TIMBÉ

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, Mal. Abdulkarim, lived in Djéné and Timbuktu for several years on a study mission. He claims to have inherited some of the MSS from his teacher in Djéné, 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 Timbí, 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), Shari'a (9), Qur'ans (12), tafsir (1), fiqh (13), sa'da (19), correspondence (20), fatwas (32), 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: Maktub fi naqd al-Hadith by 'Abd al-Rahmân al-Bashîr, undated; Musâhab al-farîd fi ma'rûfût 'ilm al-tawhîd, by Fûlânî Muhammâd Wâlî Sulaymân, undated.

Unpublished catalogue: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

BAFATA
Abd al-Qadir Ali

H/No BR 135
Date of establishment: 1982
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By appointment with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 64 (Arabic).
Description of collection: This is a rare collection of Islamic MSS, which consists of scientific and literary works, but a considerable number of them are photocopies.

The collection covers the following subjects: Qur’anic science (9 MSS); theology (9); Sufism (4); medicine (10); fiqh (13); history (7); literature (5); grammar (2); philosophy (3).

Many of the MSS are not dated nor titled. The dated ones are from the 18th century onwards. They are in good physical condition, preserved in a wooden box in the private room of the owner.

Rare MSS in the collection include: Nuzhat al-Ra’ūs wa-Bugyat al-Hāwi by al-Mukhtār al-Kūnī, undated; and Manṣūma fi il-taṣawwīd by ‘Umar Sa’īd al-Fūṭī, undated.

BISSAU
Sheikh Muhammad Khalil

c/o Musa Ajani
Ministry of Information,
Arda do Brasil
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By permission of the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 18 (Arabic; Fulbe).
Description of collection: The MSS in this collection are of 18th-, 19th- and 20th-century origin. They were acquired from itinerant book-sellers from northern Mali and Senegal. The MSS are kept on a desk in the owner’s apartment, and are in reasonably good physical con-
dition. About 10 of the MSS are in the form of amulets and prayers: 2 from the Qur'ān; 4 selected Haddīth of the Holy Prophet; and 2 on fiqh. The collection is uncatalogued.

BUBA
Alhaji Bachai Buba
Rua 11, No 75
Date of establishment: 1958
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By permission of the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 163 (Arabic; Fulbe; Mandingo).
Description of collection: This collection is perhaps the most significant in the town, with MSS on the fiqih movements in Futa Jallon, Toro and Masina. Some of the MSS were bequeathed to the owner by his parents. He acquired others through purchase and donation. The owner, who is a learned Islamic scholar, maintains this collection for study purposes. This may be the reason for the better physical condition of the MSS. They are preserved in his apartment.

The MSS cover the following subjects: Sufism (18 MSS); theology (23); fiqh (20); correspondence (11); poetry (7); history (26); astronomy (8); charms (35); šīra (15).

Most of the MSS are from the 17th and 18th centuries, although some are undated. Some are in beautiful script. The collection is not catalogued. Rare MSS in the collection include: Rasūlī masta’addida Fr sih'a Akl Māsina uwa: ‘l-ḥarī mad‘a ‘l-Faranṣayin, anonymous and undated; and Asīr kālim al-Ghazālī fī ‘l-tauhīd‘, by Muhammad ʿUṣūlmān al-Fulānī.

The collection is uncatalogued.

Alhaji Ahmadu Djallo
c/o Masjid al-Jumū’a
Date of establishment: 1955
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By appointment with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 59.
Description of collection: A reasonable number of the MSS can be said to be in good condition, but some of them have been partially damaged by humidity and insects. The collection is kept in the owner’s private apartment, and is not well looked after.

The subjects covered by the collection are: poetry (5 MSS); Arabic (12); Qur'ān (fragments) (4); fushārā (6); astronomy (1); philosophy (9); literature (2); tafsīr (al-Jalālayn, incomplete) (1); prayers,charms (16); praises of the Prophet Muhammad (3).

The collection possesses both recent and old works, with some beautifully decorated and bound.

Rarities include: Al-naqāmūt, by Al-Ḥarīrī, copied in 1926; and Daihīl al-khayrāt, by Al-Jazīrī, copied by an anonymous copyist in 1959.

The collection is not catalogued.

CHITOLI
Alifa Suleimana Mamadu
Madrasatu Nur ul Islam
Date of establishment: 1969
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By appointment with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 84 (Arabic).
Description of collection: A significant number of the MSS in this collection are badly damaged by humidity, termites and rats, although some are in good condition. They are kept in an iron box in the owner’s apartment. Some of the MSS date as far back as the 18th century, but recently written works abound. The absence of dates on some of the MSS makes it impossible to determine their dates of authorship or copying.

Subjects covered by the collection are: fiqh (17 MSS); Hadīth (3); Sufism (9); poetry (5); tafsīr (incomplete MSS) (3); astronomy (1); Qur'ān (in separate sūras) (6); prayers,charms (19); history (8); correspondence (13).

Rarities in the collection include: Al-habīb al-ṣawīyya bi-Shahr al-Jutubāt al-Ṭāhīya, anonymous, copied in 1793; Tafsīr al-Jalālayn by Sūrūrī, copied in 1890 by an anonymous copyist.
FULACUNDA

Alh. Hassan Sylla

Hassan Sylla’s residence, Rua 19, No 58
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By appointment with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 57 (Arabic).
Description of collection: A number of the MSS in this collection were bought from private hands; the rest were acquired through inheritance. The MSS are mostly in pieces. They are preserved in an old cardboard box in the owner’s private apartment.

The subjects covered by the collection are; geography (2 MSS); sīra (6); fiqh (6); Hadith (4); medicine (3); arithmetic (13); taqaddum (9); fatawa (2); philosophy (3); Sufism (8).

Most of the MSS are not dated nor titled. Some of the titles can, however, be traced in the inside pages. The collection possesses MSS of artistic and scholarly significance.

Rare MSS in the collection include: Maktūb fi taṣeṣṣid, anonymous, copied by Balla Hamma, undated; and Al-Luwāmī al-nurāniyya fi bayān al-Tariqa al-Qadiryya by Guidado bin Laima.

The collection is not catalogued.

Juma’a Mosque

Status: Public
Conditions of access: None.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 5 (Arabic).
Description of collection: This is a small collection of reading material belonging to the Mosque. It was donated by private individuals.

The MSS are made up of three copies of the Holy Qur’ān in coloured ink, one Daštūli al-khayrāt, and one fiṣḥ work. The MSS are well preserved in a small wooden box, and are in good condition. They are not catalogued.

GABU

Alh. Ismail Ishaq

Date of establishment: 1930
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By appointment with the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 89 (Arabic; Fulbe).
Description of collection: Almost all the MSS of this collection were acquired by the owner in his days as a student in Senegal. One may safely assume that the majority of the collection is from sources outside Guinea-Bissau. They are kept in a wooden box in the owner’s study. Some of the MSS are partially damaged by various biological causes. They are poorly preserved and repair work has not been done for a long time. Most of the MSS were copied in the 19th and 20th centuries. Subjects covered by the collection are; literature (10 MSS); fiqh (14); taṣfīr (1); Qur’ān (uncompleted) (1); Hadith (8); history (11); theology (9); Sufism (16); fatawa (2); Shari’ah (1); prayers (3); medicine (7); philosophy (4).

Some of the MSS are beautifully written and bound in decorative covers. Rarities in the collection are; Ikhtyār Tārikh al-khulafa li-l-Sūrīyya by Muhammad Yaḥyā ibn-Walāṭī, and Al-manzūma al-musammā bi-l-naṣlahāt al-Qudṣiyya, anonymous.

The collection is uncatalogued.

Late Alh. Hassan Sidi Baba

Late Hassan Sidi Baba’s family residence
Status: Private
Conditions of access: By permission of the late owner’s family.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 94 (Arabic).
Description of collection: A significant feature of this collection is the acquisition of old and rare MSS on Islamic religion, science and West African historiography. Though mostly not dated, the MSS are works of the 16th and 17th centuries onwards. The collection was bequeathed to the late owner’s family after his death about a decade ago. It is preserved in a wooden box in the private apartment of the late owner’s family. Some of the MSS have been eaten by bookworms, and some have torn pages and covers.

The subjects covered by the collection are; grammar (2 MSS);
MADINA

Madina Central Mosque

Status: Public
Conditions of access: None.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 2 (Arabic).
Description of collection: This collection consists of an old, but beautifully written copy of the Holy Qur’ân and a commentary on the Maqâmât of Al-‘Ara’îd. They are in good condition and well preserved.

Shaikh Mukhtar Lamine Ahmad

Ma’had al Hudaibiyya

Status: Private
Conditions of access: By permission of the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 68 (Arabic; Fulbe; Mandingo).
Description of collection: This is a collection of mixed languages and cultures. A significant number of the MSS have been damaged, as a result of poor storage. The collection requires cleaning and restoration. It is kept under the owner’s bed in a book carton. Some of the MSS are dated in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, but the larger part of the collection is not dated at all.

The titles of some of the MSS are not clear, because of their linguistic background. Some MSS are fragmentary.

The collection deals with the following subjects: Hadîth (9 MSS); literature (6); mathematics (1); fiqh (7); history (2); Shari’a (2); theology (6); Sufism (3); prayers/charms (18); correspondence (11); poetry (1); lexicography (2).