"The study of architecture cannot be undertaken without an understanding of the society that produces it."

Guy T. Petherbridge
"Architecture of the Islamic World"
Sudan is the largest country in Africa and the ninth largest in the world, and it is nearly as large as Western Europe and one third of the United States.
Sudan is situated in the Northeast of Africa, it has common boundaries with Egypt and Libya in the North, 500 miles of Red Sea coastline and Ethiopia in the East, Kenya, Uganda and Zaire in the South, Chad and the Empire of Central African Republic in the West.

The distance from the North to South is approximately 1,275 miles and East to West 1,000 miles.

The country sprawls across 967,500 square miles of desert in the North, grassy plains in the central part and tropical rain forests in the South. The people are as diverse as their land and climate. Most of them live near the Nile River and its tributaries. The Sudan may well become a “food basket” of the world with its 200 million acres of fertile soil.

The climate is tropical and continental. In the South, it is equatorial while in the North the desert is dry and warm most of the year.

The country is generally flat with hills and mountains in the east and West. The River Nile is a dominant physical feature, which is formed by the White Nile, which begins at Lake Victoria in Uganda, and the Blue Nile, which begins at Lake Tana in Ethiopia. Sudan’s population is estimated at 30,120,420 (July 1995).

Nearly 40 percent is Arabic, up to 20 percent are from other ethnic groups, but follow the Arabic customs and live in the North or central regions, and about 25 percent is purely African and live mainly in the South.

Arabic is the official language, but it is the primary language only in the North and the center. More than 100 languages are spoken in the country. English is the second spoken language in Sudan, although it was the official language in the South until 1956, when Sudan gained its independence.