INTRODUCTION

In order to achieve a comprehensive survey of Islamic manuscripts in Malawi, the following districts were covered: Karonga in the Northern Region, Dedza, Lilongwe, Nkhota Kota, Ntcheu and Salima in the Central Region, and Blantyre, Chiradzulu, Machinga, Mangochi, Mulanje, Thyolo, and Zomba in the Southern Region. The focus was on district headquarters.

The choice of districts was based mainly on the fact that, apart from Karonga, these are the districts which had come under strong Islamic influence through Swahili/Arabic traders and also the Yao people of Malawi themselves. Karonga, like Nkhota Kota, was a very important Arab stronghold in the early days of the British occupation and pacification of Malawi.

Of the thirteen districts covered by the survey, nothing was obtained from Dedza and Ntcheu in the Central Region and Mulanje and Thyolo in the Southern Region. There are a number of reasons for this: in the first place it was decided to ignore many collections with fewer than ten manuscripts. Secondly, some individuals were uncooperative or indifferent to the whole exercise, even after representations were made to them, or after they had been strongly recommended by others in the community as potential keepers of manuscripts. Furthermore, many people have a few printed books, but no manuscripts.

INDIVIDUAL COLLECTIONS

BALAKA

Abdul Rahman Afaki

Sheikh Abdul Rahman Afaki
c/o Ng’onga F.P. School, PO Box 116, Balaka, Machinga
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 45 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The collection comprises tafsir, fiqh, sira, Hadith and tawhid. Some of them have artistic value. The owner uses
the collection for his studies, and for preparing sermons for the
mosque and other gatherings.

Saiti Ali

Sheikh Saiti Ali
c/o Ng’onga F.P. School, PO Box 116, Balaka, Machinga
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 18 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The collection comprises fiqh, şura, Ḥadīth and
tauhīd. A few of the manuscripts have artistic value.

Anusi Fulano

Sheikh Anusi Fulano
c/o PO Box 218, Balaka, Machinga
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By permission from the family of the late owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 30 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The collection covers tafsir, fiqh and history.

Ali Maliki

Sheikh Ali Maliki
c/o Ng’onga F.P. School, PO Box 116, Balaka, Machinga
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 22 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The collection covers fiqh, tafsir, şura, Ḥadīth and
tauhīd. A few of the manuscripts have artistic value.

Abubakar Mkwanda collection

Sheikh Yusufu Abubakar Mkwanda
c/o Mr C. Chinkondenje, PO Box 41, Balaka, Machinga
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By permission from the family of the late owner.

Total number of Islamic MSS: 30 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The collection covers tafsir, fiqh, tauhīd, şura and
Ḥadīth. Some of the manuscripts have artistic value. The late
owner started acquiring MSS during his schooldays and continued
when he became an Imam. They are now in the custody of his eldest
son who continues to build up the collection with the cooperation of
his younger brothers.

BALAKASI

Sumaili Mwaliya

Balakasi Village
PO Namadzi, Magomero, Chiradzulu
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By permission from the family of the late owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 16 (11 Arabic; 5 Chichewa).
Description of collection: The Arabic manuscripts cover areas such as
fiqh and history, while those in the Chichewa language of Malawi
contain mainly the history of Islam. These manuscripts are not
bound. They were collected while the owner was preaching in the
mosque and were also written for teaching purposes.

Mwalimu Zubeli

Balakasi Village, PO Box 33, Magomero, Namadzi, Chiradzulu
Date of establishment: 1950s
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 14 (Arabic).
Description of collection: These MSS were collected between the 1950s
and the 1980s and most of them are written in dark ink. They mostly
relate to Qur’anic studies and Islamic subjects such as tauhīd,
Ḥadīth, Islamic marriage issues and many other themes. Most of the
manuscripts are torn because of poor storage facilities.
BLANTYRE

Abdul Karim Gamba

Sheikh Abdul Karim Gamba
c/o Blantyre Islamic Jamaat, PO Box 14, Blantyre
Tel.: 625 948
Date of establishment: 1977
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 24 (15 Arabic; 9 Chichewa).
Description of collection: The manuscripts cover the history of Islam and biographies of the Prophet Muhammad (sira), tafsir and fiqh.

Imrah Rajabu

Sheikh Imrah Rajabu
c/o Bangwe Market, PO Box 67, Blantyre
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 17 (Swahili).
Description of collection: These manuscripts cover areas such as sira, fiqh, and also some Qur’anic exegesis (tafsir). They were collected during the period when the owner was attending Islamic studies in Zanzibar, some years ago.

CHANGAMILE

Ibrahim Abubakar

Changamile Village, T.A. Chimwala, Mangochi
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 8 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The collection covers fiqh, tawhid and sira.

CHIA

Asumani Wazakili

Sheikh Asumani Wazakili
PO Box 12, Chia, Nkhata Kota
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 22 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The collection covers tafsir, fiqh, sira, tawhid and Hadith. Some have artistic value.

CHIRADZULU

Auji Abbasi

Sheikh Auji Abbasi
Bilal Islamic Mosque, PO Box 14, Chiradzulu
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 22 (3 Arabic; 19 Swahili).
Description of collection: The collection comprises mainly fiqh and sira, written by East African authors, especially those based in Zanzibar, the main author being Sheikh Abdullah Saleh Farsi. There are also some on tawhid and Arabic language. Since these texts are the products of East African minds, it is not surprising that the works generally reflect the Shafi’i school of thought which predominates in Eastern Africa. The manuscripts seem to lay a major emphasis on the foundations of Islam.

Hassan Jali Chikwatu

Sheikh Hassan Jali Chikwatu
PO Box 9, Chiradzulu
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 46 (40 Arabic; 6 Swahili).
Description of collection: The Arabic material covers subjects like natural science, mathematics, fiqh, sira and tafsir. The Swahili texts are on tawhid, fiqh, etc.
KARONGA
Y. Daud

Sheikh Y. Daud
c/o Karonga Islamic Centre, PO Box 59, Karonga
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 25 (10 Arabic; 15 Swahili).
Description of collection: The collection is mainly on the biography of the Prophet Muhammad. The manuscripts containing translations of different Arabic words into simple Arabic and then into Swahili were done by the Sheikh Abdul Rahman M. al-Najar in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania. The aim was to simplify the Qur'an.

KAWALE
Tulikamuchisye Collection
Bhatt Ali Bhatt
Mchewa Islamic Centre, PO Box Kawale, Lilongwe
Date of establishment: 1935
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 50 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The collection includes tafsir, fiqh, Hadith, sira and tawhid. A few of them have artistic value.

LILONGWE
Muhammad Mnjandaheri

Sheikh Muhammad Mnjandaheri
C/o Lilongwe Islamic Movement, PO Box 30197, Lilongwe
Tel.: 743 679
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 25 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The collection covers tafsir, fiqh, tawhid, sira, Hadith and history. Some have artistic value.

LUPANGA
Abubakar Azziz

Abubakar Azziz
C/o Apatna Mosiyanj Store, PO Box 527, Balaka, Machinga or Lupanga Village, T.A. Nsamala, Balaka, Machinga
Date of establishment: 1998
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 60 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The collection covers tafsir, fiqh and history. Some of the manuscripts have artistic value. They were collected by the owner during the time of his studies. Now as an Imam he uses them for teaching and preaching in the mosque.

MADZIABANGO
Karim Yasini

Madziabango Village, PO Mbane, Blantyre
Status: Private
Conditions of access: Permission from the family of the late owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 11 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The collection covers mainly the biography of the Prophet Muhammad and also tafsir.

MAGOMERO
Sheikh Mujafali Suwedi

Sheikh Mujafali Suwedi
C/o Macocha, PO Box 46, Magomero, Namadzi, Chiradzulu
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 18 (Arabic).
Description of collection: Some of the manuscripts contain the sira (history) of the Prophet Muhammad while others discuss verses from the Qur'an and Hadith.
MAKALANI

Mwalimu Maliro

Makalani Village, PO Magomero, Chiradzulu
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By permission from the family of the late owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 10 (Arabic).
Description of collection: Three of the manuscripts are sermons. The others include verses of the Qur'an, Hadith and the history of Islam in general.

MAKOLOJE

Yusufu Majawa Makoloje

Sheikh Yusufu Majawa Makoloje
Makoloje Village, T.A. Msamala, Balaka, Machinga
Date of establishment: late 1920s
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 32 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The collection covers tafsir, fiqh, sira, tausid and Hadith. Some of the manuscripts have artistic value. The collection is primarily for the owner’s preaching and teaching missions, and also for his own Islamic studies in general.

MANGOCHI

Abdul Azziz Abubakar

PO Box 272, Mangochi
Date of establishment: 1965
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 6 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The collection covers fiqh, tausid, sira and tafsir. It is designed to support the owner’s studies and religious faith.

Sumani Afana

Sheikh Sumani Afana
PO Box 34, Mangochi
Date of establishment: 1982
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 8 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The collection covers fiqh, sira, history, Hadith and music. One of the manuscripts is rare and comprises songs in praise of Allah during the time of Abdul Kadar Jilan.

Khalid Mustapha

Sheikh Khalid Mustapha Kaunde
PO Box 34, Mangochi
Date of establishment: 1939
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 25 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The collection covers tafsir, fiqh, Hadith, sira and tausid. A few of them have artistic value.

MBAME

Maulana Mandudi

PO Box 1, Mbame, Blantyre
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 16 (Arabic).
Description of collection: These manuscripts cover mainly Islamic areas. Some discuss Islamic law (Shari'ia), others cover such areas as sira and fiqh.

MIKULUMU

Sheikh Anasi

c/o Mikulumu Mosque, Mikulumu Village, T.A. Malemia, PO Box Domasi, Zomba
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 11 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The collection covers ta'wīd (the teachings of Islam) and sīra (biography of the Prophet Muḥammad).

MKANDA
Sheikh Mkwanda

Mkanda Village, T.A. Mulumbe, PO Box Zomba
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 7 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The MSS cover mainly Ḥadīth. Most of the manuscripts have disintegrated or been damaged because of lack of proper storage facilities.

MPHUNDU
Wadi Yunusu

Sheikh WADI YUNUSU
Mphundu Village, T.A. Ndindi, Salima
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 21 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The collection covers fiqh, history, ta'wīd and Ḥadīth. Very few of them have artistic value. The owner uses the collection for his own studies.

MTUBWI
Shaibu Wilo

Mwalimu Shaibu Wilo
Mtubwi Village, T.A. Msamala, PO Machinga, Liwonde
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 9 (Arabic).

Description of collection: The manuscripts cover sīra (including mawlid and miḥrayn).

MTWICHE
Sheikh Chiwere

Mtwitche Village, PO Domasi, Zomba
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 16 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The collection covers fiqh and ta'wīd.

Sheikh Kulesi

Mtwitche Village, PO Domasi, Zomba
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 25 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The manuscripts cover fiqh, ta'wīd, sīra, Ḥadīth and sermons. The focus is on the teachings of Islam.

NAMONDE
Sheikh Aman Duwa

c/o Namonde Mosque, Namonde Village, T.A. Mulumbe, PO Zomba
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 75 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The collection covers, among other things, elementary teaching of Islam, and laws of the month of fasting (Ramadan).

NJULI
Kaim Janah

Sheikh KAIM JANI
PO Box 44, Njuli, Chiradzulu
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 7 (Swahili).
Description of collection: Two of the manuscripts are on tafsir and one on the translation of the Qur'an by the Kadian people. Three others relate the life history of the Prophet Muhammad and his wives. The last one gives the succession of the Sultans in Zanzibar. All these are the works of Sheikh Abdullah Saleh Farsy who was a well-known scholar of Islam in Zanzibar and was the teacher there of Sheikh Kaim Jairosi. Sheikh Abdullah Saleh Farsy was an Islamic Shari'a judge and later became a Qadi in Saudi Arabia as well as in Kenya.

NKHOTA KOTA
Filjala Ahmadu

Sheikh Filjala Ahmadu
PO Box 161, Nkhota Kota
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 121 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The collection covers tafsir, tauhid, fiqh, sira and Hadith. Some of the MSS have artistic value. The collector is currently studying at Medina University. His ambition is to build a big private library, with as many old books and manuscripts as possible. The collection is primarily for reference, teaching, study and for the collector's own use.

Awani Chikalipo

Sheikh Awani Chikalipo
PO Box 3, Nkhota Kota
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 18 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The collection covers tafsir, fiqh, sira, tauhid and Hadith. It was initially intended for the owner’s studies, but it now assists him in preaching.

Abdullah Ibadi

Sheikh Abdullah Ibadi
PO Box 67, Nkhota Kota
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 72 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The collection covers fiqh, Hadith, tafsir, sira and tauhid. Some of the manuscripts have artistic value. The collection is mainly for personal use in teaching, preaching, reference and for promoting knowledge of Islam.

Alhaji Ahmadi Karumo

Sheikh Alhaji Ahmadi Karumo
PO Box 163, Nkhota Kota
Date of establishment: 1962
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 25 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The collection covers fiqh, history, Hadith and tafsir. The owner is a preacher; the collection assists his work and is also for reference purposes.

Abdul Azziz Mbaruku

Sheikh Abdul Azziz Mbaruku
PO Box 67, Nkhota Kota
Date of establishment: 1932
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 165 (162 Arabic; 3 Urdu).
Description of collection: The collection covers tafsir, fiqh, Hadith, tauhid and sira. A very big collection, but sadly not properly organised and looked after. The owner had been inspired by studies earlier on to embark on building the collection. Some of the items have been inherited from his tutors. He uses the collection for teaching, preaching and reference purposes.
Hamza Salahan Phoka

Sheikh Hamza Salahan Phoka
PO Box 129, Nkhota Kota
Date of establishment: 1979
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 18 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The collection covers tafsîr, sîra, Hadîth, fiqh and Arabic language (grammar). The MSS are intended to promote Islamic studies. The aim of the owner is to build up a very big collection, but his efforts are hampered by the fact that such manuscripts are rare.

Ali Thelere

Sheikh Ali Thelere
PO Box 103, Nkhota Kota
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 23 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The collection covers tafsîr, Hadîth, fiqh, sîra and tawhid. A few of the manuscripts have artistic value. The collection is for the owner's private use as a teacher and Imam.

Brother Ulaya Library

Sheikh Sulaimawa Yusufu Ulaya
PO Box 163, Nkhota Kota
Tel.: 292 218/292 293
Date of establishment: 1984
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 147 (145 Arabic; 2 Swahili).
Description of collection: The collection covers fiqh, tafsîr, tawhid, Hadîth and sîra. A few of the manuscripts have artistic value. Basically the collection is for the owner’s private study and to share with friends; also for teaching purposes.

NUNU

Sheikh Uladi

c/o Nunu Mosque, Nunu Village, T.A. Mulumbe, PO Box Zomba
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 10 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The MSS cover Hadîth and sîra.

SALIMA

Sheikh Ndalama Amadi

Pemba F.P. School, PO Box 458, Salima
Date of establishment: ca. 1920s
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 36 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The collection covers fiqh, Hadîth, sîra and tawhid, and the owner uses it for teaching, preaching and also for study.

Jafari Bushiri

Sheikh Jafari Bushiri
Maganga F.P. School, PO Box 93, Salima
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 26 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The collection covers fields like tafsîr, fiqh, Hadîth, sîra and tawhid. The MSS are used for the owner’s personal studies and for sharing Islamic knowledge and faith with others.

Haji Kassim

Sheikh Haji Kassim
PO Box 33, Salima
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 15 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The collection covers tafsîr, fiqh, sîra, tawhîd and Hadîth, and assists the owner in his work as an Imam, preacher and teacher.

SONGANI
Muhammad Amulu
Sheikh Muhammad Amuli
c/o Songani Islamic Centre, T.A. Malemia, PO Domasi, Zomba
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Description of collection: An unknown number of MSS covering fiqh, tawhîd, sîra and Hadîth.

Sheikh T. Hussien

c/o Songani Trading Centre, T.A. Malemia, PO Domasi, Zomba
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 3 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The manuscripts cover tawhîd and sîra.

Sheikh Sumaisi

c/o Songani Trading Centre, PO Domasi, Zomba
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By arrangement with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 18 (Arabic).
Description of collection: The manuscripts cover tawhîd, Hadîth, sermons and Islamic law.

ZOMBA
Maulana Adam

Sheikh Adam
c/o Anjuman Himaytre Islam, PO Box 56, Zomba