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'Kumabali Ye Horon Di' (The Person Who Doesn't Speak Is Free) - On the Social Construction of Copy Rights

Based on observations during years of fieldwork in Manding since 1988; this paper will analyze a recording of one griot as a group/team performance. It will be shown how those not involved in the actual recording position themselves in order to have a claim on the recording. The argument will be demonstrated with a video recording (of themes from the Sunjata epic, recited by kumatigi Lansine Diabate) made in Kela, January 2007, published in 2010 as volume 3 in the Verba Africana series. It will be argued that these 'overlooked' aspects are epistemological challenges to what academics generally present as 'oral tradition'.