

Societies and Empires of Africa



Essential Question

How did interactions with other cultures shape African societies?



About the Photo: This rock painting in northwestern Africa shows a line of calves tied to a rope in a pastoralist camp.

In this module you will learn how African civilizations adapted to various environments and developed complex civilizations and trading networks.

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VIDEOS, including...

- The Sahara
- Masai People of Africa
- Trans-Saharan Trade
- Timbuktu: Thriving Songhai Empire Metropolis

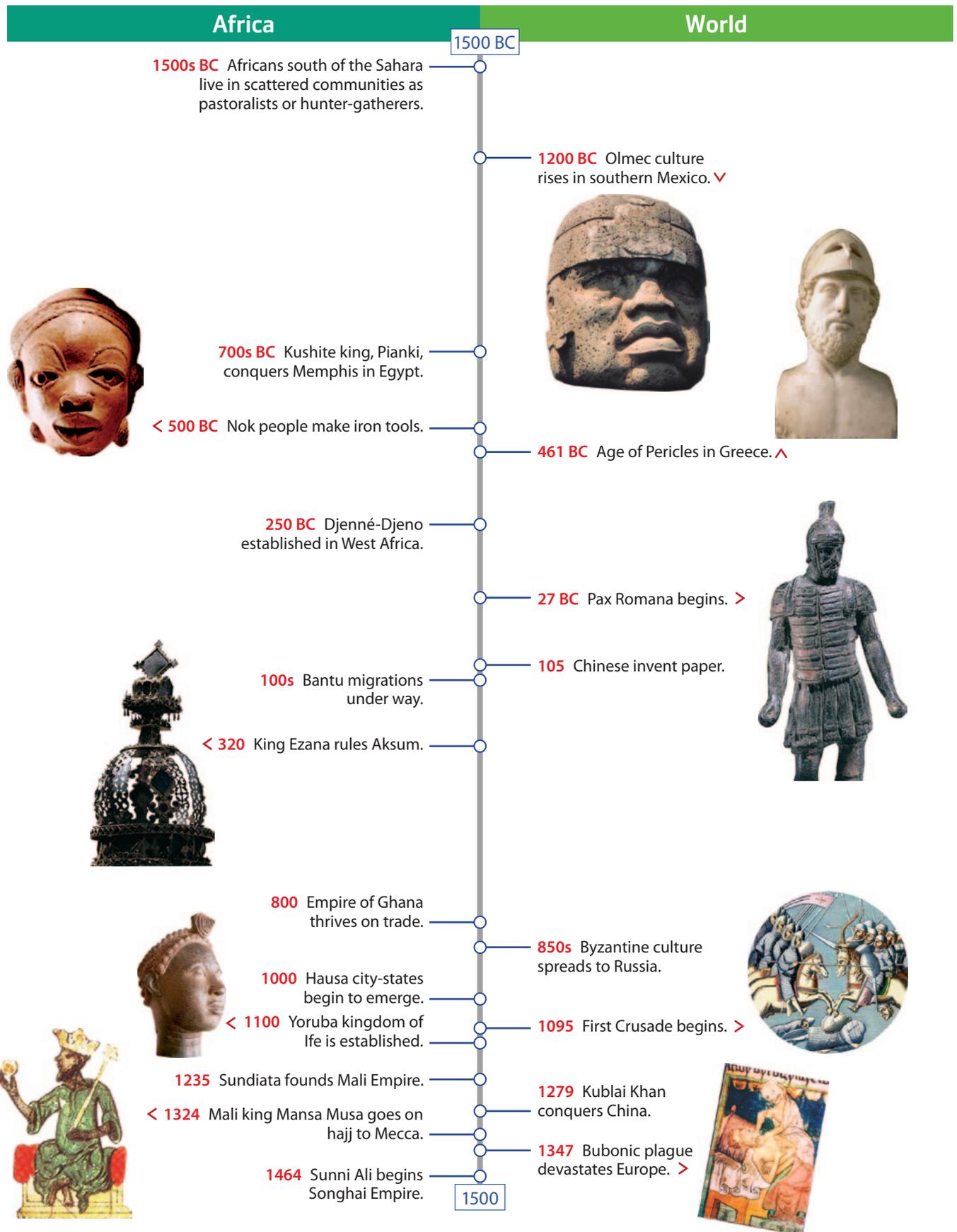
- ✓ Document-Based Investigations
- ✓ Graphic Organizers
- ✓ Interactive Games
- ✓ Image with Hotspots: African Ironworking
- ✓ Carousel: The Ruins of Great Zimbabwe

What You Will Learn ...

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The Big Idea The kingdom of Aksum became an international trading power and adopted Christianity.
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The Big Idea North and West Africa contained several rich and powerful states, including Muslim states in the north and Ghana, Mali, and Songhai in the west.
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The Big Idea African city-states and empires gained wealth through developing and trading resources.

Timeline of Events 1500 BC–1500

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Diverse Societies in Africa

The Big Idea

African peoples developed diverse societies as they adapted to varied environments.

Why It Matters Now

Differences among modern societies are also based on people's interactions with their environments.

Key Terms and People

Sahara

Sahel

savanna

lineage

stateless society

patrilineal

matrilineal

animism

griot

desertification

Nok

Djenné-Djeno

Setting the Stage

Africa spreads across the equator. It includes a broad range of Earth's environments—from steamy coastal plains to snow-capped mountain peaks. Some parts of Africa suffer from constant drought, while others receive over 200 inches of rain a year. Vegetation varies from sand dunes and rocky wastes to dense green rain forests. Interaction with the African environment has created unique cultures and societies. Each group found ways to adapt to the land and the resources it offers.

A Land of Geographic Contrasts

Africa is the second largest continent in the world. It stretches 4,600 miles from east to west and 5,000 miles from north to south. With a total of 11.7 million square miles, it occupies about one-fifth of Earth's land surface. Narrow coastlines (50 to 100 miles) lie on either side of a central plateau. Waterfalls and rapids often form as rivers drop down to the coast from the plateau, making navigation impossible to or from the coast. Africa's coastline has few harbors, ports, or inlets. Because of this, the coastline is actually shorter than that of Europe, which is one-third Africa's size.

Challenging Environments Each African environment offers its own challenges. The deserts are largely unsuitable for human life and also hamper people's movement to more welcoming climates. The largest deserts are the **Sahara** in the north and the Kalahari (kahl•uh•HAHR•ee) in the south.

Stretching from the Atlantic Ocean to the Red Sea, the Sahara covers an area roughly the size of the United States. Only a small part of the Sahara consists of sand dunes. The rest is mostly a flat, gray wasteland of scattered rocks and gravel. Each year the desert takes over more and more of the semiarid region at the southern edge of the Sahara Desert, the **Sahel** (suh•HAYL).

Vegetation Regions of Africa



Interpret Maps

- 1. Place** About what percent of Africa is desert? savanna?
- 2. Region** If you folded a map of Africa along the equator, what might you notice about the vegetation zones above and below the fold?

Another very different—but also partly uninhabitable—African environment is the rain forest. Sometimes called “nature’s greenhouse,” it produces mahogany and teak trees up to 150 feet tall. Their leaves and branches form a dense canopy that keeps sunlight from reaching the forest floor. The tsetse (TSET•see) fly is found in the rain forest. Its presence prevented Africans from using cattle, donkeys, and horses to farm near the rain forests. This deadly insect also prevented invaders—especially Europeans—from colonizing fly-infested territories.

Welcoming Lands The northern coast and the southern tip of Africa have welcoming Mediterranean-type climates and fertile soil. Because these coastal areas are so fertile, they are densely populated with farmers and herders.

Most people in Africa live on the **savannas**, or grassy plains. Africa’s savannas are not just endless plains. They include mountainous highlands and swampy tropical stretches. Covered with tall grasses and dotted with trees, the savannas cover over 40 percent of the continent. Dry seasons alternate with rainy seasons—often, two of each a year. Unfortunately, the topsoil throughout Africa is thin, and heavy rains strip away minerals. In most years, however, the savannas support abundant agricultural production.

Early Humans Adapt to Their Environments

The first humans appeared in the Great Rift Valley, a deep gash in Earth’s crust that runs through the floor of the Red Sea and across eastern Africa. People moved outward from this area in the world’s first migration. They developed technologies and social systems that helped them survive in—and then alter—their surroundings.

Hunting-Gathering Societies Nomadic hunting-gathering societies—the oldest form of social organization in the world—began in Africa. In Africa today, hunting-gathering societies form an extremely small percentage of the population. Scattered throughout the continent, these groups speak their own languages and often use their own hunting techniques. By studying these groups, scholars learn clues about how hunter-gatherers may have lived in the past.

The Efe (AY•fay) are one of several hunting-gathering societies in Africa. They live in the Ituri Forest in the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire). Like their ancestors, the modern-day Efe live in small groups of between 10 and 100 members, all of whom are related. Each family occupies its own grass-and-brush shelter within a camp, but their homes are rarely permanent. Their search for food causes them to be somewhat nomadic. As a result, the Efe collect few possessions and move to new camps as they use up the resources in the surrounding area.

In the Efe society, women are the gatherers. They search the forest for roots, yams, mushrooms, and wild seeds. Efe men and older boys do all the hunting. Sometimes they gather in groups to hunt small antelope called duikers. At other times, hunters go solo and use poison-tipped arrows to

Reading Check

Find Main Ideas

Why do most people in Africa live on the savannas?

An Efe camp



kill mammals such as monkeys. The Efe also trade honey, wild game, and other forest products for crops grown by farmers in nearby villages.

A respected older male, such as a father, uncle, or father-in-law, typically serves as group leader. Although members of the group listen to and value this man's opinion, he does not give orders or act as chief. Each family within the band makes its own decisions and is free to come and go. Group members settle arguments through long discussions. If conflicts cannot be settled by talking, a group member may decide to move to a different hunting band. Daily life for the Efe is not governed by formal written laws.



In most African pastoral societies, young boys were responsible for watching over the herds.

Pastoral Societies Other early Africans eventually learned to domesticate and raise a variety of animals for food. Called herders, or pastoralists, these people kept cattle, goats, or sheep. They were nomads who drove their animals to find water and good pastures for grazing during the dry season. Millions of modern Africans are pastoral herders as well. The Masai (mah•SEYE) of Tanzania and southern Kenya, for example, still measure their wealth by the size of their herds. The Masai diet consists mostly of meat, blood, and milk. The Masai live in small bands that traditionally included up to 12 households, although bands are smaller today. As among the Efe, each Masai family within a band makes its own decisions and is free to come and go. Multiple bands work together to oversee use of grazing and watering facilities.

Transition to a Settled Lifestyle Experts believe that agriculture in Africa probably began by 6000 BC. Between 8000 and 6000 BC, the Sahara received increased rainfall and turned into a savanna. But about 6000 BC, the Sahara began to dry up again. To survive, many early farmers moved east into the Nile Valley and south into West Africa. Some settled on the savannas, which had the best agricultural land. Grain grew well in the savannas. In addition to growing grain, Africans began to raise cattle. In areas where the tsetse fly was found, it was not possible to keep cattle. However, south and east of the rain forests, cattle raising became an important part of agricultural life. Other Africans learned to farm in the rain forest, where they planted root crops that needed little sun.

Agriculture drastically changed the way Africans lived. Growing their own food enabled them to build permanent shelters in one location. Settlements expanded because reliable food supplies led to longer, healthier lives and an increased birthrate. The increased food supply also freed some members of the community to practice activities such as working metal, making pottery, and crafting jewelry.

These increasingly complex settlements of people required more organization than smaller communities. Various types of governing bodies developed to fill this need. Some governments consisted of a village chief and a council of the leaders of individual family groups. As strong groups moved to extend their land and conquered weaker settlements, they centralized their power and their governments. Some of these societies eventually developed into great kingdoms.

Reading Check

Make Inferences
Why might some Africans continue living a nomadic lifestyle?

Stateless Societies

The societies south of the Sahara—like all human cultures—shared common elements. One of these elements was the importance of the basic social unit, the family. In many African societies, families are organized in groups called lineages. The members of a **lineage** (LIHN•ee•ihj) believe they are descendants of a common ancestor. Besides its living members, a lineage includes past generations (spirits of ancestors) and future generations (those not yet born). Lineage members are very loyal to one another.

South of the Sahara, many African groups developed systems of governing based on lineages. In some societies, lineage groups took the place of rulers. These societies, known as stateless societies, did not have a centralized system of power. Instead, authority in a **stateless society** was balanced among lineages of equal power so that no one family had too much control. The Igbo (IHG•boh) people—also called Ibo—of southern Nigeria lived in a stateless society as early as the ninth century. (Although the Igbo lived in West Africa, their political structure was similar to stateless societies found in central Africa.) If a dispute arose in an Igbo village, elders from different lineages settled the problem.

Tracing Family Descent In African societies, the way a society traces lineage determines how possessions and property are passed on and what groups individuals belong to. Members of a **patrilineal** society trace their ancestors through their fathers. Inheritance passes from father to son. When a son marries, he, his wife, and their children remain part of his father's extended family.

In a **matrilineal** society, children trace their ancestors through their mothers. Young men from a matrilineal culture inherit land and wealth from their mother's family. However, even in a matrilineal society, men usually hold the positions of authority.

Age-Set System In many African societies, young people form close ties to individuals outside their lineage through the age-set system. An age set consists of young people within a region who are born during a certain time period. Each age set passes together through defined life stages, such as warrior or elder. Ceremonies mark the passage to each new stage.

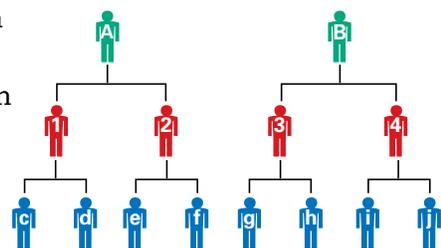
Social History

Negotiating Conflict in Stateless Societies

In a stateless society, the power to negotiate conflicts shifts from generation to generation as circumstances demand.

Look at the diagram of two lineages. If **d** is in conflict with **f**, then **c** will side with his brother **d**, and **e** will side with his brother **f**. Therefore, the parents—**1** and **2**—will meet to negotiate.

If **f** is in conflict with **g**, both entire lineages will take sides in the dispute. Therefore, the members of the oldest surviving generation—**A** and **B**—must meet to negotiate.



Men and women have different life stages, and each stage has its own duties and importance. Societies like the Igbo use the age-set system to teach young people discipline, community service, and leadership skills.

Local Religions African peoples organized themselves into family groups. They also developed belief systems that helped them understand and organize information about their world. Many of these local religions were polytheistic, involving belief in one divine creator or supreme god in addition to several secondary gods or semi-divine spirits. African religions generally also included elements of **animism**, a belief system in which spirits play an important role in regulating daily life. Animists believe that spirits are present in animals, plants, and other natural forces. In addition to nature spirits, Africans honored the spirits of their ancestors.

In most African religions, the supreme god was not involved in humans' lives. Instead, nature spirits and spirits of ancestors were responsible for many of life's events, such as a plentiful harvest or an illness. This belief led Africans to develop many religious practices and ceremonies to ask the spirits for health, fertility, and wealth. Other rituals were to protect people from bad spirits. Africans did not separate religion from other areas of life. Instead, spiritual beliefs and practices were integral to all of life.

Keeping a History Few African societies had written languages. Instead, storytellers shared orally the history and literature of a culture. In West Africa, for example, these storytellers, or **griots** (gree•ohz), kept this history alive, passing it from parent to child:

"I am a griot . . . master in the art of eloquence. Since time immemorial the Kouyatés have been in the service of the Keita princes of Mali; we are vessels of speech, we are the repositories [storehouses] which harbor secrets many centuries old. . . . Without us the names of kings would vanish into oblivion, we are the memory of mankind; by the spoken word we bring to life the deeds . . . of kings for younger generations. . . . For the world is old, but the future springs from the past."

—Djeli Mamoudou Kouyaté, from *Sundiata, an Epic of Old Mali*

Social History



Collecting Water

Finding and collecting water has traditionally been the job of women, whether they have a settled lifestyle or a nomadic one. Each day they must find clean water for their families, but drought in Africa has increased the difficulty of this task. In the past, it was estimated that women spent an average of nine minutes a day collecting water, but that time has increased in recent years. In some places, women have to walk as far as 6 miles (about 10 kilometers) to find water. Obtaining clean water will continue to be a difficult task, even for those who have made the transition to a settled lifestyle on small plots of land.

Reading Check

Analyze Sources

Why were griots important to West African societies?

Recent discoveries in West Africa have proved how old and extensive the history of this part of Africa is. Archaeologists believe that early peoples from the north moved into West Africa as **desertification**, or drying of the soil, forced them south to find better farmland. Discoveries in the areas of present-day Mali and Nigeria reveal that West Africans developed advanced societies and cities long before outsiders came to the continent.

West African Iron Age

Archaeologists' main source of information about early West African cultures has been from artifacts such as pottery, charcoal, and slag—a waste product of iron smelting. By dating these artifacts, scientists can piece together a picture of life in West Africa as early as 500 BC.

Unlike cultures to the north, the peoples of sub-Saharan Africa seem to have skipped the Copper and Bronze Ages and moved directly into the Iron Age. Evidence of iron production dating to around 500 BC has been found just north of the Niger and Benue rivers. The ability to smelt iron was a major technological achievement of the ancient Nok of that region.

The Nok Culture West Africa's earliest known culture was that of the **Nok** (nahk) people. They lived in what is now Nigeria between 500 BC and AD 200. Their name came from the village where the first artifacts from their culture were discovered. Nok artifacts have been found in an area stretching for 300 miles between the Niger and Benue rivers. They were the first West African people known to smelt iron. The iron was fashioned into tools for farming and weapons for hunting. Some of the tools and weapons made their way into overland trade routes.

DOCUMENT-BASED INVESTIGATION Historical Source

Nok Sculpture

Nok artifacts show evidence of a sophisticated culture. Their sculptures are made of terra cotta, a reddish-brown baked clay. Sculptures include animals as well as people. This Nok figure features a classical look called “elongated” style.

Most Nok figurines have these characteristics:

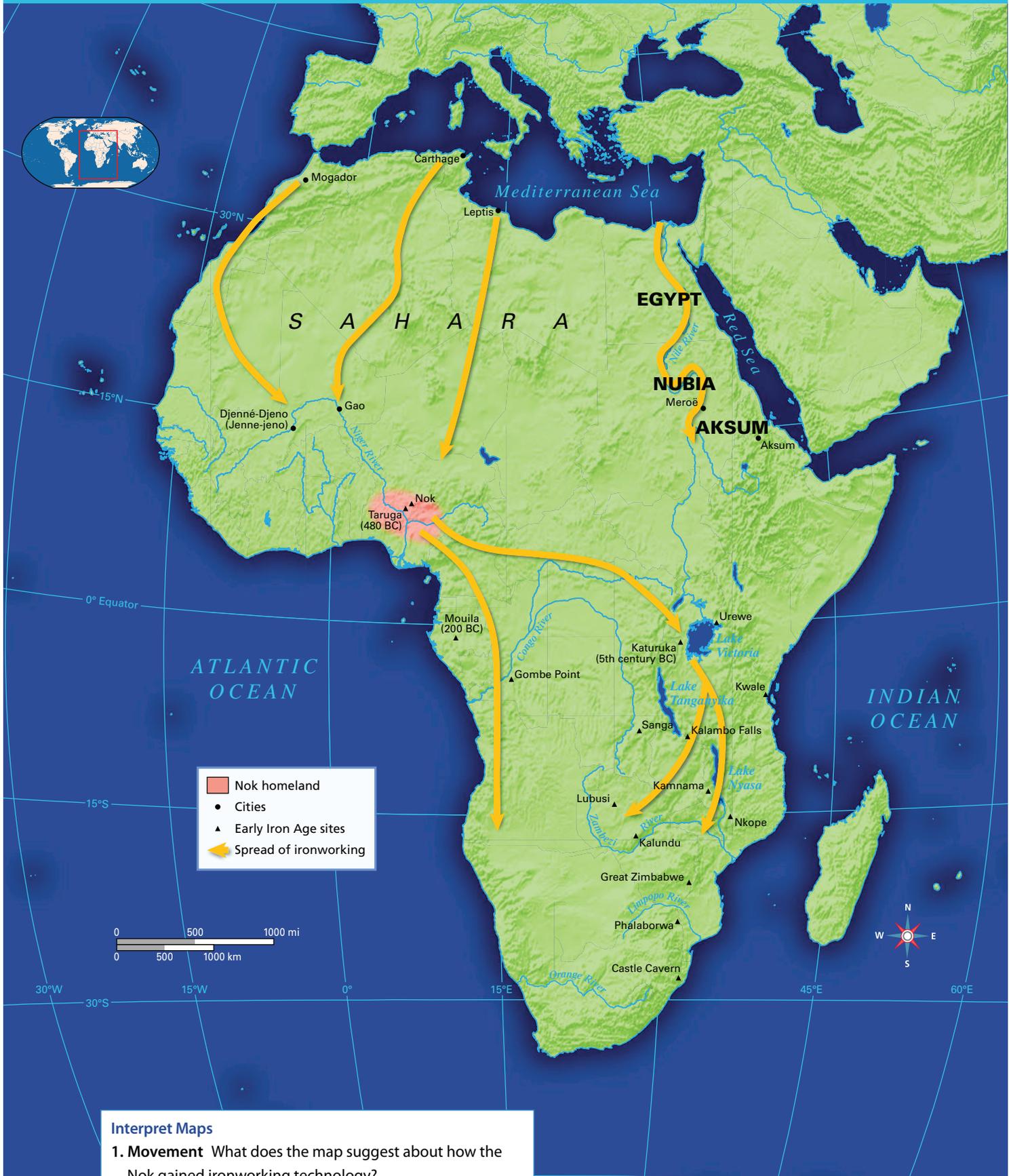
- distinctive features such as bulging eyes, flaring nostrils, and protruding lips
- an elongated style, especially used for the head
- the hand or chin on the knee in some figures
- hairstyle still common in Nigeria

Analyze Historical Sources

What questions would you ask if you could speak with the creator of this sculpture?



Spread of Ironworking, 500 BC–AD 700



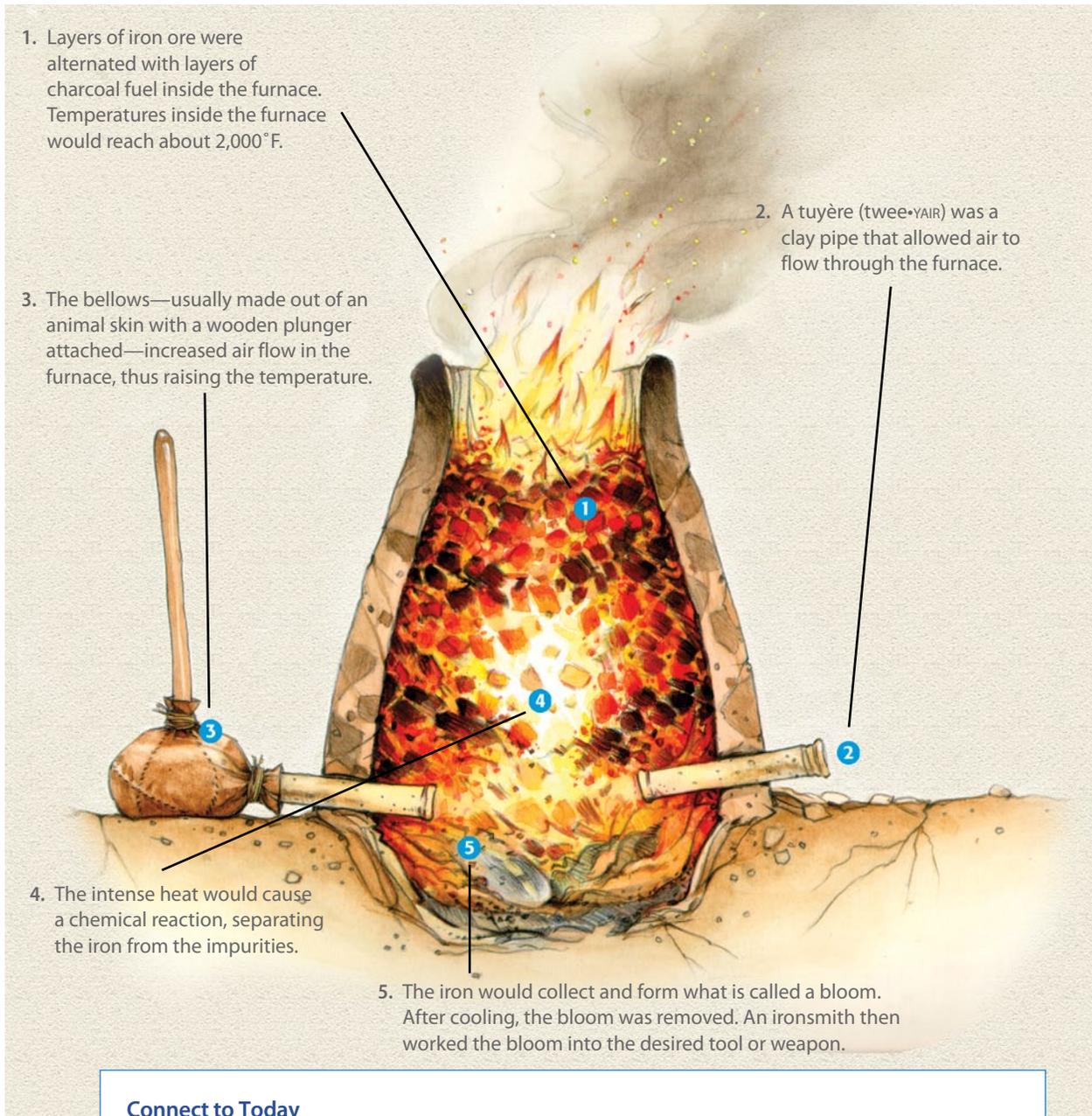
Interpret Maps

- 1. Movement** What does the map suggest about how the Nok gained ironworking technology?
- 2. Place** Which site has the earliest evidence of ironworking?

African Ironworking

Refining metal was an important technological advance in every civilization. Africa was no exception. Iron tools were stronger than copper or bronze tools, so iron tools and the technology to produce them were very valuable.

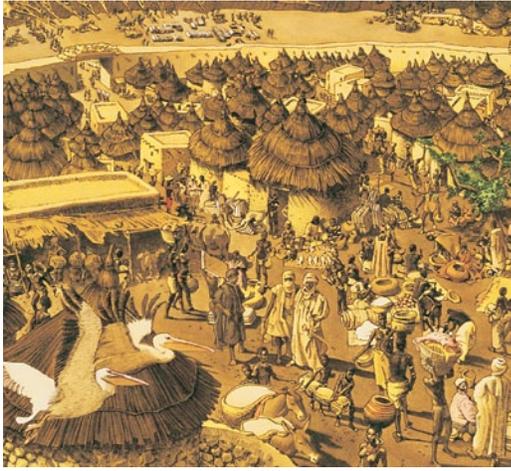
Producing iron began by mining the iron ore. The iron itself was bound up with other minerals in rocks. The trick was separating the iron from the unwanted minerals. That was the function of the furnace shown below. This process is known as smelting.



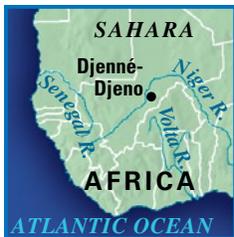
Connect to Today

1. Hypothesize What advantages would iron tools give a civilization?

2. Compare and Contrast Use the Internet to research the history of modern ironworking techniques. What improvements have been made, and how do they benefit our life today?



A modern artist, Charles Santore, has pictured life in Djenné-Djeno around 1000.



Reading Check

Compare

In what ways were the cultures of Djenné-Djeno and the Nok alike?

Djenné-Djeno In the region south of the Sahel, most Africans lived in small villages. However, cities began to develop sometime between 600 BC and 200 BC. Usually they were in areas along rivers or at an oasis. One of these cities was Djenné-Djeno.

Djenné-Djeno (jeh•NAY-jeh•NOH), or ancient Djenné, was uncovered by archaeologists in 1977. Djenné-Djeno is located on a tributary of the Niger River in West Africa. There, scientists discovered hundreds of thousands of artifacts. These objects included pottery, copper hair ornaments, clay toys, glass beads, stone bracelets, and iron knives.

The oldest objects found there dated from 250 BC, making Djenné-Djeno the oldest known city in

Africa south of the Sahara. The city was abandoned sometime after AD 1400.

At its height, Djenné-Djeno had some 50,000 residents. They lived in round reed huts plastered with mud. Later, they built houses made of mud bricks. They fished in the Niger River, herded cattle, and raised rice on the river's fertile floodplains. By the third century BC, they smelted iron. They exchanged their rice, fish, and pottery for copper, gold, and salt from other peoples who lived along the river. Djenné-Djeno became a bustling trade center linked to other towns by the Niger and by overland camel routes.

The early inhabitants of West Africa were developing cities, cultures, and technologies that would make their mark on history. Meanwhile, other groups in West Africa were beginning to make an historic move out of West Africa. The Bantu-speaking people would take their culture and ironworking techniques with them to parts of eastern and southern Africa.

Lesson 1 Assessment

- Organize Information** Use an outline like the one below to organize your notes about early African societies.

Africa

- I. A Land of Geographic Contrasts
 - A.
 - B.
- II. Early Humans Adapt to Their Environments

Write a paragraph explaining how hunting-gathering societies are different from pastoral societies.

- Key Terms and People** For each key term or person in the lesson, write a sentence explaining its significance.
- Analyze Causes** Why did diverse cultures develop in Africa?
- Recognize Effects** How did agriculture change the way Africans lived?
- Hypothesize** Why were elders from each lineage responsible for solving disputes amongst lineages of stateless societies?
- Summarize** Why did African societies develop age-set systems?
- Draw Conclusions** What evidence shows that Djenné-Djeno was a major trading city in West Africa?



Case Study

Bantu-Speaking

Peoples

Migration

The Big Idea

Relocation of large numbers of Bantu-speaking people brought cultural diffusion and change to southern Africa.

Why It Matters Now

Migration continues to shape the modern world.

Key Terms and People

migration
push-pull factors
Bantu-speaking peoples

Setting the Stage

Human history is a constantly recurring set of movement, collision, settlement, and more movement. Throughout history, people have chosen to uproot themselves and move to explore their world. Sometimes they migrate in search of new opportunities. Other times, migration is a desperate attempt to find a place to survive or to live in peace.

People on the Move

As an important pattern in human culture, migrations have influenced world history from its outset. **Migration** is a permanent or semipermanent move from one country or region to another.

Causes of Migration Aside from the general human desire for change, the causes of migrations fall into three categories: environmental, economic, and political. In the early history of human life, environmental factors were most likely the strongest. Later, economic and political causes played a greater role. For example, in the 15th century, the Ottomans' drive for power pushed them to move all over the ancient world to create a massive empire. As the world became more industrialized, more people moved to cities where work in factories was available. Elsewhere, religious or ethnic persecution supported by governments often drove groups of people to flee in order to survive. Seventeenth-century European settlers were pulled to America by the hope of religious tolerance, land for farming, or better economic conditions.

When looking at migration, historians and geographers speak of **push-pull factors**. These factors can either push people out of an area or pull them into an area. An example of an environmental pull factor might be abundant land that attracts people. On the other hand, the depletion of natural resources forces people away from a location—a push factor. Employment or the lack of it is an economic push or pull

Migration: Push-Pull Factors		
Push Examples	Migration Factors	Pull Examples
Climate changes, exhausted resources, earthquakes, volcanoes, drought/famine	Environmental	Abundant land, new resources, good climate
Unemployment, slavery	Economic	Employment opportunities
Religious, ethnic, or political persecution, war	Political	Political and/or religious freedom

Interpret Charts

- 1. Develop Historical Perspective** Are environmental factors still a cause of migration in the modern world? Explain.
- 2. Analyze Causes** Which cause do you think is most important in modern migrations? Why?

factor. Political conditions such as freedom or persecution can encourage people to move or to stay where they are. Urbanization also causes migration because job opportunities and other benefits attract people. The chart shows how causes of migration are related to push-pull factors.

Effects of Migration Life in a newly populated area changes because of the influx of new people. The results of migration may be positive or negative.

- Redistribution of the population may change population density.
- Cultural blending of languages or ways of life may occur.
- Ideas and technologies may be shared.
- People's quality of life may be improved as a result of moving.
- Clashes between groups may create unrest, persecution, or even war.
- Environmental conditions may change, causing famine or depleted natural resources.
- Employment opportunities may dry up, creating unemployment and poverty.

Migration changes the lives of those who migrate and also of the people in communities where they settle. Both groups may need to make adjustments in the way they live. Some adjustments may be relatively easy to make. For example, more advanced technology may improve living conditions. Other adjustments may be more difficult and may occur over a longer period of time. One of these adjustments may include language.

Tracing Migration Through Language One way experts can trace the patterns of movement of people over time is by studying the spread of languages. People bring their languages with them when they move to new places. And languages, like the people who speak them, are living things

that evolve and change in predictable ways. If two languages have similar words for a particular object or idea, for example, it is likely that the people who spoke those languages probably had close contact at one time.

Experts have studied languages in Africa. One group of African languages, the Niger-Congo, includes over 900 individual languages. A family of languages in this group developed from a single parent tongue, Proto-Bantu. Many anthropologists believe that the language spread across Africa as a result of migration. Today in Africa, Bantu speakers live in a region from Cameroon east to Kenya and south to the southern tip of Africa. A Bantu language is the first language of nearly one-third of all Africans.



A mask of the Kuba, a Bantu-speaking people, from Congo and Zaire

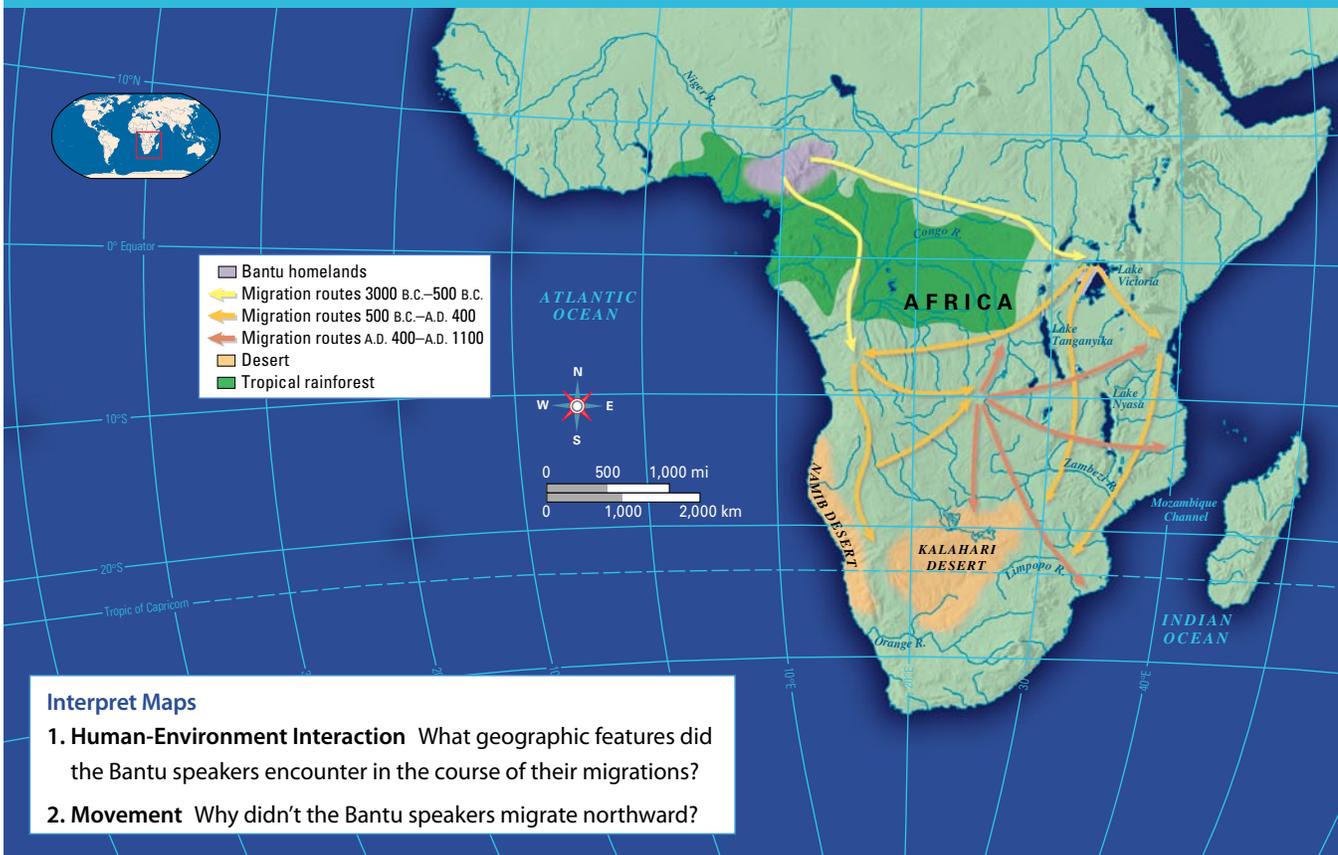
Reading Check

Form Opinions

Which of the effects of migration do you think are most negative? Explain.

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Bantu Migrations, 3000 BC-AD 1100



Interpret Maps

- Human-Environment Interaction** What geographic features did the Bantu speakers encounter in the course of their migrations?
- Movement** Why didn't the Bantu speakers migrate northward?

Massive Migrations

Early Africans made some of the greatest migrations in history. When the migrations were over they or their descendants populated the southern third of the continent. Starting in the first few centuries AD and continuing over 1,500 years, small groups moved southward throughout Africa, spreading their language and culture. Historians refer to these people as the **Bantu-speaking peoples**. (The word *Bantu* itself means “the people.”) The Bantu-speaking peoples originally lived in the savanna south of the Sahara, in the area that is now southeastern Nigeria.

Migration Begins Bantu speakers were not one people, but rather a group of peoples who shared certain cultural characteristics. They were farmers and nomadic herders who developed and passed along the skill of iron-working. Many experts believe they were related to the Nok peoples.

Beginning at least 2,000 years ago or earlier, small groups of Bantu speakers began moving to the south and east. The farming technique used by these people forced them to move every few years. The technique is called slash and burn. A patch of the forest is cut down and burned. Then the ashes are mixed into the soil, creating a fertile garden area. However, the land loses its fertility quickly and is abandoned for another plot in a new location.

When they moved, the Bantu speakers shared their skills with the people they met, adapted their methods to suit each new environment, and learned new customs. They followed the Congo River through the rain forests. In the rain forests, they farmed the riverbanks—the only place that received enough sunlight to support agriculture.

As they moved eastward into the savannas, they adapted their techniques for herding goats and sheep to raising cattle. Passing through the area that is now Kenya and Tanzania, they learned to cultivate new crops. One such crop was the banana, which came from Southeast Asia via Indonesian travelers.

Causes of Migration Although it is impossible to know exactly what caused the Bantu-speaking peoples to migrate, anthropologists have proposed a logical explanation. These experts suggest that once these peoples developed agriculture, they were able to produce more food than they could obtain by hunting and gathering. As a result, the population of West Africa increased. Because this enlarged population required more food, the earliest Bantu speakers planted more land. Soon there wasn't enough land to go around. They couldn't go north in search of land because that area was densely populated. The areas that once had been savanna were becoming more desertlike. The Sahara was slowly advancing toward them. So the people moved southward.

The Bantu people probably brought with them the technology of iron smelting. As they moved southward, they were searching for locations with

iron ore resources and hardwood forests. They needed the hardwood to make charcoal to fuel the smelting furnaces.

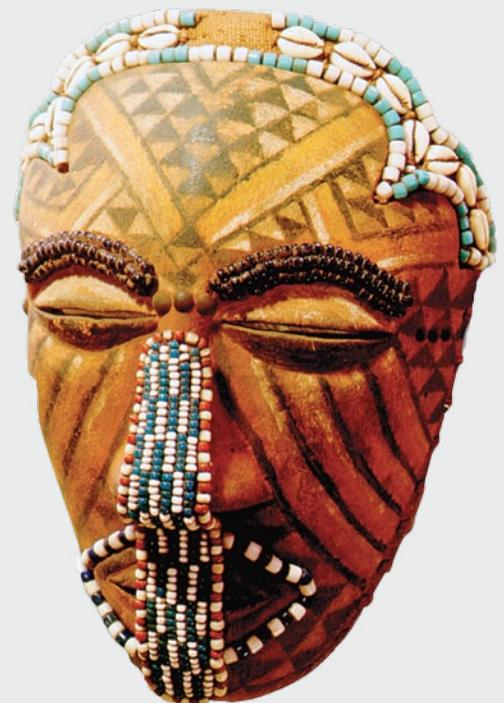
As you can see from the map, the migrations split into eastern and western streams. Eventually, the Bantu speakers worked their way around the geographical barriers of the Kalahari and Namib deserts. Within 1,500 years or so—a short time in the span of history—they reached the southern tip of Africa. Bantu speakers now populated much of the southern half of Africa.

Effects of the Migration When the Bantu speakers settled into an area, changes occurred. The lands they occupied were not always unpopulated. Some areas into which the Bantu moved were sparsely populated by peoples such as the Mbuti and the San. These groups were not Bantu speakers. They were not engaged in agriculture but were instead hunter-gatherers. They had to find ways to get along with the Bantu, get out of their way, or defend their lands and way of life.

As the Bantu speakers spread south into hunter-gatherers' lands, territorial wars often broke out. Fighting with iron-tipped spears, the newcomers easily drove off the Mbuti and the San, who were armed only with stone weapons. Today, the Mbuti are confined to a corner of the Congo Basin. The San live only around the Kalahari Desert in northwestern South Africa, Namibia, and Botswana. Both groups live a very simple life. They do not speak a Bantu language, and their culture does not reflect the influence of the Bantu-speaking peoples.

The Bantu speakers exchanged ideas and intermarried with the people they joined. This intermingling created new cultures with unique customs and traditions. The Bantu speakers brought new techniques of agriculture to the lands they occupied. They passed on the technology of ironworking to forge tools and weapons from copper, bronze, and iron. They also shared ideas about social and political organization. Some of these ideas still influence the political scene in eastern and southern Africa. Although the Bantu migrations produced a great diversity of cultures, language had a unifying influence on the continent.

In the next lesson, you will see how cultures on the east coast of Africa experienced growth and change. These changes came about as a result of human migrations from Arabia and cultural interaction with traders from North Africa and the Indian Ocean trade routes.



This Kuba mask represents the sister of the founding ancestor of the Kuba culture group, a Bantu-speaking people.

Reading Check

Analyze Effects

How did the Bantu migrations change the history of Africa?

Now and Then

Bantu Languages: Swahili

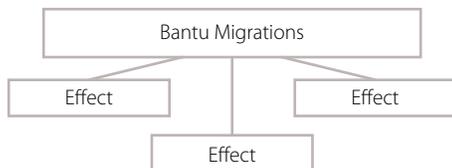
An estimated 240 million people in Africa speak one of the Bantu languages as their first language. Of that number, about 50 million people in central and east Africa speak Swahili (also known as Kiswahili). The word *swahili* means “the coast.” Swahili is widely used on the east coast of Africa but is found elsewhere, too. It is the official language of Kenya and Tanzania.

In fact, after Arabic, Swahili is the most commonly spoken language in Africa. Swahili uses Bantu basics along with Arabic and Persian words. It probably developed as people of East Africa interacted with Arabic traders and with traders from the Indian Ocean trade networks.



Lesson 2 Assessment

- 1. Organize Information** Complete a graphic organizer like the one below by adding the effects of the Bantu-speaking migrations.



Which effects of the Bantu-speaking migrations do you think had the most long-term impact? Explain.

- 2. Key Terms and People** For each key term or person in the lesson, write a sentence explaining its significance.
- 3. Synthesize** How did the Bantu deal with the problems they encountered in their migrations?
- 4. Make Inferences** How can the effects of one migration become a cause of another migration?
- 5. Recognize Effects** How does migration shape the modern world?
- 6. Hypothesize** How might the population of Africa be different today if the Bantu-speaking migrations had not taken place?



The Kingdom of Aksum

The Big Idea

The kingdom of Aksum became an international trading power and adopted Christianity.

Why It Matters Now

Ancient Aksum, which is in modern-day Ethiopia, is still a center of the Ethiopian Orthodox Christian Church.

Key Terms and People

Aksum
Adulis
Ezana
terraces

Setting the Stage

While migrations were taking place in the southern half of Africa, they were also taking place along the east coast. Arab peoples crossed the Red Sea into Africa perhaps as early as 1000 BC. There they intermarried with Kushite herders and farmers and passed along their written language, Ge'ez (GEE•ehz). The Arabs also shared their skills of working stone and building dams and aqueducts. This blended group of Africans and Arabs would form the basis of a new and powerful trading kingdom.

The Rise of the Kingdom of Aksum

By 715 BC, the East African kingdom of Kush had become powerful enough to push north and conquer Egypt. During the next century, fierce Assyrians swept into Egypt and drove the Kushite pharaohs south. However, Kush remained a powerful kingdom for over 1,000 years. Finally, a more powerful kingdom arose and conquered Kush. That kingdom was **Aksum** (AHK•soom). It was located south of Kush on a rugged plateau on the Red Sea, in what are now the countries of Eritrea and Ethiopia.

In this area of Africa, sometimes called the Horn of Africa, Arab traders from across the Red Sea established trading settlements. These traders were seeking ivory to trade in Persia and farther east on the Indian Ocean. They brought silks, textiles, and spices from eastern trade routes. Eventually, the trading settlements became colonies of farmers and traders. Trade with Mediterranean countries also flowed into seaports located here.

The Origins of Aksum A legend traces the founding of the kingdom of Aksum and the Ethiopian royal dynasty to the son of King Solomon (of ancient Israel) and of the Queen of Sheba (a country in southern Arabia). That dynasty lasted into the 20th century when the last ruler, Haile Selassie, died in 1975.

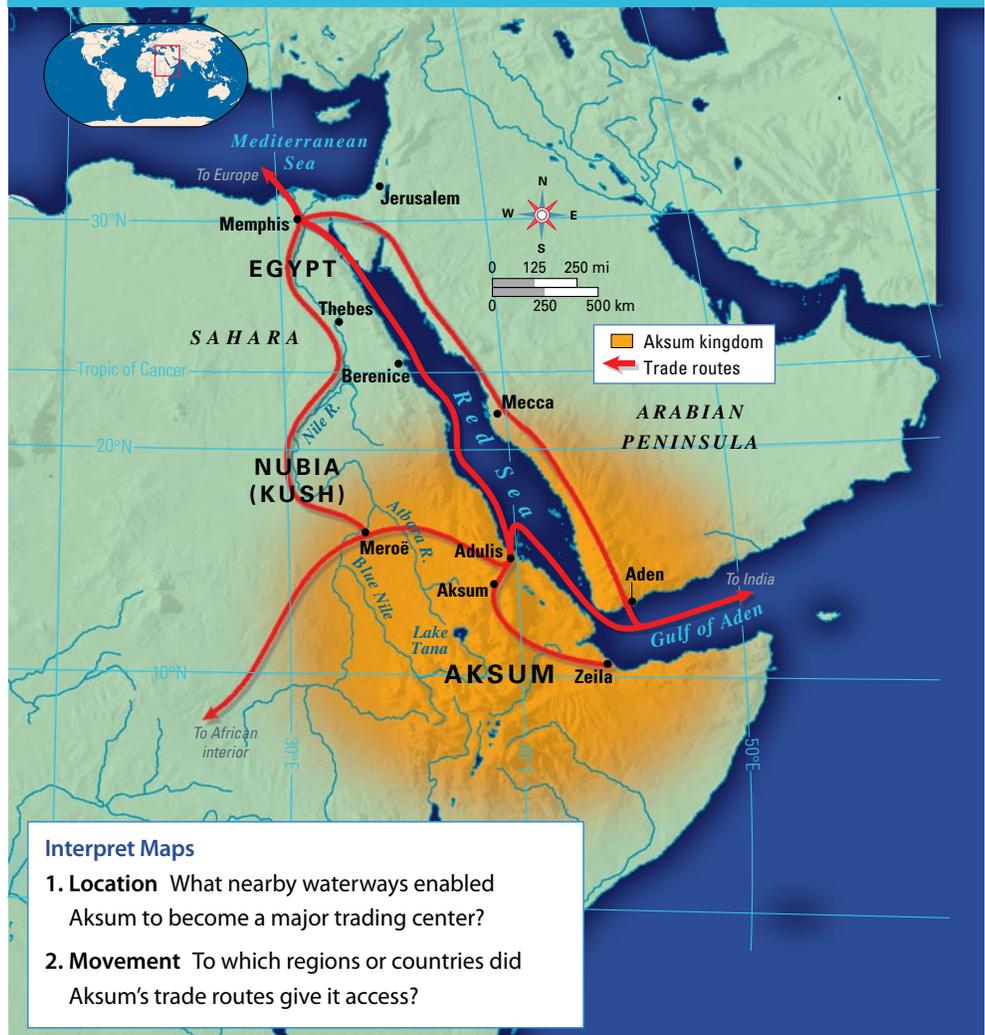
The first mention of Aksum was in a Greek guidebook written around AD 100, *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*. It describes Zoskales (ZAHS•kuh•leez), thought to be the first king of Aksum. He was “a stickler about his possessions and always [greedy] for getting more, but in other respects a fine person and well versed in reading and writing Greek.” Under Zoskales and other rulers, Aksum seized areas along the Red Sea and the Blue Nile in Africa. The rulers also crossed the Red Sea and took control of lands on the southwestern Arabian Peninsula.

Aksum Controls International Trade Aksum’s location and expansion made it a hub for caravan routes to Egypt and Meroë. Access to sea trade on the Mediterranean Sea and the Indian Ocean helped Aksum become an international trading power. Traders from Egypt, Arabia, Persia, India, and the Roman Empire crowded Aksum’s chief seaport, **Adulis** (AHD•uh•luhs), near present-day Massawa.

Aksumite merchants traded necessities such as salt and luxuries such as rhinoceros horns, tortoise shells, ivory, emeralds, and gold. In return, they chose from items such as cloth, glass, olive oil, wine, brass, iron, and

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Aksum, AD 300–700



Interpret Maps

- 1. Location** What nearby waterways enabled Aksum to become a major trading center?
- 2. Movement** To which regions or countries did Aksum’s trade routes give it access?

copper. Around AD 550, an Egyptian merchant named Cosmas described how Aksumite agents bargained for gold from the people in southern Ethiopia:

“They take along with them to the mining district oxen, lumps of salt, and iron, and when they reach its neighborhood they . . . halt . . . and form an encampment, which they fence round with a great hedge of thorns. Within this they live, and having slaughtered the oxen, cut them in pieces and lay the pieces on top of the thorns along with the lumps of salt and the iron. Then come the natives bringing gold in nuggets like peas . . . and lay one or two or more of these upon what pleases them. . . . Then the owner of the meat approaches, and if he is satisfied he takes the gold away, and upon seeing this its owner comes and takes the flesh or the salt or the iron.”

—Cosmas, quoted in *Travellers in Ethiopia*

Reading Check

Analyze Effects

How did Aksum's location and interactions with other regions affect its development?

A Strong Ruler Expands the Kingdom The kingdom of Aksum reached its height between AD 325 and 360, when an exceptionally strong ruler, **Ezana** (AY•zah•nah), occupied the throne. Determined to establish and expand his authority, Ezana first conquered the part of the Arabian peninsula that is now Yemen. Then, in 330, Ezana turned his attention to Kush, which had already begun to decline. In 350, he conquered the Kushites and burned Meroë to the ground.

An International Culture Develops

From the beginning, Aksumites had a diverse cultural heritage. This blend included traditions of the Arab peoples who crossed the Red Sea into Africa and those of the Kushite peoples they settled among. As the kingdom expanded and became a powerful trading center, it attracted people from all over the ancient world.

The port city of Adulis was particularly cosmopolitan. It included people from Aksum's widespread trading partners such as Egypt, Arabia, Greece, Rome, Persia, India, and even Byzantium. In the babble of tongues heard in Aksum, Greek stood out as the international language of the time, much as English does in the world today.

Global Patterns

A Road Paved with Gold: Aksum to Rome

The kingdom of Aksum had a tremendous impact on the ancient Mediterranean world. It particularly influenced one of the most important powers of the time, the Roman Empire. Roman ships came to Adulis weekly to trade with the Aksumites. Many Roman merchants lived in Adulis and in the capital city, Aksum.

One of the chief commodities that linked the two powers was gold. The Aksumites had access to it from inland gold mines, and the Romans needed it to support the monetary system of their growing empire. Rome and Aksum were linked not only by gold, however. They also shared a spiritual link in Christianity.

Aksumite Religion Early Aksumite religion probably resembled the polytheistic religion practiced in southern Arabia at the time. Aksumite gods included Astar, Mahrem, Beher, and Medr. Aksumites were also animists, however, and worshiped the spirits of nature and honored their dead ancestors. They offered sacrifices—often as many as a dozen oxen at a time—to those spirits, to Mahrem, and often to the Greek god of war, Ares.

Merchants exchanged more than raw materials and finished goods in Aksum. They shared ideas as well. One of these ideas was a new religion, Christianity. Based on the teachings of Jesus and a belief in one God—monotheism—Christianity began in Judea about AD 30. It spread throughout the Roman Empire and then to Africa, and eventually to Aksum.

Aksum Becomes Christian Ezana succeeded to the throne as an infant after the death of his father. While his mother ruled the kingdom, a young Christian man from Syria who had been captured and taken into the court educated him. When Ezana finally became ruler of Aksum, he converted to Christianity and established it as the kingdom's official religion. He vowed, "I will rule the people with righteousness and justice and will not oppress them, and may they preserve this Throne which I have set up for the Lord of Heaven." King Ezana's conversion led to the conversion of the royal court, but for many years people outside of the court continued to practice indigenous religions. As Christianity spread amongst the Aksumite people, they blended the new beliefs and practices with traditional religious practices, such as dancing ceremonies and use of the sistrum during worship, to form a unique expression of Christianity. The establishment of Christianity was the longest-lasting achievement of the Aksumites. Today, the land of Ethiopia, where Aksum was located, is home to millions of Christians.

Vocabulary

sistrum a handheld percussion instrument that includes a frame with rods or loops attached to it and is shaken to make sound



This mural depicting Bible stories is located on the wall of one of the oldest Christian churches in Aksum.

Aksumite Innovations The inscription on Ezana’s stele is written in Ge’ez, the language brought to Aksum by its early Arab inhabitants. Aside from Egypt and Meroë, Aksum was the only ancient African kingdom known to have developed a written language. It was also the first state south of the Sahara to mint its own coins. Made of bronze, silver, and gold, these coins were imprinted with the saying, “May the country be satisfied.” Ezana apparently hoped that this inscription would make him popular with the people. Every time they used a coin, it would remind them that he had their interests at heart.

In addition to these cultural achievements, the Aksumites adapted creatively to their rugged, hilly environment. They created a new method of agriculture, terrace farming. This enabled them to greatly increase the productivity of their land. **Terraces**, or steplike ridges constructed on mountain slopes, helped the soil retain water and prevented it from being washed downhill in heavy rains. The Aksumites dug canals to channel water from mountain streams into the fields. They also built dams and cisterns, or holding tanks, to store water.

Reading Check

Analyze Causes
What conditions led to Aksum’s becoming Christian?

DOCUMENT-BASED INVESTIGATION Historical Source



Pillars of Aksum

Aksumites developed a unique architecture. They put no mortar on the stones used to construct vast royal palaces and public buildings. Instead, they carved stones to fit together tightly. Huge stone pillars were erected as monuments or tomb markers. The carvings on the pillars are representations of the architecture of the time.

This towering stone pillar, or stele, was built to celebrate Aksum’s achievements. Still standing today, its size and elaborate inscriptions make it an achievement in its own right. The pillars have many unique features:

- False doors, windows, and timber beams are carved into the stone.
- Typically, the top of the pillar is a rounded peak.
- The tallest stele was about 100 feet high. Of those steles left standing, one is 75 feet tall and is among the largest structures in the ancient world.
- The stone for the pillar was quarried and carved two to three miles away and then brought to the site.
- Ezana dedicated one soaring stone pillar to the Christian God, “the Lord of heaven, who in heaven and upon earth is mightier than everything that exists.”

Analyze Historical Sources

How would constructing these pillars be similar to constructing the pyramids in Egypt?

The Fall of Aksum

Aksum's cultural and technological achievements enabled it to last for 800 years. The kingdom finally declined, however, under invaders who practiced the religion called Islam (ih•s•LAHM). Its founder was Muhammad; by his death in 632, his followers had conquered all of Arabia. This territory included Aksum's lands on the Arabian coast of the Red Sea.

Islamic Invaders Between 632 and 750 Islamic invaders conquered vast territories in the Mediterranean world, spreading their religion as they went. Aksum protected Muhammad's family and followers during their rise to power. As a result, initially the invaders did not seize Aksum's territories on the African coast of the Red Sea. Retaining control of that coast-line enabled Aksum to remain a trading power.

Before long, though, the invaders seized footholds on the African coast as well. In 710 they destroyed Adulis. This conquest cut Aksum off from the major ports along both the Red Sea and the Mediterranean. As a result, the kingdom declined as an international trading power. But it was not only Aksum's political power that weakened. Its spiritual identity and environment were also endangered.

Aksum Isolated As the invaders spread Islam to the lands they conquered, Aksum became isolated from other Christian settlements. To escape the advancing wave of Islam, Aksum's rulers moved their capital over the mountains into what is now northern Ethiopia. Aksum's new geographic isolation—along with depletion of the forests and soil erosion—led to its decline as a world power.

Although the kingdom of Aksum reached tremendous heights and left a lasting legacy in its religion, architecture, and agriculture, it never expanded outside a fairly small area. This is a pattern found in other cultures, both in Africa and around the world.

Reading Check

Analyze Effects

How did the Muslim conquest of Africa affect the kingdom of Aksum?

Lesson 3 Assessment

1. **Organize Information** Use a web like the one below to record the significant achievements of Aksum.



In your opinion, which of Aksum's achievements was most impressive? Why?

2. **Key Terms and People** For each key term or person in the lesson, write a sentence explaining its significance.
3. **Draw Conclusions** How did Aksum's location and interaction with other regions affect its development?
4. **Analyze Causes** Why did the kingdom of Aksum decline?
5. **Evaluate Decisions** What impact did Ezana's decision to become a Christian have on the kingdom of Aksum?
6. **Form Opinions** Write a two-paragraph opinion on the following statement: The kingdom of Aksum would have reached the same heights even if Ezana had not become king.



North and West African Civilizations

The Big Idea

North and West Africa contained several rich and powerful states, including Muslim states in the north and Ghana, Mali, and Songhai in the west.

Why It Matters Now

These civilizations demonstrate the richness of African culture before European colonization.

Key Terms and People

Maghrib
Almoravids
Almohads
Ghana
Mali
Sundiata
Mansa Musa
Ibn Battuta
Songhai
Hausa
Yoruba
Benin

Setting the Stage

In the seventh century, the new religion Islam appeared in Arabia and quickly spread through Egypt and into North Africa. Many African rulers converted and established strong states based on Islamic law. While these states developed in North Africa, three powerful empires flourished in West Africa. These ancient African empires arose in the Sahel, the savanna region just south of the Sahara. They grew strong by controlling trade. In this section you will learn about the Almoravid and Almohad empires of North Africa and the West African empires of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai.

Muslim States

While stateless societies developed south of the Sahara and the Christian state of Aksum developed in the Horn of Africa, Islam played a vital role in North Africa. After Muhammad's death in 632, Muslims swept across the northwest part of the continent. They converted many by the sword of conquest and others peacefully. By 670, Muslims ruled Egypt and had entered the **Maghrib**, the part of North Africa that is today the Mediterranean coast of Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco.

As Islam spread, some African rulers converted to Islam. These African Muslim rulers then based their government upon Islamic law. Muslims believe that God's law is a higher authority than any human law. Therefore, Muslim rulers often relied on religious scholars as government advisers.

Islamic Law In Islam, following the law is a religious obligation. Muslims do not separate their personal life from their religious life, and Islamic law regulates almost all areas of human life. Islamic law helped to bring order to Muslim states.

However, various Muslim states had ethnic and cultural differences. Further, these states sometimes had differing

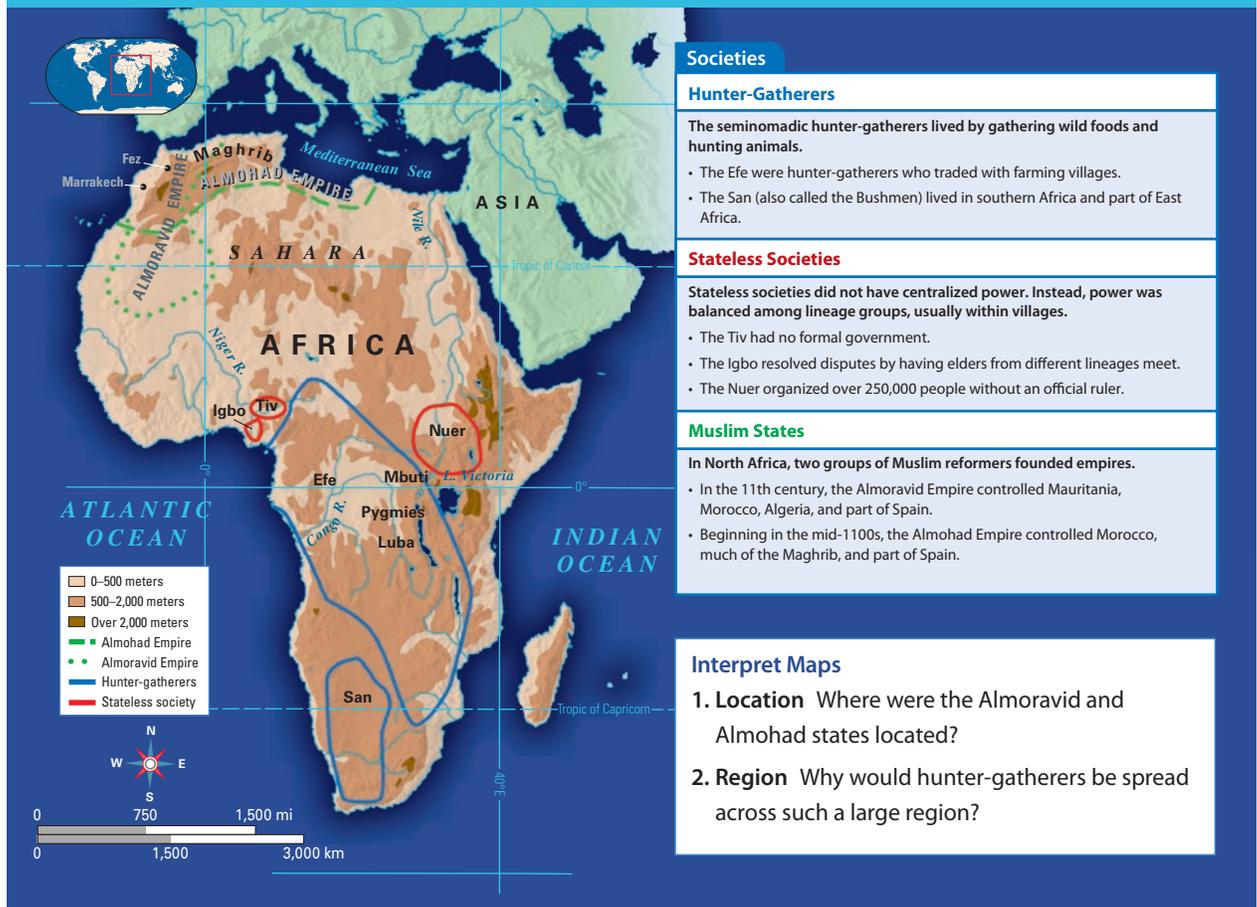
interpretations, or schools, of Islamic law. Nonetheless, Islamic law has been such a significant force in history that some states, especially in North Africa, are still influenced by it today.

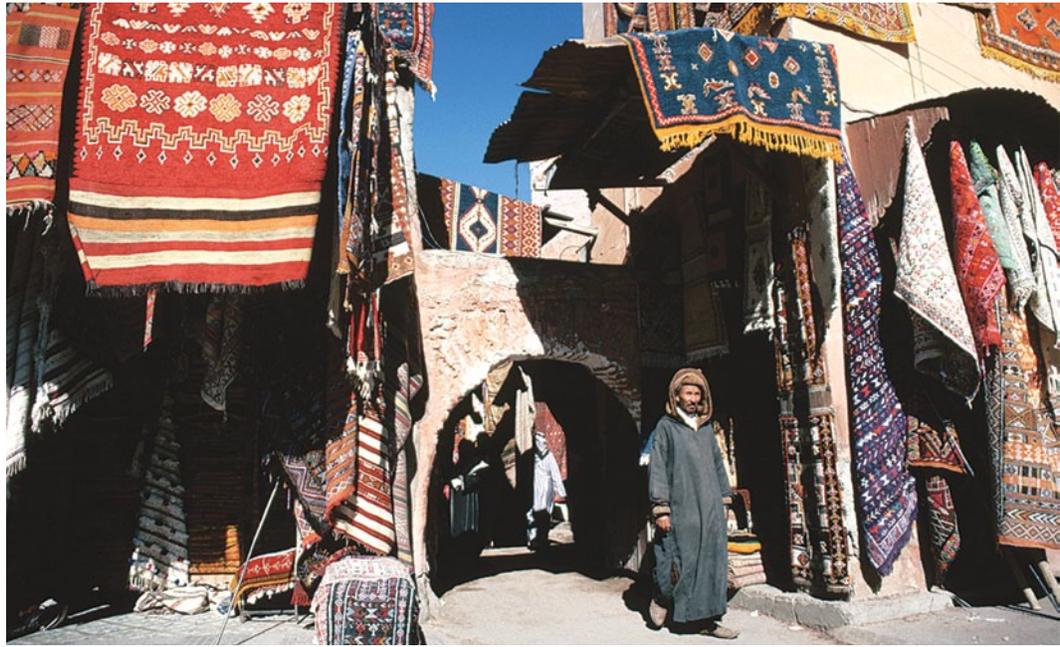
Among those who converted to Islam were the Berbers. Fiercely independent desert and mountain dwellers, the Berbers were the original inhabitants of North Africa. While they accepted Islam as their faith, many maintained their Berber identities and loyalties. Two Berber groups, the Almoravids and the Almohads, founded empires that united the Maghrib under Muslim rule.

Almoravid Reformers In the 11th century, Muslim reformers founded the Almoravid (al•muh•RAHV•uhd) Empire. Its members came from a Berber group living in the western Sahara in what is today Mauritania. The movement began after devout Berber Muslims made a hajj, or pilgrimage, to Mecca. On their journey home, they convinced a Muslim scholar from Morocco named Abd Allah Ibn Yasin to return with them to teach their people about Islam. Ibn Yasin's teachings soon attracted followers, and he founded a strict religious brotherhood, known as the **Almoravids**.

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Selected African Societies, 800–1500





Carpets for sale in Marrakech, Morocco

According to one theory about the name's origin, the group lived in a *ribat*, or fortified monastery. They were therefore called the "people of the *ribat*," or *al-Murabitun*. This eventually became "Almoravid."

In the 1050s, Ibn Yasin led the Almoravids in an effort to spread Islam through conquest. After Ibn Yasin's death in 1059, the Almoravids went on to take Morocco and found Marrakech. It became their capital. They overran the West African empire of Ghana by 1076. The Almoravids also captured parts of southern Spain, where they were called Moors.

Almohads Take Over In the mid-1100s, the **Almohads** (AL•moh•HADZ), another group of Berber Muslim reformers, seized power from the Almoravids. The Almohads began as a religious movement in the Atlas Mountains of Morocco.

The Almohads followed the teachings of Ibn Tumart. After a pilgrimage to Mecca, Ibn Tumart criticized the later Almoravid rulers for moving away from the traditional practice of Islam. He urged his followers to strictly obey the teachings of the Qur'an and Islamic law. The Almohads, led by Abd al-Mumin, fought to overthrow the Almoravids and remain true to their view of traditional Islamic beliefs.

By 1148 the Almohads controlled most of Morocco and ended Almoravid rule. The new Muslim reformers kept Marrakech as their capital. By the end of the 12th century, they had conquered much of southern Spain. In Africa, their territory stretched from Marrakech to Tripoli and Tunis on the Mediterranean. The Almohad Empire broke up into individual Muslim dynasties. While the Almohad Empire lasted just over 100 years, it united the Maghrib under one rule for the first time.

Stronger empires were about to emerge. Societies in West Africa created empires that boasted economic and political power and strong links to trade routes.

Reading Check

Analyze Effects

What was the main effect of Almohad rule on the Maghrib?

Empire of Ghana

By AD 200, trade across the Sahara had existed for centuries. However, this trade remained infrequent and irregular because of the harsh desert conditions. Most pack animals—oxen, donkeys, and horses—could not travel very far in the hot, dry Sahara without rest or water. Then, in the third century AD, Berber nomads began using camels. The camel could plod steadily over much longer distances than other pack animals, covering as much as 60 miles in a day. In addition, it could travel more than ten days without water, twice as long as most pack animals. With the camel, nomads blazed new routes across the desert and trade increased.

Other technologies and developments also facilitated interregional trade between North and West Africa. The ironmaking technologies that had developed by 500 BC in West Africa enabled trade as people manufactured agricultural tools, weaponry, and other implements. The iron weapons helped West African empires keep order on the trade routes, providing safe passage to merchants. Iron tools also helped increase agricultural production, and agricultural surplus could be traded. Plentiful food also meant that more people could specialize in areas such as metalworking, trading, or administration. By the 11th century, Arabic writing became important for recording contracts, sharing information, and keeping other records. Pottery made locally could be used to store and transport goods, and canoes were used to carry materials and goods along the Niger (NY•juhr) River to trading towns.

The trans-Saharan trade routes crossed the savanna through the region farmed by the Soninke (soh•NIHN•keh) people. The Soninke people called their ruler *ghana*, or war chief. Muslim traders began to use the word to refer to the Soninke region. By the 700s, **Ghana** was a kingdom, and its rulers were growing rich by taxing the goods that traders carried through their territory.

Gold-Salt Trade The two most important trade items were gold and salt. Gold came from a forest region south of the savanna between the Niger and Senegal (SEHN•ih•GAWL) rivers. Miners dug gold from shafts as deep as 100 feet or sifted it from fast-moving streams. Some sources estimate that until about 1350, at least two-thirds of the world's supply of gold came from West Africa. Although rich in gold, West Africa's savanna and forests lacked salt, a material essential to human life. The Sahara contained deposits of salt. In fact, in the Saharan village of Taghaza, workers built their houses from salt blocks because it was the only material available.

Arab and Berber traders crossed the desert with camel caravans loaded down with salt. They also carried cloth, weapons, and manufactured goods from ports on the Mediterranean. After a long journey, they reached the market towns of the savanna. Meanwhile, African traders brought gold north from the forest regions. African traders also exported spices, kola nuts, shea butter, animal hides, leather goods, cloth (starting in the 11th century), and slaves.

Slaves were a part of the trans-Saharan trade from the sixth century to the 19th century. Slaves taken from West Africa were sold in North Africa, Egypt, Arabia, what is now Iraq, and India, although most African slaves in Arabia, Iraq, and India came from east African societies and were traded along the Indian Ocean routes.

Merchants met in trading cities, where they exchanged goods under the watchful eye of the king's tax collector. In addition to taxing trade, royal officials made sure that all traders weighed goods fairly and did business according to the law. Royal guards also provided protection from bandits.

Land of Gold By the year 800, Ghana had become an empire. Because Ghana's king controlled trade and commanded a large army, he could demand taxes and gifts from the chiefs of surrounding lands. As long as the chiefs made their payments, the king left them in peace to rule their own people.

In his royal palace, the king stored gold nuggets and slabs of salt (collected as taxes). Only the king had the right to own gold nuggets, although gold dust freely circulated in the marketplace. By this means, the king limited the supply of gold and kept its price from falling. Ghana's African ruler acted as a religious leader, chief judge, and military commander. He headed a large bureaucracy and could call up a huge army. In 1067, a Muslim geographer and scholar named al-Bakri wrote a description of Ghana's royal court:

“The king adorns himself . . . wearing necklaces and bracelets. . . . The court of appeal is held in a domed pavilion around which stand ten horses with gold embroidered trappings. Behind the king stand ten pages holding shields and swords decorated with gold, and on his right are the sons of the subordinate [lower] kings of his country, all wearing splendid garments and with their hair mixed with gold.”

—al-Bakri, quoted in *Africa in the Days of Exploration*

Social Organization At its height, the Empire of Ghana included many peoples, some of which had their own customs and language. However, as Ghana's rule strengthened and trade continued to connect peoples and communities, the empire's cities, at least, began to develop similarities. In all of Ghana, the king was considered the supreme ruler. An administrative class helped the king run the government. Other segments that emerged in Ghana's society included miners, agricultural laborers, metalworkers, and leather crafters. Skilled craftsmen such as blacksmiths and leather crafters enjoyed a privileged place in society. Some were supported by the king's court.

Ghana was a matrilineal society, meaning that ancestry was traced through the mother's lineage. Inheritances also passed through the mother's lineage. For example, the king's son was not the king's heir. The son of the king's sister was the heir.

Islamic Influences While Islam spread through North Africa by conquest, south of the Sahara, Islam spread through trade. Muslim merchants and teachers settled in the states south of the Sahara and introduced their faith there.

Eventually, Ghana's rulers converted to Islam. By the end of the 11th century, Muslim advisers were helping the king run his kingdom. While Ghana's African rulers accepted Islam, many people in the empire clung to their animistic beliefs and practices. Animism is the belief that spirits living in animals, plants, and natural forces play an important role in daily life. Much of the population never converted. Those who did kept many of their former beliefs, which they observed along with Islam. For example, people might celebrate both Islamic festivals and festivals of local African religions. Among the upper class, Islam's growth encouraged the spread of literacy. To study the Qur'an, converts to Islam had to learn Arabic.

In 1076 the Muslim Almoravids of North Africa completed their conquest of Ghana. Although the Almoravids eventually withdrew from Ghana, the war had badly disrupted the gold-salt trade. Ghana never regained its power, but it had helped Islam to gain a foothold in the region, and the West African–North African trade that Ghana developed would continue for centuries, although the trade routes would shift.

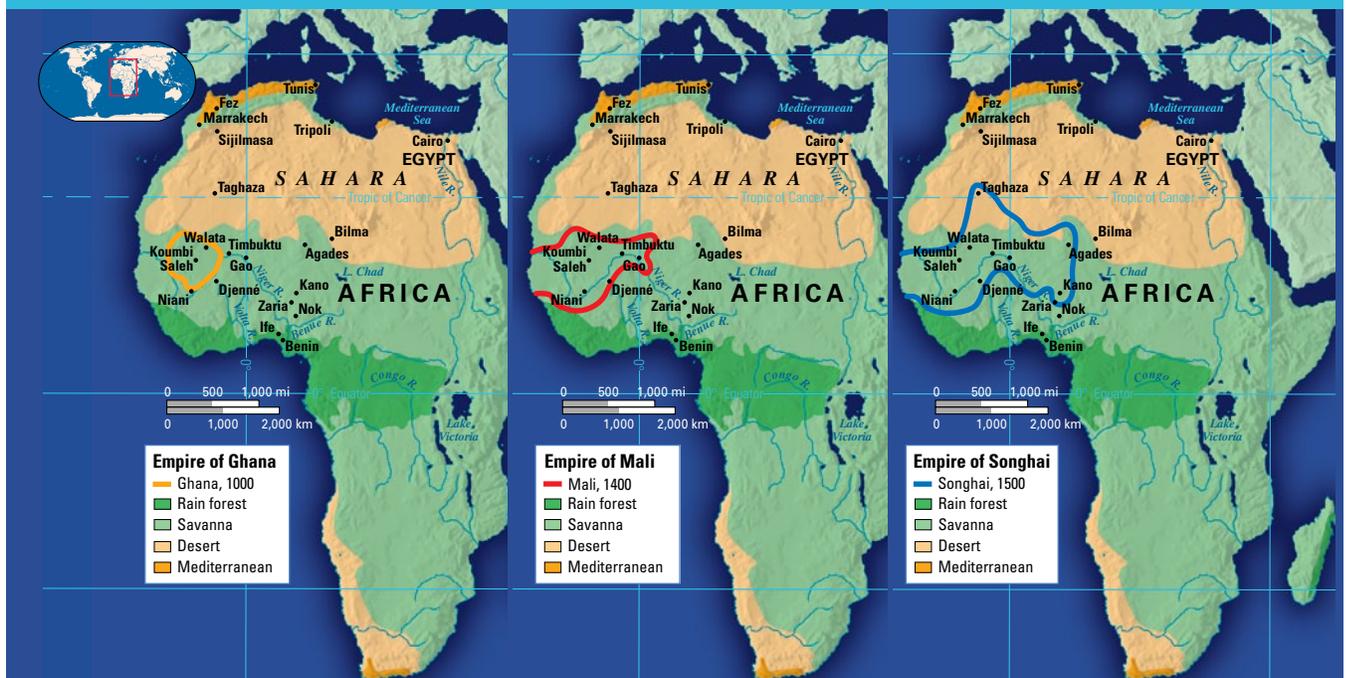
Reading Check

Analyze Causes

Why would the disruption of trade destroy Ghana's power?

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West African Empires, 1000–1500



Interpret Maps

- 1. Region** Compare the regions occupied by the Ghana, Mali, and Songhai empires in terms of size and location.
- 2. Human-Environment Interaction** How did the environment both contribute resources to and cause problems for traders?

Empire of Mali

By 1235 the kingdom of **Mali** had emerged. Its founders were Mande-speaking people who lived south of Ghana. Mali's wealth, like Ghana's, was built on gold. As Ghana remained weak, people who had been under its control began to act independently. In addition, miners found new gold deposits farther east. This caused the most important trade routes to shift eastward, which made a new group of people—the people of Mali—wealthy. With this wealth they acquired horses and crafted iron weapons and leather goods, all of which enabled them to seize power.

Sundiata Conquers an Empire Mali's first great leader, **Sundiata** (sun•JAHT•ah), came to power by crushing a cruel, unpopular leader. Then, in the words of a Mande oral tradition, "the world knew no other master but Sundiata." Sundiata became Mali's *mansa*, or emperor. Through a series of military victories, he took over the kingdom of Ghana and the trading cities of Koumbi Saleh and Walata. A period of peace and prosperity followed.

Sundiata proved to be as great a leader in peace as he had been in war. He put able administrators in charge of Mali's finances, defense, and foreign affairs. From his new capital at Niani, he promoted agriculture and reestablished the gold-salt trade. Niani became an important center of commerce and trade. People began to call Sundiata's empire Mali, meaning "where the king lives."

Mansa Musa Expands Mali Sundiata died in 1255. Some of Mali's next rulers became Muslims. These African Muslim rulers built mosques, attended public prayers, and supported the preaching of Muslim holy men. The most famous of them was **Mansa Musa** (MAHN•sah moo•SAH), who

BIOGRAPHY

Sundiata

(?–1255)

Sundiata came from the kingdom of Kangaba near the present-day Mali-Guinea border. According to tradition, he was one of 12 brothers who were heirs to the throne of Kangaba.

When Sumanguru, ruler of a neighboring state, overran Kangaba in the early 1200s, he wanted to eliminate rivals, so he murdered all of Sundiata's brothers. He spared Sundiata, who was sickly and seemed unlikely to survive.

However, as Sundiata grew up, he gained strength and became a popular leader of many warriors. In 1235, Sundiata's army defeated Sumanguru and his troops.

Mansa Musa

(?–1332?)

Mansa Musa, the strongest of Sundiata's successors, was a devout Muslim. On his hajj, Mansa Musa stopped in Cairo, Egypt. Five hundred slaves, each carrying a staff of gold, arrived first. They were followed by 80 camels, each carrying 300 pounds of gold dust. Hundreds of other camels brought supplies. Thousands of servants and officials completed the procession.

Mansa Musa gave away so much gold in Cairo that the value of this precious metal declined in Egypt for 12 years.

may have been Sundiata's grandnephew. Mansa Musa ruled from about 1312 to 1332.

Between the reigns of Sundiata and Mansa Musa, Mali had experienced turmoil. There had been seven different rulers in approximately 50 years. Like Sundiata, Mansa Musa was a skilled military leader who exercised royal control over the gold-salt trade and put down every rebellion. His 100,000-man army kept order and protected Mali from attack. Under Mansa Musa, the empire expanded to roughly twice the size of the Empire of Ghana. To govern his far-reaching empire, Mansa Musa divided it into provinces and appointed governors, who ruled fairly and efficiently.

A devout Muslim, Mansa Musa went on a hajj to Mecca from 1324 to 1325. When he returned, he ordered the building of new mosques at the trading cities of Timbuktu (TIHM•buhk•TOO) and Gao. Timbuktu became one of the most important cities of the empire. It attracted Muslim judges, doctors, religious leaders, and scholars from far and wide. They attended Timbuktu's outstanding mosques and universities. These intellectual and religious centers helped to integrate Islam into the society of Mali, an effect of Mansa Musa's rule that would endure for centuries.

Although Mali's urban centers flourished under Mansa Musa, their residents represented a small minority of the empire's population. Most people were farmers. Many others were skilled craftspeople, such as carpenters and metalworkers, and still others were religious leaders. The governing class of Mali and the scholars of its intellectual centers were Muslim, but most people believed in and practiced traditional African religions, especially outside of the urban centers. While Mansa Musa supported Islamic studies and religious practices, he did not force the faith on his subjects.

Travels of Ibn Battuta In 1352, one of Mansa Musa's successors prepared to receive a traveler and historian named **Ibn Battuta** (IH•buh•ba•TOO•tah). A native of Tangier in North Africa, Ibn Battuta had traveled for 27 years, visiting most of the countries in the Islamic world.

After leaving the royal palace, Ibn Battuta visited Timbuktu and other cities in Mali. He found he could travel without fear of crime. As a devout Muslim, he praised the people for their study of the Qur'an. However, he also criticized them for not strictly practicing Islam's moral code. Even so, Mali's justice system greatly impressed him:

“One of the best things in these parts is, the regard they pay to justice; for, in this respect, the Sultan regards neither little nor much. The safety, too, is very great; so that a traveller may proceed alone among them, without the least fear of a thief or robber.”

—Ibn Battuta, *The Travels of Ibn Batūta*, 1829

Ibn Battuta left Mali in 1353. Within 50 years, the powerful empire began to weaken. Most of Mansa Musa's successors lacked his ability to govern well. In addition, the gold trade that had been the basis of Mali's wealth shifted eastward as new goldfields were developed elsewhere.

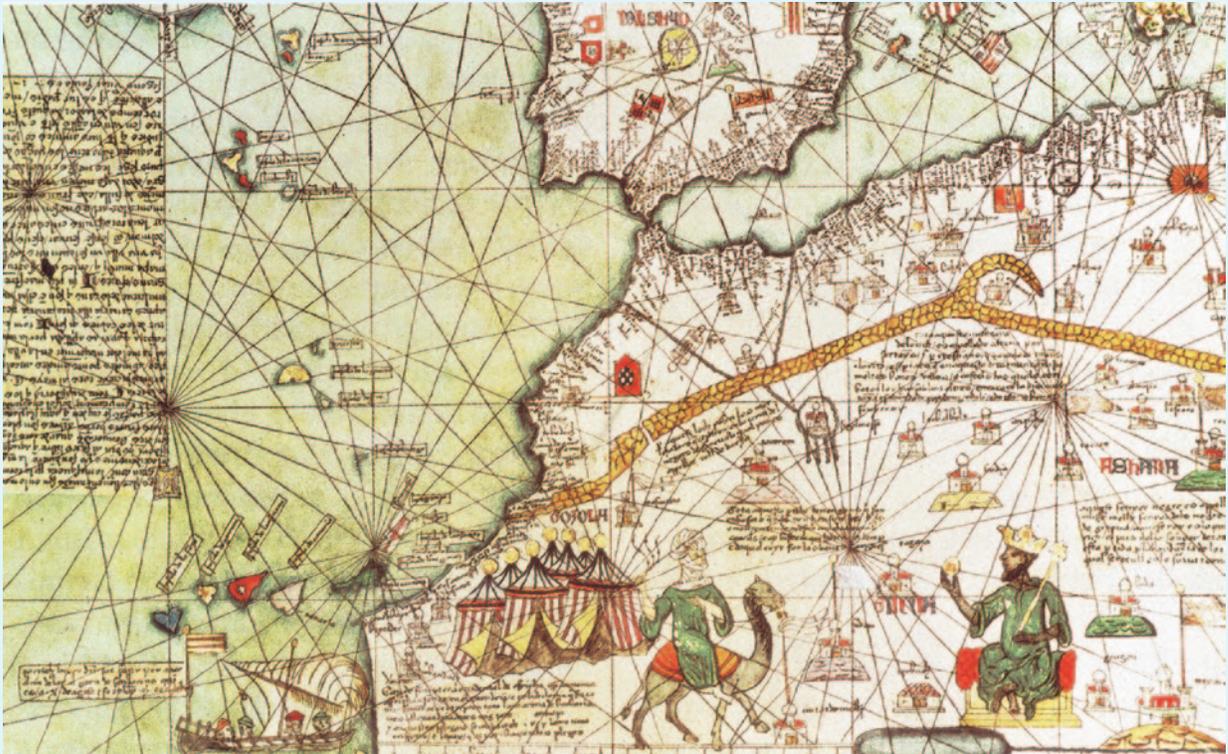
Reading Check

Analyze Effects
Why did Islam flourish
in urban centers
of West Africa?

Mansa Musa's Kingdom

In 1324, Mansa Musa left Mali for the hajj to Mecca. On the trip, he gave away enormous amounts of gold. Because of this, Europeans learned of Mali's wealth. In 1375, a Spanish mapmaker created an illustrated map showing Mansa Musa's kingdom in western Africa. Drawn on the map is Mansa Musa holding a gold nugget.

At the top of the map is Spain. At the bottom of Spain, the Mediterranean meets the Atlantic Ocean at the Strait of Gibraltar. South of Gibraltar is Africa. Filling most of the map is North Africa, with the Mediterranean extending east and the Atlantic west of Gibraltar.



Analyze Historical Sources

1. What was a major source of wealth for the Empire of Mali?
2. How might Mali's (and Africa's) wealth have influenced interactions between Africans and Europeans?

Empire of Songhai

As Mali declined in the 1400s, people who had been under its control began to break away. Among them were the **Songhai** (SAWNG·HY) people to the east. They built up an army and extended their territory to the large bend in the Niger River near Gao. They gained control of the all-important trade routes. Gao was the capital of their empire.

Sunni Ali, a Conquering Hero The Songhai had two extraordinary rulers, both of whom were Muslims. One was Sunni Ali, who built a vast empire by military conquest. Sunni Ali's rule began in 1464 and lasted almost 30 years.

Sunni Ali built a professional army that had a riverboat fleet of war canoes and a mobile fighting force on horseback. He expanded Songhai into an empire through his skill as a military commander and his aggressive leadership. In 1468, Sunni Ali achieved his first major military triumph. He captured the city of Timbuktu, which had been an important part of Mali's empire.

Five years later, he took Djenné, also a trade city that had a university. To take Djenné, Sunni Ali surrounded the city with his army for seven years before it fell in 1473. Sunni Ali completed the takeover of Djenné by marrying its queen.

Askia Muhammad Governs Well After Sunni Ali's death in 1492, his son succeeded him as ruler. Almost at once, the son faced a major revolt by Muslims who were angry that he did not practice their religion faithfully. The leader of the revolt was a devout Muslim named Askia Muhammad. He drove Sunni Ali's son from power and replaced him.

Askia Muhammad conquered the Mossi people, whose territory bordered Songhai to the south. Then he turned west, to the Hausa kingdoms, and conquered them. He permitted the king of the Hausa city-state Kano to remain on his throne as a vassal. In some lands that he annexed, Askia established a Songhai colony to ensure efficient governance and collection of taxes and tribute. Annexing neighboring kingdoms increased the power and wealth of the Songhai Empire by expanding control of trade routes, increasing tax revenues, and increasing receipt of tribute.

During his 37-year rule, Askia Muhammad proved to be an excellent administrator. He set up an efficient tax system and chose able officials. Adding to the centralized government created by Sunni Ali, he appointed officials to serve as ministers of the treasury, army, navy, and agriculture. In addition to the king and the elites who worked in his government, Songhai society included a class of artisans such as metalworkers, farmers, and slaves. Under his rule, the well-governed empire thrived.

Despite its wealth and learning, the Songhai Empire lacked modern weapons. The Chinese had invented gunpowder in the ninth century. About 1304, Arabs developed the first gun, which shot arrows. In 1591, a

SOCIAL HISTORY

Islam in West Africa

South of the Sahara, many converts to Islam also kept their African beliefs. They found ways to include traditional rituals and customs in their new religion.

The status of women in West African societies demonstrates how local custom altered Muslim practice. In many 15th-century Muslim societies, women seldom left their homes. When they did, they veiled their faces. Muslim women in West Africa, however, did not wear veils. They mingled freely with men in public, which shocked visiting Muslim religious leaders.

Reading Check

Make Inferences

Why might the people who had been conquered by Mali want to break away?

Moroccan fighting force of several thousand men equipped with gunpowder and cannons crossed the Sahara and invaded Songhai. The Moroccan troops quickly defeated the Songhai warriors, who were armed only with swords and spears. The collapse of the Songhai Empire ended a 1,000-year period in which powerful kingdoms and empires ruled the central region of West Africa.

Other Peoples of West Africa

While empires rose and fell, city-states developed in other parts of West Africa. As in Ghana, Mali, and Songhai, Muslim traditions influenced some of these city-states. Other city-states held to their traditional African beliefs.

Hausa City-States Compete The **Hausa** (HOW•suh) were a group of people named after the language they spoke. The city-states of the Hausa people first emerged between the years 1000 and 1200 in the savanna area east of Mali and Songhai in what is today northern Nigeria. Songhai briefly ruled the Hausa city-states, but they soon regained their independence. In such city-states as Kano, Katsina, and Zazzau (later Zaria), local rulers built walled cities for their capitals. From their capitals, Hausa rulers governed the farming villages outside the city walls.

Each ruler depended on the crops of the farmers and on a thriving trade in salt, grain, and cotton cloth made by urban weavers. Because they were located on trade routes that linked other West African states with the Mediterranean, Kano and Katsina became major trading states. They profited greatly from supplying the needs of caravans. Kano was noted for its woven and dyed cloth and for its leather goods.

Zazzau, the southernmost state, conducted a vigorous trade in enslaved people. Zazzau's traders raided an area to take captives and then sold them to traders in other Hausa states. These traders sold the captives to other North or West African societies in exchange for horses, harnesses, and

History in Depth

Queen Amina's Reign

In the 1500s, the Hausa city-state of Zazzau (later called Zaria) was governed by Queen Amina. She was remembered as the "headdress among the turbans." Her rule was distinguished for its military conquests.

The *Kano Chronicle*, a history of the city-state of Kano, records:

"At this time Zaria, under Queen Amina, conquered all the towns as far as Kawarajara and Nupe. Every town paid tribute to her. . . . Her conquests extended over 34 years."

Queen Amina's commitment to her Muslim faith also led her to encourage Muslim scholars, judges, and religious leaders from religious centers at Kano and Timbuktu to come to Zazzau.

guns. The Hausa kept some enslaved captives to build and repair city walls and grow food for the cities.

All the Hausa city-states had similar forms of government. Rulers held great power over their subjects, but ministers and other officials acted to check this power. For protection, each city-state raised an army of mounted horsemen. Although rulers often schemed and fought to gain control over their neighbors, none succeeded for long. The constant fighting among city-states prevented any one of them from building a Hausa empire.



This Yoruba crown made of glass beads and grass cloth stands about 20 inches high.

Yoruba Kings and Artists Like the Hausa, the **Yoruba** (YAWR•uh•buh) people all spoke a common language. Originally the Yoruba-speaking people belonged to a number of small city-states in the forests on the southern edge of the savanna in present-day Benin and southwestern Nigeria. In these communities most people farmed. Over time, some of these smaller communities joined together under strong leaders. This led to the formation of several Yoruba kingdoms.

Considered divine, Yoruba kings served as the most important religious and political leaders in their kingdoms. All Yoruba chiefs traced their descent from the first ruler of Ife (EE•fay). According to legend, the creator sent this first ruler down to earth at Ife, where he founded the first Yoruba state. His many sons became the heads of other Yoruba kingdoms. All Yoruba chiefs regarded the king of Ife as their highest spiritual authority. A secret society of religious and political leaders limited the king's rule by reviewing the decisions he made.

Ife and Oyo were the two largest Yoruba kingdoms. Ife, developed by 1100, was the most powerful Yoruba kingdom until the late 1600s, when Oyo became more prosperous. As large urban centers, both Ife and Oyo had high walls

surrounding them. Most rural farms in the surrounding areas produced surplus food, which was sent to the cities. This enabled city dwellers to become both traders and craftspeople.

The Ife were gifted artists who carved in wood and ivory. They produced terra cotta sculptures and cast in metal. Some scholars believe that the rulers supported artists. Many clay and metal casts portray Ife rulers in an idealistic way.

Vocabulary

terra cotta a reddish-brown clay, hard ceramic



This ivory mask is one of four taken from the king of Benin in 1897. It was worn on the belt of a ceremonial costume.

Kingdom of Benin To the south and west of Ife, near the delta of the Niger River, lay the kingdom of **Benin** (buh•NIHN). Like the Yoruba people of Ife and Oyo, the people of Benin made their homes in the forest. The first kings of Benin date from the 1200s. Like the Yoruba kings, the oba, or ruler, of Benin based his right to rule on claims of descent from the first king of Ife.

In the 1400s, an oba named Ewuare made Benin into a major West African state. He did so by building a powerful army. He used it to control an area that by 1500 stretched from the Niger River delta in the east to what is today Lagos, Nigeria. Ewuare also strengthened Benin City by building walls around it. Inside the city, broad streets were lined by neat rows of houses.

The huge palace contained many courtyards and works of art. Artists working for the oba created copper figurines and magnificent brass heads of the royal family. Brass plaques on the walls and columns of the royal palace of the oba showed legends, historical scenes, and the deeds of the oba and his nobles. According to tradition, Benin artists learned their craft from an Ife artist brought to Benin by the oba to teach them.

In the 1480s, Portuguese trading ships began to sail into Benin's port at Gwatto. The Portuguese traded with Benin merchants for pepper, leopard skins, ivory, and enslaved persons. This began several centuries of European interference in Africa, during which Europeans enslaved Africans and seized African territories for colonies. Meanwhile, East Africans prospered from trade and developed thriving cities and empires.

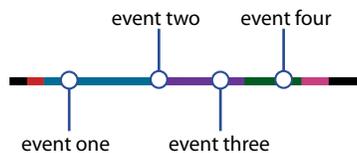
Reading Check

Analyze Causes

What was the main reason that the Hausa did not develop an empire?

Lesson 4 Assessment

- Organize Information** Create a timeline like the one below to trace the growth and decline of the empires you read about in this lesson.



Write a paragraph describing how any two of these events are related.

- Key Terms and People** For each key term or person in the lesson, write a sentence explaining its significance.

- Analyze Motives** Why did Berber leaders want to make changes to their society?
- Summarize** How did the trans-Saharan trade practiced by Ghana, Mali, and Songhai work?
- Compare** What are some of the similarities between Sundiata and Mansa Musa?
- Evaluate Impact** How did the expansion of the Songhai Empire affect the people and the economy of West Africa?
- Compare** What are some of the similarities between the Hausa city-states and other city-states you have read about?

Benin Bronzes

Benin is famous for its bronze and brass sculptures. Benin sculpture was made by guilds controlled by the king. One of the main functions of Benin art was to please the ruler by recording his history or by displaying his power. For instance, brass plaques commemorating the ruler's great achievements adorned the palace walls. Busts of the ruler and his family showed them as idealized figures.

► QUEEN MOTHER

Perhaps the most widely known type of Benin sculpture was the royal head, such as this one. In Benin, the Queen Mother held a lot of power. To symbolize that power, she wore a woven crown called a "chicken's beak."



◀ PLAQUE

Plaques such as this decorated the palace of the oba, or ruler, of Benin.

▼ **LEOPARD**

Admired for its power, fierceness, and intelligence, the leopard was depicted on many royal objects. This snarling leopard is a symbol of the king's power. It is also a water vessel that was used on ceremonial occasions.



▲ **MUSICIAN**

This figure was probably made in the late 16th or early 17th century. It shows an attendant of the king blowing a horn or flute. This type of figure was often found on altars.

THE LOST-WAX PROCESS

Many of the Benin sculptures were made using the lost-wax process.

1. The artist forms a core of clay that is roughly the shape of the planned sculpture.



2. The artist applies a layer of wax over the core, then carves fine details into the surface of the wax.



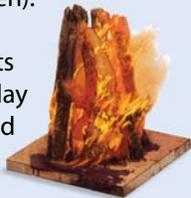
3. A layer of fine clay is spread over the wax surface. This creates a smooth finish and captures the small details.



4. Several layers of coarse clay are applied to create the mold.



5. The entire object is fired in a kiln (oven). The clay hardens and the wax melts away, leaving a clay mold. (The melted wax is the origin of the name "lost-wax.")



6. Melted bronze is poured into the mold and left to harden.



7. The clay mold is broken off, revealing the finished bronze sculpture.



Now and Then

- 1. Make Inferences** Why do you think the figure of a servant blowing a horn was found on an altar?
- 2. Compare and Contrast** Use library resources or the Internet to identify a sculpture of a U.S. leader. What quality about that leader does the sculpture portray? How is it similar to or different from Benin's royal sculptures?



Eastern City-States and Southern Empires

The Big Idea

African city-states and empires gained wealth through developing and trading resources.

Why It Matters Now

The country of Zimbabwe and cities such as Mogadishu and Mombasa have their roots in this time period.

Key Terms and People

Swahili

Great Zimbabwe

Mutapa

Setting the Stage

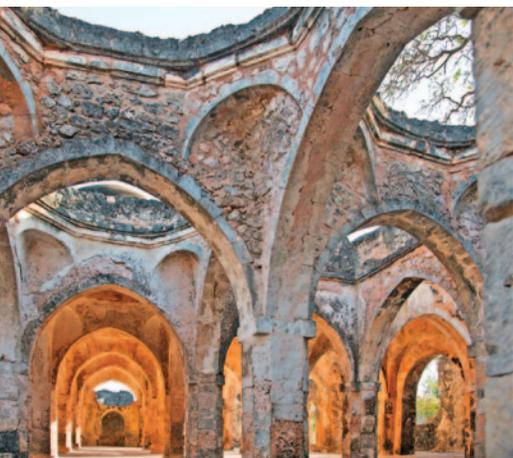
By the third century AD, Aksum was part of an extensive trade network. From its Red Sea port, Aksum traded with Arabia, Persia, India, and Rome. In the 600s, Muslim forces gained control of Arabia, the Red Sea, and North Africa. They cut off the Aksumites from their port. The Aksumites moved their capital south from Aksum to Roha (later called Lalibela) before 1100. Meanwhile, other cities on the east coast were thriving because of Indian Ocean trade. In this lesson, you will learn about East African trade, Islamic influences in East Africa, and the peoples of southern Africa.

East Coast Trade Cities

Villages along the east coast began to develop into important trade cities. By 1100, waves of Bantu-speaking people had migrated across central Africa to the east coast. There they established farming and fishing villages. Slowly, the coastal villages grew into bustling seaports, built on trade between East African merchants and traders from Arabia, Persia, and India. As trade increased, many Muslim Arab and Persian traders settled in the port cities. Arabic blended with the Bantu language to create **Swahili** (swah•HEE•lee).

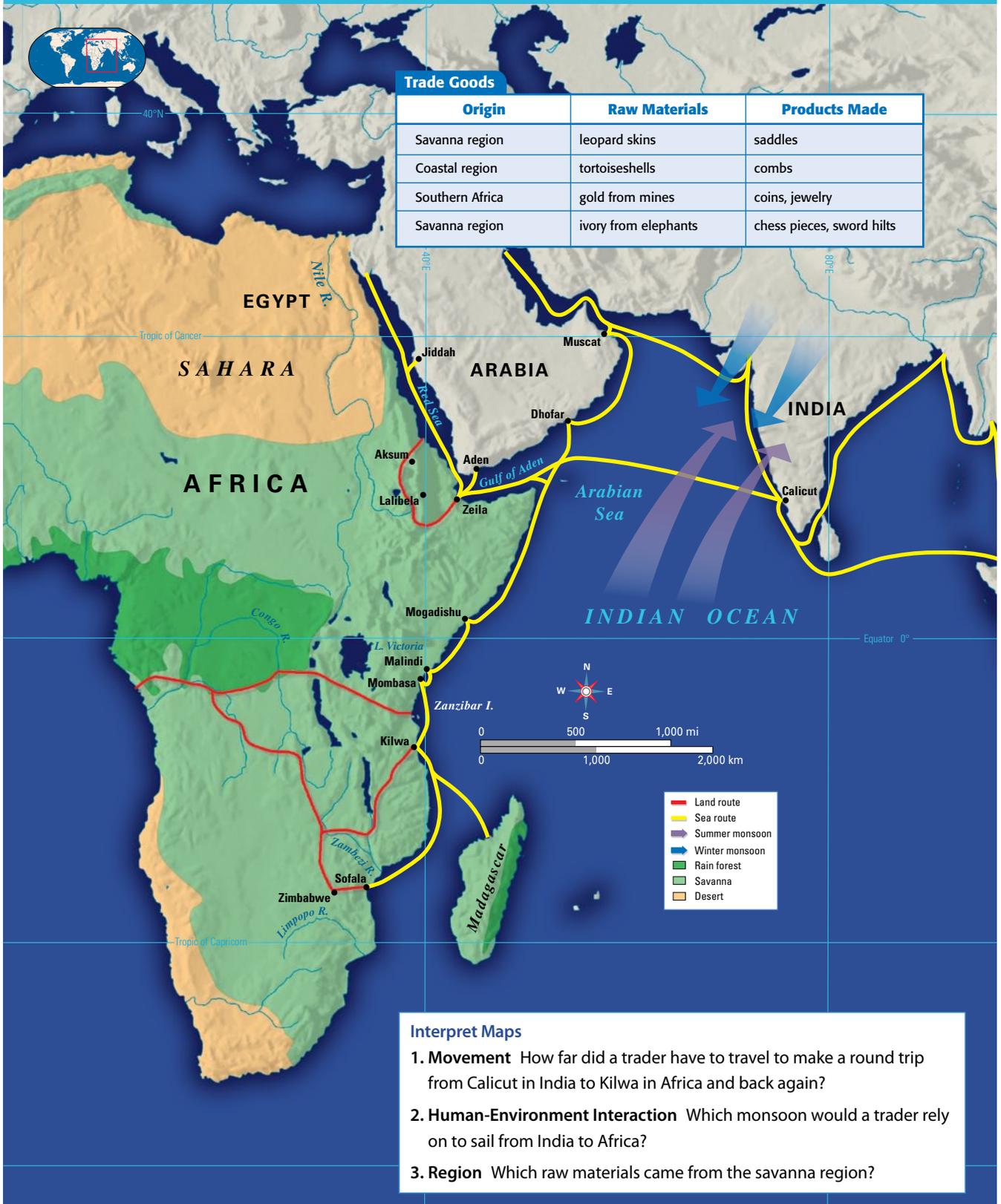
Persian traders moved south from the Horn of Africa, a triangular peninsula near Arabia. They brought Asian manufactured goods to Africa and African raw materials to Asia. In the coastal markets, Arab traders sold porcelain bowls from China and jewels and cotton cloth from India. They bought African ivory, gold, tortoiseshell, ambergris, leopard skins, and rhinoceros horns to carry to Arabia.

By 1300, more than 35 trading cities dotted the coast from Mogadishu in the north to Kilwa and Sofala in the south. These seaports grew wealthy by controlling trade. Some cities also manufactured trade goods for export. For example, weavers in Mogadishu and Sofala made cloth. Workers in Mombasa and Malindi made iron tools.



Ruins of the Great Mosque at Kilwa

East African Trade, 1000



The City-State of Kilwa In 1331, Ibn Battuta visited Kilwa. He admired the way that its Muslim rulers and merchants lived. Rich families lived in fine houses of coral and stone. They slept in beds inlaid with ivory, and their meals were served on porcelain. Wealthy Muslim women wore silk robes and gold and silver bracelets.

Kilwa grew rich because it was as far south as a ship from India could sail in one monsoon season. Therefore, trade goods from southerly regions had to funnel into Kilwa, where Asian merchants could buy them.

In addition, in the late 1200s Kilwa had seized the port of Sofala, which was a trading center for gold mined inland. By controlling Sofala, Kilwa was able to control the overseas trade of gold from southern Africa. As a result, Kilwa became the wealthiest, most powerful coastal city-state.

Portuguese Conquest In 1488, the first Portuguese ships rounded the southern tip of Africa and sailed north, looking for a sea route to India.

Historical Source

Islamic Law in Mogadishu

In 1331, Ibn Battuta, traveling by caravan, visited the African city of Mogadishu. He described how Muslim officials decided legal matters.



Analyze Historical Sources

1. Who were the four types of people who decided legal matters?
2. What types of cases did they judge?

“The Shaikh [sultan] takes his place in his hall of audience and sends for the Qadi [judge]. He takes his place on the Shaikh’s left and then the lawyers come in and the chief of them sit in front of the Shaikh. . . . Then food is brought and . . . those who are in the audience chamber eat in the presence of the Shaikh. . . . After this the Shaikh retires to his private apartments and the Qadi, the wazirs [government ministers] . . . and . . . chief amirs [military commanders] sit to hear causes and complaints. Questions of religious law are decided by the Qadi, other cases are judged by the . . . wazirs and amirs. If a case requires the views of the [Shaikh], it is put in writing for him. He sends back an immediate reply.”

—Ibn Battuta, *Travels of Ibn Battuta*

Reading Check
Analyze Causes
What were the two main reasons Kilwa became so wealthy?

They wanted to gain profits from the Asian trade in spices, perfumes, and silks. When the Portuguese saw the wealth of the East African city-states, they decided to conquer those cities and take over the trade themselves.

Using their shipboard cannon, the Portuguese took Sofala, Kilwa, and Mombasa. They burned parts of Kilwa and built forts on the sites of Kilwa and Mombasa. The Portuguese kept their ports and cities on the East African coast for the next two centuries.

Islamic Influences

Muslim traders introduced Islam to the East African coast, and commerce caused the religion to spread. Even the smallest towns had a mosque for the faithful. A Muslim sultan, or ruler, governed most cities. Most government officials and wealthy merchants were Muslims. However, the vast majority of people along the eastern coast held on to their traditional religious beliefs. This was also true of the people who lived in inland villages.

Enslavement of Africans Along with luxury goods, Arab Muslim traders exported enslaved persons from the East African coast. Traders sent Africans acquired through kidnapping to markets in Arabia, Persia, and



An Arab slave market in Yemen, 1237

Reading Check

Summarize

How extensive was the trade in enslaved persons from East Africa before 1700?

Iraq. Wealthy people in these countries often bought slaves to do domestic tasks. Muslim traders shipped enslaved Africans across the Indian Ocean to India, where Indian rulers employed them as soldiers. Enslaved Africans also worked on docks and ships at Muslim-controlled ports and as household servants in China.

Although Muslim traders had been enslaving East Africans and selling them overseas since about the ninth century, the numbers remained small—perhaps about 1,000 a year. The trade in slaves did not increase dramatically until the 1700s. At that time, Europeans started to buy captured Africans for their colonial plantations.

Southern Africa and Great Zimbabwe

The gold and ivory that helped the coastal city-states grow rich came from the interior of southern Africa. In southeastern Africa, the Shona people established a city called **Great Zimbabwe** (zihm•BAHB•way), which grew into an empire built on the gold trade.

Great Zimbabwe By 1000, the Shona people had settled the fertile, well-watered plateau between the Zambezi and Limpopo rivers in present-day Zimbabwe. The area was well suited to farming and cattle raising. The location also had other economic advantages. The city of Great Zimbabwe stood near an important trade route linking the goldfields with the coastal trading city of Sofala. Sometime after 1000, Great Zimbabwe gained control of these trade routes. From the 1200s through the 1400s, it became the capital of a thriving state. Its leaders taxed the traders who traveled these routes. They also demanded payments from less powerful chiefs. Because of this growing wealth, Great Zimbabwe became the economic, political, and religious center of an empire.

Almost everything that is known about Great Zimbabwe comes from its impressive ruins, which include a complex of walled enclosures on a large hill, another group of enclosures south of the hill, called the Great Enclosure, and more recent ruins in the valley between. In addition to the stone walls of the enclosures, there are ruins of many huts that were constructed of mud or stone, both within and without the walls of the enclosures. Most of the stone structures in Great Zimbabwe were probably built between 1250 and 1450.

Excavations of the ruins suggest that Great Zimbabwe's society included multiple social and economic classes. Huts outside of the city's enclosures were very close together, but inside the enclosures, they were not—showing that those living inside the enclosures enjoyed elite status. Some huts inside the hill enclosure seemed to be for special purposes, such as religious ceremonies. Additionally, most cattle bones on the site were found near the wall of the Great Enclosure, an indication that the elite of the

Great Zimbabwe

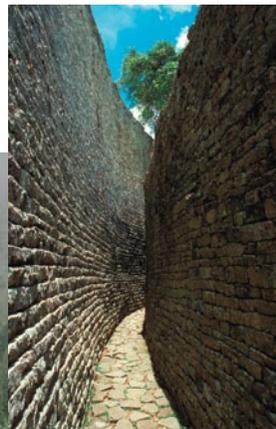
Great Zimbabwe was an important city in southern Africa. The word *zimbabwe* comes from a Shona phrase meaning “stone houses.” The ruins consist of two complexes of stone buildings that once housed the royal palace of Great Zimbabwe’s rulers. There are great curving walls around the ruins. Because there was no way for soldiers to climb to the top of the walls, archaeologists theorize that they were not used primarily as defenses. The massive walls were probably built to impress visitors with the strength of Zimbabwe and its ruler.

Inside the walls stands a cone-shaped tower. Among the ruins were found tall figures of birds, carved from soapstone. Archaeologists believe the construction of Great Zimbabwe may have taken about 400 years.

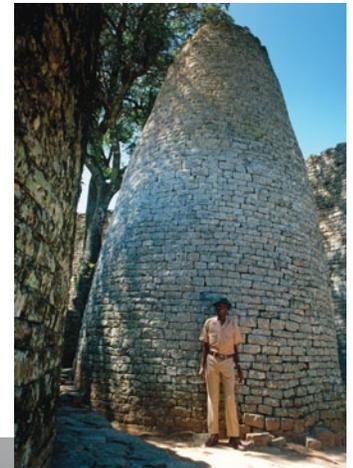
City of Great Zimbabwe

The Shona people built this impressive city as the center of their empire.

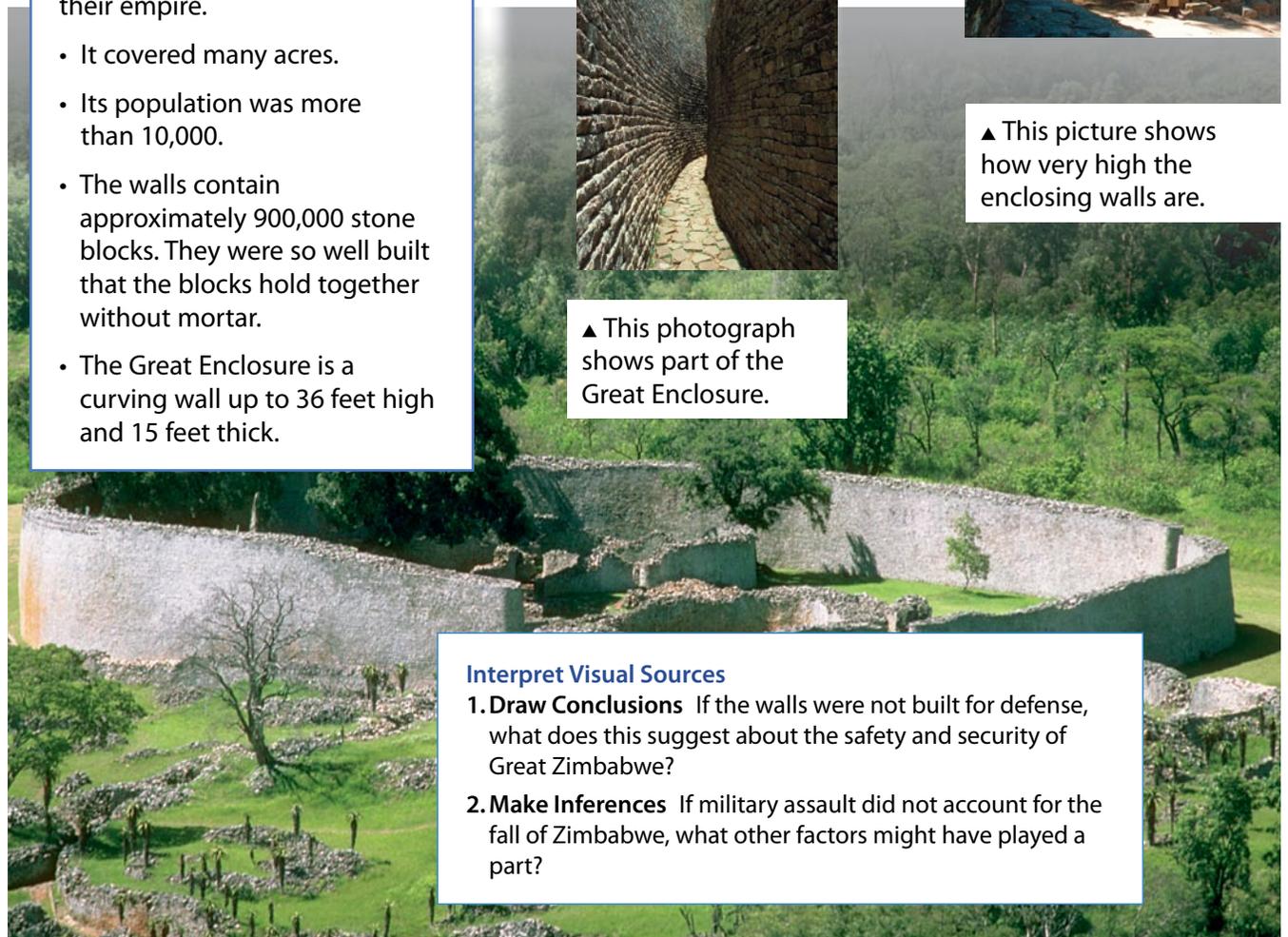
- It covered many acres.
- Its population was more than 10,000.
- The walls contain approximately 900,000 stone blocks. They were so well built that the blocks hold together without mortar.
- The Great Enclosure is a curving wall up to 36 feet high and 15 feet thick.



▲ This photograph shows part of the Great Enclosure.



▲ This picture shows how very high the enclosing walls are.



Interpret Visual Sources

- 1. Draw Conclusions** If the walls were not built for defense, what does this suggest about the safety and security of Great Zimbabwe?
- 2. Make Inferences** If military assault did not account for the fall of Zimbabwe, what other factors might have played a part?

Reading Check
Analyze Events
Why did the people of Great Zimbabwe settle on the plateau between the Limpopo and Zambezi rivers?

community were probably the only ones who ate beef; commoners may have eaten goat or mutton, if they ate meat at all.

The people of Great Zimbabwe probably practiced a traditional religion similar to the Shona religion of today. This religion's dominant feature is devotion to the spirits of ancestors, who the Shona believe protect and guide the community.

By 1450, Great Zimbabwe was abandoned. No one knows for sure why it happened. According to one theory, cattle grazing had worn out the grasslands. In addition, farming had worn out the soil, and people had used up the salt and timber. The area could no longer support a large population.

Portuguese explorers knew about the site in the 1500s. Karl Mauch, a German explorer, was one of the first Europeans to discover the remains of these stone dwellings in 1871.

The Mutapa Empire

According to Shona oral tradition, a man named Mutota left Great Zimbabwe in about 1420 to find a new source of salt. Traveling north, he settled in a valley with fertile soil, good rainfall, and ample wood. There he founded a new state to replace Great Zimbabwe. As the state grew, its leader, Mutota, used his army to dominate the northern Shona people living in the area. He forced them to make payments to support him and his army.

Mutapa Rulers These conquered people called Mutota and his successors *mwene mutapa*, meaning “conqueror” or “master pillager.” The Portuguese who arrived on the East African coast in the early 1500s believed *mwene mutapa*—or *monomotapa*, as they wrote it—to be a title of respect for the ruler. The term is also the origin of the name of the **Mutapa** Empire. By

Global Patterns

Swahili

Over the centuries, contacts between two peoples—Bantu speakers and Arabs—led to the creation of a new people and a new language. Many Arab traders married African women. People of mixed Arab and African ancestry came to be called Swahili. The word comes from an Arabic term meaning “people of the coast” and refers to the East African coast.

Although Swahili peoples do not share a single culture, they do speak a common language. Swahili is a Bantu language with many words borrowed from Arabic. Swahili cultures are also dominated by Bantu characteristics, although many Swahili peoples practice Islam.

The Swahili peoples traded the gold and ivory of Africa for goods from India and China. At least some Indian and Chinese goods made it back to the inland Africans who supplied the gold: archaeologists have discovered fragments of Chinese porcelain in sites related to Great Zimbabwe. During the 1500s and 1600s, the Portuguese looted Swahili cities and damaged Swahili trade as they sought to take control of Indian Ocean trade.



Modern ships such as this are similar to those historically used in trading along the East African coast.

the time of Mutota's death, the Mutapa Empire had conquered all but the eastern portion of what is now Zimbabwe. By 1480 Mutota's son Matope claimed control of the area along the Zambezi River to the Indian Ocean coast. Matope established vassal states in the southern areas that he conquered.

The Mutapa Empire controlled most of the gold mines in this region of Africa and the trade routes to and from the coast. Its people were able to mine gold deposited in nearby rivers and streams. In addition, Mutapa rulers forced people in conquered areas to mine gold for them. The rulers sent gold to the coastal city-states in exchange for luxuries. Even before the death of Matope, the southern vassal states of his empire broke away. However, the Mutapa Dynasty remained in control of the smaller empire.

In the 1500s, the Portuguese tried to conquer the empire. When they failed to do so, they resorted to interfering in Mutapa politics. They helped to overthrow one ruler and replace him with one they could control. This signaled increasing European interference in Africa in centuries to come.

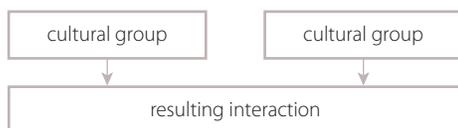
Reading Check

Make Inferences

Why do you think the Portuguese wanted to conquer the Mutapa Empire?

Lesson 5 Assessment

- 1. Organize Information** Create a chart to list the effects of intercultural interactions between two groups of people discussed in this lesson.



Write a paragraph analyzing the results of the cultural interaction. Were the effects mostly positive or mostly negative?

- 2. Key Terms and People** For each key term or person in the lesson, write a sentence explaining its significance.
- 3. Compare** Compare the Portuguese who arrived in East Africa with the rulers of the Mutapa Empire.
- 4. Synthesize** What were some of the effects of East African trade on different cultural groups?
- 5. Draw Conclusions** How is Swahili an example of cultural interaction?
- 6. Summarize** Based on the archaeological evidence, what was the society of Great Zimbabwe like?

Module 12 Assessment

Key Terms and People

For each term or person below, write a sentence explaining its connection to Africa in the period from 1500 BC to AD 1500.

1. Sahara
2. animism
3. push-pull factors
4. Bantu-speaking peoples
5. Aksum
6. Ghana
7. Mali
8. Songhai
9. Swahili
10. Great Zimbabwe

Main Ideas

Use your notes and the information in the module to answer the following questions.

Diverse Societies in Africa

1. How did geographic features affect the settlement of Africa?
2. What technology did the Nok introduce to West Africa?
3. What circumstances enabled Djenné-Djeno to become a bustling trade center?
4. How is a dispute settled in Efe society?
5. What is an age-set system?

Case Study: Migration

6. What are three general causes of migration?
7. How are push-pull factors related to migration?
8. What caused the Bantu-speaking peoples to migrate?
9. Why were the migrations of Bantu speakers so extensive and successful?

The Kingdom of Aksum

10. Why was Aksum able to control international trade?
11. In what ways did Ezana contribute to the rise of his kingdom?
12. Why did Aksum fall?

North and West African Civilizations

13. How were the beginnings of the Almoravid and Almohad empires similar?
14. What accounted for Ghana's financial success?
15. What were two ways that Islam spread through Africa?
16. How did Sunni Ali build an empire?
17. What was the economy of the Hausa city-states like?

Eastern City-States and Southern Empires

18. How did the Swahili language evolve?
19. Why was it important for Kilwa to control Sofala?
20. Who was most affected by the introduction of Islam to East Africa?
21. What was the relationship of Great Zimbabwe to the Mutapa Empire?

Module 12 Assessment, continued

Critical Thinking

1. **Compare** Use a chart like the one below to describe and compare the social, economic, and political aspects of African societies you read about in this module.

Description of Society or Empire	How They're Alike

2. **Make Inferences** How are the spread of ironmaking technology to East and South Africa and the Bantu migrations related?
3. **Evaluate** What were some of Ezana's most crucial leadership decisions?
4. **Form Opinions** Do you think cultural characteristics or personal qualities determine how individuals act toward migrating people who settle among them? Explain.
5. **Compare and Contrast** What are some positive and negative effects of migration?
6. **Recognize Effects** In what way did Islam encourage the spread of literacy?
7. **Recognize Effects** How did people adapt to the harsh conditions of the Sahara? Discuss traders who crossed the Sahara and people who lived in the Saharan village of Teghaza.
8. **Summarize** How are group membership, inheritance rights, and positions of authority usually decided in a matrilineal society?
9. **Synthesize** Why was the location of Great Zimbabwe advantageous?
10. **Compare and Contrast** In what ways was Great Zimbabwe's growth similar to and different from that of Kilwa?

Engage with History

Consider what you learned in this module about trading states in both West and East Africa. How might trade benefit both sides? Now that you've read the module, reevaluate what makes trade beneficial. How did environmental conditions affect which items had value in Africa? Did government policies have any effect on value?

Focus on Writing

Review the causes for migration you learned about in this module. Think about which of the causes might affect you personally. Write a paragraph describing a cause that would force you to migrate to another part of the country or the world. Be sure to identify either the push or pull factor that might influence your decision. Consider the environmental conditions in the area in which you live and the economic or political factors that might have a direct effect on your life.

Multimedia Activity

Today, much of eastern Africa still relies heavily on trade. Work with a group to create an electronic presentation about trade in Africa. Have each member choose one East African country to research in terms of its trade and culture. Use this module and the Internet as resources for your research. Issues to investigate might include what goods present-day East African nations trade and who their trading partners are. Remember to confirm your information by checking multiple sources. Next, create an electronic presentation of information on exports and imports, quantities shipped, where the goods are going, and how they are being transported. How did this project contribute to your understanding of the interrelationship between prosperity and trade?

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