

PHILOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION AND CATALOG OF
SELECTED MANUSCRIPTS OF ḤAJI BUŠRĀ GĀTA
(SAYYID AL-BĀ')

BY

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Abstract

The Muslim communities throughout Ethiopia have contributed in various fields of human endeavor towards the development of Ethiopian society and have had a considerable impact on its history. Among those Ethiopian Muslims who have contributed in this way, we find Shaykh Sayyid Bušrā of Gäta, Wollo (Sayyid al-Bā'), who was a leading Sufi leader in Southern Wollo in the 18th -19th centuries.

The thesis begins with the background of the study, review of related literature, objectives of the study and methodology. All are included in chapter one. The objective of this thesis is to introduce Shaykh Sayyid Bušrā Ay Mohammed and present nine selected Arabic manuscripts of his, with some discussion of the geographical location and the history of his center of education and shrine in Gäta, Southern Wollo. All these are presented in chapter two. As Shaykh Sayyid Bušrā was a Sufi leader, chapter three briefly discusses what Sufism is and what its role has been in Ethiopian history. Chapter four presents in detail the biography of Shaykh Sayyid Bušrā Ay Mohammed. Chapter five is the core of the thesis; it presents the nine selected manuscripts of Shaykh Sayyid Bušrā with philological description and catalog. Finally the thesis is summarized in chapter six.

Acknowledgments

Like so many before me, I owe a great deal to a great many, in ways that no acknowledgement could ever recompense. What is more, I owe it in ways that I cannot begin to credit properly. I can only offer my fullest thanks to Professor Orin Gensler for his extremely helpful comments and advice, from shaping the thesis topic to the final stages of the study. I have sincerest appreciation for his constructive and democratic approach to advising.

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I would like to thank W/rt Hayat Fikadu and W/ro Alawiya Seid for their help in typing and formalizing my thesis.

Finally, I owe my special thanks to my wife W/ro Jamila Omer Hussein and my children, Hamid Mustafa and Shaymā' Mustafa, for their patience until the successful completion of my thesis.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my beloved and respected father, **Haji Hamid Yussuf**, who always wished to look upon my academic success as a mark of my commitment to the fulfillment of his desire for knowledge, and to my mother **Nabila Mustafa**.

“My Lord! Bestow on them Your Mercy as they did bring me up when I was young.”

(Holy Qur’ān 17:24)

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1. Background of the study

Islam in Ethiopia is a historical, social and cultural reality with a long and rich history of dynamic development which reflects the country's capacity for peaceful social integration and for enriching the diverse cultures of Ethiopian society. The Muslim communities throughout Ethiopia have contributed in various fields of human endeavor towards the development of Ethiopian society and have had a considerable impact on its history.¹ Among those Ethiopian Muslims who have contributed in this way, we find Shaykh Sayyid Bušrā Ay Mohammed of Gäta (Sayyid al-Bā'). He was renowned for his strict observance of orthodox Islamic law (Šarī'ah), reforming Ethiopian Islam by removing from it pagan beliefs and practices which had crept in over the years. His strictness and high ethical and religious standards aroused the jealousy and opposition not only of the traditional leaders of ritual ceremonies, but also of the ordinary people and rural reciters of the holy Qur'ān. My thesis will present a philological description and catalog of nine selected manuscripts of his.

2. Review of related literature

Few studies have been done on the contribution of Ethiopian Muslim scholars to the development of Ethiopia and the history of its literature in the past centuries. Recently the life and works of some of these Muslim scholars have begun to be studied here at the Department of Linguistics and Philology in Addis Ababa University. Some of these recent works are B.A. or M.A. theses, especially in the field of Philology. Of these works, a few have dealt with the biography of Shaykh

Buṣrā Ay Mohammad Some of these are written in modern scientific style and some are written traditionally. Among these works, we find:

- Hussein Ahmed (1985). *Islam in nineteenth-century Wallo, Ethiopia*.
- ----- (1996). Al-Ḥajj Bushra Ay Moḥammed, Muslim reformer, scholar and saint of 19th century Wallo. *Journal of Islamic and African Studies* 10:17-25.
- Segge Negatu (1990). *Oral tradition on miracles of Shaykh Sayyid Bushra and the celebration of the Mawlid festivals in Gäta*.
- J.S. Trimingham (1965). *Islam in Ethiopia*.
- Asnake Ali (1983). *Aspects of the Political History of Wollo: 1872-1917*.
- Fekadu Benga (1972). *A Tentative History of Wollo: 1855-1908*.
- Al-Hajj Mohammed Tāj Ad-din Aḥmed (unpublished book). *'i'lām al-'aḡbiyā' bi-ḥayāt 'uzamā' 'ithyūbyā min al-'ulamā' wa-l-'awliyā' wa-aṣ-ṣāliḥīn al-'islām wa-l-'aṣfiyā'*.
- Muḥammed Wale Aḥmad (2006). *kitāb aṭ-ṭirāz al-manqūš fi manāqibat 'awliyā' al-ḥubuš*.

In his two works Hussein Ahmad briefly introduces Shaykh Sayyid Buṣrā but presents no scientific study of his writings. Segge Nigatu in his B.A. thesis presents Shaykh Sayyid Buṣrā's biography, his miracles, and the mawlid celebration at Gäta, where he lived. The more traditional works by Al-Ḥajj Muḥammad Tāj Ad-din Aḥmad and Muḥammad Wale Aḥmad present only the biography and miracles of Shaykh Buṣrā. They do not discuss his literary works or

the general literary achievements of Ethiopian Muslim scholars. None of these works about Shaykh Bušrā includes philological discussion of his literary oeuvre.

3. Objectives of the study

The aim of this study is to catalog nine selected manuscripts among twenty-five manuscripts of Shaykh Bušrā which I have seen in the shrine of Gäta, with discussion of their general content. Some selected pages from each manuscript were also photographed with digital camera.

The reason that I was only able to look at nine manuscripts among those twenty-five is that the present guardian of the shrine, who has the manuscripts, did not allow me to examine more than these nine, which they selected for me; moreover, they did not permit me to take photographs of all the pages of each manuscript. Besides, they consider the manuscripts as *Barakah* (blessing) for Shaykh Bušrā, and thus they feel it would be disrespectful to his memory to photograph the manuscripts in their entirety.

4. Methodology of the study

I will follow standard cataloging practice in preparing my catalog of the manuscripts. The primary data for the study are the manuscripts themselves, supplemented by secondary sources and interviews with family members of Shaykh Sayyid Bushrā.

Southern Wollo is the home of various ethnicities and languages. Linguists categorize the languages of this area into two language families, Semitic and Cushitic. Cushitic is considered as the indigenous language group in the area.⁶ In southern Wollo the Oromo language is the largest Cushitic language spoken in the southeast and western parts, and Amharic (Semitic) is the largest language in the highlands of the north and southwest.⁷

Southern Wollo is also the home of different religions and faiths. The main religions of southern Wollo are Christianity and Islam, with Christians settled mainly in the highlands and the lowland areas chiefly Muslim. But followers of both religions are found in both areas.⁸

The economy of the area is based on agriculture and commerce: agriculture, especially mixed farming, in rural areas and commerce in cities and towns.⁹

2. Islamization of Southern Wollo

Islamization in Southern Wollo had three phases. Scholars and traditions hold different views on the question of how and by whom Islam was brought to Southern Wollo. One view, held by '*ulamā*' (local Muslim scholars), proposes that Islam entered into Southern Wollo through the agency of Arabs who left Arabia for political reasons and crossed the Red Sea to Zaila and then into present-day Southern Wollo. Another view is that of Abba Bahrey, the author of the first historical work about the Oromo; according to this view Islam was brought to Southern Wollo by Sufi scholars from Argobba, in the Oromia zone of Amhara regional state.¹⁰ The third view is that Islam spread in southern Wollo through the migration of the Jeberti (the early Ethiopian Muslims) from the north.¹¹

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The second phase of Islamization was the campaign of Imam Ahmed ibn Ibrahim Al-Ghazi (Ahmed Gragn) in the 16th century. Gragn's campaign had significant impact for the spread of Islam in Southern Wollo. Many Christians and other non-Muslims were forced to accept Islam and at least some of them accepted Islam out of expediency.¹² In situations where outright coercion was not applied many were converted through the activities of Muslim preachers who had joined Imam Ahmed in the course of his campaign and settled in Southern Wollo to proselytize Islam.¹³

The third phase is associated with the establishment of Sufi elements in the late eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century. It was during this time that Islam took on a political dimension through the support of the emerging Oromo dynasties, which accelerated the pace of Islamization significantly. In this process the *Ṣūfi Ṭarīqah* (mysticism of Islam) played a significant role in providing the social infrastructure for the intellectual and cultural development of Islam in the area.¹⁵

The spread of Islam into Southern Wollo brought with it the spread of various *maḍāhib* (schools of Islamic jurisprudence). These different schools were introduced at different times and to different degrees. Due to the absence of written documents which might show the exact date of introduction of these schools, it is difficult to trace their history, both in Southern Wollo and in Ethiopia in general. Before proceeding with the historical discussion, I will briefly introduce the four schools of Islamic jurisprudence.

3. The four Schools of Islamic Jurisprudence (*maḍāhib*)

3.1. The School of Al-Ḥanafīyyah

3.2. The School of Al-Mālīkiyyah

3.3. The School of Aš-Šāfi'īyyah

The second phase of Islamization was the campaign of Imam Ahmed ibn Ibrahim Al-Ghazi (Ahmed Gragn) in the 16th century. Gragn's campaign had significant impact for the spread of Islam in Southern Wollo. Many Christians and other non-Muslims were forced to accept Islam and at least some of them accepted Islam out of expediency.¹² In situations where outright coercion was not applied many were converted through the activities of Muslim preachers who had joined Imam Ahmed in the course of his campaign and settled in Southern Wollo to proselytize Islam.¹³

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3. The four Schools of Islamic Jurisprudence (*maḍāhib*)

3.1. The School of Al-Hanafīyyah

3.2. The School of Al-Mālikīyyah

3.3. The School of Aš-Šāfi'īyyah

Ibrahīm ibn Ḥabīb al-'Ansāriyy, who was commonly known by the name of Abū Yūsuf (112-183 A.H.), and Moḥammad ibn al-Ḥassan aš-Šaybaniyy (132-189 A.H.) .

3.2 The School of Al-Mālikiyyah

It was founded by Mālik ibn 'Anas aš-Šaybāniyy. He was born in Madinah in 709 A.D. He lived and studied in his birthplace, notably under the famous Muslim scholar Rabi'ah ar-Ra'iy. After completing his studies he wrote his school of Islamic jurisprudence in Madinah. The teachings of his school are found in his book *Muwatta'*. This book, which was the earliest collection of *Ḥadith* (prophetic tradition), was characterized by its combination of *Ḥadith* with Islamic jurisprudence.

Mālik used all basic Islamic sources and research methods in his school. The unique character of his school was that he never accepted any religious decisions without getting *dalīl* (proof). The basic principles of this school were based on the practices of the people of Madinah, since Mālik ibn 'Anas believed that their practices were inherited from the companions of the Prophet. He died in 795 A.D. in Madinah.

3.3 The School of Aš-Šāfi'iyyah

It was founded by 'Abu 'Abdallah Mohammed ibn Idris aš-Šāfi'iyy. He was born in Gaza in 767 A.D., but he grew up in Mecca. He was related to Moḥammed via the prophet's fifth grandfather 'Abd al-Manāf. He studied Islamic jurisprudence under Muslim ibn Khalid Az-Zinjiyy and Ṣufyān ibn 'Uyaynah. After that he traveled to Madinah and there met Mālik ibn 'Anas. He studied Mālik's school of jurisprudence under Mālik himself. After a few years with Mālik he traveled to

Baghdad where he met Mohammed ibn al-Ḥassan aš-Šaybaniyy and learned the school of Al-Ḥanafīyyah under him. After completing his studies in Baghdad, he began to prepare his school of Islamic jurisprudence. His school was considered as intermediate between the schools of Al-Mālikiyyah and Al-Ḥanafīyyah. 'Aš-Šāfi'īyy was also the first to lay out the basic and general principles of Islamic jurisprudence. His system of studying the principles of Islamic jurisprudence is called '*Uṣūl al-Fiqh* (the foundations of Islamic jurisprudence).¹⁸

'Aš-Šāfi'īyy was the first legal scholar to write a book which was explicitly devoted to Islamic jurisprudence as such. He presented his legal system twice, in two books: *ar-Risālah* and later *al-'Umm*. He died in Egypt in 820 A.D.¹⁹

3.4 The School of Al-Ḥanbaliyyah

It was founded by 'Abu 'Abdullah Aḥmad ibn Moḥammad ibn Ḥanbal ibn Hilal ibn 'Asad aš-Šaybaniyy. He was born in Baghdad 780 A.D. and studied in Syria, Mecca, Madinah, and Yemen. While he was in Baghdad he studied under aš-Šāfi'īyy. He was characterized by his orthodoxy in Islamic jurisprudence and his deep knowledge of *Ḥadith*. He collected around forty thousand traditions of the Prophet Mohammed. The principles of his school were based on the Holy Qur'ān, the Prophet Mohammed's traditions, the legal opinions of the companions of Prophet Mohammed etc., but rejected the concepts of *ra'y* and *qiyās* (personal opinion and analogical reasoning). His principles were not compiled in the form of a book, partly due to his explicit dependence on *Ḥadith*. He died in 855 A.D. in Madinah.²⁰

3.5. Chronology of the schools

I return now to the historical discussion of Wollo. The first school of Islamic jurisprudence to be introduced in Southern Wollo was the school of aš-Šāfi'iyyah. It prevails even today in the lowlands of Wollo. Mufti Dawūd ibn Abi Bakr (died 1819 A.D.) is locally remembered as the propagator of the aš-Šāfi'iyyah school. It is related that in 1791 A.D. he traveled to Zabīd in Yemen and having received his training as a jurist in the Šāfi'iyyah school, he returned to Dawway where he established a well-known teaching center at a place called Gaddo. He thus contributed to the spread and consolidation of the Šāfi'iyyah school in the region.²¹

The second school chronologically is the Ḥanafīyyah school, introduced into Ethiopia by the scholar Kabīr Ḥamza, whose ancestors originally came from Harar.²² The school of Ḥanbaliyyah has had relatively little impact in Wollo. In Wollo the school of al-Mālikiyyah has the smallest number of followers, even fewer than Ḥanbaliyyah.²³

Notes to chapter two

1. በደቡብ ወሎ ዞን ባህልና ቱሪዝም ቅርንጫፍ ጽ/ቤት፣ በቅርስ ጥበቃና ቱሪዝም ልማት የስራ ሂደት ለ 2001 ዓ.ም ለክልሉ ዓመታዊ መፅሔት በግብዓትነት የተላኩ የመስህብ መረጃዎች። ደቡብ ወሎ ዞን፣ ደ.ሰ.።
2. Ibid.
3. Masfin Woldemariam (1972). *An Introduction to the Geography of Ethiopia*. p. 5.
4. Ato Mohammed Yimer. Agricultural expert in Southern Wollo. Informant.
5. Trimingham, J.S. (1965a). *Islam in Ethiopia*. pp. 193-194.
6. Bahru Zewde (1991). *A History of Modern Ethiopia 1855-1974*. p.4
7. Hussein Ahmed (2001), *Islam in Nineteenth-Century Wallo, Ethiopia*. p. 3.
8. Ibid. pp. 3-4.
9. Summary and Statistical Report of the Population and Census carried out by The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Population Census Commission, December 2008. p. 63.
10. Getachew Haile (2002). *Yü abba Bahray Därsätoch Oromowochin Kämimäläkät Sänädoch Gar* (Unpublished) pp. 232-233.
11. Hussein Ahmed (2001: 60).
12. Trimingham (1965a:87-88).
13. Hussein Ahmed (1990). Two Shrines of Islam in Wollo. Seminar in the Department of History, Addis Ababa University p. 7.
14. Hussein Ahmed (1998). Traditional Muslim Education in Wollo. *Proceedings of Ninth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies*, Vol. III p. 213.
15. Hussein Ahmed (2001: 74-82).
16. Mohammed Salāmah Madkūr (1964). *Introduction to Islamic Jurisprudence*. p. 15.
17. Wuhbah Az-Zuhayliyy (2002). *Islamic Jurisprudence and Its Sources*. p. 47.
18. Mohammed Salāmah, p. 40.
19. Ibid, p. 48.
20. Wuhbah Az-Zuhayliyy, p. 47.
21. Ibid. pp. 52-53. Interestingly, Mohammed Seid Abdella (2007) does not mention Mufti Dawūd as a propagator of the Šāfi'iyyah school.
22. Hussein Ahmed (2001: 67).
23. Ibid. pp. 66-67.

CHAPTER THREE

SUFISM AND ITS ORDERS (ṬURUQ)

1. What is Sufism?

According to the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, a Sufi is a member of a Muslim group who try to become united with God through prayer and meditation by living a simple and strict life.¹ As to the etymology of Sufism, traditional scholars have various theories. These theories are the following:²

- The first theory says that the word Sufism is derived from the Arabic term *aṣ-ṣuffah*. This term was given to the Prophet's companions who (like most typical Sufis) were poor and spent much of their time in the mosque.
- The second theory says that the word Sufism is derived from the Arabic word *ṣafā'* meaning "purity", implying that a Sufi is a one who is pure in heart.
- The third theory says that the word Sufism is derived from the Arabic word *ṣūf* "wool", from which the clothing of the first Muslim ascetics was made. This is the only etymology accepted by modern linguists.
- The fourth theory says that the word Sufism is derived from the word *aṣ-ṣaff al-'awwal*, meaning the first rank. This theory implies that the Sufis are in the first rank among the others before God (Allah). This is because of their devotion to praising Allah.
- The fifth theory says that the word Sufism is derived from the Arabian tribe called *Ṣūfah*, which existed before the rise of Islam in Arabia. The people of

this tribe devoted themselves to their various gods and paid little attention to the life of this world.

Sufism as a universal phenomenon in the Islamic world is a complex concept having no simple answer as to the question of its origin. However, it is strongly believed that Sufism came into being when Islam came into contact with the eastern and western Christian worlds. At the time when Islam began its contact with these worlds, a significant part of Christianity was mystical in essence. This had a profound impact on new converts to Islam in these parts of ^{the} Islamic world and soon rooted itself in the Islamic realm, challenging the position of orthodox Islam.³

Sufism in its popular form combines both classical and local ideas. Because of its tolerance, it is often the means by which little and great traditions come together in harmonious balance, blending regional ideas and practices with orthodoxy, with a rough dominance of the latter.⁴

The basis of Sufism is the belief that the believer who desires to attain communion with Allah needs the guidance of one who is experienced in the Sufi order, one who has been blessed by Allah on earth with the special virtue of *barakah* (benediction). Sufism has different orders called *ṭarīqah* (singular), *ṭuruq* (plural), literally 'way'. The method of following these orders has always depended upon the particular tendencies of the particular religious leader (Shaykh).

One of the manifestations of Sufism is saint worship, in which a saint renders his sacred *barakah* (benediction) to his followers in the form of blessing. Trimingham regards the veneration of saints as the perpetuation of "pre-Islamic sediment" in which the Sufi saints act as a bridge between man and Allah having a striking resemblance with the pre-Islamic rituals.⁵ For example, elaborating the view of

religious oppression of the Ethiopian monarch in the second half of the nineteenth century, following the ideological guidance of Sufi scholars. The forceful conversion of the Wollo Muslims to Christianity during the reign of Yohannes IV faced a widespread revolt which was especially serious in Southern Wollo, where Emperor Yohannes IV personally had to intervene. The fervent opposition to the policy of the monarch was strongly supported by shaykhs of Southern Wollo, in which the roles of Shaykh Hussein Jibril of Warra Himano, Sayyid Bušra of Gäta, Shaykh Ali Jeru of Gerado and later Haji Ṭalḥa Ja'far of Argobba were decisive.¹⁰

Socially, in Southern Wollo Qallu in particular was the center of Islamic scholarship, which diffused to the rest of Wollo and to Ethiopia; in Southern Wollo the Islamic centers of Dawway and Gäta were the most prominent. Moreover, the cult of Sufi saints had an impact on the social structure of Wollo society, since social solidarity was strengthened through the redistribution of votive offerings to the poor.¹¹

Culturally, Sufi centers in Southern Wollo can take credit for the development of indigenous Islamic poetry, *'Ajami Manzumah* and panegyric, through which the life and career of the Prophet, *Tawḥīd* (Islamic monotheism), the attributes of Paradise, and Islamic morals and ethics were and continue to be disseminated to the people. Moreover, the area remains as a center of interaction between popular Islam and paganism. These centers also served the Muslim proselytization of Christian pilgrims who came to the area for social and economic reasons.¹²

A characteristic feature of Sufism is the repetition of holy verses known as *dhikr* and *awrād*, as a means to spiritual enlightenment. Dancing and singing typically accompany *awrād*.

2. The well-known Sufi orders (*turuq*)

1. Qadiriyyah

This is the oldest Sufi order. It was founded by the Iraqi Shaykh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jailaniy (1077-1166 A.D.). This Sufi order first came to the eastern coast and Horn of Africa with the advent of Muslim traders, who migrated from Ḥaḍramawt in Yemen. In Ethiopia, it was first brought to Harar by 'Abu Bakr ibn 'Abdullāh al-'Aydarūs (died 1503 A.D.).¹³

2. Šadhiliyyah (Darqawiyyah)

This order was founded by one of the descendants of Ali ibn 'Abī Ṭālib called 'Abū al-Ḥassan Ali ibn 'Abd al-Jabbār aš-Šadhiliyy, who was born in Morocco in 1197 A.D. He toured a number of Islamic states and finally settled in Alexandria in Egypt where he began preaching. Many people responded to his Islamic call. He died in the 'Izab desert when he was in his way to perform the Hajj to Mecca. It is said that before his death he passed down the *ṭarīqah* to his successor 'Abū al-'Abbās al-Mursi.¹⁴

In Wollo the spread of this Sufi order was propagated by the Muslim scholar Ibrahim Negash of Qallu (died 1948 A.D.). The order spread into Borana and Begēmidir largely through his efforts.¹⁵

3. 'Aḥmadiyyah ('Idrīsiyyah)

This *ṭarīqah* was founded by the Moroccan Shaykh 'Aḥmad ibn 'Idrīs al-Fāsi (died 1837 A.D.). He was influenced by the Salafiyyah movement in Najd. This enabled

him to purify Sufism from many innovations (*bid'a*) and anchor it in the Holy Qur'ān and Ḥadith only.¹⁶ This Sufi order thus contributed significantly to the religious reformation movement that appeared in the 19th century.

This order came to Ethiopia via Somalia but it was never as strong as the others in Wollo.¹⁷

4. Sammāniyyah

It was founded by Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Karīm as-Sammāniyy (1718-75 A.D.). It was introduced into Wollo by 'Amīr Hussein, the grandson of the Sudanese mystic, Shaykh Ahmad ibn aṭ-Ṭayyib ibn Bašīr (died 1823 A.D.).¹⁸

5. Tijāniyyah

It was founded by 'Abū al-'Abbās Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Mukhtār at-Tijāniyy (1767- 1815 A.D.). In Wollo it was introduced by Shaykh Habīb and Shaykh Bušra of Gēta.¹⁹

Notes to chapter three

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2. Ja'far Ibrahim (2000). *Islam, Mohammed and His Religion*. Riyadh: Al-Maiman Publishing House. pp. 1-5.
3. Ibid. p. 33.
4. Mathewson, Fredric (1985). *An Introduction to Islam*. New York: Macmillan. p. 336.
5. Trimmingham, J.S. (1965a). *Islam in Ethiopia*. Oxford: Frank Cass. pp. 256 ff.
6. Mathewson p. 336.
7. Al- Fawzan, Sālih (2000). *Kitāb at-tawḥīd*. Riyadh: Al-Maiman Publishing House. p. 156.
8. Braukämper, Ulrich (2002). *Islamic History and Culture in Southern Ethiopia. Collected Essays*. Münster: LIT Verlag. pp. 123-124.
9. Von Grunebaum, G.E. (1951). *Mohammed's Festivals*. New York: Henry Schuman. pp. 76-77.
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12. Pankhurst, Alula (1994). Indigenising Islam in Wällo: *Ajām*. Amharic Verse Written in Arabic Script. *Proceedings of the Eleventh International Conference of Ethiopian Studies*. pp. 257- 273.
13. Trimmingham (1965a: 234-236).
14. Hassen Ahmed Mahmūd (1998). *al- 'Islam wa-ḥā'iqah al- 'Arabiyyah fī 'Afriqiyyah*. Beirut: Dar al-Fikr al-'Arabi. p. 47.
15. Hussein Ahmed (2001: 70).

16. Hassen Ahmed (1998:54-60).

17. Hussein Ahmed (2001: 70).

18. Hussein Ahmed (2001: 70).

19. Hussein Ahmed (2001: 70).

CHAPTER FOUR

THE BIOGRAPHY OF SHAYKH SAYYID BUŠRĀ AY MOḤAMMAD (SAYYID AL-BĀ')

According to his manuscript titled *Hadīqat al-'ikhwān fī šarḥ fatḥ ar-raḥmān wa-ma'rifat kayfiyat al-'īmān*, his full name was Sayyid al-bā' Bušrā ibn Sayyid Ay Muḥammad ibn Sayyid 'Abdurraḥmān ibn Sulyamān ibn Sayyid Waliy Muḥammad ibn Ay Aḥmad ibn Sayyid Muḥyaddin ibn al-'Arabiyy ibn Tamīmah. Tamīmah was the daughter of Sirāj, who was the son of 'Imām ibn Sayyid Šāliḥ ibn Mūsā al-Ḥankiyy ibn 'Abdullah ibn 'Imām Yaḥyā az-Zāhid ibn Sayyid 'Imām Muḥammad ibn Sayyid 'Imām Dāwūd ibn Sayyid 'Imām 'Abdullah ibn 'Imām ibn Ḥassan ibn Sayyid Ḥusayn ibn Sayyidatī Faṭimah az-Zahrā' bint Rasūlillah [the Prophet Muḥammad].¹ He was born in 1780 A.D. There are two views on his birthplace. The guardians of his shrine say that his birthplace is Lantu in Ifat.² However, Hussein Ahmed stated that the birthplace was Maṭāqalāya, also in Ifat.³ He was born into a religious Muslim family; his father was Ay Muḥammad ibn Sayyid 'Abdurraḥmān and his mother Raḍiyyah (or Marḍiyyah according to some informants). Ethnically he was of Argobba origin. He grew up in an environment where Islamic education prevailed.

When he was eight years old, he began Qur'ānic studies at Amoy Melesay in Borāna under the local Muslim scholar Shaykh 'Ibrāhīm. He was a child prodigy, and completed and memorized the Holy Qur'ān within one year. When his teacher asked him to pronounce the Arabic letters he pronounced only the letter *bā'*. When his teacher ordered him to say the rest of the letters that he had learned and

went to his enemy in the form of a hyena. But his enemy had anticipated that the former might come to him disguised as a hyena or another wild animal. Hence, he was always ready to protect himself from any sudden attack. Accordingly, when the former came to the latter's home in the form of a hyena in order to attack him, his enemy was ready and killed him first.

After the killing, the dead man's family appealed the case to Mufti Dawūd, and the Mufti ruled that the killer must pay *diyyah* to the family. According to Shaykh Muzafar, the Mufti gave his decision based on his knowledge that both parties (the killer and the killed) knew each other well so that both of them knew that they had the power of transformation. However, Shaykh Bušrā's tutor objected to the Mufti's decision. The tutor said that the killer did not have to pay *diyyah* to the family of the victim. This is because the killer did not kill a person but rather a wild animal, and according to Šarī'ah anyone who kills a wild animal is never obliged to pay anything for the killing unless the animal is under the protection of some other person. Concerning this, Hussein Ahmed said "There are no details on the respective position taken by the two scholars on the matter."⁶ However, from my informant I was able to get the details on the respective positions taken by the two scholars. Note also that Shaykh Muḥayddin Aḥmad, now guardian of the shrine of Gāta, disputes the story, objecting that Shaykh Bušrā lived many years after Mufti Dawūd, so that they could not possibly have met.⁷

After this dispute, Shaykh Bušrā and his tutor, accompanied by other students, left Daway and traveled to the neighboring country of Sudan. After a journey of three months they arrived at Omdurman. There he completed his education and received the title *Shaykh* from his tutor.⁸

In Sudan they met the head of the Sammaniyyah Ṣufī Ṭarīqah, Sayyid Aḥmad aṭ-Ṭayyib ibn Baṣīr (died 1824 A.D.). He welcomed them and treated them well, advising Shaykh Buṣrā's tutor to settle there as a teacher and advising Shaykh Buṣrā to go to Sufī school for training and initiation. The Sudanese mystic became an intimate friend to him from that time on and revealed to him the *'asrār* (inner secrets) of the Qādiriyyah order. He told Shaykh Buṣrā that all that was required of him was to retire to a cave near Khartoum in order to recite and study the Sammaniyyah *dhikr* (rite) and its rituals. I had a chance to visit that cave when I went to Sudan to collect the primary data for this thesis, but I was not allowed to take photographs of the cave due to their great respect for it.

According to Hussein Ahmed, Shaykh Buṣrā lived in Sudan for twenty-five years. However, some informants told me that he is believed to have lived there only three years; and some only say that he lived there for a long period.⁹

While he was in Sudan he had the chance to study a wide range of subjects, among them geometry, surveying, Arabic grammar and literature, philosophy, logic etc. Because of his modern secular learning, his works are especially interesting to all who have both a religious and an academic background. This will become clear when we look at his literary works in the next chapter.

After completing his education and training in Sudan, he traveled to Mecca to perform the pilgrimage (Ḥajj) and get additional learning. There he met Sayyid Muḥammad 'Uthman al-Mirghani, from whom he received the Khatmiyyah ṭarīqah. Muḥammad 'Uthman also entrusted him with a mission to exert his efforts for the cause of Islam, and gave him his blessings for success.¹⁰ He returned to

Ethiopia via Massawa and proceeded to the interior. He arrived at Šire in Tigray where he married two local women named Bäfte and Taybah, who bore him two daughters named Maymūnah and Nafisah. Then he went to Gondar and met the great scholar and *waliyy* (Saint) Shaykh Ali Gondar. It is said that Shaykh Ali prophesied that Haji Bušrā would finally settle in an area where the names of persons and places began with the Arabic letter *bā*.¹¹ These names (in addition to his own name and the name of his wife Bäfte) were:

- The river found near his center is Borkänna
- The name of the nearby plain is Bäkke
- The governor of the region was named Birru
- The governor's wife's name was Birritu

The guardian of the shrine, Haji Muhyaddin Aḥmad, composed an Amharic poem including these names as follows:

በዝህድና ነፍሩ 25 ዓመት፤

በባ ተለቅበው ቃሉን መጡበት፤

የተለቀቡባት ስድስ (6) ባዕ ናት፤

ቦርከናና በኬ ይኸ ነው ሁለት፤

ብሩና ብሪቱ ሲታክል አራት፤

ስመዎ በ-ሽራ ነው ሆነልህ አምስት፤

ሚስትዎ በፍታ ናት ሆነልህ ስድስት፤

He lived in asceticism for 25 years;

He came by the nickname .bā'.

Those who were surnamed with bā are 6:

Borkänna and Bäkke make two

Birru and Birritu make four

His name Bušra makes five

His wife Bäfte makes six.¹²

The informants implicitly indicated that Sayyid Bušrā preferred southern Wollo over his own birth place because of the prevalence of religious disputes between him and his countrymen; he even cursed the people and the land.¹³ In relation to this, Trimmingham notes that saints “were rarely... born amongst the people in whose territory their shrines are situated.”¹⁴

No sooner he settled in Gäta than he began an extensive program of Islamic education and Arabic language. In this way he turned the area into an active center of Islamic scholarship and propagation comparable with the famous one at Dawway.¹⁵ In Yemen he had a special reputation in the field of Islamic monotheism (*Tawḥīd*); Yemeni students moving to Ethiopia were advised to take their first course in *Tawḥīd* under his tutelage.¹⁶

During his lifetime, he produced 12,000 students including prominent Muslim scholars of Wollo like Shaykh Šonkiyy, Shaykh Jamāl ad-Dīn al-'Anniy etc.

According to the guardian of his shrine, Sayyid Bušrā is said to have produced five hundred books which contributed to the expansion of Islam in Wollo and in Ethiopia in general. However, few of his books can be found today in the shrine or in the hands of individuals.

The hagiographical source reveals the prominence of Haji Bušrā in the intellectual life of the Wollo Muslims. This is because he was authorized to assemble religious notables from all over Wollo for legal and religious discourse at Gäta; this in turn confirmed the place as the leading center of Islamic scholarship and Sayyid Bušrā as the most renowned scholar in southern Wollo.

Haji Bušrā was considered the most Orthodox scholar among his contemporaries in southern Wollo; he taught in accordance with the strict interpretation of the holy Qur'ān and the Hadith. He gave especial emphasis to Tawḥīd; he taught the people to refrain from polytheism because of the widespread superstitious worship of *Gačča* (incense burner), chickens, stones, and trees, which are forbidden in Islam. In combating these, he used both peaceful and coercive means; for example, he is said to have cut down trees which were worshipped by the people and sometimes he went directly to the people to persuade them against polytheism.¹⁷ This indicates the laxity and the prevalence of pagan rites in the religious life of southern Wollo at his time. Moreover, it shows the weak hold of Orthodox teaching in the area. He condemned the admiration of *Chat*, which paradoxically became the instrument of *Du'ā'* (prayer) among his descendants and successors. He said: "*Chat* is useless because some people, if they pray and chew, will stop at the moment of spitting it out."¹⁸ His reason for saying this is that some Muslims venerated *Chat* and believed that chewing it actually enhanced the effectiveness of prayer.

During his lifetime, he did not chew *chat* and discouraged others around him from chewing it. Moreover, he did not allow drums in any Islamic ceremonies in Gäta because he considered it as a musical instrument. His strictness and high ethical and religious standards aroused the jealousy and opposition not only of the traditional clerics (*Qalleča*) and the rural reciters of the Qur'ān, but also of the exorcists, whose activities he also condemned. On the other hand, some of the contemporary chiefs, such as Birru Lubo of Qällu and the chiefs of Albukko and Daway, held him in much awe and respect. He was on especially good terms with Birru, who attended to his needs and requests.¹⁹

Miracles of Al-Haji Bušrā

Saints are men who are believed to be chosen by God during their lifetime and who continue after their death to provide a link between God and the material world through their *barakah* (miraculous power), which enables them to contact the esoteric world.²⁰ It is believed that they truly have the power to work miracles. The Orthodox view, on the contrary, condemns “miracle working” as a heretical belief and practice, arguing that nowhere in the holy Qur'an and Hadīth did Allah make the working of miracles a stipulation for being *Waliyy*.²¹

Al-Haji Bušrā is believed to have performed many miracles that made him popular among his descendants and followers. Interestingly, his miracles have a striking resemblance with the miracles or *Mu'jizāt* of the prophets in the holy scriptures of Islam, which in turn casts doubt on their authenticity. Indeed, nothing is written about his power of working miracles nor do Muslim scholars present the miracles of Haji Bušrā in an exaggerated way; rather, it is the belief of the ignorant masses and the guardians of the shrine. Most of these miracles have been collected from devotees in different parts of Wollo by the present guardian regardless of their authenticity and the social background of the informants. Therefore, as

Trimingham pointed out in general, few of the miracles of Haji Bušrā seem convincing and many of them are either deformed or exaggerated accounts fabricated by the followers of the saint.²² However, it is through his miracles passed from generation to generation that the shrine of Gäta continues to exist. Nobody in Gäta feels he has a right to speculate over the miracles; rather, they accept them blindly as if they really happened. The followers of Haji Bušrā believe that the saint truly worked miracles during his lifetime and even after his death. Some of these are listed as follows:

1. Restoring the dead to life: This includes both humans and animals.
2. The myth of fire: It is widely believed that things and humans that have either been touched by Haji Bušrā or have arrived in the place of the saint cannot be harmed by hell fire.
3. Conversing with angels
4. Power of levitation: The ability to rise and float in the air without any physical support.
5. Power of killing: It is said that the saint had the power of killing those who attempted to challenge him.
6. Power of commanding the jinn
7. Stopping the flow of a river
8. Power of returning sight to the blind
9. Power of causing barren women to conceive²³

Notes to chapter four

1. Sayyid Bušrā Ibn Sayyid Ay Moḥammad (1315 H.C). *Ḥadīqat al-`ikhwān fī šarḥ fath ar-rahmān wa-ma'rifat kayfiyat al-`imān* (Unpublished) p. 1.
2. Informant: Shaykh Muḥyaddin Aḥmad, guardian of the shrine of Gäta.
3. Hussein Ahmad (2001). *Islam in Nineteenth-Century Wallo, Ethiopia*. p. 104.
4. Informant: Haji Muḥyaddin Aḥmad.
5. Hussein Ahmad (2001: 106).
6. Hussein Ahmad (2001: 106-107).
7. Informant: Haji Muḥyaddin Aḥmad.
8. Informant: Shaykh Muzafar Bahiru; Hussein Ahmad (2001: 110).
9. Hussein Ahmad (2001: 110). Informants: Shaykh Muḥammad Kerem, an Ethiopian resident in Suda, college instructor in International University of Africa and follower of the Qadiriyyah in Khartoum; Haji Muḥyaddin Aḥmad.
10. Hussein Ahmad (2001: 108).
11. Haji Muḥyaddin Aḥmad: *Yä Gäta'aw Ḥaji Sayyid Bušra Yä hiwot tarikačä'aw* (Unpublished).
p. 7.
12. Ibid: p. 25.
13. Informants: Shaykh Muzafar Bahiru and Haji Muḥyaddin Aḥmad.
14. Trimingham (1965a: 247).
15. Informant: Shaykh Muzafar Bahiru.
16. Informant: Shaykh Muzafar Bahiru.
17. Informants: Shaykh Hussein Ali, Shaykh Muzafar Bahiru.
18. Informants: Shaykh Hussein Ali, Shaykh Muzafar Bahiru.

CHAPTER FIVE

PHILOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION AND CATALOG OF SELECTED MANUSCRIPTS OF ḤAJI BUŠRĀ

As indicated in the previous chapter, Ḥaji Bušrā is said to have produced five hundred books, which contributed to the expansion of Islam in Wollo and in Ethiopia in general. All the manuscripts were written in Arabic, according to oral tradition. However, few of these books are to be found in his shrine or in the possession of individuals. It is impossible to present and study all the manuscripts of Ḥaji Bušrā in this study. Therefore, as mentioned in chapter one, this study focuses on nine of Ḥaji Bušrā's manuscripts. These are:

1. Holy Qur'ān
2. Ḥadīqat al-'ikhwān
3. Minḥat al-'ilāhiyyahy
4. Kašf al-ḥaqā'iq
5. Tanzīh al-mujarrad min qawl-in wa-l-'amal
6. Miškāt al-'anwār fi šifāt al-mukhtār
7. Kitāb al-ḥikam
8. Nafaḥāt az-zamān
9. 'Anqā maḡrib fī ma'rifat al-'awliyā' wa-šams al-maḡrib

Common philological features of the manuscripts

All of the manuscripts are written with traditional pen on thick brown parchment. The copyist used both red and black ink, made from red clay and black ash mixed with gum; black is used for the normal text, and red is mostly used for chapter and sub-chapter headings, for the word Allah, and for the phrase “peace and blessing upon the Prophet Muḥammad”. The ink is very clear and readable. Manuscripts 4-8 are bound together in succession in a single book. The binding is made of cardboard and hard leather and is covered with yellow cloth. Both the front and the back covers are present. The size of the binding is 18x24cm.

All the manuscripts have two columns. The pages in all of them are written both recto and verso. All of the manuscripts except the Holy Qur’ān have notes on some pages, occurring in any of the four margins or between the lines. All the manuscripts are in classical Arabic, except for small parts of manuscript 9.

In manuscripts 1-3 page numbers are written in Arabic numerals on both verso and recto of every page. Manuscripts 4-9 have no page numbers at all. The text in all of the manuscripts is complete. All of the manuscripts except the Holy Qur’ān manuscript conclude with the phrase: *ṣallā Allāhu ‘alā nabiyyinā wa-sayyidinā Muḥammad*. “Peace be upon our Prophet and our Master Muḥammad”. Sometimes this is preceded by the explicit statement: *wa-qad tamma al-kitāb fi yawm....* . “[Now] the book is completed on the day of...”.

For some (not all) of the manuscripts, the date is given in the form of *abjadiyyah*: each letter of the Arabic alphabet is assigned a standard numerical equivalent (*alif*=1, *bā'*=2, *jīm*=3, etc.), and the year is thus written as a combination of letters rather than with the normal Arabic numeral symbols.

In all of the manuscripts except the Holy Qur'ān, the first and last pages of the manuscript are decorated in triangular form. The triangular decoration at the beginning shows the title of the manuscript and the author. The triangular decoration at the end shows the date of writing of the manuscript, sometime in normal Arabic numerals, sometimes in *abjadiyyah*, and sometimes spelled out in words.

1. Holy Qur'ān

i. General introduction and significance of the manuscript:

The manuscript is a copy of the Holy Qur'ān. It is comprised of thirty short manuscripts, each of which is one *juz'* (standard section) of the Qur'ān. The division of the Qur'ān into thirty parts of equal length is standard throughout the Muslim world. Apparently Haji Bušrā decided to write each part as a separate short manuscript in order to make the Qur'ān easier to read and study. To my knowledge, other and earlier Ethiopian manuscripts of the Qur'ān do not split the text into different manuscripts in this way; the idea seems to have been original with Haji Bušrā. It is also important to stress the beauty of the design and the handwriting of Ethiopian Muslim scholars compared to that of many non-Ethiopian Arab Muslim scholars in the 19th century.

ii. Physical material:

Binding: The thirty short manuscripts are bound together in the form of a book. The binding is of cardboard and hard leather. The manuscripts are sewn together and both the front and the back covers are present.

Pages: Each sub-manuscript (*juz'*) has exactly 28 pages.

Size: The size of the pages of the manuscript is 15x17cm and the size of the binding is 17x22cm.

iii. Overall condition of the manuscript:

- Although the covers are preserved, and the sewing is firm and strong, the edges of the pages are slightly ripped. However, this does not affect the written text at all.
- The paper is not very brittle or dirty, which makes the book easy to read.

iv. Page layout of the manuscript:

- Page numbers: top of the pages.
- The top, bottom, right, and left margins of each page of the book are decorated, as can be clearly seen on the digital photos of the manuscript (see appendix).
- The margins on each page measure 10cm.
- There is a header at the top of the first page of each *juz'*, i.e. of each of the thirty sub-manuscripts. If the *juz'* begins a new sura, this header gives the name of that sura and the number of verses. For example, the first *juz'* begins with the Fātiḥa, and the header reads: *surat al-Fātiḥā sab 'u 'ayāt-in makkiyyah* “sura al-Fātiḥā [has] seven verses [and was revealed] in Mecca”.
- The width of the written surface on the page is 7cm.

- Red ink is used for the end of each verse and to indicate the long vowel of Arabic alif “ā”, which in the Qur’ānic text is added above the consonantal *rasm*.
- The first page of the book only has seven lines, but all the other pages of the manuscript have eight lines.

v. Style of writing:

- The size of the letters is medium, which makes the manuscript easy to read.

vi. Date of the manuscript:

- None is given.

vii. Content of the manuscript:

- Each manuscript is one *juz*’ of the Holy Qur’ān.

2. Ḥadīqat al-’ikhwān

i. General introduction and significance of the manuscript:

It is a book of *’īmān* (faith) written by Haji Bušrā. In this theological work Haji Bušrā dealt with how Muslims acquire faith in Allah. Also it shows the way to prove the existence of Allah.

ii. Physical material:

Binding: The manuscript is bound as a book. The binding is made of cardboard and hard leather, and is covered by yellow cloth. Both the front and the back covers are present.

Pages: The manuscript has 101 pages.

Size: The size of the pages is 15x24cm and the size of the binding is 17x24cm.

iii. Overall condition of the manuscript:

- The paper is not very brittle or dirty, which makes the manuscript easy to read.

iv. Page layout of the manuscript:

- Page numbers: bottom of each page.
- The width of the written surface on the page is 12cm.
- The first page has nineteen lines; all the other pages have twenty-four lines.

v. Style of writing:

- The size of the letters is medium, which makes the manuscript easy to read.

vi. Date of the manuscript:

- 1315 A.H., as written out in words on page 100 of the manuscript.

vii. Content of the manuscript:

- It deals with *’imān* (faith) and briefly discusses how a Muslim believes in Allah. It gives various arguments that prove the existence of Allah. In most of the content of the manuscript the writer uses Qurānic verses and Ḥadith to strengthen his argument. Finally the writer defines and briefly discusses the *ṣahādatayn* (the two testimonies) of Islam, which are the two halves of the text *lā ’ilāha illā Allāh Muḥammadun rasūl Allāh* “there is no God except Allah, Mohammad is his messenger”. He also discusses the nature of the relation between Allah and his servants (Muslims).

3. Minḥat al-’ilāhiyyah

i. General introduction and significance of the manuscript:

This book deals with Islamic philosophy and the ethics of Sufism.

ii. Physical material:

Binding: The manuscript is bound as a book. The binding is made of cardboard and hard leather. Both the front and the back covers are present.

Pages: The manuscript has 140 pages.

Size: The size of the pages is 15x24cm and the size of the binding is 20x24cm.

iii. Overall condition of the manuscript:

- All three unbound edges of each page of the manuscript are burnt and ripped.
- There are some added blank pages at the beginning and end of the manuscript, sewn together with the rest of the book.
- The paper is not very brittle. In spite of the dirtiness of the paper, the manuscript is easy to read.

iv. Page layout of the manuscript:

- Page numbers: both at the top and the bottom of each page (redundantly).
- The width of the written surface on the page is 12cm.
- The first page has nineteen lines; all the other pages have twenty-five lines.

v. Style of writing:

- The size of the letters is medium, which makes the manuscript easy to read.

vi. Date of the manuscript:

- None is given.

vii. Content of the manuscript:

It deals with Islamic philosophy in education, way of life etc. The book also indicates the true ethics of Sufism as opposed to the false and unacceptable ethics which some Sufis consider as good ethics of Sufism and which have been

wrongly handed down from generation to generation. As in the previous manuscript, he cites Qur'ānic verses and Ḥadīth to support his points.

4. Kašf al-ḥaqā'iq

i. General introduction and significance of the manuscript:

It is the first of five manuscripts (no. 4-8) which are bound together. This book discusses all the basic principles of Islamic jurisprudence and their way of application, by presenting various arguments from the founders of the various *madhāhib* (schools of Islamic jurisprudence).

ii. Physical material:

Binding: see common philological features of the manuscripts.

Pages: The manuscript has 48 pages.

Size: The size of the pages is 15x24cm.

iii. Overall condition of the manuscript:

- The paper is not very brittle. In spite of the dirtiness of the paper, the manuscript is easy to read.

iv. Page layout of the manuscript:

- The width of the written surface on the page is 15cm.
- The first page has nineteen lines; all the other pages have twenty-two lines.

v. Style of writing:

- The size of the letters is small, but the manuscript is easy to read.

vi. Date of the manuscript:

- 1247 A.H., as given on the last page of the manuscript.

vii. Content of the manuscript:

- It gives a brief description of Islamic jurisprudence and its application beginning with *wuḍū'* (ablution) and ending with the Islamic code regarding theft.

5. Tanzīh al-mujarrad min qawlin wa-l-'amal

i. General introduction and significance of the manuscript:

This is the second of the five manuscripts. It gives answers to questions and misunderstandings regarding Islam and its principles. The significance of the manuscript is indicating the proper mode of answering religious questions and the system of propagating Islam to non-Muslims.

ii. Physical material:

Binding: see common philological features of the manuscripts.

Pages: The manuscript has 52 pages.

Size: The size of the pages is 15x24cm.

iii. Overall condition of the manuscript:

- The paper is very brittle and very dirty, which makes the manuscript hard to read.

iv. Page layout of the manuscript:

- The width of the written surface on the page is 15cm.
- The first page has nineteen lines; all the other pages have twenty-two lines.

v. Style of writing:

- The size of the letters is small, which makes the manuscript hard to read.

vi. Date of the manuscript:

- 1240 A.H., as given on the last page of the manuscript in the form of 'abjadiyyah.

vii. Content of the manuscript:

It is a refutation of misconceptions about Islam. For example: the question of the Trinity, chewing *Chat*, worshipping many gods as mediators toward approaching Allah etc. It cites arguments of various leading Sufi and non-Sufi scholars.

6. Miškāt al-'anwār fi šifāt al-mukhtār

i. General introduction and significance of the manuscript:

This book gives the biography and brief description of the personality of the Prophet Mohammed. It illustrates the style used by Ethiopian Muslims in writing biography.

ii. Physical material:

Binding: see common philological features of the manuscripts.

Pages: The manuscript has 35 pages.

Size: The size of the pages is 15x24cm.

iii. Overall condition of the manuscript:

- The paper is very brittle and very dirty, which makes the manuscript hard to read.

iv. Page layout of the manuscript:

- The width of the written surface on the page is 15cm.
- The first page has nineteen lines; all the other pages have twenty-six lines.

v. Style of writing:

- The size of the letters is small, which makes the manuscript hard to read.

vi. Date of the manuscript:

- 1237 A.H., as written out in words at the end of the manuscript.

vii. Content of the manuscript:

- It is a description of the personality of the Prophet Muḥammad in his community in Mecca and Medina. It also contains the genealogical chain (*'isnād*) of the Prophet Muḥammad. It discusses his endurance when the people of Mecca attacked him at the beginning of his preaching of Islam his leadership after he established Medina as the first Islamic state.

7. Kitāb al-ḥikam

i. General introduction and significance of the manuscript:

It is a book of Arabic proverbs by various famous Muslim scholars with brief explanations. It was originally written by ibn 'Aṭā' 'Allāh Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Karīm. The present copy and annotations were made by Haji Bušrā. The manuscript shows how Haji Bušrā was interested in collecting Arabic proverbs and his ability in giving explanations for them. Such Arabic proverbs are useful for strengthening our knowledge of the Arabic language. A minor problem of this manuscript is that it does not give any information about the number of proverbs it contains.

ii. Physical material:

Binding: see common philological features of the manuscripts.

Pages: The manuscript has 20 pages.

Size: The size of the pages is 15x24cm.

iii. Overall condition of the manuscript:

- The paper is very brittle and very dirty, which makes the manuscript hard to read.

iv. Page layout of the manuscript:

- The width of the written surface on the page is 15cm.
- The first page has nineteen lines; all the other pages have twenty-six lines.

v. Style of writing:

- The size of the letters is small, which makes the manuscript hard to read.

vi. Date of the manuscript:

- Copied in the month of Muḥarram 1280 A.H. The date is written at the end in the form of *ʿabjadiyyah*.

vii. Content of the manuscript:

It is a book of Arabic proverbs by famous Muslim scholars with brief explanations. Most of them are by leading Sufi leaders in the Muslim world like the Moroccan Sufi leader Muḥyaddīn Ibn al-ʿArabiyy. The proverbs focus on general ethics and education.

8. Nafaḥāt az-zamān

i. General introduction and significance of the manuscript:

This book presents the major historical events that took place in the reign of ʿImām Maḥdi of Sudan in the 19th century

ii. Physical material:

Binding: see common philological features of the manuscripts.

Pages: The manuscript has 35 pages.

Size: The size of the pages is 15x24cm.

iii. Overall condition of the manuscript:

- The paper is very brittle and very dirty, which makes the manuscript hard to read.

iv. Page layout of the manuscript:

- The width of the written surface on the page is 15cm.
- The first page has nineteen lines; all the other pages have twenty-six lines.

v. Style of writing:

- The size of the letters is small, which makes the manuscript hard to read.

vi. Date of the manuscript:

- Copied in the month of Rabī' al-'Awwal 1280 A.H.; the date is written at the end in the form of *ʿabjadiyyah*.

vii. Content of the manuscript:

It is a collection of major historical events that took place during the time of the Mahdi of Sudan. It discussed how and when 'Imām Mahdi began to fight the colonial powers in order to protect the sovereignty of his country. The manuscript describes the personality of 'Imām Mahdi of Sudan, discussing both his leadership and his social life among his soldiers and people.

9. 'Anqā mağrib fi ma'rifat al-'awliyā' wa-šams al-mağrib

i. General introduction and significance of the manuscript:

This book presents short biographies of leading Sufis and Muslim scholars of Africa.

ii. Physical material:

Binding: The manuscript is bound in the form of a book. The binding is made of cardboard and hard leather. Both the front and the back covers are present.

Pages: The manuscript has 75 pages.

Size: The size of the pages is 15x24cm and the size of the binding is 20x24cm.

iii. Overall condition of the manuscript:

- The paper is very brittle and very dirty, which makes the manuscript hard to read.

iv. Page layout of the manuscript:

- The width of the written surface on the page is 12cm.
- The manuscript has two columns.
- The first page has nineteen lines; all the other pages have twenty-eight lines.

v. Style of writing:

- The size of the letters is small, which makes the manuscript hard to read.

vi. Date of the manuscript:

- 1275 A.H., written in normal Arabic numerals on the last page.

vii. Language of the manuscript:

The language of the manuscript is Arabic. But there are strange and unidentified letters in the text on some of the pages. The writer added a comment about these

letters: *man 'arifa hādha al-khaṭṭ wa-r-ramz wa-fakka ḥurūfahu wa-qara'ahu fa'innahu ḥustādhi 'alā kulli ḥāl-in wa-ḥi kulli ḥāl.* (Whosoever recognizes this script and can decipher its letters and read it, he is indeed my teacher in each and every situation).

viii. Content of the manuscript:

It contains short biographies of the Prophet Muḥammed and of various leading Sufi leaders of Africa.

letters: *man 'arifa hādha al-khatt wa-r-ramz wa-fakka ḥurūfahu wa-qara'ahu fa'innahu ḥustādhi 'alā kulli ḥāl-in wa-fī kulli ḥāl.* (Whosoever recognizes this script and can decipher its letters and read it, he is indeed my teacher in each and every situation).

viii. Content of the manuscript:

It contains short biographies of the Prophet Muḥammed and of various leading Sufi leaders of Africa.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY

Relatively few studies have been done on the contribution of Ethiopian Muslim scholars to the development of Ethiopia and the history of its literature in the past centuries. Recently the life and works of some of these Muslim scholars have begun to be studied here at the Department of Linguistics and Philology in Addis Ababa University. Among those Ethiopian Muslims who contributed in this way, we find Shaykh Sayyid Bušrā Ay Mohammed of Gäta (Sayyid al-Bā'). In my thesis I have presented a catalog of nine of his selected manuscripts.

I divided the thesis into five chapters. In chapter one I gave a general introduction to the thesis, including the background of the study, review of related literature, objectives of the study and methodology. Chapter two dealt with two topics, the geographical location and the Islamization of Southern Wollo. When we look at Islamic history in Ethiopia, Islamic heritage was preserved and transferred from generation to generation in large part by Sufi *ṭarīqah*, and Haji Bušrā was one of the leading Sufis in Southern Wollo. In chapter three I gave a brief introduction to Sufism and its orders (Ṭuruq). In chapter four I presented the biography of Haji Bušrā including his education, travels to neighboring Sudan and Mecca, religious character, and his miracles. In chapter five I gave a brief philological description and catalog of selected manuscripts of Haji Bušrā. Finally, I summarize my thesis in chapter six.

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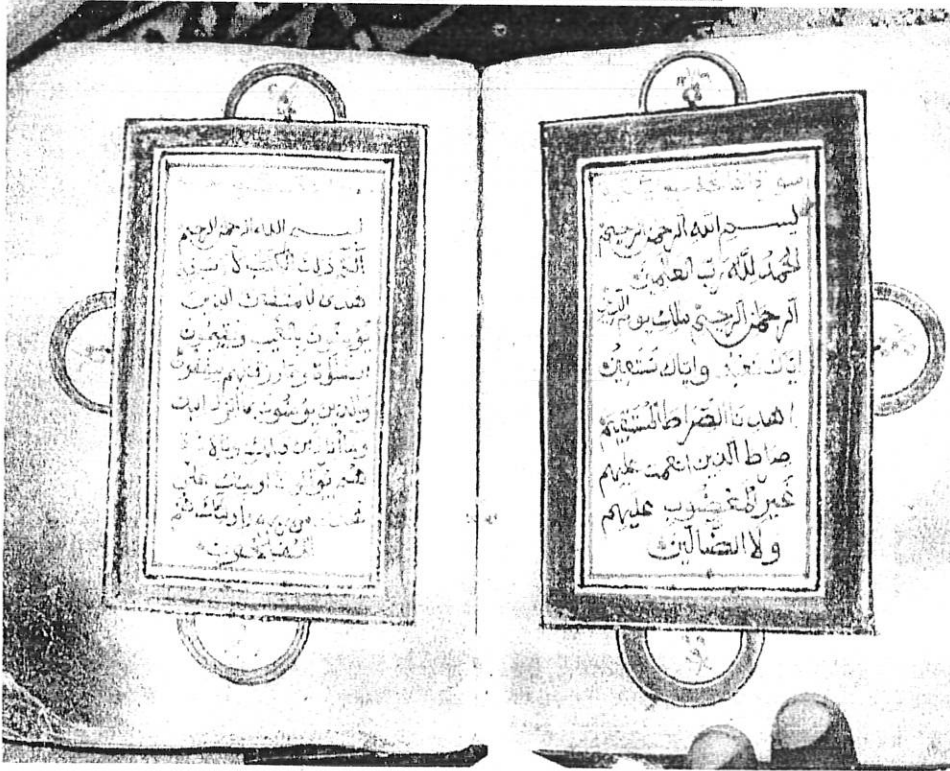
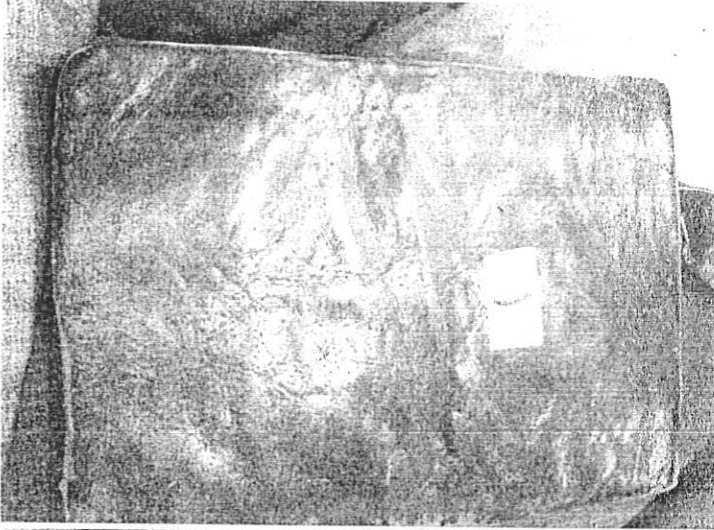
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List of Informants

	Name of Informant	Age	Date of Interview	Position
1	Shaykh Muzefer Bahiru	71	July 18, 2009	Islamic scholar in Kombolcha (Southern Wollo)
2	Ato Kedir Hussien	45	July 14, 2009	Head of Tourism and Cultural Office of Southern Wollo
3	Ato Mohammed Yimer	38	July 14, 2009	Agricultural expert in Southern Wollo
4	Haji Muhyaddin Ahmad	78	Dec. 22, 2009	Guardian of the shrine of Gäta
5	Shaykh Muhammad Kerem	45	April 20, 2009	An Ethiopian resident in Sudan, college instructor at International University of Africa and follower of the Qadiriyyah in Khartoum
6	Shaykh Hussein Ali	48	Dec. 20, 2009	Religious teacher in Kombolcha (Southern Wollo)

APPENDIX

Digital Photographs of the manuscripts:



Manuscript (1): Holy Qur'an



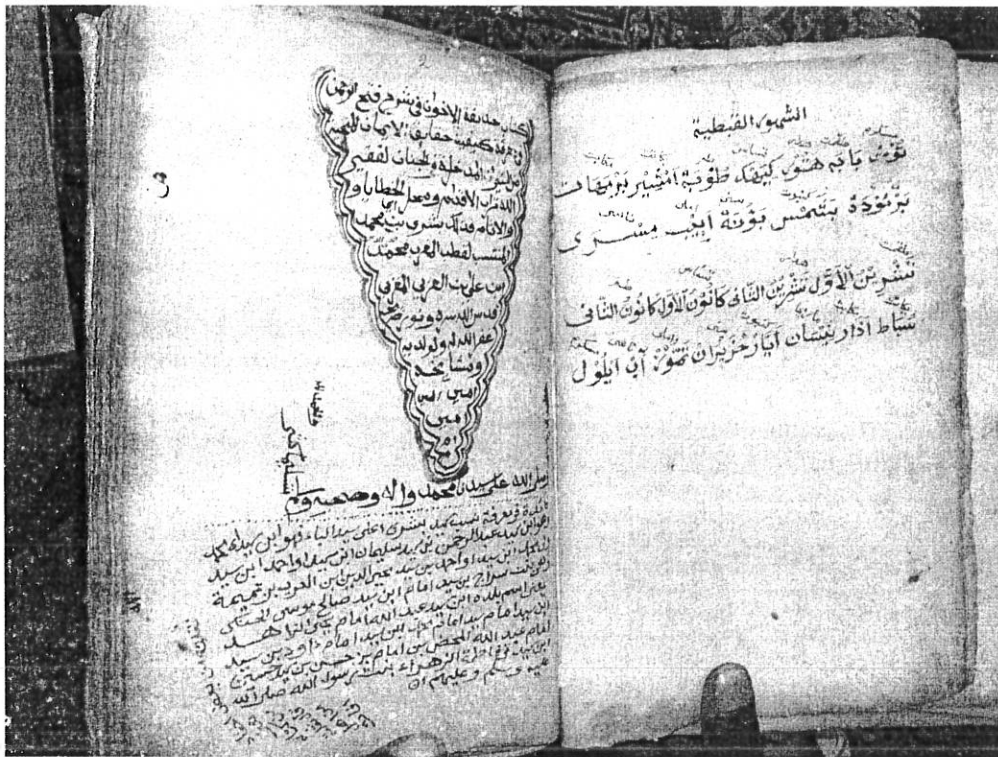
إِنَّ الْبَقْرَ تَشَدُّهُ عَلَيْنَا وَإِنَّا
شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَهْتَكُونَ قَالَ اللَّهُ
يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقْرَةٌ لَأَذْلَوْلُ تُبِيرُ
الْأَرْضَ وَلَا تُسْقِي الْحَرْثَ مُسَمَّةً
لِلشَّيْءِ فِيهَا قَالُوا لَيْتَ جِئْت
بِالْحَقِّ فَنَجُوهَا وَمَا كَذَّبُوا
يَفْعَلُونَكَ وَإِذْ قَسَمْتَ لَنَفْسًا

ع

فادراتم

فَإِذَا رَأَتْكُمْ فِيهَا وَاللَّهُ مَخْرُجُهَا
كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُورُونَ فَقُلْنَا
اصْرَبُوا بِبَعْضِهَا كَذَلِكَ يُحْيِي
اللَّهُ الْمَوْتِ وَيُرِيكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَعْقِلُونَ ثُمَّ قَسَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ
ذَلِكَ فَهِيَ كَالْحِجْرَةِ أَوْ أَشَدَّ قَسْوَةً
وَإِنَّ مِنْ الْحِجْرَةِ لَأَيُّ شَجَرٍ مِنْهُ

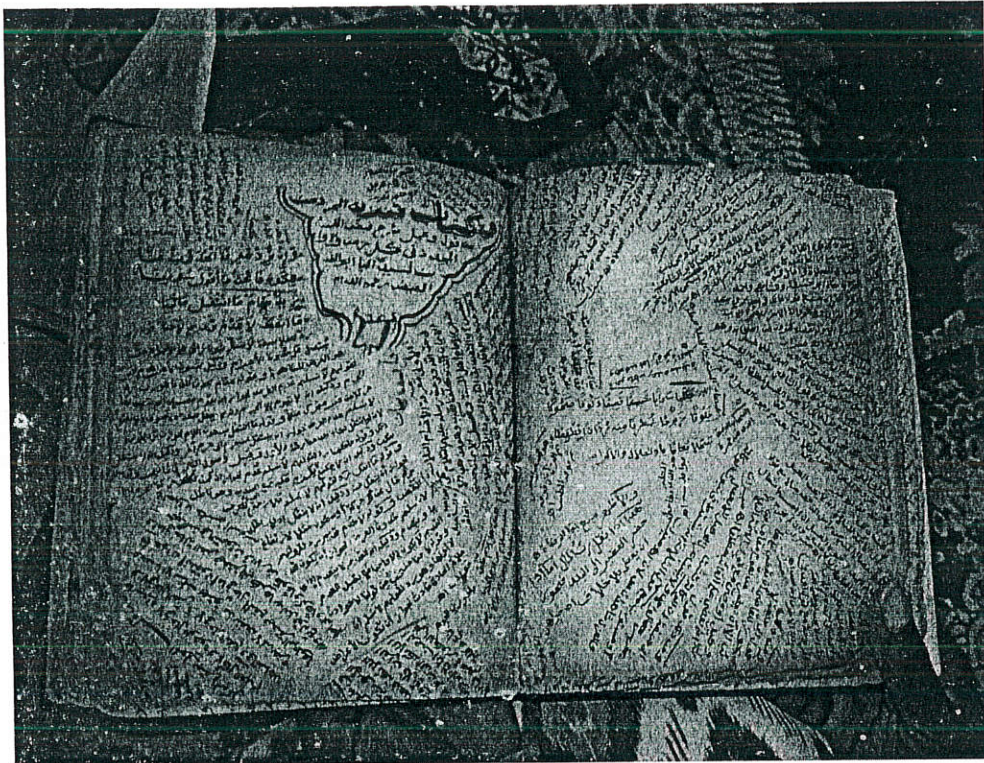
Manuscript (1): Holy Qur'an



Manuscript (2): Ḥaḍīqat al-ikhwān



Manuscript (2): Ḥaḍīqat al-ikhwān



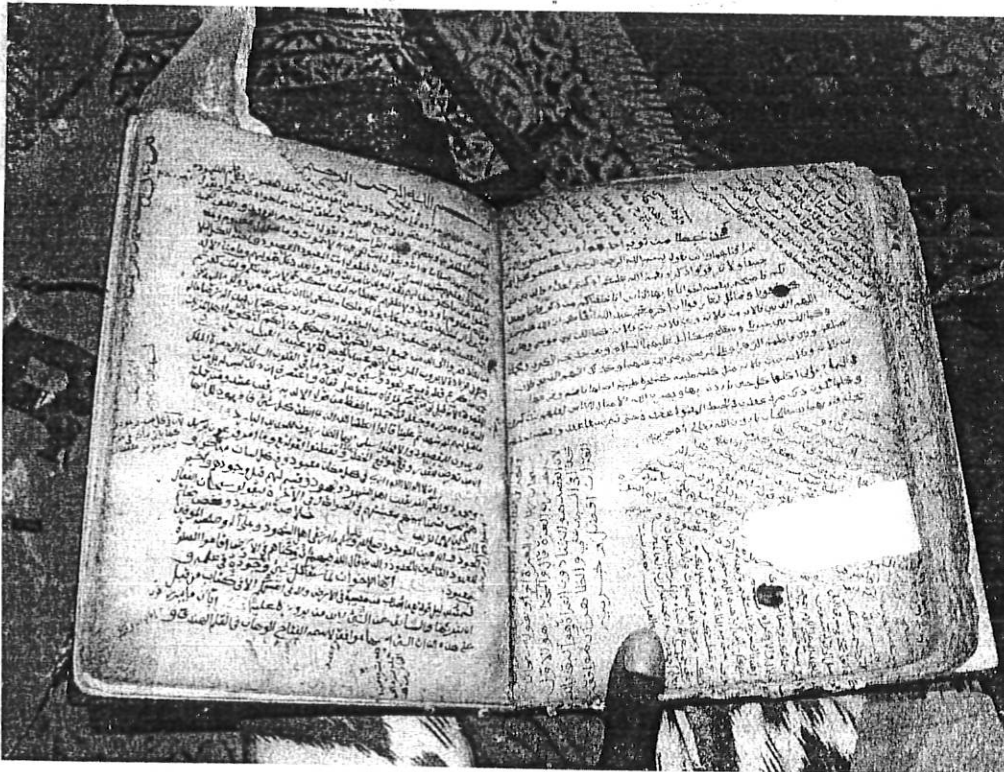
Manuscript (5): *Tanzih al-mujarrad min qawl-in wa-l-'amal*



Manuscript (6): *Miškāt al-'anwār fi šifāt al-mukhtār*



Manuscript (7): Kitāb al-ḥikam

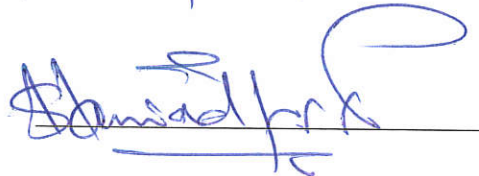


Manuscript (8): Nafahāt az-zamān

Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented in any other university, and that all sources of materials used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name Mustafa Hamid Yusuf

Signature 

Date 20 November 2010
Addis Ababa

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as university advisor.

Name ORIN GENSLER

Signature 

Date 20 NOVEMBER 2010

Addis Ababa

3.4. The School of Al-Ḥanbaliyyah

3.5. Chronology of the schools

3.1 The School of Al-Ḥanafīyyah

It was founded by Abu Ḥanīfah An-Nu'mān ibn Tābit ibn Zūṭīyy, who was born in Kūfah (in 699 A.D.) He was originally from Persia. He lived and studied for many years in Kufah and then went to Baghdad where he lived until his death in 767 A.D. He was the only one of the school founders who knew personally the companions of the Prophet Mohammed, including 'Anas ibn Mālik, 'Abdullah ibn 'Ubay, Suhayl ibn Sa'd As-Sā'idiyy, Abu Ṭufayl 'Āmir ibn Wā'ilah.¹⁶

First he studied *ilm al-kalām* (scholastic theology), and based on this subject he wrote his first book, *Al-fīqh Al-'akbar*. Later he studied Islamic jurisprudence under the great shaykhs Ḥammād ibn Abī Salamah, Ibrāhīm ibn Yazīd An-Nakha'iyy.¹⁷ After he completed his studies under these shaykhs he began preparing his school of Islamic jurisprudence. His principle of jurisprudence was based on arriving at religious decisions through *ar-ra'y* (personal opinion). This does not mean that he did not use all the other basic sources and methods of research in Islamic jurisprudence; he used these methods where possible, but sometimes there were cases which did not have any applicable precedent in the basic sources of jurisprudence.

His school remained an oral one during his lifetime, but after his death his students wrote down all his teachings and opinions. Of these students, the most important in writing down the Al-Ḥanafīyyah school of Islamic jurisprudence were Ya'qūb ibn