

14

Africa ca. 1000–1700

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The Great Mosque at Kilwa, ca. 1100 c.e. The Swahili city of Kilwa, on the coast of present-day Tanzania, was likely founded by Muslim traders with strong links to the Indian Ocean world. The insides of its domes were lined with Chinese porcelain. Now in ruins, this large congregational mosque was probably in its day the largest fully enclosed structure in sub-Saharan Africa.

What characterizes Swahili culture?

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Different parts of the African continent had very different histories early in the second millennium C.E. Many regions had substantial interactions with the Islamic and European worlds; others engaged in trade and cultural exchanges within the continent.

The Atlantic slave trade affected almost all of Africa between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries. This subject is treated in detail in Chapter 17, but here, we cannot overlook its importance in disrupting and reconfiguring African economies, social organization, and politics.

We begin with Africa above the equator, where Islam's influence increased and substantial kingdoms and empires flourished. Then we discuss West, East, central, and southern Africa and the effects of Arab-Islamic and European influence. ■

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

AFRICA, 1000–1700

Long-distance trade—the supply-and-demand-driven movement of goods, people, and cultural attitudes and practices—typically stimulates historical change. This was as true in Africa in the early second millennium as in the Americas, Europe, Asia, or anywhere in the world. Different regions in Africa were oriented differently in relation to trade routes and trading partners, and these regions developed in markedly different ways between 1000 and 1700.

The North African coast and the Sahel lay amidst trading networks linking the Mediterranean world, the growing **Dar al-Islam** (“House of Submission”—the Islamic realm), and the rich kingdoms of West Africa. The East African coast was integrated into the trading and cultural networks of the Indian Ocean basin and was firmly engaged with the Muslim world there. The rest of sub-Saharan Africa was culturally diverse; people here engaged primarily in intra-African trade with cultures that occupied other ecological niches. It is important to remember that Africa is a

 **See the Map**
Trade Routes in Africa
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continent that is home to many societies with different histories, languages, religions, and cultures. In this way it is

similar to Europe, but Africa is also much larger than Europe and more ethnically and culturally diverse.

Along the Mediterranean, the key new factor in African history at this time was the Ottomans’ imperial expansion into Egypt and the **Maghreb**. The long Ottoman hegemony altered the political configuration of the Mediterranean world. Merchants and missionaries carried Islam and Arabian cultural influences across the Sahara from North Africa and the Middle East to the western, central, and Nilotic Sudan, where Muslim conversion played a growing social and political role, especially among the ruling elites who profited most from brokering trade between their lands and the Islamic north. Islam provided a shared arena of expression for at least some classes and groups in societies over a vast area from Egypt to Senegambia. In Africa as elsewhere, new converts modified Islam through a process

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Discovery: The Maghrib
and West Africa,
Fourteenth Century
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of syncretism. Distinctively African forms of Islam emerged, faithful to the central tenets of the religion, but differing in observances and customs from those of the Arabian cultural



HOW DID the Ottomans govern North Africa and Egypt?

Dar al-Islam

In Arabic, the “House of Submission,” or Islamic world. This term has many shades of meaning, ranging from a place where the government is under Muslim control to a place where individuals are free to practice Islamic beliefs.

Maghreb

Literally, in Arabic, “place of sunset,” or the west; refers to the northwest of Africa, and specifically what is now Morocco.

Sharifs

A term for leaders who are direct descendants of the Prophet Muhammad through his first grandson, Hasan ibn Ali.

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NORTH AFRICA AND EGYPT

As we saw in Chapter 12, Egypt and other North African societies played a central role in Islamic and Mediterranean history after 1000 C.E. From Tunisia to Egypt, Sunni religious and political leaders and their Shi’ite, especially Isma’ili, counterparts struggled for the minds of the masses. By the thirteenth century, the Shi’ites had become a small minority among Muslims in Mediterranean Africa. In general, a feisty regionalism characterized states, city-states, and tribal groups north of the Sahara and along the lower Nile. No single power controlled them for long. Regionalism persisted even after 1500, when most of North Africa came under the influence—and often, direct control—of the Ottoman Empire centered in Istanbul.

By 1800 the nominally Ottoman domains from Egypt to Algeria were effectively independent. In Egypt the Ottomans had established direct rule after their defeat of the Mamluks in 1517, but by the seventeenth century power had passed to Egyptian governors descended from the Mamluks. The Mediterranean coastlands between Egypt and Morocco were officially Ottoman provinces, or regencies, but by the eighteenth century, Algiers, Tripoli (in modern Libya), and Tunisia had institutionalized their own political structures.

Morocco, ruled by a succession of **Sharifs** (leaders claiming descent from the family of the Prophet Muhammad), was the only North African sultanate to remain fully independent after 1700. The most important *Sharifian* Dynasty was that of the Sa’dis (1554–1659). One major reason for Morocco’s independence was that its Arab and Berber populations united after 1500 to oppose the Portuguese and the Spaniards.

sphere, especially in attitudes toward women and relationships between the sexes.

South of the Sahara, dynamic processes of state-building and trade were the main forces for cultural change. In central and South Africa, except along the eastern coast, and in the West African forests, older African traditions held sway, and there was little or no evidence of Islam beyond individual Muslims involved in trade. On the eastern coast, however, Islam influenced the development of the Swahili culture and language, a unique blend of African, Indian, and Arabian traditions, and Islamic traders linked the region to India, China, and the Indies. In sub-Saharan Africa, the spread of Islam took place almost entirely through peaceful means.

Along the Atlantic and Indian Ocean coasts of Africa, the key development of the fifteenth century was the arrival of ships carrying traders and missionaries from Christian Europe. The strength of African societies and the biological dangers to Europeans venturing into the interior meant that most of the trade between the African interior and Europeans on both coasts remained under the control of Africans for generations. Even

before Europeans themselves reached the interior, however, the trade in slaves, weapons, and gold that they fostered greatly altered African political and social structures not only along the coasts but also in regions untouched by the outsiders. The European voyages of discovery of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries presaged the African continent's involvement in a new, expanding, and, by the eighteenth century, European-dominated global trading system. This system generally exploited rather than bolstered African development, as the infamous Atlantic slave trade (see Chapter 17) and the South African experience illustrate.

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Influences in Africa 2
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Focus Questions

- ◆ Where in Africa was Islamic influence concentrated? How did Islam spread? What does this reveal about the relationship between commerce and cultural diffusion?
- ◆ Why did different regions in Africa develop in different ways between 1000 and 1700?

THE SPREAD OF ISLAM SOUTH OF THE SAHARA

Islamic influence in sub-Saharan Africa began as early as the eighth century. By 1800 it affected most of the Sudanic belt and the coast of East Africa. The process was generally peaceful, gradual, and partial. Conversion to Islam was rare beyond the ruling or commercial classes, and Islamic faith tended to coexist or blend with indigenous beliefs. Agents of Islam brought commercial and political changes as well as the Qur'an, new religious practices, and literate culture.

In East Africa, Muslim traders moving down the coastline with the ancient monsoon trade routes had begun to “Islamize” ports and coastal regions even before 800 C.E. From the thirteenth century on, Islamic trading communities and city-states developed along the coast from Mogadishu to Kilwa.

In the western and central parts of the continent, Islam was introduced primarily by traders from North Africa and the Nile valley. Berbers who plied the desert routes (see Chapter 5) to trading towns such as Awdaghost on the edge of the Sahel as early as the eighth century were Islam's chief agents. From there Islam spread south to centers such as Kumbi Saleh and beyond, southeast across the Niger, and west into Senegambia. Migrating Arab tribal groups that settled in the central sub-Saharan Sahel also helped spread Islam.

The year 985 marks the first time a West African royal court—that of the kingdom of Gao, east of the Niger bend—officially became Muslim (see Chapter 5), though Gao rulers did not try to convert their subjects.

By contrast, the rulers of the later kingdom of Ghana long maintained their indigenous traditions even though they traded with Muslims and had Muslim advisers.

HOW DID Islam spread south of the Sahara?



 **See the Map**

East African Coast to 1600
at myhistorylab.com



Starting in the 1030s zealous militants known as Almoravids (see Chapter 12) began a conversion campaign that eventually swept into Ghana's territory, taking first Awdaghost and later, in 1076, Kumbi Saleh. Thereafter, the forcibly converted Soninke ruling group of Ghana spread Islam among their own populace and farther south in the savannah. They converted Mande-speaking traders, who brought Islam south into the forests.

Farther west, the Fulbe rulers of Takrur became Muslim in the 1030s and propagated their new faith among their subjects. The Fulbe, or Fulani, remained important carriers of Islam over the next eight centuries as they migrated gradually into new regions as far east as Lake Chad, where some rulers were Muslim as early as 1100.

Major groups in West Africa strongly resisted Islamization, especially the Mossi kingdoms founded in the Volta region at Wagadugu around 1050 and Yatenga about 1170.

SAHELIAN EMPIRES OF THE WESTERN AND CENTRAL SUDAN



WHAT WERE the four most important states in the Sahel between 1000 and 1600?

As we noted in Chapter 5, substantial states had risen in the first millennium C.E. in the Sahel just south of the Sahara.¹ From about 1000 to 1600, four of these developed into relatively long-lived empires: Ghana, Mali, and Songhai in the western Sudan, and Kanem-Bornu in the central Sudan.

GHANA

Ghana established the model for later Sahelian empires in the western Sudan. Well north of modern Ghana (and unrelated to it except by name), it lay between the inland Niger Delta and the upper Senegal. A Ghanaian kingdom existed as early as 400–600 C.E., but Ghana emerged as a regional power only near the end of the first millennium to flourish for about two centuries. Its capital, Kumbi (or Kumbi Saleh), on the desert's edge, was well sited for the Saharan and Sahelian trade networks. Ghana's major population group was the Soninke; *Ghana* is the Soninke term for "ruler."

Ghanaian rulers were descended matrilineally (through the previous king's sister) and ruled through a council of ministers. Contemporaneous reports, especially from the eleventh-century Muslim writer al-Bakri, indicate that the king was supreme judge and held court regularly to hear grievances. The royal ceremonies held in Kumbi Saleh were embellished with the wealth and power befitting a king held to be divinely blessed, and perhaps semidivine.

Slaves were at the bottom of Ghana's hierarchical society; farmers and draftsmen above them; merchants above them; and the king, his court, and the nobility on top. Ghana's power rested on a solid economic base. Tribute from the empire's many chieftaincies and taxes on royal lands and crops supplemented duties levied on all incoming and outgoing trade. This trade—north–south between the Sahara and the savannah, and especially east–west through the Sahel between Senegambia and more easterly trading towns like Gao on the Niger Bend—involved a variety of goods. Imported salt, cloth, and metal goods such as copper from the north were probably exchanged for gold

¹S. K. and R. J. McIntosh, *Prehistoric Investigations in the Region of Jenne, Mali* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1980), pp. 41–59, 434–461; R. Oliver, *The African Experience* (New York: HarperCollins, 1991), pp. 90–101.

and kola nuts from the south. The regime apparently also controlled the gold (and, presumably, the slave) trade that originated in the savanna to the south and west.

Although the Ghanaian king and court did not convert to Islam, they made elaborate arrangements to accommodate Muslim traders and government servants in a separate settlement a few miles from Khumbi's royal preserve. Muslim traders were prominent at court, literate Muslims administered the government, and Muslim legists advised the ruler.

A huge, well-trained army secured royal control, enabling the kings to extend their sway in the late tenth century to the Atlantic shore and to the south (see Map 14–1 on page 342). In 992, Ghanaian troops wrested Awdaghost from the Berbers. The empire was, however, vulnerable to attack from the desert, as Almoravid Berber forces proved in 1054 when they took Awdaghost in a single raid.

Ghana's empire was probably destroyed in the late twelfth century by the anti-Muslim Soso people from the mountains southeast of Kumbi Saleh; they were a Malinke clan who had long been part of the Ghanaian Empire. Their brief ascendancy between 1180 and 1230 ended the once great transregional power centered at Kumbi Saleh.²

MALI

With Ghana's collapse and the Almoravids' focus on North Africa, the western Sudan broke up into smaller kingdoms. In the early twelfth century Takrur's control of the Senegal valley and the gold-producing region of Galam made it the strongest state in the western Sudan. Like Ghana, however, it was soon eclipsed, first by the brief Soso ascendancy and then by the rise of Mali.

In the mid-thirteenth century, the Keita ruling clan of Mali forged a new and lasting empire, built on monopolization of the lucrative north–south gold trade. The Keita kings dominated enough of the Sahel to control the flow of West African gold from the Senegal regions and the forestlands south of the Niger to the trans-Saharan trade routes and the influx of copper and salt in exchange. Based south of their Ghanaian predecessors, in the fertile land along the Niger, they controlled all trade on the upper Niger, as well as the Gambia and Senegal trade to the west. They used captives for plantation labor in the Niger inland delta to produce surplus food for trade.

Agriculture and cattle farming were the primary occupations of Mali's population. Rice was grown in the river valleys and millet in the drier parts of the Sahel. Together with beans, yams, and other agricultural products, this made for a plentiful food supply. Fishing flourished along the Niger and elsewhere. Cattle, sheep, and goats were plentiful. The chief craft specialties were metalworking (iron and gold) and weaving of cotton grown within the empire.

The Malinke, a southern Mande-speaking people of the upper Niger region, formed the core population of the new state. They apparently lived in walled urban settlements typical of the western savanna region. Each walled town held 1,000 to 15,000 people and was linked to neighboring cities by trade and intermarriage.

The Keita Dynasty had converted to Islam around 1100 C.E. Keita's rulers even claimed descent from Muhammad's famous *muezzin* Bilal ibn Ribah, a former black slave from Abyssinia whose son was said to have settled in the Mande-speaking region. During Mali's heyday in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, its kings often

QUICK REVIEW

Mali

- ◆ Keita clan forged Mali in mid-thirteenth century
- ◆ Keita kings controlled the flow of West African gold
- ◆ Agriculture and cattle farming were primary occupations of Mali's people



The Great Mosque at Jenne. Jenne was one of the important commercial centers controlled by the empire of Mali in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The thriving market in front of the mosque reflects the enduring vitality of trade and commerce in the region.

How widely was Islam adopted in western Sudan?

muezzin

The leader of a mosque's call to prayers.

²D. Conrad and H. Fisher, "The Conquest That Never Was: Ghana and the Almoravids, 1076," *History in Africa* 9 (1982): 1–59; 10 (1983): 53–78.



MAP EXPLORATION

To explore this map further, go to <http://www.myhistorylab.com>



MAP 14-1. Africa ca. 900–1500. Shown are major cities and states referred to in the text. The main map shows the region of West Africa occupied by the empire of Ghana from ca. 990 to ca. 1180. The inset shows the region occupied by Mali between 1230 and 1450.

Why was Ghana's location important for its prosperity?

 **Read the Document**
Excerpts from *Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali*, 1235 at [myhistorylab.com](http://www.myhistorylab.com)

made the pilgrimage to Mecca, bringing back with them military aids, such as Barbary war horses, and new ideas about political and military organization. Through Muslim traders' networks, Mali was connected to other areas of Africa, especially to the east.

Mali's imperial power was built largely by the Keita King Sundiata (or Sunjaata, r. 1230–1255). Sundiata and his successors exploited their agricultural resources, significant population growth, and Malinke commercial skills to build an empire even more powerful than that of Ghana. Sundiata extended his control west to the Atlantic coast and east beyond Timbuktu. By controlling the commercial entrepôts of Gao, Walata, and Jenne, he dominated the Saharan as well as the Niger trade. He built his capital, Niani, into a major city. Niani was located on a tributary of the Niger in the savannah at the edge of the forest in a gold- and iron-rich region. It had access to the forest trade products of gold, kola nuts, and palm oil; it was easily defended by virtue of its surrounding hills; and it was readily reached by river.

The empire that Sundiata and his successors built ultimately encompassed three major regions and language groups of Sudanic West Africa: (1) the Senegal region (including Takrur), populated by speakers of the West Atlantic Niger-Kongo language group; (2) the central Mande states between Senegal and Niger, occupied by the Niger-Kongo-speaking Soninke and Mandinke; and (3) the peoples of the Niger in the Gao region who spoke Songhai, the only Nilo-Saharan language west of the Lake Chad basin. Mali was less a centralized bureaucratic state than the center of a vast sphere of influence that included provinces and tribute-paying kingdoms. Many individual chieftaincies were independent but recognized the sovereignty of the supreme, sacred *mansa*, or “emperor,” of the Malian realms.

The greatest Keita king was Mansa Musa (r. 1312–1337), famous for his pilgrimage through Mamluk Cairo to Mecca in 1324. He spent or gave away so much gold in Cairo alone that he started massive inflation lasting over a decade. He brought many Muslim scholars, artists, scientists, and architects back to Mali, where he consolidated his power and secured peace throughout his vast dominions. The devout ruler fostered the spread of Islam. Under Musa's rule, Timbuktu became famous for its *madrasas* and libraries, making it the leading intellectual center of sub-Saharan Islam and a major trading city of the Sahel—roles it retained long after Mali's empire declined.³

After Musa, rivalries for the throne diminished Mali's dominance. The empire slowly withered until a new Songhai power supplanted it after about 1450.

SONGHAI

There was a Songhai kingdom around Gao, on the eastern arc of the great bend of the Niger, as early as the eleventh or twelfth century. In 1325 Mansa Musa gained control of the Gao region. Mali's domination ended with the rise of a dynasty in Gao known as the Sunni or Sonni around 1375. The kingdom became an imperial power under the greatest Sunni ruler, Sonni Ali (r. 1464–1492). For more than a century the Songhai Empire was arguably the most powerful state in Africa (see Map 14–2 on page 344). With a strong military built around a riverboat flotilla and cavalry, Sonni Ali took Jenne and Timbuktu. He pushed the Tuareg Berbers back into the northern Sahel and Sahara and stifled threats from the southern forestland.

³For more on Mali, especially its wealth and Timbuktu's role as a center of scholarship, see E. Gilbert and J. T. Reynolds, *Africa in World History: From Prehistory to the Present* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2008), pp. 106–109.

QUICK REVIEW

King Sundiata (r. 1230–1255)

- ◆ Built Mali's imperial power
- ◆ Mali's empire was more powerful than its Ghanaian predecessor
- ◆ Empire encompassed three major regions: Senegal, the central Mande states, and the peoples of Niger in the Gao region

Read the Document

The Travels of Ibn Battuta “Ibn Battuta in Mali” at myhistorylab.com

Read the Document

Al-Umari describes Mansa Musa of Mali at myhistorylab.com

mansa

Malian emperor, from Mandinka word meaning “king of kings.”



Mansa Musa, King of Mali. The fourteenth-century Catalan Atlas shows King Mansa Musa of Mali, seated on a throne holding a nugget of gold. A camel rider approaches him.

Why would a fourteenth-century European atlas show Mansa Musa?



MAP EXPLORATION

To explore this map further, go to <http://www.myhistorylab.com>



MAP 14-2. Africa ca. 1500–1700. Important towns, regions, peoples, and states. The inset shows the empire of Songhai at its greatest extent in the early sixteenth century.

What was Songhai's major source of wealth?

His successor Askia Muhammad al-Turi (r. 1493–1528) continued Sonni Ali's expansionist policies. Between them, these two rulers built an empire that stretched west nearly to the Atlantic, northwest into the Sahara, and east into the central Sudan. Like their Ghanaian predecessors, they took advantage of their control of access to gold and other West African commodities to cultivate and expand

the caravan trade to the North African coast. This provided their major source of wealth.

Unlike Sonni Ali, who maintained his people's traditional faith, Askia Muhammad and his Askia successors were emphatically Muslim. At-Turi modeled the Songhai state on the Islamic empire of Mali. (See Document, "Muslim Reform in Songhai.") In his reign, many Muslim scholars came to Gao, Timbuktu, and Jenne. He appointed Muslim judges (*qadis*) throughout the empire and made Timbuktu a major intellectual and legal training center. He replaced native Songhais with Arab Muslim immigrants as government officials. Like Mansa Musa before him, Muhammad made a triumphal pilgrimage to Mecca, where he was hailed as "Caliph of the western Sahara." From his vast royal treasury he supported the poor and Sufi leaders, or *marabouts*, and built mosques throughout the realm. Nevertheless, he failed to Islamize the empire or to ensure a strong central state for his successors.

The last powerful Askia leader was Askia Dawud (r. 1549–1583), under whom Songhai prosperity and intellectual life reached its apogee. Both trans-Saharan trade and royal patronage of the arts rose to new levels. Still, difficulties mounted. The last Askias battled the Mossi to the south and Berbers from the north. Civil war broke out over the royal succession in 1586, dividing the empire. In 1591 an army sent by the Sa'dis of Morocco used superior gunpowder weapons, coupled with the aid of disaffected Songhai princes, to defeat the last Askia of Gao, and the Gao Empire collapsed.

KANEM AND KANEM-BORNU

A fourth sizable Sahelian Empire—this one in the central Sudan—arose after 1100. Called Kanem, it began as a southern Saharan confederation of the nomadic tribes known as Zaghawah. By the twelfth century a Zaghawah group, the Kanuri, had settled in Kanem. From there they began a campaign of military expansion during the thirteenth century. Their leader, Mai Dunama Dibbalemi (r. ca. 1221–1259), was a contemporary of Sundiata in Mali. Dibbalemi was a Muslim, and he used a synthesis of Islam and African traditions of sacred kingship to sanction his rule. Islam provided a rationale for expansion through *jihad* , or holy "struggle" against polytheists.

Dibbalemi and his successors extended Kanuri power north into the desert and northeast along the Sahelian-Saharan fringe. In both directions they controlled important trade routes—north to Libya and east to the Nile. The next two centuries saw the mixing of Kanuri and local Kanembu peoples. There was a corresponding transformation of the



A Marabout Creates a *Grigri*. A verse from the Qur'an is copied onto a piece of paper, which will be folded and put in a leather pouch. The pouch is worn as an amulet, to protect the wearer from sickness, harm, or evil.

Are you aware of the use of amulets in non-Muslim religious traditions?

marabout

In Sunni Islam as practiced in West Africa, a *marabout* is a spiritual leader, versed in the Koran, who often guides the personal lives of his followers.

 See the Map

African Empires in the Western Sudan
at myhistorylab.com

CHRONOLOGY

SAHELIAN EMPIRES OF THE WESTERN SUDAN

ca. 990–ca. 1180?	Empire of Ghana
1076	Ghana loses Awdaghast to Almoravids
1180–1230	Soso clan controls old Ghanaian territories
ca. 1230–1450	Empire of Mali, founded by Sundiata
1230–1255	Reign of Sundiata
1312–1337	Reign of Mansa Musa
1340–1370s	Independent Songhai state emerges in Gao after throwing off Malian rule
ca. 1450–1591	Songhai Empire at Gao
1462–1492	Reign of Sonni Ali
1493–1591	Askia Dynasty rules Songhai Empire
1493–1528	Reign of Askia Muhammad al-Turi
1549–1583	Reign of Askia Dawud



DOCUMENT

Muslim Reform in Songhai

Around 1500 Askia Muhammad al-Turi, the first Muslim Songhai ruler, wrote to the North African Muslim theologian Muhammad al-Maghili (d. 1504) about proper Muslim practices. In these excerpts from al-Turi's seventh question, we glimpse the new convert's zeal for conformity to traditional religious norms, as well as the king's desire for bettering social order and his concern for justice. The answers from al-Maghili reflect the puritanical "official line" of the conservative ulama who did not want to allow syncretism to emerge among newly converted groups.

- **WHAT** are the problems and corresponding solutions described in the letters? Which problem did al-Maghili find most serious? Why? Which do you think would have been most serious? Why?

FROM ASKIA MUHAMMAD AL-TURI'S SEVENTH QUESTION

Among the people [of the Songhay Empire], there are some who claim knowledge of the supernatural through sand divining and the like, or through the disposition of the stars . . . [while] some assert that they can write (talismans) to bring good fortune . . . or to ward off bad fortune. . . . Some defraud in weights and measures. . . .

One of their evil practices is the free mixing of men and women in the markets and streets and the failure of women to veil themselves . . . [while] among the people of Djenné [Jenne] it is an established custom for a girl not to cover any part of her body as long as she remains a virgin . . . and all the most beautiful girls walk about naked

So give us legal ruling concerning these people and their ilk, and may God Most High reward you!

FROM MUHAMMAD AL-MAGHILI'S ANSWER

The answer—and God it is who directs to the right course—is that everything you have mentioned

concerning people's behavior in some parts of this country is gross error. It is the bounden duty of the commander of the Muslims and all other believers who have the power to change every one of these evil practices.

As for any who claims knowledge of the supernatural in the ways you have mentioned . . . he is a liar and an unbeliever. . . . Such people must be forced to renounce it by the sword. Then whoever renounces such deeds should be left in peace, but whoever persists should be killed with the sword as an unbeliever; his body should not be washed or shrouded, and he should not be buried in a Muslim graveyard. . . .

As for defrauding in weights and measures it is forbidden (*haram*) according to the Qur'an, the Sunna and the consensus of opinion of the learned men of the Muslim community. It is the bounden duty of the commander of the Muslims to appoint a trustworthy man in charge of the markets, and to safeguard people's means of subsistence. He should standardize all the scales in each province. . . . Similarly, all measures both large and small must be rectified so that they conform to a uniform standard. . . .

Now, what you mentioned about the free mixing of men and women and leaving the pudenda uncovered is one of the greatest abominations. The commander of the Muslims must exert himself to prevent all these things. . . . He should appoint trustworthy men to watch over this by day and night, in secret and in the open. This is not to be considered as spying on the Muslims; it is only a way of caring for them and curbing evildoers, especially when corruption becomes widespread in the land as it has done in Timbuktu and Djenné

Source: From *The African Past*, trans. by J. O. Hunwick, reprinted in Basil Davidson (Grosset and Dunlap, The Universal Library), pp. 86–88. Reprinted by permission of Curtis Brown Ltd. Copyright © 1964 by Basil Davidson.

shaykh

Arabic word for a tribal elder or Islamic scholar; can also be rendered as sheikh, sheik, or cheikh.

Kanuri leader from nomadic *shaykh* to Sudanic king and of Kanem from a nomadic to a largely sedentary, quasi-feudal kingdom. Like Mali to the west, Kanem's dominion was of two kinds: direct rule over and taxation of core territories, and indirect control over and collection of tribute from a wider region of vassal chieftaincies. Islamic acculturation progressed most rapidly in the core territories.

Civil strife, largely over royal succession, weakened the Kanuri state. After 1400 the locus of power shifted from Kanem to Bornu, southwest of Lake Chad. Here, in the 1490s, a new Kanuri Empire arose almost simultaneously with the collapse of the Askia Dynasty of the Songhai Empire at Gao. Firearms and Turkish military instructors acquired after a pilgrimage to Mecca enabled the Kanuri leader Idris Alawma (r. ca. 1575–1610) to unify Kanem and Bornu. He set up an avowedly Islamic state and extended his rule as far as Hausaland, between Bornu and the Niger. The center of trading activity as well as political power now shifted from the Niger Bend east to Kanuri-controlled territory.

Deriving its prosperity from the trans-Saharan trade, Idris Alawma's regional empire survived for nearly a century. It was broken up by a long famine, Tuareg attacks, weak leadership, and loss of control over trade to smaller, better-organized Hausa states to the west. The ruling dynasty held out until 1846, but by 1700 its power had been sharply reduced.

CHRONOLOGY

CENTRAL SUDANIC EMPIRES

ca. 1100–1500	Kanuri Empire of Kanem
ca. 1220s–1400	Height of empire of Kanem
ca. 1221–1259	Reign of Mai Dunama Dibbalemi
ca. 1575–1610	Reign of Idris Alawma, major architect of the Kanem-Bornu state
ca. 1575–late 1600s (1846)	Kanuri Empire of Kanem-Bornu

THE EASTERN SUDAN

The Christian states of Maqurra and Alwa in the Nilotic Sudan, or Nubia, lasted for more than 600 years, beginning in the early seventh century. They maintained political, religious, and commercial contact with Egypt, the Red Sea world, and much of the Sudan.

After 1000 C.E. Maqurra and Alwa continued treaty relations with their more powerful northern Egyptian neighbors. However, the Mamluks intervened repeatedly in Nubian affairs, and Arab nomads constantly threatened the Nubian states. Both Maqurra and Alwa were subject to immigrating Muslim Arab tribesmen and to traders and growing Muslim minorities. Long-term intermingling of Arabic and Nubian cultures created a new Nilotic Sudanese people and culture.

A significant factor in the gradual disappearance of Christianity in Nubia was its elite character there and its association with the Egyptian world of Coptic Christianity. Maqurra became officially Muslim at the beginning of the fourteenth century, although Christianity persisted briefly. The Islamization of Alwa came later, under the long-lived Funj sultanate that replaced the Alwa state.

The Funj state flourished between the Blue and White Niles and to the north along the main Nile from just after 1500 until 1762. The Funj were originally cattle nomads who apparently adopted Islam soon after setting up their kingdom. During the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Funj developed an Islamic society whose Arabized character was unique in sub-Saharan Africa. A much reduced Funj state survived until an Ottoman Egyptian invasion in 1821.

WHY DID Christianity gradually disappear in Nubia?

THE FORESTLANDS—COASTAL WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

WEST AFRICAN FOREST KINGDOMS: THE EXAMPLE OF BENIN

Many states with distinct political, religious, and cultural traditions had developed in the southern and coastal regions of West Africa. The forest kingdom of Benin reflects the sophistication of West African culture before 1500; its art, in particular, is renowned for its enduring beauty.

HOW DID the arrival of Europeans affect the peoples of West and central Africa?



QUICK REVIEW

Changing Roles of Edo Kings

- ◆ Edo leaders invited limited rule by Ife prince around 1300
- ◆ King Ewuare developed military and ceremonial authority in fifteenth century
- ◆ Kings became religious figures with supernatural powers in seventeenth century
- ◆ Deceased kings honored by human sacrifice in nineteenth century

oba

Title of the king of Benin.

uzama

An order of hereditary chiefs in Benin.

 **Hear the Audio**
Influences in Africa 2
at myhistorylab.com

The Edo speakers of Benin have occupied the southern Nigerian region between Yorubaland and the Ibo peoples east of the lower Niger for millennia. Traditional Edo society is organized according to a patrilineal system emphasizing primogeniture. The village is the fundamental political unit, and authority is built around the organization of males into age-grade units.⁴

Traditional Edo culture was closely linked to that of Ife, one of the most prominent Yoruba states northwest of Benin. A distinct kingdom of Benin existed as early as the twelfth century, and traditional accounts of both Ife and Edo agree that an Ife prince was sent to rule in Benin around 1300. The power of the *oba*, or king, was sharply limited by the Edo leaders who invited the foreign ruler. These leaders were known as the *uzama*, an order of hereditary chiefs. According to tradition, the fourth *oba* managed to wrest more control from these chiefs and expanded his ceremonial authority. In the fifteenth century, with King Ewuare, Benin became a royal autocracy and a large state of regional importance.

Ewuare rebuilt the capital—known today as Benin City—and named it and his kingdom Edo. He exercised his sweeping authority in light of the deliberations of a royal council. Ewuare formed this council not only from the palace *uzama* but also from the townspeople. He gave each chief specific administrative responsibilities and rank in the government hierarchy. Ewuare and his successors developed a tradition of military kingship and engaged in major wars of expansion, into Yorubaland to the west and Ibo country to the east, across the Niger River. They claimed for the office of *oba* an increasing ritual authority that presaged more radical developments in the king's role.

In the seventeenth century the *oba* was transformed from a military leader into a religious figure with supernatural powers. Human sacrifice, specifically of slaves, seems to have accompanied the cult of deceased kings and became even more frequent later in the nineteenth century. Succession by primogeniture was discontinued, and the *uzama* chose *obas* from any branch of the royal family.

Benin's court art—the splendid terra-cotta, ivory, and especially the famous brass sculpture of Ife-Benin—is among the glories of human creativity. Some scholars trace the artistic and technical lineage of these magnificent works to the sculptures of the Nok culture of ancient West Africa (see Chapter 5). Cast bronze plaques depicting legendary and historical scenes were mounted in the royal palace in Benin City before the sixteenth century. There are also brass heads, apparently of royalty, that resemble the many life-size terra-cotta and brass heads found at Ife. Similar sculptures have been found both to the north and in the Niger Delta.

EUROPEAN ARRIVALS ON THE COASTLANDS: SENEGAMBIA AND THE GOLD COAST

Along the coasts of West and central Africa, between 1500 and 1800, the changes wrought by the burgeoning Atlantic slave trade are notorious (see Chapter 17). But there were other significant developments. The introduction of food crops from the Americas—maize, peanuts, squash, sweet potatoes, cocoa, and cassava (manioc)—had far-reaching impacts. Africa's gradual involvement in the emerging global economic system paved the way for European colonial domination. The European names for segments of the coastline—the Grain (or Pepper) Coast, the Ivory Coast, the Gold Coast, and the Slave Coast—identify the main exports that could be extracted by ship.

CHRONOLOGY

BENIN

ca. 1100–1897	Benin state
ca. 1300	First Ife king of Benin state
1440–1475	Reign of Ewuare

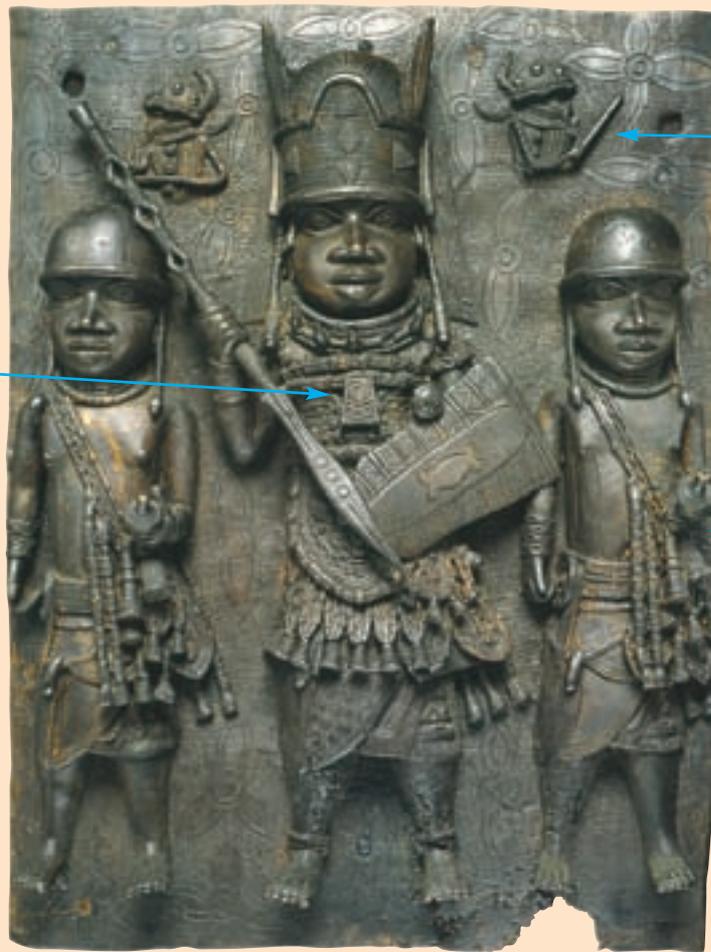
⁴A. F. C. Ryder, *Benin and the Europeans, 1485–1897* (New York: Longman, 1969), p. 1. Ryder's work is a basic reference for the following brief summary about Benin.

A Closer Look

Benin Bronze Plaque with Chief and Two Attendants

BENIN ARTISTS AND ARTISANS produced spectacular sculptures from the late thirteenth century until the coming of the British in 1897. Their figures typically have the head-to-body proportions of this example, about one to four—perhaps emphasizing the head’s importance as a marker of identity and behavior and a symbol of life. The details of the clothing might have been “readable” as to the wearer’s rank and family. The stylized faces are typical of Benin bronzes (often actually of brass); dating the piece is hard, but given the two small European figures depicted in the upper field and the sophisticated detail, it is most likely sixteenth or seventeenth century.

The royal figure here has an elaborate headdress with two feathers on top and pendant plumes behind; two bead necklaces, one with leopard teeth mixed in; armlets and anklets; a loincloth; a leopard skin with fringe; a quadrangular bell on a double necklace; a spear with leaf-shaped blade; and an ornamented shield.



Two European figures, possibly Portuguese, are shown from the waist up; both have long moustaches, clublike weapons, plumed helmets, neck ruffs, and armor.

The two royal attendants are carrying round fans, wearing helmets, and adorned like the king with bracelets.

Benin Plaque. Brass. Lost wax. W. Africa 16th–17th century c.E. Hillel Burger/Peabody Museum, Harvard University © President and Fellows of Harvard College. All rights reserved.

Questions

1. The sophisticated Benin bronze artistry allowed for highly detailed sculpture that, for all its stylization, captured its subjects vividly and in great detail. What do you make of the differences between the depictions of the Benin Africans and the two European figures?
2. It has been speculated that this was a piece of court art and the depiction of the royal figure and attendants was intended to exalt royal power and prestige. Do you see evidence of this? If so, what is the evidence?



To examine this image in an interactive fashion, please go to www.myhistorylab.com



Ife figure, ca. twelfth – fifteenth centuries c.e. The serene classicism of Ife art is equaled only by that of ancient Greece.

What other artistic traditions seem to be linked to Ife?

In West Africa, Senegambia—which takes its name from the Senegal and Gambia rivers—was one of the earliest regions affected by European trade. Senegambia’s maritime trade with European powers, like the older overland trade from the interior, was primarily in gold and products such as salt, cotton goods, hides, and copper. For roughly a century Senegambian states also provided slaves for European purchase; perhaps a third of all African slaves exported during the sixteenth century came from Senegambia. Thereafter, however, the focus of the slave trade shifted south and east along the coast (see Chapter 17). Over time, Portuguese-Africans and the British came to control the Gambia River trade, while the French won the Senegal River markets.

The Gold Coast was another West African coastal district heavily affected by the arrival of international maritime trade. As the name suggests, after 1500 the region served as the outlet for the gold fields in the forestland of Akan. Beginning with the Portuguese at Elmina in 1481, but primarily after 1600, European states and companies built coastal forts to protect their trade and to serve as depots for inland goods. The trade in gold, kola nuts, and other commodities seems to have encouraged the growth of larger states, perhaps because they could better handle and control the overland commerce.

The intensive contact of the Gold Coast with Europeans also led to the importation and spread of American crops, notably maize and cassava. The success of these crops in West and central Africa likely contributed to substantial population growth in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Gold Coast was an importer of slaves until long after 1500. Slaves became major exports in the late seventeenth century, especially in the Accra region. The economy was so disrupted by the slave trade that gold mining declined sharply. Eventually more gold came into the Gold Coast from the sale of slaves than went out from its mines (see Chapter 17).

CENTRAL AFRICA: THE KONGO KINGDOM AND ANGOLA

Before 1500 natural barriers—including swamps in the north, coastal rain forests to the west, highlands to the east, and deserts in the south—impeded international contact and trade with the vast center of the continent. In tropical central Africa, there had long been regional interactions in movements of peoples and in trade and culture (see Chapter 5). Political, economic, and social units varied in size; peoples such as the Lunda and the Luba, on the southern savannah below the rain forest, carved out sizable kingdoms by the fifteenth century and expanded their control over neighboring areas into the eighteenth century.

The Portuguese came to the western coastal regions looking for gold and silver but found none. Ultimately, their main export was slaves. At first, slaves were taken for gang labor to the Portuguese sugar plantations on Sao Tomé island in the Gulf of Guinea and

then, in vast numbers, to perform similar plantation labor in Brazil. In the 1640s the Dutch briefly succeeded the Portuguese as the major suppliers of African slaves to English and French plantations in the Caribbean.

The Kongo Kingdom was located on a fertile, well-watered plateau south of the lower Zaïre River valley. Astride the border between forest and grassland, the Kongo kings had built a central government based on a pyramid structure of tax or tribute collection, dating from the fourteenth century. The king’s authority was tied to his role as a spiritual spokesman for the

CHRONOLOGY

CENTRAL AFRICA

1300s	Kongo Kingdom founded
1483	Portuguese come to central African coast
ca. 1506–1543	Reign of Affonso I as king of Kongo
1571	Angola becomes Portuguese proprietary colony

gods or ancestors. By 1600 Kongo was half the size of England and boasted a high state of specialization in weaving and pottery, salt production, fishing, and metalworking.

When the Portuguese came to central Africa in 1483, Kongo was the major state with which they dealt. The Portuguese brought Mediterranean goods, preeminently luxury textiles from North Africa, to trade; slaves became the primary export. Although imported luxuries augmented the prestige and wealth of the ruler and his elites, they did nothing to replace the labor pool lost to slavery. At first the Portuguese put time and effort into education and Christian proselytizing, but the desire for more slaves eventually outweighed these concerns. As demand grew, local rulers increasingly attacked neighbors to garner slaves for Portuguese traders (see Chapter 17).

The Kongo ruler Affonso I (r. ca. 1506–1543) was a Christian convert who initially welcomed Jesuit missionaries and supported conversion. But in time he broke with the Jesuits. Affonso had constant difficulty curbing the more exploitative slaving practices and independent-minded provincial governors, who undermined royal authority by dealing directly with the Portuguese. Affonso's successor finally restricted Portuguese activity to Mpinda harbor and the Kongo capital of Mbanza Kongo (São Salvador). A few years later, Portuguese attempts to name the Kongo royal successor caused a bloody uprising against them that led in turn to a Portuguese boycott on trade with the kingdom.

Thereafter, disastrous internal wars shattered the Kongo state. Slavery contributed to provincial unrest. Independent Portuguese traders and adventurers soon did their business outside government channels and tried to manipulate the Kongo kings.

Kongo, however, enjoyed renewed vigor in the seventeenth century. The Kongo kings ruled as divine-right monarchs at the apex of a complex sociopolitical pyramid. Royal power came to depend on hired soldiers armed with muskets. The financial base of the kingdom rested on tribute from officials and taxes and tolls on commerce. Christianity, the state religion, was accommodated to traditional beliefs. Sculpture, iron and copper technology, dance, and music flourished.

To the south, in Portuguese Angola, the experience was even worse than in Kongo. The Ndongo Kingdom flourished among the Mbundu people during the sixteenth century, though the Portuguese controlled parts of Angola as a proprietary colony (the first white colonial enterprise in black Africa). By the end of the 1500s Angola was exporting thousands of slaves yearly through the port of Luanda. In less than a century the hinterland had been depopulated. New internal trade in salt and the spread of American food crops such as maize and cassava (which became part of the staple diet of the populace) produced some positive changes in the interior, but in the coastal region the Portuguese brought catastrophe.



Queen Nzinga of Ndongo, who ruled from 1615 to 1660. This contemporary engraving shows her negotiating a treaty with the Portuguese. She is seated on the back of a slave.

Who seems to have the most power in this scene?

 **Read the Document**

Voyage from Lisbon
at myhistorylab.com

 **View the Image**

Loango, the Capital of the Kingdom
of the Congo at myhistorylab.com

EAST AFRICA

SWAHILI CULTURE AND COMMERCE

The participation of East African port towns in the lucrative South Seas trade was ancient. Arabs, Indonesians, and even some Indians had been absorbed into what had become, during the first millennium C.E., a predominantly Bantu-speaking population from Somalia south. From the eighth century onward Islam traveled with Arab and Persian sailors and merchants to these southerly trading centers of what the Arabs called the land of the *Zanj*, or “Blacks” (hence “Zanzibar”). Conversion to Islam, however, occurred only along the coast. In the thirteenth century Muslim traders

HOW DID Swahili
language and culture
develop?



 **Read the Document**

Descriptions of the cities of Zanj
at myhistorylab.com

Swahili

A language and culture that developed from the interaction of Africans and Arabs along the East African coast.

QUICK REVIEW

East African Port Towns

- ◆ Part of trade with Middle East, Asia, and India
- ◆ Tied together by common language, Swahili
- ◆ Swahili civilization reached its peak in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries



The Malindi Mosque on Zanzibar Island is an example of Islamic influence in Swahili culture.

What are some other examples of Islamic influence on Swahili culture?

Moors

The Spanish and Portuguese term for Muslims.

from Arabia and Iran began to dominate coastal cities from Mogadishu to Kilwa. By 1331 the traveler Ibn Battuta wrote of Islamic rulers, inhabitants, and mosques all along the coast.⁵

A shared language called **Swahili**, or Kiswahili (from the Arabic plural *sawahil*, “coastlands”), developed along the coast. Its structure is Bantu; its vocabulary is largely Bantu but incorporates many words with Arabic roots; it is written in Arabic script. Like the language, Swahili culture is basically African with a large contribution by Arab, Persian, and other extra-African elements. This admixture created a new consciousness and identity. Today, many coastal peoples who share the Swahili language join African to Persian, Indian, Arab, and other ancestries.

Like the Swahili language and culture, the spread of Islam was largely limited to the coastal civilization, with the possible exception of the Zambezi valley, where Muslim traders penetrated upriver. This contrasts with the Horn of Africa, where Islamic kingdoms developed both in the Somali hinterland and on the coast.

Swahili civilization reached its apogee in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The harbor trading towns were the administrative centers of the local Swahili states, and most of them were sited on coastal islands or easily defended peninsulas. Merchants came from abroad and from the African hinterlands. These towns were impressive, with stone mosques, fortress-palaces, harbor fortifications, fancy residences, and commercial buildings combining African and Arabo-Persian elements.

The Swahili states’ ruling dynasties were probably African in origin, though elite families often included Arab or Persian members. Swahili coastal centers boasted an advanced, cosmopolitan culture; by comparison, most of the populace in the small villages lived in mud or sometimes stone houses and earned their living farming or fishing. Society seems to have consisted of three principal groups: the local nobility, the commoners, and resident foreigners engaged in commerce. Slaves constituted a fourth class, although their local extent (as opposed to their sale) is disputed.

The flourishing trade of the coastal centers was based on ivory taken from inland elephants. Other exports included gold, slaves, turtle shells, ambergris, leopard skins, pearls, fish, sandalwood, ebony, and cotton cloth. The chief imports were cloth, porcelain, glassware, glass beads, and glazed pottery. Cowrie shells were a common currency in the inland trade, but coins minted at Mogadishu and Kilwa from the fourteenth century on were increasingly used in the trading centers.

THE PORTUGUESE AND THE OMANIS OF ZANZIBAR

The original Swahili civilization declined in the sixteenth century. Trade waned with the arrival of the Portuguese, who destroyed both the Islamic commercial monopoly on the oceanic trade and the main Islamic city-states along the coast. Decreases in rainfall or invasions of Zimba peoples from inland regions may also have contributed to the decline.

The Portuguese undoubtedly intended to gain control of the South Seas trade (see Chapter 17). In Africa, as everywhere, they saw the **Moors** (the Spanish and Portuguese term for Muslims) as their implacable enemies; they viewed the struggle to wrest the commerce and the ports of Africa and Asia from Islamic control as a Christian crusade.

⁵*Travels in Asia and Africa, 1325–1354*, trans. and selected by H. A. R. Gibb (New York: Robert M. McBride, 1929), pp. 110–113.

After the initial Portuguese victories along the African coast, there was no concerted effort to spread Christianity beyond fortified coastal settlements. Thus the long-term cultural and religious consequences of the Portuguese presence were slight. The Portuguese did, however, cause widespread economic decline. Inland Africans refused to cooperate with them, and Muslim coastal shipping from India and Arabia was reduced sharply. Ottoman efforts in the late sixteenth century failed to defeat the Portuguese, but after 1660 the strong eastern Arabian state of Oman raided the African coast with impunity. In 1698 the Omanis took Mombasa and ejected the Portuguese everywhere north of Mozambique.

Under the Omanis, Zanzibar became a new and major power center in East Africa. Control of the coastal ivory and slave trade fueled prosperity by the later eighteenth century. Zanzibar itself benefited from the introduction of clove cultivation in the 1830s; cloves became its staple export. (The clove plantations also became the chief market for a new internal slave trade.) Omani African sultans dominated the east coast until 1856, when Zanzibar and its coastal holdings became independent under a branch of the same family that ruled in Oman. Zanzibar passed eventually to the British in the late 1880s. Still, the Islamic imprint on the coast survives today.

CHRONOLOGY

EAST AND SOUTHEAST AFRICA

900–1500	“Great Zimbabwe” civilization
ca. 1200–1400	Development of Bantu Kiswahili language
ca. 1300–1600	Height of Swahili culture
1698	Omani forces take Mombasa, oust Portuguese from East Africa north of the port of Mozambique
1741–1856	United sultanate of Oman and Zanzibar

SOUTHERN AFRICA

SOUTHEASTERN AFRICA: “GREAT ZIMBABWE”

About the same time that the east coast trading centers were beginning to flourish, a different kind of civilization was thriving farther south, in the rocky, savannah-woodland watershed between the Limpopo and Zambezi rivers (now southern Zimbabwe). This civilization was sited far enough inland never to have felt the impact of Islam. It was founded in the tenth or eleventh century by Bantu-speaking Shona people, and it became a large and prosperous state between the late thirteenth and late fifteenth centuries. We know it only through the archaeological remains of approximately 150 settlements.

The most impressive of these ruins is the apparent capital known today as “Great Zimbabwe,” a huge site encompassing two major building complexes. One, called the acropolis, is a series of stone enclosures on a high hill. It overlooks a larger enclosure that contains many ruins and a circular tower, all surrounded by a massive wall some 32 feet high and up to 17 feet thick. The acropolis complex may have contained a shrine, whereas the larger enclosure was apparently the royal palace and fort. The stonework reflects a



HOW DID slavery affect race relations in Cape Colony?

 **See the Map**

African Climate Zones and Bantu Migration Routes, ca. 3000 B.C.E. at myhistorylab.com

Great Zimbabwe. Ruins of the Conical Tower inside the Great Enclosure at Great Zimbabwe.

What were some probable sources of Great Zimbabwe's power?

**prazeros**

Portuguese and mixed-race owners of large estates in the Zambezi valley.



Carving from Great Zimbabwe. This soapstone carving of a bird comprises the top portion of a monolith from Great Zimbabwe, c. 1200 – 1400 c.e. [H: Bird—14 1/2" (36.8 cm); H: Monolith—5' 4 1/2" (1.64 m).] Stone-carved birds are national emblems in Zimbabwe and were commonly found on walls and monoliths dating back to Great Zimbabwe in the eleventh century.

What is known about the culture at Great Zimbabwe?

wealthy and sophisticated society. Artifacts from the site include gold and copper ornaments, soapstone carvings, and imported beads, as well as glass and porcelain of Chinese, Syrian, and Persian origins.

The state seems to have partially controlled the gold trade between inland areas and the east coast port of Sofala. Its territory lay east and south of substantial gold-mining enterprises. This large settlement was probably home to the ruling elite of a prosperous empire. Its wider domain was made up mostly of smaller settlements whose inhabitants lived by subsistence agriculture and cattle raising.

Earlier Iron Age sites farther south suggest that other large state entities may have preceded Great Zimbabwe. The specific impetus for Great Zimbabwe may have been a significant immigration around 1000 c.e. of Late Iron Age Shona speakers who brought with them mining techniques and farming innovations, along with their ancestor cults. Improved farming and animal husbandry could have led to substantial population growth. The expanding gold trade linked the flourishing of Zimbabwe to that of the East African coast from about the thirteenth century.

We may never know why this impressive civilization declined after dominating its region for nearly 200 years. It appears that the northern and southern sectors of the state split up, and people moved away from Great Zimbabwe, probably because the farming and grazing land there was exhausted. The southern successor kingdom, Changamire, was powerful from the late 1600s until about 1830. The northern successor state, which stretched along the Zambezi, was known to the first Portuguese sources as the kingdom ruled by the Mwene Mutapa, or "Master Pillager," the title of its sixteenth-century ruler, Mutota, and his successors.

THE PORTUGUESE IN SOUTHEASTERN AFRICA

Portuguese attempts to obtain gold from the Zambezi region of the interior by controlling trade on the Swahili coast were failures. The Portuguese then established fortified posts up the Zambezi and meddled in Shona politics. In the 1690s the Changamire Shona Dynasty conquered the northern Shona territory and pushed the Portuguese out of gold country.

All along the Zambezi, a lasting consequence of Portuguese intrusion was the creation of quasi-tribal chiefdoms. These were led by *prazeros*, interracial descendants of the area's first Portuguese estate holders, Africans, and Indian immigrants. By the end of the eighteenth century, they formed a few clanlike groups that controlled vast landholdings and commanded armies, often made up largely of slaves. They functioned as warlords, too strong for either the Portuguese or the regional African rulers to control.

SOUTH AFRICA: THE CAPE COLONY

In South Africa the Dutch planted European colonials almost inadvertently, yet the consequences were far-reaching. The first Cape settlement was built in 1652 by the Dutch East India Company as a resupply point for Dutch vessels traveling between the Netherlands and the East Indies. The support station grew gradually, becoming by century's end a large settler community (the population of the colony in 1662, including slaves, was 392; by 1714 it had reached 3,878).⁶ These settlers were the forebears of the Afrikaners of modern South Africa.

Local Khoikhoi people were gradually incorporated into the colonial economy. The Khoikhoi (see Chapter 5) were mostly pastoralists; they had neither traditions of strong political organization nor an economic base beyond their herds. At first they freely bartered livestock for iron, copper, and tobacco. However, when settlers began to

⁶R. Elphick and H. Giliomee, *The Shaping of South African Society, 1652–1820* (Cape Town: Longman, 1979), p. 4.

displace the Khoikhoi in the southwestern Cape, conflicts ensued. The results were the consolidation of European landholdings and a breakdown of Khoikhoi society. Dutch military success led to even greater control over the Khoikhoi by the 1670s. Treated as free persons, they became the chief source of colonial wage labor—labor that was in ever greater demand as the colony grew.

The colony also imported slaves from all along the South Seas trade routes, including India, East Africa, and Madagascar. Slavery set the tone for relations between the emergent, and ostensibly “white,” Afrikaner population and the “coloreds” of other races. Free or not, the latter were eventually all too easily identified with slave peoples.

After the first settlers spread out around the company station, nomadic white livestock farmers, or **Trekboers**, moved more widely afield, leaving the richer but limited farming lands of the coast for the drier interior tableland.

There they contested wider groups of Khoikhoi cattle herders for the best grazing lands. The Trekboers developed military techniques—notably the “commando,” a collective civilian raid—to secure their way of life by force. Again the Khoikhoi were the losers. By 1700 they were stripped almost completely of their own pasturages, and their way of life was destroyed. Increasing numbers of Khoikhoi took up employment in the colonial economy. Others moved north to join with other refugees from Cape society (slaves, mixed bloods, and some freedmen) to form raiding bands operating along the frontiers of Trekboer territory close to the Orange River. The disintegration of Khoikhoi society continued in the eighteenth century, accelerated sharply by smallpox—a European import against which this previously isolated group had no immunity.

Cape society in this period was diverse. The Dutch East India Company officials (including Dutch Reformed ministers), the emerging Afrikaners (both settled colonists and Trekboers), the Khoikhoi, and the slaves played differing roles. Inter marriage and cohabitation of masters and slaves added to the social complexity, despite laws designed to check such mixing. Accommodation of nonwhite minority groups within Cape society proceeded; the emergence of **Afrikaans**, a new vernacular language of the colonials, shows that the Dutch immigrants themselves were subject to acculturation. By the time of English domination after 1795, the sociopolitical foundations of modern South Africa—and the bases of **apartheid**—were firmly laid.



Early European View of Khoikhoi. This seventeenth-century illustration of Khoikhoi reflects a European view of daily life near the Cape of Good Hope.

What economic role did the Khoikhoi play in the Cape Colony?

Trekboers

White livestock farmers in Cape Colony.

Afrikaans

The new language, derived from Dutch, that evolved in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Cape Colony.

apartheid

“Apartness,” the term referring to racist policies enforced by the white-dominated regime that existed in South Africa from 1948 to 1992.

SUMMARY

HOW DID the Ottomans govern North Africa and Egypt?

North Africa and Egypt. Developments in African history from 1000 to 1700 varied from region to region. In North Africa, the key new factor was the imperial expansion of the Ottoman Empire as far west as Morocco. But the development of independent regional rulers soon rendered Ottoman authority in North Africa purely nominal. *page 338*

HOW DID Islam spread south of the Sahara?

The Spread of Islam South of the Sahara. Islam was introduced between the eighth century and 1800. In most cases, the process was slow, peaceful, and partial; ruling elites and traders were more likely to practice Islam, whereas most commoners followed traditional practices. *page 339*

WHAT WERE the four most important states in the Sahel between 1000 and 1600?

Sahelian Empires of the Western and Central Sudan. Several substantial states arose south of the Sahara: Ghana, Mali, Songhai, and Kanem. The ruling elites of these states converted to or were heavily influenced by Islam, although most of their populations practiced local religions or engaged in syncretism. Much of the wealth of these states was tied to their control of the trans-Saharan trade routes. *page 340*

WHY DID Christianity gradually disappear in Nubia?

The Eastern Sudan. The Nubian Christian states of Maqurra and Alwa were gradually Islamized. *page 347*

HOW DID the arrival of Europeans affect the peoples of West and central Africa?

The Forestlands: Coastal West and Central Africa. In the coastal forestlands of West Africa, a substantial kingdom arose in Benin, famous for its brass sculptures. Senegambia and the Gold Coast were influenced by contact with European traders and the introduction of food crops from the Americas. Social, political, and economic structures in Kongo and Angola were disrupted by Portuguese slave trading. *page 347*

HOW DID Swahili language and culture develop?

East Africa. On the east coast, Islam influenced the development of the distinctive Swahili culture and language, and Islamic traders linked the region to India and East Asia. Omanis gained control of Zanzibar. *page 351*

HOW DID slavery affect race relations in Cape Colony?

Southern Africa. The ruins at Great Zimbabwe leave many questions unanswered. The Portuguese followed the Zambezi to the gold fields that fed the trade at the Swahili coast, but they were unable to profit much. In southernmost Africa, Trekboers displaced Khoikhoi. The Trekboers imported slaves from India and other parts of Africa, and soon the master–slave relationship became their model for all interactions with nonwhites. *page 353*

KEY TERMS

Afrikaans (AF-rih-KAHNS) (p. 355)	muezzin (myoo-EHZ-ihn) (p. 341)
apartheid (a-PART-HAYT) (p. 355)	oba (OH-bah) (p. 348)
Dar al-Islam (DAR-ahl-his-LAHM) (p. 338)	prazeros (p. 354)
Maghreb (MUHG-RUHB) (p. 338)	Sharifs (shuh-REEFS) (p. 338)
mansa (MAHN-SAH) (p. 343)	shaykh (SHAYK) (p. 346)
marabouts (MAYR-uh-BOOZ) (p. 345)	Swahili (swah-HEE-lee) (p. 352)
Moors (p. 352)	Trekboers (TREHK-BORZ) (p. 355)
	uzama (p. 348)

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why did Islam succeed in the Sudanic belt and East Africa? What role did warfare play in its success? What role did trade have in it?
2. What is the importance of the empires of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai to world history? Why was the control of the trans-Saharan trade so important to these kingdoms? What was the importance of Islamic culture to them? Why did each of these empires break up?
3. What was the impact of the introduction of food crops from the Americas on various regions of Africa during this period?
4. How did Swahili culture form? Describe its defining characteristics. Why has its impact on the East African coast endured?
5. What was the impact of the Portuguese on East Africa and central Africa? How did European coastal activities affect the African interior?
6. Why did Ottoman influence decline in northern Africa in the eighteenth century?
7. How did the Portuguese and Dutch differ from or resemble the Arabs and other Muslims who came as outsiders to sub-Saharan Africa?
8. What is known about Great Zimbabwe? What questions remain? How might the remaining questions be answered?
9. Discuss the diversity of Cape society in South Africa before 1700. Who were the Trekboers, and what was their conflict with the Khoikhoi? How was the basis for apartheid formed in this period?

Note: To learn more about the topics in this chapter, please turn to the Suggested Readings at the end of the book. For additional sources related to this chapter please see www.myhistorylab.com

myhistorylab Connections

Reinforce what you learned in this chapter by studying the many documents, images, maps, review tools, and videos available at www.myhistorylab.com

Read and Review

✓ • **Study and Review** Chapter 14

• **Read the Document** *Excerpts from Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali, 1235, p. 342*
The Travels of Ibn Battuta "Ibn Battuta in Mali," p. 343
Al-Umari describes Mansa Musa of Mali, p. 343
Voyage from Lisbon, p. 351
Descriptions of the cities of Zanj, p. 352

• **See the Map** *Trade Routes in Africa, p. 338*
Discovery: The Maghrib and West Africa, Fourteenth Century, p. 338
East African Coast to 1600, p. 339
African Empires in the Western Sudan, p. 345
African Climate Zones and Bantu Migration Routes, ca. 3000 B.C.E., p. 353

• **View the Image** *Loango, the Capital of the Kingdom of the Congo, p. 351*

• **Hear the Audio** *Influences in Africa 2, p. 339*
Influences in Africa 2, p. 348

Research and Explore

• **Watch the Video** *Piracy, p. 338*



• **Watch the Video** *West African States*



• **Hear the Audio**

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