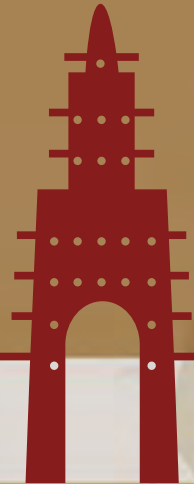


The South Africa - Mali Project

TIMBUKTU MANUSCRIPTS

*A South African Presidential Initiative
A Nepad Cultural Project*





يا قاصدا كاغو فحج نحو بلاتي
سلاما عطيرا من غريب و شائق
وزمزم لهم باسمي و بلغ احبتي
إلى وطن الأحباب رهطي و جيرتي

O TOI QUI VAS A GAO FAIS UN DETOUR PAR TOMBOUCTOU
MURMURE MON NOM A MES AMIS ET PORTE-LEUR SALUT PARFUME DE L'EXILE QUI SOUPIRE
APRÈS LE SOL OU RESIDENT SES AMIS, SA FAMILLE, SES VOISINS.


O traveller to Gao, turn off to my city,
Murmur my name there and greet all my dear ones.
With scented salams from an exile who longs for his homeland and neighbours, companions and friends.



The Presidency



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MESSAGE FROM

THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF
SOUTH AFRICA, **THABO MBEKI**

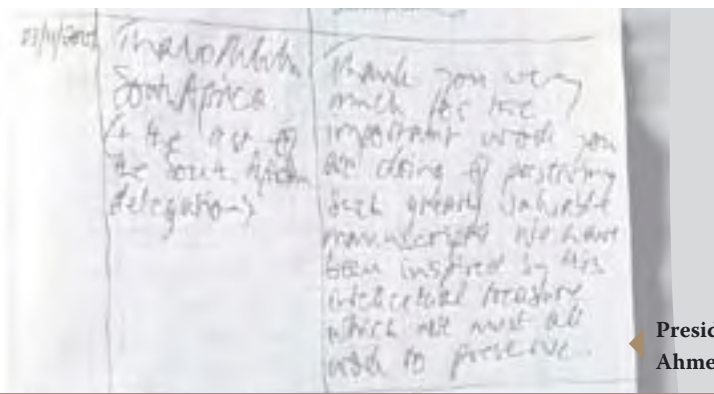
In November 2001 I visited the Republic of Mali and the then President of the country, Dr. Alpha KONARE, invited me to conclude the trip by making a call at the historic town of Timbuktu. There was no hesitation in taking this opportunity, since, as a student of African history in years gone by, I had read about the significance of Timbuktu in the history of the great Mali and Songhay Empires.

We were warmly received by the town's diverse peoples who took us to view the centuries-old buildings that spoke of ingenuity and originality, a keen artistic eye, and delicate artisanal skill. While aware of the impressive history of the town, which had become "a symbol of the unreachable", we were not aware of the extent to which this history had left its mark. The Djingere-Ber and the Sankore Mosques are truly astounding monuments to ancient African collective endeavour, planning and imagination, and worthy traces of the "university town" of old that we have read and pondered about for years.

Yet, little could prepare one for the excitement of visiting the modest building of the Ahmed Baba Institute. There we were shown medieval manuscripts which are without any doubt among the most important cultural treasures in Africa, forming as it were, an integral part of a rich and diverse cultural heritage of the town that includes its historic mosques and architecture and its cultural traditions. These manuscripts and papers, some of which dated back eight centuries, were used in this ancient African town of learning to teach mathematics, chemistry, botany, astronomy, optics, medicine, law, history, religion and other subjects. We were astounded by the artistic beauty of the illustration and illumination of some of these documents, surely amongst the most exquisite we had ever seen.



President Thabo MBEKI



President MBEKI's message in the visitor's book at the Ahmed Baba Institute (IHERI-AB) on November 3rd, 2001.



It was moving to witness the exceptional effort of the Malian government officials whose dedication to the tasks of collection, conservation, and preservation of these documents for posterity were executed so diligently and painstakingly under working conditions which can at best be described as basic. Limited facilities and staffing also meant that there were severe restrictions on accessing these manuscripts by academics and others. Clearly there was a great need to create conditions conducive to the documentation and study of these important intellectual artifacts.

Sadly, many of the manuscripts are in poor condition and in urgent need of stabilization and repair. Yet others are poorly enclosed and stored. Unfortunately given the rudimentary facilities at the centre and the harsh Saharan desert environment these manuscripts in the possession of the Ahmed Baba Institute, constituting one of the most extraordinary collections of medieval manuscripts in Africa if not the world, were not likely to survive another 100 years in these conditions.

These inspirational manuscripts which represent such an important link to our own glorious past, and of inestimable value to the African Renaissance, led the South African Government to pledge support for their conservation and to ensure that the South Africans at the foot of the continent are themselves apprised of these treasures on the western extreme of the continent, so that they, too, may embrace its significance.

Following our pledge the South African and Malian Governments represented by the Minister in the Presidency, Dr. Essop PAHAD,

and the Malian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Malians ABROAD, Mr. Lassana TRAORE, signed an agreement expressing the two countries' commitment to undertake a government-to-government project aimed at conserving the manuscripts at the Ahmed Baba Institute and at rebuilding the library and archival infrastructure of the Institute. The SA-Mali project has been declared an official South African Presidential Project and has been endorsed by the New Partnership For Africa's Development (NEPAD) as its first cultural project.

More concretely, the South African Government has embarked on a training programme for Malian conservators and heritage professionals. Already our own National Archive has hosted one cohort of trainees in South Africa for two months annually in SA since 2003. The South African Government also established a Trust Fund to raise funds from South African citizens, including the business sector, towards the building of a new library. The project has also encouraged South African academics to begin to study the significance of specific manuscripts. With the assistance of Premier Ebrahim RASOOL a team of building experts have visited Timbuktu to investigate the requirements for the construction of a library.

Our compact to assist in conserving and protecting these valuable manuscripts, is a compact to secure our own patrimony for the benefit of our children and all of Africa's future generations.

MESSAGE FROM

THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALI,
AMADOU TOUMANI TOURÉ

A remarkable intellectual heritage was constituted in Africa over the past millennium, as demonstrated by the wealth of manuscripts in the Arabic language, and/or manuscripts written in African languages and transcribed into Arabic.

One of the regions most characterised by this flourishing intellectual activity is the region of Timbuktu, situated along the northernmost bend of the Niger River, in Mali. Starting from the fourteenth century, Timbuktu became a renowned centre of Islamic studies. Not only were books brought there, but local scholars also wrote their own works in order to teach the sciences and literature, and to satisfy the demand for scholarly books in areas such as law, Koranic studies, the traditions of the Prophet, theology, and the Arabic language.

The erudition of these wise elders fostered the production of an original and varied body of important works of medieval science in mathematics, esoteric arts and practices, medicine, poetry and music, as well as in astronomy, and reflections on the resolution of community and interethnic conflicts. The existence of this heritage, which is spread from north to south, and from east to west of the continent clearly refutes the prejudices and assertions that portray Africa as a continent of exclusively oral traditions.



President Amadou Toumani TOURÉ



This treasure that has been accumulated over time is however under threat today. Each year, an increasing number of documents deteriorate and become illegible. This common heritage of humanity is thus in danger of being irretrievably lost if firm action is not taken to ensure its conservation.

Mali is grateful to South Africa for its vital commitment and support to preserving the Timbuktu Manuscripts. The African

Renaissance, which lies at the heart of the political steps undertaken by my brother President Thabo MBEKI, requires that this continent seize hold once more of its own history.

Through this project to conserve the manuscripts of the Ahmed Baba Institute, and reconstruct its library, South Africans and Malians together are giving meaning to the concept of African solidarity.

MESSAGE DU PRESIDENT DE LA REPUBLIQUE DU MALI

En Afrique s'est constitué au cours du dernier millénaire, un héritage intellectuel remarquable illustré par la richesse extraordinaire des manuscrits en langue arabe (et/ou en langue africaine transcrits en langue arabe).

Une des régions où cet épanouissement intellectuel a été le plus marquant est celle de Tombouctou, située sur la courbe la plus septentrionale du fleuve Niger au Mali. Tombouctou devient un centre d'études islamiques renommé à partir du quatorzième siècle. Non seulement les livres y étaient amenés, mais aussi des érudits locaux écrivaient leurs propres œuvres afin d'enseigner les sciences, la littérature et de satisfaire une demande de livres savants dans les domaines du droit, des études coraniques, des traditions du prophète, de la théologie et de la langue arabe.

L'érudition des sages a favorisé la production la production d'un corpus original et varié comprenant d'importantes œuvres de la science médiévale : mathématique, arts et pratiques ésotériques, médecine, poésie et musique ainsi que l'astronomie et les réflexions sur la résolution des conflits communautaires et interethniques. L'existence de cet héritage, qui s'étend du nord au sud et de l'ouest

à l'est du continent, réfute clairement les préjugés et les assertions faisant de l'Afrique un continent de traditions exclusivement orales.

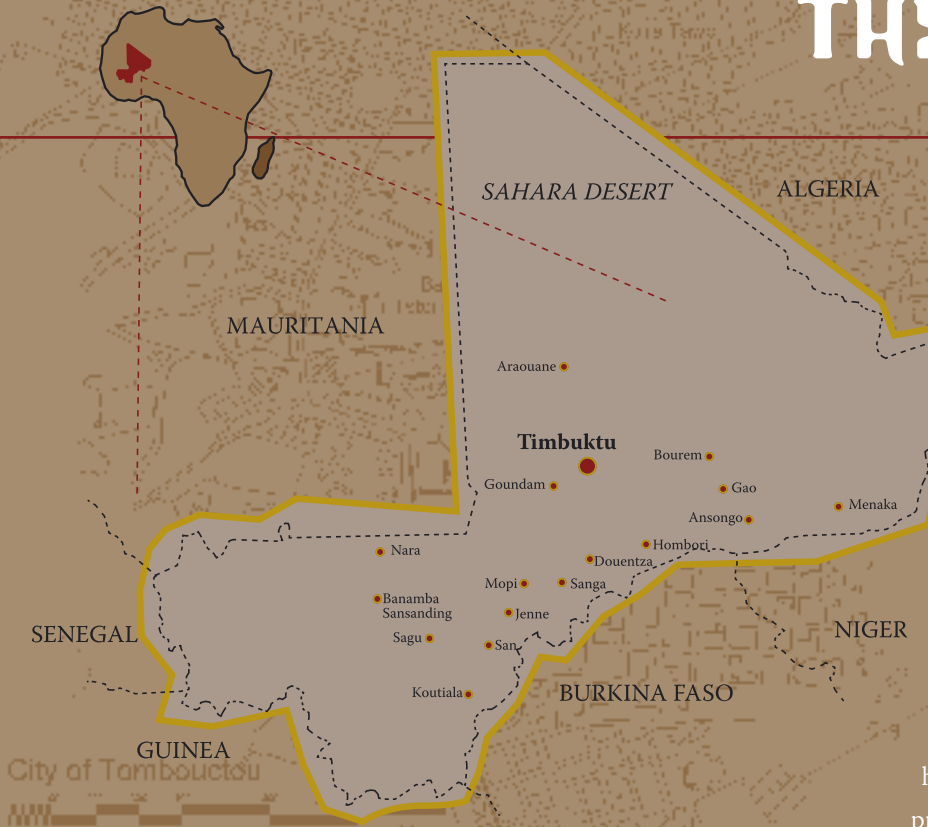
Mais ce trésor, accumulé au fil de l'Histoire, est aujourd'hui menacé. Chaque année, un nombre plus grand de documents se détériore et devient illisible. Ce patrimoine commun à l'humanité risque donc d'être perdu si des actions résolues ne sont pas entreprises pour le préserver.

Le Mali est reconnaissant à l'Afrique du Sud pour son engagement dynamique et son soutien à la conservation des Manuscrits de Tombouctou. La Renaissance Africaine, au coeur de la démarche politique de mon frère, le Président Thabo MBEKI, impose à notre Continent une re-appropriation de son histoire.

A travers le projet de conservation des Manuscrits de l'Institut Ahmed BABA et de reconstruction de la Bibliothèque, Sud-Africains et Maliens donnent du sens au concept de Solidarité africaine.


THE HISTORY

OF TIMBUKTU



The origin of the name of the desert town of Timbuktu (Tombouctou and Tinbuktu are variant spellings) situated on the bend of the great Niger River which traverses West Africa, is clouded in the mists of history. The historian Al-Sa'd_ traced the origins of Timbuktu to around 1100. In his *Tarikh al-Sudan* he claims that it was the name of a slave woman who was the guardian of the first nomadic camp there. Another explanation is that Buktu is derived from the Znaga root meaning “to be distant or hidden” with the feminine possessive Tin prefixed.

What is more certain is that Timbuktu has always been known as a place of commerce and scholarship. Historically, it served as a meeting place for traveling caravans arriving from across the Sahara desert to the North and river traffic coming from the South. Given its location as a “port” on the edges of the desert and along the river it has always had a linguistically and ethnically mixed population. Tuareg clans, Arabs from various oases, Songhay, Soninke, Dyula, and Fulbe are notable among the range of groups that have made the town home - as merchants, scholars and rulers. In the early 16th century it came to be viewed as a Songhay-speaking town, and Songhay remains the dominant language today.



The great traveller, Ibn BATTUTA, visited the town in the 1350s when it was under the rule of the Malian state. His written impressions of the town at this time are important because there are few surviving accounts of life then. The ruler of the Malian state, mansa MUSA, visited the town on his way back from pilgrimage to Mecca around 1325. With him was the intellectual Abu Ishaq Ibrahim AL-SAHILI who hailed from Andalusia, a region of Spain. He designed a residence for the mansa as well as the Djingere-Ber or Great Mosque, which still stands and remains the main mosque of the town.

Timbuktu was incorporated into the expanding Songhay state in 1468 and remained part of it until 1591. For a hundred years after 1493, scholars and scholarship thrived within a milieu of political stability and respect shown them by the Songhay ruler Askiya Muhammad bin Abi BAKR and his descendants. During this period, although it was Gao - about 400km from Timbuktu - which was the capital of Askiya rule, Timbuktu remained a relatively autonomous town, renowned as a place of books and learning, where students frequented the homes of scholars and congregated around reputed masters of various intellectual fields in the mosques of the town.

But this golden era came to an end in 1591 when the Sa'dian ruler of Morocco sent a force to attack and conquer the region. Many scholars, such as the famous Ahmed BABA, were taken prisoner and banished to

Marrakesh. Others simply left the town. After the initial pacification of the region, the state entered a period of slow decline characterised by internecine conflict between officers left behind by the Sa'dian conquerors. They were furthermore unable to defend the state and the town from incessant Tuareg assaults. Over time the descendants of the Sa'dian invaders came to constitute a distinctive social group in Timbuktu. The unstable situation after the decline under Sa'dian rule continued through the 17th and 18th centuries. A similar situation prevailed in the 19th century but with Fulbe dominance over the affairs of Timbuktu. In 1893/4 Timbuktu fell to French colonial occupation which lasted until independence in 1960. Yet, throughout this period, scholarship and writing never ceased in Timbuktu.

In the late nineteen sixties UNESCO convened a conference in Timbuktu to look at the place of the city in African history. It was this conference which placed Timbuktu at the centre of African history. And when it was discovered that a great number of ancient papers still remained, the conference gave impetus to the campaign to preserve Timbuktu's manuscripts and heritage. The large corpus of work, especially that of Ahmed BABA, led UNESCO to initiate the creation of a manuscripts library in 1973, named after the famed scholar from Timbuktu.

The Malian government-sponsored Ahmed Baba Institute has become the major centre for the collection of manuscripts from the region.



THE EUROPEAN

SEARCH FOR TIMBUKTU

It is still widely believed, at least in the English-speaking world, that Timbuktu is not a real place but imaginary - an unreachable location. "Going to Timbuktu" means going to a place so far away that it is unlikely to be reached. The Oxford English Dictionary still retains a definition of Timbuktu as a place that is unreachable.





Yet given the trade and intellectual networks which connected Africa with Europe during the first millennium, Timbuktu had already established itself as a place of some importance outside Africa by the 14th century. The earliest recorded reference to Timbuktu in a European source is the Catalan Atlas of 1375 where the city, spelled Tenbuch, is located in West Africa. In later centuries the city gained more recognition by scholars and travellers from Spain and elsewhere in Europe. In the early 16th century the scholar from Granada in Spain, al-Hasan bin Muhammad al-Wazz_n al-Zayy_t_, who became known in Europe as Leo Africanus, reached Timbuktu. He left a work in which he described his visit to the Songhay state and a number of the towns in the region including Jenne and Timbuktu, remarking on, among other things, the value placed on books and learning among Timbuktu's inhabitants.

The high-point of concern by Europeans with Timbuktu was during the nineteenth century at a time when there were a number of exploration missions sent to "discover" it for Europe alongside all the other missions to penetrate the continent. It is during this period of extensive European exploration on the continent that the town is first characterised as the most unreachable

point in Africa and it becomes in popular western imagination, a synonym for the "mysteriousness" of the continent.

The Scotsman Alexander Gordon LAING who arrived in Timbuktu in 1826 is considered the "first" European to reach it successfully but he was killed while returning to Europe. The Frenchman René CAILLE followed in his footsteps 1828.

The German-speaking Heinrich BARTH undertook an expedition to West Africa for the British Africa Association between 1849 and 1855. During his travels, BARTH was afforded the protection of Shaykh Ahmad AL-BAKKAI, a leading scholar in the region with whom he engaged in lively discourse. He arrived in Timbuktu in 1853 and resided there for between six to eight months. During his travels and while in Timbuktu, he wrote extensively and in greater detail than previous travellers about the culture and religion of the region. His sensitive description of people he encountered, their social practices and values - quite exceptional in the context of the Eurocentric anthropological viewpoints then current in western scholarship - and his description of places and geography remain a major source of western knowledge about Timbuktu and West Africa in the 19th century.



AHMED BABA AND TIMBUKTU.

THE TOWN OF SCHOLARSHIP



Commerce and scholarship were two significant aspects of the everyday life of Timbuktu. Traders came and went, bringing along finished goods and other products such as gold, salt and millet from surrounding regions for exchange in Timbuktu. Long-distance camel caravans would also call on the town. Students and their professors would come from far and wide to study and teach and were spread throughout the town. Often the vocation of merchant and scholar went hand-in-hand and there was a healthy trade in books. Other figures devoted solely to an intense spiritual life would also act as teachers. All these categories of people thrived in the town. Many of them came especially to study a particular field with the leading specialists of the day in subjects such as traditional medicine, astronomy, optics, musicology, botany, mathematics and the sciences. Alongside scholarship there developed an industry around books, book production and copying: ink making, illustration, copyists, the paper trade, production of book enclosures, binding and so on.



Because public and private spaces in the town, like the mosque of Sankore and the houses of scholars, were used for learning and teaching, and furthermore because of its large variety of hand-written manuscripts - remarked upon by many visitors over the centuries - Timbuktu became renowned across the world as a place of learning. Many of the manuscripts found in Timbuktu today bear watermarks of European manufactured paper which indicate the existence of viable trade in paper with distant regions of the world.

The most famous scholar of all in the town was Ahmed BABA, to whose name is often appended al-Tinbukti. He was born on October 26 1556. In the literature, he has been given many epithets reflecting his ethnic background - such as al-Sanhaji and al-Takruri - but Timbuktu (hence al-Tinbukti) is what he most closely came to be identified with. His family (the Aq_t) were renowned as scholars and judges and he studied under his father, grandfather and several others. Like all the young students of the time in the region, he had to work his way through the major works of grammar, mysticism and the Maliki school of Islamic jurisprudence, among other things.

He refused to recognise the Sa'dian conquerors of the town and at the age of around 35 he was chained and exiled with his family to Marrakesh in Morocco where he arrived in June 1593. It is said

that when he left Timbuktu, he took with him 1600 volumes of works from his personal library - all of which were reputedly lost or not returned to him. At the request of prominent local scholars who petitioned the Sultan, he was placed under some kind of house arrest rather than imprisonment and later he was allowed to move around freely in the city and to teach. His lectures in the Jami al-Shurafa in Marrakesh were distinguished and very well attended, often including the Mufti of Fez.

In 1607 he was allowed to return to Timbuktu where he devoted himself to teaching law which appears to have been his favourite field of research and teaching. He died in Timbuktu in April 1627.

Baba was the author of around 56 works. We know of between 23 and 30 titles that are still accessible today. His Nayl al-ibtihaj bi-tatriz al-dibaj which is a biographical dictionary of the leading scholars of his time, was republished in 1986. It lists around 800 scholars including his own teacher, Muhammad AL-WANGARI.

Ahmed BABA was committed to a life of learning and teaching, a life which left a strong intellectual imprint on Timbuktu. His legacy was remembered long after his death and it remains to this day.

أحمد بابا السودان
أهبط إلى مراكش
ورجع لتنبكتو 27 مارس سنة 1593
وانتقل إلى رحمة الله 27 أبريل سنة 1627

A LA MEMOIRE D'AHMED BABA
ES-SUDANI NE LE 26 Oct. DEPORTE
A MARRAKECH LE 18 MARS 1593
IL REVINT A TOMBOUCTOU LE 27 Mar.
ET EST RAPPELE A DIU LE 27 AVRIL 1627

THE LIBRARIES

OF TIMBUKTU TODAY



Whether there were organized libraries for scholars and the public in general we do not know. But what is certain is that individual scholarly families housed their own collections derived from the scholars in their own family or lineage. Beside original works of scholars, the total corpus of manuscripts still in existence was due to a large extent to a thriving industry involving the copying of original texts. Scholarship often entailed reading a text with the master of a certain body of texts and then getting permission from the master to teach it. In the process, copies of original works would be reproduced by specialized scribes - a skill which still exists in Timbuktu today - for students or scholars who needed them.



The existing manuscripts date from the earliest periods of Timbuktu's intellectual flowering through to the twentieth century. They reflect the whole range of areas of writing common among the scholars of the town and with copies of materials from as far a field as Nigeria. In the same way that Latin was the language of scholarship in Europe, Arabic served that role in much of western Africa, the northern half of the continent and along the Eastern African coast, and therefore the manuscripts are mostly in the Arabic language. But there are also works in the Songhay, Fulfulde, Tamasheq and Hausa languages, all written in the Arabic script, in a range of calligraphy styles, yet all with a distinctly northwest African design.

Given that so many manuscripts are still being found in Timbuktu - and in the surrounding towns, it would seem appropriate to talk of Timbuktu itself as a vast archive. Yet clearly there was a need for a formalised repository to take care of the vast collections dispersed so precariously across the Sahara. It was appropriate that the name of the town's most famous scholar, Ahmed BABA, was invoked and given to the archive established in 1973 that would house all the manuscripts located in the town and the broader region.

From 1977 the Ahmad Baba Institute embarked on a programme to popularize the work of the centre and educate families throughout the region about the importance of preserving their cultural and intellectual patrimony perhaps long-forgotten or hidden among their family possessions. As a result of these activities,

many collections have been given to the centre as family endowments. The centre also began to purchase more valuable and rare manuscripts and collections. The strategy of actively seeking and buying manuscripts proved to be very effective and to date the library has a collection of around 20 000 manuscripts housed in its inadequate building.

At the same time, the increased recognition and emphasis on the ancient heritage of Mali by the Government of Mali and others resulted in a number of families with large manuscript collections establishing their own archives dedicated to preserving their own collections. There is now an association of private libraries with 24 participant families. Three families, the Mamma Haidara, Ka'ti, and Wangari families already have special buildings housing their own collections managed by members of their respective families. The Mamma Haidara library has published a catalogue enumerating its 5000 items.

There is no way of knowing exactly how many manuscripts or individual collections exist in Timbuktu, the surrounding region and in other towns such as Gao and Jenne. Estimates range from tens of thousands to a quarter million manuscripts. What is certain is that we are now discovering more and more materials as there is more African and international focus on the value of the manuscripts. Working to conserve and research the extraordinary richness and vast number of the Timbuktu manuscripts is a beginning, and in itself a lifetime's work.



TIMBUKTU

AND THE AFRICAN RENAISSANCE



In many ways, Timbuktu, especially during its height in the 16th century, represents an example of a “knowledge society”, one actively engaged in the pursuit of knowledge production and application. However, Timbuktu was but one centre of its kind on the continent. Another example is Abyssinia (present-day Ethiopia), which too developed a similar reputation, albeit in a different period of history. Moreover, throughout the northern parts of the continent, across the Sahara, and along the whole of Sudanic Africa - from Senegal to Ethiopia - and down the East African coast as far as Northern Mocambique we can find rich and copious examples of Africans engaged in reading and writing as far back as the earlier centuries of the previous millennium.

Despite this rich history on the continent of centres of high intellectual repute, of places of learning and intellectual inquiry, Africa has in modern times falsely been represented as devoid of the practices of reading and writing. It has been, and still is, erroneously characterised as only or largely a continent of oral communication, despite all the historical evidence to the contrary. The vast collections of manuscripts and papers that still remain in Timbuktu decisively confound this view. The Timbuktu manuscripts and those from the surrounding settlements are testimony to an undeniable history of scientific inquiry, the writing of poetry, intellectual discourse and philosophical reflection. They unambiguously demonstrate the sophisticated use of a wide diversity of Africa's languages in high-level intellectual pursuits which is the mark of African peoples' capacities to express themselves in complex forms and of African intellectual capabilities over the centuries. Intellectual and scholarly endeavours have been an integral part of African history since the development of writing on the continent.

Every experience of re-nnaissance, such as that in Europe before the 16th century

and Bengal in the 19th century, was rooted in a critical appropriation of the past and conversations across boundaries in the present. This is the meaning of "rebirth" (re-nnaissance). Clearly then the challenge is to correct the suppressed history of writing and reading on the continent. To remake our continent we have to look back deeply and reclaim the many pasts that have been denied and hidden from us as a result of Eurocentric thought perspectives, colonial racism and racial domination. As part of our own process of critical appropriation in the cause of the African Renaissance, we have to begin to think continentally and embrace positively our own African history and heritage, not least of which is our history and heritage of knowledge, knowledge production and knowledge application.

The African heritage of reading and writing is our heritage. The manuscripts of Timbuktu are our heritage. Indeed they are part of our common human and African patrimony.

"We are Africans", we should all say, for what we truly love is our heritage irrespective of colour, religion or language.



أنا إفريقي
 أنا إفريقي
 أنا إفريقي
 أنا إفريقي
 أنا إفريقي

THE WORK OF THE

SOUTH AFRICA-MALI PROJECT



Deputy Minister of Arts and Culture, Ntombazana BOTHA with Malian Minister Badi Ould GANFOUD in Bamako, November 2004.

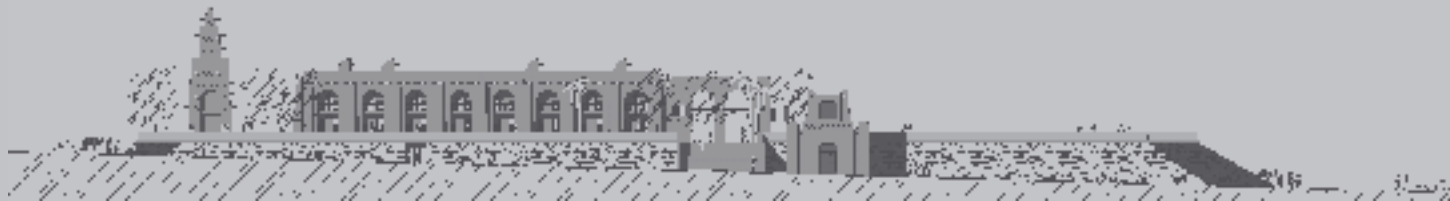
The work of the SA-Mali Project has various aspects. It has taken it upon itself to promote public awareness, interest and understanding of the value and significance of the Timbuktu manuscripts. On Africa Day in 2003, President MBEKI officially launched the project at the official South African celebrations with the continental broadcast of a 10 minute promotional video which resulted in widespread interest and inquiry. Various members of the Project team have also written articles in popular media on various aspects of the project and on the manuscripts. It is anticipated that a major documentary will be commissioned within the next year or two.



The project collaborates with the Government of Mali and with other stakeholders and role-players in preserving, cataloguing and appropriately and securely housing the documentary heritage at the Ahmed Baba Institute in Timbuktu. Specifically it is assisting with the conservation of the historic manuscripts of Timbuktu through the provision of training, technical support and assistance for the development of conservation facilities. In 2003, the South African Government, has through the National Archives of the Department of Arts and Culture, instituted a training programme for Malian conservators and heritage professionals at appropriate South African institutions. This programme completed the second phase of a three-year internship programme to train conservators from the Ahmed Baba Institute in preservation and conservation repair. The final stages of the programme involve conservation and repair to the manuscripts.



The South African National Archives and the South African National Library has also embarked on a programme to provide the materials for and to teach conservation staff at the Ahmed Baba Institute on ways to improve the preventive measures in place to avoid the further deterioration of fragile manuscripts. This involves determining and executing the best techniques for the removal of foreign and potentially harmful materials from the manuscripts, the development of correct handling procedures, and the construction of appropriate storage boxes, to avoid further damage and deterioration. Further preventive measures will include the development of a disaster plan which takes into account the need for good “house-keeping” in view of the potential destructiveness of the fine Saharan sand, pest control and the extreme temperatures experienced in the desert.



The project has also encouraged academics at South African universities to visit Timbuktu with a view to promoting the formal study of the manuscripts. To this end Dr. Shamil JEPPIE of the Department of Historical Studies at UCT has a two-year pilot project with a team of researchers studying a selection of materials. The materials selected for study deal with the development of law and scholarship in Timbuktu. Future research will include work on a selection of science materials.

Lastly, the project raises funds from South African business and the public for the construction of a purpose-built archive/library which will provide the protection required so as to properly house, preserve and protect the manuscripts. It has already executed a preliminary investigation and a needs-analysis, on the basis of which a concept design and costing exercise was completed. The Provincial government of the Western Cape has supported this aspect of the project by convening a group of professionals in the construction industry to take this process further. Accordingly a team of builders, engineers, quantity surveyors and architects from the Western Cape was sent to Timbuktu to investigate the requirements for the actual construction of the archive in Timbuktu. Their findings will inform the specifications and procurement requirements for the final design and construction of the building.

The SA-Mali Project is led by an official governmental Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC), supported by a technical implementation team drawn from govern-

ment officials and a project manager. The IMC has set up a Board of Trustees which currently comprises Dr. Essop PAHAD (Chairperson), Deputy Minister of Arts and Culture, Ms. Ntombazana BOTHA, Mr. Rick MENELL, Dr. Snowy KHOZA, Ms. Mary SLACK and Mr. Tokyo SEXWALE. The Government of Mali is represented on the Board by the Malian Embassy in Pretoria. The Trust is administered by the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA). The lead department in South Africa for the project is the Department of Arts and Culture.

For the purposes of fundraising, the IMC has set up a Trust Fund which is administered by the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA).

All funding for activities in Mali, (e.g. design and construction, infrastructure, fieldwork, provision of equipment and materials), is derived from the Trust Fund. All donations to the trust fund are exempt from donations tax in terms of Section 30, Section 10(1)(c) N) and Section 56(1)(h) of the Income Tax Act, 58 of 1962.



DETAILS FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

TO THE TRUST FUND

Bank: Standard Bank of South Africa
Branch: Sandton
Branch code: 01-02-05
Account Name: DBSA Timbuktu Mali Project
Account Number: 42 101 891 7

Please note: The DBSA should be notified of all donations by forwarding the details of the donation including the name of the donor to:

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Shireen SULEMAN

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EXTRACTS FROM

“I AM AN AFRICAN” SPEECH



أنا ابن حفيد المحاربين رجالاً ونساءً، من هينسا وسكوكهونه، من
 المحاربين الذين أخذهم حيتشواي ومفهبو إلى المعركة، من الجنود الذين
 علمهم موشوشو وونغونغيان أن لا يهينوا سبب الحرية.
 عقلي ومعارفتي تتشكل من انتصاراتنا، من انتصاراتنا التي هي
 مثل حليتنا في تاج إفريقيا، من انتصاراتنا التي حققناها من
 إساندلوانا إلى الخرطوم، مثل الإثيوبيين، مثل أشانتي غانا، مثل
 البربر في الصحراء.

Je suis le petit-fils des guerriers, hommes et femmes, menés par Hints et
 Sekhukhune, des patriotes que Cetshwayo et Mphephu ont emmenés au
 combat, des soldats à qui Moshoeshoe et Ngungunyane ont enseigné de ne
 jamais déshonorer la cause de la liberté.
 Mon esprit et ma connaissance de moi-même sont formés par les victoires
 qui sont les bijoux de notre couronne africaine, les victoires que nous
 avons remportées d'Isandlwana à Khartoum, comme Éthiopiens et comme
 les Ashanti du Ghana, comme les Berbères du désert.

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Extracts from statement of Deputy President Thabo MBEKI, on behalf of the African National Congress, on the occasion of the adoption by the constitutional assembly of “The Republic of South Africa Constitution Bill 1996” - CAPE TOWN, MAY 8, 1996

Thereafter also known as “I am an African”

I am the grandchild of the warrior men and women that Hints and Sekhukhune led, the patriots that Cetshwayo and Mphephu took to battle, the soldiers Moshoeshoe and Ngungunyane taught never to dishonour the cause of freedom.

My mind and my knowledge of myself is formed by the victories that are the jewels in our African crown, the victories we earned from Isandlwana to Khartoum, as Ethiopians and as the Ashanti of Ghana, as the Berbers of the desert.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Presidency would like to acknowledge the contributions of the following people in the preparation of this brochure: Shamil JEPPIE, Nazeem MAHATEY, Graham DOMINY, Alexio MOTSI and Riason NAIDOO.

Design and layout by PROFIT CREATIVE • Illustrations by Riason NAIDOO • All photographs provided courtesy of The National Archives of South Africa

