

Soxna Maam Jaaratul Laahi Buso

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In the name of Allah, The Merciful, The Beneficent.

Peace and blessings be upon Prophet Muhammad, his family,

his companions, his servant, and all Muslims.

This is a summary of Soxna Maam Jaara Buso's life story. Her name at birth is Maryama Buso, Jaaratul Laahi. She was born in 1833 in Gollore, a village in Fuuta, Senegal.¹ Her father's name is Sëriñ Muhammadu Buso² ibn Muhammadu Amaad ibn Aliyyu Buso. They are of Shurafa lineage whose origin can be traced back to Imam Hasan, son of Aliyyu, son of Abu Bakrin,³ up to Fatimatu Zahra,⁴ daughter of the Prophet of God [Muhammad], peace be upon her. Those are [Soxna Maam Jaara Buso's] ancestors. Her mother Soxna Astu Waalo Mbakke⁵ was learned.

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She used to teach the Quran and various Islamic sciences, especially disciplines dealing with *Tawhid* [Unicity of God] and Sufism. Yet, she was unknown to many people in Africa. She taught the Noble Quran and all Islamic religious sciences to Soxna Maam Jaara Buso Jaaratul Laahi, who handwrote an entire copy of the Quran when she was fourteen years old. She was respectful and pious from her

¹ *Soxna Maam Jaara Buso* is also spelled *Sokbna Mame Diarra Bousso*. She has several nicknames such as *Jaaratu Laahi* that is also spelled as *Diaratou Laahi* (The neighbor of God), and *Maryama Buso* that is spelled as *Mariama Bousso*. Her village of birth is *Gollore* or *Golloré*, which is located in the region of Fouta that corresponds to the present-day region of Podor in Northern Senegal.

² *Sëriñ Muhammadu Buso* is also spelled *Serigne Mouhamadou Bousso*.

³ *Abu Bakrin* is also spelled *Aboubakrine* or *Abū Bakr*. Here the author or scribe may have mistakenly replaced *Abi Ṭalib*, the father of *Aliyyu* (*ʿAlī* in Arabic) with *Abū Bakr*, the companion of Prophet Muhammad.

⁴ *Fatimatu Zahra* is also spelled as *Fatima al-Zabrā* ou *Fatimatou*.

⁵ She is also known as *Soxna Astu Waalo Mbakke*, *Sokbna Astou Walo Mbacké*, or *Asta Walo*.

early age throughout her adult life. Hence her nickname *Jaaratul Laabi* or *Neighbor of God*. She was very dedicated to her religious duties and was fully vested in all domestic matters. Her husband, Sëriñ Maam Mor Anta Sali Mbakke⁶ ran a large Quranic school. Students from all horizons came to the school to study religious sciences. Soxna Jaara has provided a model of how women should behave toward their husbands, showing them respect and providing them assistance as needed

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in order to give birth to notable children. It is said that: "She never prayed or touched her prayer beads without ablutions. The Book [Quran] was her favorite topic of conversation. She has defeated Satan." She was well-mannered and hardworking, which paid off as God granted her a son, Sëriñ Tuubaa Xaadimu Rassul,⁷ the Spiritual Pole of the Century. She was of discreet nature, and frequently talked about the noble characters of righteous people that she emulated. Sëriñ Basiiru Mbakke⁸ substantiated this in his book *Minanul Baaxil Khadim* [Autobiography of Ahmadu Bamba]. Sëriñ Tuubaa, our Shaykh Ahmadu Mbakke stated the following: "I am sincerely grateful to Soxna Maryama Buso Jaraatu Laahi who raised me in my childhood with dignity and respect." This is a significant statement. This is the reason why Sëriñ Mbay Jaxate⁹ wrote the following: "Rejoice Lady

⁶ *Sëriñ Maam Moor Anta Sali Mbakke* or *Serigne Mame Mor Anta Sali Mbacké* (1814-1880) was a Quranic and religious sciences teacher. He also served as judge and advisor to the Wolof king *Lat Joor Joob* (1842-1886).

⁷ *Sëriñ Tuubaa Xaadimu Rassul* is also known as *Serigne Touba Khadimou Rassoul* or *Sëriñ Tuubaa* which is also spelled as *Sëriñ Tuubaa* ou *Serigne Touba* (*The Master of Touba*).

⁸ *Sëriñ Bassiru Mbakke* or *Serigne Bassirou (Bachir) Mbacké* (1885-1966), is one of the sons of Ahmadu Bamba (also spelled *Ahmadu Bamba Mbacké*). He is the author of the famous biography of Bamba in Arabic: *Minanul Baaxil Khadim fi Siratul Shaykhil Khadim* (*The Blessings of the Eternal or the Biography of Shaykhul Khadim*) translated in French by Khadim Mbacké of IFAN, Cheikh Anta Diop University. *Basiiru* is also the father of Sëriñ Mountakha Mbacké (b. 1930) the current and eighth Caliph of the Muridiyya.

⁹ *Sëriñ Mbay Jaxate* or *Serigne Mbaye Diakhaté* (1875-1951) is one of the disciples of Ahmadu Bamba. He was a Wolof Ajami poet and son of judge *Xaali Majaxate Kala* or *Qādi Majaxate Kala*. *Majaxate Kala* was a renowned Muslim jurist and legal advisor to king *Lat Joor Joob*. The poet *Mbay Jaxate* began his career during Bamba's exile in Mauritania. He focused in his work on social criticism, satire and the code of ethics of Murid discipleship. See Fallou Ngom, *Muslims Beyond the Arab World: The odyssey of 'Ajami and the Muridiyya* (Oxford University Press, 2016), 22; and Mamdou Lo, *Un Aspect de la Poésie "Wolofal" Mouride: L'Éducation Morale et Spirituelle de l'Aspirant (al Murid) dans la Production de Sëriñ Mbay Jaxate*. (L'Harmattan Sénégal 2020).

Jaara! You have shamed your detractors, know that. You have begotten a son who took the path of God and whose call was answered by all." Talking about Soxna Jaara's

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outstanding life can be daunting, even though it has been celebrated by many Wolof poets, including Sëriñ Mbay Jaxate, Sëriñ Maam Moor Kayre and Sëriñ Muusaa Ka,¹⁰ who all celebrated her moral character and righteous deeds as exceptional. Sëriñ Masamba Joob,¹¹ father of Soxna Takko Joob, said he was amazed by the fortitude and resilience of Soxna Maam Jaara Buso Jaaratul Laahi. He was a student of Sëriñ Maam Moor Anta Sali Mbakke. One day, he decided to test her. After Soxna Maam Jaara Buso Jaaratul Laahi returned from fetching water, he found a way to spill the water on purpose. But when he apologized, Soxna Maam Jaara Buso Jaaratul Laahi took it very lightly, even though water was hard to get, especially during those

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hot days of the dry season. Soxna Maam Jaara Buso Jaaratul Laahi told him the following: "Don't worry! my chief concern now is refilling the kettle¹² of Sëriñ Maam Moor Anta Sali Mbakke." From then on, he concurred with all the testimonies about her good character he had heard about. But, before she passed away in Poroxaan¹³ at the age of 33 (1864), she left us an intercessor in this life

¹⁰ *Sëriñ Maam Moor Kayre* or *Serigne Mame Mor Kayré* (1869-1951) was a disciple of Ahamdu Bamba. He was the oldest of the Murid Wolof Ajami poets. He specialized in hagiography and Islamic topography, especially the science of finding the right places where to build mosques. *Sëriñ Muusaa Ka* or *Serigne Moussa Ka* (1889-1963) was also Bamba's disciple and the greatest of the Wolof Ajami poet. He was a hagiographer and historian who drew from Bamba's writings, Islamic sources and the works of his senior colleagues. For more information on these Murid Ajami poets, see Fallou Ngom, *Muslims Beyond the Arab World*, 22-23.

¹¹ *Sëriñ Masamba Joob* also spelled *Serigne Massamba (Marema) Diop*: he is the great maternal grandfather of *Murtada* or *Mourtala Mbakke* (1927-2004), Cheikh Ahmadu Bamba's youngest son. *Soxna Takko Joob* or *Sokbna Tacko Diop* is the maternal grandmother of *Sëriñ Murtada Mbakke* the founder of the largest private school network in Senegal.

¹² The author uses the word *satala*, which means a water container used for the necessary ablutions and purification before praying or touching the Quran.

¹³ *Poroxaan* or *Porokhane* is located in the Salum area in Senegal (in the present-day region of Kaolack). The shrine of *Soxna Maam Jaara Buso* is today the place of an annual pilgrimage for Murids. The pilgrimage is the second largest Murid

and the afterlife: Sëriñ Tuubaa, our Shaykh Ahmadu Bamba, Xaadimu Rasuul [Servant of the Prophet], who should be considered a role model in Senegal and the world. May she enjoy the blessings of the Lord, and of His servant [the Prophet] by the grace of Sëriñ Tuubaa, our Shaykh Ahmadu Bamba, the servant of the Prophet.

Amen. Oh God, Lord of the worlds.

Oh God, bless our master Muhammad, the illiterate Prophet,

his family, his companions, his servant, and his community, and grant them abundant peace!

event, besides the annual Mànggal commemorating the 1895 deportation of Shaykh Ahmadu Bamba to Gabon by the French colonial administration.