

## **Markadugu: the relationship of urbanism and trade to state power in the Segou region of Mali**

Initiative: Freigeist-Fellowships

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Laufzeit: 5 Jahre

Projekt-Website: <http://www.frobenius-institut.de/en/research/ongoing-projects/334-markadugu-2>

This project explores the relationship between trading cities and imperial states in the ancient pre-colonial civilisations of Mali, West Africa. Urbanism and statehood, the most eye-catching parts of the region's past, remain badly understood. While archaeologists have attempted to explain the development of cities with little regard to statehood, the study of written historical sources has emphasised states and paid little attention to cities. The two disciplines have so far not produced a convincing account of how cities and states might have worked and developed together, a crucial problem in the region's history, and the one this project seeks to redress. As a case study, the focus will be on the 'markadugu' of the Segou region, ancient Islamic trading centres that have persisted through a number of state formations. We will chart their long-term development as an example of the different roles urban settlements could take within a state, and what impacts a changing political landscape had on the fortunes of city-dwellers. This study combines historical research and new archaeological methods with the voices of local populations through the collection and integration of oral histories. This way, it will attempt to overcome disciplinary boundaries, produce a coherent, multi-vocal and relevant account of the past, and reinvigorate a flagging, yet fascinating, field of study.

### **Projektbeteiligte**

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### **Open Access-Publikationen**

#### **Evidence of an Eleventh Century AD Cola Nitida Trade into the Middle Niger Region The Empire of Ghana**

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Es werden die Institutionen genannt, an denen das Vorhaben durchgeführt wurde, und nicht die aktuelle Adresse.

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