

Kaskara

The Sword of Ali Dinar
the Last Sultan of

DARFUR

The British
Museum



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Museum

International Training Program 2013





Kaskara sword in the Sultanate of Darfur - SUDAN

The Empire of Darfur is considered as one of the Empires of Sudanic Africa together with the sultanates of Ghana, Mali, Songhai, Hausa, Kanem-Borno and others. All rose to power through the might of their horse-borne warriors and their ability to control one or more of the trans-Saharan trade-routes.

These horsemen were instrumental in procuring vast number of slaves who were traded across the Sahara together with gold, silver and ivory.

Islamic Jihād in Sudanic Africa together with the Hajj "Pilgrimage" to Mecca helped to spread artifacts, including arms and armour.

In the Central and Eastern Sudan from Chad through Darfur and across to the Red-Sea province, the straight, double-edged sword known as Kaskara were an essential possession of most men, and may be made of decorative metal work as in the case of the Kaskara which was made for Ali Dinar "a rebel leader who led the army in Darfur during the 1910s". The sword sheaths were of red leather, sometimes embellished with crocodile or lizard skin.

Kaskara sword in Darfur

The Kaskara was carried across the back and parallel to the ground or with the sheath held between the upper arm and body. Until very recently the kaskara was still habitually worn by older men in the rural area of Darfur.

Sword blades forged in such great smithies as those of Solingen in Germany, Toledo in Spain and Belluno in Italy were traded across the Sahara from the Mediterranean ports of Tunis, Tripoli and Alexandria. They also came into ports on the Atlantic coast of Morocco and, the Portuguese ports in Mauritania probably traded blades to the western Sudan. It has been fitted with locally made hilts and scabbards in Al Fashir which was the capital of Darfur Sultanate.

Various Quranic and talismanic inscriptions might be added to the blade to protect its owner from harm.

Translations of the texts founded on both sides of the blade and the handles :

Translations:

The first phase on the blade:



أَيْنَمَا تَكُونُوا يُدْرِكْكُمُ الْمَوْتُ وَلَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُرُوجٍ مُشَيَّدَةٍ ۗ قُلْ إِنَّ الْمَوْتَ
الَّذِي تَفِرُّونَ مِنْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مُلَاقٍ بِكُمْ ۗ نَصْرٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَفَتْحٌ قَرِيبٌ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۚ يَا مُحَمَّد... انا علي مشهور من غير نسبة بن زكريا
ملقب بدينار. هذا السيف ملكي.

(Wherever you may be, death will overtake you, even if you should be within towers of lofty construction. Say, Indeed, the death from which you flee - indeed, it will meet you. victory from Allah and an imminent conquest; and give good tidings to the believers) Oh Mohammed.

From the Surat : An-Nisā' 78. Al-Jumu`ah 8. Aş-Şaf 13.

I am Ali. Famaus is the son of Zakriya.
Titled Dinar. This sword, I have it.

Inside the Decoration:

الحسن و الحسين ، ابوبكر ، عمر ، عثمان ، علي ، يا الله ، لا إله إلا الله
محمد رسول الله

Al-Hassan and Al-Hussein, Abu Bakr, Omar, Osman, Ali,
Oh Mohammed, There is no god but God; Muhammad is
the messenger of God.

Second phase on the blade:



السلطان علي دینار بن السلطان زكريا بن السلطان محمد الفضل سنة
١٣٢٤هـ. طلسم الحروف

Then : Talismans

Sultan Ali Dinar son of the Sultan Zakriya son of the
Sultan Mohammed Al-Fadl in the year 1324 AH (1906 AD).

Inside Decoration:

الحمد لله . ابوبكر . عمر . عثمان . علي . حمزة . العباس . الحسن . الحسين

Praise be to God. Abu Bakr, Omar, Osman, Ali, Hamza .
Al-Aba'as. Al-Hassan. Al-Hussein.

First Phase of the Handle:



ن . ملك السلطان علي دینار بن زكريا . يا محمد ؟

(Nun). belongs to the Sultan Ali son of Zakriya. Oh
Mohammed.

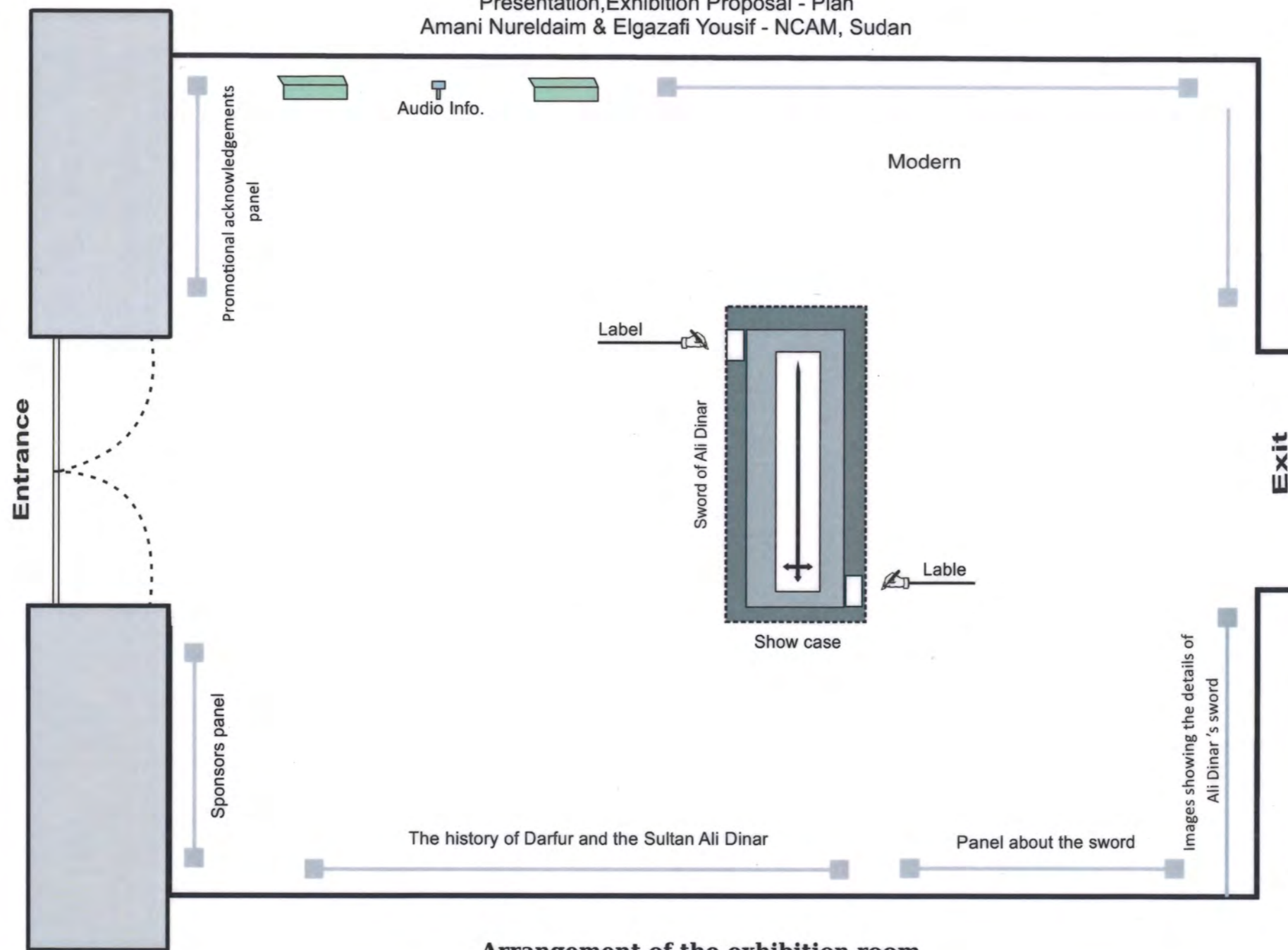
Second phase of the Handle:



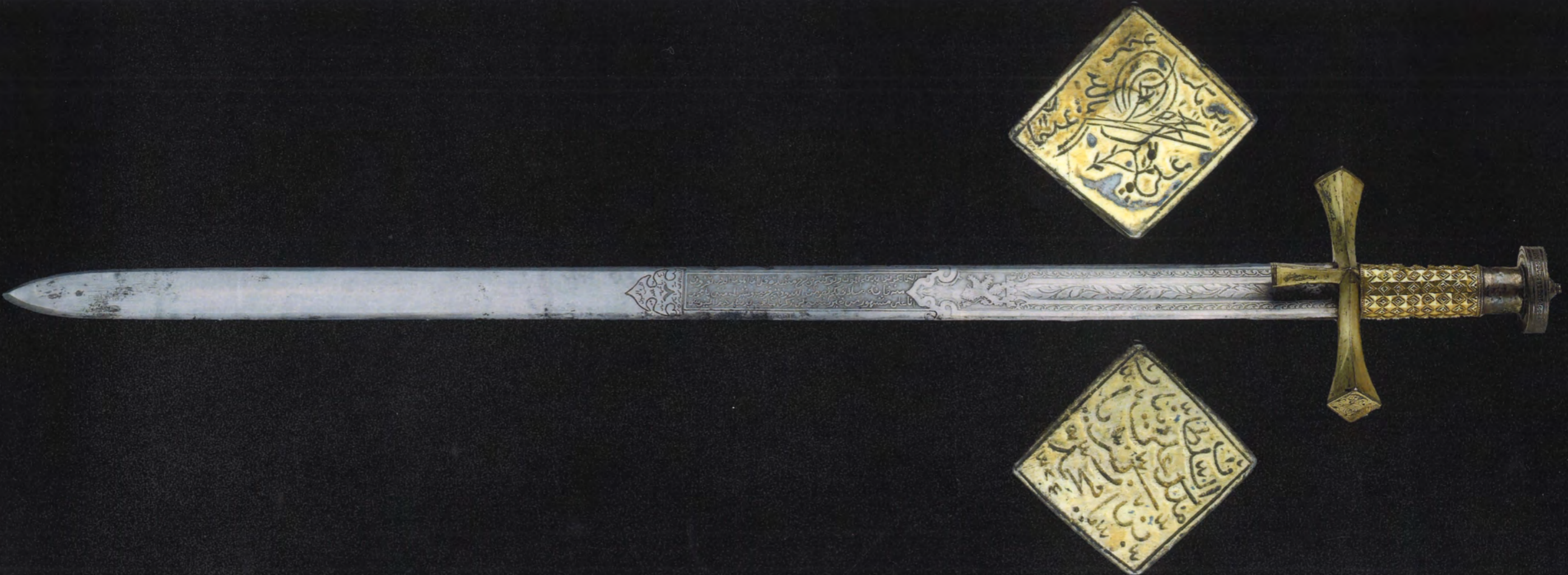
أبوبكر . عمر . عثمان . علي . يا الله . (بخط الطغراء)

AbuBakr, Omar, Osman, Ali, OhGod «Tughra calligraphy».

International Training Programme 2013
Presentation, Exhibition Proposal - Plan
Amani Nureldaim & Elgazafi Yousif - NCAM, Sudan



Arrangement of the exhibition room



ALI DINAR

The Last Majestic Sultan of

DARFUR

