GUINEA

by

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INDIVIDUAL COLLECTIONS

BOFA

Bakary Hamad

BF 174
Date of establishment: 1969
Status: Private

Total number of Islamic MSS: 187 (Arabic).
Description of collection: This collection possesses unique MSS which are important for the history of West Africa. About 23 are of artistic significance. The collection covers a variety of Islamic subjects, namely Hadîth (28), fiqh (39), usûl (27), Qur’ân and related studies (15), fatuâs (57), sermons (16), mathematics (5).

Most of the MSS were copied in the 19th and 20th centuries; the oldest was copied or written in the 15th century. The rest are undated. They are housed in a room which serves as the prayer and study room of the owner. They are well preserved, although a few have lost their bindings. They are bound together and kept on a table.

Significant MSS in this collection are: Kitâb ma’rifat al-hisâb, anonymous and undated; and Kitâb fikr al-rajîl wa-akhkâm al-ajrîl by Abû Mas`ûdî, dated 1480.

It is not known whether the collection has been catalogued or not.

BOKE

Ab. Bakary Diallo

c/o Central Mosque
Date of establishment: 1959
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By appointment with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 257 (Arabic; Hausa; Kanuri).
Description of collection: This collection is in mixed languages. According to the owner, he established it when he returned from N'djamena, Chad, and Koudouga, Nigeria where he had lived and worked as an Islamic teacher. He copied most of the MSS himself as an act of pious devotion while in Nigeria and Chad. Others were later purchased from Guinean sources on his return to Guinea.

The collection covers the following subjects: poetry (22), philosophy (35), fiqh (20), ta'ziya (70), medicine (50), mathematics (11), Shari'a (2), Hadith (4), fatwa (18), science (25).

The MSS are not well preserved, as most have been affected by damp and termites. They are housed in the living room of the owner in a metal box. The collection requires exposure to light and repair work. Some MSS are very old, although impossible to date. Others are dated between the 17th and 20th centuries. Only a few are of artistic significance. The rarities in the collection are: Kitaab al-Akhdar by Abu Zayd Abudh-Rahman al-Akhderi, undated; Qasidat al-burda by Abu Basri, undated; and Risalat al-suwail 'an al-maṣyyil wa-salat al-janaza wa-'l-dafn by Muhammad Salga Kano, copied in 1952.

Unpublished catalogue:
A handwritten list covers about 200 MSS in this collection.

CONAKRY
Alhaji Ibrahim Ba

Grand Mosque of Conakry
Date of establishment: 1960
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By special permission of the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 141 (Arabic; Fulbe).
Description of collection: This collection has old MSS dating back to the 18th century. Part of this collection was bequeathed to the present owner by his grandfather who was a famous scholar in Pita in his time. Alhaji Ba, now the Chief Imam of the Grand Mosque of Conakry, enriched the collection with MSS purchased or copied by himself or his disciples.

Subjects covered are: astrology (10), occult (18), Qur'an (4), tafsir (2), history (15), genealogy (7), fiqh (22), praise of the Prophet (6), Hadith (16), Qur'an science (11), Shar'a (10), usul (4), Sufism (16).

Most MSS were copied in the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries. The rest are undated or not properly dated. The collection is of artistic significance, and there are two Qur'ans with superb bindings.

The collection is significant in that it contains rare manuscripts on religious sciences and history. It is well preserved in a glass-fronted wooden bookcase. The important MSS in the collection include: Tafsir al-qaṣṣā'ī wa-la-ḥikām wa-tārikh Fālāni, by Ḥāfiz al-Fārūqī, undated; Hamzīya fi maṣūm al-Nabhāni, by Ṣa'īd ibn al-Maḥrūzī; Kāfīya waqf al-ṣuqūr al-māhiyya, anonymous & undated; and Kitaab fi fiqh by Ibn Farḥūn Abū 'Ībāhī, copied in 1838.

Unpublished catalogue:
A list covers all the MSS in this collection.

Alhaji Soumani Diawara

954 ENG
Date of establishment: 1971
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By appointment with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 62.
Description of collection: Alhaji Soumani Diawara is a Sufi scholar who has travelled widely in West Africa. He claims to have copied personally about half the MSS in his collection. Most of the copying was done in Senegal, Mauritania and Ivory Coast. Others were purchased in these countries.

The subjects covered are: occult (6), science (4), fiqh (15), tawhid (10), Sufism (10), Qur'an (1), Hadith (8), history (1), grammar (7). Five of the MSS are undated. The rest are dated between the 18th and 20th centuries. They are kept in a leather bag, and are well preserved, although most have lost their bindings. About seven MSS have fine calligraphy.

Important MSS in the collection are: Sharī'at Bāghīn Abū 'l-Hasan 'Alī b. Muḥammad, copied
in 1731; and Al-Tashil li-sulûm al-tanzîl, anonymous and undated.

It is not known whether this collection has been catalogued.

Bibliothèque au Centre de Documentation Universitaire

BP 2201
Date of establishment: 1984
Status: University library
Conditions of access: By permission of the Librarian on production of a letter of introduction.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 125 (Arabic).
Description of collection: This centre serves as the Library of the University of Conakry. No accurate information exists about the date of establishment of the manuscript division, nor about the source of this collection. It does have MSS of significance, in that they are elaborately and attractively designed. The collection covers the following subjects: tanzîh (18), usûl (7), fiqh (11), history (25), sociology (9), poetry (15), Qur'anic science (10), Sufism (22), genealogy (3), astrology (1), Qur'ân (1), Hadîth (3).

The MSS were copied or written in the 18th and 19th centuries. Some 40% are anonymous and undated. The rarities in the collection include: Târîkh al-futûh fi akhbar al-buldân wa-l-jâyiş wa-al-nâhir al-nâs by Mahmûd ibn al-Mutanâwirî; Kutî al-Karmânî, undated; Aṣâbâb al-bahri al-Mâghâlî, dated 1894 by Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Karîm al-Mâghâlî; and Fâth al-shakîr, anonymous and undated.

Direction Générale des Archives de Guinée

BP 617
Date of establishment: 1959
Status: Public archives
Conditions of access: By special application with two passport-size photographs and a payment of 1000F.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 262 (Arabic; Fulbe; Susu).
Description of collection: This collection possesses valuable MSS which relate to the history of Guinea and its neighbours. The MSS are well preserved in glass-fronted wooden cases. Most are diplomatic correspondence and history.

The subjects covered by this collection are: diplomatic correspondence (57), history (38), fiqh (27), Hadîth (18), Qur'ân (13), tasfîr (5), politics (19), Qur'anic science (10), astronomy (3), Sufism (22), genealogy (8), geography (3), education (9), grammar (14), philosophy (6), usûl (10).

Most of the MSS are undated. The dated ones are of the 17th to the 20th centuries. Only two MSS are 15th-century.

Most of the MSS are in the hands of their authors and in diverse languages like Fulbe and Susu. Manuscripts of artistic significance abound in this collection. The most important items are: Irshâd al-matât li-fatâd al-Shaykh al-Khâsî, and Tâlîf al-dalîb wa-nûkhir al-shâb, anonymous and undated.

Sâdavâlia Jumu’a Mosque

Opposite Sogam Assurances Building
Status: Trust
Total number of Islamic MSS: 18 (Arabic).
Description of collection: This collection is kept on a wooden bookshelf in the mosque for public reading. The MSS were donated to the mosque by individuals. Five are complete texts of the Qur’ân; 2 are in praise of the Prophet; 1 is of Usf text; 2 are in praise of the Prophet; 2 are in Sufi litany.

Three MSS are dated between the 19th and 20th centuries, but the rest are undated. Two copies of the Qur’ân and a fiqh text are highly artistic.

The collection is well preserved.

It is not known whether this collection is catalogued.

DALABA

Alimamy Saidou Beli Dalaba
Date of establishment: 1938
Status: Private
Total number of Islamic MSS: 244 (Arabic).
Description of collection: This collection comes from sources in Senegal where the owner lived for several years. According to the owner, about 40% of the MSS were bequeathed to him by a friend who was
a Tijāniyya Sufi Shaykh. About 12% of the collection was copied by the owner and his eldest son, who still resides in Kaolack, Senegal.

An undisclosed number of MSS were sold to a Shaykh from Tunisia, who visited the town 17 years ago.

Subjects covered by the collection are: Qurʾānic science (25), mathematics (12), theology (30), Sufism (34), fiqh (32), praise of the Prophet (7), fikih (6), Hadith (15), poetry (11), Qurʾānic science and the occult (19), correspondence (21), psychology (8), history (10), astronomy (3).

The MSS are well preserved, and are packed in a cardboard box. A few have been affected by termites. Some have also lost their back covers.

The collection has MSS written with good ink on high quality paper. There are four MSS of artistic significance. About 70% of them were either written or copied between the 15th and 18th centuries. 15% were either copied or written in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Rare MSS in this collection are: *Ibt al-yaqīn wa-sunan al-muttaqīn bi-ḥaqq al-tāwaq al-musawwar al-mustāqiμ* by Muḥammad al-Muḥtār Abū Bakr Kūntī, undated; *Nabīḥa min tārīkh al-jinn*, anonymous and undated; and *Kisāʾ al-tārīkh fi kalāmāt al-tawḥīd*, by Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Ghażālī, copied by Muḥammad ibn Muḥtār Kūntī in 1693.

_unpublished catalogue:
An incomplete list describes about half of the MSS in this collection.

### FOUNDBAN

**Alhaji Laminou Muhammad Fountban**

Madrasatu Nuriyya

Status: Private

**Conditions of access:** Accessible only to the owner’s visitors and students.

**Total number of Islamic MSS:** 164 (Arabic).

**Description of collection:** Alhaji Laminou, the founder of the Nuriyyah Islamiyya School, initiated this collection. He and his students have copied some of the MSS, but it appears that the majority were bequeathed to him by his grandparents. The owner claims that some of the MSS are autographs, and that efforts are still being made to enrich the collection.

Most MSS are dated between the 17th and 20th centuries and have artistic significance. The collection covers the following subjects: history (24), fiqh (27), ʿaqīda (10), philosophy (8), Qurʾān and related studies (14), education (5), mathematics (7), astrology (2), astronomy (6), Sufism (18), politics (7), geography (1), genealogy (6), poetry (10), praise of the Prophet (19).

The collection is well preserved, but some of the very old MSS require restoration. They are kept in a large wooden box. Rare MSS include: Al-Jawāhir al-Zakīya fi bāl al-fāṣ al-ʿAshmūnīya, undated and anonymous; and Al-Shārī al-naṣīf al-adḥāt al-muḥallāt al-khali al-waṣat, by Muḥammad ibn al-Muḥtār ʿAbd al-Kūntī, undated.

**Jumuʿat Mosque**

**Status:** Trust

**Total number of Islamic MSS:** 16 (Arabic).

**Description of collection:** The collection serves as the library of this mosque. It was donated to the mosque by individuals. The MSS are kept on a small wooden shelf. Most of the collection is composed of Qurʾāns (8 MSS); 5 MSS are in praise of the Prophet Muhammad and the rest are fiqh and poetry respectively.

One copy of the Qurʾān and another of Dārug al-ḥayrūt have artistic quality. It is not known whether this collection is catalogued.

**Ustaz Sessay Sekou**

c/o Founban District Head Court

**Date of establishment:** 1924

**Status:** Private

**Conditions of access:** By permission of the owner.

**Total number of Islamic MSS:** 158 (Arabic; Fulbe).

**Description of collection:** Part of this collection was bequeathed to Ustaz Sekou by his late father, who served as Qādi of the Court of the head of Founban. He purchased others from the families of deceased scholars in Founban and surrounding areas.

There are MSS with fine calligraphy, and excellent bindings.
The subjects covered by the collection are: praise of the Prophet (6), mathematics (13), logic (22), fatwās (15), usūl (18), fiqh (21), ta'wil (14), taṣfīr (1), Qur'ān (1), science (9), methodology (12), jihād (5), politics (2), sermons (4), Sufism (10), geography (4).

The collection is housed in the owner's room, on bookshelves. The MSS are well preserved, but require constant dusting. Some are dated between the 17th and 19th centuries. The undated MSS, according to the owner, were copied or written in the 20th century.

The rarities in the collection include: Muqaddima fi ḥalīf al-Malik by 'Abd al-Ḥamīd ibn 'Abd al-Hamīd ibn 'Abd al-Aswād, undated; Tārikh al-Ḏimān by al-Ḥasan ibn Ṭāhir al-Dimīmī, undated; and Kifayat al-ṣuḥūr, anonymous and undated.

This collection is uncatalogued.

KANNA

Ahmadou Ba

Central Market Avenue

Date of establishment: 1940

Status: Private

Conditions of access: By permission of the owner.

Total number of Islamic MSS: 171 (Arabic).

Description of collection: This collection is a combination of two collections of the family of the present owner. He inherited them from his forefathers about fifteen years ago. No effort has been made to enrich the collection since. An unspecified number of MSS have been lent out to scholars, who have not yet returned them. The subjects covered by the collection are: Qur'ān (6), Ḥadīth (11), taṣfīr (4), genealogy (8), history (17), Sufism (10), fatwās (2), sermon (7), fiqh (21), poetry (8), grammar (13), ṣaḥīḥ (20), rhetoric (2), mathematics (15), Qur'ānic science (12), praise of the Prophet (6), medicine (9).

The collection is kept in the owner's study room in a wooden book container. The manuscripts are well preserved, although most of them have lost their bindings. Some have been affected by bookworm and damp.

The oldest MSS in the collection are dated between the 14th and 15th centuries. Others are from the 18th and 19th centuries. The collection possesses 8 MSS of artistic significance. Four MSS are also very important for their arrangement and the authors' style of presentation. They are: Majmū'a fi ṭarīq al-ṣuḥāb Muḥammad Bilāl [Bello] by Conrado bin Lima, undated; Ṣanā'ī' at-Ṭabākhi bi-ma'ṣūma zinda 'udār undat al-Ṭabākhi by Muḥammad Bilāl [Bello]. 30. Uthmān dated 1802; Nāṣirī ahmar al-Muṣṭawir ibn al-Muṣṭawir al-Ḥasan al-Fārisī by Uthmān bin Fārisī, undated; and Ḥadiqah al-muṣrih fi ḥaqq al-muṣrih fi 'l-Ḥadiqah by Muḥammad Saghār al-Fārisī, copied in 1974 by 'Abd al-Rašīd bin Ṣūlī.

Maryam Diakite

P. V. 34, Sinkefra

Date of establishment: 1987

Status: Private

Total number of Islamic MSS: 122.

Description of collection: The collection has MSS of both Timbuktu and Sokoto origin. They are dated between the 17th and 19th centuries, although a few are undated. A thorough inspection reveals that most of the MSS have been affected by damp and bookworm, and require restoration. Two MSS are of high artistic significance. Rare MSS are numerous, and they include: Kifayat al-ṣuḥūr by Uthmān bin Muḥammad al-Fuṣālī, Ṣarḥ Mūχāda al-Lamī by 'Abd al-Azīz al-Lamī, dated 1856; and Manṣūma fi 'l-Ṭawḥīd, by Umar Sā'īd al-Fūrī, undated.

It is not known whether this collection is catalogued.

LABE

Alhaji Habibu Labe

c/o Masjid Jamu'atu Labe

Date of establishment: 1940

Status: Private

Conditions of access: By special appointment with the owner.

Total number of Islamic MSS: 114 (Arabic; Fulbe; Mandingo).

Description of collection: According to Alhaji Habibu, his collection is from both Guinean and Senegalese sources. He personally copied about 35 in Senegal, where he studied with various Shaykhs. Some of the MSS were donated to him by friends, while he purchased others from itinerant bookellers.

The MSS are on the following subjects: Sufism (13), Qur'ān (1),
MAMOU

Ustaz Kaba Suleimana Touré

Markaz Irshadul Muslimin ṣa‘la Tariqi Tijaniya

Date of establishment: 1955

Status: Private

Total number of Islamic MSS: 393 (Arabic).

Description of collection: This collection was established when the owner returned to Mamou from his study mission to Timbuktu. He personally copied about a third of the collection in Timbuktu, under the close supervision of his late teacher. Most of the MSS he copied are the works of the late AHMADU BABA and SHEHU USMANU DANN FOUKO. He later enriched the collection through purchases and donations. Although some MSS which he lent out to other scholars and visiting researchers have not been returned, Ustaz Kaba Touré possesses the most organized and richest collection of Islamic MSS in the area.

The subjects covered by the collection are: poetry (27), politics (15), Sufism (48), ṣa‘īda (30), fiqh (69), literature (14), grammar (25), Sharī‘a (4), Qur’āns (8), tafsīr (2), fatwā (18), correspondence (23), sermons (22), philosophy (11), history (25), praise of the Prophet (16), occult (19), mathematics (7), medicine (10).

About 33% of the MSS were copied or written in the 19th and 20th centuries. Some have vague dates and sources, while others are undated. The collection lacks MSS of artistic significance. A few MSS have been partially destroyed by bookworm and damp, and require repair. The rarities in the collection include: Kitāb al-faraḍ’id al-zakah by IBN SALIM MUHAMMAD YAHYA, undated; and Kitāb al-taṣawīr wa-l-taṣawīr li-muẓaffir ahdām al-tanzil by IBN SALIM MUHAMMAD YAHYA, undated; and Al-Buqā‘ al-nawwācq fi shā‘n Barbar wa-l-taṣawīr by MUHAMMAD BILH [BELLO].

Unpublished catalogue:
A handwritten catalogue by ALIMAMY UMARU describes in detail about 302 MSS in this collection.

PITA

Alhaji Umaru Pita

c/o Pita Central Mosque

Date of establishment: 1961

Status: Private

Conditions of access: By permission of the owner.

Total number of Islamic MSS: 159 (Arabic; Fulbe).

Description of collection: Alhaji Umaru, the Imam of Pita, inherited most of the MSS in this collection from his father, who was himself an Islamic scholar and calligrapher. He enriched the collection with some MSS he purchased for his studies from both Guinean and Malian sources. The MSS are in mixed languages.

They are mostly dated to the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. Some are beautifully written in black and red ink. The subjects covered are: mysticism (4), philosophy (8), mathematics (2), Qur’āns (11), Ḥadīth (27), fiqh (23), ṣa‘īda (14), science and the occult (34), correspondence (6), fatwā (19), history (4), politics (7).

The collection is kept on a reading table in the owner’s living room. A few MSS have lost their bindings, and others have torn pages. The MSS are mostly well preserved, although some require restoration.

The important MSS in the collection are: Sinjī al-ghayrī fi ʾumāl al-qulūb by AL-MASMUDI ʿABD AL-KARIR, undated; and Wuslàt al-ṣa‘īda fi misr mā laṣfman al-shahāda by AL-MUKHTAR IBN BUKH, written in 1918.
TIMBI

Abdul Karim Bari

Date of establishment: 1938
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By permission of the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 203 (Arabic; BAMbara; Fulbe).
Description of collection: This collection is mainly from Malian sources. The owner, Mál. Abdulkarim, lived in Djené and Timbuktu for several years on a study mission. He claims to have inherited some of the MSS from his teacher in Djené, and to have copied most others from either MSS or printed Arabic texts. In those days, he said, he made Islamic calligraphy his means of livelihood. Since his collection was transferred to Timbi, an unspecified number of MSS were sold to a foreign scholar. The manuscripts are in mixed languages: Arabic, Fulbe and Bambara.

The subjects covered by this collection are: history (25), genealogy (17), Sharī'a (9), Qur'ān (12), tafsīr (1), fiqh (13), Saqīda (19), correspondence (20), fatwās (22), sermons (3), praise of the Prophet (11), science and the occult (24), astrology (10), astronomy (2), mathematics (5).

The MSS are tied together and kept in a large box, which also houses the clothes of the owner. They are well preserved, but they are very dirty and require occasional exposure to light to protect them from damp. There are MSS of artistic significance; those copied by the owner stand out as the most attractive and beautifully written. Most of the MSS are of the 19th and 20th centuries. There are also very old MSS, dating as far back as the 17th century. Important MSS in this collection include: Maktūb fi naqīl al-Hadīth by ʿAbd al-Rahmān al-Bashīr, undated; and Manhaj al-fārīd fi maʿrifat ʿībn al-tawḥīd, by Fulānī Muḥammad Wālī Sulaymān, undated.

Unpublished catalogue:
A handlist describes in detail about 370 MSS (although the total number of MSS now in the collection is 203).