

MANSA NEWSLETTER

MANDE STUDIES ASSOCIATION

ASSOCIATION DES ETUDES MANDE

NUMBER 1, NOVEMBER 1986

At the annual meeting of the African Studies Association on November 1, 1986 in Madison, Wisconsin a group of scholars interested in the topic of Mande studies gathered to discuss the possibility of forming an organization devoted to pursuing this interest. Thus was born the Mande Studies Association, to be known by the acronym MANSA. A primary purpose of MANSA is the exchange of ideas and information among its members via a newsletter, and this is the first issue. It is being sent to those who have already joined MANSA or expressed an interest in doing so, and to those whose names have been suggested as potential members.

The first issue of the newsletter will serve as an introduction to those who may not yet know about MANSA, in the hope that they will be interested in joining. The second issue will contain the names, addresses and brief descriptions of the research or occupational interests of those who are actually members. Subsequent issues will list this information about new members as they join, but in addition to newsletter entries, the up-to-date comprehensive list will be sent to all members upon request or as they join.

A special effort is being made to inform research institutions in countries of the Mande culture zone and interested areas, of the existence of MANSA. I suggest that complimentary copies of the newsletter and annually up-dated membership lists be sent to such institutions and governing bodies as l'Institut des Sciences Humaines in Bamako, IFAN in Dakar, l'Institut Nationale de Recherche et de Documentation in Conakry, and their counterparts in Abidjan, Banjul, Freetown, Monrovia, Paris and any other appropriate place. Suggestions with names and addresses will be gratefully accepted.

Present at the founder's meeting were: Mary Jo Arnoldi, Gerald Cashion, David Conrad, Ariane Deluz, Mona Etienne, Kate Ezra, Barbara Frank, Alma Gottlieb, Kathryn Green, Thomas Hale, Robert Handloff, Steve Harmon, John Johnson, Lansiné Kaba, Mamadou Kanté, Jon Kirby, Martin Klein, Robert Launay, Adria LaViolette, Nehemia Levtzion, Ann McDougall, Roderick McIntosh, Patrick McNaughton, Richard Roberts, and Walter van Beek (if I have left anyone out, please notify me).

David C. Conrad
President
S.U.N.Y. - Oswego

Minutes Of The Founders' Meeting

On November 1, 1986 at the Concourse Hotel in Madison, Wisconsin, a group of scholars interested in the topic of Mande studies gathered in Suite 619 to discuss the possibility of forming an organization devoted to pursuing this interest.

After much discussion Nehemia Levtzion suggested that the Mande Studies Association, with the acronym of MANSA, be formed and the suggestion was voted on and accepted by those present.

Due to the excited interest in this undertaking (and possibly also to the spirits present), normal notetaking of motions presented and voted on became impossible for the secretary. The following is a list of the main topics discussed and decided upon:

1. Officers consisting of a President, Vice President, Secretary, and two Board members were chosen at the meeting:

President - David C. Conrad, State University of New York at Oswego
 Vice President - B. Marie Perinbam, University of Maryland, College Park
 Secretary - Kathryn L. Green, University of Florida
 Board - Gerald Cashion, African Development Foundation
 Board and French Liason - Robert Launay, Northwestern University

2. After much discussion a logo for the organization was chosen, suggested by John Wm. Johnson. The "life eternal" symbol common on traditional mud cloth textiles will be prepared by John Johnson for communications of the organization.

3. A newsletter for MANSA will be issued a minimum of twice a year. Preparation and mailings will be done by David Conrad. All materials that members wish to be published in the newsletter should be sent to him at the Department of History, S.U.N.Y. - Oswego, Oswego, NY 13126. Materials may be photocopied as they are received for presentation in the newsletter, so contributors are responsible for seeing that submissions are free of typos and need for further editing. Submissions may be made in English, French, or Bamanakan.

4. Membership fee for the first year is 5 U.S. dollars. That sum in a check made out to MANSA, along with a brief description of the member's research or occupational interests should be sent to David Conrad for presentation in the second issue of the newsletter. In addition to these two items, members are requested to submit names of individuals interested in Mande studies, who might be interested in MANSA.

5. A call for papers for MANSA-sponsored panels will be issued in the first newsletter. Six panel topics and their chairpersons were chosen. Those interested in contributing a paper to any of these panels should send an abstract by February 1 to David Conrad. He will pass on the abstract to the appropriate chairperson, keeping a record of submissions. All panels formed as a result of the call for papers will be submitted from the MANSA President's office to the meeting organizers for next year's annual meeting.

6. It was decided that the President should write to the ASA News to inform the association of the formation of the organization and to request that a notice to that effect, soliciting members, be published in the News. The announcement will include a special invitation to graduate students interested in Mande studies, and professors will be encouraged to recruit their graduate students for membership in MANSA.

7. There was further discussion about MANSA forming an editorial committee for selecting papers for a journal, an edited volume, pre-publication or working papers, or for submitting papers directly to an established journal for the production of a special issue. All of these ideas were tabled for discussion at future meetings.

Kathryn L. Green
 Secretary
 University of Florida

Call For MANSA-Sponsored Papers For The 1987 ASA Meeting

Because of the lateness of this newsletter, those interested in contributing a paper to one of the panels listed below should send an abstract by February 1 directly to the appropriate chairperson, and the chairpersons can then send the necessary information on to David Conrad who will submit the panel information to the ASA organizers:

The Soninke Diaspora - Tom Hale, French Department, 316 Burrowes Bldg., The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA 16802

Social Organization of the Southern Mande - Alma Gottlieb, Department of Anthropology, 109 Davenport Hall, 607 S. Mathews Ave., University of Illinois, Urbana, IL 61801

Belief Systems in the Mande - Robert Launay, Department of Anthropology, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL 60201

Mansaya: Political Authority in the Mande World - Lansiné Kaba, Black Studies Program, University of Illinois, Box 4348, Chicago, IL 60680

Environment and Ecology in the Mande Culture Zone - George Brooks, History Department, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405

Professor Brooks invites scholars from different disciplines, e.g., geography, linguistics, anthropology, archaeology, and history, to participate in this panel and hopes that they might be able to read each other's papers before preparing their final drafts.

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David C. Conrad
President
SUNY - Oswego

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