

Islamic Archaeology in Sub-Saharan Africa:

The Case of the Sudan

Introduction: -

The Republic of the Sudan, the largest country in Africa, is highly differentiated both geographically and culturally. Geographically the country occupies at least three different ecological zones; the Sahara to the north, the Savannah in the middle and the equatorial forests to the south, with the Nile crossing it from the south to the north, its tributaries stretching from Ethiopia to Chad and the Red Sea to the east.

Culturally, the country possesses a considerable diversity of ethnic and cultural components. There are Arab and Arabized peoples, especially the Nubians, in the north and central Sudan, Beja tribes in the east, Nuba and Fur to the west and Nilotic tribes to the south. The country before Christianity and Islam had a variety of individual expression of religious beliefs.

Much of the country, has from the early days of Islam, been opened to slow Arab penetration. It has accepted Islam and changes that have taken place in Dar-al-Islam from both the north(Egypt) and east(Arabian Peninsula). This will be considered in three phases: -

Phase (1) from 640-ca. 1300 CE.

Phase (2) from 1300-1500 CE

Phase (3) from 1500-1800 CE

phase 1 CE 640-1300: -

This phase witnessed the most significant event which was the conquest of Egypt in CE 640/AH 20 by Arabic speaking Muslims, camel herders from Arabia. At that time Nubia, the Middle Nile Valley, was ruled by the powerful Christian kingdoms, Makurra with its capital at Old Dongola and 'Alwa with its capital at Soba, near the junction of the Blue and White Niles. Arab armies tried twice to conquer Makurra and in the second trial, they reached as far south as Old Dongola, the capital. The attempt ended up with a peace treaty in CE 651/AH 31, the first of its type in Dar-al-Islam, known as the Baqt. It was in essence a commercial treaty, which gave Nubia peace for six hundred years. As a result of this treaty and the Arab conquest of Egypt, the nomad tribes of Arab tribes of Arabia began to emigrate into the region as they did throughout North

Africa. A group of Rabi'a tribe, established itself in the Nile Valley, Aswan region but the main occupation was in the eastern desert whereby intermarried with the Beja (Paul 1954: 71) and thus a process of Islamisation was started.

Trade with the Savannah continued to flourish in this period as it had done for 2000 years. Slaves, gold, ivory, ebony and leopard skins were among the commodities that move northward, while manufactured goods like pottery, glass and spices move southward (Adams 1988: 32). This trade was carried freely between the Nubian kingdoms and the Muslims. From the account of Ibn Selim and other writers (Magrizi 1906: 323), it is clear that the trade was in the hands of Muslims who after the 9th century were allowed to travel and settle freely in Lower Nubia. The trade continued flourishing during the Fatimid and Ayyubid dynasties in Egypt and started to decline during the Mamluk time CE 1250-1517.

Badi', 'Aidhab and other Red Sea ports continued and there was more Muslim penetration. On al-Rih island, where Badi' is located, the increase of Muslim islanders was mainly due to the increase of trading by Muslim merchants since the late half of the 10th century (Kawatoko 1993: 188). The Rabi'a-Beja coalition prospered to the degree that they came to dominate the frontier region of Wadi-al-'Alaqi gold and emerald mining area and the pilgrims route of 'Aidhab (Paul 1954: 72).

West of the Nile, after CE 1000 Arab nomads spread throughout the Sahel and Savannah as camel and cattle herders. They gradually developed in the 13th century states in Darfur by joining similar groups who had opened the camel caravan route across the Sahara including Darb-al-Arba'in (forty day route). The Tunjur sultanate was founded in this period with palaces and mosques (Musa 1986: 220-22).

The process of Islamisation: -

1. The Baqt treaty opened the way for Arab migration into Makurra and the acceptance of Islam from the north and east and it was continued between the first and the second cataract i.e. Lower Nubia by Muslims merchants during the rule of Kanz-ad-Dawla, (a title given by the Fatimid to the ruler of Aswan and his successors).
2. The earliest reference to mosques at Old Dongola is CE 651. Ibn Selim al Aswani in his mission to the king of Makurra in the late 10th century said that he had performed the Barium prayers in the mosque at the capital with sixty Muslims.

3. Documents from Qasr Ibrim indicate that there had been settlement of Arabs in Lower Nubia since the 9th century (Adams 1984: 464). And many documents in Arabic have been found there from the Fatimid period.
4. Tombstones from Nubia and the eastern desert and ports, show gradual spread of Muslims e.g. tombstones of northern Nubia, from Tafa, kalabsha, Qertassi and Derrin which ranges between CE 822 to 1027. And from Badi' and Khor Nubt between CE 877 to 1045 (Kawatoko 1993: 190-192) (pl.).
5. Further south in 'Alwa there were also Muslim traders. There was a lodging house, a ribat as mentioned by Ibn Selim, at Soba where a number of Muslim merchants lodged (Maqrizi 1906: 311-12).
6. Reference to the earliest mosques at 'Ain Farah, Uri in western Sudan which are dated to the 13th century (Musa 1986: 220).
7. Imported Islamic objects especially pottery were among the traded commodities which have been recovered from many sites e.g. Kulubnarti, Qasr Ibrim, Dongola, Soba, Sennar, Badi' and 'Aidhab.

Phase 11 CE 1300-1500: -

The documentary evidence from this period is wholly Islamic. There were two major developments in this 200 years; the kingdom of Makurra disappeared and 'Ulama (scholars) arrived from Arabia and established khalwas and mosques e.g. Ghullam Allah Ibn 'Aid, whose father came from Yemen and found the Muslims of Dongola in extreme perplexity and confusion (Dayf Allah 1992: 10).

By 1317, the Muslim members of the ruling class had become kings of Makurra. This was the result of a long period of Mamluk rulers of Egypt interventions in the internal affairs of this kingdom. By 1365/6 Dongola was in ruins and had been abandoned perhaps temporarily by most of its inhabitants (Trimingham 1983: 70).

The political barrier now demolished and Arab migration on the Nile Valley and the eastern deserts increased and penetrated southward to the Butana (between the Blue Nile and River 'Atbara), the Suakin hinterland and the Gezira (area between the Blue and White Niles). The destruction of the kingdom of 'Alwa came in the late 15th century when Arab tribes of 'Abdallab confederation overran the Gezira and dominated its population. In CE 1476, Arabic speaking people developed the town of Arbaji, 150 km south-east of Khartoum, which developed into a commercial town during the Fung period.

'Aidhab which prospered as trade and pilgrims route now is declining after Salah-ad-Din of the Ayyubid defeated the Latin Christian kingdom of Jerusalem and the pilgrims moved back to the overland route. Its end came as a result of a punitive expedition sent by the Mamluk sultan Bars Bey in 1426. From this time onwards began the rise of the port of Suakin.

The process of Islamisation: -

1. This period witnessed the coming of individual learned holy men whose main concern was not conquer or trade but teaching the people the right practices of Islam.
2. In most of the northern and eastern regions the people became bilingual, Nubian and Beja. The Fur in the west passed through a similar process. Arabic spread from the Red Sea to Chad in the west and from Aswan in the north to latitude 10 north in the south (Hassan 1973: 134).
3. The incoming Arabs in the Nile Valley and the Savannah were absorbed in varying degree by the people of the land. Their descendants speak Nubian or Nuba as well as Arabic. Though indigenous people offered little resistance to this process, they remodelled it considerably and preserved not only the Sudanese racial elements but their own identity to be seen in customs, language, music and material culture of the Nubians, the Beja and the others. Many of the sites of the northern Sudan, show a gradual process of Islamisation e.g. Kulubnarti, Meinarti and Dongola.

Phase 111 1500-1800: -

This phase is characterised by four major events:

1. After the collapse of Makurra, and the flow of the Arabs into the country, the kingdom of 'Alwa had been left isolated from the Christian north and became overrun by Beja/Arab nomads. Its end was inevitable for it was in no position to offer effective resistance to the marauding nomads (Hassan 1980: 122). The actual downfall of 'Alwa in CE 1504 is generally supposed to have been caused by the alliance of the Qawasma Arabs with the Fung who suddenly appeared east of the White Nile from the south-west. Thus Christianity completely disappeared and Abyssinia (Ethiopia) was left the sole Christian kingdom in Africa (Trimingham 1983: 75).
2. The rise of the first powerful Islamic state in the Middle Nile. This was the Fung or the Black Sultanate which marked the supremacy of Islam in the present Republic of the Sudan. During this period there developed the

khalwas and Mosques of the early indigenous Muslims and the Sufi orders. In the Sudan the religious life became bound up with holy men and to think of Allah without his intermediaries is impossible. This aspect proves the impact of local beliefs and customs upon orthodox or Sunni Islam in a direct way. Sufism and Islam are synonyms for the Sudanese as a term and as a historical process in the wider cultural and religious history of the country (ElZein 1987: 10).

3. The third major event was that in CE 1517, Selim 1 the Ottoman Turkish sultan, defeated the Mamluk of Egypt and from then until the 19th century it was administered as a province of that empire. The Ottoman defeat in Abyssinia in 1550-70s transferred their interest to the Nile Valley where they attacked the Fung Sultanate. In Dongola reach, near the third cataract, they met with resistance from the army of the Fung in 1584 and in 1585 the frontier between the two sultanates was fixed at Hannek where it was to remain until 1820. To defend the new frontier, they constructed the fortress of Sai to garrison the area as at Qasr Ibrim. Those alien, Arabic and Turkish speaking garrisons were regularly reinforced and in time became landowners, and Nubian speaking.
4. The fourth development was that in the early 17th century, Darfur witnessed the rise an Islamic state and its Keira dynasty. Trade flourished at this time via Darb-al-Arba'in to Egypt and across the Savannah of central Sudan to west Africa, following the pilgrim route (Insoll 1996: 456).

With the establishment of these regimes the stage of proselytization came to its end and a new era of reform and of teaching of the Quran began in the south and west; in the north the religious administration of the Sunni ottoman Caliphate was in place. The Fung and the Fur invited 'Ulama from abroad as well as from inside in the case of the Fur. The Sudanese now began to travel abroad for religious studies specially at al-Azhar in Cairo.

South of latitude 10 N, there was no Christian or Islamic missionaries before the end of the 19th century. Muslim traders entered south of the sudd area, and some of them settled there but with no intentions of propagating Islam. Archaeological works so far conducted revealed the existence of stone ages and late iron age cultures.

The process of Islamisation: -

With the establishment of the three Islamic regimes; the Ottoman "Sunni" north of the 3rd Cataract region and the Red Sea port of Suakin, the Fung in central Sudan including

the Beja lands and parts of Darfur, and the Keira sultanate of Darfur, the stage of proselytisation came to its end and a new era of reform and of teaching the Quran and its sciences began. The three regions will be considered separately as well as the region south of latitude 10 N.

a) The Sanjak of Ibrim. -

The Sanjak of Ibrim includes two important military sites, Qal'at Ibrim and Qal'at Sai and a number of civilian ones especially El-Dirr (the capital), Jebel 'Adda and Faras (map 1). The garrison of Ibrim had left much archaeological, documentary and oral tradition evidence. The fortress at Ibrim was restored and utilised in a way that reflect its importance as the main riverine defence guarding the southern frontier of Egypt from the Fung aggression (Alexander and Schlee: forthcoming).

Architectural remains include houses of conventional Islamic type related to the earliest Ottoman houses at Suakin. Part of the cathedral at Ibrim was converted to a mosque after CE 1600. No Muslim burials within the fortress, but near it were mud brick domed tombs.

Documentary evidence show that there were Shari'a courts at El-Dirr and in the fortress in 17th and 18th centuries with details of 19 Imams and Qadis. The documents reveal the successions of Kachifs about twenty-four names. In the 18th century there were forty administrative officials in the Sanjak of Ibrim with the Sanjak Bey at El-Dirr.

Artefactual evidence includes textiles, ceramics, water skin bags, basketry, glass vessels, household equipment like bridles, straps, pads, querns and farming equipment like Saqiya parts and tethering pegs.

Qal'at Sai was built near 3rd cataract region because of the confrontation there between the two powers-Ottomans and Fung (Alexander 1997). Archaeological work at the site showed the existence of well-defined streets and at least nine long used dwellings of conventional Islamic type as recognised at Ibrim and Suakin. The fortress itself has the same general plan as at Ibrim but in mud brick. It housed in barracks, few public buildings, a Friday mosque, a Headquarters building, an armoury. It is similar to Ibrim in that it had no Suq (market) no Hammams (baths), no artisan shops and no Khans or Caravanserai.

Qal'at Sai is still awaiting thorough excavations to elucidate much of its general history. The scatter of ceramic material suggested that the wares and forms were similar to those of Qasr Ibrim (Alexander 1997). Documentary evidence from Ibrim explains the increase of the garrison in CE 1608 during the rule of the strong Fung king Dakin CE 1596-1614. It also shows how the soldiers became landowners at the end.

Throughout the 300 years period the influence of the Ottomans must have been immense and extended into the frontier mekdom of Mahas. The Mahas are attested historically as they left their homes beyond the 3rd Cataract region CE 16-17th centuries

(Reid 1935: 20). They settled in Fung domains, namely Tuti island, Burri and 'Ailafun. The Tuti group according to local tradition was from a village called Gamai (personal research 1999). The holy men who were Sufi came first like Arbab al-'Agaid of Khartoum and Idris Wad al-Arbab of 'Ailafun. It is probable that the Sunni Islam of the Ottomans and their harshness were among the factors that led to the migration of the Mahas. In the 18th century boys from Qasr Ibrim were sent to the khalwas in Shaiqiya area for education.

Suakin flourished with three phases of buildings; the old buildings, the Ottoman style and after CE 1860 the Egyptian style. The rise of the port of Port Sudan early 20th century led finally to the abandonment of the site by most of its inhabitants who have taken the roshans and coral stones for their new houses leaving the town decaying. By CE 1996, only parts of the Egyptian style buildings are there, the rest has gone beyond any hope of restoration.

b) The Fung kingdom: -

The first rulers of the Fung kingdom were very occupied with legitimising their rule over Muslim Arabs by claiming Arab pedigrees. When the Ottoman occupied Suakin, 'Amara Dunqas was said according to tradition, to have sent a genealogy showing his Arab descent to the Ottoman sultan. This, if true, could have been for two reasons; the first was to show that the Fung sultanate was part of Dar al-Islam and to stop the Ottomans from progressing southward to conquer the Fung main domain and the second is to claim their right on the port of Suakin and the eastern desert.

The examination of the careers of the Muslim holy men of the Fung kingdom as recorded in the Tabaqat show that the faith of Islam spread deeply among the people of the kingdom in the early 17th century. From the Fung chronicles it appears that the reign of 'Adlan the 1st in the early 17th century saw a marked increase in number and significance of Muslim missionaries in Sennar. Some came from abroad such as Taj ad-Din al-Bahari who came from Baghdad and introduced the Qadiriya order to Sennar, and Hassan Wad Hassuna al-Andalusi who came from the Maghreb. About the same time the first indigenous holy men appeared in the historical record of Sennar like Mahmoud al 'Araki, Idris Wad al-Arbab and Ibrahim al-Bulad (one of the four sons of Jabir). Though few in number it is highly significant that some of these indigenous holy men had been trained abroad, more than possibly in Egypt. About the middle of the 17th century a new stage was achieved in the advance of Islam. The great majority of holy men were not only indigenous but had received their training within the Fung kingdom.

The form of Islam that prevailed in the 17th century reflected the duality that widespread at that time throughout the Dar al-Islam. Islam in the Fung Kingdom bore the two faces; the orthodox and the ecstatic. Each brought a distinctive set of

institutions; the orthodox emphasised the mosque while the Sufi emphasised the khalwa in which the teacher was a holy man who possesses 'Baraka' (blessing).

The archaeological remains include towns like Old Dongola, Khandaq, Qerri, Sennar, Arbaji, Suakin, Kobbe, Kabkabiyya and Shoba. Fattovich excavations at Mahal Teglinos (kassala) in CE 1984-88, refer to the existence of a Fung site in the southern Gash Delta. The site is known as the Gergaf group and is dated to CE 1500-1800 and was found in the Sahel between Kassala and Khashm al-Girba (Fattovich 1993: 280). Mosques, khalwas and mesids are every where, while qubbas were built throughout the country reflecting the effect of Sufi trend in the Sudan. The 3rd-5th Cataract castles and fortified houses show something of the civil development. Artefactual remains include pottery, glass objects, metal objects, basketry, leather objects, metal objects, wood objects and written documents.

c) West of the Nile Valley: -

Kordofan was disputed territory between the Fung and the Keira, populated in the north by nomads especially the camel owning Kababish, in the central hinterland by the cattle owning Beqqara and in the south by the Nuba of Tegale Mountain kingdom. The latter was subdued to Sennar in CE 1650.

Islam entered Darfur with the Tunjur, one of their early ruler, Ahmed al-Ma'qur was a Muslim. The Tunjur are said to be Berber who had been moved by Banu Hilal pressure in north Africa or people from the Nile (Trimingham 1983: 89). Arkell posits that they came from Tibesti or from Kush (1952: 264) while Udal identified them with the Beja or 'Anaj of Alwa (1998: 168). One of their centres was Uri where remains of a mosque and palace were found. It was strategically placed where Darb al-Arba'in from Egypt and the road from Tripoli via Fezzan and Tibesti met. Between the Tunjur and the Keira dynasties two viceroys from the kingdom of Kanem occupied Uri and drove out the last of Tunjur kings CE 1526-1603. They made Turra their new capital where mosques and palaces were attested archaeologically as well as in the hills near Uri. They were built with red brick (map 2).

The Keira sultanate 1600-1800 remains include palaces, mosques and town sites like Uri, Kabkabiyya and Kobbe. Al-Fashir was founded in CE 1791-2 by Sultan 'Abed al-Rahman. Uri and Kabkabiyya were abandoned consecutively for lack of fresh water while the merchants who moved to al-Fashir abandoned Kobbe the commercial capital. Generally the palaces vary in size as well as mosques. Houses and palaces were reported by early travellers.

In the CE 18th century Kordofan was a Fur province divided into two, the south and the north. It was ruled first by King Sulayman Solong brother or cousin Tunsan known as Musaba'awi (He who went east). The Fung sent two expeditions in CE 1747 and 1750

but were defeated. In CE 1755 Abu Likailik the vizier of the Fung king defeated Musaba'at and himself ruled for the Fung until he overthrew Badi IV and became the King of Sennar. Kordofan remained a Fung province for another 10 years and by CE 1774 Hashim the son of Eisawi of the Musaba'at ruled again until 1786. From that time Kordofan was a province of the Fur. It is important to note that Hashim retreated to Shendi region and with the Shaiqiya support he defeated the Ja'aliyin and founded a new base on West Bank of the Nile. Although finally he was executed by Mek Nimr but his followers continued to live there as cultivators (Spaulding 1985: 391-410). No sites so far have been recognised in Kordofan.

d) South of Latitude 10 N: -

South of Sobat river there is no evidence for Fung control or of the spread of Islam before the 19th century. Muslim traders penetrated this area late 19th and early 20th century but with no intention to propagate for Islam. The main archaeological work so far conducted in southern Sudan revealed the existence of Stone and Iron Age cultures. According to Philipson this area is of major importance of the later prehistory of East Africa as a whole as it borders the Ethiopian high lands (1979: 56-61).

The archaeological work conducted at Debbas near Renk and Malakal as part of studying the every day life within the Fung revealed the presence of Fung potsherds and smoking pipes. The Shilluk in this area are known as using ceremonial stools and as having the tradition of killing the king, which might help in clarifying the identity of the Fung. Ethnoarchaeological and ethnohistorical studies were carried on pottery tradition (David: 1979) and (Siirialinn 1984).

No evidence of major Arab penetration, and if Cohen theory (1973: 114) is to be accepted, that the first Lwoo migration were stimulated probably as result of pressure from peoples to the east. The immigration of Arabs nomads into the northern cattle-keeping zone during the CE 13th-14th centuries must surely have had impact on the western Nilotes. Slave trade before CE 1898 led to the penetration of Arabs which resulted in the disintegration of tribal organisation and the reduction in human and cattle population (Ferguson 1948: 24).

General Remarks: -

1. This review of the nature of Islamic evidence in the Sudan show that it is to be expected that there will be considerable differences in regional material culture, both in time (over 1000years) and space (700,000km). It also to be expected that there will be great differences, except in religious matters, between the sedentary population of the Nile Valley and the savannah and nomads.

In the Nile Valley in Phase III when conditions in the Sanjak of Ibrim and Habesh were so different for over 200 years from those in the Fung kingdom, distinctions should be clearly visible. In the Sanjak under ottoman authority military, financial, legal and religious control meant that centres of population like Qasr Ibrim, el-Dir, Sabua and Suakin would have had residents officials (kashifs), 'Ulama (Qadis and Imams) and Janissaries recruited from all over the Empire as well as merchants and craftsmen from outside Nubia.

Further south, while the Fung kingdom had its trade and pilgrim route through Sennar to Suakin connections with the rest of Dar al-Islam, it was much more isolated than the Sanjaks and developed, like the Islamic sultanates further west in the savannah, a different organisation

2. It is evident from the historical and archaeological evidence that Islam entered the Sudan as early as the 7th century CE and co-existed with Christianity until the end of the Christian kingdom of Makurra. By this time a new era of reforms began with the coming of 'Ulama from Arabia who settled in Dongola region and from there their descendants moved south wards to the Shaiqiya area where they established more khalwas for teaching Quran and other religious sciences. When the Fung kingdom came into existence there was already Muslims in the Gezira and Butana areas, the domain of the Fung. The first Islamic state in the Middle Nile Valley came into being without a '*jihad*' (Holy war) which emphasise the existence of a big Muslim community in the area.

3. In the Sudan in the Islamic period there were four building traditions. In the Nile Valley from 1st-6th Cataract the existing tradition of building rectangular houses in mud brick was continued. The houses were modified to suit Muslim social needs. Barrel vaulting was abandoned south of the third cataract after Phase I in favour of flat roofs. On the Red Sea Coast instead of mud brick coral blocks were used to build rectangular houses, the style was best preserved in Suakin. South of the junction of the Niles, more rains made conical roofs necessary and the Savannah tradition of houses being groups of single room huts placed close together inside a fence continued. House walls were of mud and the roofs of straw. The fourth style, really a variation of style 3, was in Darfur where house walls were built of stone.

4. There is a more wide range of objects that one expect when conducting an archaeological excavation of settlement sites. Objects connected with agriculture like heavy work baskets 'quffa', plaited storage baskets, ropes, hoes, blades of adzes, axes and sickles. The saqiya parts, ropes and *qadus* remains. Sewing, weaving and basket making equipment like awls, needles of wood, iron or bone. Spindle and whorls; the spindles are made out of palm centrum stalks while whorls, the great majority made

from ground down pot sherds and few of gourd and wood as reported from Kulubnarti (Adams 1998: 49).

Other Objects are kept with families or at khalwas such as the kakar, swords, copper objects, and clothes boxes and *nisha* documents.

5. Since Islam entered the Middle Nile Valley from the north and east two different traditions in mosque architecture are visible.

In the north, certainly from 1st-3rd cataract there was a spread of Muslims, mainly merchants and Banu Kanz chiefs and mosques were erected, probably in the Egyptian style. Dated tombstones were used in cemeteries and the Sunni tradition was not followed. No mosques of Phase I and II have survived. In Phase III the Ottoman influence was complete.

In the east, direct contact with Arabia was maintained at 'Aidhab where there were mosques from the 9th century CE. After the destruction of 'Aidhab and the founding of Suakin in the 15th century there were close links with Jeddah and the mosques copied the Arabian models. Through the Red Sea coast Sufi 'Ulama entered the Middle Nile Valley in Phase III resulting in the Fung religious architecture differed from the northern styles both in mosques and gubbas.

West of the Nile in Kordofan and Darfur there was some influence from further west in Wadai especially after the development of a Hajj route from west Africa to Suakin and Masawa'.

It is very evident from the above review that Islamic religious remains in the Sudan vary greatly. There is a wide range of architectural evidence. It is clear that we can recognise Islam in the Sudan from archaeological evidence e.g. different types of qubbas, mosques and khalwas. Thus even in the absence of documentary evidence, which is rare, we can understand Islam in different parts of the Sudan from its material remains. The early and gradual spread of Islam from the north can be deduced from the tombstones, Fatimids manuscripts, early mosques and its relationship with Makurra.

While the earliest evidence of Islam in the east is also from tombstones and manuscripts evidence and its links with 'Alwa demonstrated, the later spread of Sufi 'Ulama through Suakin from Arabia. The material evidence from the Fung kingdom show a different pattern from the northern Sudan which was for so long firmly in Sunni Ottoman control.

6. Military architecture includes forts, castles and tabya after the Mahdiya. They spread in the Nile Valley with more concentration on the fourth and fifth cataracts region. There are few examples from western and eastern Sudan. So far very few objects were reported. This is due mainly to two factors; the first one is that the Islamic sites are still awaiting excavations, and the second factor is that most of these objects are kept with families. A vivid example are the saddle, shield and sword of Mohammed Abd al-Salam from 'Ailafun. He used these objects in the siege of Khartoum during the Mahdiya. They are kept in his descendant's house, hardly taken care off (pl. 2).

The surviving evidence is all from Phase 111, a period in which there was no major wars before the Mahdiya. The introduction and efficient use of firearms gave the Ottoman Sanjak such superiority that it was never challenged by the Fung Kingdom, which only concluded small-scale wars in Kordofan and Ethiopia. The Fung armies and the desert nomads fought in the pre-firearms way into the 19th century.

Concluding Comments:-

1. The territory of the Republic of the Sudan as we know it was never part of an Islamic caliphate, except for the Sanjak of Ibrim and the port of Suakin, which were parts of the Ottoman empire. Thus the architectural and other features we came to associate with Islamic countries do not necessarily obtain in the Sudan. Such Islamic countries lack the magnificent architectural manifestations as well as fine objects which attract the attention of Islamic archaeologists and museum personnel.
2. The first rulers of the Fung sultanate were very occupied with legitimising their rule over Muslim Arabs by encouraging Muslim reformers from abroad and claiming Arab pedigrees more than with building magnificent edifices to the new religion. Actually they had never been exposed to such architecture.
3. The extensive use of mud as the main building material and the abandonment or rebuilding of most earlier structures led to few being available for study today. The greatly increased documentary evidence however, allows the main developments to be understood.
4. The nature of Sufi Islam necessitate simplicity in every thing including structures.
5. Evidence from the Red Sea coast and the eastern desert include the remains of buildings, cisterns, cemeteries, mosques, tombstones and ceramic scatters.
6. Evidence from the Nile Valley includes town sites (pl. 3), mosques, gubbas (pl.4), khalwas, artefactual remains such as pottery glass and documents.
7. West of the Nile, no sites so far have been recognised in Kordofan. As for Darfur, evidence include palaces and mosques.
8. The objects that are only likely to be found in the excavation of settlements and abandoned sites of Khalwas are the following: -
 - i) Objects connected with administration like the kakar (pl.5), sceptres, seals and documents.
 - ii) Objects connected with military activities like forearms, swords, spears, kettledrums, saddles, shields chainmail, and helmets.
 - iii) Objects connected with household like furniture; doors, locks, keys, beds, mats, spinning and weaving equipment, perfume containers, leather skirts (rahat).

- iv) Objects connected with religious rituals like prayer mats, rosaries, ablution pitchers, hijabs, loah(wooden slate).
- v) Objects connected with agriculture and animal husbandry like saqiya, adzes, sickles, ropes, baskets, tattering pegs, harnesses.
- vi) Personal belongings like clothes male and female, jewellery(glass and metal), shoes, smoking pipes, daggers and sheaths (fig 1).
- vii) Food debris which includes plant and animal remains.
- viii) Nomads camping sites like knee hobbles, herdsman pipes, bullets, water skin, daggers and sheaths.

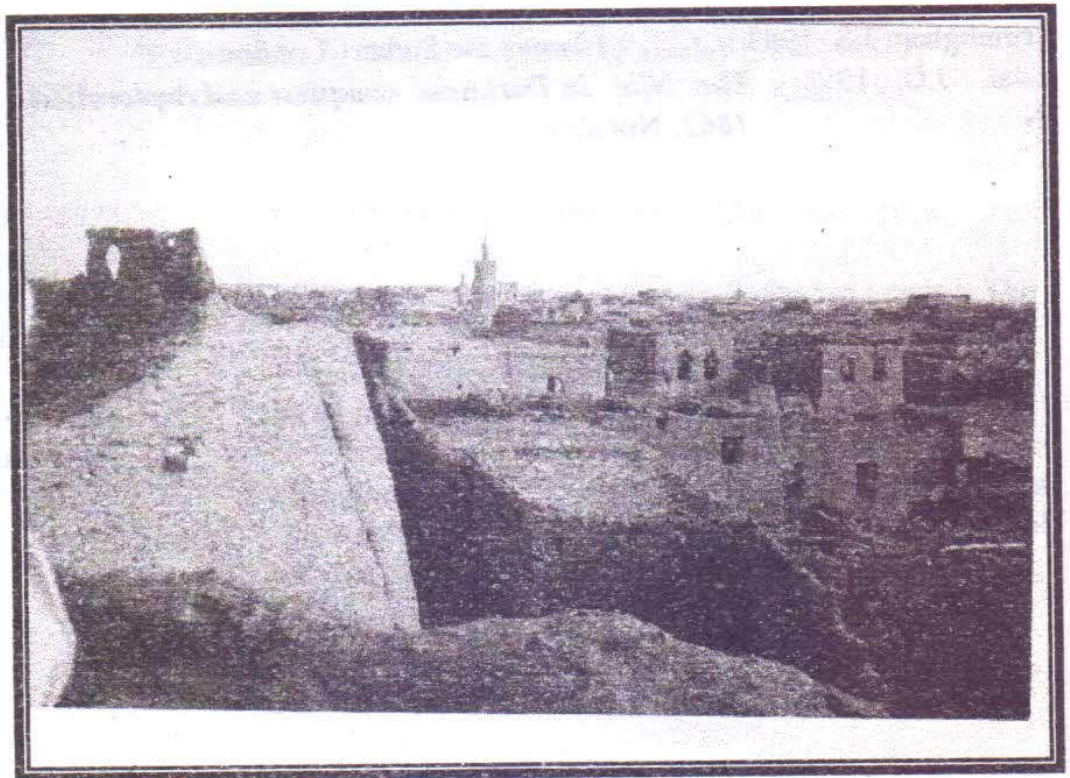
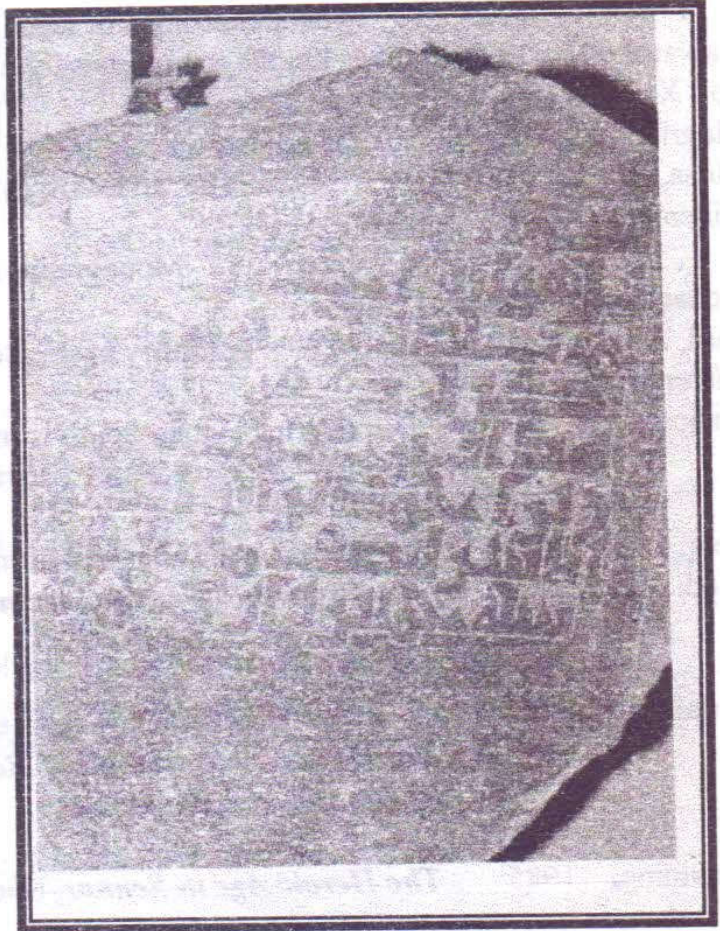
9..It is obvious that the state of research is in its very beginning. The international view of Islamic archaeology as provider of fine objects to museums and the concentration of magnificent buildings of the Islamic caliphate has its disastrous effect on the development of this science. Thus no attempts were made towards the understanding of the social context of any site, the ordinary life of the people and no consideration is given to Islamic countries of Sub-Saharan Africa which were never ruled by the Islamic caliphate. Towards this better understanding we have the pioneer work of T.Insoll in Mali and his general study of the archaeology of Islam.

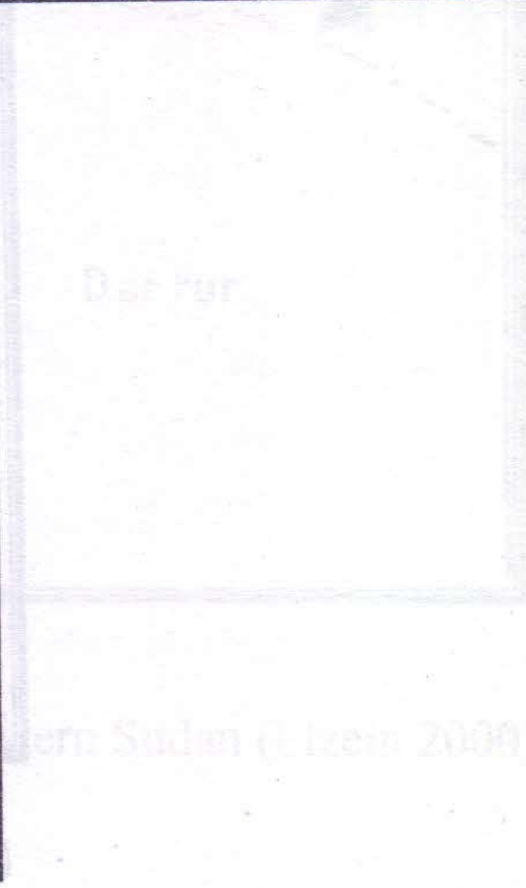
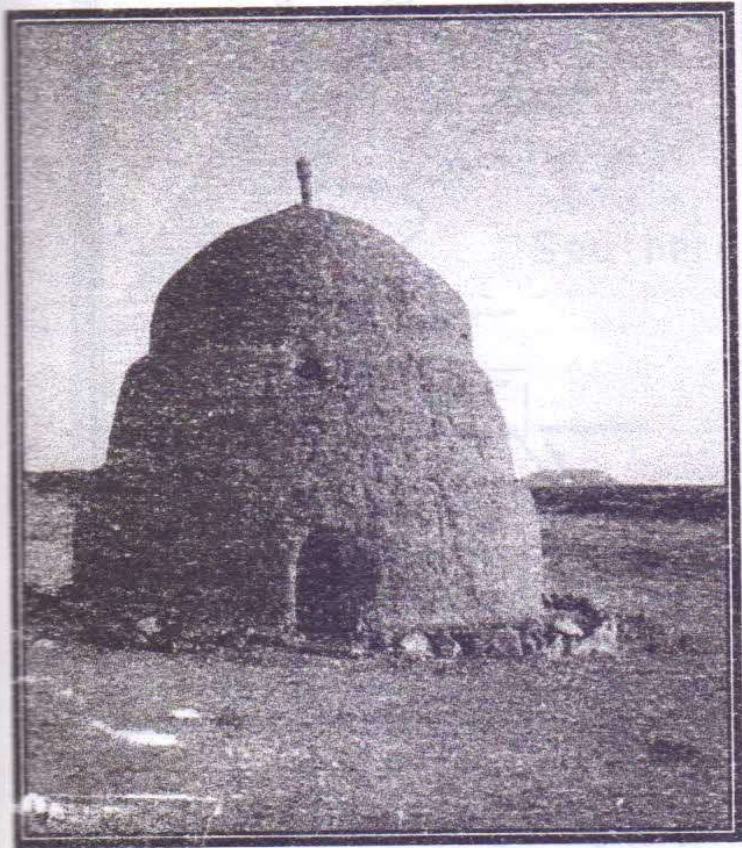
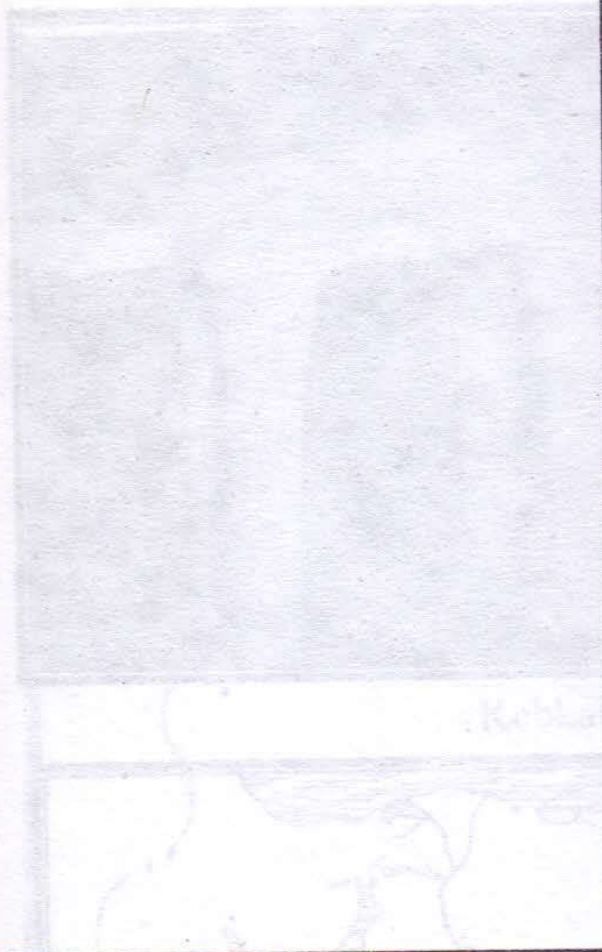
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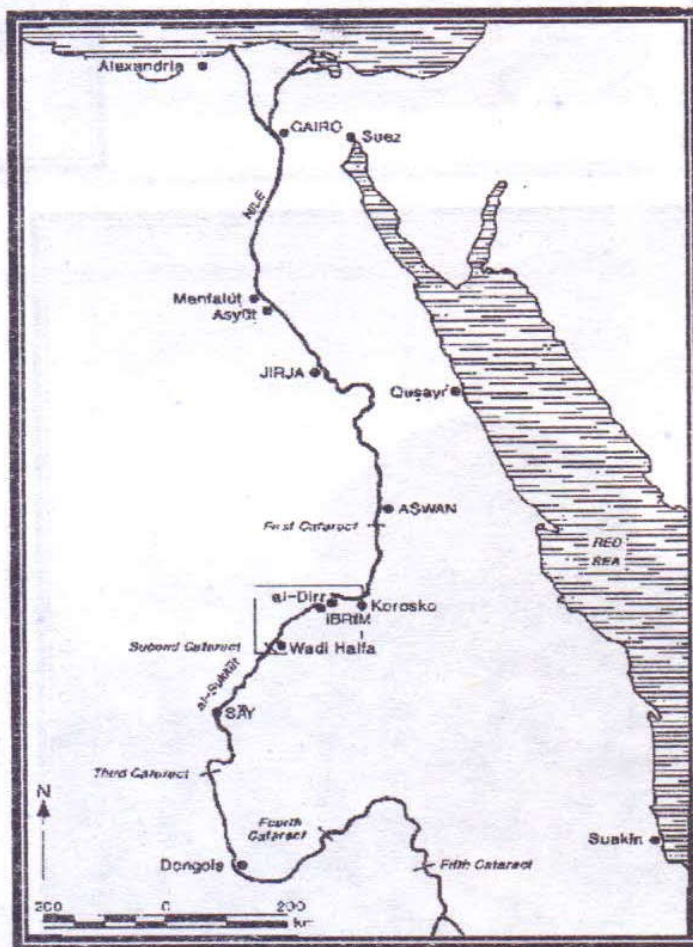
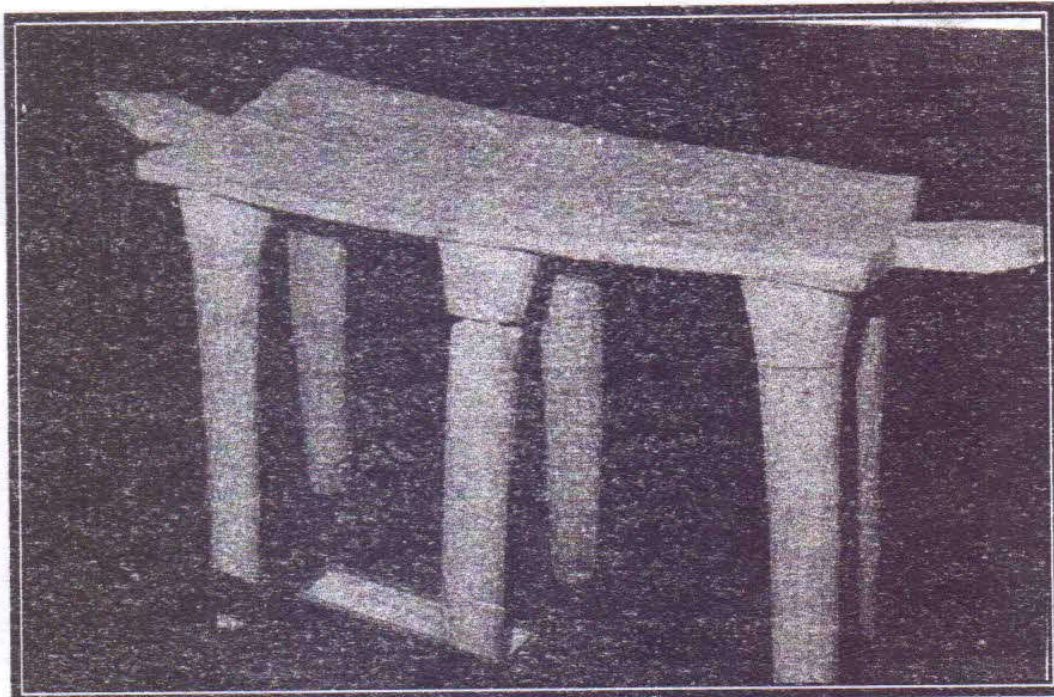
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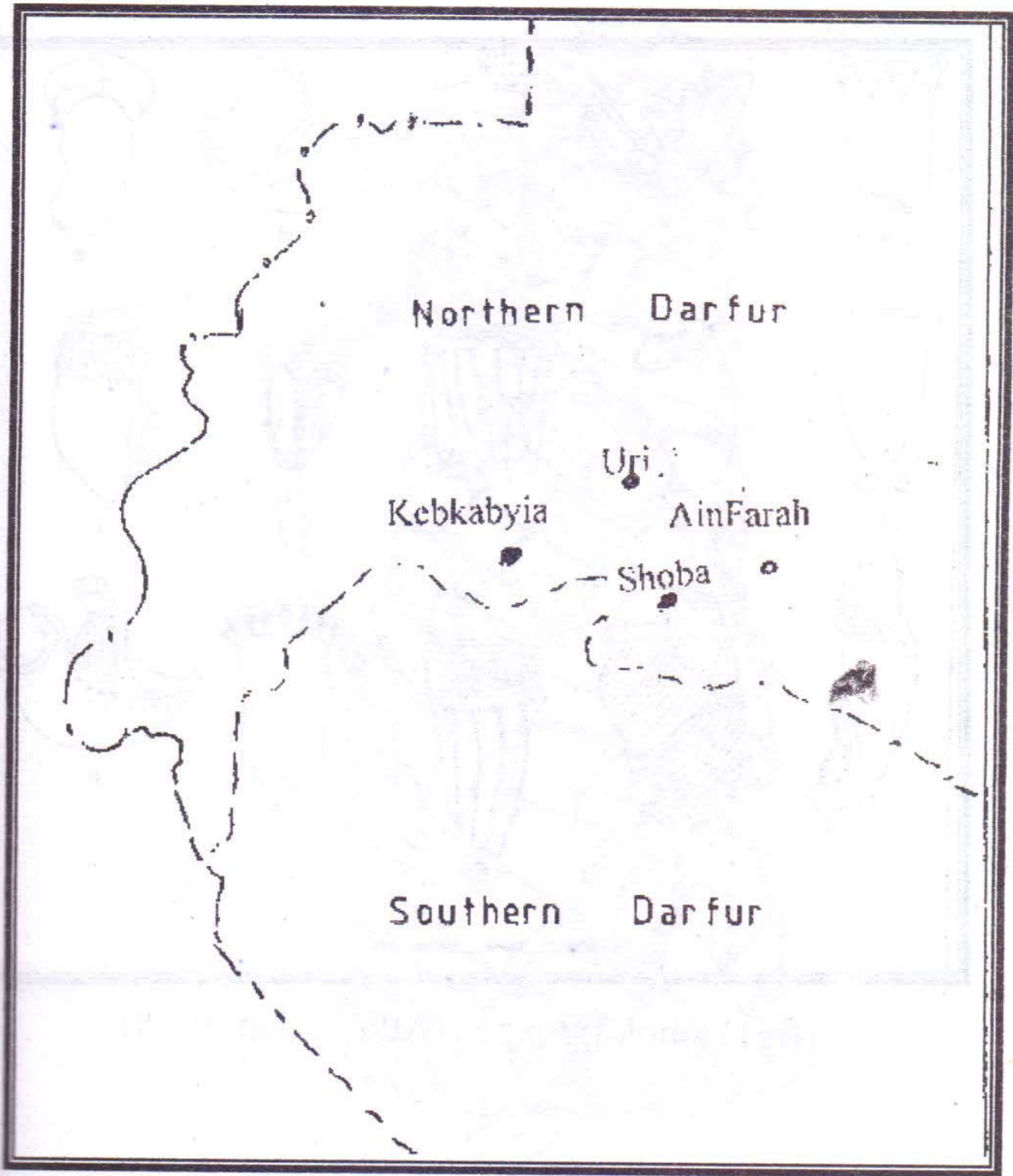
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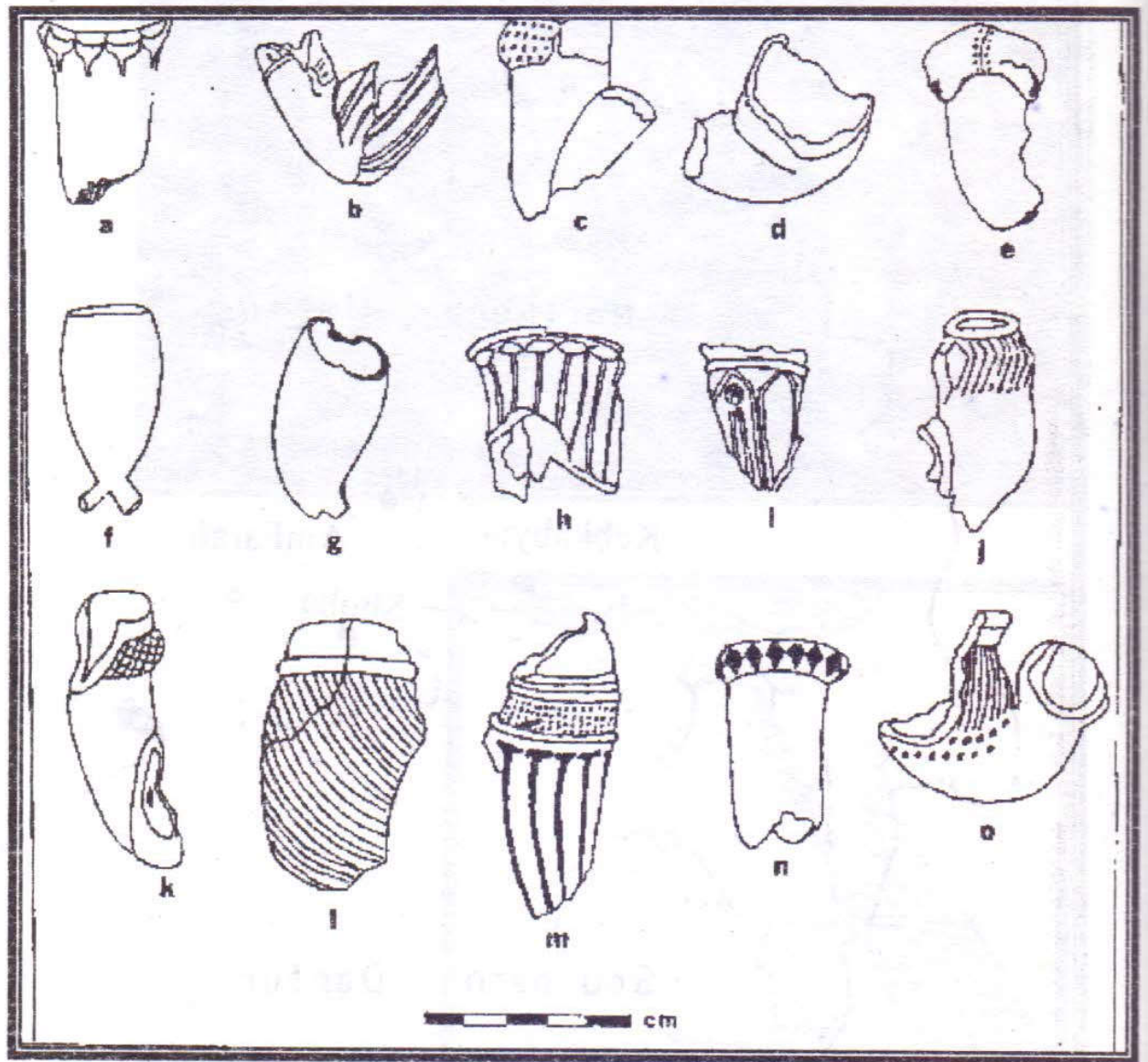




Map 1 (after Alexander 1997)

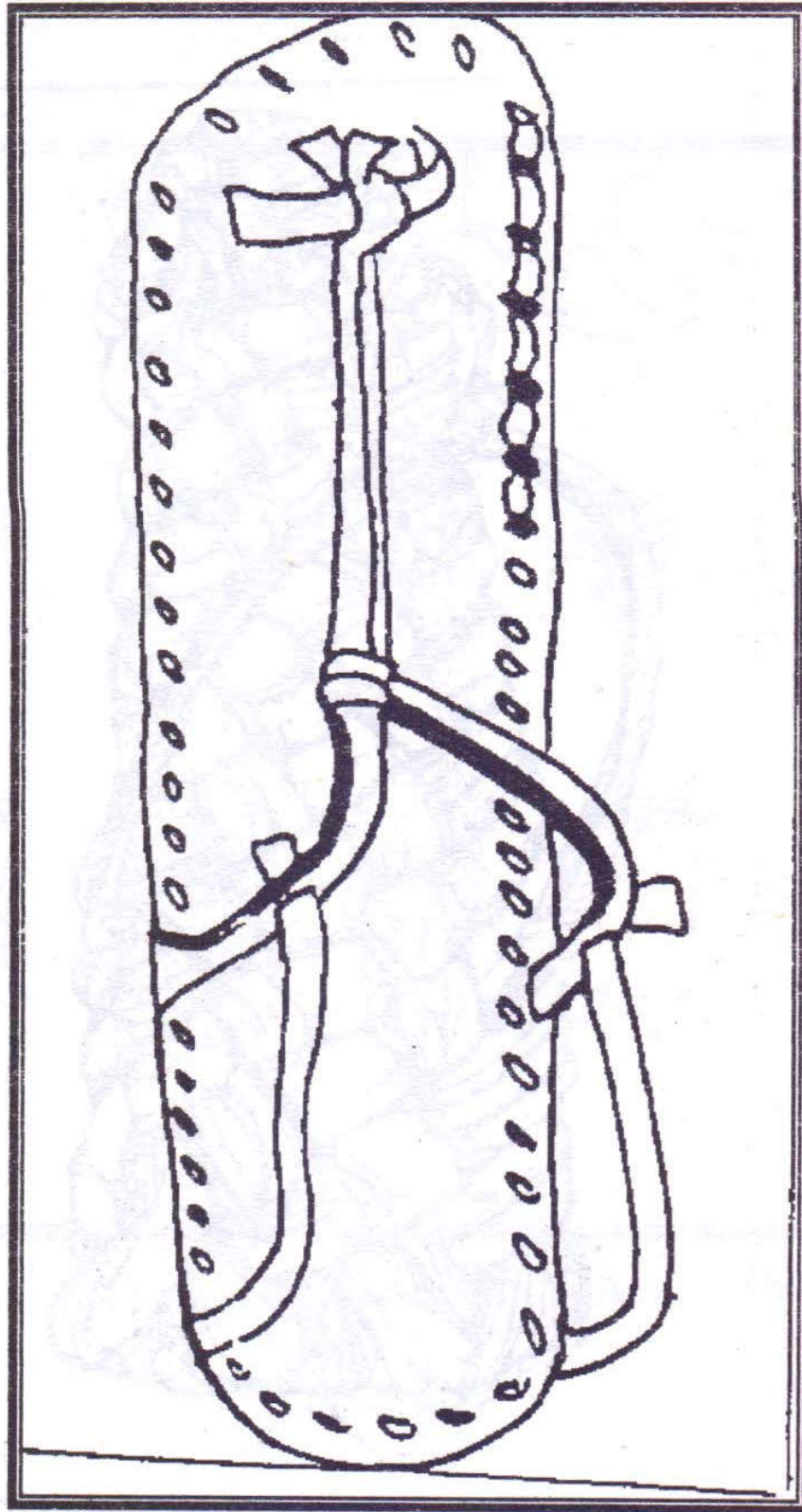


Map (2) settlement sites of the western Sudan (Elzein 2000)



(fig1) smoking pipes (Atlas Adans1998)





(Fig 2) Sandals (after Adams 1998)