

AFRICAN KINGDOMS

Mansa Musa and the Spread of Islam

VOCABULARY

- 1. Dhow – a sailboat that uses wind-catching
- 2. Clan – a group of people descended from the same ancestor
- 3. Swahili – the unique culture of Africa's East Coast and the language spoken there

African Kingdoms

800 C.E. – 1600 C.E.

- The kingdoms of: **Ghana (c. 800–1100), Mali (c. 1200–1450), Songhai (c. 1450–1600)** became powerful in **West Africa**.

Contemporary Events

800 C.E. – Charlemagne crowned Holy Roman Emperor.

1000 C.E. – Song Dynasty in China, “Golden Age”, printing, gunpowder.

1200 C.E. – 4th Crusade sacks Constantinople, fracturing the Byzantine Empire.

1346-1353 C.E. – Black Death in Europe

1492 C.E. – Columbus lands in Hispaniola, in the Caribbean.

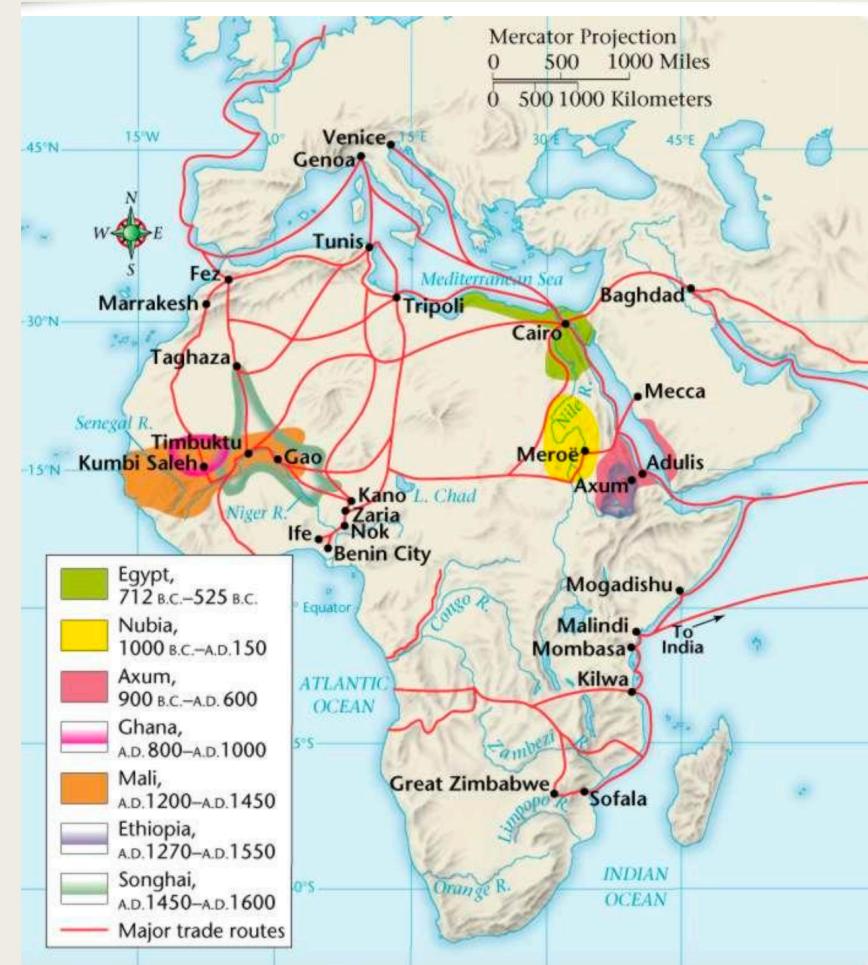
Ghana, Mali, & Songhai

- They controlled important **trade routes** that connected them to **North Africa, Europe, and the Middle East**. These kingdoms grew wealthy by trading valuable resources like **gold** and **salt**.

Wealth and Trade

■ Gold-Salt Trade:

- **Gold was mined in West Africa and traded for salt, which came from the Sahara Desert.**
- Salt was valuable because it was used to **preserve food** and improve health.
- These items were traded along the **Trans-Saharan Trade Routes**, connecting West Africa to the rest of the world.



Wealth and Trade

- **Camels:** Camels were essential for trade across the **Sahara Desert** because they could travel long distances without needing much water.
- **Key Trade Cities:**
 - ***Timbuktu:*** A center for ***trade and learning***, where merchants, scholars, and goods gathered.
 - ***Jenne:*** A trading city that was important for commerce and cultural exchange.



Geography and Climate Zones

■ Climate Zones:

- **Deserts**, like the *Sahara*, limited farming but encouraged trade.
- **Savannas**, or grassy plains, were good for farming and herding.
- **Rainforests** in some areas provided wood, food, and unique resources like *kola nuts*.



Shared Features of West African Kingdoms

■ Art and Culture:

- *These kingdoms created beautiful **artwork**, including gold jewelry, bronze statues, and clay sculptures.*



Shared Features of West African Kingdoms

■ Religion and Traditions:

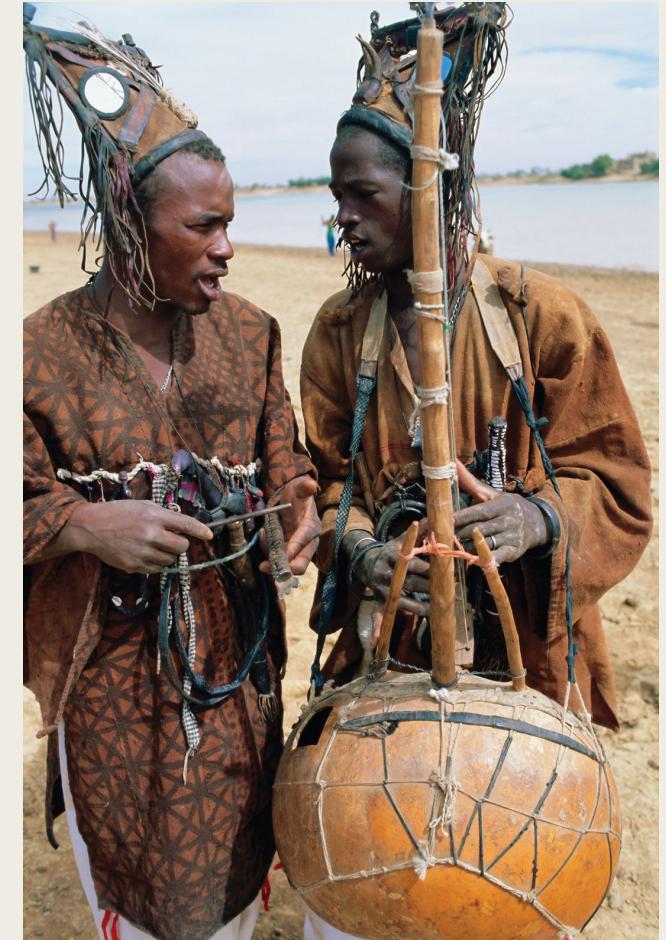
- Many people practiced *traditional African religions*, which were *polytheistic*.
- *Islam spread to West Africa through trade*. Many rulers converted, bringing *Islamic laws and scholars to their courts*. *Islamic beliefs mixed with African traditions*, creating a unique *West African culture*.



Shared Features of West African Kingdoms

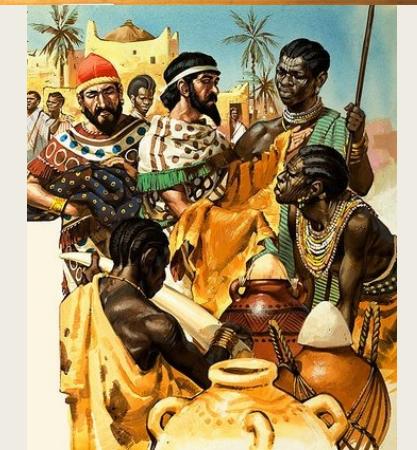
- **Griots:**

- *Griots were storytellers who preserved history through oral traditions. They told stories about kings, battles, and daily life.*



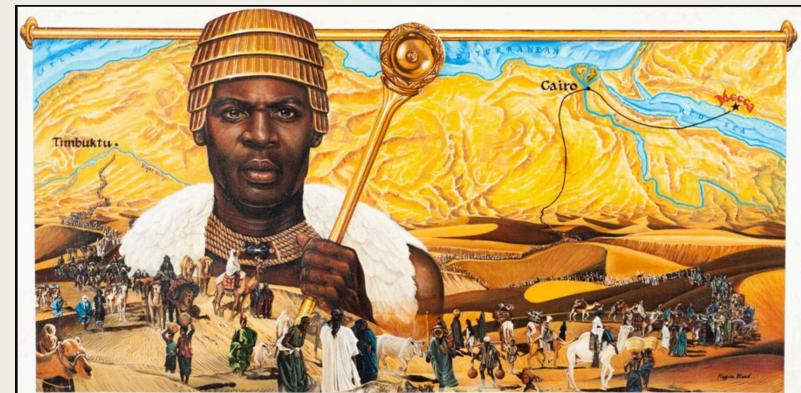
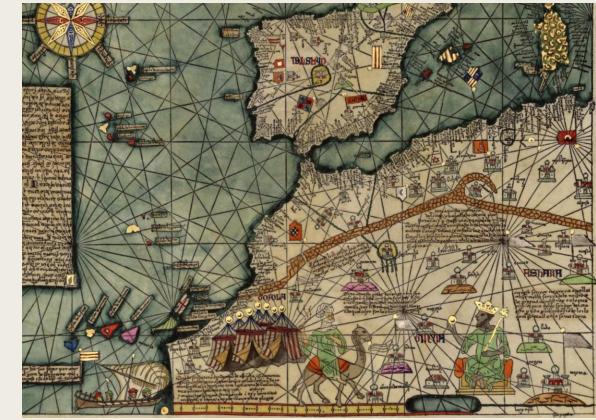
Ghana (c. 800-1100 C.E.)

- **Wealth from Trade:** Ghana controlled the gold trade and taxed merchants who passed through its lands.
- **Iron Tools:** Ghana used iron tools for farming and weapons to expand its power.
- **Decline:** Ghana weakened after invasions by the **Almoravids** and the loss of trade routes.



Mali (c. 1200 – 1450)

- **Mansa Musa:**
 - *Mali's most famous ruler, known for his **hajj** (pilgrimage) to Mecca. His journey showed the world Mali's wealth and forged **diplomatic alliances**.*
 - *He built **mosques** and supported education, making **Timbuktu** a center for religion and learning.*
 - *Mansa Musa's generosity with gold caused its value to drop temporarily in regions he visited.*
- **Agriculture and Trade:** Mali used **iron tools** to improve farming, which supported its growing population and trade network.



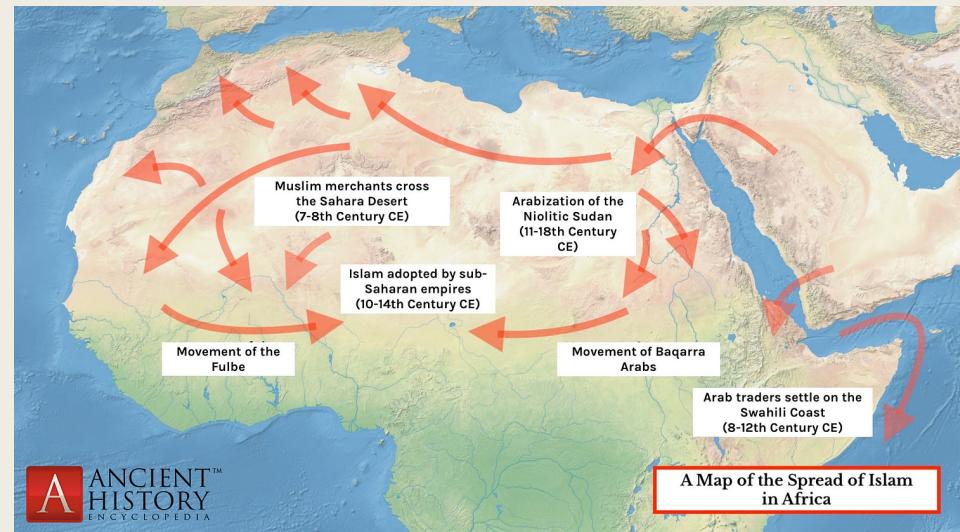
Songhai (c. 1450 – 1600)

- **Askia Muhammad:**
 - A Songhai leader who expanded the empire and improved its government.
 - He supported education and kept **Timbuktu** as a cultural hub.
- **Military Strength:** Songhai had a strong army but eventually fell to the **Moroccans**, who used **gunpowder weapons** like cannons.



Spread of Islam to Eastern Africa

- Islam spread slowly through East Africa—arrived in the A.D. 700s but did not gain many followers until the 1100s and 1200s.
- A new society arose known as Swahili. It was based on a blend of African and Muslim cultures.
- Swahili comes from an Arabic word meaning “people of the coast”.
- By 1331, Swahili came to mean both the culture of East Africa’s coast and the language spoken there.



Eastern African Kingdoms

In ancient times powerful kingdoms arose in East Africa

Axum

- Located on the Red Sea
- Important stop on the trade route linking Africa, the Mediterranean, and India.
- Christianity became the official religion
- Exported: ivory, incense, and enslaved people
- Imported: cloth, metal goods, and olive oil

Zimbabwe

- Arose in southeastern Africa
- Inland Territory rich in copper and gold mines
- "Great Zimbabwe" means great stone buildings.
- Exported: minerals, ivory, coconut oil, and enslaved people
- Imported: silk, glass beads, carpets, and pottery

How does culture diffusion happen?

- Cultural diffusion is the spreading of ideas to new regions.
 - *Examples: Christmas traditions, foods, religions*
 - 1) People move from place to place
 - 2) Trade
 - 3) Warfare