

# IslHornAfr 1<sup>st</sup> Field Mission Report

17 November – 12 December 2014



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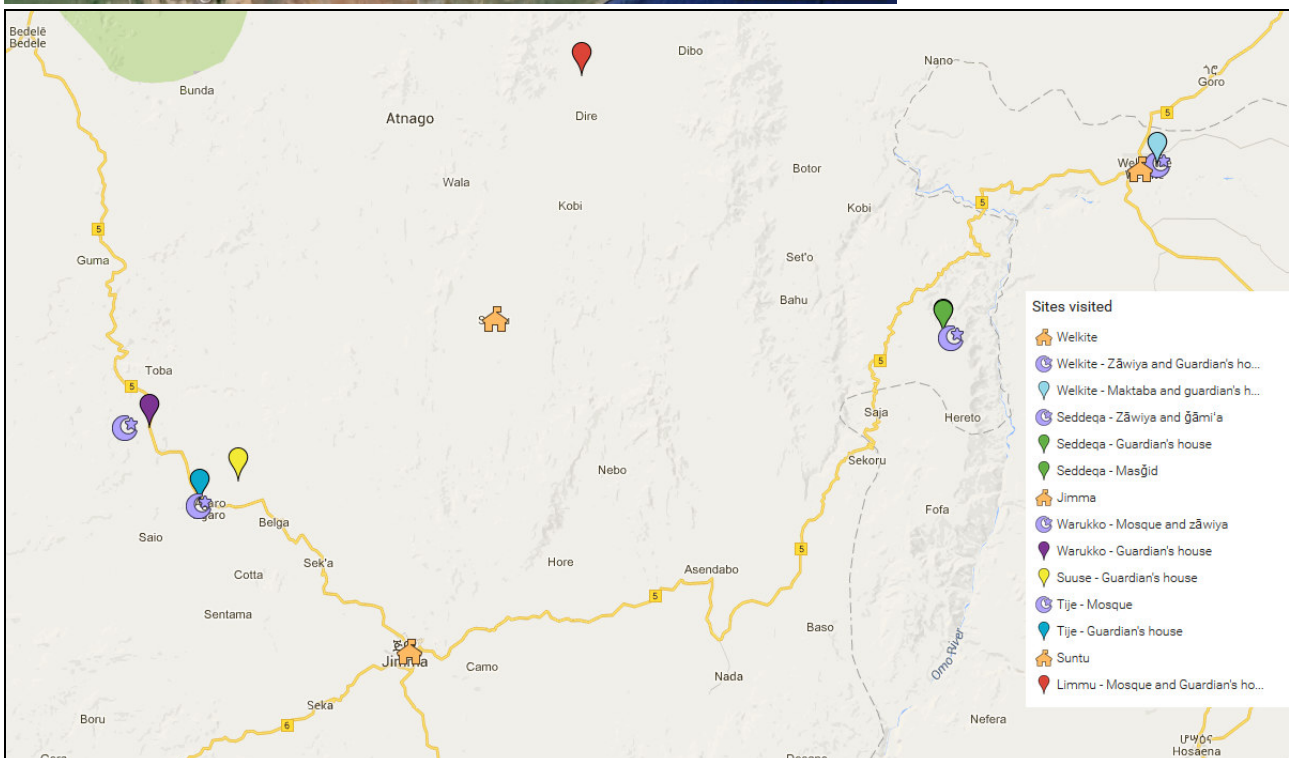
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The first field research of *Islam in the Horn of Africa* project was conducted in the South-Western area of Central Ethiopia). The identified manuscript collections are located in the regions of Oromia (in particular in Jimma Zone) and in the region of the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples (in particular in Gurage Zone).<sup>1</sup>



Fig. 1a-b Map of Ethiopia with manuscript sites identified during the first mission



The project team was composed by Alessandro Gori (PI, 17-21 November 2014), Sara Fani, and Michele Petrone (19 November – 12 December 2014), who were supported by field research coordinators from Addis Ababa University, Hassen Muhammad Kawo and Kemal Ibrahim (see also below).

<sup>1</sup> On the IslHornAfr project see <http://www.islhornafr.eu>.



## I. The environment

From a geographical point of view all the sites we visited are located around 2000 metres above the sea level in the fertile regions of western Ethiopian Highlands. The main urban centres of these two areas are respectively Jimma (around 160000 inhabitants) and Wolkite (around 30000 inhabitants). In the surrounding rural areas people are mostly organized in small villages or towns in which the most common building are wooden and mud thatched huts (Fig. 2). The inhabitants live basically of agriculture and breeding (Fig. 3). With the exception of the more extended and populated built-up centres, villages and groups of huts are not endowed with domestic electricity and water, which is usually supplied only by public fountains or natural springs and rivers (Fig. 4); some rural houses are equipped with solar electricity systems or power generators. Every inhabited centre is quite isolated not only depending on the actual distance from other centres, but also depending on the conditions of the road connections, which, apart from the main ones linking Wolkite to Addis Ababa and to Jimma and Jimma to Agaro, are gravel roads.



Fig. 2 Wooden and mud hut of the Gibe Valley, road from Wolkite to the Gibe river

## II. Mission organization:

### 1. Choice of the area of work and individuation of the manuscript collections

The research area of this first mission has been chosen primarily according to historical considerations. The Islamization of the region during the last decades of the eighteenth century, in fact, encouraged the spread and circulation of Arabic textual traditions. The present-day Jimma Zone, in which most of our manuscript collections are located, includes in fact all the five Islamic Kingdoms of Gibe, i.e. Gomma, Gumma, Limmu-Ennarea, Jimma, and Gera.<sup>2</sup> These Muslim Oromo monarchic states became representative of a significant Islamic literary culture mainly in Arabic, but also in 'aḡamī, i.e. in local languages written in Arabic script, with the contribution of 'ulamā' and traders of Arab origins, travelling within and through the region. Islamic texts in Arabic, thus, have been copied and used in Islamic educational centres and followed the spreading routes of Islamic knowledge thanks to the active and literary productive contribution of local ṣayḥs.

<sup>2</sup> See, among others, Mohammed Hassen, *The Oromo of Ethiopia: a history, 1570-1860*, Trenton, N.J., Red Sea Press, 1994 and Abir, Mordechai, "The Emergence and Consolidation of the Monarchies of Enarea and Jimma in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century", in: *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (1965), pp. 205-219.





Fig. 3 Wooden thatched hut surrounded by sorghum farm and cattle on the road from Wolkite to the Gibe river.



Fig. 4 Water supplying at the sunset, on the road from Wolkite to the Gibe river.

All the manuscript collections identified are nowadays kept in private houses; the present owners and custodians are the descendants of the founders of Islamic educational centres around which the collections developed, by gathering books from different provenances, copying them *in situ* or collecting the works of local scholars. These residences are usually located in the same place as the original Islamic centres developed or just few hundred meters far from them, so that it was still possible to evaluate and understand their cultural and social function. These religious and educational centres, in fact, represents what in Arabic is called *zāwiya*<sup>3</sup> (also *ḥaḍra*), meaning with this a complex of buildings, mainly a small mosque, oratory or prayer room, but also buildings designed to house and feed travellers and members of a local Sufi brotherhood. The *zawāyā* were in fact typically associated with a religious lineage and often constructed around the tomb or shrine of its founder; as the number of disciples increased, the house units were incorporated into larger complexes which not only provided space for teaching and accommodation for the devotees, but also served as centres of pilgrimage and gathering, beyond serving as the residences of the *ṣayḥ* or head of the *zāwiya*, his family and retainers. Some rural *zawāyā*, as in the case of those visited during this mission, function as intellectual centres and include also libraries, schools, mosques,

<sup>3</sup> See Blair, Sheila *et al.*, in *Encyclopædia of Islam*, 2nd Edition, edited by P.J. Bearman, *et al.*, Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1960–2005, vol. XI, pp. 466b–470a, s.v. “Zāwiya”.

workshops, but also granaries stockpiled for local relief in times of famine and they can also represent sort of sanctuaries offering asylum to refugees, poor people and travellers. In the past, the *zawāyā* often played an important commercial role by protecting trade routes and creating networks of exchange among its members, assuming in specific circumstances also the role of political focus. These buildings and functions are still recognisable in the sites where the manuscript collections were formed and in the history of those places.

## **2. Co-optation of local guides and scientific collaborators.**

The manuscript collections which have been object of this first field research related to the project *IslHornAfr* had been firstly identified by a functionary of the Jimma *wārāda* (administrative district), Miliyoon Tigist, who was involved in the census of Islamic manuscript collections aiming to the cultural and tourist promotion of the region. Then, the collections have been chosen as object of a PhD thesis by the scholar Kemal Ibrahim (University of Addis Ababa), aiming to a preliminary description of the collections and their history. Among these, the digitized corpora by *IslHornAfr* mission have been selected depending on the number of manuscripts they include, the previous knowledge and studies about them, and the accessibility of the place where they are stored, trying to optimize the logistical efforts and aiming to the best results for the project in terms of novelty and literary significance. Some of the sites identified by the *Wārāda* Office have been temporarily overlooked and will hopefully be object of further missions. With regard to Wolkite area, the only manuscript collection known has been pointed out by another researcher from the University of Addis Ababa, Hassen Mohammad Kawo, who, in the last years, has frequented the *zāwiya* where the manuscripts are kept, supporting the guardian in the library managing. The *wārāda* functionary and both the researchers of Addis Ababa University have taken active part to the project mission, supporting the team in the organization and developing of the fieldwork. In addition to the identification of the collections, their contribution has been essential also to establish direct contacts with the manuscript custodians, whom they already knew personally; their presence has also been crucial to move around the region with administrative and bureaucratic tutelage in addition to the institutional and academic one obtained from Institute of Ethiopian Studies of the University of Addis Ababa and from the University itself. Moreover, the presence of these collaborators has been important as the present manuscript custodians spoke only local languages, so the local collaborators also had the role of interpreters with Oromo (for Jimma area) and K'abeena (for Wolkite) speakers.

## **3. Logistic organization.**

To optimize our transfers and accommodations, the sites were divided into two groups, the first one including the sites around Wolkite (Zabbi Molla *Zāwiya* and Seddeqa) and the second one including the ones around Jimma. These two cities have been chosen as bases for the team accommodation for their relatively short distances from the collections and for the facilities they can offer: first of all water and electricity and, not least, the possibility to get money to pay all the travel expenses. All the sites were maximum 2 hours distant from the chosen accommodations (except Limmu). The real distances are actually not so big, but the roads, which, apart from the main ones (from Addis Ababa to Wolkite and Jimma, the other one from Jimma to Agaro), are not paved, are usually very damaged and require a safe drive, with a travel speed not exceeding 50 Km/h; moreover, the Gibe Valley cuts through a mountainous landscape, so they are for long distances curvy roads, with a constant danger of domestic and wild animals (especially monkeys) crossing from one side to the other (Fig. 5 and 6). Also, outside the inhabited centre, along the roads, there is no enlightenment at all, and this means that every workday has to finish before the sunset. This are the reasons why the team had to rent a private four-wheel drive vehicle with a driver who was used to and experienced in this kind of driving, even in case of rainy days, when also the main roads become almost not accessible (Fig. 7). It has to be said that the rainy season usually lasts from June to October, but, at the beginning of the field work, the team had to face a couple of rainy days which



completely stop the job. The main problems due to rain are, apart the difficulty in moving along both the gravel and paved roads, also the black outs which are much more common with rainy weather; it has to be taken into account that anyway, even with good weather and even in the big cities like Addis Ababa, one or two black outs per day are very common and can last from few minutes to a couple of hours.



Fig. 5 Gibe Valley landscape.



Fig. 6 A baboon along the road from Gibe river to Seddeqa.





Fig. 7 Car and driver of the mission

#### 4. Technical equipment.

Other factors had to be considered to set the mission technical equipment. First of all, the need to obtain high quality digital images reproducing all the (at least) visual particulars of the original objects, entailed the choice of a good quality reflex full-frame digital camera (Nikon® D800e with VR 24-85 mm f/3.5-4.5 G lens). All the images taken have been provided with a professional colour scale in order to define the original colours of the manuscripts. The need to identify on a map the sites where the manuscript collections are preserved, suggested the use of a GPS device connected with the camera, in order to record the geographical coordinates where every shot was taken. A proper photographic setting was arranged in every site in order to have the best possible exposure light and background; for the background a specific acid-free polyester non-woven fabric, Reemay®, has been used. The darkness of the rooms where manuscripts were kept led the team to work outside in the shadow, even if this often created light changes which had to be controlled and attenuated by the camera setting; regarding to this, the use of a tripod enabled long shots and a constant framing (Fig. 8). When there was the need and possibility of working inside the use of LED cold artificial light was essential, for its long duration and autonomy and also to avoid damages to the original *codices* (Fig. 9). The power autonomy of all these electronic devices had to be considered in advance in order to have always additional batteries at our disposal and cover at least a full working day; they were usually recharged during the night while staying in hotels or, when possible, in the manuscript custodians' houses.



Fig. 8 Photographic set for big manuscripts in Zabbi Molla, Wolkite.



Fig. 9 Night work during a black-out in a hotel, Jimma, with manuscripts coming from Warukko Zāwiya.

Part of the technical equipment of the team has been determined also depending on the manuscripts' conservation conditions: few instruments and tools have been included in advance among the accessories for the photographic setting (for example the thin plumb bobs rope to keep the manuscripts open), while some other have been “invented” or arranged at need (as the glass to keep flat the very crinkled folios – Fig. 10 – or the support to keep the books stand to take pictures of their edges). In some cases there was the need of inventing solutions to avoid sudden change of light or to deal with very big or small format manuscripts or with particularly fragile and damaged ones. It has to be reminded that the digitizing process took place in locations that were not properly photographic studios, so the team had to arrange every time the proper setting, especially regarding to light: houses are usually very dark inside and, as already said, not all of them have electricity, so it was usually easier to work outside at natural light, sometimes using the ground as working surface (adequately covered) or the traditional small wooden tables and stools. In every situation the team was supported and helped by their hosts in many ways. Just to make an example, many of them spent days following the team work and providing all the facilities they can, losing days of work in the fields: it was in fact time of crop both for the area of Wolkite (in particular of teff crop, *Eragrostis tef*) and Jimma (coffee crop) and this was the reason why in one case the team couldn't access one of the mss collection that was planned to be visited.

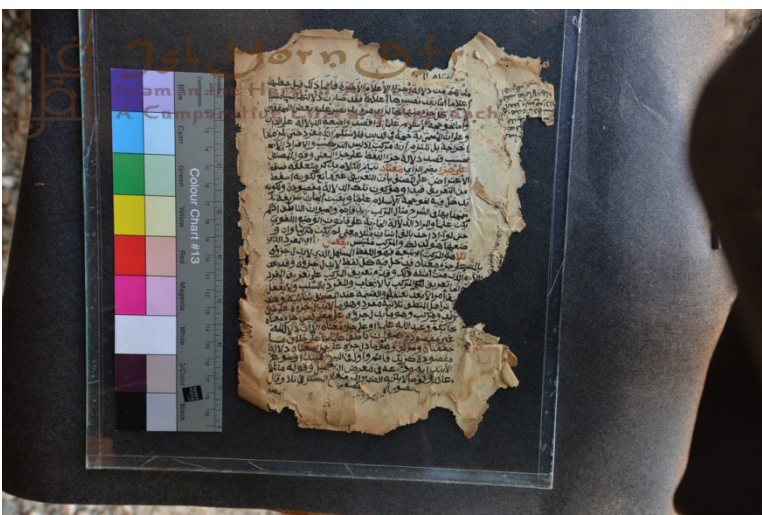


Fig. 10 Loose bifolio of a manuscript in Tije (Img12355), a commentary on the *urğūza* poem, *al-Sullam al-murawniq fi ‘ilm al-manṭiq*, by ‘Abd al-Raḥman al-Aḥḍarī (fl. mid XVI century).



### III. Manuscript collections identified and digitized

Number of pictures taken: 14660 in 5 different sites.

#### 1) Zabbi Molla

(30 mss digitized)



Fig. 11 Wolkite, Zabi Molla library

Location: just outside the town of Wolkite and very easy to reach. The site is represented by the mosque and *zāwiya* founded by *Šayḥ* Muḥammad Rašād al-Qaṭī (founder of the *rašādiyya šūfī* order) and *Šayḥ* Kamal al-Dīn al-Ubbī (Ḥāḡḡ Badr al-Dīn Ibn Ḥāḡḡ Surūr Zabī al-Awwal Ubiyy). In the compound are included a library, in a separate building, and the house of the present guardian, Muḥammad Amīn, grandson of *zāwiya*'s founder (Figg. 11-16). Some huts for students are available to host people coming from outside not only for long period of study but also in the occasion of the annual Islamic festivals of which it was possible to obtain video records.



Fig. 12. Zabi Molla library inside





Fig. 13 Zabi Molla library



Fig. 14 Zabi Molla library



Fig. 15. Zabi Molla Mosque.



Fig. 16. Zabi Molla Cemetery



**Mss Collection:** The library is well furnished with Arabic printed books (some of them quite rare also outside Ethiopia) and some manuscripts. The most significant among these explains the tenets and the history of the *raṣādiyya* order (Fig. 17 – Ms Wolkite, Zabbi Molla 001, *Ḥulāṣa muḥtaṣar taḥrīr al-uṣūl wa-l-awrād fī dīkr tarāḡim aṣyāḥinā wa-l-asyād*, written by Badr al-Dīn b. al-Ṣayḥ Abī Muḥammad al-Ḥāḡḡ Muḥammad Surūr al-maʿrūf bi-Ubbī b. al-Ṣayḥ Muḥammad Baṣīr al-Zabbī al-Qabīnī al-Ṣāfiʿī al-Qādirī al-Raṣādī). The *ḥaḍra* is still considered and frequented as a religious centre and it's still used as a Coranic school. The possible institution of a public museum hosting the library in a more appropriate structure inside the *ḥaḍra* is considered by the present guardian as a possibility to improve his social position in the community.

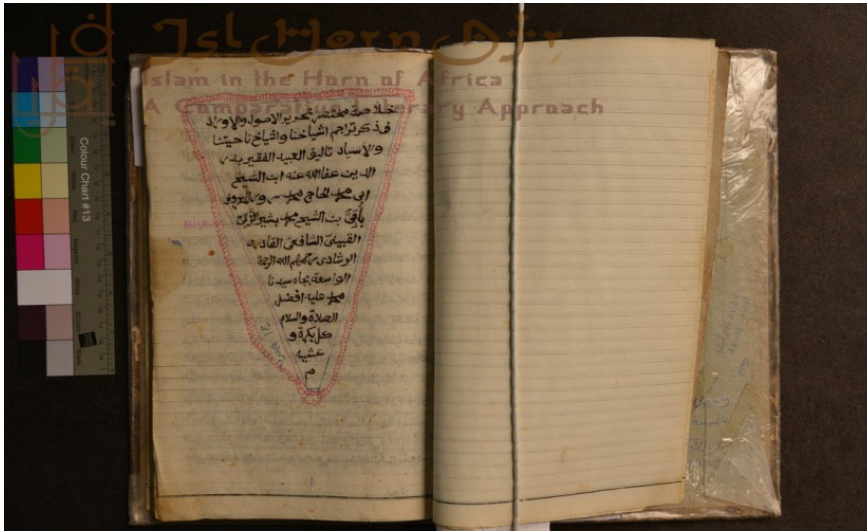


Fig. 17 – Ms Wolkite, Zabbi Molla 001 ff. 4v-5r, *Ḥulāṣa muḥtaṣar taḥrīr al-uṣūl wa-l-awrād fī dīkr tarāḡim aṣyāḥinā wa-l-asyād*, written by Badr al-Dīn b. al-Ṣayḥ Abī Muḥammad al-Ḥāḡḡ Muḥammad Surūr al-maʿrūf bi-Ubbī b. al-Ṣayḥ Muḥammad Baṣīr al-Zabbī al-Qabīnī al-Ṣāfiʿī al-Qādirī al-Raṣādī.

## 2) Seddeqa

(46 MSS digitized)<sup>4</sup>

**Location:** about 65 Km South-West from Wolkite; the last 10 Km are on a gravel road; at about 5 Km far from the *zāwiya* site, one of the bridge fell down so that the team had to climb the hill with mules that the local hosts, as a sign of great respect, sent downstream (Figg. 18 and 19). The site, its manuscript collection and its eponymous founder, Ṣayḥ ʿAlī b. ʿAbd al-Fataḥ (Fig. 20), born in Daro Labu, eastern Arsi in c. 1887, have been widely studied in a MA thesis by Kemal Ibrahim, one of the local scholar and collaborator of the team.<sup>5</sup> Ṣayḥ ʿAlī resided in Seddeqa in the years 1925-1935 after having studied in Arsi, Harar, Wallo (where he was initiated to the Qadiriyya order), Zabbi Molla (where he joined the Rasādiyya order) and Shiro; in these intellectual centres he studied *fiqh*, Arabic language, *tafsīr*, *ḥadīth*, rhetoric, theology and logic. Under his guidance Seddeqa became a major centre of Islamic teaching in Eastern Jimma attracting many students from different regions of Ethiopia, who became in their turn famous scholars (Figg. 21-22).

<sup>4</sup> It has to be underlined that some of the codicological units have been assembled according to arbitrary criteria in the last years.

<sup>5</sup> Kemal Ibrahim, *Catalogue of Manuscripts at the Seddeqiyu Mosque: Jimma Zone, Sokorru*, MA Thesis, School of Graduate Studies, Addis Ababa University, June 2012 (in particular ch. 3, pp. 35-49).



Fig. 18 Road to Seddeqa.



Fig. 19 The team riding mules on the road to Seddeqa.

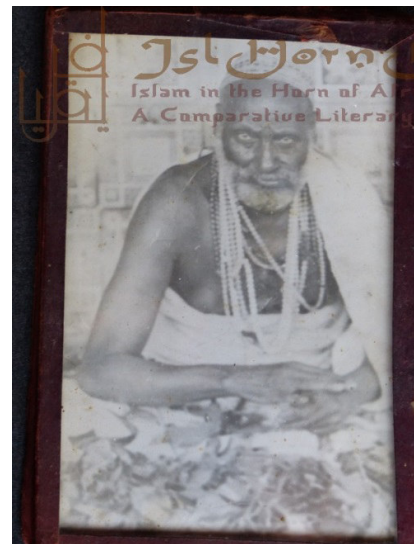


Fig. 20 Šayḥ ‘Alī b. ‘Abd al-Fataḥ Mus‘id al-Dīn Seddeqī.



Fig. 21 Seddeqa, the *muṣallā*



Fig. 22 Seddeqa, mosque



**Mss Collection:** the MSS collection is nowadays kept in the residence of the guardian of the *ḥaḍra*, Abbā Hikam Abbā Digga, grandson of *Šayḥ* ‘Alī and represents only the 40% of the original collection, the most part of which have been destroyed by fires in the last decades. Among the mss it's possible to find works of famous Muslim scholars on different subjects revealing the interests and knowledge of the *Šayḥ* in different fields. Also locally produced works are well represented, especially devotional literature, and works written by the *Šayḥ* himself. His works in poetry, for example, became popular among *šūfīs* of Jimma and Arsi, but he also compiled peculiar texts, hardly comprehensible and often provided with peculiar pictures and symbols, probably originated during his ecstatic mystical states (*fanāʾ*) (Fig. 23a-b).

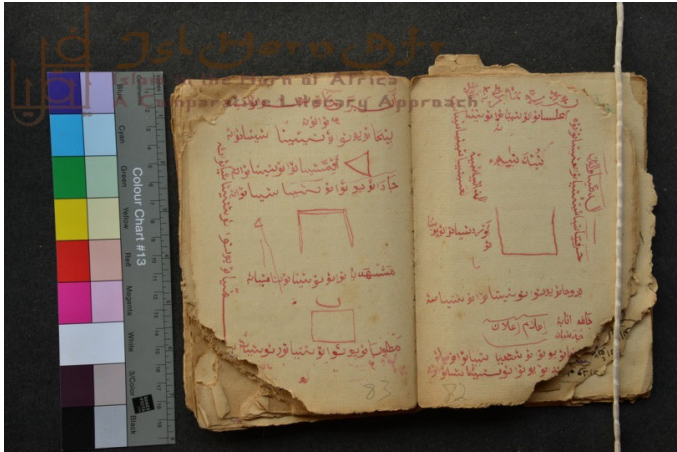


Fig. 23ab. *Šayḥ* ‘Alī’s text and pictures



Fig. 24 Seddeqa manuscripts



Fig. 25 Seddeqa, the elders gathering manuscript loose folios.

A big part of the collection is made of loose folios that are now cluttered up. During the first attempt to describe the collection, these loose folios were assembled according to controversial and blameworthy criteria; the previous cataloguer also pasted on papers and bindings sticky labels to record new signatures. After that a team of cultural heritage conservators from the Jimma *wäräda* went to see the collection and mixed up the folios again. The pictures taken during *IslHornAfr* project mission present the folios in the order in which they were found, because any attempt to recreate the original one is now very far from the success (Fig. 24-25).

### 3) Warukko

(52 MSS digitized)

Location: about 65 Km North-Est from Jimma. The *zāwiya* was allegedly founded in the eighteenth century by a local saint, Warukko, who is associated with the Islamization of the kingdoms of Gomma and Gumma. There the tomb of the founder and his descendants is located. A part of the manuscripts are preserved in the house of *Šayḥ* Nāšir, a descendant of Warukko. His house is situated on the main road, while the *zāwiya* is a couple of kilometres west from the main road and reachable with a short walk in the fields (Figg. 26-27). After a visit to the *zāwiya*, part of the manuscripts was brought to Jimma to be photographed, while the rest were then photographed in the custodian's house.

Mss collection: The *zāwiya* is still in use for devotional rituals and part of the manuscript collection is in fact represented by local devotional poems and songs which are available *in situ* for the believers (Fig. 28). Being the manuscripts still in use, they are well preserved apart from damages related to their handling and reading.





Fig. 26. Warukko, the mosque



Fig. 27 Warukko, *Šayḥ* Nāṣir and his half-sister in front of their forefather's shrine.

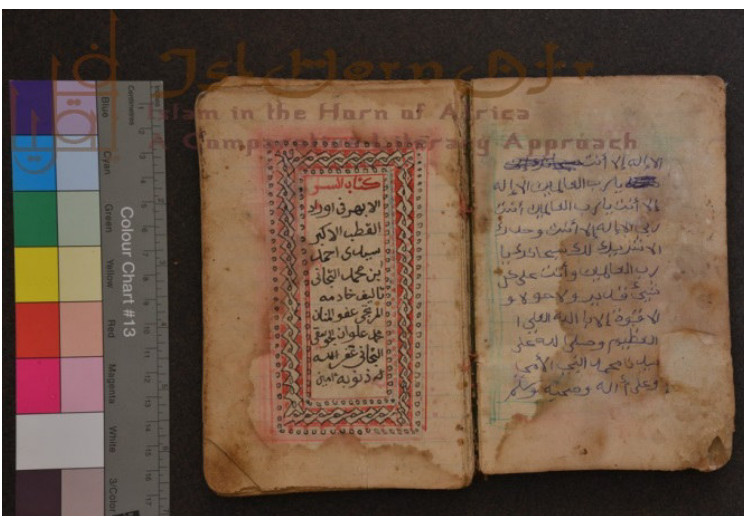


Fig. 28 Warukko, Ms Warukko010, ff. 6v-7r, *al-Sirr al-abhar fī awrād al-Quṭb al-Akbar Sayidī Aḥmad b. Muāammad al-Tiġānī*, written by Muḥammad ‘Alwān al-Ġawsiqī al-Tiġānī.



#### 4) Tije

(about 300 fragments, some of them entire quires)



Fig. 29 Tije, shrine of Šayḥutā Tije al-Qurārī (d. 1917).



left: Fig. 30 Michele Petrone and Kemal Ibrahim at work in Tije, custodian's residence.

above: Fig. 31 Tije, mosque

Location: about 50 Km North-Est from Jimma on paved road apart from the last couple of kilometres; it is very close to the town of Agaro. The mosque and the original intellectual centre around which the collection formed it's some hundreds meters far from the present guardian's house, Abbā Mecha Abbā Jobir, where the team worked (Fig. 30). The original place where the collection was previously kept includes the mosque and tomb (*qubba*) of the religious centre's eponym, Šayḥutā Tije al-Qurārī (d. 1917) (Figg. 29 and 31). He was a *tiḡānī* master who married Abbaa Jifaar II's (Muslim king of the Gibe Kingdom of Jimma, r. 1878–1932) sister and moved to Tije after 15 years where he founded an Islamic intellectual centre.





Fig. 32 Tije manuscripts

**Mss collection:** In Tije the conservation conditions of the collection are very critical: the manuscripts, in fact, have been kept for decades in an outer part of the mosque inside an iron box and are now reduced almost to crumbs (Fig. 32). Fortunately some bigger fragments are still readable and could hopefully be useful at least to identify the texts they contain, but a lot of information has been certainly lost forever. The paper fragments are now kept in plastic bags in the house of the present custodian and descendent of the local *ṣayḥ*, al-Qurārī. Although being almost completely in fragments, preliminary considerations allow to say that the manuscripts (and printed books) come from different parts of the Muslim world (Fig. 33), thus revealing interesting intellectual connections among distant regions.

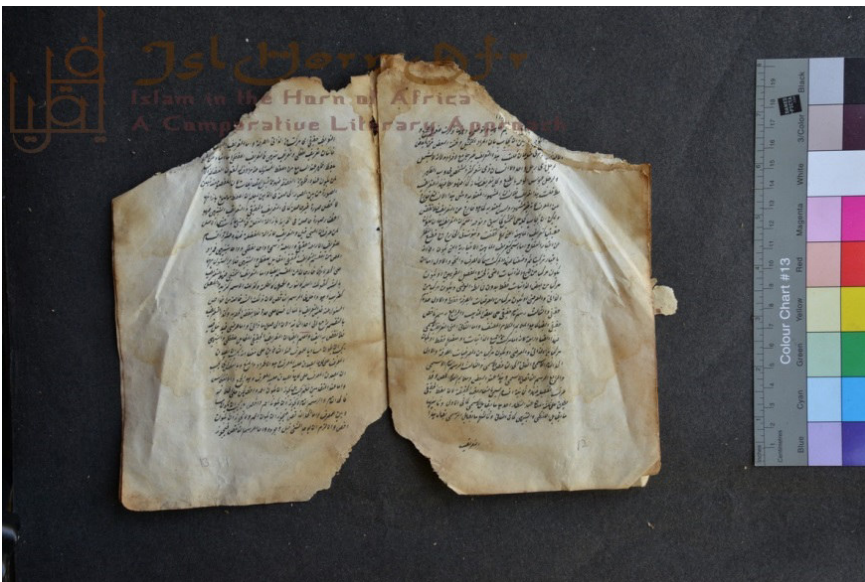


Fig. 33 Tije, ms loose folios in *nasta'liq* calligraphic style.

## 5) Suuse

(39 MSS digitized):

Location: about 45 Km far from Jimma on the same road to Agaro; quite easy to reach apart from the last part of the road that had to be walked through on foot. The manuscripts are nowadays kept in the residence of Muḥī al-Dīn Abbā Šayḥutā, descendant of Šayḥ Yūnus b. Sufyān eponym founder of this Muslim intellectual centre. The šayḥ was member of the *rašādiyya šūfī* order that he obtained from Aḥmad al-Ḥawī at the end of the 1950s. In Suuse the manuscripts are no longer used and the place where they are preserved is no longer a centre of Islamic cultural formation. The intent of the present custodian, is to keep alive his family tradition especially in terms of social prestige (Fig. 34).



Fig. 34. Suuse, Muḥī al-Dīn Abbā Šayḥutā with the manuscripts of his forefather, Šayḥ Yūnus b. Sufyān.

Mss Collection: The texts transmitted by Suuse MSS are mainly devotional poems locally produced; they dedicated to the local saints and show a quite vivid devotional practice. These MSS also show several documentary notes regarding Šayḥ Yūnus family and his community thus revealing interesting details not only about this venerated šayḥ but also about his social position inside his community and his relations with other communities. Among the MSS of this collection there are also linguistics works or scientific works in addition to the more common juridical works quite spread in the region (Fig. 35 – Ms SU0014, ff. 30v-31r, *Al-Kāfī fī ‘ilmī al-‘arūḍ wa-l-qawāfī*, written by al-Ḥawāṣṣ, Aḥmad b. ‘Ibād b. Ša‘īb al-Qinā‘ī, d. 858 H.). In the case of Suuse, the manuscripts are well preserved in their structures, also thanks to the operation of binding or re-binding made by Šayḥ Yūnis, but for this collection the problems of conservation depend most of all on their wrong storage conditions. At the arrival of the *IslHornAfr* team the mss were kept closed in plastic bags inside one of the building that had just been plastered with mud; the humidity of the place and the high temperature range, thus, had created condensation inside the bags with a high risk of mould and insects proliferation on the manuscripts' papers and bindings.





Fig. 35. Suuse, ms SU0014  
 ff. 30v-31r, *al-Kāfī fī 'ilma  
 al-arūd wa-l-qawāfī*,  
 written by al-Ḥawāṣṣ,  
 Aḥmad b. 'Ibād b. Ša'īb al-  
 Qinā'ī, dated 1343 H.

## 6) Limmu-Ennarea

**Location:** with regard to this manuscript collection, it was already known that the site was quite difficult to reach, but it was also documented that there was kept a great quantity of manuscripts and printed texts. During this first mission the team decided just to make a first survey to get acquainted with the site, and to determine the exact quantity and importance of the collection so that the text collection of Limmu can be included in the next mission, managing the organization with knowledge and awareness of the logistic difficulties that have to be faced. The present nearest accommodation solution is in Limmu - Gannat (around 50 Km South of Limmu-Ennarea); from there, it took about three hours to reach the site by car on gravel road and on foot (the last 4 km) in the wood and fields. Hopefully a new hotel, now under construction, will be ready for the next mission of *IslHornAfr* project and will allow the team to stay in the nearest town of Atnago. (Fig. 36)



Fig. 36 Limmu-Ennarea, mosque.

**Mss Collection:** the manuscripts and printed books were kept as museum pieces under the authority of the local present *šayḥ*, Šāliḥ ibn Bušra, and the majority of them are no longer in use for devotional practices, or copied for knowledge transmission even if the place still represent a lively Muslim educational centre (Fig. 37). They are preserved in a dozen wooden boxes inside a sort of storage building (Figg. 38 and 39) and show all the problems of this improper conservation, especially insect infestations and mould proliferations (Figg. 40 and 41). The importance of Limmu



as a crossroad of trading routes, thus the possibility to trace intellectual cross-regional links through the study of this collection, encourage to organize another specific field-research in this sites, that will hopefully be one of the aims of *IslHornAfr* project's next mission.



Fig. 37 Limmu, young students.



Fig. 38. Limmu-Ennarea, storehouse where manuscripts are kept.



Fig. 39. Limmu-Ennarea, *Šayḥ Šāliḥ ibn Bušra* (on the left) and people of Limmu with the wooden boxes full of manuscripts.





Fig. 40 Limmu-Ennarea, manuscripts and printed books inside the boxes.



Fig. 41 Limmu-Ennarea, manuscripts and printed books inside the boxes.

## Final remarks

It has to be taken into account that all the considerations about the literary material transmitted by the MSS of these collections are still a preliminary survey; sites and characters involved in the transmission of knowledge in this region of the Horn of Africa, underestimated until now by academic studies, will be the subject of further researches and studies also thanks to the description of this material in the *IslHornAfr* project literary data-base.

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**European Research Council**  
Established by the European Commission

