



MANDE STUDIES ASSOCIATION
Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association
December 2, 2016
Washington, D.C.

ATTENDEES:

Laura Arnston
Larry Becker
Stephen Belcher
Jody Benjamin
Selby Carpenter
David Conrad
Rosa de Jorio
Coleman Donaldson
Lorenzo Ferrarm
Till Foester
Barbara Frank
Sten Hagberg
Kathrin Heitz-Topka
Jan Jansen
Charlotte Joy
Lansiné Kaba
Cherif Keita
Dolores Koenig
Kassim Kone
Bonnie McConnell
Bill Moseley
Charles Riley
Janet Smith
Marcia Tiede
Jeanne Toungara

AGENDA

Barbara called the meeting to order and asked for a motion to approve the business meeting minutes from the 2015 ASA. She turned the time over to Dianna Bell for the treasurer's report:

We currently have 84 members – this includes dues-paying and sponsored members.

We show our membership divided as:

regular	20%
sponsor	22%
student	3%
sponsored	55%

Where is our membership?

- 55% resides in Africa (Mali, Guinea, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Guinea-Bissau)

- 20% resides in Europe (France, Hungary, The Netherlands, Germany, United Kingdom, Switzerland, Belgium, Italy, Portugal, and Scandinavia)
- 26% resides in North America (United States and Canada)
- One member resides in Brazil

We have \$8,088.14 in our US Bank account.

We have lost a lot of members this year! You can always check with the treasurer to see if your dues are current. When registering please fill out all the information asked for in the online form – including the country where you live. This will help to ensure that we have **complete** addresses for mailing out journals! If there's no address, you won't get a journal.

Dianna suggested we discuss both the rates for members based in North America and Europe, as well as potential logistics for collecting dues from members based in West Africa.

One woman suggested using the Orange money network to collect fees and deposit them into account. Stephen Belcher said he belongs to an organization with the same problem, and they pay membership at meetings. Joseph Hellweg said that a local African organization could potentially collect money and when one of us is visiting could bring the money back and write a check to the African Studies Association.

Sten added that he belongs to an organization in West Africa where one trustworthy, long-standing member would collect dues and then the organization would send all the copies of the journal to that one person. He added that it may not be necessary to transfer the money but a long-term member of MANSA, as there's benefit to having some money on the ground in West Africa when we're organizing conferences. Laura said that she did not want to put the burden on any single person, but that members should be able to float with the intention of paying their dues whenever there's a conference in West Africa.

Jeanne asked about using WARC to collaborate with us to collect dues. Secondly, she asked about the average salaries for an assistant professor? She also brought up the issue of sponsored level being tied to a specific person, but Barbara said that the money goes into a pool for all West African colleagues.

Barbara turned the focus back to sponsored/sponsoring memberships. Of late, we have had web expenses, legal expenses, and a variety of other expenses that didn't occur in the past. Until we figure out how African-based colleagues can pay dues, they're all "sponsored." So we need to increase dues for everyone and moreover discuss the possibility of setting up a lifetime membership.

Barbara suggested \$500 for a lifetime membership and introducing platinum, gold, and silver level dues for annual members. Jan said he thought that \$500 was too cheap and people stop sponsoring and rather proposed \$1,000. Laura mentioned her lifetime membership with the ASA and said the benefit is that it eases having to not pay year to

year. Stephen added that he got a bargain paying \$1,000 for a lifetime ASA membership years ago.

Sten said that 55% of the members of MANSAs don't pay dues, so they get stuck in a zone of being a sub-member and that membership is important for fundraising. He proposed 12 000 CFA as an annual fee for those in West Africa earning less than \$20,000. This shouldn't be a sum that has prevented people from entering.

Barbara said when Mande Studies was in Bobo-Dioulasso everyone voted to pay dues. Jeanne said we should have two categories, with the journal and without the journal. Barbara said that we have to find a gradual way to work in this issue, but for now she wants to discuss with members the plan to raise dues.

Joseph asked if an increase to \$60 for a regular membership sounded reasonable and no one said otherwise.

Barbara said that she wanted to say a few things about the meeting in Bobo-Dioulasso, especially about the way the proceedings of the meeting were handled. Members took a poll of the authors and people voted to electronically publish the proceedings electronically. The Bobo colleagues tried to rework it with a local press, but by then we had determined that we weren't going to publish it.

Barbara reminded members of the gala this evening and said that she has paid costs for the totality of the event so everything will go into the travel account.

We've launched call for papers, which started slow but has picked up. The deadline is the 16th of December. Barbara asked for more proposals from North American and European-based members, as meetings require these members' presence because they pay registration fees.

Barbara pointed out that she didn't send out a newsletter this year. She didn't have time and altogether wonders if we need a newsletter anymore since the listserv is so active and we have the journal and a Face Book page. Producing the newsletter is extremely time-consuming perhaps something that the organization grown out of.

Sten said that one way of keeping a history of the organization would be to have a short report within the journal, and that can be our historical record in place of the newsletter. Jeanne reiterated Sten's point and said that if MANSAs is trying to grow up then it should have a record.

Dianna suggested this could be a position. Someone said that a member of the board could do that. Jody Benjamin offered that he could do it for a year and then it could switch to someone else.

Barbara and Joseph attended a meeting with the ASA board in which they proposed a new structure between the ASA and coordinate organizations. As part of becoming a

reworked member of the ASA coordinate organizations, our legal status will change and we will have 5013c tax exempt status. In turn, there will be some financial changes. Specifically that you will pay dues through the ASA website. So when you renew your membership for the ASA, you then can click to become a member of MANSAs. Our legal status would be as a branch of the ASA and they will offer us the opportunity to have a section of their website that will be accessible only to members. We could publish a membership directory there. As we get more details, we'll be sharing information with members. They will also do an annual audit and send us a report. Barbara Frank asked if a certain percentage of our membership had to be ASA members, and Barbara said that we far surpass it. Laura asked if we can still set the membership levels and Barbara said that it will let us and that we don't have to pay any fees (for the time being) to the ASA. Joseph said that this is the 60th anniversary for the ASA and so they'll be setting up some small grants that we could apply to fund African colleagues to come to the ASA.

Barbara brought up the issue of the logo. David Conrad asked if anyone knew the history of the logo. Samantha Reinco (sp?) designed the logo and Conrad was married to her at the time and that's all he got out of the marriage. In the course of dealing with legal matters, Barbara asked for a trademark for it.

Mande Studies is changing homes and will be published by University of Indiana Press rather than Wisconsin. Without going into detail, it involved attorneys and the negotiations are almost finished. Our next volume (18) will come out this year.

Barbara turned the time over to Peter Mark, who told the group that Barbara did a lot of difficult and delicate work to carry out this transition. Those who read the previous volume, would recall that the editor wrote that we were online and digital. Two months later, Peter found out that we were not online or electronic and felt that his reputation was damaged because he promised authors that it would not be online and that he unintentionally lied to them. Peter was about to resign because it seemed all he could do would be to fall on his sword. Barbara did all of the dirty work that Peter was too angry to undertake and he's thankful to Barbara. On a positive, Indiana University Press is highly reputable and professional but they are also the publishers of the strongest works on West Africa in the English language. He's thrilled be returning to Indiana and hopeful that after last year's false start we will actually be there. This is part of why volume 18 hasn't come out yet.

He can share a bit of the content. It's on a flash drive and ready to go. It's going to have a section that, in terms of historiography, will make a huge contribution to Lusophone 17th century understandings of the Upper Guinea Coast, when a Jesuit missionary (named Father Alvarez) lived long enough in the region to have a sense for the language and collected oral histories. Paul Harr in 1982 privately published these records but there's no final translation of the Portuguese into English. When Paul Harr published his informal version, he did not publish the whole thing. There was a missing chapter that Fred has now transcribed and translated. It's been a very difficult process because Portuguese has changed a lot over the last three hundred years. It's a clean version that's close to the 1733 version. The next volume of *Mande Studies* constitutes a series of

articles with an introduction by Fred Lamp. This will crack open the history of ethnography and will provide enough material to keep scholars busy for years. It's been redone every few weeks while waiting for publication. They're now on the eleventh version of revisions.

There is a specification with Indiana in the contract that they will publish print and online versions of the journal.

The next issue will be guest edited and will deal with sociological issues in the contemporary Mande world. After that Peter envisions that the following volume will be about scholars who started research before electronic communication.

Joseph – for the organization of the conference we owe Jeanne Toungara a huge debt of gratitude who helped to put together the connections for the University of Grand-Bassam. The collaborations we need are in place and the conference is scheduled for Aug. 2-6th. It's an hour away from Abidjan in Grand-Bassam. There will be transportation for students who want to go from University of Abidjan to Grand-Bassam. The conference hall itself is Hotel N'Sa, which has a working relationship and Afrikland and will give group rates. There are a range of hotels in Grand-Bassam, so there will be an array of hotels for varying budgets.

Things are in place, we Yacouba Konate will present a request for 5-10k from ASCAD (L'Acad. des Arts, des Sciences et des Cultures d'Afrique et des Diaspos) for the conference. We'll know soon. The university has agreed to give us dorm rooms for a very reduced rate, so that came as a huge relief for housing African presenters. They're also trying to arrange a reception at the prime minister's residence. Joseph reminded people that this was the site of the attack last year and Ivoirians are determined that it won't happen again and have raised security. After the selection committee chooses papers, the African colleagues who are accepted will be selected for those who will get their arrangements paid for.

David encouraged everyone to get the word out to all your colleagues in order to make this the best Mande Studies conference ever.