

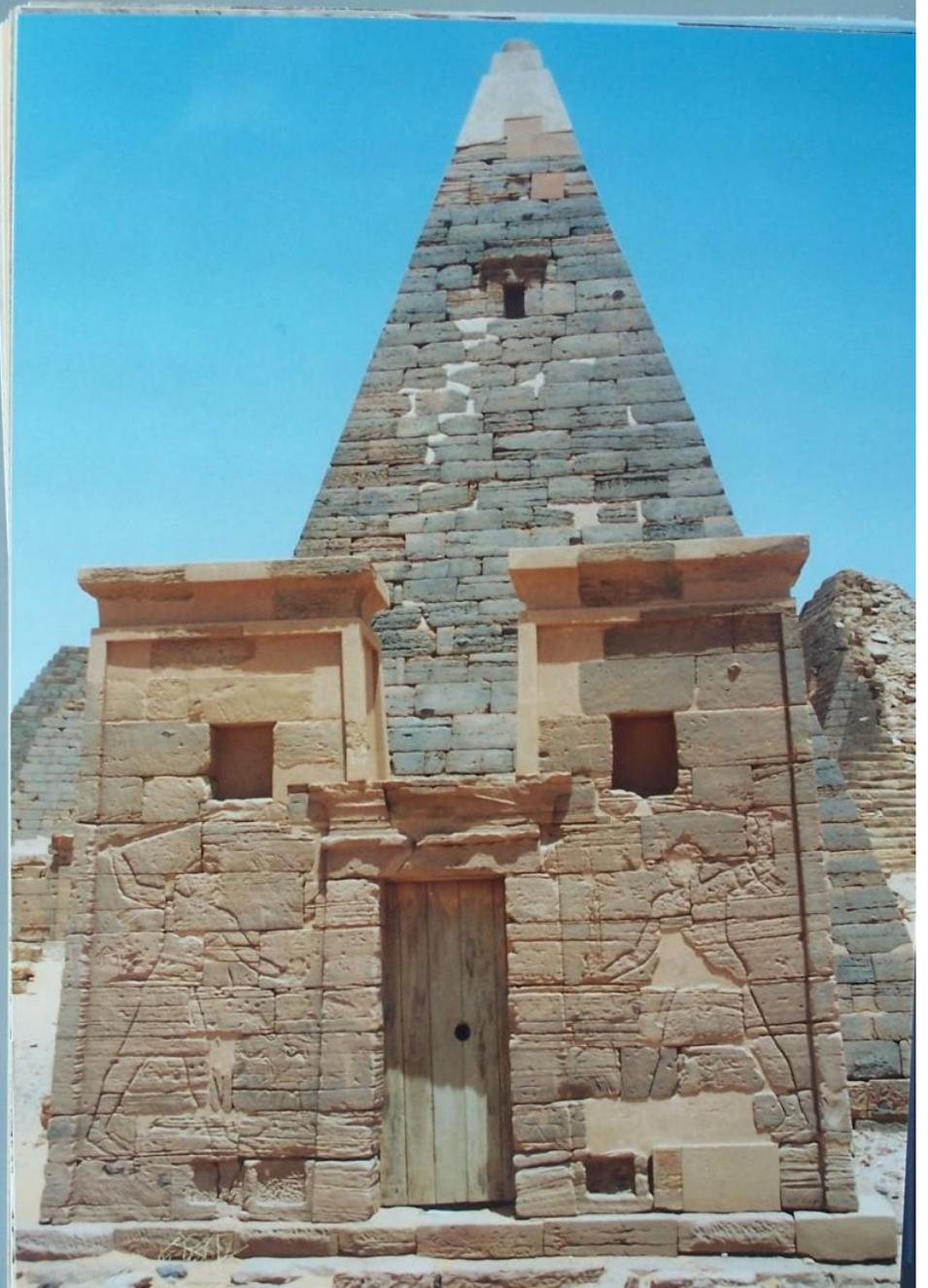
5. Sheikhs,
Saints, &
Baraka:
Sufi Healing
and Social
Construction
in Central
Sudan



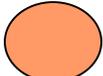
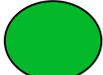
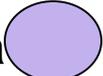
Sheikh Abdullah of Taiba receives visitors

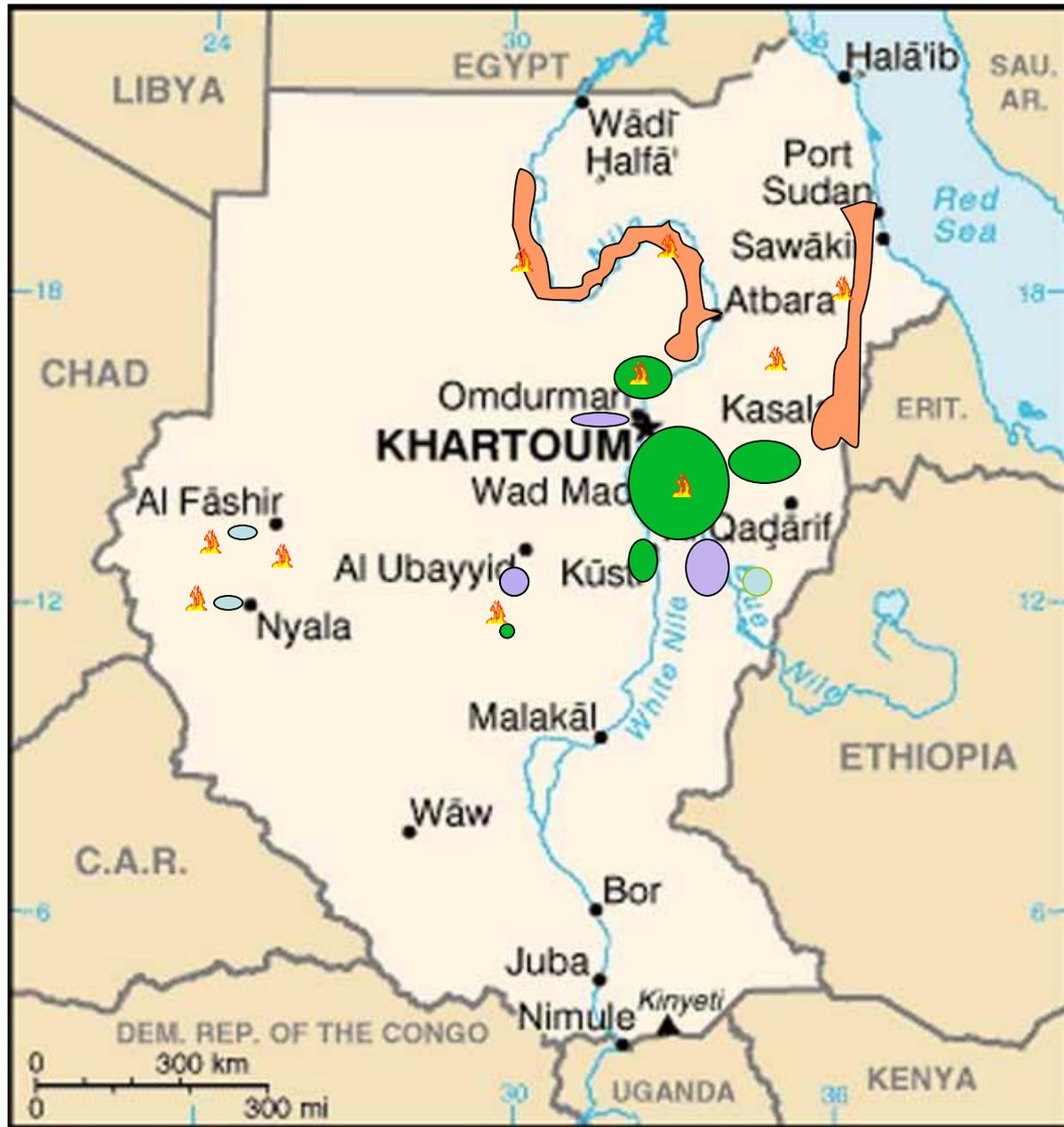


Meroitic pyramids
north of
Khartoum on the
Nile show
influences of
Egyptian religion
and architecture

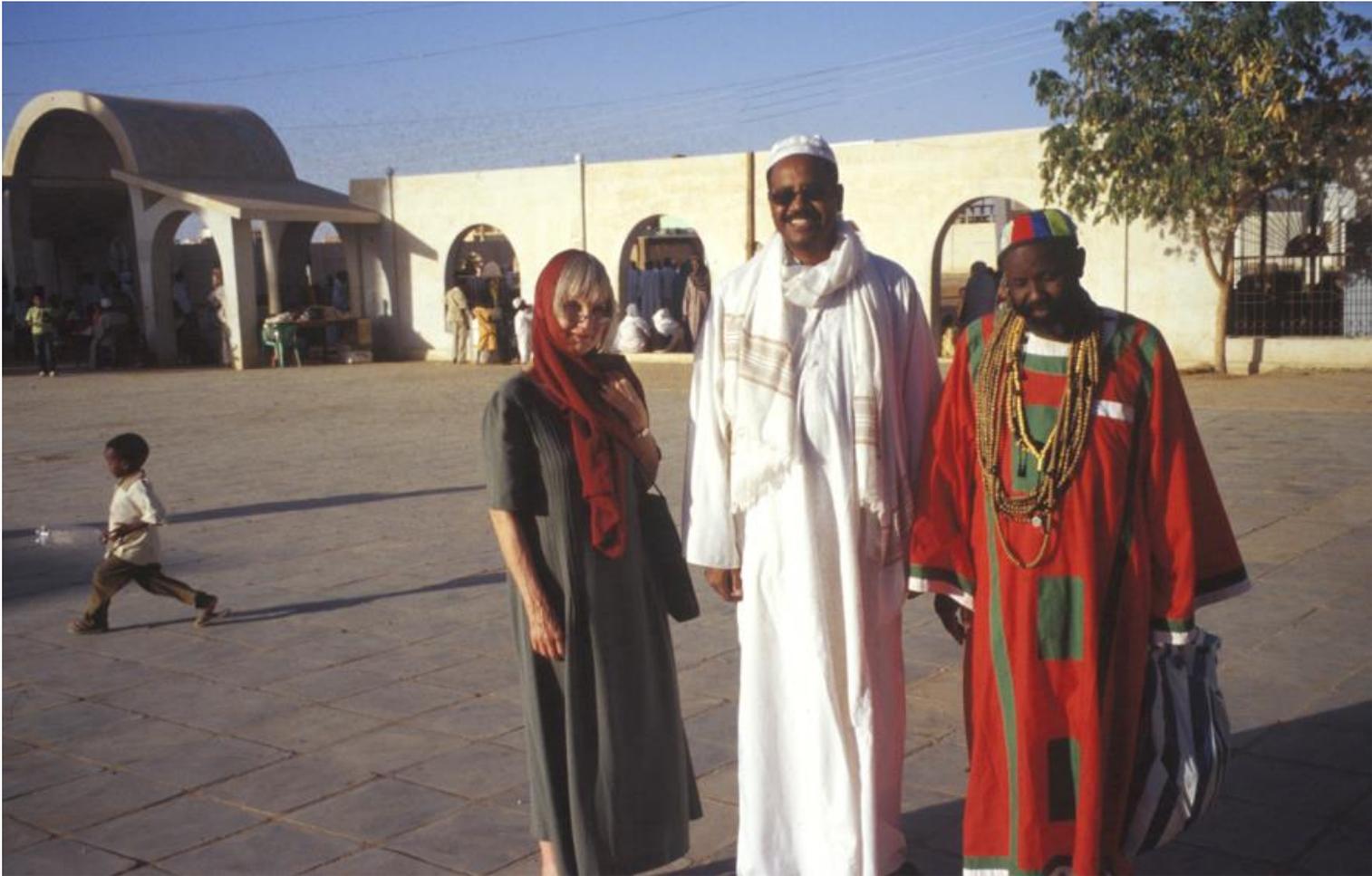


Sufi Orders in Sudan

- Khatmiyya 
- Qadiriyya 
- Sammaniyya 
- Tijaniyya 
- Khalwa (Islamic School) 



Reinhild Janzen, Abu Baker Malik, and Sheikh Siliman's dervish
in Riyad district of Khartoum



Sheikh Abdullah explains his work. Abu Baker Malik translates, until the sheikh decides to use his very good English directly with the visiting American academic. Visible behind the Sheikh are photographs of figures of his ancestry and sources of his spiritual power, his *baraka*; his father, grand-father, and distinguished Sufi teachers and healers of the past inspire his work.

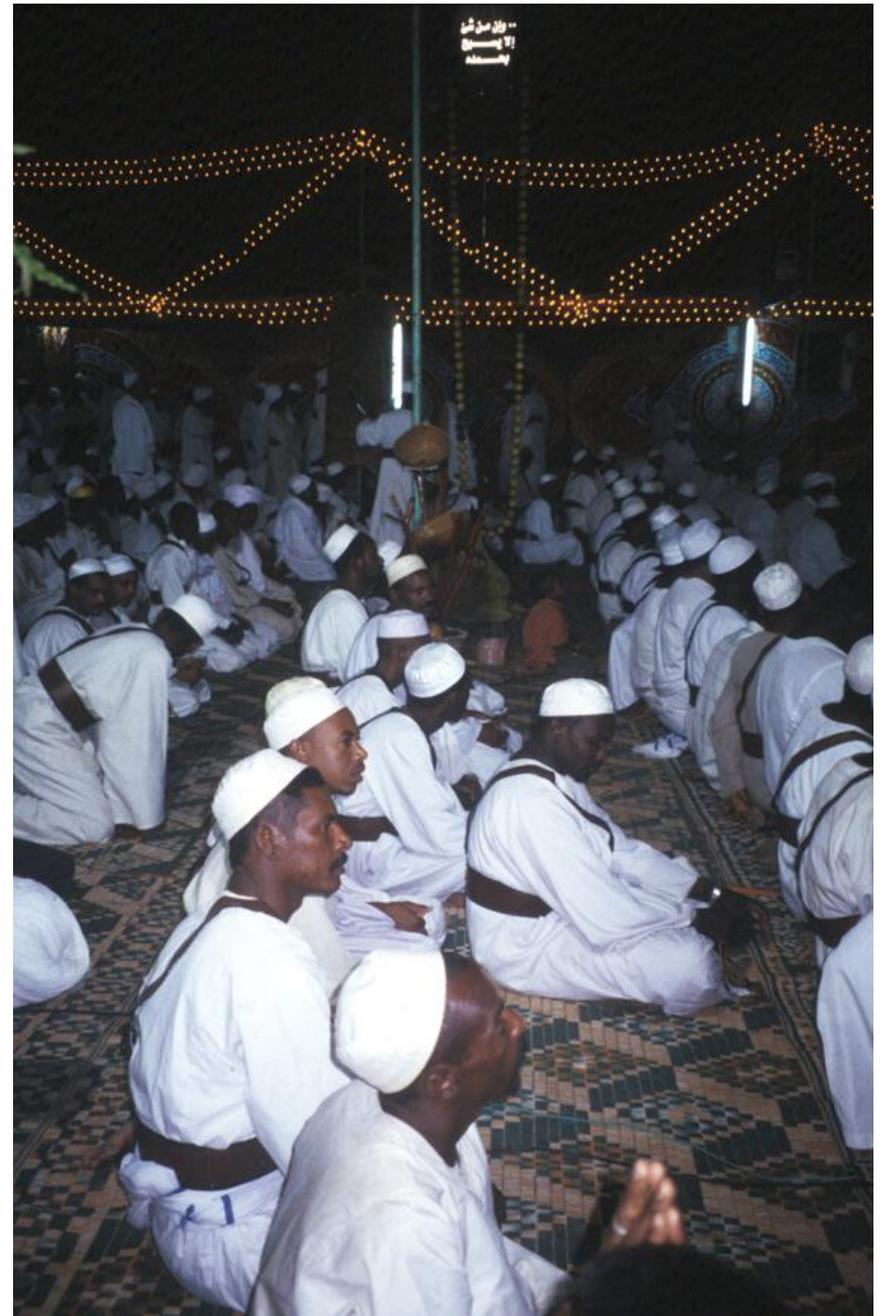




Every year for ten days, during the Maulid, the birthday of the prophet Mohammed, the illuminated tomb of the Mahdi is visible from the square adjoining it. Thousands of people gather to celebrate and pray.

More than 50 tents surround the vast square, each one is the site of a Sheikh with his following.

Here Sheikh Hassan and his followers gather to pray every evening during the Maulid.



Riyadh maseed





Sheikh Mahmoud's *maseed* in Khartoum North —mosque, school, clinic, kitchen, meeting rooms-- is surrounded by a vast cemetery.

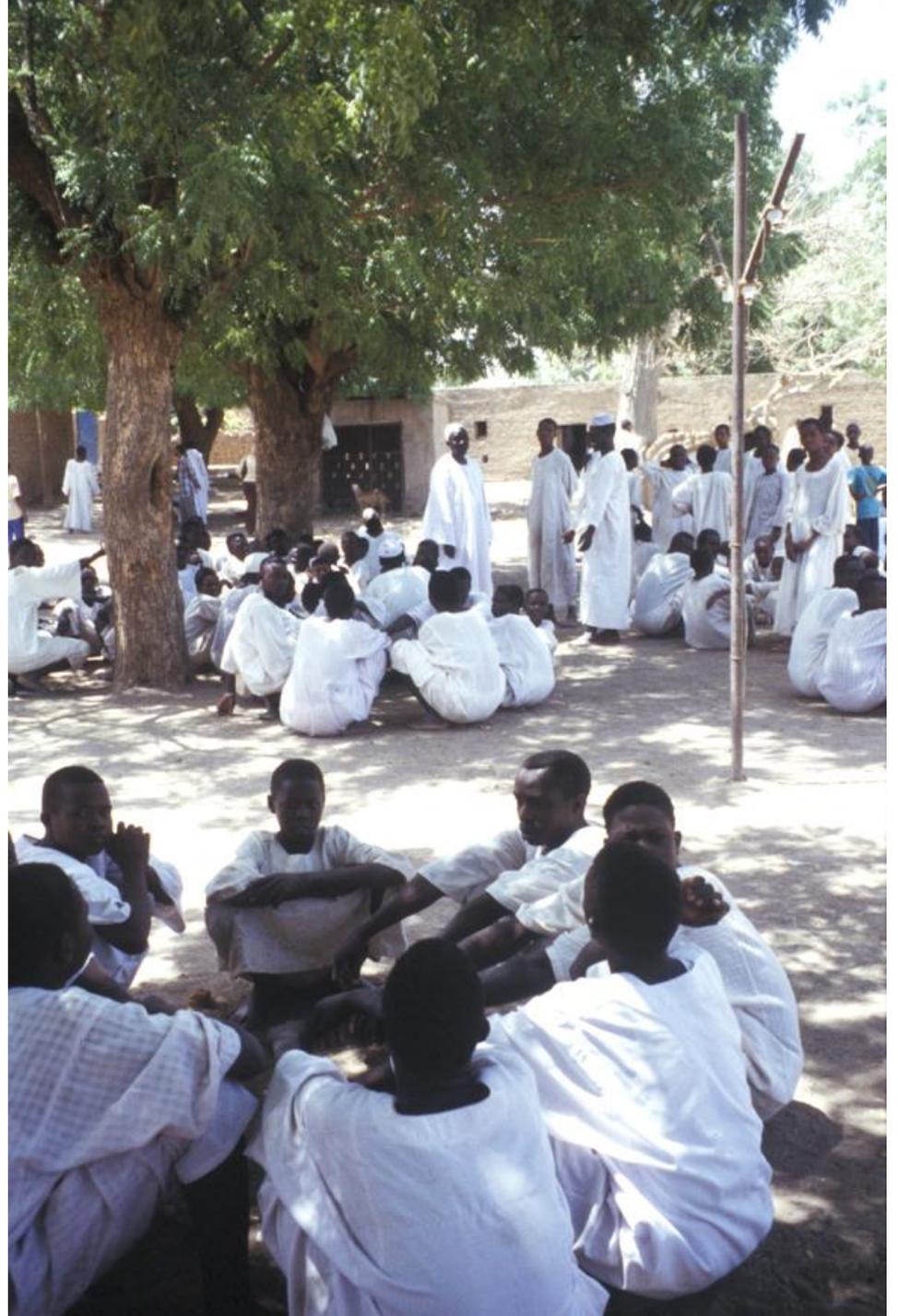
Maseed of Sheikh Mohmed Khier

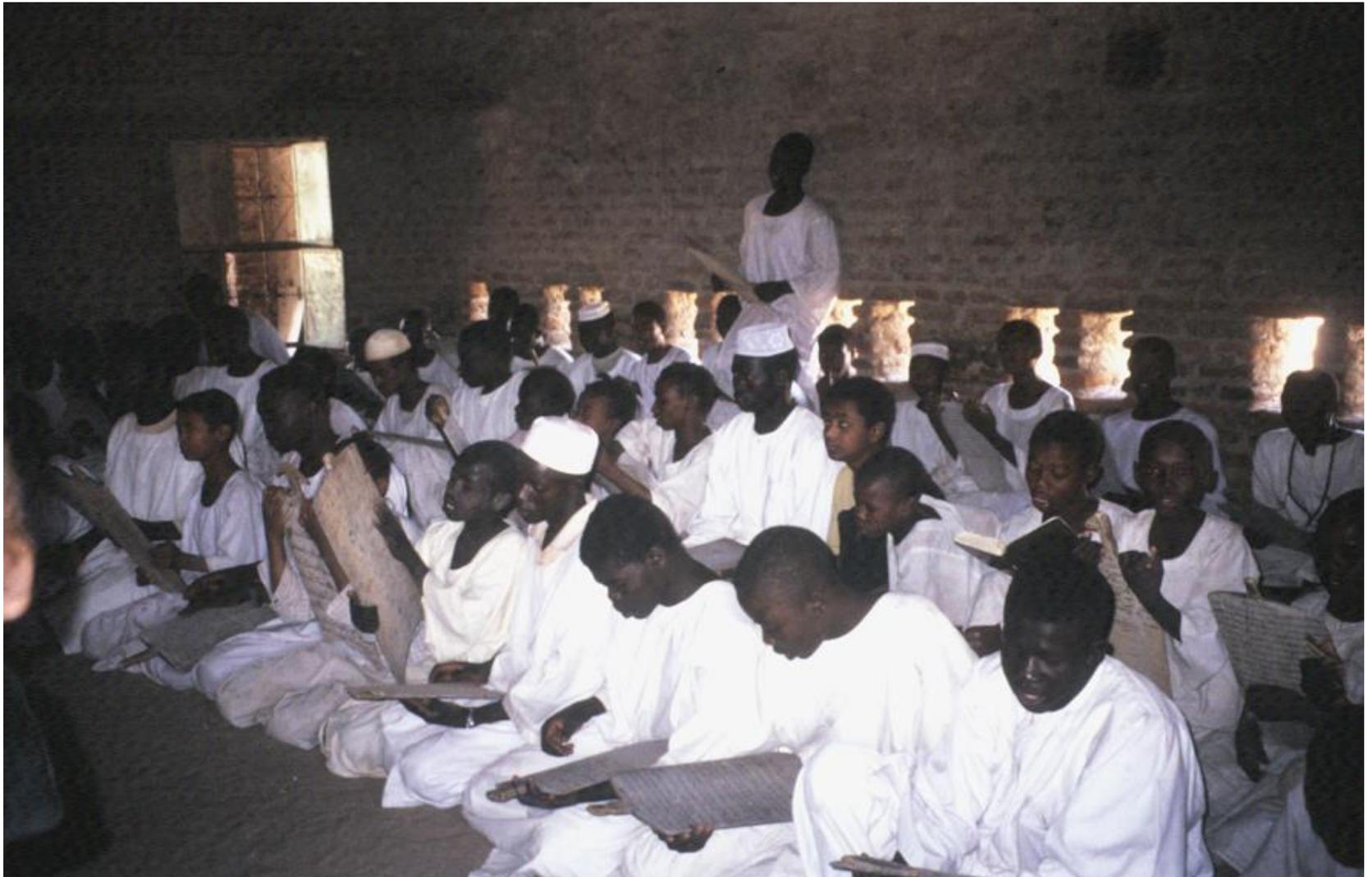


Sheikh Mahmoud's *maseed* complex includes a clinic or hospital where these boys—perhaps his students—recover from injuries and infections.



Maseed of Taiba



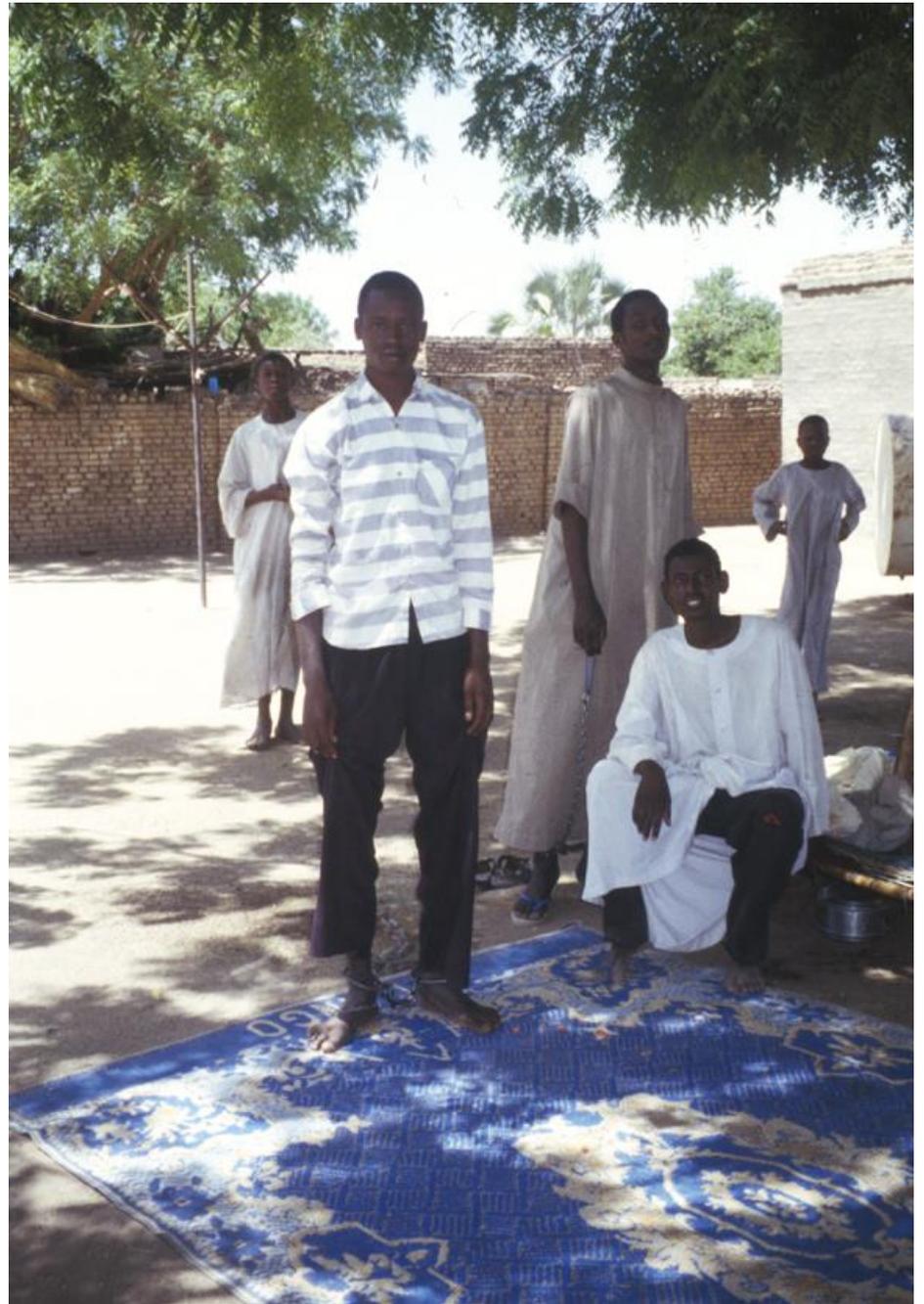


The *maseed* of the sheikh usually includes a school. Here students reading from the Koran verses they have transcribed on wooden tablets and books.

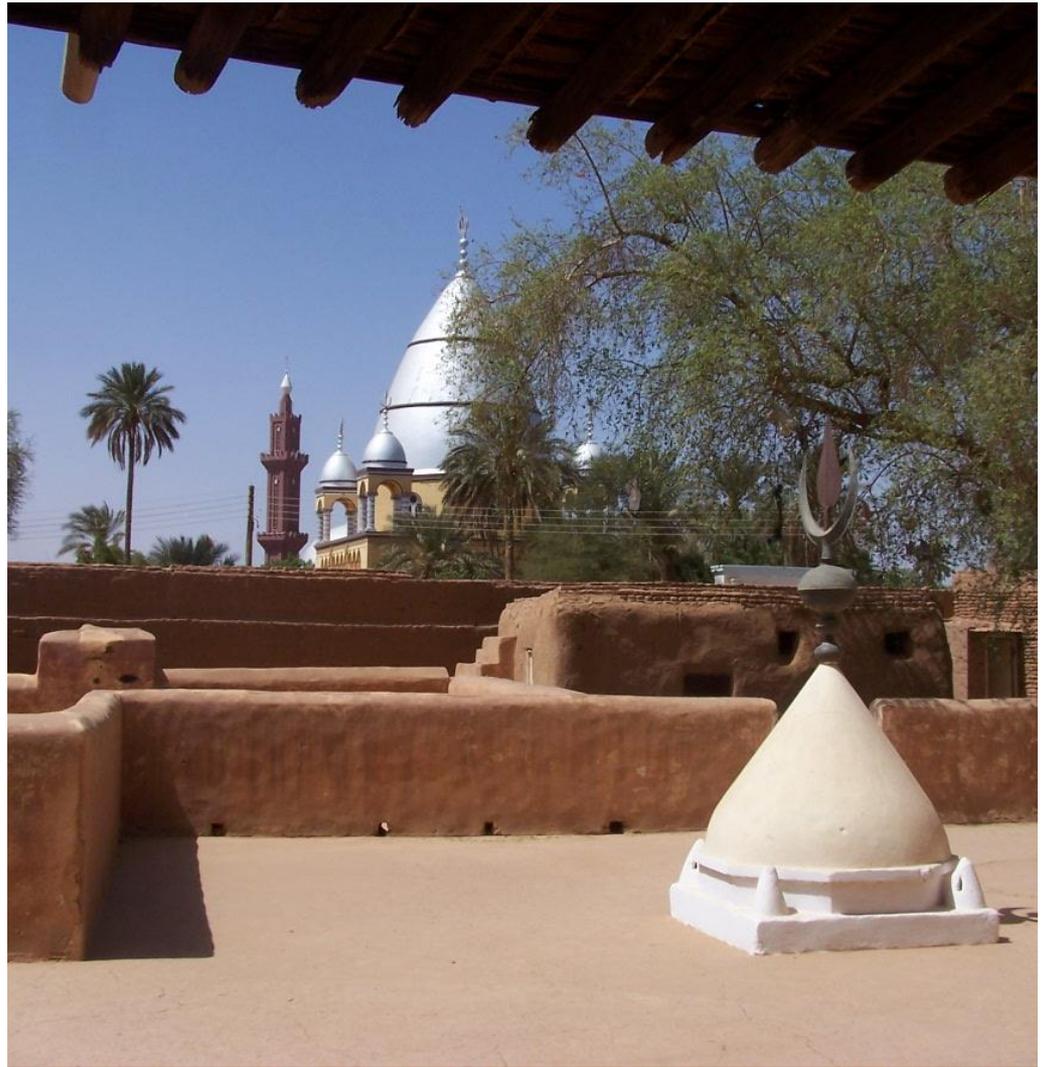
Devotees and clients wait to see Sheikh Abdullah in Taiba



This young man, suffering from mental disturbance, raises his trousers so the photographer may see the shackle around his ankle. He and a dozen others similarly shackled were brought to Taiba by their families to be treated and cared for by Sheikh Abdullah. Beyond the basic counselling, blessing, and care, Sudan's healing sheikhs specialize in various illnesses and refer their cases to each other as appropriate.



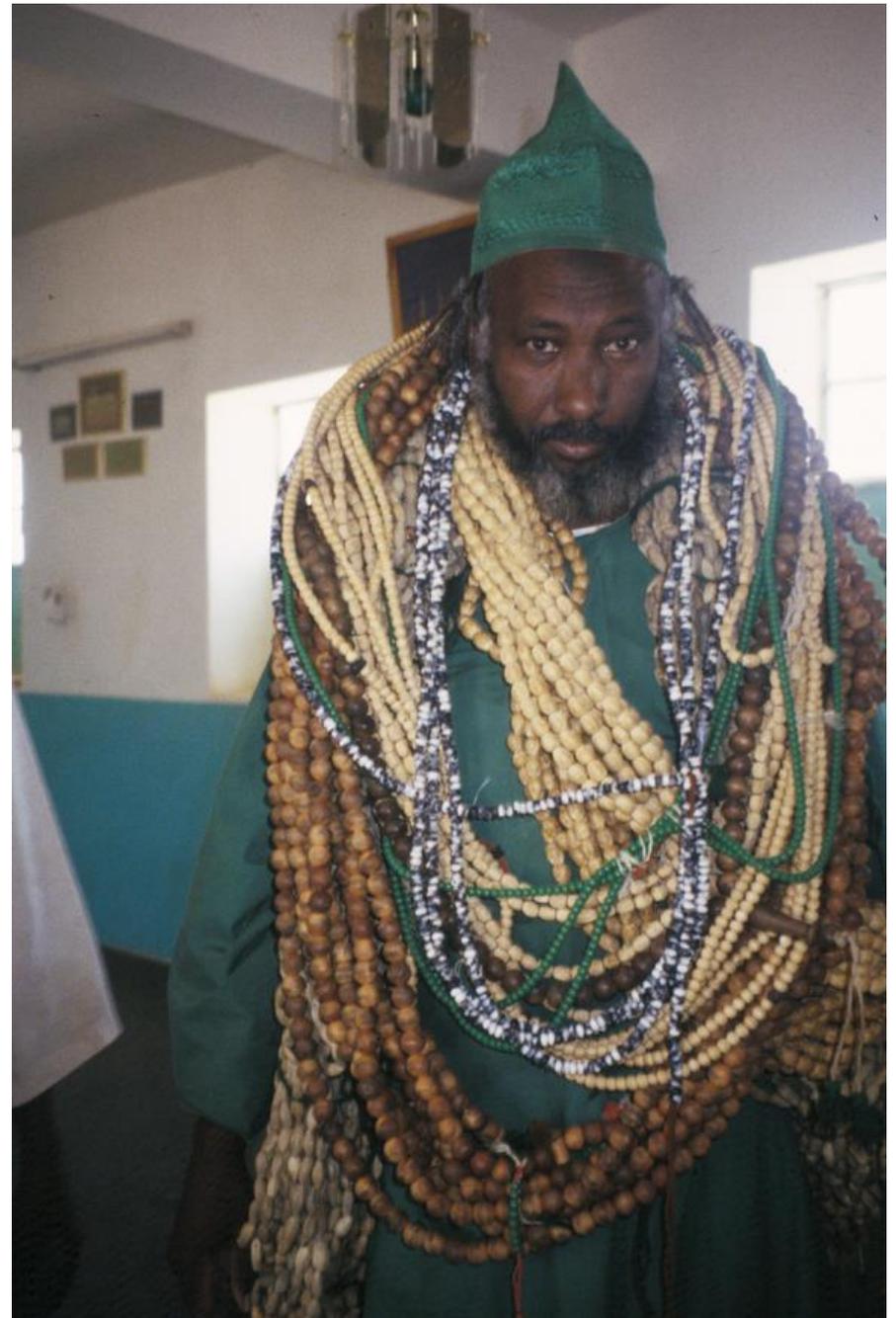
The sheikh—known as the Mahdi, the promised one-- who led the resistance against the Turkish colonial rule in the 1880s is memorialized in this the most prominent building in old Khartoum (Omdurman). The Mahdi died shortly after independence. He was succeeded by the Khalifa, from whose house this picture is taken. The Mahdist state survived until the British conquest of 1898.



This mannequin stands in the entrance to the Khalifa's House, today a national museum. The guard, just as the mahdi's soldiers, were called *dervishes*. The term combines military, spiritual, and performance dimensions. Today, many sheikhs are accompanied by dervishes.



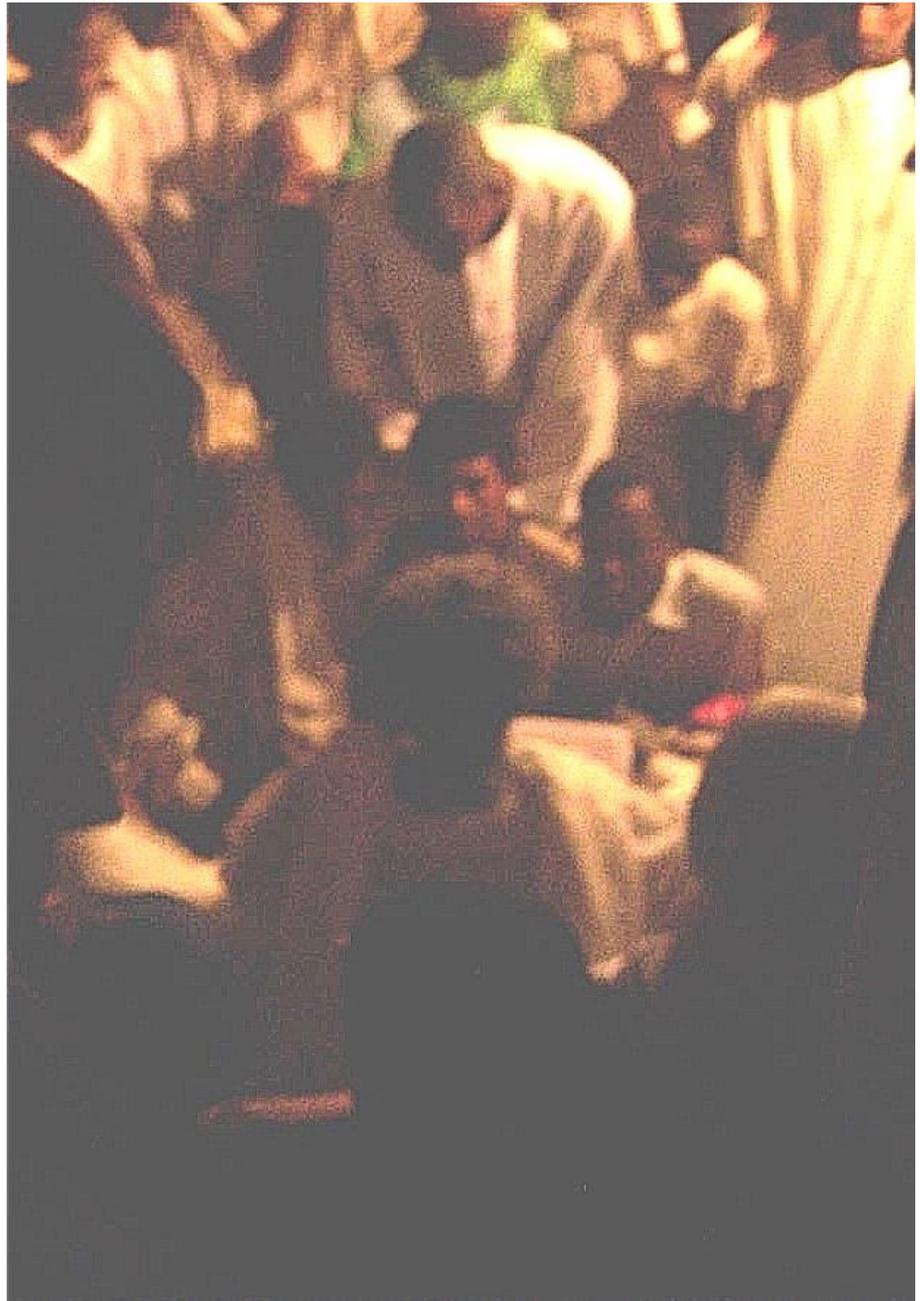
Sheikh Mahmoud's dervish strikes a particularly pious pose with as many prayer beads as he could find.





Sheikh Siliman receives devotees, hears their concerns, offers his blessing to them and any objects they may bring to him.

Pilgrims, devotees, and a hundred other people crowd into Sheikh Abdullah's consultation room to bring him their problems, hear his counsel and receive his blessing (*baraka*). The sheikh is seen here with his back to the camera.





The ceremony of recollection (*dhikr*), is a “a spiritual exercise designed to render God’s presence throughout one’s being..using a method of rhythmical repetitive invocation of God’s names” (J. Trimingham).



The climax of the *dihkr* performance, when singers-dancers rhythmically chant the 100 names of God



Meeting of the Republican Brothers and Sisters--a reform Sufi movement; in these two views taken in succession, singing is being led by man on far left, and women with outstretched hands on right.

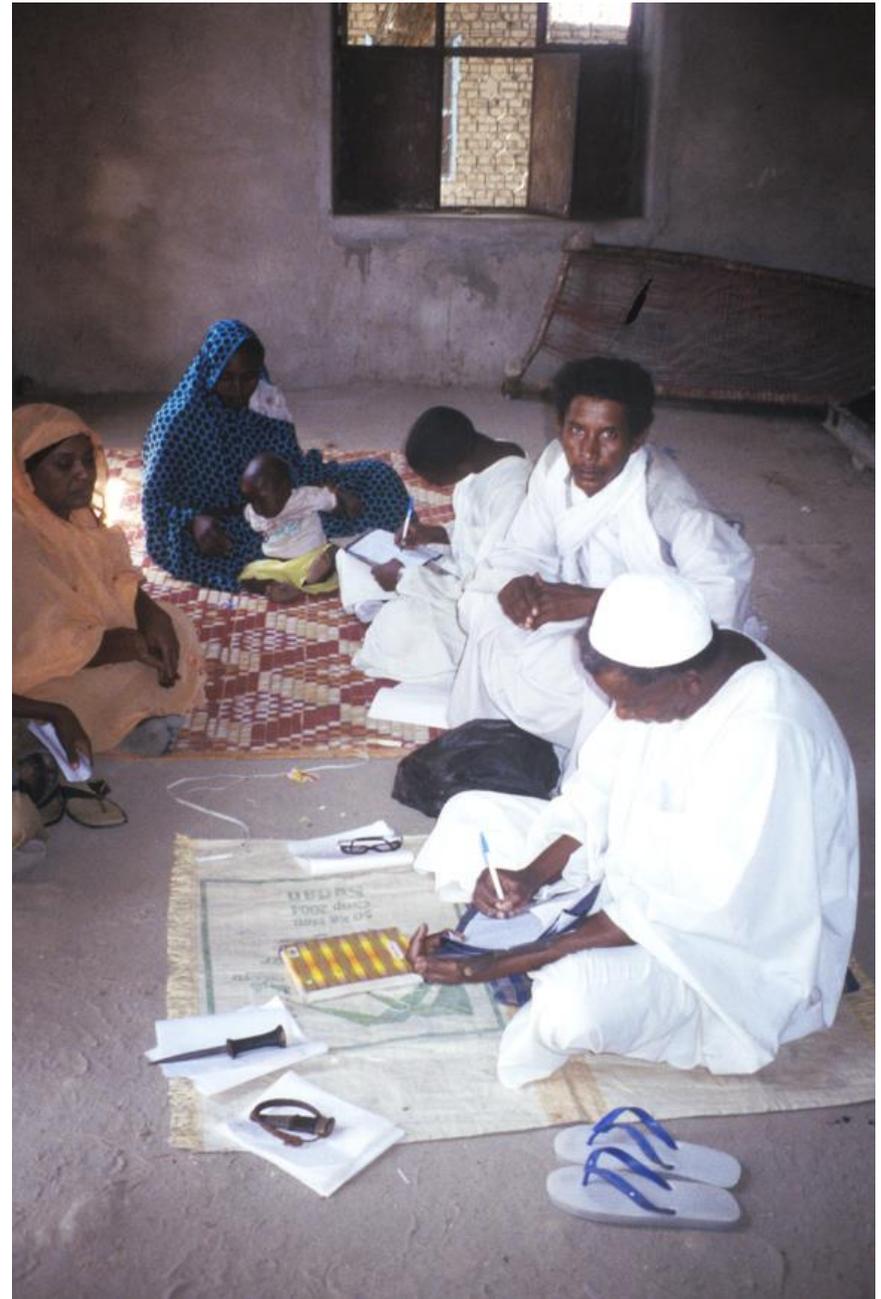
Common meal with Republican Brothers in Wad Medani



John M. Janzen with Sheikh Mohamed Khier right, Abu Baker left



Scribes copy Koranic verses for use in medicinal teas and for the preparation of amulets for patients





Sheikh Mamoud's scribe copies Koranic verses onto leaves of medicinal plants that will be brewed as medicinal tea for patients

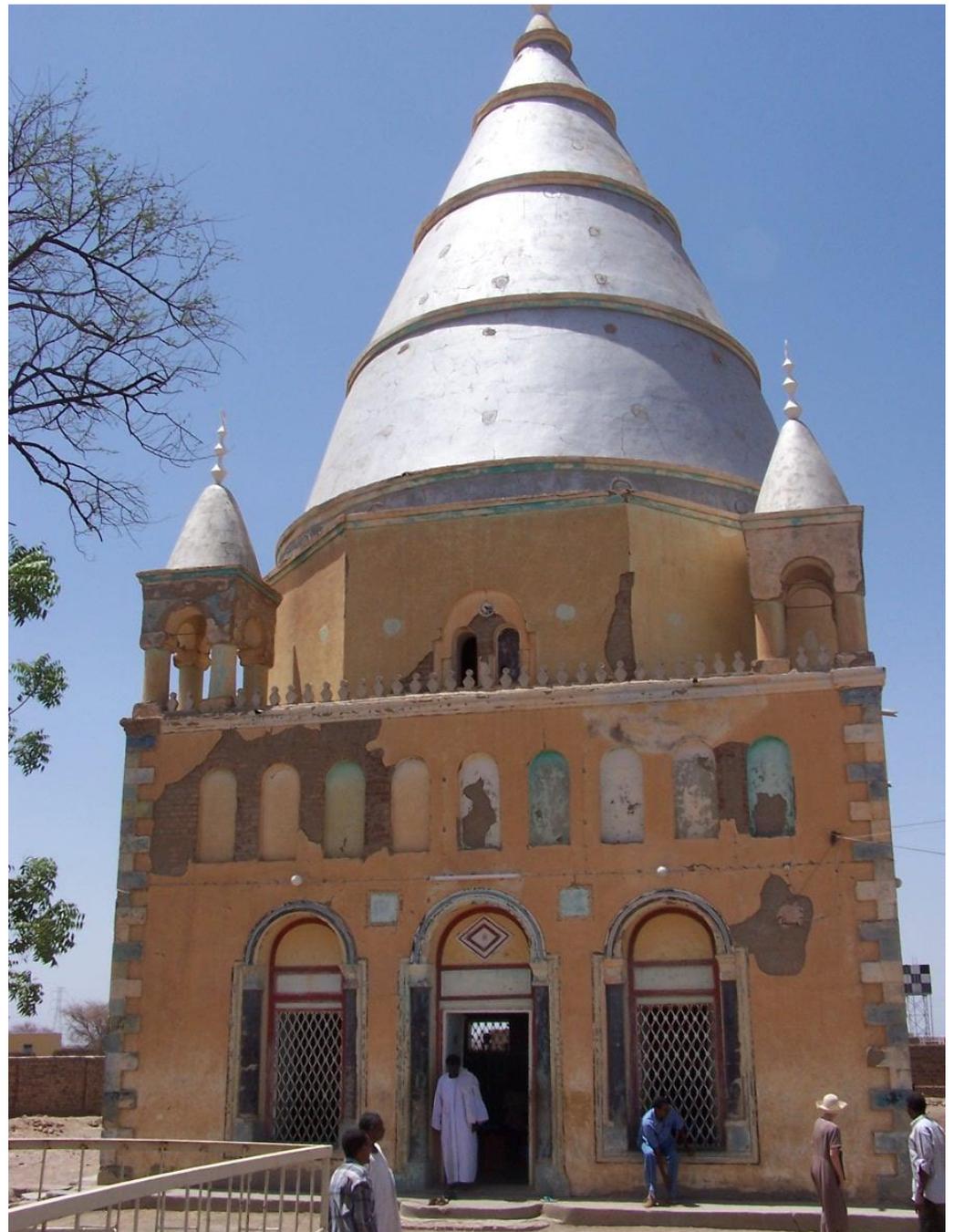
Sheikh Mahmoud



Abdullah of Taiba—
note line of baraka
descent in photos: his
father, grandfather, and
greatgrandfather



The tomb of the parents of
Abdullah of Taiba,
principal source of his
baraka, spiritual strength.



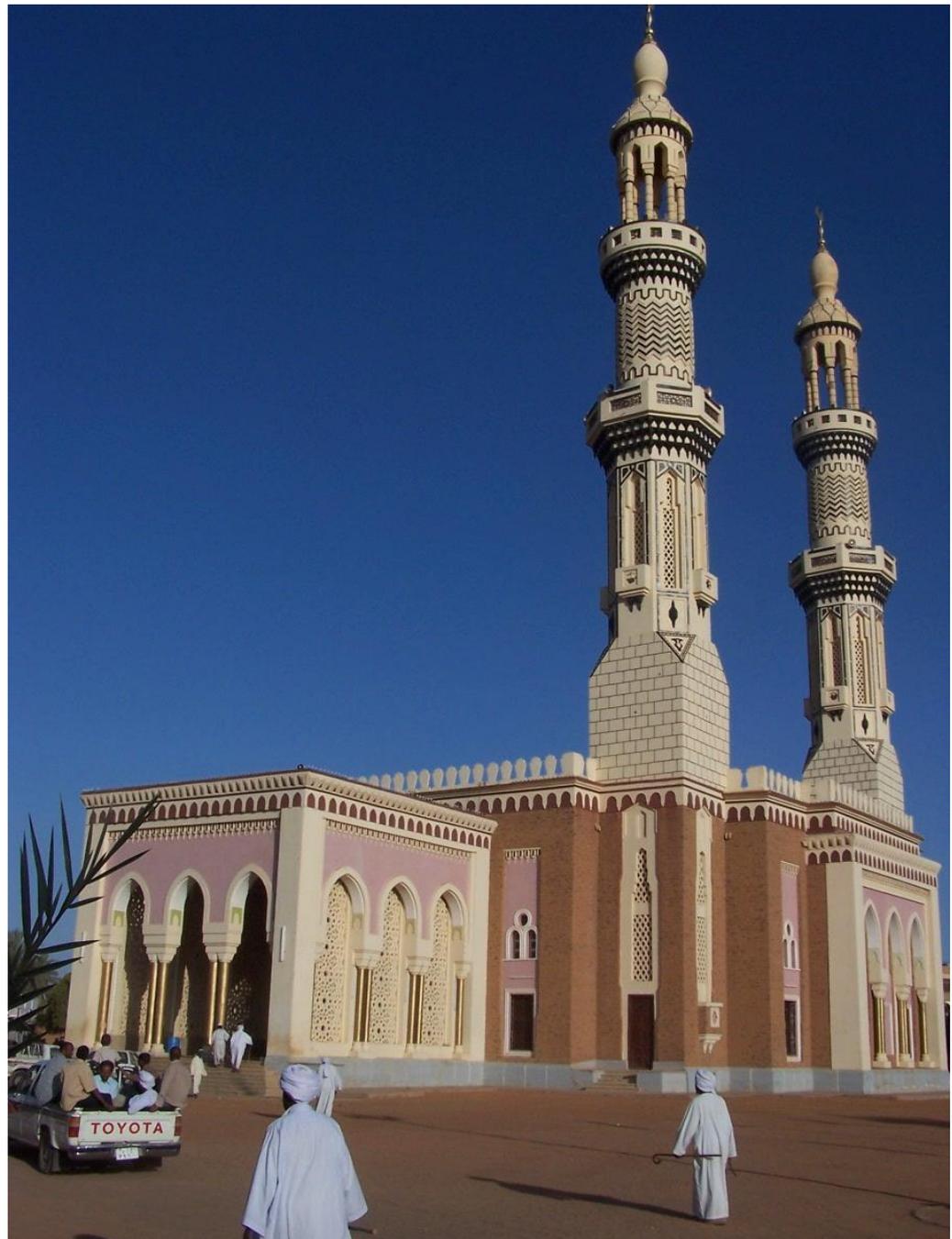


Pilgrims pray at the tombs of the forebears of Abdullah of Taiba.



The tombs of the forebears of Abdullah of Taiba, including his grandfather, Abdullah the Black.

Al-Mirghani tomb and mosque





Some of the fifteen Sufi saints' tombs of Abuharaz, near Wad Medani. The Toyota Camry has just been blessed with water from a well near the tomb of Jozif, distant spiritual ancestor of Abdullah of Taiba.

Saints' Tombs of Abuharaz at sunset

