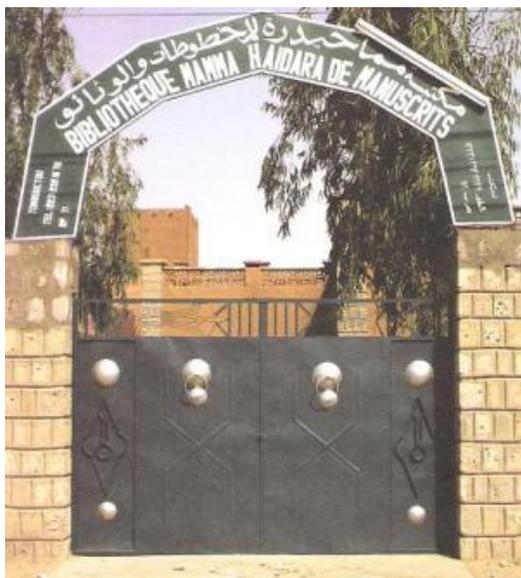


The Mamma Haidara Memorial Library

The Mamma Haidara Library was started by Abdul Kader Haidara, former employee of the Ahmed Baba Institute (IHARI-AB). After leaving the centre he devoted all of his time and energy to preserve his own family's manuscript collection and was successful in setting up the Mamma Haidara Memorial Library, which was the first of its kind in Mali.



The Haidara family is renowned for its scholars and judges. Abdul Kader's father, Mamma Haidara, was not only a Qadi (judge), but also a scholar who taught classical Islamic sciences such as Jurisprudence and Arabic Grammar. His personal library dates back to the 16th century and is one of the largest and oldest collections in the city.

This library was established by Mamma Haidara's forebear, Mohamed El Mawlud, and was handed down to his descendents, generation after generation. Mamma Haidara added to it substantially, buying manuscripts while studying in Egypt and Sudan. He also studied under local scholars in the village learning centres of Arawan and Boujbeyha, procuring manuscripts there as well. In addition to his Timbuktu

library, Mamma Haidara had also established an archive in the village of Bamba.

Mamma Haidara's efforts were by no means restricted to the collation and preservation of manuscripts. He also established collaborative relationships with other manuscript libraries in the region, facilitating research and exchange. When Mamma Haidara died in 1981, he not only left behind a tremendous legacy for his son, Abdul Kader, but also a passion for manuscripts and an education in basic cataloguing and conservation skills.

Abdul Kader began cataloguing his inherited collection and was assisted by the al-Furqan Heritage Foundation in London, which agreed to publish his catalogue. Currently four of the projected five volumes in the catalogue have been published. Abdul Kader has also been actively involved in assisting other collection holders in setting up their own libraries. He has given much guidance and assistance to Ismael Diadié Haidara, a close relative whose mother hails from the Haidara clan, and who has also managed to establish his own private library, The Timbuktu Andalusian Library.

Relevant link: Ancient Manuscripts from the Desert Libraries of Timbuktu
<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/mali/mali-exhibit.html>