

Soxna Aysatu Mbakke-Kajoor

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This is a brief summary of the life of

Soxna Aysatu Mbakke-Kajoor,¹ daughter of the Servant of the Prophet [Bamba]

Soxna Aysatu Mbakke was born in 1878 in the village of Pataar. Her father is the Servant of the Prophet. Her mother was Soxna Faati Samba Joob, daughter of Aminta Njaga, daughter of Soxna Hafsatu Mbakke, daughter of Sëriñ Ahmadu Soxna Buso Mbakke, son of Maam Maharam Mbakke. She belongs to the Jaafuñ maternal lineage.² She is the full blood sister of Sëriñ Muhammadu Abdullaahi Mbakke. It is said that she and Soxna Faati Ja were born around the same time. Maam Sëriñ Moor Anta Sali was the one who weaned her in Mbakke-Kajoor. Her education: The spiritual Master of Tuubaa [Shaykh Ahmadu Bamba] taught her the Quran and Sharia. Her upbringing: She grew up between her virtuous grandparents mentioned above and the Master [Bamba]. The Master had held her in high esteem. He entrusted her to her uncle named Sëriñ Medun Penda Joob, son of Soxna Ndumbe Xari, who is related to

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Soxna Aminta Njaga and Soxna Faati Isa. They had two children there named Soxna Faati Joob who was born in 1902, and Soxna Xari Joob who was born in 1904. It is said that they were the Master's first grandchildren that he saw. Her moral character: She is remembered as a woman who shared similar virtues and physical traits with the Master. She loved the Quran dearly and was disinterested in worldly matters. She was humble. She was useful to people. She used to discuss about the Master.

¹ *Soxna Aysatu Mbakke-Kajoor* is also known as *Sokhna Aissatou* (or *Astoni*) *Mbacké Kadior*.

² *Jaafuñ* is also spelled *Jafongne* or *Diafongne*.

These discussions inspire Murid disciples. However, this did not prevent her from fulfilling all her domestic duties, because she disregarded her birth rights and high social rank. It is for this reason that the Master [Bamba] trusted her and tasked her to handle the requests from male religious leaders who lived in her vicinity. The Master told them: "Whatever you have put in the hands of my child, it is as if you have put it in my own hands." Those leaders included Sëriñ Daawuda Njaga Degen Joob and others like him. When she passed away, she left behind forty dedicated Murid disciples she was training. Thus, she was one of the first women

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to have attained the rank of Shaykha [spiritual leader] in the path [of the Muridiyya]. She was well trusted by the Master with the education of the children and taking care of the relationships with relatives. She had many namesakes. It is said that the Master named one of his own daughters' after her. It is even said that Soxna Aysatu Gaawaan was her namesake. Furthermore, many members of the Master's family named their children after her because of her early death. She was very close to them. She was especially close to Sëriñ Muhammadu Lamiin, because they grew up together in Mbakke-Kajoor, and to Sëriñ Basiiru because she often visited Njaareem³ where she would meet him. She was also a very close sister of Sëriñ Fallu. She used to handle many domestic matters in his house. For this reason, many women called Soxna Mbeen in the house of Sëriñ Fallu⁴ are named after her. Similarly, Sëriñ Abdu Lahad⁵ preferred naming the baby girls in the family of the Master [Bamba] after her. Soxna Aysatu Mbakke died in 1914 in Mbakke-Kajoor. The Master instructed

³ *Njaareem* or *Ndiarème* also known as *Njurbel* or *Jurbel* or *Diourbel* is the place where Shaykh Ahmadu Bamba was kept under house arrest by the French colonial administration from 1912 to his death in 1927.

⁴ *Soxna Mbeen* is also spelled as *Sokbna Mbène*. *Sëriñ Fällu* is also known as *Serigne Fallon Mbacké* (1881-1945). He was one of the sons of Shaykh Ahmadu Bamba and the second Caliph of the Muridiyya.

⁵ *Sëriñ Abdu Lahad* also spelled *Serigne Abdou Lahad Mbacké* (1914-1989). He was one of the sons of Shaykh Ahmadu Bamba who served as the third Caliph of the Muridiyya. He founded the Murid central library in Tuubaa called *Daaray Kaamiil*.

Maam Cerno⁶ to lay her to rest. She is buried in Mbakke-Kajoor. In a nutshell, this is the story of her life that we wanted to share.

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Many things about her life have escaped us because she died very early. But what we have compiled here is useful to anyone who wishes to emulate her. Anyone who ponders over it will find virtues and traits that are worth emulating. May God bless us with her baraka. May He increase her blessings and her light with the baraka of her parents and our spiritual Master [Bamba]. Allah is pleased with both!

⁶ *Maam Cerno* or *Mame Thierno* (1863-1943), also known as *Ibra Faati Mbakke* or *Ibra Fati Mbacké*, was one of the younger brothers of Shaykh Ahmadu Bamba, and his close assistant. He was also a teacher and specialist in Islamic law (*fiqh*) and oversaw legal issues in the Murid Community. See John Glover, *Sufism and Jihad in Modern Senegal: The Murid Order* (University of Rochester Press, 2007), chapter 3.