



Ostrich eggs of Sudan

Tradition from past
to present



Room 3
September 1 to December 31, 2014



Image of Saint Anna from Faras (left) and ruins of the Faras Cathedral now in the garden of the Sudan National Museum.

Faras was a settlement in Lower Nubia, occupied by the A-Group people onwards. It was a centre of Meroitic culture, and later an important city of the Christian period, famous for its church frescoes.

In the 1960s, it was flooded under the waters of Lake Nasser.



String of ostrich egg shell
beads from waste of a shell -
found in perforating jar grave at
SANAM, DONGOLA
C.700 - 500 BC.
NUBIA, 1915 (N.I. 327).
Ed. P.L. C. 1921.

String of ostrich eggshell beads from Dongola, north Sudan, south of Faras. c. 700-500 BC.

The ostrich was valued in Sudan for its feathers and meat, but the shell was also widely used. When perforated, it made a useful water container, whilst its hardness made it suitable for producing small disc beads which could be strung together and worn as necklaces, bracelets, girdles and anklets. Ostrich eggshell beads were used for many millennia by the people of Sudan.



The tradition
of using ostrich
egg vessels
continues in
Sudan today.

Modern ostrich egg vessel in a beaded
carrying bag, from western Sudan.