



IslHornAfr 6th Field Mission Report

Awsa (ET), 2017



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I. INTRODUCTION

I.1 – The Environment

The sixth field mission of the project *Islam in the Horn of Africa* has developed in the Eastern Ethiopian region of Awsa, name that specifically indicates the area East of the city of Asayta, where the Awaš river ends; it is an area permanently covered by three main lakes, the Gamarri, Abbe, and Afambo, which also gives name to the nearby sedentary settlement. Awsa is the richest area of 'Afar region thanks to the permanent water supply from the river Awaš, along which it was possible to develop sedentary agricultural activities (especially sorghum, cotton and corn); in the other areas people still practice the traditional seminomadic pastoralism, especially of camels, cows and goats'.



Fig. 1: The river Awaš in one of its canals near Lake Afambo

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¹ Didier MORIN, *Dictionnaire historique afar* (1288-1982), Paris, Karthala, pp. 63-65.



Fig. 2: A canal with a sluice to control the water flow in the peripheral areas.

The difference in economy and social organization between peoples living along the shores of the river and the ones settled in the arid peripheral areas is clearly shown by the different kinds of house typical of the region. Along the shores of the Awaš and its canals is common to find houses made of a wooden framework of bent sticks, with the roof and part of the walls thatched with grass.



Fig. 3: A typical hut and dwelling in a cultivated area near Lake Afambo.

People who have to move in search of grazing for their animals, instead, live in dwellings that have to be quickly built and dismantled, and at the same time easily transportable. They have the shape of small cupolas and are made of bent boughs on which mats of palm fibre are fixed. The lower part is often

covered with plastic tarpaulin as a protection from dust and sand; they have only one small entrance and no windows. A certain numbers of this kind of tents belonging to the same enlarged family, is usually grouped together in a circle in the middle of which the animals are protected overnight. The entire compounds are usually surrounded by thorn twigs or stones. 'Afar people can also temporary inhabit stone dwellings during their transhumance in search of grazing, but they are only scattered along the cliff of the highlands.



Fig. 4: 'Afar compound on the road between Semera and Asayta.



Fig. 5: 'Afar compound with stone dwelling along the road between $\ref{eq:compound}$

The area, as the entire 'Afar Depression, is particularly unstable from a geological point of view, as a consequence of the plate tectonic involving movements of the African and Arabian shields. The landscape is dominated by volcanic features and activities, with points in which the magma lies close to the surface and points in which the flowing of lava is frequent².



Fig. 5: The evidence of a previous lava flow.



Fig. 6: The arid and stony landscape between Dikhil (DJ) and the border with Ethiopia.

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² Geoffrey LAST, "Afar Depression", *EAe*, I, pp. 119-122.

The depression has long been a salt deposit; it was largely exported since the Antiquity, especially by Muslim 'Afars, and it also played a role as currency.³ The presence of salt deposits has attracted the interests of foreign powers, especially in the last half century, and foreign extraction stations, especially Chinese, have been established in the last decades.





Figg. 7a-b: The salt surfacing on the ground and its traditional transportation.

I.2 – The Historical Setting

In addition and prior to the geographic region, the name Awsa indicates the most ancient 'Afar subgroup who established a flourishing sultanate in the region in the 18^{th} - 19^{th} century. This was also known

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³ Wolbert SMIDT, "Salt", *EAe*, 4, pp. 500-503.

as 'Afar Sultanate, as it was recognised by the other rulers as the dominant among the principalities of the region. The modern Awsa Sultanate historically developed from the previous Awsa Imamate, established in 1577, when Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm Gāsa, of the family of Imām Aḥmad Ibrāhīm al-Ġāzī Grañ, moved the capital of 'Adal Sultanate from Harar to the Eastern region of the lakes, in the town of Farfara, because of the growing Oromo pressure. The origins and historical phases of the 'Afar group are also reflected in the identification of their name to that of 'Adal, and the definition of their language as adalañña.⁴

There are no written sources related to the history of the region before that date, but, according to genealogies and oral sources, it is possible to trace a brief sketch of the history of the region and the its reflection on the present people of Awsa.⁵ The introduction of sedentary agriculture in Awsa is attributed to the Haralla group who moved to the region into two different waves of migrations: the first one starting from the 13th-14th c. and the second from the 16th c. following the *imām* Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm Gāsa. When the second wave of migration reached Awsa, the group had to face the already established power of the first Haralla settled in the region, rulers of the land, and the Arab *imāms* Dardōra. The latter had replaced the family of Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm Grañ of Balaw origin and maintained a real power at least from 1628 to 1750, when the last Arab *imām*, Salmān, was killed by a coalition of Haralla and Mōdayto. But the political power emerging in Awsa, was not able to maintain the historical territory that was previously under the authority of 'Adal: the main losses were Zayla', passed under the control of Mokha in 1630, and Harar that, starting from 1647, recognised the authority of independent emirs. Also the two principalities of Tadjoura (Tagórri) and Raḥaytó, just beyond the present Eritrean border, became independent sultanates.⁶

From 1750 the Ḥaralla Muḥammad Dūs is mentioned in the chronicles with the title of $r\bar{a}$ 'is, testifying that the political predominance of this group above the other.

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⁴ Didier MORIN, Poésie Traditionelle des Afars, Paris, Peeters, 1997, p. 9.

⁵ *Id.*, *Dictionnaire Historique*, *op.cit.*, pp. 174-175.

⁶ For this historical period (in particular from 999 to 1030 AH) see the sources edited by Cerulli and related to the sack of Zayla', expeditions against Awsa, internal conflicts among the rulers, 'Afar expedition against Oromo, geological phenomena in the region (Enrico CERULLI, "Documenti Arabi per la storia d'Etiopia", in Enrico CERULLI, *L'Islam di ieri e di oggi*, Roma, Istituto per l'Oriente, 1971, pp. 173-197). For the period of the *imāms*, see MORIN, *Dictionnaire historique*, *op. cit.*, pp. 65-67.

The following period is signed by the struggle for the control of the Awaš valley between the two coalitions, the Red and the White. In 1834, with the battle of Darmá, the Modaytó, of the Red coalition, took control over Awsa; this group was originally from the mountainous region north of Obock (Djibuti) and arrived in Awsa at the beginning of the 18th c. and, once they took the power, repeatedly had clashes with the more ancient groups settled in the region. It was after the defeat of Darmá and the arising of Maḥámmad "Illálta", in 1865, that the group of the Ḥaralla was splitted into two branches: the Dardortí were the responsible of the land irrigation (with the title of $badd\acute{a}$ -h $abb\acute{a}$), while the religious power was reserved to the Kabirto branch of the clan. Between 1912 and 1917, Yāyyò, son of Muḥammad Illalta, came to power and led a de facto semi-independent sultanate. Under his son's leadership 'Afar obtained economical prosperity thanks to its cattle trading with the Italian colonial army, but this collusion was the official reason why the *sulṭān* was dismissed by the Emperor Ḥaylä Śəllase I and replaced by the sulțān's cousin 'Alī Miráḥ Hanfare. After the nationalization of the lands imposed by the Därg regime, the latter tried to organize an armed resistance movement claiming the foundation of a Great 'Afar Nation but he was pushed to flee to Saudi Arabia with a condemn of exile. By the time the Sultan fled Ethiopia, 'Afar revolt against the regime founded the Afar Liberation Front. He could come back to Ethiopia only after the falling of the regime in 1991, but from that moment he had not official political position, only holding a role of political leader within the 'Afar community. He died in 2011 and was succeeded by his son, who took part in the political scene for the revendication of autonomy of the 'Afar People.9

Within the 'Afar people of Awsa, three main sub-groups have emerged for their contribution to the religious and intellectual life of the region. During this field mission the team had the opportunity to come across the manuscript collection of two of them, namely the Ḥarallā, including both its Kabirto and the Dardortí branches, and the Kādīto clan who founded an important centre of traditional learning in

⁷ Id., "Mōdaytó", EAe, 3, p.984; Id., Poésie Traditionelle des Afars, p. 15.

⁸ Id., Dictionnaire Historique Afar (1288-1982), p. 177.

⁹ Kassim Shehim, "Ethiopia, Révolution and the Question of the Nationalities: the Case of the Afar", in *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 23/2 (1985), p. 331-348; Sarah Vaughan, *Ethnicity and Power in Ethiopia*, PhD Thesis, University of Edimburgh, 2003.

Đāle, one Km South from Asayta, the old capital of the 'Afar Sultanate. The third sub-group is represented by the Šayhak-Šarīfa, whose history and intellectual heritage remain so far unexplored¹⁰.

II. MISSION PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION

II.1 - Status of the Studies and Identification of the Collections' Sites

Important contributions to the history of 'Afar have been given by Didier Morin in his *Dictionnaire historique afar* (1288-1982)". Regarding the Ḥarallā clan and its sub-groups Kabirto and Kādīto, that have been the main focus of the field mission, he based his investigations on oral sources and on a written source that he edited, a chronicle known as *Chronique de l'Awsa*. The text is ascribed by Morin to šaylı Ğīlānī b. ḥāǧǧ Ḥamza b. Maḥmūd b. Kabīr Ḥamza (1908—1973). It concerns the history of the region between 1727 and 1873 (1140-1290 H.) and the struggles for the power among the different clans in Awsa. The importance and reliability of the text are mainly based on the fact that its author is a member of the Ḥarallā tribe, of the Kabirto branch, directly involved in the political history of Awsa. 12

Didier Morin also devoted his academic interest to the literary tradition of the 'Afar people, but his publications deal almost exclusively with the oral literature, in particular on the 'Afar *gad*, "poetry", that is usually performed in 'Afar language (it includes Arab passages especially if it deals with religious matters). The *gad* covers different genres, from the religious, to the profane, the war-related, the ones related to magical practices etc.¹³. In his analysis of this kind of poetry, Morin underlines that its structure is inspired by two different models: from one hand it is directly linked to the classical Arabic model of the

¹⁰ MOHAMMED IDRISS MOUSSA, *The Kādīto Clan and Their Library: Islamic Literature and Knowledge in Awsa ('Afar*), BA Thesis, Addis Ababa University, School of Graduated Studies, Addis Ababa, 2012, p. 28.

ⁿ If not clearly mentioned, the bibliographical references of this contribution refer to the first edition (Paris, Khartala, 2004); Nouvelle édition augmentée, Paris, Khartala, 2015.

The text has been edited and translated in the second edition of the *Dictionnaire historique afar*, Annexe II, pp. 395-422, where Morin also gives account of partial reproductions of the same text; see also MORIN, *Dictionnaire historique*, pp. 67-70; *Id.*, *Poésie des Afars*, p. 55, note 1. Another witness of the same text has been found during the 2017 *IslHornAfr* field Mission (see *infra*).

¹³ Loren F. BLIESE, "Afar songs", in Northeast Africa Studies, 4/3 (1982-1983), pp. 51-76; MORIN, Poésie Traditionelle Des Afars.

qaṣīda, in particular in its rhyming scheme and prosody; on the other hand, its typical internal repetitions recall the textual features of invocations¹⁴. A direct inspiration to the classical Arabic poetry is evident in the examples of this poetical production that have been transmitted in written form. The only written example of this kind of text given by Morin is particularly meaningful to us as it is attributed to one of the most prolific characters of the Kabirto clan, šayḥ Kabīr Ḥamza b. Kabīr Maḥmūd b. Kabīr 'Alī (d. 1863), known also as Kabīr Ḥandà. It shows an excerpt of a poetical composition in which the rhyming scheme and the internal rhythm are evident even in the organization of the page space¹⁵. In the collections digitized this kind of text in 'ağamī ('Afar in Arabic script) is instead quite frequent especially among the manuscript heritage of the Kabirto clan.

Other attestations of literary production of 'Afar people in Arabic language and/or in Arab script are in the volume devoted to *The Writings of the Muslim Peoples of Northeastern Africa* of the series *Arabic Literature of Africa*. Three authors seem in fact to be somehow related to 'Afar region. One is an "adopted" 'Afar, Ğamal al-Dīn b. Ibrāhīm b. Halīl al-Šāmī (d. 1st Šawwal 1370/28th March 1961): his family, of Ethiopian origin, claimed to descend originally from the famous *ṣūfī* saint 'Abd al-Qādir al-Ğīlānī. Ğamāl al-Dīn's father on his way back from Macca where he had proceeded in religious studies, settled in Tī'o, on the 'Afar coast of Erithrea, where he was appointed *qādī* for the 'Afar tribes. From a manuscript source found in the collection of the Kabirto family in Balbala (DJ) ¹⁶ we know that Kabīr 'Abd al-Qādir b. Ḥamza b. Maḥmūd b. Kabīr Ḥamza (d. 1344 H) met Ibrāhīm b. Halīl al-Šāmī on his way to Mecca in 1326 H. The latter wrote a book of prayers and poems in praise of the Prophet, while a documentary study with the title *Manhal fī taʾrīḥ wa-aḥbār al-ʿAfar* is attributed to his son, Ğamāl al-Dīn¹. The work has been published in Cairo, then translated in Amharic and published in Adddis Ababa in 2007 (Bādis T'rat Atāmwočč Tatāmā).

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 54 et seq.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 212-214.

¹⁶ DJBL00039, ff. 63-65, *Tarğama Kabīr 'Abd al-Qādir b. Ḥamza b. Maḥmūd*, by 'Alī Ibn al-ḥāǧǧ Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Aḥmadī.

¹⁷ ALA3, pp. 10-11.

Another known author, this of 'Afar origin, is 'Abd al-Rāziq al-Tağurrī al-Dankalī, thus from Djibuti. He also wrote devotional poems in praise of the Prophet and of different *šuyūḫ*, among which 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Aḥmad al-Zayla'ī (1820-1882 AD)¹⁸.

The historical study $Manhal fi ta'r\bar{l}h wa-ahb\bar{a}r al-'Afar$ has also been the main source for the BA thesis compiled by Mohammed Idriss Moussa on the Kādīto 'Afar group, whose manuscript heritage has been digitized during the field mission '9. His dissertation confirmed the oral information related to the history of the clan and collected during the field mission of the project through an interview to the present $q\bar{a}q\bar{l}$ of the Mosque of $\bar{\Phi}$ ale, where the clan settled and founded its teaching centre specializing in $fiqh^{20}$. In his dissertation the author also compiled a first inventory of the manuscripts kept there in 2012.

II.2 - Logistic Organization

Starting from November 2015 large-scale protests swept throughout Ethiopia. The protests occurred against a background of lacking political space for the ethnic groups who are not represented in the ruling coalition. In particular concerns about the government's proposed expansion of the municipal boundary of the capital, generated widespread protests across Oromia, and involved also Amhara region from July 2016. Ethiopian security forces cracked-down on these demonstrations, killing more than 500 people according to Human Rights Watch's report. In October 2016, following the destruction of some government buildings and private property by youths, the government announced a six-month countrywide state of emergency (till the end of March), which substantially reduce the possibility of access and movements of foreigners inside the country.

The conditions of the state of emergency were partly reduced so that it was possible to schedule a mission of three weeks in the month of February. Nonetheless the political situation remained quite sensitive and it was evident that foreigners with photographic equipment such the one we use to digitize

¹⁸ ALA₃, pp. 86-87.

¹⁹ MOHAMMED IDRISS MOUSSA, The Kādīto Clan and their Library (op.cit.).

²⁰ This specialization in juridical sciences is evidently connected to the name of the clan; the most important $q\bar{a}d\bar{l}$ of the region were in fact descendants of that group or formed in Dāle.

the manuscript material would have undergone extra controls and interviews of the security forces²¹. As a peripheral area, Awsa remained quite isolated from the main protests, but to avoid the most critical areas and routes the team decided to enter the country by car from Djibouti were the researchers had scheduled to work on a manuscript collection in Tadjoura²².

The sites to be visited had been previously identified thanks to 'Alawī 'Abd al-Ṣamad, of the Kabirto branch of the Ḥaralla, who holds part of the manuscripts collection of his family in Balbala (DJ)²³. He guided the team in Awsa and introduced the researchers to his family members mainly residing in the area of Afambo²⁴.

'Alawī 'Abd al-Ṣamad also played as intermediary with the present higher representative of the Kādīto clan in Đāle, thanks to his socially recognized position, and organized a visit to the mosque obtaining the permission to digitize the manuscript collection still kept there.

While the collections of the Ḥaralla groups (Kabirto and Dardortì) are preserved in the private houses of the clan members as private inheritance of the family branches, and are no more used as teaching or devotional media, what remains of the collection of Đāle is still preserved in the mosque; also in this case, the intellectual and formative centre, which was especially devoted to the study of fiqh, is no more in activity. The old residence of the local šayh and the students' lodgings have been reduced to ruins by the Därg Regime in the 1970s; the original mosque demands heavy restoring interventions.

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²¹ A list of the technical equipment is given in Sara FANI, "IslHornAfr 1st Field Mission Report" (= "First Mission to Ethiopia Report" http://islhornafr.eu/mission1.html) and in *id.*, "IslHornAfr 3rd Field Mission Report" (= "First Mission in Djibouti report", http://islhornafr.eu/publ.html.

²² See "IslHornAfr 5th Field Mission Report" (*ivi*).

²³ See Sara FANI, "IslHornAfr 3rd Field Mission Report", cit.

²⁴ See the complete map of *IslHornAfr* missions at https://goo.gl/6hGYin.





Figg. 8a-b: Đāle, the ruins of the Aḥmad Kabīr's residence and the interior of the mosque.

III. BOOK COLLECTIONS IDENTIFIED AND DIGITIZED

III.1 – The Ḥarallā of Afambo (Kabirto and Dardortí)

The first part of the field work was focused on the area around Asayta, the old capital of the 'Afar Sultanate, and in particular on the zone of Afambo (known as Eboba), on the Awaš river, where most of the Kabirto are settled. The team could visit six different sites, each corresponding to a compound where a part of the bigger Ḥarallā group is settled, in which manuscript collections of different size are

preserved by the clan elders. Traditionally it is believed that Kabīr Ḥamza has given custody of his manuscript collection splitting it among his eight sons who founded eight different teaching centres. The first collection was kept in the house of Šayḫ Yā Sīn b. Šayḫ Ğīlānī b. Ḥāǧǧ Ḥamza. In the site 17 codicological unities have been identified, mostly represented by loose folios and fragments. Most of them have been copied by the present custodian's father, Šayḫ Ğīlānī (1908-1973).



Fig. 9: Šayh Yā Sīn b. Šayh Ğīlānī b. Ḥāǧǧ Ḥamza and his manuscripts.

The second collection is nowadays under the responsibility of Ḥamza b. Maḥmūd b. Ḥāǧǧ Ḥamza; he is a young man (around 35), right cousin of the above mentioned Šayḫ Yā Sīn b. Šayḫ Ğīlānī, both descending from Kabīr Ḥamza's son Maḥmūd. The compound is called Masǧid Maḥaḍrā, as it developed around an old mosque, now dismissed; a mention of it is found in a manuscript from Balbala (DJ) collection, digitized during the field mission in February 2016²⁵. In this case the manuscripts have been presented to

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²⁵ See DJBL0039, f. 64.

the team in wooden boxes and in better conservation conditions then the previous collection. This one consists of 15 units among which are also printed books.



Fig. 10: Ḥamza b. Maḥmūd b. Ḥāǧǧ Ḥamza and Michele Petrone in the digitizing set.

A part of the manuscript heritage of this branch of the family, descending from Maḥmūd b. Ḥāǧǧ Ḥamza, is also kept by Yā Sīn b. Maḥmūd b. Ḥāǧǧ Ḥamza, elder brother of the afore mentioned Ḥamza. In particular Yā Sīn is the depositary of a copy of the famous work *Tanbīh al-Anām*, with a *waqf* attestation dated 1263/1847.



Fig. 11: Manuscript AFYN0001, colophon and final waqfiyya dated 1263/1847.

The fourth collection digitized is kept by Ayfaraḥ b. Ḥamza b. 'Abd al-Bārī b. Ġazālī b. al-Ḥāǧǧ 'Abd al-Bārī b. Kabīr Ḥamza, thus descendant of Ḥāǧǧ 'Abd al-Bārī's branch of the Kabirto and not the Maḥmūd b. Kabīr Ḥamza's. The ownership statements on the manuscripts show that they were property of the present custodian's father, Ḥamza b. 'Abd al-Bārī. Some of the manuscripts of this collection, which counts a total of 10 units, are quite old, dating to the middle of the 19th century.



Fig. 12: The digitizing set in Ayfaraḥ b. Ḥamza b. 'Abd al-Bārī's compound.

The custodian of the last collection of the Kabirto branch of the clan is Kamāl b. Qamar al-Tawḥīd b. Ḥamza b. Qamar al-Tawḥīd b. Kabīr Ḥamza, descendant of the lineage through another son of Kabīr Ḥamza, Qamar al-Tawḥīd.



 $Fig.\ 13: Sara\ Fani\ with\ the\ custodians\ of\ the\ Kabirto\ manuscript\ heritage\ (on\ her\ right\ is\ `Alaw\bar{\ }\ `Abd\ al-\bar{\ }\ Abd\ al-\bar{\ }\ Abd\$

Most of the manuscripts of the mentioned collections contain devotional texts, the majority composed by members of the Kabirto clan, especially by Kabīr Ḥamza, who seems to be the most prolific among them. The transmission of these texts developed within the family itself, being generally copied by descendants of the authors. The genealogies of the Kabirto and Dardorti branches of the Ḥarallā clan are transmitted in colophons and notes of the manuscript collections from Djibouti²⁶ and Awsa²⁷. The distinction of the social role between the two branches is well reflected by the genre of literature collected and preserved: devotional compositions for the branch of the Kabirto, and historical texts for the Dardortì branch. The last collection digitized of the Ḥarallā group, in fact, is that of 'Umar Ḥabīb Yāsīn (present baddà-h abbà, of the Dardortì branch of the Ḥarallā clan) and, even if it is a limited collection by number, reveals to be very interesting for the documentary and historical texts contained. Among them is a copy of the already mentioned *Chronique de l'Awsa*; it shows an ownership statement of the chief (ra'īs) of the Ḥarallā and their šayḥ Ḥabīb b. Ḥāǧǧ Yāsīn b. Dā'ūd b. Bit'a, father of the present baddà-h abbà.²⁸



 $Fig. \ 14: Manuscript \ AFUHooo4, \ explicit \ and \ ownership \ statement. \ Chronique \ de \ l'Awsa.$

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 $^{^{26}}$ See the Report of Isl HornAfr $3^{\rm rd}$ Field Mission

²⁷ See the Appendix for a reconstruction of the genealogy.

²⁸ AFUH0004, f. 13v.

Among the texts collected by the Dardortì branch, a new historical source has also been retrieved during the field mission²⁹. It refers to the genealogy of the family and to their migration to Awsa, their territorial expansion in search of grazing and to the war arisen against the Awsa people. The text confirms that they dried the lake which in the time of their arrival occupied the region of Awsa, to farm³⁰. The lineage from the Ḥaralla tribe is well attested in this text: the name of the tribe is given in the two variants Ḥarallā and Ḥarla that in the text are reported by a certain Yūsuf, collector of the mosque of Šayḥ Ādam which is situated at the border of Yemen, on the seaport of Moḥā. The eponymous founder of the clan, Ḥarallā, is said to have three brothers: all their children scattered between Awsa, Harar, and Berbera. Going back to the ancestors of the clan, a forefather of Ḥarallā, Dārūt, eponymous founder of the famous Somali tribe of the Darood, is said to be from Mecca in the text, and then to have moved to Zayla'. His father was the well known Ismā'īl b. Ibrāhīm al-Ğabartī, from Zabīd, whose ancestors are believed to descend directly from the Banū Hašim and the Qurayš.



²⁹ AFUH0003.

 $^{^{\}rm 30}$ MORIN, $Diction naire\ historique$, pp. 174-175.

Fig. 15: Manuscript AFUH0003, f. 1r, ownership statement and doxologies.

The Kabirto and the Dardortì, descendants of the Ḥarallā, seem to consider themselves 'Afar and speak 'Afar language, so it's somehow surprising to see in their genealogy the presence of the ancestor of one of the major Somali clan. In the *Chronicle of 'Amdä Ṣəyon* (14^{th} century) the Ḥarlā are mentioned as an independent and sedentary population. In the *Futūḥ al-Habaša*, many names of Ḥarlā's clans are still understandable in 'Afar and the group is always distinguished from the Somali, so it is possible to suppose that their integration in the Somali lineage is later than the 16^{th} century (date of the redaction of the Futūh).

III.2 - The Kādīto of Đāle

According to the oral sources, the area of Đāle has been founded by the Kādīto clan at the end of the 19th century. It was originally a shrubby, flooded and inhospitable area and was believed to be the dwelling of *ğinns*, remaining inhabited for a long time. The sources report that *sulṭān* Ḥanfare Aydāḥis (Illalta I), who reigned in the years 1862-1896, accepted to grant to Ḥāǧǧ Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir, ancestor of the Kādīto clan, a piece of land after the land of his first settlement in Wayyīrā (Awsa) had dried up. When the *sulṭān* asked him to decide where he wanted to settle, Ḥāǧǧ Muḥammad chose the so-called "Hill of the *ğinns*" (Ginni Kōma) arousing the astonishment of the chief, who eventually accorded that land to him and his family. At that time Ḥāǧǧ Muḥammad should have already been a master as the sources report that he was followed in the new compound by his students. A *waqf* of fertile land next to the first settlement was specifically given by the *sulṭān* for the accommodation of the non-local students who could stay in the compound of the mosque built on the top of the hill. The entire area became famous for its traditional Islamic teaching centre with the new name of Đāle, "stony".



Fig. 16: The mosque of Đāle.

Part of the genaology of the clan, starting from Abū Šawārib, the ancestor of the Kādīto, through Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Qādir, the founder of Đāle, to Muḥammad b. Aḥamad b. Yā Sīn, the present district $q\bar{a}d\bar{t}$ in Awsa, has been reconstructed by Mohammed Idriss Mousa and his thesis remain the only reference on the history of the Kādīto. Some details regarding the genealogy are worth to be mentioned. The ancestor Abū Šawārib, lived at the time of $im\bar{a}m$ Aḥmad Grañ. The different sources do not agree about his origin and life: according to Ğamāl al-Dīn and Hāšim's work, he was born in Tadjoura, DJ, then he moved to Harar to participate to the $\check{g}ih\bar{a}d$ (half of the 17^{th} century). He returned from Harar and established in Tadjoura where he died and was buried. According to the oral sources interviewed he was instead born in Upper Egypt (Qalqašandiyya), having South Arabian origins, and never moved to Harar, but to Mecca and Yemen. He established in Tadjoura where he became renowned for his qualities of great scholar and for his missionary activity. He finally arrived to Awsa during the time of Imām Salmān (d. 1750) of the Dardōra dynasty and married his daughter, but then he was accused by his father in law to support Datá Kadḍāfó of the Aydāḥissó fraction of the Mōdaytó. He returned to Tadjoura as he discovered Imām Salmān's plan to murder him.³¹

³¹ The second version of his biography seems to be more plausible, as the characters mentioned lived around the middle of the 18th century, and in fact only two generations separate Abū Šawārib from Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir, who lived during the reign of *sultān* Hanfare Aydāhis Illalta I (r. 1862-1896).

It is important to notice that even if the clan has more recent origin in comparison with the Kabirto and Šayḫak-Šarīfa (traditionally followers of the Ḥanafi madhab), they introduce Šāfiʻī madhab in 'Afar which became the most spread juridical school among scholars who studied in Đāle. The role of $q\bar{a}d\bar{a}$ of the district passed from one member of the clan to the other until the present time, in which it is covered by our informant $\check{s}ayh$ Muḥammad Aḥmad Yā Sīn al-Awsī (b. 1955)³². Through their social position, the Kādīto could also lead the community according to Islamic morality and principles gradually eliminating the traditional practices of the local pre-Islamic period. The clan also contributed to the economic life of the community by developing new agricultural methods and tolls³³.



Fig. 17: Šayh Muḥammad Aḥmad Yā Sīn al-Awsī present $q\bar{a}d\bar{\iota}$ at the Afambo District.

 32 For further information on the clan members see Mohammed Idriss Moussa, *The Kādīto Clan and their Library, op. cit.*, pp. 22-28.

22

³³ Ibid., pp. 30-32.



Fig. 18: Digitizing station inside the mosque of $\bar{\text{Dale}}$.

The manuscripts identified in the library of Đāle Mosque (8 units), are clearly less in number then the ones seen by Mohammed Idriss Moussa in 2012 (25 units). Their conditions have got worse as it happened for the conditions of the entire building. The collection consists of manuscripts copied by members of the clan (especially the juridical ones, used for teaching) as well as scribes from different groups and regions.

APPENDIX: ḤARALLĀ GENEAOLOGY

