

## Document Citation

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MANDABI. (LE MANDAT). (THE MONEY ORDER). 1968. Directed by Ousmane Sembène. Written by Sembène; adapted from his novella, Le Mandat. Produced by Filmi Domireew, Dakar & Comptoir Français du Film, Paris. Producer - Jean Maumy. Director of Photography - Paul Soullignac. Camera (Eastmancolor) - Georges Caristan. Production Manager - Paulin Soumanou Vieyra. Edited by - Gillou Kikoine, Bernard Lefavre. Assistant camerapeople - Issa Thiaw, Maya Bracher. Assistant Director - Abouacar Samb-Makharam. Production Secretary - Awa Sylla. Assistant Editor - Marx. Sound - Henry Moline. Assistant Sound - El Hadji M'Bow. Perchman - Mawa Gaye. Chief Electrician - Emile Ganem. Grips - Cherif Duam Amate Dia. Clapman - Joseph Diatta. With: Mamadou Guye, aka Makhouredia Gueye (Dieng), Yanousse N'Diaye-(Seye) (1st wife), Issa Niang (2nd wife), Serigne Sow (The Imam), Moustapha Touré (M'Barka the Shopkeeper), Medoune Faye (Postman), Moussa Diouf (Nephew), Christophe M'Doulabia, aka Colomb (Water-seller), Therese Bass (Dieng's Sister), Farba Sarr (Business Agent). Made simultaneously in two languages - Wolof and French. English subtitles. (Grove Press Films). 90 minutes.

An unemployed father of seven and husband of two receives a money order from his working nephew in Paris. However, given the vagaries of daily life in Dakar, Dieng finds it impossible to cash his gift. His education of learning the rules of this new game is both extremely funny and sad.

The Wolof version of MANDABI is the first Senegalese feature to be made in an "indigenous" language.

"As a comedy dealing with life's miseries, it displays a controlled sophistication in the telling that gives it a feeling of almost classic directness and simplicity. What Sembène does not make his camera do means more than what many virtuoso directors do make their cameras do...Sembène's approach is spare, laconic, slightly ironic, and never patronizing. Like many good directors, he displays a reticence toward

toward his characters that grants him freedom from explicit moral judgment and allows them a quality of personal wholeness that is perhaps more important to the movies than great performance. Because his hero, Dieng (played by Mamadou Guye, brilliantly and without undue complications), must change in our eyes without changing very much in his character, such wholeness is crucial to the movement of the film...Dieng's misfortunes, like the rooms, courtyards, and streets so unassumingly explored by Sembène's camera, belong to the ordinary continuum of experience. Because they are the products of a universal trickery, like fate, they cannot be avoided. But they need not be approved. In this small distinction lies the style and the hope of the film." - Roger Greenspun, The New York Times, Sept. 30, 1969.

Notes prepared by Larry Kardish

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