

Early Art of the African Continent Part One

The Sahel, Savannah, Western Africa, and Guinea Coast,

Seeking an Answer:

Why are 90-95% of Africa's known cultural heritage artifacts housed outside the continent of Africa?



Art

Week One



Jean-Michel Basquiat, *El Gran Espectaculo (The History of Black People)*, 1983.

“Harlem Renaissance”



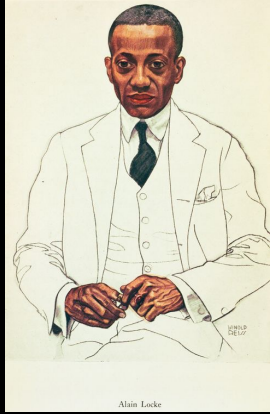
Jacob Lawrence, Panel 40 (“Great Numbers”) from the “Migration Series,” 1940-1941 (



Winold Reiss, “African Phantasy: Awakening,” from “The New Negro: An Interpretation,” 1925. Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,



Aaron Douglas, “Aspirations,” 1936 (



African Art,
Alain Leroy
Locke
Collection,
Howard
University
Gallery of Art.





Lois Mailou Jones, *Les Fétiches*,
1938, oil on linen, 6

Lois Mailou
Jones, *Moon
Masque*, 1971,
oil and collage
on canvas,



Lois M. Jones '71

“African American Visual Artists During the Years of Black Power 1960 – 1975”



Barbara Jones-Hogu, *Relate to Your Heritage*, 1971.



Jeff Donaldson, *Victory in the Valley of Eshu*, 1971

- Why are 90-95% of Africa's known major cultural artifacts held outside the African continent?



Benin Bronzes

Golden Head
of Karikari
(Asante)
Taken by
British forces
in 1874



Queen Mother
Pendant Mask:
Iyoba
Edo artist

16th century
MET



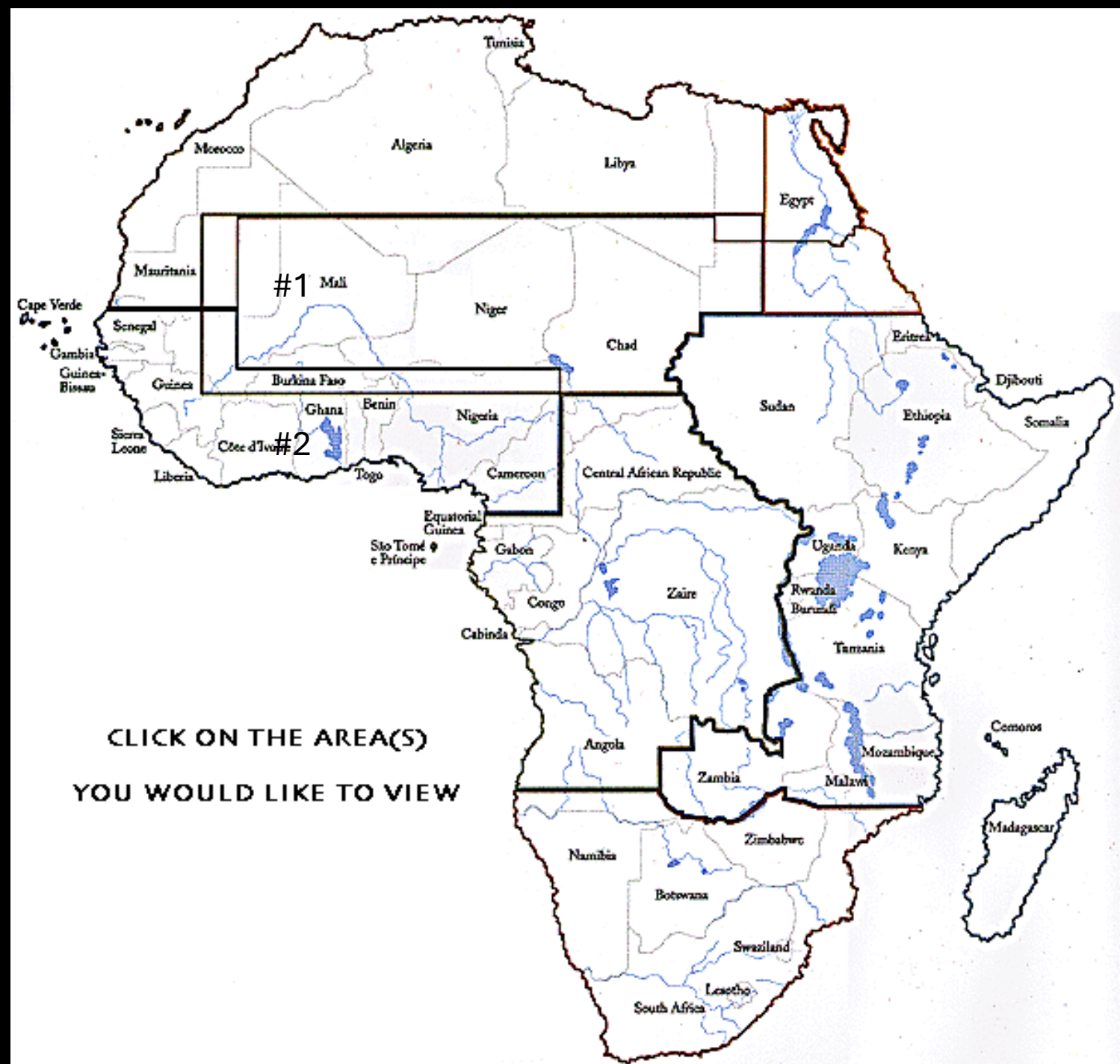
The geographical area we will cover.

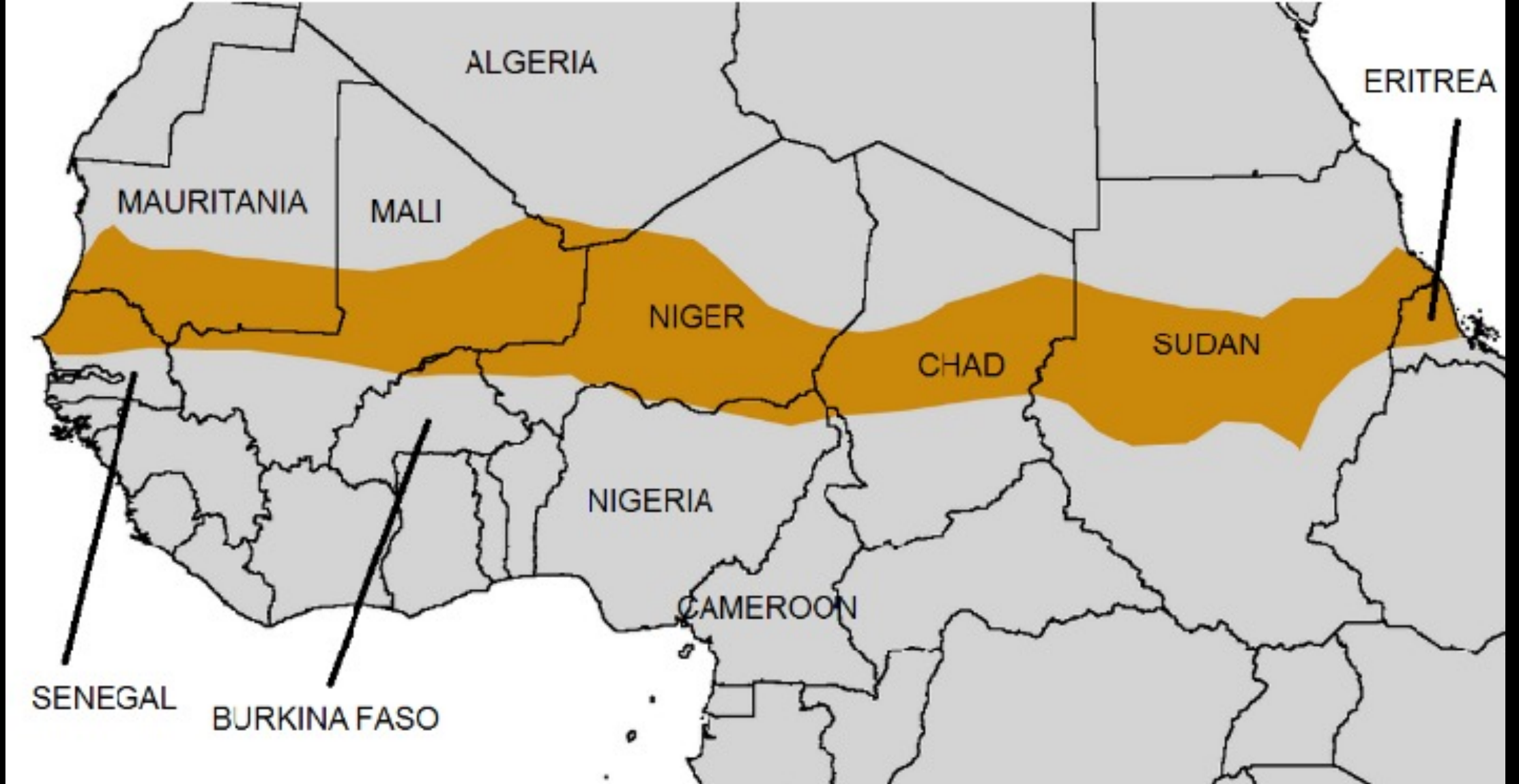
#1

Sahel and Savanna

#2

Western Africa and the Guinea Coast





The Sahel region

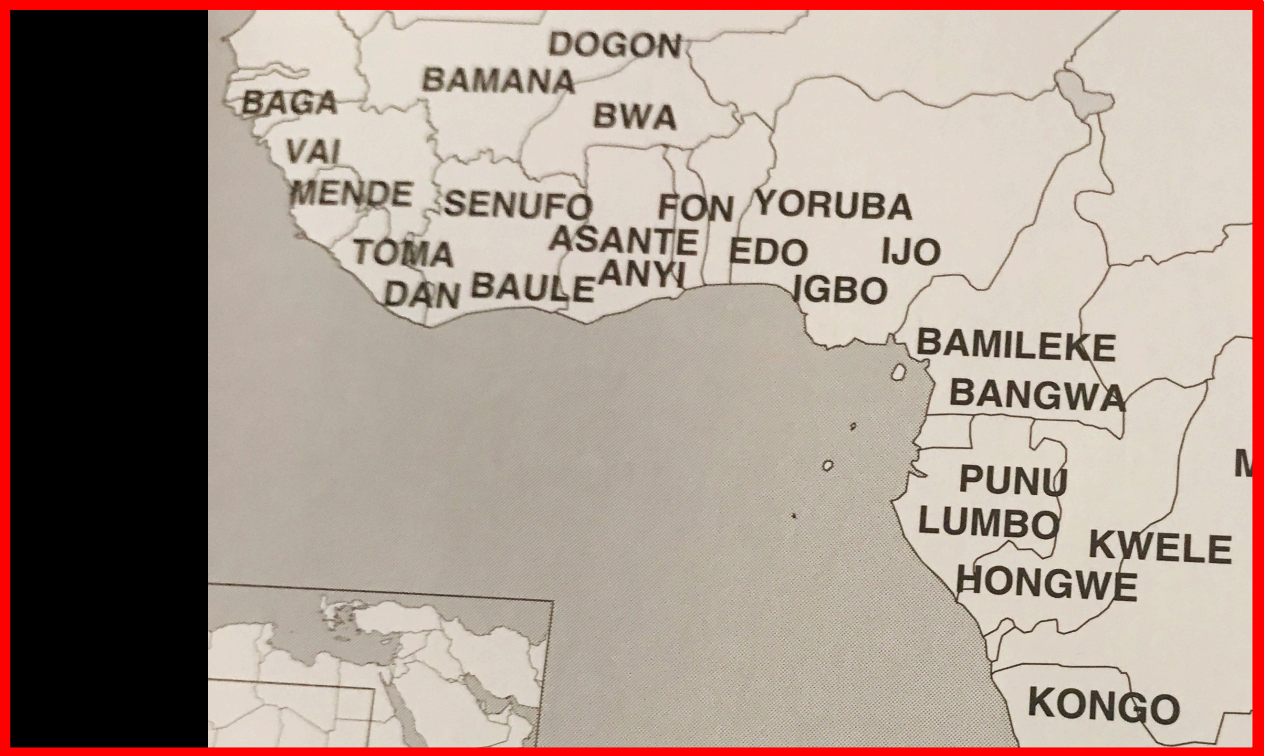
Savannah/Sudan
Region



Guinea Coast



Ethnic Groups

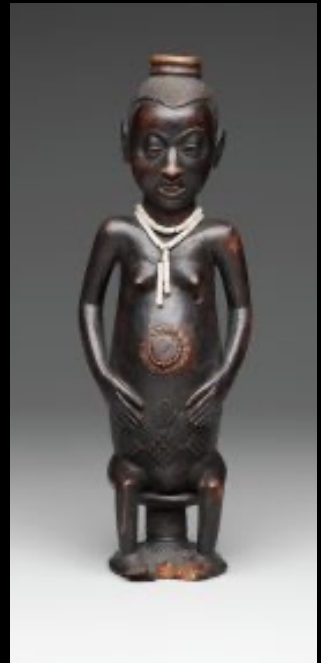


The human figure

Some Questions to consider:

What is perhaps being suggested?

- Through Scale?
- Through Gestures?
- Through Position?
- Through Distortion?
- Through abstraction?
- Through Idealization?
- Through features?
- Through surface qualities?
- Through adornments?



Animals also often appear.



What attributes? And why?

How have animals been combined and Why?





The oldest scientifically-dated figurative rock art in Africa dates from around 26,000–28,000 years ago and is found in Namibia.

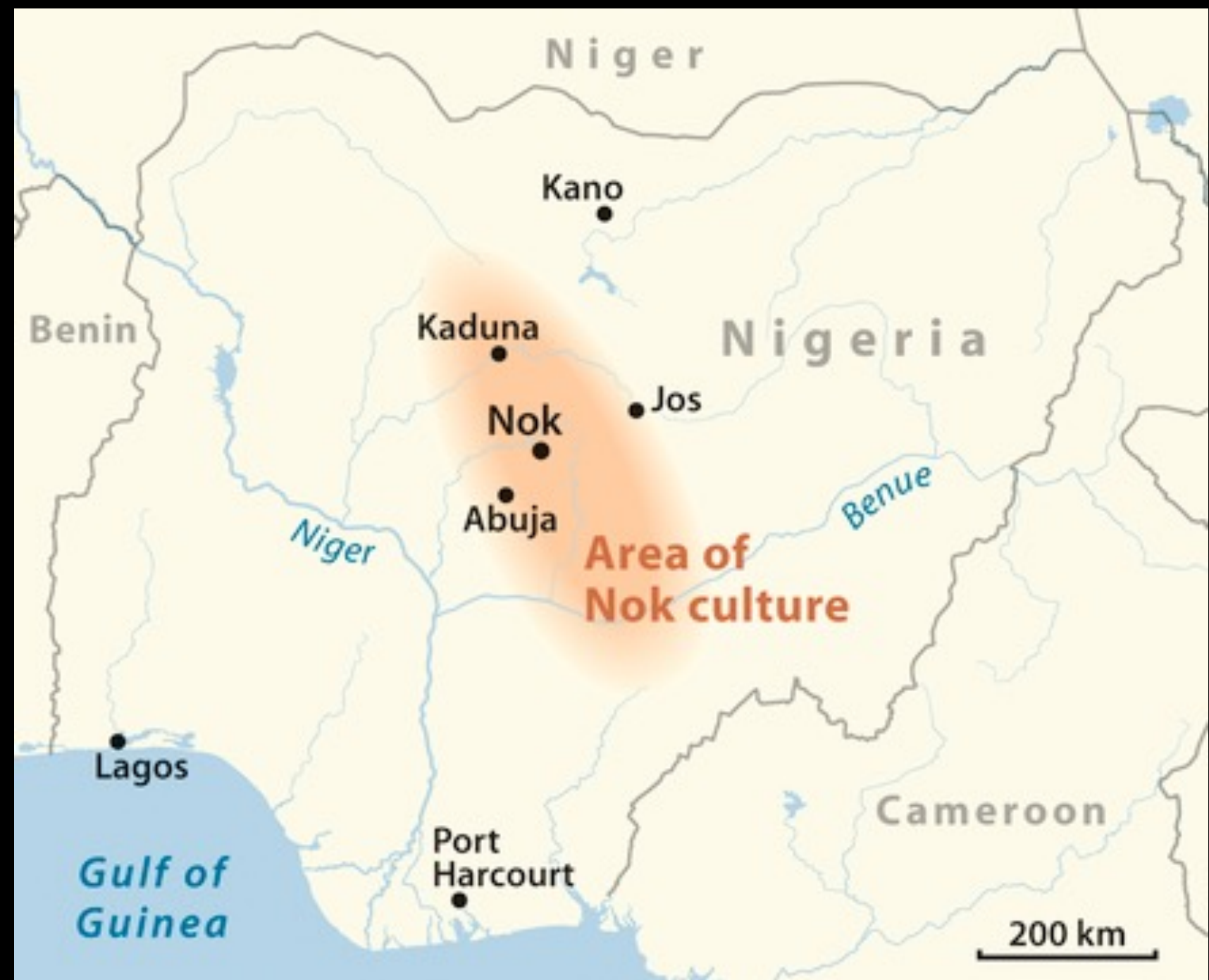
Rock
Paintings
found in
mountains of
Sahara

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The Nok

500 BCE -200 CE





Nok sculpture,
terracotta,



500 B.C.E. to 200
C.E.,
Nok terra cottas



KRANNERT ART MUSEUM

Head

ca. 500 BCE - 300 CE

Terracotta

CREATION PLACE:

Jos Plateau region, Nigeria, Africa

CULTURE OR GROUP:

Nok



At Nok sites, metal tools made around 500 B.C. have been found alongside stone tools, attesting to the manufacture of iron while stone was still being used.



Bamana Iron Staff with Female
Figure 19th Century

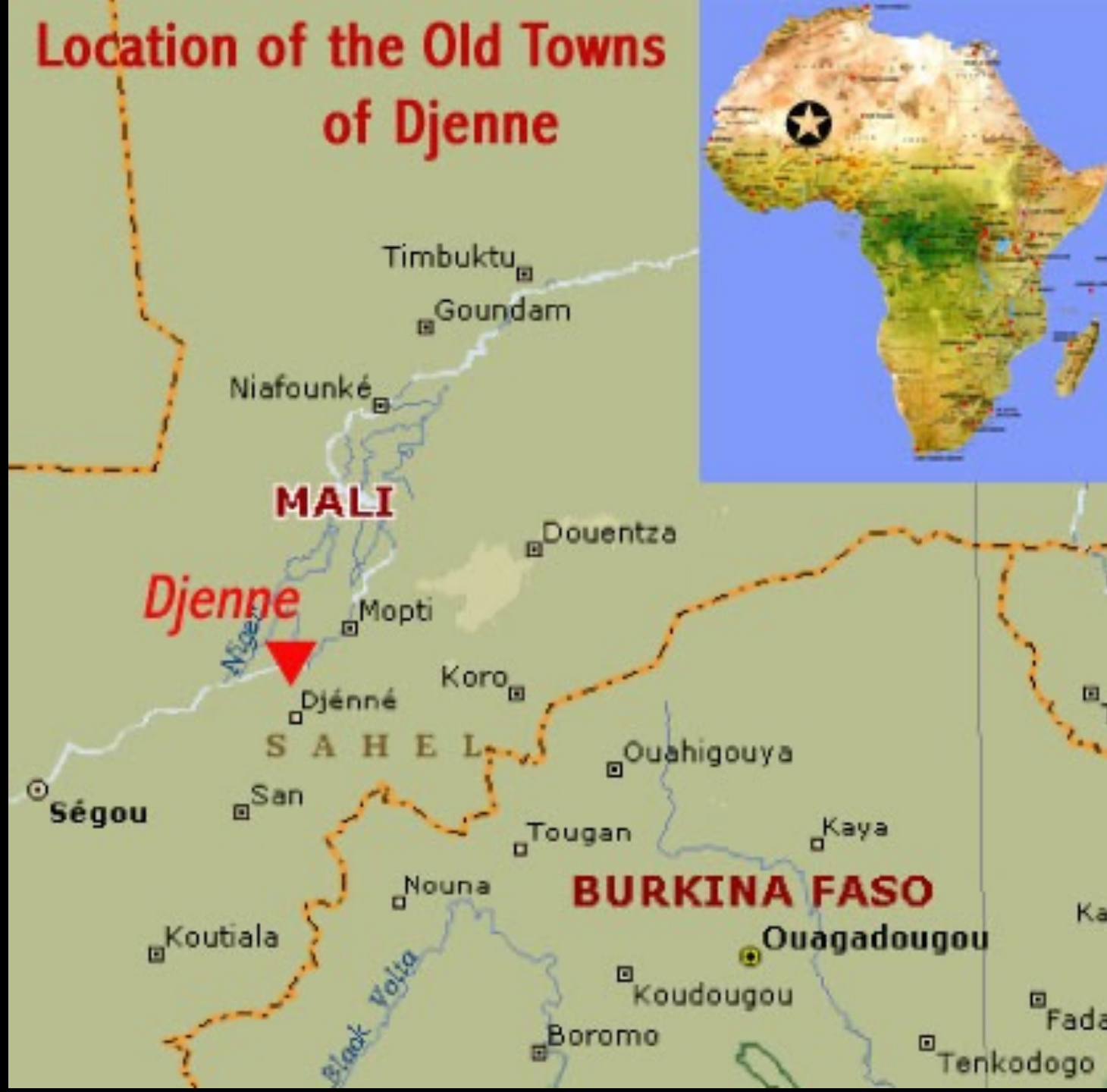


Dogon artist Mali
Ritual figure 19th century
Iron

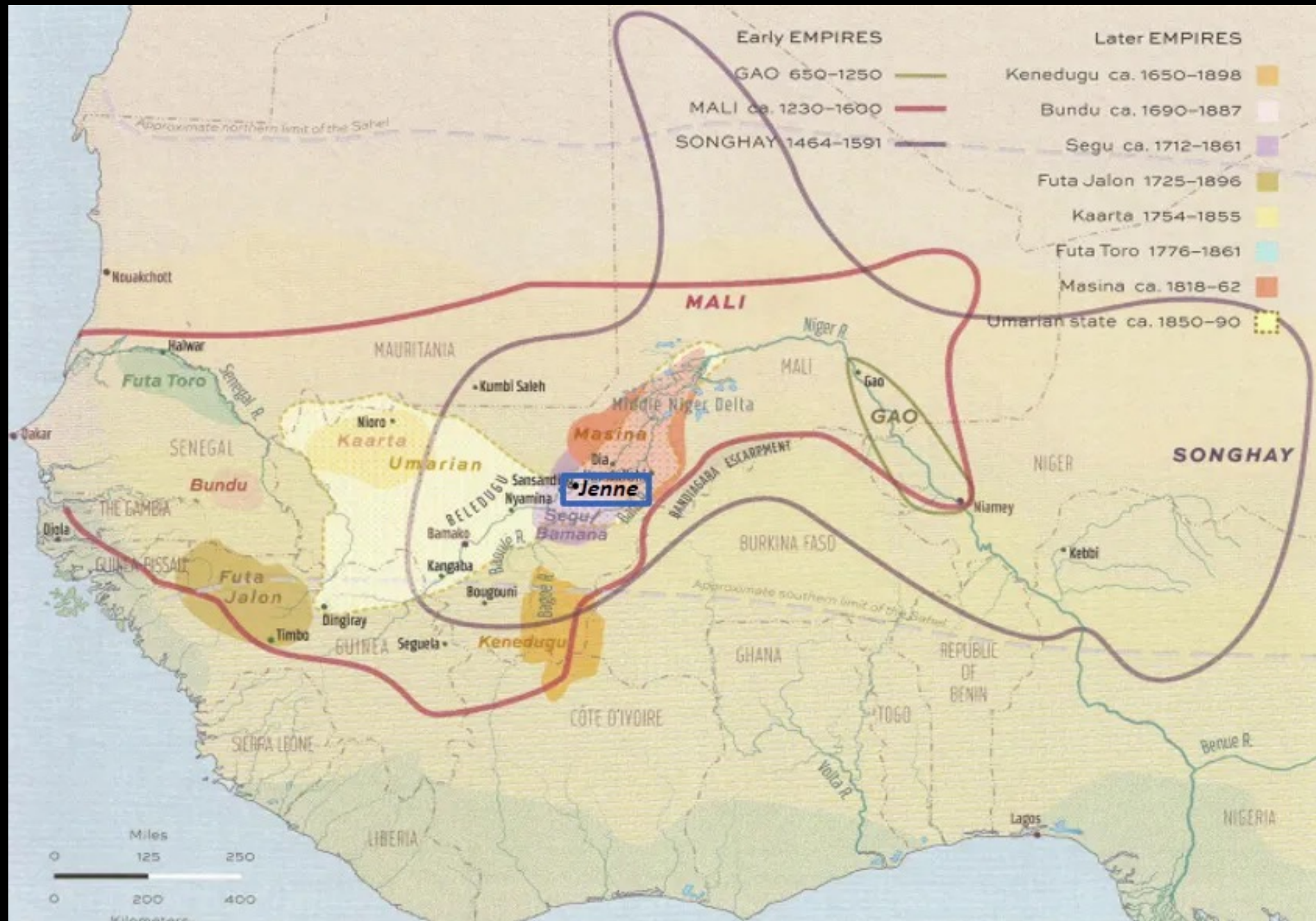


Djenne-Djenno (aka Djenné-Jeno, Jenne-Jeno, or Old Jenne) was an ancient city located in modern Mali, West Africa which flourished between c. 250 BCE - 1100 CE, making it one of the oldest cities in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Location of the Old Towns of Djenne



Djenné a second city,
 founded between 800 and
 1250 C.E.



Djenne 1250-1600

*'Illness and Cure in a Djenné-
Jeno Seated Figure'...*



**TERRACOTTA
DJENNE
SNAKE**



Seated Figure, terracotta,
13th century, Mali, Inland
Niger Delta region, Djenné
peoples,



Detail
*Seated
Figure,*
terracotta,
13th
century,
Mali,
Inland
Niger
Delta
region,
Djenné
peoples,



Reclining
Figure Middle
Niger
civilization,
Jenne-jeno,
Mali 12th-
14th century
Terracotta.



Equestrian
Middle Niger civilization 12th–16th century



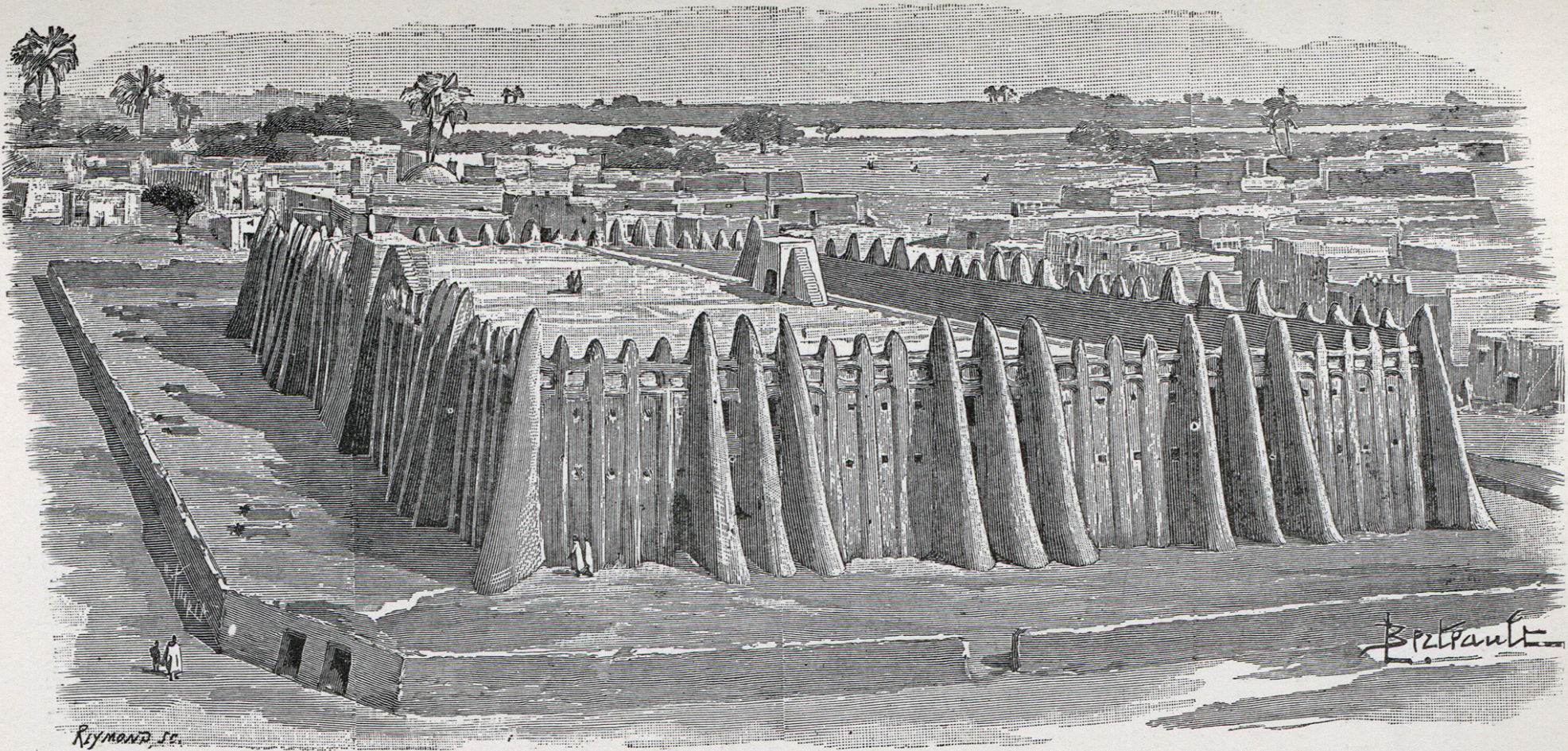
A talisman

Object ascribed with religious or magical powers intended to protect, heal, or harm individuals for whom they are made.

Grigris

believed to protect the wearer from evil or bring luck





THE OLD MOSQUE RESTORED

By legend original Great Mosque erected in 13th century.
King Koi Konboro, the 26th ruler and first Muslim sultan used local materials and traditional design.
His successors added two towers and surrounded main building with wall.



Great Mosque of Djenné, present day Mali, 1907

Mud and Earthen Material Homes

