

UNIT 3 -CHAPTER 9: THE ISLAMIC WORLD AND AFRICA



INTRODUCTION

- ✘ In this chapter you will learn about developments in the Middle East and Africa during the post-classical era.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- ✘ What are the major beliefs of Islam?
- ✘ What were the political, economic, and social effects of the spread of Islamic culture?
- ✘ What were the major civilizations of Africa in this period?

KEY VOCABULARY

- ✘ Islam
- ✘ Arabian Peninsula
- ✘ Mohammed
- ✘ Quran (Koran)
- ✘ Five Pillars of Islam
- ✘ Sunni/Shiite Muslims
- ✘ Savanna
- ✘ Gold-Salt Trade
- ✘ Ghana, Mali, Songhai
- ✘ Mansa Musa
- ✘ Timbuktu
- ✘ Ibn Battuta

IMPORTANT IDEAS

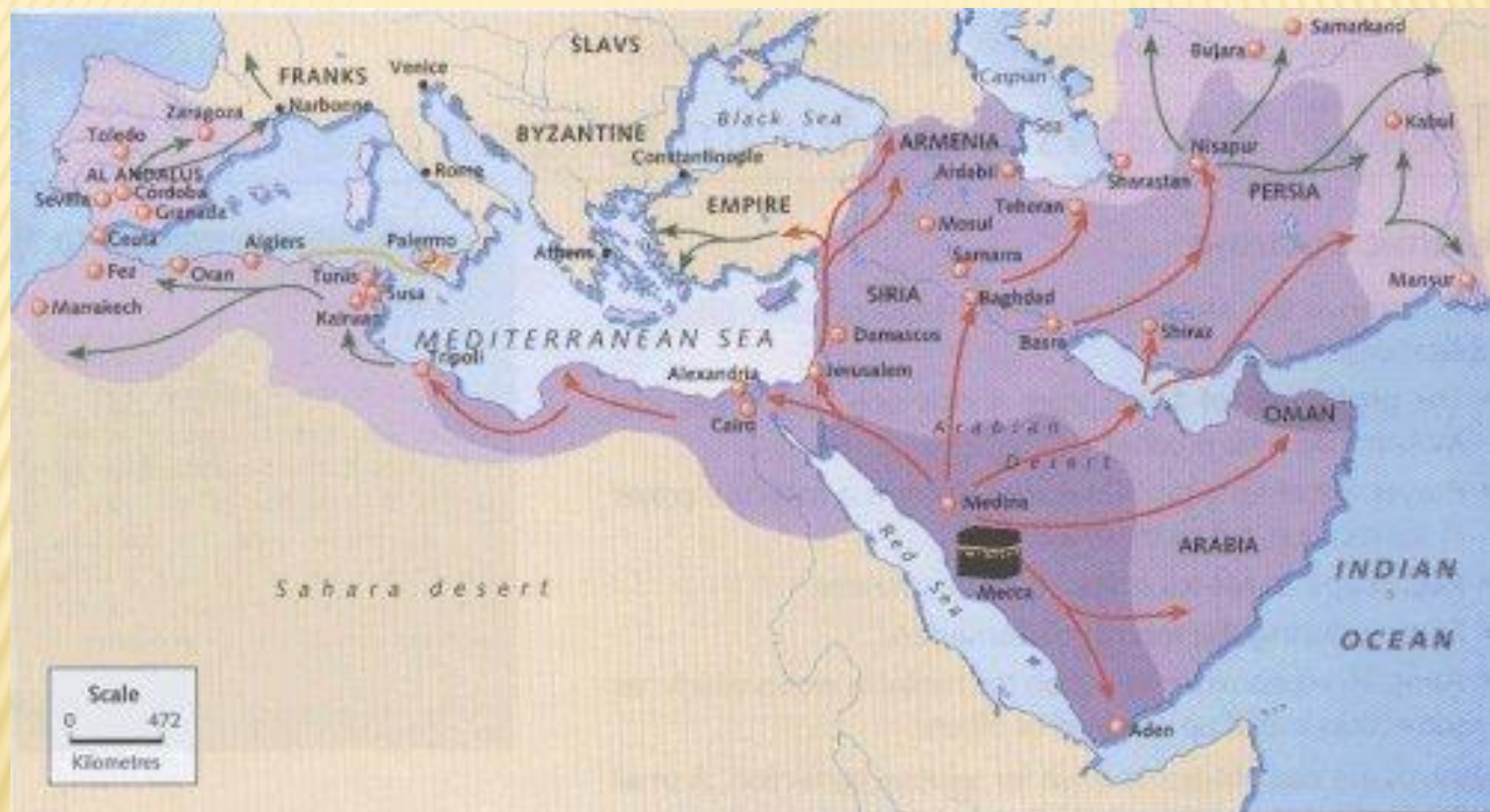
- A. Mohammed founded Islam on the Arabian Peninsula in the seventh century.
- B. The Quran (Koran) is the sacred book of Islam. It records the teachings of Mohammed.
- C. Muslims follow the Five Pillars of Islam: faith in one God, prayer, charity, fasting, and making a pilgrimage to Mecca.
- D. Islam rapidly spread through the Middle East, North Africa, and Spain. Islamic Culture flourished under the caliphates. Islamic scholars made important contributions to mathematics, science, and architecture.

IMPORTANT IDEAS

- E. The gold-salt trade exchanged salt from the Sahara Desert with gold found in West Africa.
- F. The gold-salt trade encouraged the growth of a series of prosperous kingdoms in West Africa: Ghana, Mali, and Songhai.
- G. Other civilizations also flourished in Africa, including Ife, Benin, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, and the cities of East Africa.
- H. The use of captives as slaves, a practice common in the ancient world, encouraged later development of the slave trade.

1. THE RISE OF ISLAM

- ✘ In the fifth century, warfare between the Byzantine and Persian Empires interrupted overland trade routes from East Asia. Trade in spices, Chinese silks, and Indian cottons shifted to the sea routes connecting India with Arabia and the Red Sea. Overland caravans carried goods up the western coast of the Arabian Peninsula. Cities and towns developed near wells along these caravan routes. Mecca was one of the most important of these cities. In the seventh century, a new religion emerged: Islam. “Islam” is Arabic for “submission.” Within a hundred years, Islam grew to control an area larger than the Roman Empire.



THE EXPANSION OF ISLAM

- | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|--|-------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
|  | Conquests at Muhammad's death |  | Conquests during the Umayyad caliphate |  | Expansion of the Orthodox caliphate |  | Expansion of the Abbasid caliphate |
|  | Conquests during the Orthodox caliphate |  | Abbasids |  | Expansion of the Umayyad caliphate |  | Main cities and caliphates |

MOHAMMED: THE PROPHET OF ISLAM

- ✘ Islam was founded by Mohammed. Born in 570, he worked in Mecca as a merchant and a shepherd. He had a religious nature and often meditated in a nearby cave. One day, Mohammed had a vision that the Angel Gabriel commanded him to convert the Arab tribes, who then believed in many gods, to believe in a single God, known in Arabic as “Allah.”

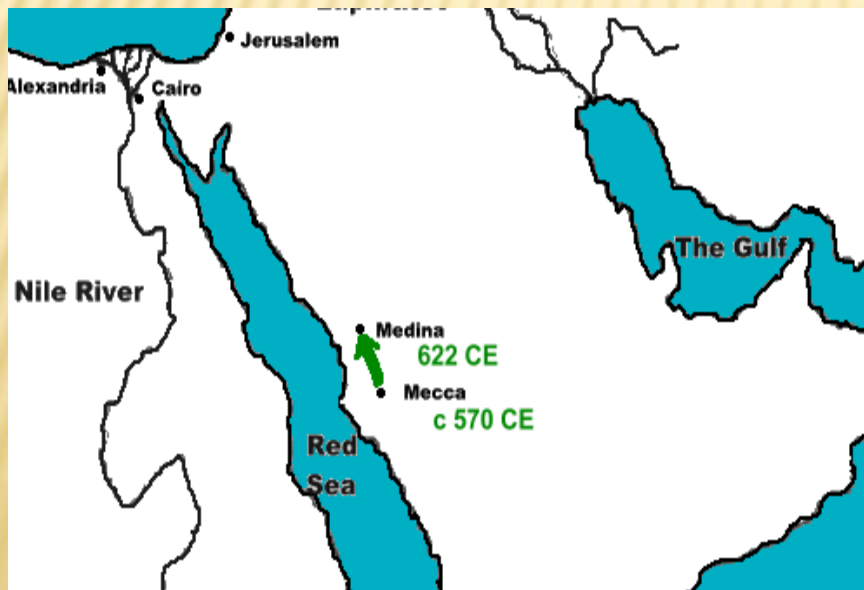


MOHAMMED: THE PROPHET OF ISLAM

- ✘ This Allah was the same God worshipped by Jews and Christians. After this vision, Mohammed started to preach belief in Allah to his neighbors in Mecca.

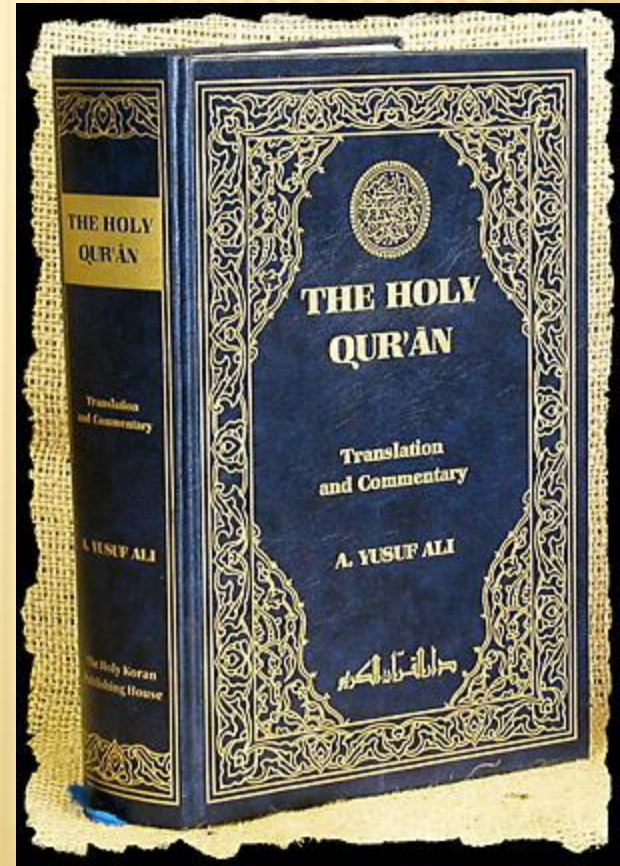
MOHAMMED: THE PROPHET OF ISLAM

- ✘ Some merchants in Mecca grew envious of Mohammed's growing influence. Fearing for his life, Mohammed fled to the city of Medina in 622. This event, known as the Hegira, marks the starting point of the Muslim calendar. In Medina, Mohammed became a popular religious leader. He gathered an army to retake Mecca in a jihad or "holy war." In 632, two years after recapturing Mecca, Mohammed became ill and died. By the time of his death, most of the tribes of the Arabian Peninsula had united and converted to Islam.



THE QURAN (KORAN)

✘ The Quran (Koran) is the sacred text of Islam. Muslims believe it records the words revealed to Mohammed by God. Mohammed memorized these words and taught them to his followers. Then scribes wrote these words down in the Quran. The Quran contains many references to both Jews and Christians. Its 114 chapters also discuss forms of worship, proper conduct, and the treatment of women, along with many other matters. The fundamental doctrine of the Quran is contained in two articles of belief: “there is no God but Allah; and Mohammed is his prophet.”



ACTING AS AN AMATEUR HISTORIAN



What follows is the opening chapter of the Quran, which expresses its central message. This passage is usually recited at the start of every prayer.

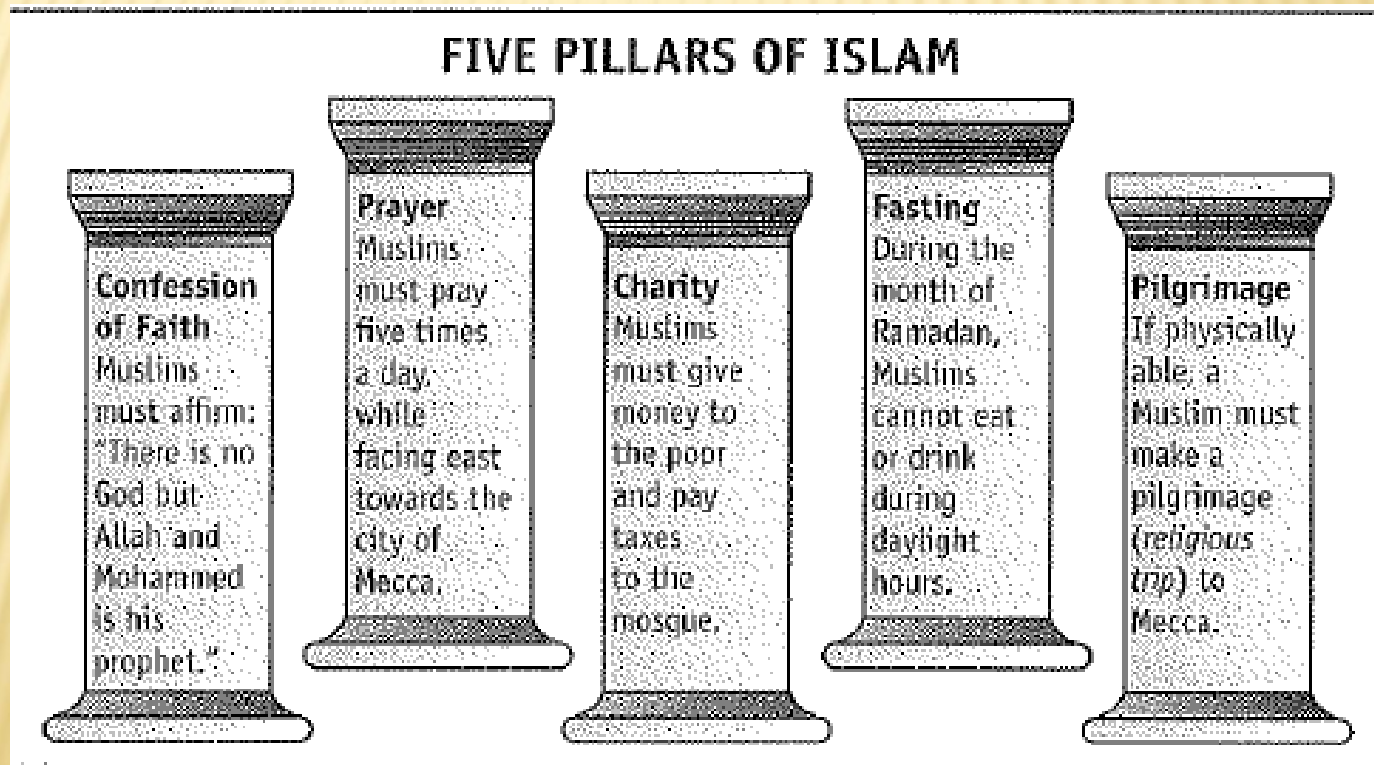
FIRST CHAPTER OF THE HOLY QURAN

"In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Praise be to God, The Cherisher and Sustainer of the Worlds; Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Master of the Day of Judgment. You alone we worship. You alone we ask for help. Guide us in the right path; the path of those whom You blessed; not of those who have deserved wrath, nor of those who go astray." (1:1-7)

Often language from the past is hard to understand, especially in religious texts. In your own words, what do you think this opening passage says?

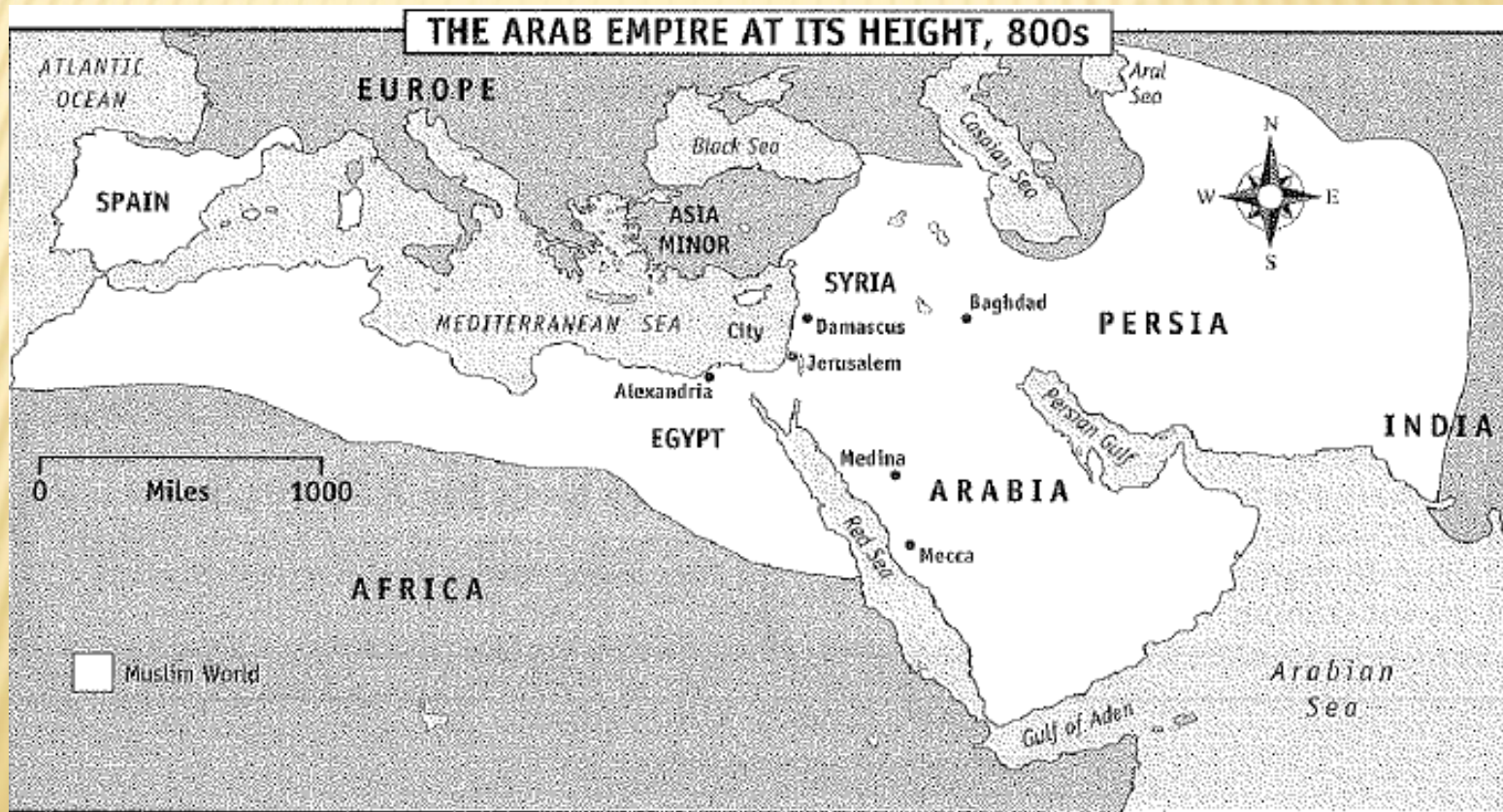
THE FIVE PILLARS OF ISLAM

- ✘ In contrast to some religions, Muslims worship God directly without the intercession of a priest or clergy. The Five Pillars of Islam – faith in one God (monotheism), prayer, charity, fasting, and pilgrimage – make up the basic religious duties that all Muslims must fulfill. In doing so, Muslims strengthen their faith in and service to Allah, whom they see as the supreme, all-powerful and all-knowing God.



THE ISLAMIC RELIGION SPREADS

- ✗ Islam united the various Arab tribes with a common language (Arabic) and religion. Strengthened by their newfound unity, they set out on a “holy war” against non-believers. The Arabs were experienced desert fighters who fought with enthusiasm to gain entry into Heaven.

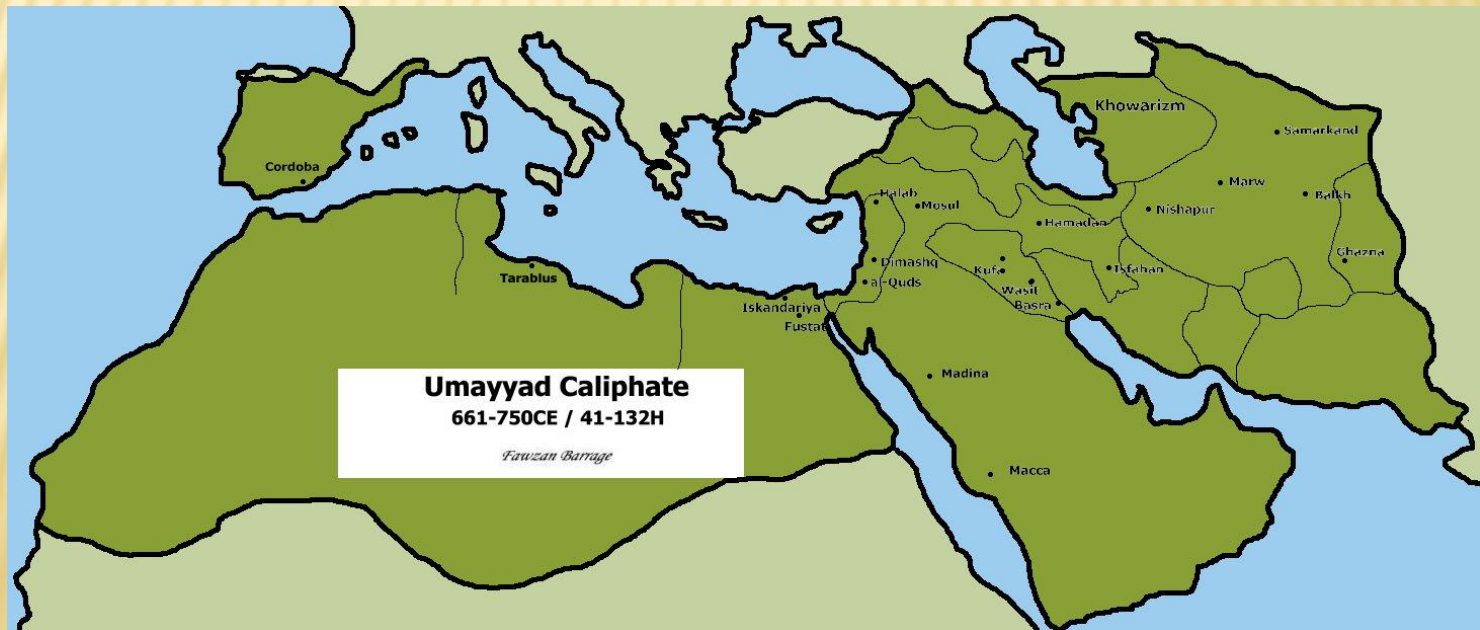


THE ISLAMIC RELIGION SPREADS

- ✘ In contrast, by this time the Byzantines and Persians were both weakened from centuries of fighting each other. Over the next century, Arab Muslims succeeded in creating a vast empire that extended from the Indus valley into Europe as far west as Spain. Muslim expansion in Europe was only halted at the Battle of Tours.

THE CALIPHATES

- ✘ When Mohammed died, a group of Muslim leaders chose a new leader, whom they called the caliph, or “successor to Mohammed.” Two of the early caliphs were murdered. A new caliph then founded the Umayyad Caliphate. Most Muslims, known as Sunnis, followed the new caliph. A small group of Shiite Muslims decided that only Mohammed’s descendants could be caliphs. The division between Sunnis and Shiites remains to this day.





THE CALIPHATES

- ✘ Under the Umayyad caliphs, the capital of the Arab Empire was moved to Damascus (in present-day Syria). After 750, a new family, the Abbasids, took over the caliphate. The Abbasids focused on trade rather than war, and built a new capital at Baghdad (in present-day Iraq). The Abbasid caliph governed as an absolute ruler and surrounded himself with a rich court.

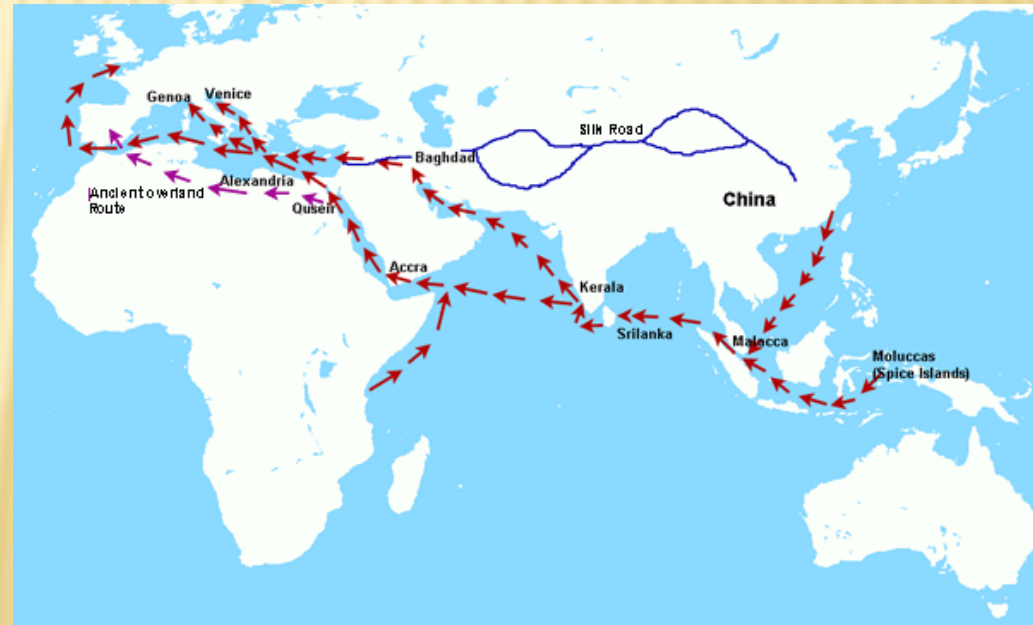
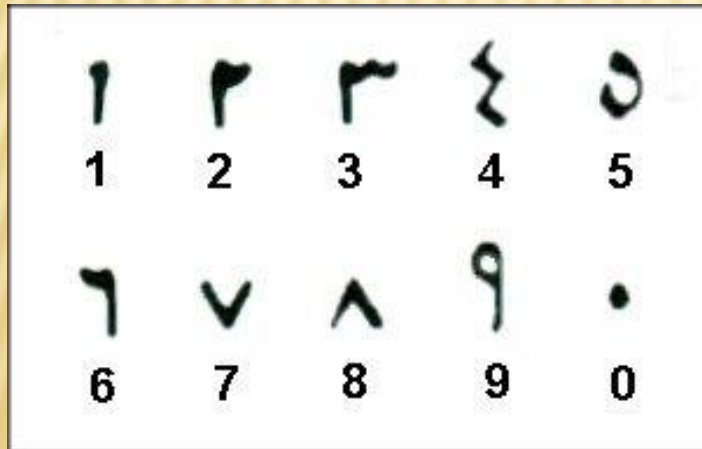


THE CALIPHATES

- ✘ As Islam expanded, the caliphs converted or enslaved other peoples they found worshipping many gods. At first, non-Arabs converts to Islam had less rights than Arabs, but eventually all Muslims were treated equally. Muslim rulers treated Jews and Christians with respect since they were believed to worship the same God. They were permitted to have self-governing communities. However, Jews and Christians had to pay a special tax and could not hold some public offices.

THE GOLDEN AGE OF MUSLIM CULTURE

- ✘ While learning was in decline in Western Europe, a Golden Age of Muslim Culture flourished – a period of great advances in culture and technology. Arab Muslims absorbed the cultural achievements of the Greeks, Persians, Romans, Jews and Byzantines. They also controlled a vast trading area – larger than the ancient Roman Empire had been. The new Arab Empire, like the Byzantine Empire before it, served as a crossroads for trade. Goods from India, China, Africa, Spain and the eastern Mediterranean entered through Arab territories. This period also saw Arabic, the language of the Quran, achieve standardized use throughout the empire and become the language of literature, philosophy, and art.



The Golden Age of Muslim Culture

Mathematics. Arab scholars borrowed the concept of zero from India and developed Arabic numerals, which were eventually adopted by other cultures. These developments led to great advances in algebra and geometry.

Arts and Crafts. Mohammed forbade making images of God or people. Islamic art is largely made up of geometric designs, flowers, and stars. Their textiles, leather works, and rugs are highly prized.

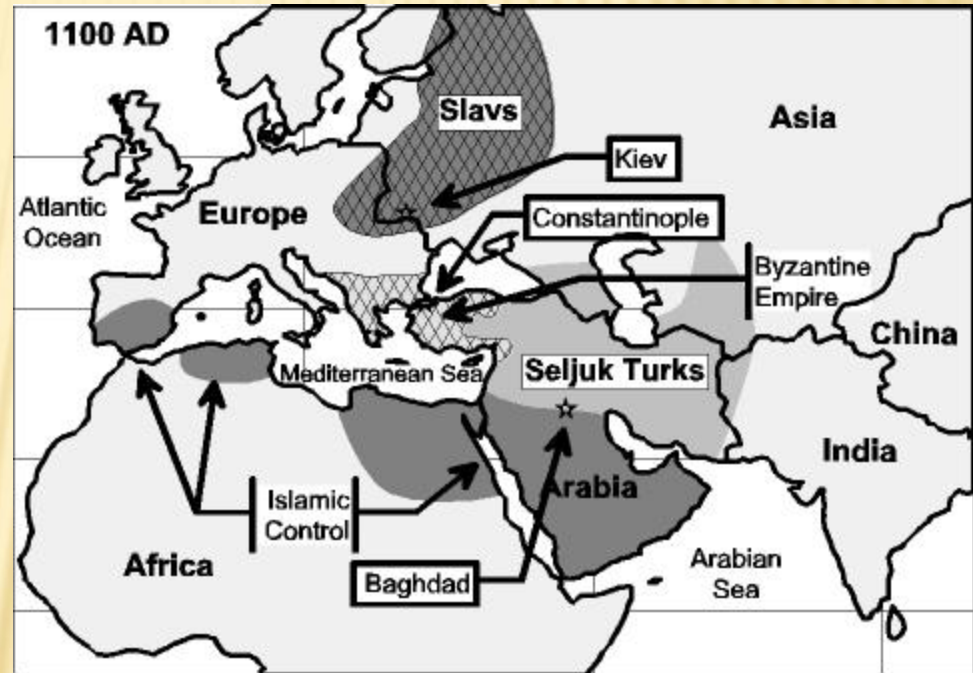
ARAB CULTURAL ACHIEVEMENTS

Medicine. Arab doctors discovered that blood moves to and from the heart. They learned to diagnose many diseases, including measles and smallpox.

Architecture. Muslim rulers built beautiful palaces and mosques, richly decorated with mosaics, calligraphy, and geometrical designs.

THE GOLDEN AGE OF MUSLIM CULTURE

- ✘ The prosperous Islamic Empire attracted invaders from Central Asia. In the 11th century, Baghdad was captured by the Seljuk Turks – a Turkish tribe from Central Asia. Although conquerors, the Seljuk Turks converted to Islam. Baghdad remained the capital of their new empire.



THE GOLDEN AGE OF MUSLIM CULTURE



- ✘ In the 12th century, Muslims became engaged in a war with Christians over control of the Holy Land, known as the Crusades. Christians captured Jerusalem in 1099, but the city later retaken by the Muslim leader and warrior, Saladin (1137-1193). Until this day, he remains a hero to the Islamic world for uniting the Arabs and defeating the Crusaders in battle.

ISLAM

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Mohammed

Beliefs

Areas

2. THE KINGDOMS OF AFRICA

- ✘ Anthropologists believe humanity first arose in East Africa. In ancient times, the rise of Egyptian civilization affected African cultures along the upper Nile, such as Kush and Axum. Kush was an early iron-producing center, which grew rich from selling iron wares, ivory, ebony, wood, and slaves. Later, the Kingdom of Ethiopia in East Africa adopted its own form of Christianity.



THE GOLD-SALT TRADE



- ✘ The dry Sahara Desert occupies much of North Africa. Just below this desert is a wide band of grasslands with some trees known as the savanna. The savanna stretches across almost the entire width of Africa, from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean.

THE GOLD-SALT TRADE

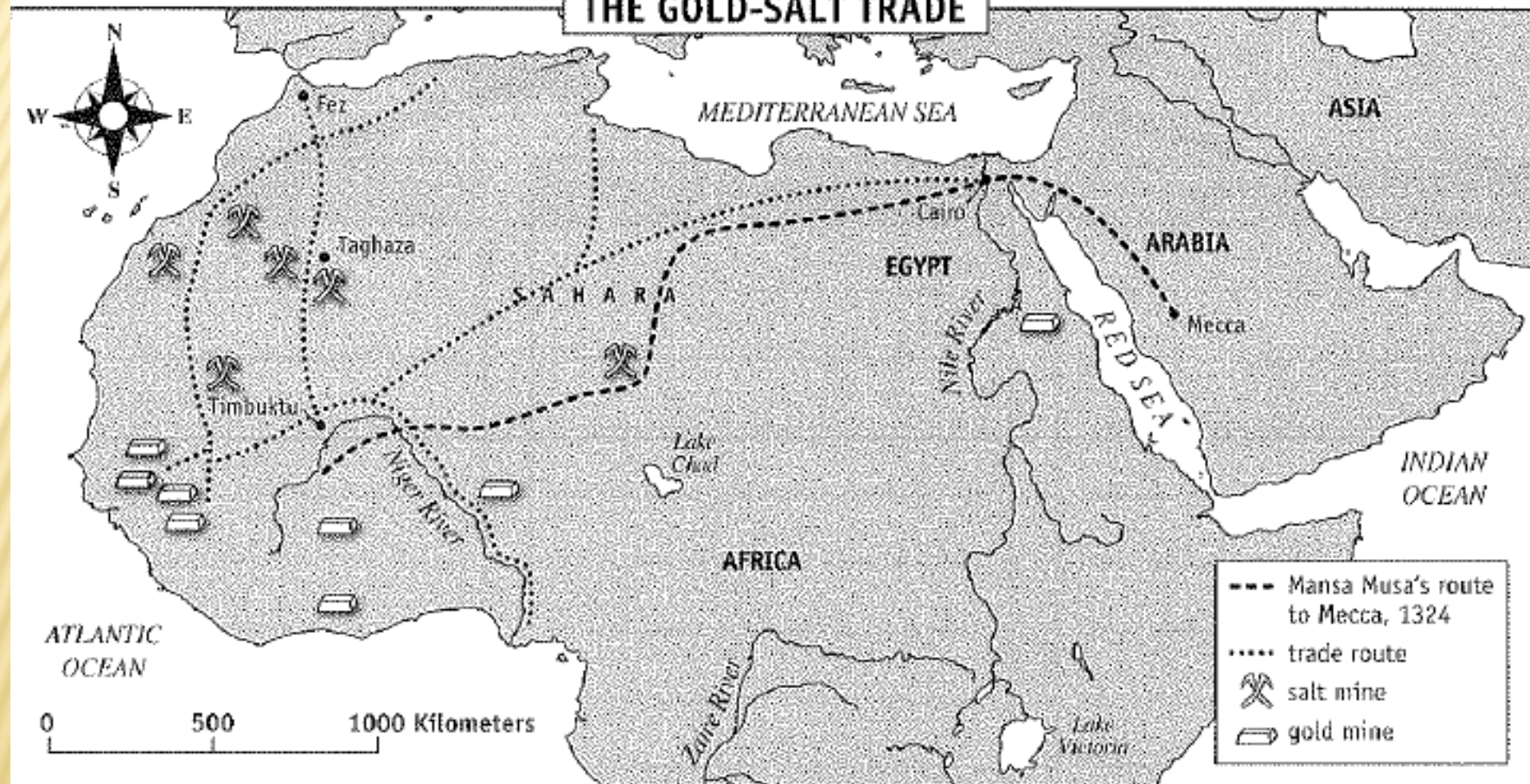
- ✘ It was home to a large number of pastoral peoples herding cattle and sheep. These people also learned to smelt iron and grow crops, and had complex communities with craftspersons, warriors and traders. Below the savanna lay the tropical rainforests of equatorial Africa.



THE GOLD-SALT TRADE

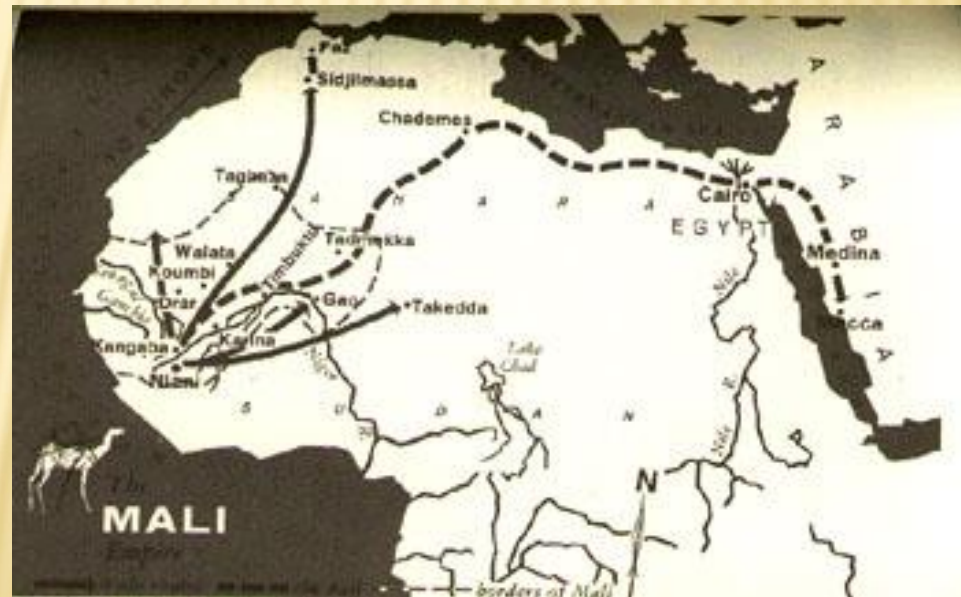
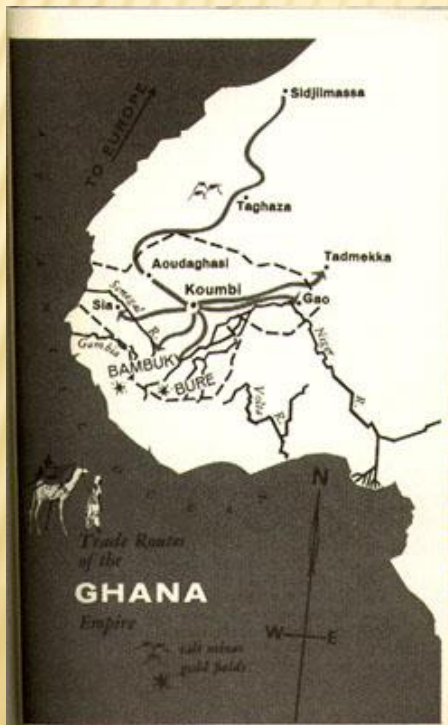
- ✘ The Sahara Desert acted as a barrier that separated the peoples of Sub-Saharan Africa from the Mediterranean world and the rest of Eurasia. Despite this separation, trade across the Sahara was never cut off completely. The Sahara contains oases with underground springs that supply fresh water. Because camels are able to go several days without water, merchants could cross the desert once they knew where these oases were located. By the 7th century, Muslim merchants from the Mediterranean were making this challenging journey.

THE GOLD-SALT TRADE



THE GOLD-SALT TRADE

- ✘ These merchants were especially motivated to cross the Sahara because of the gold and other riches they could obtain from trade with West Africa. At the same time, part of West Africa lacked salt – vital to human survival. Merchants, moving in camel caravans across the desert, picked up large blocks of salt on their journey, to exchange for gold. A thriving trade developed, based on this gold-salt trade. Ideas were exchanged, such as Islamic beliefs, as well as goods.

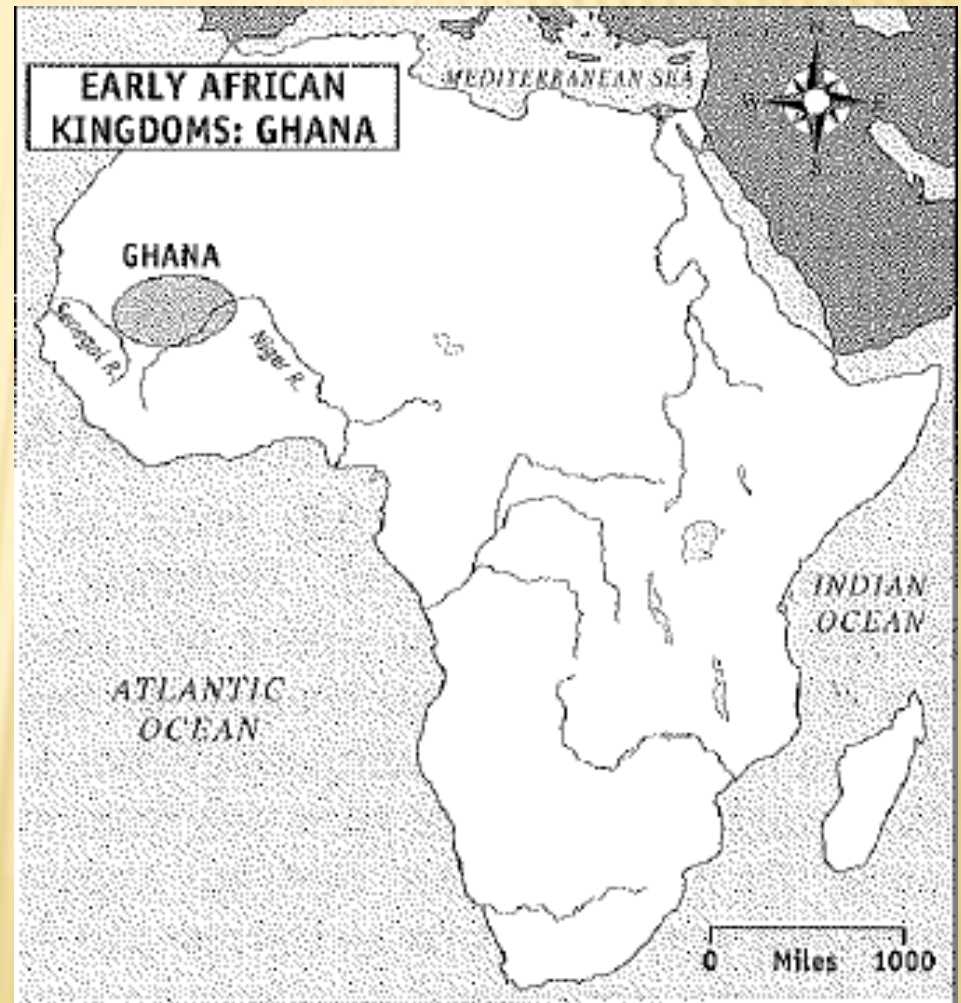


RISE OF THE WEST AFRICA KINGDOMS

- ✘ Around the fifth century, West Africa saw the rise of a series of powerful kingdoms based on their control of trade routes and the cavalries. For the next thousand years, their civilizations dominated West Africa – leading to an exchange of ideas, the rise of cities, and increasing wealth.

KINGDOM OF GHANA (750-1200)

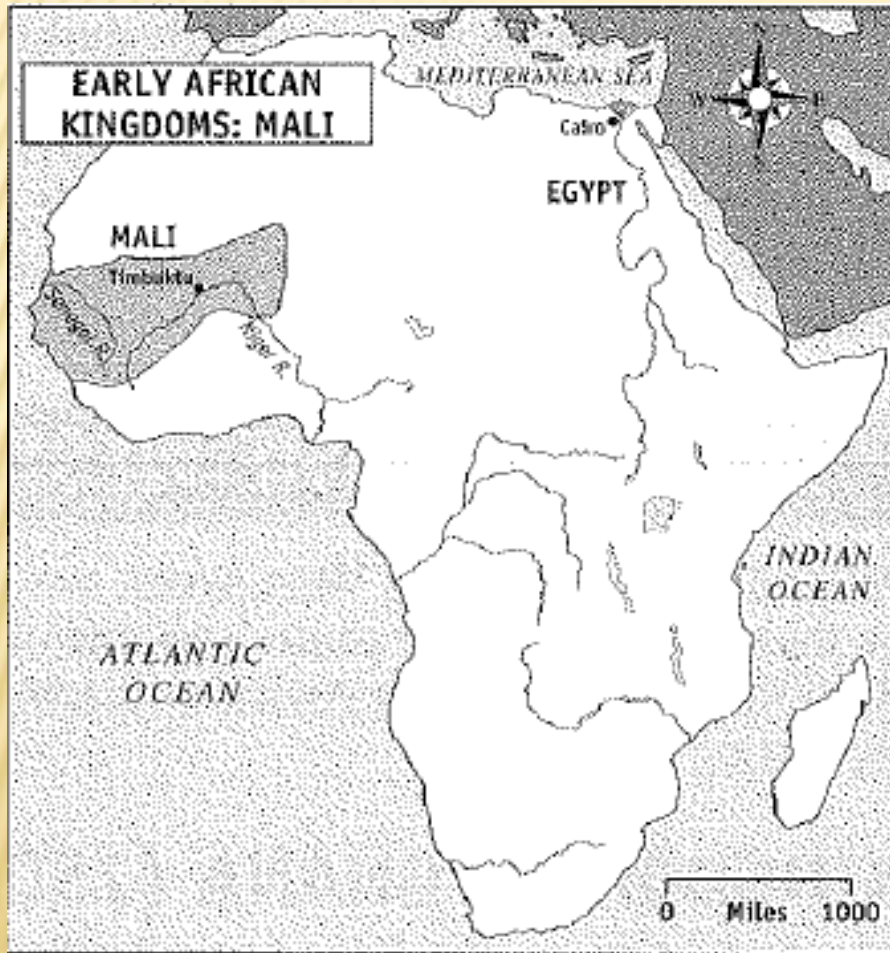
- ✘ The first of these, the Kingdom of Ghana, was founded about 750. It developed in the region between the Senegal and Niger Rivers. The people of Ghana used their ability to make iron swords, spears, and lances to subdue neighboring peoples and to gain control over West Africa's major trade routes. Caravans brought salt south to Ghana, and returned north with gold from forest areas southwest of Ghana. The power of the kings of Ghana rested on their ability to tax all trade passing through the region, especially the salt and gold trade. With these revenues, they were able to raise an army with a large cavalry.



KINGDOM OF GHANA (750-1200)

- ✘ The rulers of Ghana built a capital city and governed a wide area through the use of officials and nobles. The king appointed nobles to govern the provinces in return for paying taxes to the central government. This system had some similarities with European feudalism. Rulers and nobles were further enriched by using captives of war as slaves. However, in 1076, the Ghanaians were invaded by Muslims from North Africa. The Muslims brought Islam to West Africa. Ghana never fully recovered from this invasion and eventually dissolved into several smaller states.

KINGDOM OF MALI (1240-1400)



- ✘ In 1240, the people of Mali conquered the old capital of Ghana and established a new empire. Their rulers brought both gold and salt mines under their direct control. Mali's rulers converted to Islam, although most of their people did not adopt the Islamic faith and stayed loyal to traditional beliefs.

KINGDOM OF MALI (1240-1400)

- ✘ Mali's most famous ruler, Mansa Musa, expanded the kingdom greatly. He made a religious pilgrimage to Mecca in 1324, also visiting Cairo in Egypt. Observers were impressed with his wealth. Mansa Musa brought Muslim scholars and architects back with him to Mali.



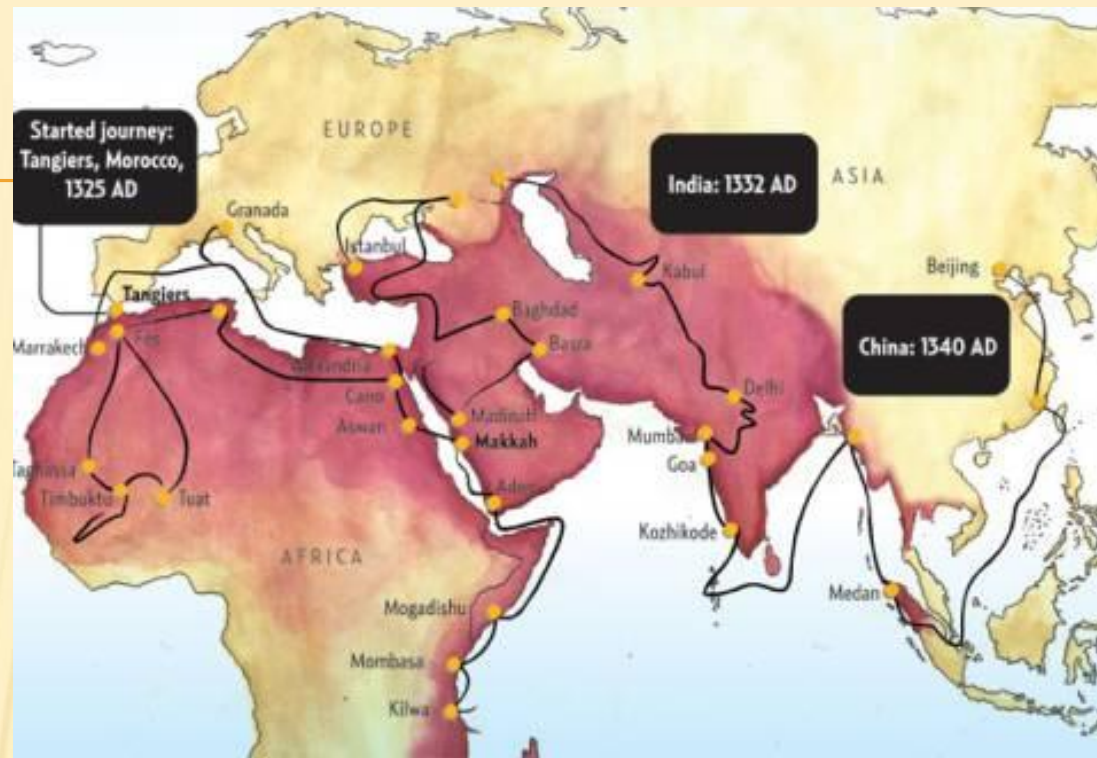
KINGDOM OF MALI (1240-1400)

- ✘ Mansa Musa commissioned a palace and a giant mosque to be built in Timbuktu, a thriving trading center on the Niger River. Under Musa's support, Muslim scholarship flourished. Timbuktu became an important center of several important universities and attracted students from Europe, Asia, and Africa. Because of the importance of studying the Quran, many of his subjects learned to read and write.



KINGDOM OF MALI (1240-1400)

✘ Arab travelers like Ibn Battuta were impressed by Mali's wealth, respect for law and the power of its ruler. It is through the extensive travels of Ibn Battuta during this time period that scholars know much about life in Africa and the Middle East. Later rulers of Mali proved less capable than Mansa Musa, and the empire collapsed in the 1400s.



THE KINGDOM OF SONGHAI (1464-1600)

- ✘ In 1464, Sultan Sunni Ali, ruler of the Songhai people, captured Timbuktu and brought the upper Niger under his control. The Kingdom of Songhai became the largest of west Africa's three trading kingdoms. Like Ghana and Mali, Songhai grew rich from trade across the Sahara Desert. Songhai expanded its trading networks as far as Europe and Asia. The Songhai established an elaborate system of taxation and communications. Timbuktu continued to flourish as a center of Muslim scholarship, and many subjects were Muslim.

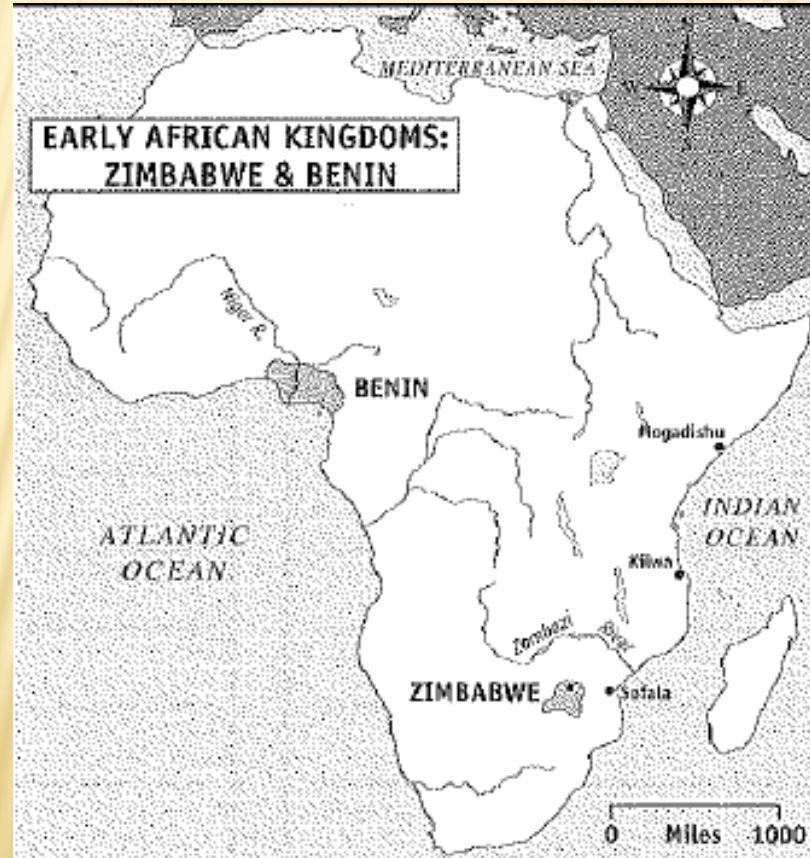


THE KINGDOM OF SONGHAI (1464-1600)

- ✘ Despite its riches and power, the Kingdom of Songhai lasted only 130 years. In 1591, the ruler of Morocco, hearing of Songhai's wealth, invaded West Africa. Although the Songhai army was larger, the Moroccans used gunpowder and muskets to defeat the Songhai, who fought with arrows and spears. Despite their military success, the Moroccans were unable to govern Songhai from such a great distance. West Africa again split apart into a large number of independent areas. The fall of Songhai marked the end of the great West African Kingdoms.

OTHER AFRICAN STATES

- ✘ The growth of trading kingdoms in West African savanna, like Ghana, Mali, and Songhai, was matched by the rise of trading kingdoms in other parts of Africa.



OTHER AFRICAN STATES

- ✘ **Ife and Benin.** These kingdoms developed in the rainforests of West Africa. They became famous for their copper and bronze sculptures, which were among the finest of all African artwork. By the 16th century, Benin became involved in the slave trade. It traded captured persons from other tribes and exchanged them with Europeans for guns and iron goods.

OTHER AFRICAN STATES

- ✘ **Zimbabwe.** Furth to the south, Zimbabwe was one of the best known of Africa's trading kingdoms. The existence of gold deposits near Zimbabwe was crucial to its rise. It traded gold, copper, and ivory from Africa's interior with Muslim traders along Africa's east coast.

OTHER AFRICAN STATES

- ✘ **Coastal Cities of East Africa.** Along the east coast of Africa, a number of independent city-states arose around the 10th century. Gold from the African interior was sent down the Zambia River to these cities, where it was sold to merchants from Arabia and India.

FAMILY ROLES AFRICA

- ✘ In many traditional African societies, both boys and girls were separated from the community and underwent special ceremonies at puberty. Marriages were arranged by families, and the groom paid a dowry to his bride's family. Under Islam, women were limited to running the household while their husbands represented the family outside it. Their roles were summed up by a traditional Ghanaian proverb: "A woman is a flower in a garden; her husband is the fence around it."

Complete the graphic organizer below describing the West African kingdoms. Indicate the location, general time period, and key characteristics of each kingdom.

WEST AFRICAN KINGDOMS

Ghana

Mali

Songhai
