English or French. (For additional information on *Mande Studies* see the web page:

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