

Archaeological Perspectives on Conversion to Islam and Islamisation in Africa



European Research Council
Established by the European Commission



UNIVERSITY OF
EXETER

17-18 December 2019



Archaeological Perspectives on Conversion to Islam and Islamisation in Africa
17-18 December 2019

Date	Time	Activity
16 th December	1900	Opening Dinner: The Hour Glass, 21 Melbourne St, Exeter EX2 4AU
17 th December	0915-0930	Conference opening
	0930-1000	Paper 1. Archaeological Perspectives on Islam and Islamisation in Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa. Timothy Insoll
	1000-1030	Paper 2. Archaeological Perspectives on Islam and Islamisation on the northern Swahili Coast. Mark Horton
	1030-1045	Questions
	1045-1115	Tea
	1115-1145	Paper 3. Archaeological Perspectives on Islam and Islamisation on the southern Swahili Coast. Stephanie Wynne-Jones
	1145-1215	Paper 4. Archaeological Perspectives on Islam and Islamisation in the Comoros and Madagascar. Chantal Radimilahy
	1215-1230	Questions
	1230-1330	Lunch
	1330-1400	Paper 5. Archaeological Perspectives on Islam and Islamisation in Nubia. Artur Obluski
	1400-1430	Paper 6. Archaeological Perspectives on Islam and Islamisation in the Maghreb. Corisande Fenwick
	1430-1445	Questions
	1445-1515	Coffee
	1515-1545	Paper 7. Archaeological Perspectives on Islam and Islamisation in Egypt. Alison Gascoigne
	1545-1615	Paper 8. Archaeological Perspectives on Islam and Islamisation on the African Red Sea Coast. John Cooper
	1615-1630	Questions and Comments



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	1830-2100	Conference Dinner: TBD
18 th December	0915-0945	Paper 9. Archaeological Perspectives on Islam and Islamisation in the Central Sahel. Carlos Magnavita
	0945-1015	Paper 10. Archaeological Perspectives on Islam and Islamisation in the West African Sahel. Mamadou Cissé
	1015-1030	Questions
	1030-1100	Tea
	1100-1130	Paper 11. Archaeological Perspectives on Islam and Islamisation in the West African Savanna and Forest. Kevin MacDonald
	1130-1200	Paper 12. Archaeological Perspectives on Islam and Islamisation in Southern Africa. Shadreck Chirikure
	1200-1230	Paper 13. Archaeological Perspectives on Islam and Islamisation in Central Africa. Noemie Arazi
	1230-1330	Questions
	1330-1400	Lunch
	1400-1430	Paper 14. A Historian's Perspective on the Archaeology of Islam and Islamisation in sub-Saharan Africa. Andrew Peacock
	1430-1500	Paper 15. An Anthropologist's Perspective on the Archaeology of Islam and Islamisation in sub-Saharan Africa. Tal Tamari
	1500-1515	Questions
	1515-1600	Final Discussion
	1600-1630	Coffee and Conference Ends
	1800	Closing Dinner: Comptoir Libanais, Queen St, Exeter EX4 3HP



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Abstracts:

Archaeological Perspectives on Islam and Islamisation in Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa

Timothy Insoll, Centre for Islamic Archaeology, University of Exeter

Established models proposed to explain Islamisation in sub-Saharan Africa often invoke phases or stages. Their utility varies, but they often fail to acknowledge local cultural adaptations, staggered chronologies, and syncretic processes, and their operation within local or regional contexts. These models will be briefly explored in relation to interpreting the archaeology of Islamisation in Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa. They seem to fit where the data is sparse (or primarily epigraphic), and broad interpretations can be proposed, but when the archaeological data becomes more fine-grained they become less applicable. Recent excavations at Harlaa and Harar in eastern Ethiopia provide an example of where understanding of the relevant archaeological record has progressed significantly. This is allowing both an evaluation of how and why people became Muslim. The site of Harlaa will be introduced and a summary of the different categories of evidence recovered provided; architectural, burial, trade, industrial, epigraphic, faunal, and botanical. This evidence suggests that the initial agents of Islamisation in the mid-12th century appear to have foreign, likely Arabs, possibly Indians, as well as other Africans from the east African coast. There were local converts too, but further south in the Tchercher Mountains and east in the Harar region, Islamisation appears to have stalled until the 15th century. Trade goods found in non-Muslim burial contexts in the Tchercher mountains indicate contacts with Islamised Harlaa but these were not accompanied by conversion to Islam. Whilst Harar, contrary to local traditions, did not become an established urban centre until after the abandonment of Harlaa also in the 15th century. Finally, working hypotheses will be advanced to suggest why this hiatus existed, and why Islamisation suddenly progressed from the 15th century.

Archaeological Perspectives on Islam and Islamisation on the Northern Swahili Coast

Mark Horton, University of Bristol

In the 1980s the excavations at Shanga revealed a series of timber mosques built below the 10th century stone mosque that still remains on the site today. Careful stratigraphic analysis produced a sequence of structures extending into the 8th century. Dating was estimated by 5 x 14C dates from critical levels, using the conventional method of dating, using the best calibration curve at the time. The starting point of this paper will be several new dates, obtained using AMS, on samples that were retained since the 1980's. Using these, and the recalibration of original dates and Bayesian modelling will enable a reconsideration of the chronology of the Shanga mosques and thus the earliest evidence for Islam on the East African coast. With these new dates, the paper will examine the various historical models proposed for the spread of Islam to East Africa. In particular I will examine what we now know about the chronology of international trade and will argue that the most likely factors behind the spread of Islam, and its acceptance by coastal communities, are these trade connections.



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Archaeological Perspectives on Islam and Islamisation on the Southern Swahili Coast

Stephanie Wynne-Jones, University of York

Approaches to conversion on the Swahili coast have tended to focus on the identification of different sects, assuming a north-south spread of Islam from various locations in the Persian Gulf and Hadramawt. The evidence for this is sought in the record of mosque architecture and burial, as well as less directly through evidence for trading connections. This connectivity is well established, with Islam seen to accompany and facilitate commerce. In this paper I would like to take a different approach to thinking about Islam and Islamisation in the Kilwa archipelago and – by extension – the southern Swahili coast. Traces of evidence for a southern circuit linked to Sunni Shafi'i Islam will be reported to suggest alternative dynamics and networks of scholarship and conversion. These do not follow the traditional geographies of trade and seem to be linked to different types of elite activity such as feasting and consumption. These connections will also be explored in the context of archaeological evidence for memorialisation at Kilwa's neighbouring site of Songo Mnara, where activities around tombs suggest ritual practice and a key role for sharif's tombs in the life of the town.

Archaeological Perspectives on Islam and Islamisation in the Comoros and Madagascar

Chantal Radimilahy, University Museum Antananarivo, Madagascar

Islam seems to be present in Northern Madagascar and in the nearby Comoros already by the 8th century CE if we take into account archaeological remains. However, it is only around the 11th and 12th century CE that we have numerous materials demonstrating presence of Islamised people, the Swahili, in the western basin of the Indian Ocean. In Madagascar, along the northern coasts and in Comoro archipelago, archaeological sites are known from excavations. In Northern Madagascar, we have the towns and trade-ports called « échelles » by Verin (1975, 1986), founded by Islamised known locally as Antalaotse or Antalaotra “people of the sea” (from *laotse/laut* meaning sea, ocean in Indonesian). In fact, the term is firstly related to a way of life. The Antalaotra culture reaches its peak with Mahilaka, Kingany or Langany on north west or in the sites of Benavony, Vohemar (Iharana) on north east. The Antalaotra culture possibly at the origin of the Islamised archaeological sites known in the Comoro archipelago, was engaged in trade network and exported various products: stones (rock crystal), chlorite schist, rice, cattle, wood, slaves and other products such turtles or copal gum, etc. The importation included ceramic from Middle East and China, glasses, beads and other jewels, textiles, metals, etc. The iron metallurgy and production of precious metals were among activities as well as farming, fishing ... In the middle of the towns were mosques and stone buildings. Although Islamised people have extended their activities and presence further south since the beginning (9th century CE), Islam as a religion is not as developed as in Northern parts of Madagascar. Also, regarding cultural heritage, the practising the Islam is different between Madagascar and Comoros and between the different islands of this archipelago. In Comoros, the islamisation of the state is a recognised fact, nowadays.



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Archaeological Perspectives on Islam and Islamisation in Nubia

Artur Obluski, Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology, University of Warsaw

In Nubia, the earliest archaeological evidence of Islam can be dated to the 9th century and is found in the north and east (tombstones in Lower Nubia and Khor el-Nubt). Historical narratives claim that a town quarter of Soba, the capital of Alwa, was inhabited by Arab/Islamic traders. It appears, however, that in the time of Christian kingdoms Islamisation took the form of individual conversions and migrations and did not occur on a broader scale due to resistance of the kings of Makuria and Alwa. It was not until the early 14th century and the instalment of converts on the royal throne of Dongola that a meaningful signal of coming change could be seen. The early 15th century saw the arrival of Yemeni missionaries, who established religious schools. With the fall of the kingdoms of Makuria and Alwa, the political obstacle to the spread of Islam in Nubia disappeared.

Archaeological research on the early modern era in Sudan, the time when conversion to Islam gained momentum, is in its infancy. There are still few answers to fundamental questions concerning religious change. What was the nature of the conversion process? How long did it last? Did it occur in a uniform manner and at the same pace throughout? All these questions lie at the core of the research project funded by the ERC Starting Grant, UMMA. One of its key aims is to determine how conversion to Islam proceeded in an urban setting, in a community of a former capital of a kingdom that had turned into a city-state. One of the research avenues to pursue is the dichotomy between official conversion and massive conversion of the society. Material culture studies may shed light on religious change through analysis of house inventories seeking evidence of conversion on household level.

Archaeological Perspectives on Islam and Islamisation in the Maghreb

Corisande Fenwick, University College London, Institute of Archaeology

This paper proposes a new chronological framework for understanding the spread of Islam in medieval North Africa. Through the archaeological evidence of mosque construction, church abandonment and dietary change, it will provide a regional overview of how and when Islam displaced Christianity and paganism to become the dominant religion in North Africa at the regional level. It proposes that North Africa had a Muslim majority by the ninth century, rather than the late tenth-eleventh century date often proposed on the basis of textual sources. The evidence suggests that the chronology of conversion differs between those regions under Byzantine rule (eastern Algeria, Tunisia, coastal Libya), and those ruled by Berber chiefdoms in late antiquity. Much of the latter converted in the eighth century, whereas the ninth century marks the mass conversion of town dwellers from the Byzantine core and a first period of crisis for Christianity. This early conversion was an important factor in the collapse of the caliphate in North Africa and the emergence of successor states that used Islam as the main idiom through which to establish and legitimize their right to rule. It concludes by looking closely at the site of Walila (Volubilis) in Morocco where archaeological investigations provide detailed information on how and why people became Muslim in the eighth and ninth century and the implications for funerary practices, dietary habits and everyday activities.



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Archaeological Perspectives on Conversion and Islamisation in Egypt

Alison L. Gascoigne, Department of Archaeology, University of Southampton

The political realignment of the Middle East in the seventh century gave rise to more gradual changes in the material cultural of the region. Over some three centuries or more, significant developments and innovations took place across many spheres of activity. These included both elements requiring organisation (or at least cooperation) at the level of the ruling elite (major architectural projects, central urban redesigns, administrative reorganisations) and those that might be termed more informal or ‘self-organising’ (changes to the ceramic repertoire, alterations to residential spaces and informal economic urban areas), many of which have frequently been interpreted through the lens of social emulation, as well as conversion. The relationship between the adoption of new forms of material behaviour, and the nature of religious belief at the level of the individual and/or the community, is notoriously challenging to unpick. The construction of religious buildings is one of the few aspects that can be considered as an explicit footprint of religious identity, although even mosque construction need not relate to conversion, whether real or aspirational. Likewise, church construction in the early Islamic era may represent implicit resistance to conversion, although some scholarly narratives prefer to interpret it as the reexpression of Monophysite religious identity that had been suppressed in the immediate pre-conquest period. Unequivocal archaeological expressions of the conversion of Egypt to Islam are, thus, largely intangible. Perhaps a more profitable approach to the question can be found in the identification of patterns of change across multiple spheres of activity, with explicit consideration of regional differences, that might allow some tentative conclusions to be drawn regarding the rate and nature of, and vectors for, conversion in this important province of the Islamic world. This paper will thus present a survey of current archaeological evidence relating to this topic, including results from the author’s own fieldwork at sites including Fustat/Old Cairo, Tinnis and Aswan.

Archaeological Perspectives on Islam and Islamisation on the African Red Sea Coast

John P. Cooper, Centre for Islamic Archaeology, University of Exeter

The conquest of Egypt through Sinai by the land-based Arab cavalry forces of ‘Umar ibn al-‘As stands at the canonical heart of the historical narrative around the introduction of Islam to Egypt, and thence to North Africa and beyond. It was indeed this army that brought about the toppling of Byzantine authority in Egypt, centred on Alexandria, and established an Islamic emirate at Fustat on the Nile, under the tutelage of the Caliph in Medina in the first instance. However pre-existing, pre-Islamic connections between the Hijaz and Egypt across the Red Sea played an essential and under-appreciated role in the cementing of Islamic dominance over the Nile valley, and hence in the onward spread of Islam into Africa more broadly. On the one hand, the Caliph Umar’s shrewd re-excavation of a former canal between Nile and the Red Sea at al-Qulzum (Suez) secured the stability, through food security, of the emergent Islamic heartlands in the face of Egyptian resistance. On the other, a second, more diffuse, process of Arab-Islamic incursion also took place across the Red Sea directly into Egypt’s Eastern Desert, building on maritime links that were probably already in place before the emergence of Islam. This ultimately depended on a suitable harbour on Egypt’s Red Sea coast through which



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contact could take place, with the name ‘Aydhab eventually emerging as the toponym for this harbour: Today it is a little-understood site in the Egyptian-held Halaib Triangle. ‘Aydhab in turn depended on the maintenance of a network of desert routes connecting it to the Nile, and ultimately on the Eastern Desert’s mineral wealth—particularly its gold mines—which provided the political and economic rationale for the whole. This paper assesses the archaeological evidence for Egyptian-Hijazi maritime connections via both the Gulf of Suez and the Eastern Desert shore, and their role in the secure establishment of Islam in Egypt.

Archaeological perspectives on Islam and Islamisation in the Central Sahel

Carlos Magnavita, Frobenius-Institut, Goethe-Universität Frankfurt

The early introduction and dissemination of the Islamic faith into a large part of the Central Sahel intrinsically relate to the growth of the Kanem-Borno Kingdom (8th-19th centuries). Situated around Lake Chad, Kanem-Borno was one of the largest and longest-lived pre-colonial states from sub-Saharan Africa and the most influential polity from the central *Bilad al-Sudan*. In view of its privileged position at the southern terminus of the major central trans-Saharan route, the state early became Islam's front door to the region. According to the available historical record, the religion officially entered the area in the middle of the 11th century, when the first Kanem-Borno rulers converted. For the subsequent centuries, we have a number of external and internal documents that allow some interpretations on the progress of Islam in the royal court and beyond. Overall, the picture is one in which proponents of the new religion and the new way of life long and actively struggled, with varying success, against traditional beliefs and practices within and outside the aristocratic circles.

Whilst written sources provide valuable information on the early (11th-14th c.) and late (15th-19th c.) fortunes of Islam both in Kanem-Borno and in neighbouring states, little is known archaeologically of those developments. Notwithstanding the existence in the Central Sahel of relatively well-preserved religious and other architectural remains dating to the early and the late periods mentioned, hardly any effort have been thus far made to investigate them. Surprisingly indeed, though a couple of test-excavations were conducted at very few sites in the region, the ruins of religious structures were never investigated. Focusing on the Lake Chad surroundings where more recent survey work has been accomplished, the paper highlights and discusses the unexplored archaeological potential of sites and structures related to the introduction and spread of Islam, concomitantly addressing future directions of research.

Archaeological Perspectives on Islam and Islamisation in the West African Sahel

Mamadou Cissé, Chief of the Cultural Mission of Kangaba, Mali

This paper presents a broad overview of the recent excavations conducted at many sites from the West African Sahel, focusing particularly on archaeological evidence for Islam and contacts with the Islamic World during the early Islamic era (c. AD 700 – 1500). Early historical sources including those written in Arabic, and the two seventeenth-century Songhay chronicles written in Arabic (*Tarikh Es-Sudan* and *Tarikh El Fettash*) will be considered as well to clarify certain



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aspects of the reconstruction of the history of dynasties and Islamisation processes through trade, proselytization and slavery within West African Sahel.

Excavations at numerous sites within West Africa, such as Gao Saney, Gao Ancien, Kumbi Saleh, Es-Souk-Tadmekka, Awdaghost, Sincu Bara, Dia, revealed the presence of direct evidence for Islam and indirect evidence for contacts with the Islamic World. Many archaeological remains, including mosques and other architectural remains, inscriptions, burials and funerary monuments, and complete settlements, were documented during the various investigations. Additionally, many imported products, such as glass vessels and glass beads, copper and glazed ceramic from the early Islamic Trans-Saharan trade, found in numerous archaeological deposits in West Africa dating from 8th -15th c. AD, show the involvement in the long distance trade networks with the Islamic World during the early Islamic era.

The chemical analysis of lead isotope samples of first millennium copper and glass from the excavations at many sites from the West African Sahel shows that the chemical compositions of these trade goods are very similar to those found in large workshops of copper ores in North Africa and in the Middle East glass production centers. These analyzes show that the raw materials for the production of copper objects and glass beads and also some of the finished products come from North Africa and the Middle East (Egypt and Near East in particular).

These data, gathered in the course of archaeological excavations at many sites from the West African Sahel, provide a better understanding of the process of implantation of Islam and also advances our knowledge of the development of early Islamic Trans-Saharan trade and exchange networks between the early trading *entrepôt* from West Africa and other trading centers in Islamic World.

Archaeological Perspectives on Islam and Islamisation in the West African Savanna and Forest

Kevin C. MacDonald, University College London, Institute of Archaeology

Notwithstanding attestations by Al-Bakri (AD 1040-41) of widespread Islamic conversion at the polities of Takrūr and Silā along the Senegal River, it is evident that such early conversions to Islam in the Savanna were sometimes temporary and frequently patchy. For example, the Senegal river valley has evidence for monumental burial ritual in the eleventh and subsequent centuries where individuals are interred with rich grave goods, and other offerings, beneath substantial tumuli. To this same end – and despite contemporary claims - it seems unlikely that imperial Mali was initially an Islamic polity, only moving (in part) to that position in the time of later monarchs like Mansa Musa (c. AD 1312-37) who undertook the hajj. Islamisation in the Savanna and Forest was thus relatively slow-moving and surprisingly accommodating via syncretic processes with local spiritual traditions - as can be viewed in aspects of historical material culture related to maraboutism. In more recent times, from the seventeenth century onwards, there were upswellings of *Bamanaya*, magico-religious faiths utilising shrines and ‘cult’ activity, in open conflict with waves of Islamic jihadism (e.g. the Umarian movement). Despite this, polities such as Segou retained both mosques and non-Islamic shrines, often in the same town.



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This paper will survey oral and written sources for Islamisation in this region, cross-indexed with archaeological findings, historic structures and material culture. Although providing an evaluation for the region as a whole, particular scrutiny will be given to the Empire of Mali and the historic polities of Waalo (Senegal) and Segou (Mali), where the author has undertaken long term and ongoing fieldwork.

Archaeological Perspectives on Islam and Islamisation in Southern Africa

Shadreck Chirikure, British Academy Global Professor, Department of Archaeology, University of Cape Town

When did Islam first spread to southern Africa, at the coast and in the hinterland? As a follow on, what are the fingerprints, material and non-material, of the Islamisation process? These questions while pertinent, are not easy to address, due to a combination of patchy evidence and historically shifting research priorities. Research foci on the interaction between southern Africa and the Islamic world has traditionally been trade-centric. Consequently, more is known about exotica and local commodities that characterised the commercial traffic within the southern Indian Ocean than on the interchange of faiths, beliefs and ideas that formed part of the same exchange system. This contribution engages archaeological evidence to explore, within contextual variation, the unfolding process of Islamisation in coastal and interior southern Africa. It shows that Islam was first introduced to the Mozambican coast by the end of the first millennium AD and flourished with varying degrees of intensity until the present. Questions however still remain as to whether Islam has ever penetrated the interior states such as Mapungubwe (AD1200-1300), Great Zimbabwe (AD1000 – 1700), and the Mutapa (AD1450 – 1900) or any historically overlapping social formations. The establishment of the Dutch settlement at Cape Town from AD 1700 onwards prompted an influx of Islamic people from Asia who settled, built mosques and spread their faith. However, it was the boom in industrial development prompted by 19th century industrialisation and colonisation that prompted a large scale and sustained trans-regional and trans-continental labour migration which brought Muslims, both from African shores and outside of it, resulting in the continued spread of Islam across the region. The paper concludes that Islam and Islamisation is a major historical phenomenon that shaped, based on context, the evolution of southern African communities, past and present than a narrow focus on commerce can ever allow.

Archaeological Perspectives on Islam and Islamisation in Central Africa

Noemie Arazi (Groundworks, Université Libre de Bruxelles), Igor Matonda (Université de Kinshasa), Olivier Mulumbwa (Université de Lubumbashi) & Alexandre Smith (Royal Museum of Central Africa, Université Libre de Bruxelles, Gaes Wits)

The history of Islam in Central Africa is rich, complex and dramatic. During the second half of the 19th century its diffusion is closely associated with pre-existing social interaction networks as is often the case with the diffusion of ideas. In this case, in Central Africa Islam followed the paths developed by adventurous traders/warlords interested in ivory and slaves. They emerged from three great domains: The North West around Lake Chad, the North East around South-Western Sudan and the East around the Zanzibar city states. From these power bases they tapped deep into Central Africa for its resources and connected this part of the world



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with the trade networks of the Sahara, the Nile Valley and the Indian Ocean. However, this vast web of interactions left scant archaeological traces, which poses challenges for the study of Islam and its materiality. In this presentation we will focus on the Eastern part of Central Africa. Archaeological traces being almost inexistent, historical records remain one of the most important source materials. But it will be shown that they have shaped a stereotypical image of an 'Arab' zone of war, slavery and cannibalism, which has been further accentuated by the colonial powers' containment of Islam and their lack of studies on its socio-cultural legacies. Archaeological evidence alone might not be able to reverse this image and lack of knowledge. To go further, one needs to combine it with the collection of oral histories and memories, participant observation, archival research, and recent anthropological and historical scholarship. It will be argued that this hybrid praxis might reveal a more complete view of the Muslim presence and its materiality in Central Africa.

A Historian's Perspective on the Archaeology of Islam and Islamisation in Sub-Saharan Africa

Andrew Peacock, School of History, University of St Andrews

Scholarship on Islam and Islamisation in Africa has traditionally been based on written and oral sources and anthropological evidence, for example the studies of Trimingham, Levtzion and Horton. In East Africa, however, archaeology has played a more prominent role in the study of Islam, and more recent archaeological work has addressed the spread of Islamic material culture in a wider range of locations. Clearly, archaeology offers considerable potential to address Islam and Islamisation in a region which is traditionally considered to have an uneven written record, with the textual evidence on which historians of the Islamic world have traditionally relied less evident (although not always as lacking as sometimes assumed). In this paper I examine the contribution of archaeology to the study of Islam and Islamisation in Africa by considering how it compels us to reassess our understanding based on literary sources, and the new perspectives it can open up, in particular on social change over the longue durée and the characteristics of the built environment. The paper will focus on evidence from the Sudan, both Nubia and the Red Sea coast, although I will also compare the situation with other parts of Africa including East and west Africa, where the evidence and sources present different problems. This paper will also examine the question of cultural synthesis, an explanatory device commonly used in the archaeological literature, but one which has recently been questioned by historical scholarship dealing with other parts of the Islamic world.

An Anthropologist's Perspective on the Archaeology of Islam and Islamisation in Sub-Saharan Africa

Tal Tamari, Research Director, Institute of African Worlds, CNRS Paris

This presentation will begin by analysing the extensive literature on the relationships between history and archaeology and on ethnoarchaeology, before broadening the discussion to cover anthropology and linguistics. Archaeology unearths material "facts" that are notoriously difficult to interpret; these "facts" are most useful when datable with reasonable certainty. Archaeological findings may bring total surprises (pointing to developments that could not be inferred from any other sources), confirm interpretations suggested on the basis of other



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sources, or significantly modify the time framework envisaged on the basis of such sources. With respect to the process of “becoming Muslim”, the presenter will work through the published results of archaeological investigations conducted in Mali (especially but not limited to the Dia, Djenné, Ségou, and Gao areas) to determine how they articulate with evidence from oral traditions and written sources, and recent or still observable patterns of Islamisation. In particular, we will search for evidence concerning such matters as: the relative importance of commercial, military, and political factors in Islamisation; coexistence of Muslim and non-Muslim groups (with mutual cultural influence); fluctuations in religious identity over time; how some apparently non-Muslim objects and monuments may be indicative of Muslim cultural influence.



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Notes: