

Preliminary Remarks on Aspects of Indo-Sudanese Contacts Since Ancients Times*

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Abstract:

This study is an attempt to shed light on the contacts between India and Sudan since the ancient times. The study begins to explore the existence of a direct contacts between india and the Kingdom of Kush. Studies recognizes the existence of “extraneous influences” in the Meroetic culture which are neither Egyptian nor European. It is attributed to an eastern origin. The cumulative effect of the oriental (including Indian) influences at Meroe is small when compared to the Egyptian and Greco-Roman influences.

The ancient and ever growing commercial transactions between India and Sudan had developed to such an extent that Sudanese traders began to tap the Indian source of the eastern trade at Surat itself.

The study reveals the contacts between Sudan and India in women’s costumes, Saj Beds, and probably in the realm of Islamic sufism (mysticism), especially the Qadiriyya order, that some Indian scholars and sufi leaders left an impact on local *sufi* leaders and were instrumental in the dissemination of *sufism* during the Funj era.

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المستخلص:

تحاول هذه الورقة أن تسلط الضوء على الاتصال بين الهند والسودان منذ أقدم العصور. وقد بدأت الورقة باستكشاف وجود هذه العلاقة بين الهند ومملكة كوش. وقد توصلت بعض الدراسات إلى وجود تأثيرات خارجية على الثقافة المروية، والتي لم تكن مصرية أو أوروبية، ونسبت إلى الشرق. وعموماً فإن التأثيرات التراكمية الشرقية، بما في ذلك الهند، تعتبر محدودة مقارنة بالمصرية والإغريقية والرومانية.

وقد لعبت الطرق التجارية دوراً كبيراً على التواصل بين الهند والسودان، عبر مينائي سواكن وعيذاب. وقد زادت المعاملات التجارية بين البلدين للدرجة التي جعلت التجار السودانيون يطبعون الأصل الهندي على بضائعهم. وقد كشفت الورقة عن التواصل بين البلدين في عادات النساء، خاصة اللباس، والأثاث المنزلية، وبالتأكيد فإن الأثر الصوفي يبدو واضحاً في التواصل بين البلدين، خاصة الطريقة القادرية.

I would like to begin my remarks by stating that there is very little data on Indo-Sudanese contacts, and the little we know seems to indicate the ascendancy of Indian influence compared with that of the Sudanese. This conclusion may be due to the fact that most of the consulted data is related to the Sudan. However there is need for more research on the subject especially from the Indian side.

Ancient Sudanese contacts with India

Although the existence of direct contacts between India and the Kingdom of Kush: Napata and Meroe (750 BC to 330 AD)

cannot be substantiated fully by available historical evidence, there are traceable indications which may prove such a probability.

Writing in 1955 Dr. A.J. Arkell states: “ Near Masawwarat and at Naga (al-Naq‘a) there are large artificial reservoirs for the storage of rainwater, and near the *hafir* at Musawwarat are the remains of several small shrines, from one of which Lepsius has recorded some remarkable reliefs including one of a king.... riding bareback on an elephant [figure 1]. In this representation of an elephant being ridden, which is unique in the Nile Valley, and in that of the Meroetic lion god Apedemak with three heads and two pairs of arms on the Lion Temple at Naga [figure 2].... it seems reasonable to see the influence of Indians, with whom no doubt Meroe was beginning to come into touch indirectly through the Kingdom of Axum which was much interested in the now important Indian trade. It is probable that the cotton which was identified in fabrics found in the North Cemetery at Meroe was introduced from India, and it is not unlikely that the idea of the artificial reservoir which became so important at this time and the construction of which must have needed much man-power also came from India, where such reservoirs have long been an important method of storing rainwater”.⁽¹⁾

However recent archaeological research tends to abandon the idea of the Indian origin of reliefs, and hence scholars are beginning to look for a local explanation for this development.⁽²⁾ It is true that large tracts of land and long distances impede direct contact between the two regions, yet it was through maritime trade that commercial exchange and cultural association were facilitated. Regular maritime trade between India and

the countries of the western Indian Ocean became more regular especially after the discovery of the Monsoon winds and their use for navigation (in 126 BC)⁽³⁾ It was through Aden, the Yemani port that controls the southern gate of the Red Sea, that Indian wares, as part of the North-South trade-route, found their way to the

Mediterranean countries and Europe. From Aden goods were carried by camels through the caravan trade route across the Arabian Peninsula or via the Red Sea where ships had frequent stops at the African ports. It was through the latter route that contacts became operative and produced some impact on the Sudanese ports and their hinterland.

The North-south trade consisted of incense, spices, aromatics, precious stones, gold, ivory, ebony, medical herbs and later silk.⁽⁴⁾ India's main exports were spices, incense, aromatics and ivory. Meroe's main produce since ancient times included gold (obtained chiefly from the Eastern Desert) incense, ivory, oils, precious stones, ostrich feathers and leopard hides. Most of these products were not necessarily acquired from the kingdom of Kush itself but from a wider hinterland. That kingdom was traversed by important long-distance trade routes that connected it with the Red Sea ports, Egypt, the kingdom of Axum, Upper Nile and the semi-desert lying between the Nile and Chad.⁽⁵⁾

Accordingly Meroe was strategically well placed in the North-South mercantile traffic, that started from India, and participated in it, consequently many Indian goods (and probably ideas) found their way to Meroe. It is therefore not surprising that some Sudanese archaeological finds bear some striking resemblance to some Indian cultural manifestations.

The enormous man-made depression or *hafir* alluded to by Dr. Arkell above has received some serious consideration professor Dr. W. Adams in 1977. He argued that such structures are common through out the Butana (the island of Meroe) in ancient and modern times. They are indeed the only source of water after the rainy season which lasts only for three months. This particular *hafir*, asserts Professor Adams, is large enough perhaps to provide water for a herd of elephants⁽⁶⁾ It is over 1000 feet across and 20 feet deep, the sides were built up above the ground and reinforced with stone. *Hafirs* were associated with Meroetic settlements and temples. "These colonies", Professor Adams

argues “made possible by considerable feats of hydraulic engineering are the only permanent settlements which the Butana steppe has ever supported; they offer a unique sidelight of the vigour and prosperity of Nubian civilization in the last centuries BC and the first century AD”.⁽⁷⁾

Is such an achievement a local initiative or has such a technique been derived from India as Dr Arkell suggested? Is such a technique well established in Ancient India?

Professor Adams recognizes the existence of “extraneous influences” in the Meroetic culture which are neither Egyptian nor European. He prefers to attribute these extraneous elements to an eastern origin. They include the sun god, the cult of the elephant at Musawwarat, the three-headed and snake-bodied representation of the god Apedemak, the introduction of *hafirs* and cotton cultivation into the Nile valley and the introduction of the tripod bronze vessels found in graves; “so strong indeed is this hint of Indian artistic elements”, asserts Professor. Adams, “in some of the art of Meroe, that it has led Vercoutter to say that he considers Meroetic art to be *“tout aussi indianisant qu’ égyptisant”*”.⁽⁸⁾

In the Sudan elephants were not known to have been used as beasts of burden as was the case in India.

The cumulative effect of the oriental (including Indian) influences at Meroe is small when compared to the Egyptian and Greco-Roman influences.⁽⁹⁾ However incidental the Indian impact had been at Meroe a glimmer of such influences continued to radiate from India mainly through trade.

Trade Routes

In ancient times there were two major trade routes between the Mediterranean countries and the East; one passed through the Red Sea via Egypt (as discussed above), and the other through the Arab Gulf and the Fertile Crescent. The prolonged Byzantine-Persian wars of the sixth century AD led to the abandonment of the latter route and the deviation of trade through Constantinople via Central Asia or western Arabia, as hinted before. With the rise of

Islam, (which coincided with the foundation of the Christian Kingdoms in the Nilotic Sudan (580 AD – 1450 AD) and the establishment of the °Abbasid Caliphate (750-1258 AD) trade was deflected once more to the Persian Gulf. Egypt, which was reduced to the status of a province, was left with very little share of the Eastern Trade. However, the new masters of Egypt, the Fatimids (969-1171 AD), in their struggle to subdue the °Abbasids succeeded in deflecting the Indian trade from the Persian Gulf to Aden and the Red Sea route- which remained the principal route until the sources of the Indian trade were captured by the Portuguese at the beginning of the sixteenth century. To ensure their control over that route, the Fatimids extended their rule over several Red Sea ports including °Aydhab – the Sudanese port.⁽¹⁰⁾

With the establishment of °Aydhab the distance between Aden and the Egyptian port of al-Qulzum was reduced by one third and hence most of the hazardous part of the Red Sea journey was avoided.⁽¹¹⁾

When the Andalusian traveler, Ibn Jubayr started his land journey from Qus to °Aydhab in 1183 that port stood as a focal point in the flow of East West Trade. The prosperity of °Aydhab depended on the Eastern Trade and pilgrims. The Indian and Chinese goods were discharged first at Aden and then transshipped by dhows to the Sudanese port where they were carried to a town in Upper Egypt. The Indian goods were paid for in gold (from the Eastern Desert) and in silk, lead, copper and chemicals (from Egypt and North Africa).⁽¹²⁾ The Indian trade, particularly the spice trade, was associated with the Karimi merchants, who were engaged in importing Indian merchandise into Egypt and beyond. They had agents in °Aydhab, Aden and India. A special fleet of five ships was assigned to protect the Karimi merchants from pirates in the Red Sea.⁽¹³⁾

The size of trade and the amount of merchandise involved must have been substantial. Indeed when Ibn Jubayr tried to count the number of caravans that traversed the Easter Desert, he failed

because of the heavy traffic. He observed that the loads of exhausted camels were left behind on the road, unattended, and saw such colossal amounts of pepper and cloves lying in the wilderness that he thought spices were as cheap as the earth on which they were lying.⁽¹⁴⁾

Trade continued to flow through °Aydhab until 1358 according to Al-Maqrizi⁽¹⁵⁾ or 1378 on the authority of al-Qalqashani when it almost ceased.⁽¹⁶⁾ The decline of trade was due to a number factors: increase in tribal disturbances in Upper Egypt and the Eastern Desert, the beginning of economic decline as a result of natural calamities, and decrease in the yield of gold and emerald mines; hence many merchants came to prefer the port of Jeddah to °Aydhab. Consequently Jeddah became the official transit port for the eastern goods. In 1426 °Aydhab received its death blow at the hand of Sultan Barsbay's troops. However, with the Portuguese dominance over the source of the Eastern Trade the role of °Aydhab and that of other Red Sea ports in the North-South trade have almost come to end.

Suwakin and the Indian Trade

The inhabitants of °Aydhab fled to Dongola and the port of Suwakin. The sack of °Aydhab did not change the situation radically in favour of Suwakin; Eastern Trade continued to flow only towards Jeddah. However its early history is connected with Shunqayr – an important mining centre in the Eastern Desert. In the fifteenth century Indian merchants tried to use Suwakin to avoid the exorbitant dues at Aden, but the rulers of Egypt discouraged them. Sudanese trade with the Hijaz depended largely on Suwakin's hinterland. It was largely in the local field that Suwakin rose to a position of importance during the Funj Kingdom (1504-1821) and the Turco-Egyptian Administration (1821-1885) which it retained unchallenged, until the establishment of Port Sudan at the beginning of the twentieth century.⁽¹⁷⁾

Fatima bint Salim, the wife of °Ammar b. °Abd al-Hafiz al-Khatib, the *Imam* of Sinnar mosque in the last quarter of the

seventeenth century was a very rich business woman. She had vast commercial contacts and her agents used to make business trips to Egypt and India.⁽¹⁸⁾

A brighter and detailed picture on trading is given by the French surgeon Charles Poncet who traveled across the Funj Kingdom and stopped at Sinnar towards the end of seventeenth century. He states: “The merchants of Sinnar have a great trade towards the east. At the time of monsoon they embark at Sawakin, upon the Red Sea. They pass from there to Maka.⁽¹⁹⁾ a town of Arabia felix.... From whence they proceed to Surate.⁽²⁰⁾ To which place they carry gold, civet, elephant teeth and bring from hence spices and other merchandise of the Indians. They commonly spent not less than two years [there]”.⁽²¹⁾

Suwakin was the main port of the Funj Sultanate, it had a vast hinterland and was well connected with the interior especially Sinnar, the seat of government and the main commercial centre of the kingdom. According to Theodoro Krump, a German Roman Catholic priest, who visited Sinnar in 1702, “One should know that of all Africa, as far as Moorish land are concerned, Sinnar is close to being the greatest trading city. Caravans are continually arriving from Cairo, Dongola, Nubia, from across the Red Sea, from India, Ethiopia, Dar Fur, Bornu, the Fezzan and other Kingdoms”.⁽²²⁾

The ancient and ever growing commercial transactions between India and Sudan had developed to such an extent that Sudanese traders began to tap the Indian source of the eastern trade at Surat itself. Indeed Surat became the trade mark for all kinds of merchandise imported from India such as costumes, perfumes and beds. Furthermore these extensive mercantile transactions evolved into common cultural manifestations which are noticeable at that time in some forms of women’s costumes, cosmetics, and household furniture.

Women’s costumes

Most of the Sudanese men and women-wear white clothes except for the Beja tribes that live in the Eastern Sudan. When Ibn

Battuta (1304-77), the famous Arab travellers visited Suwakin in 1332 he noticed that “the Beja wrapped themselves in yellow *malahif* (wrappers, *tobs*, or *futas*) or garments and used red head banners each about a finger breadth wide”.⁽²³⁾ It is not clear from the text whether the reference is to men or women. Today men wear white, while women wear very colourful *futas* or wrappers similar to the Indian *sari*. They were probably one of the most colourful attires in the Sudan. This is what I noticed when my parents moved to Port Sudan in the middle of the 1940s.

Use of Indian *saris* is firmly established in the whole region, “and worn in a way similar to the Indian *sari*”.⁽²⁴⁾ All Beja women of the Amar’ar, the Bishariyn, the Hadandawa, the Halanga and the Bani Amir traditionally wear *futas*. “The *futa* is nine meters long, folded in half and sown along one edge, making four 4.5 meters by 2 meters wide”. These *futas* are known in the trade as *surrati* and were almost entirely imported from India and probably from the region of Surat, from which that trade mark was derived. The common colours are purple, royal blue, dark green – which were worn by women of all ages; the younger age groups prefer brighter yellow, orange, pink and lighter green.⁽²⁵⁾ They also wear a very short waist coat which is similar to the one worn by Indian women.

The traditional *tob* or wrapper worn by the riverain Sudanese women seems to have derived its origin from India, though it does not have as much similarity to the manner of wearing as the Indian *sari*. Most of the material used as *tobs* is imported from India, and is generally white in colour. *Tobs* are generally made of two types of Indian cloth; the first is a cheap white Indian muslin with a yellow, purple border, and is used by women and men mainly nomads and inhabitants of rural areas. Its trade name is *bangali* which is derived from Bengal. The second type is an expensive silk cloth with a red border, and is called *surrati* it is normally white but sometimes yellow; and it is often used for rituals.⁽²⁶⁾

A lot of perfumes, including *surratiyya* (i.e attributed Surat), *mahlabiyya*, an oil extraction from *mahlab* or *prumus mahleb* and other cosmetics and a wide range of spices all found their way to the Sudanese markets.

Saj Beds

Indian influence has also been observed in house hold furniture, especially beds, or *angareb* made of wood. The impact had taken the form of the importation of ready made beds and other types of household furniture produced from a special type of Indian wood. At a later stage the Indian impact affected both the technique of production and design.

According to the Funj Chronicle⁽²⁷⁾ which was compiled in the nineteenth century, Sultan Badi II (d. 1677-78) was very keen on constructing beautiful dwellings and magnificent buildings, one of which was the grand mosque that he built in Sinnar; He imported windows made of yellow copper from India and Egypt. And with the assistance of al-Khabir Ahmad °Alwan⁽²⁸⁾ and al-Hajj Sa°id walad (son) °Abd al-Jalil brought in building material for the mosque and the palace which the king intended for his own use. They imported windows made of °uud⁽²⁹⁾ wood, doors manufactured of *saj* wood all of which were acquired in a finished form. They also introduced *sarir al-saj* a bed shaped of *saj* in an elevated form, hence it was called *Abu-Rakuba* to which one can only get to the top by climbing a ladder. Another version of the chronicle states that all beds in the palace were made of ivory studded with gold and so were all the chairs. There were also large *saj* beds.⁽³⁰⁾

An earlier tradition connects the *angareb* with a Funj ritual. It reports when the Funj decided to migrate from their original habitat they made an *angareb* of *sharatan* or *sartan* for their king and his wife and they carried them until they stopped at Jebel Moya- near Sinnar. "When they became rulers the *angareb* also became a ritual custom". The word *saratan* is associated by al-Shatir Busayli °Abd al-Jalil with Surat, the Indian district from

which lots of Indian merchandise were imported to the Sudan.⁽³¹⁾ If ʿAbd al-Jalil’s reading is correct then it means special types of wood like *saj*, *ʿuud* and *saratan* (or *surati*) figure prominently in manufacturing of *angarebs* and other household furniture.

In a well argued thesis Dr. Yusuf Hasan Madani has shown the traditional bed craft making since ancient times and the Indian influence on bed industry in material, design and technique.⁽³²⁾ The present day wooden bed or *angareb* has a “rectangular frame, made of four rails with two long side rails running into the length of the frame and two shorter end rails running the width of the frame”.⁽³³⁾ It is interlaced with a *dome-palm* (*Hyphane Thebaica*) fibre rope. According to G. A. Resiener there is not much change in the shape of the *angarebs*, the techniques of joining the pieces of wood, and stringing since ancient times. The only change that happened was in the design of the legs.⁽³⁴⁾

The foregoing remarks confirm that *saj* beds were imported from India to the Sudan. The word *saj* is derived from the Indian word *sajwan* meaning tree. It grows in abundance in India, and is used for making beds and furniture.⁽³⁵⁾ However very little is known about the design of this bed and it was only during the Turco-Egyptian administration 1821-1885 that oral traditions made reference to beds with turned legs, that they were imported from India and that they were used by the rich and in marriages.⁽³⁶⁾ The change of design was apparently introduced when Sudanese carpenters learnt the craft of manufacturing turned legs from Indian craftsmen. This knowledge was introduced according to Sudanese oral traditions by Indian craftsmen who worked in Sinnar, or by Sudanese carpenters who learnt the vocation from Indian craftsmen in Jeddah. Wherever the Sudanese carpenters learnt this industry they became equipped with new tools: they began to use a bow- lathe⁽³⁷⁾ The leg was no longer designed by the adze (*qadum*) exclusively. Henceforth beds with turned legs were made locally albeit on a small scale. What was achieved was a significant transfer of technology, the bow-lathe continued to be

useful for bed making until it was eclipsed by the electric lathe decades later.⁽³⁸⁾

Sufi Impact

It is probably in the realm of Islamic *sufism* (mysticism), especially the Qadiriyya order, that some Indian scholars and *sufi* leaders left an impact on local *sufi* leaders and were instrumental in the dissemination of *sufism* during the Funj era.

When Shaykh Idris wad (son) al-Arbab (1507-1656) the holyman of great fame died⁽³⁹⁾ a statement⁽⁴⁰⁾ was found in his pocket. It says. "My Shaykh in the [Qadiri] Path was °Abd al-Kafi al-Maghrabi the one possessed with the *Haqiqa*,⁽⁴¹⁾ and my Shaykh was the *Qutb*⁽⁴²⁾ al-Shaykh °Ali al-Khawwas,⁽⁴³⁾ an easterner (*mashriqi*) from the land of al-Sind.

From India, through Baghdad and Mecca came Shaykh Taj al-Din al-Bihari, the reputable Qadri missionary who initiated a number of prominent Sudanese into the Qadiri order. He came to the Sudan in the company of a Sudanese merchant from Arbaji in 1557. The origin of the epithet (*laqab*) al-Bihari is uncertain. A most likely explanation is the one attributed to the Indian city or district of Bihar which was conquered by the Muslims towards the the close of the twelfth century. The city of Bihar is reputed to have had many distinguished °*ulama* or scholars and that it had developed under the patronage of the Mughal Emperors. Shaykh Taj al-Din al-Bihari was very instrumental in spreading the teachings of the Qadiri order in the Funj Sultanate. The order continued to flourish until it won the hearts of many Sudanese.⁽⁴⁴⁾

In short the Indian trade continued to dominate the Indo-Sudanese relationships for centuries. The impact of Indian trade especially in textiles, spices, furniture, perfumes, jewelry (gold and silver articles) reached its peak when the Benian, a class of Indian merchants came to Suwakin and slowly spread to the rest of the country towards the close of the nineteenth century and were very active during the Anglo-Egyptian Administration (1899-1956).

Endnotes

- (1) A. J. Arkell, *A History of the Sudan, from the Earliest Times to 1821*, University of London Press, London, 1955, pp. 165-167; J. Leclant, "The Empire of Kush; Napata and Meroe", *General History of Africa*, II, Paris, 1985, Arabic version ed. By Jamal-Mukhtar, p. 295. The idea of Indian influence is also discussed in A. J. Arkell, "Meroe and India", in *Aspects of Archaeology in Britian and Beyond, Essays Presented to O.G.S. Crawford*, London, Grimes, 1951; I. Hoffman *Studien zum Meroitischen Königtum* (MREZ), Bruxelles, 1971, (both of which I have not been able to consult)
- (2) Leclant, *op. cit.*, p. 295.
- (3) Mustafa El-Abadi, "Egypt, a link between India and the Mediterranean", in N.N. Vohra, (ed.) *History, Culture and Society in India and West Asia*, India International Centre, p. 172-42.
- (4) *Ibid*, p. 42.
- (5) Ahmed M. Ali El-Hakem et al, "The civilization of Meroe", *General History of Africa*, II, Paris, 1985 p. 320.
- (6) William Y. Adams, *Nubia, Corridor to Africa*, London, 1977, pp. 320-321.
- (7) *Ibid*, p 321.
- (8) *Ibid*, p 331.
- (9) *Ibid*, p 9.
- (10) Yusuf Fadl Hasan, *The Arabs and the Sudan from the Seventh to the Early Sixteenth Century*, Edinburgh, 1967, pp 67-68.
- (11) *Ibid*, pp 68-69.
- (12) *Ibid*, p. 71.
- (13) *Ibid*, p. 73.
- (14) Ibn Jubayr, Muhammad Ibn Ahmad, *Rihlat Ibn Jubayr*, Leiden, 1907, pp. 65-73.
- (15) Al-Maqrizi, Ahmad b. ʿAli, *Kitab al-Mawaʿiz wal-ʿItibar bi-dhikr al-khitat wa'l Athar*, ed. by G. Wiet, Cairo, 1923, III, p. 301.
- (16) Al-Qalqashandi, Ahmad b. ʿAbdallah, *Subh al-Aʿsha fi Sinaʿat Al-Insha*, Cairo, 1913, IV, p. 469.
- (17) Yusuf Fadl Hasan, *op.cit.*, pp. 82, 87, 88.

- (18) Ibn Dayf Allah, Muhammad al-Nur, *Kitab al-Tabaqat fi Khusus al-Awliya wal-salihin wa'l-^cUlama wa l'^cShu'ara fi al-Sudan*, ed. by Yusuf Fadl Hasan, Khartoum, 1974, p. 219
- (19) I.e. the port of Mocha in Yemen.
- (20) Surat is a town in India, north of Bombay and east of the Gulf of Cambay.
- (21) Charles Poncet., *The Red Sea and the Adjacent Countries at the close of the 17th century*, ed. William Foster, Hakluyat Society, London, 1949, p. 107.
- (22) Jay Spaulding, *The Sudanese Travels of Theodoro Krump 1700-1702* an English translation of portions of Krumps *Hoher und Fruchtbare Palm-Baum Des Heiligen Evangelij*, 1710, Hambata Publications, 1979, p. 39.
- (23) Ibn Battuta, Muhammad b. Ibrahim, *Tahadhdhib Rihlat Ibn Battuta*, [full title]. *Tuhfat al-Nuzzar fi Ghara'ib al-Amsar wa 'Aj'ib Al – Asfar*, ed. By Ahmad Al-^cAwamri and Muhammad Ahmad Jad Al-Mawla, Cairo, 1934, I, p. 188.
- (24) D. Griselda El-Tayib, *An Illustrated Record of Sudanese National Costume*, M.A in Folklore Institute of African and Asian Studies, University of Khartoum, 1976, pp. 116, 291. This excellent thesis contains a lot of useful information on the subject.
- (25) *Ibid.* p. 157.
- (26) *Ibid.* 291, pp. 292 307, 311.
- (27) The Funj Chronicle is a title given to a Sudanese Arabic history of Funj Kingdom and the Turco-Egyptian Administration in the Sudan, the chronicle was authored, continued and recensed by five historians among whom Ahmad b. al-Haj, ^cAli and hence it has many versions. It is now being edited by the present writer. The version used in this citation is the compilation of al-Sharif Yusuf al-Hindi on the Funj.
- (28) An expert, a leader of a commercial caravan appointed by the Sultan.
- (29) Literary it means in Arabic a piece of wood but refers also in Sudanese usage to an expensive type like *sandal wood* .
- (30) Al-Sharif Yusuf al-Hindi Version of the Funj Chronicle.

- (31) Funj Chronicle, Ms. Nottingha, University of Nottingham Library, Parkyns of Bunny, pa x3, 311, p.3, Al-Shatir Busayli °Abd al-Jalil, *Makhtutat Katab al-Shuna*, Cairo, 1962, p. 6, foot note 8.
- (32) Yusuf Hasan Madani, *Al-°Angareb; A Traditional Bed Craft Industry in the Sudan*, MA. Thesis, in Folklore, Institute of African and Asian Studies, University of Khartoum, 1980.
- (33) *Ibid*, p. 73.
- (34) *Ibid*, p. 45, 73, quoting G.A. Reisner, *Excavation at Kerma* vol. 4, Harvard University Press, 1923, p. 210.
- (35) Yusuf Hasan Madani, *op.cit*, p. 65.
- (36) *Ibid*. p 61.
- (37) *Ibid*, p. 66.
- (38) *Ibid*, p. 88
- (39) Ibn Dayf Allah, *op.cit*, pp. 49-70.
- (40) The Funj Chronicle, Nottingham version, p 3, see also P.M. Holt *The Sudan of the Three Nile, the Funj Chronicle* p. 5.
- (41) *Al-Haqiqa* means in *sufism*, the devine Reality. *ibid*, 187.
- (42) *Ibid*, p. 188. it means literary axis, i.e. of the Universe.
- (43) According to, Abd al – Wahhab, Al-Sha°rani, *al-Tabaqat al-Kubra*, II, pp. 150-169; his full name is al-Shaykh °Ali al-Khawwas al-Barlasi, *a sufi shaykh* and the teacher of Shaykh °Abd al-Wahhab al-Sha°rani. I could not trace further information about him.
- (44) Ibn Dayf Allah *op.cit*, p. 137.