

## African Civilizations

### Section 3

# The Kingdom of Aksum

## Terms and Names

**Aksum** African kingdom that reached the height of its power in the fourth century A.D.

**Adulis** Chief seaport of Aksum

**Ezana** King of Aksum who conquered Kush

**terraces** Step like ridges built on slopes to improve farming

## Before You Read

In the last section, you read about the migration of Bantu-speakers across parts of southern Africa. In this section, you will learn about the kingdom of Aksum and its role in trade.

## As You Read

Use a web diagram to list the achievements of Aksum.

### THE RISE OF THE KINGDOM OF AKSUM (Pages 225–226)

#### How did Aksum arise?

The peoples in East Africa had a great deal of contact with people from other areas. The Kushite kingdom of Nubia had close relations with Egypt. Its kings even ruled Egypt for a while. That kingdom continued for many centuries as a trading power. It was then replaced by the kingdom of **Aksum** in what is now modern Ethiopia. The dynasty that ruled Aksum and later Ethiopia included the 20th-century ruler Haile Selassie.

Aksum may have begun as early as 1000 B.C. when Arabian traders mixed with the people of Kush. It became an important part of world trade. Salt, emeralds, brass, copper, gold, cloth, olive oil, and wine all moved through Aksum. Its trade routes helped link Rome to India. Traders crowded into its chief seaport, **Adulis**.

In the early A.D. 300s, Aksum had a strong new king named **Ezana**. He

brought the kingdom to its height during his rule. Ezana captured more land on the Arabian peninsula, and then conquered Kush in 350.

1. Why was Aksum an important trading center?

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### AN INTERNATIONAL CULTURE DEVELOPS (Pages 227–228)

#### What was unique about Aksum's culture?

Aksum was an international trading center. It was home to peoples from many different cultures. There were people from Aksum's widespread trading partners, including Egypt, Arabia, Greece, Rome, Persia, India, and even Byzantium.

Section 3, *continued*

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At the time of King Ezana, these different peoples all spoke to one another in Greek.

The Aksumites, like other ancient Africans, traditionally believed in one god. They also worshiped the spirits of nature and honored their dead ancestors. During his rule, King Ezana decided to become a Christian. The religion slowly spread throughout the land.

The people of Aksum also developed a special way of building. They made structures out of stone, not mud baked into bricks by the hot sun. Their kings built tall pillars of stone that reached as high as 60 feet. They were among the tallest structures in the ancient world.

Aksum made other advances as well. Aside from Egypt and the city of Meroë, it was the only culture of ancient Africa to have a written language. The language of Aksum had been brought to the land by Arab traders many hundreds of years before. Aksum was also the first state south of the Sahara to mint its own coins.

The people of Aksum also developed a new way of farming. They cut terraces, steplike ridges, into the steep mountainsides in their country. The terraces helped the land hold water instead of letting it run down the mountain in a heavy rain. This was called terrace farming. The people of Aksum also used dams and stone tanks to store water and used ditches to channel it to their fields.

2. What achievements and advances were made in Aksum?

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**THE FALL OF AKSUM** (Page 229)

**Why did Aksum fall?**

Aksum remained an important power in East Africa for 800 years. It was first challenged in the 600s, after the new religion of Islam came to Arabia. The followers of Islam captured the lands that Aksum held in the Arabian peninsula. Within a few decades, they had taken much of North Africa.

At first, these conquerors left Aksum alone. Aksum remained an island of Christianity in a sea of Islam. In 710, however, the conquerors destroyed Adulis. The Aksum kings moved their capital over the mountains to a hard-to-reach area, in present-day northern Ethiopia. Aksum was now cut off from other Christian lands. It was also isolated from the sea trade. Aksum began to decline as a world power.

3. Why did the rulers of Aksum move their capital?

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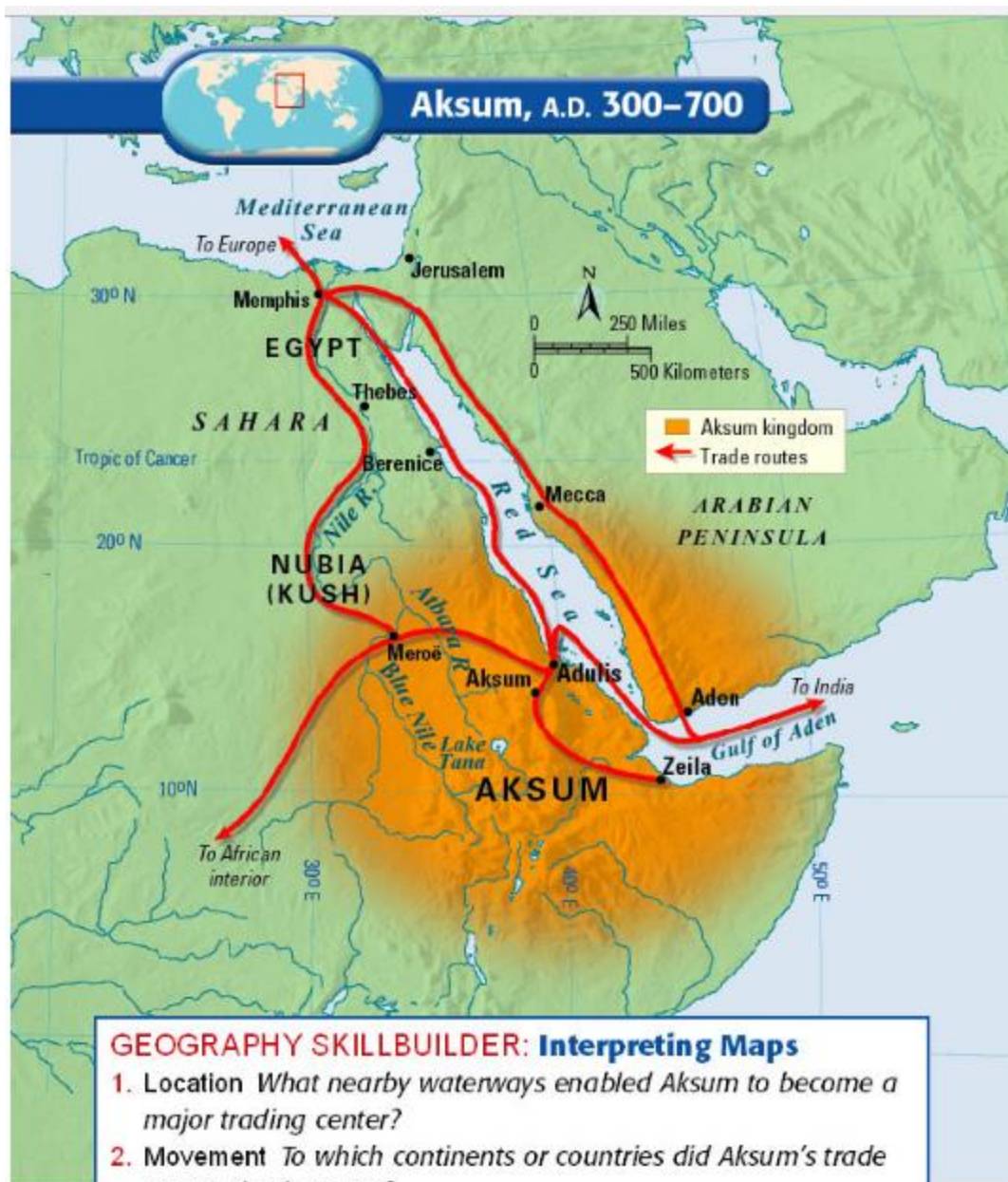
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# The Kingdom of Aksum

MAIN IDEA	WHY IT MATTERS NOW	TERMS & NAMES
<p><b>POWER AND AUTHORITY</b> The kingdom of Aksum became an international trading power and adopted Christianity.</p>	<p>Ancient Aksum, which is now Ethiopia, is still a center of the Ethiopian Orthodox Christian Church.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aksum</li> <li>• Adulis</li> <li>• Ezana</li> <li>• terraces</li> </ul>



**GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Maps**

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



## Pillars of Aksum

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

To the left, the towering stone pillar, or stele, was built to celebrate Aksum's achievements. Still standing today, its size and elaborate inscriptions make it an achievement in its own right. It has many unique features:

- False doors, windows, and timber beams are carved into the stone.
- Typically, the top of the pillar is a rounded peak.
- The tallest stele was about 100 feet high. Of those steles left standing, one is 60 feet tall and is among the largest structures in the ancient world.
- The stone for the pillar was quarried and carved two to three miles away and then brought to the site.
- Ezana dedicated one soaring stone pillar to the Christian God, "the Lord of heaven, who in heaven and upon earth is mightier than everything that exists."

### **SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Visual Sources**

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



**Societies and Empires of Africa****Section 3****Eastern City-States and Southern Empires****Terms and Names****Swahili** Language that is a blend of Arabic and Bantu**Great Zimbabwe** City that grew into an empire built on the gold trade**Mutapa** Southern African empire established by the leader Mutota**Before You Read**

In the last section, you read about West African kingdoms and states.

In this section, you will read about East African city-states and southern African empires.

**As You Read**

Use a chart to explain one example of cultural interaction resulting from trade.

**EAST COAST TRADE CITIES**

(Pages 422–424)

**What cultures blended in East Africa?**

The east coast of Africa became a region where cultures blended. Africans speaking Bantu languages moved to this area from central Africa. Muslim Arab and Persian traders settled in port cities along the coast. A new blended language formed. It was called **Swahili**.

Arab traders sold porcelain bowls from China. They sold jewels and cotton cloth from India. They bought ivory, gold, and other African goods. The traders took these goods back to Asia. By 1300, trade was thriving in over 35 cities on the coast. Some cities also manufactured products for trade. These goods included woven cloth and iron tools.

Kilwa was one of the richest trading ports. It was located far to the south. Trade

goods from southern lands passed through Kilwa.

In 1497, though, the situation changed. Ships arrived on the east coast of Africa from Portugal. Portuguese sailors were looking for a route to India. They wanted to join in the trade for spices and other goods desired in Europe. Soon the Portuguese attacked Kilwa. They also attacked other trading centers along the East African coast.

For the next two centuries, the Portuguese remained a powerful force in the region.

1. Why did Kilwa become an important center of trade?

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Section 3, *continued*

**ISLAMIC INFLUENCES**

(Pages 424–425)

**How did Muslim traders influence East Africa?**

On the east coast of Africa, contact with Muslim traders grew. This resulted in the spread of Islam. A sultan, or governor, ruled each city. Most government officials and wealthy merchants were Muslims. As in West Africa, though, most common people kept their traditional beliefs.

Muslim traders also sold slaves from the East African coast. These slaves were brought to markets in areas such as Arabia and Persia. Some slaves did household tasks. Other were sent to India to be soldiers. This slave trade was still small. Only about 1,000 slaves a year were traded. The later European-run slave trade was much larger.

2. Describe the Muslim slave trade.

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**SOUTHERN AFRICA AND GREAT ZIMBABWE** (Pages 425–426)

**What empires arose in southern Africa?**

In southern Africa, a great city-state arose in the 1000s. The Shona people grew crops in their rich land. They also raised cattle. Their city, **Great Zimbabwe**, linked the gold fields inland with the trading cities on the coast. From the 1200s through the 1400s, the city controlled this trade. The city grew wealthy.

Around 1450, though, the people left the city. No one knows why. One explanation is that overuse had destroyed the grasslands, soil, and timber. About 60 acres of ruins remain. The ruins include stone buildings. A high wall carved with figures of birds also still stands.

3. What happened to Great Zimbabwe around 1450?

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**THE MUTAPA EMPIRE** (Page 427)

**Who founded the Mutapa empire?**

The **Mutapa** Empire followed. It began around 1420. A man named Mutota left the area. He moved farther north looking for salt. Mutota and his successors took control of a large area. It was almost all of the land of the modern Zimbabwe. This empire gained wealth from its gold. The rulers forced the conquered to mine the gold. The southern region of the empire formed its own kingdom.

In the 1500s, the Portuguese moved in. They failed to conquer the empire. Later, through political schemes, they took over the government.

4. How did Mutapa rulers obtain luxury goods from coastal city-states?

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# Eastern City-States and Southern Empires

## MAIN IDEA

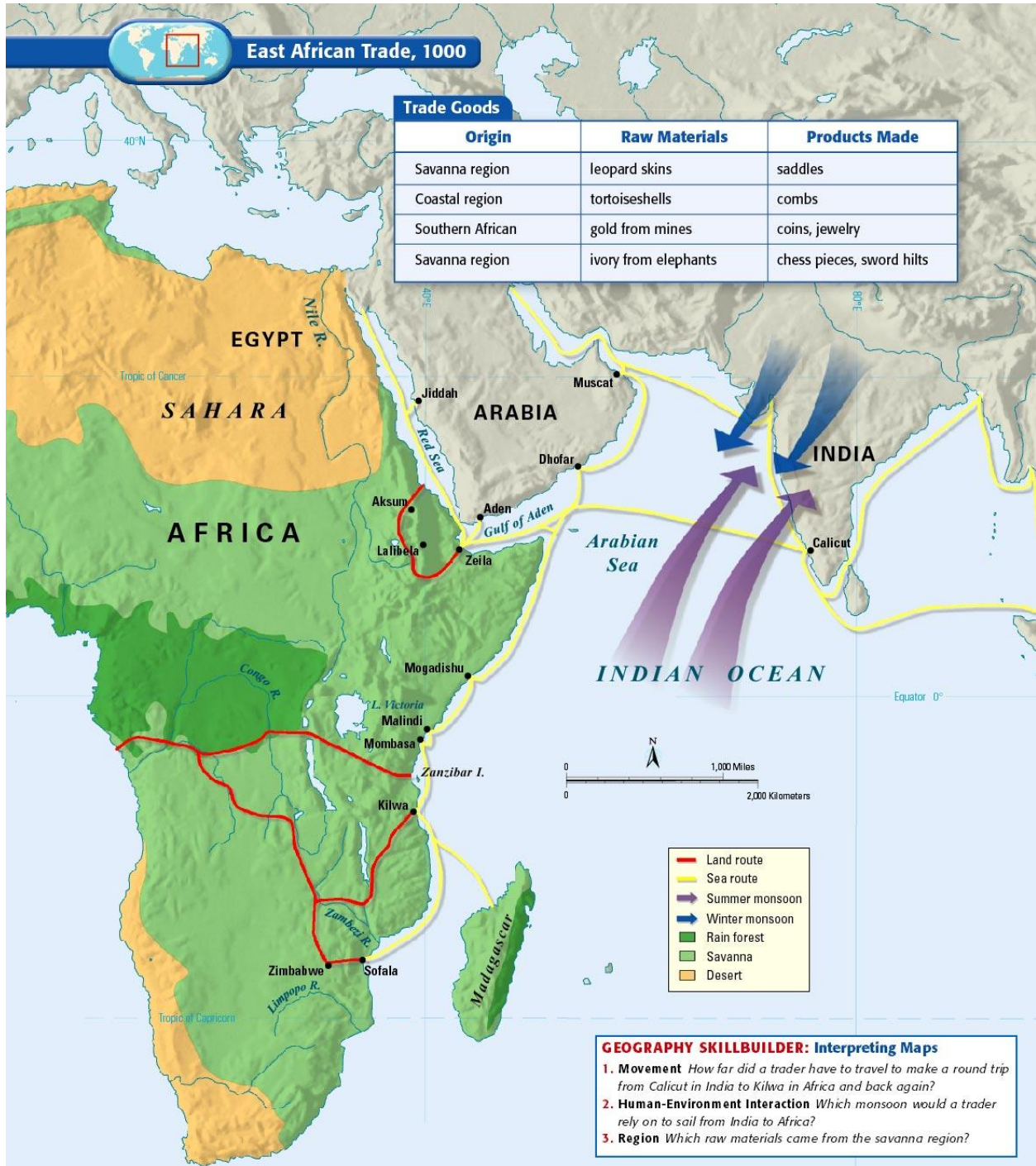
**INTERACTION WITH ENVIRONMENT** African city-states and empires gained wealth through developing and trading resources.

## WHY IT MATTERS NOW

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

## TERMS & NAMES

- Swahili
- Mutapa
- Great Zimbabwe



**Societies and Empires of Africa****Section 2****West African Civilizations****Terms and Names**

**Ghana** West African empire that grew rich from trade

**Mali** West African empire that grew rich from trade

**Sundiata** Founder and first emperor of the kingdom of Mali

**Mansa Musa** Mali ruler who created a large kingdom and adopted Islam

**Ibn Battuta** 14th century traveler who visited most of the Islamic world

**Songhai** West African empire that conquered Mali

**Hausa** West African people who lived in several city-states of what is now northern Nigeria

**Yoruba** West African people who formed several kingdoms in what is now Benin

**Benin** Kingdom that arose near the Niger River delta and became a major West African state

**Before You Read**

In the last section, you read about societies in North and Central Africa.

In this section, you will read about kingdoms in West Africa.

**As You Read**

Use a Venn diagram to compare and contrast information about the Mali and Songhai empires.

**EMPIRE OF GHANA** (Pages 413–415)**How did the kingdom of Ghana arise?**

Traders crossed the Sahara Desert of North Africa as early as A.D. 200. The desert was harsh. This limited trade. Then the Berbers began using camels. Trade increased.

By the 700s, the rulers of the kingdom of Ghana were growing rich. They taxed the goods that traders carried through their land. The two most important trade goods were gold and salt. Gold was taken from mines and streams in the western and southern parts of West Africa. It was traded for salt from the Sahara region. Arab traders also brought cloth and manufactured goods. These came from cities on the Mediterranean Sea.

The king of Ghana was powerful. Only the king could own gold nuggets. He was the religious, military, and political leader. By the year 800, Ghana had become an empire. It controlled the people of nearby lands.

Over time, Muslim merchants and traders brought their religion to Ghana. By the 1000s, the kings converted to Islam. Many common people in the empire, though, kept their traditional beliefs. Later, Ghana fell to the Almoravids of North Africa. Ghana never regained its former power.

1. What goods were traded in Ghana?

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Section 2, *continued***EMPIRE OF MALI** (Pages 415–417)**How did Mali rise to power?**

By 1235, a new kingdom began—**Mali**. It arose south of Ghana. Mali's wealth and power were also based on the gold trade. **Sundiata** became Mali's first emperor. He was a great military and political leader.

Later Mali rulers adopted Islam. One of them was **Mansa Musa**. He made Mali twice the size of the old empire of Ghana. To rule this large empire, he named governors to head several provinces. Mansa Musa was a devoted Muslim. He built mosques in two cities. One was Timbuktu. It became a leading center of Muslim learning.

**Ibn Battuta** was a later traveler to the area. He described how peaceful Mali was. Mali, though, declined in the 1400s. Mali was replaced by another empire that grew wealthy from gold.

2. **What did Mansa Musa achieve?**

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**EMPIRE OF SONGHAI** (Page 417)**How did Songhai arise?**

The next trading empire was **Songhai**. It was farther to the east than Mali. Songhai arose in the 1400s. It had two great rulers. One was Sunni Ali. He gained control of new areas. His conquests included the city of Timbuktu.

Songhai's other great ruler was Askia Muhammad. He was a devoted Muslim. He ran the government well.

The Songhai Empire fell, however. Its army lacked modern weapons. In 1591, Moroccan troops used gunpowder and cannons to beat Songhai soldiers. They had only swords and spears. This defeat ended the period when empires ruled West Africa.

3. **Why did Songhai fall?**

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**OTHER PEOPLES OF WEST****AFRICA** (Pages 417–419)**What other states and kingdoms arose?**

In other parts of West Africa, city-states developed. The **Hausa** people lived in the region that is now northern Nigeria. Their city-states first arose between the years 1000 and 1200. The Hausa rulers depended on farmers' crops. They also relied on trade goods. These included salt, grain, and cotton cloth.

The **Yoruba** people also first lived in city-states. These were located in what is now Benin and southwestern Nigeria. Over time, some of the small Yoruba communities joined together. Many Yoruba kingdoms were formed. Yoruba people believed their kings were gods.

The kingdom of **Benin** arose in the 1200s. It was located near the delta of the Niger River. In the 1400s, a ruler named Ewuare led Benin. He made the kingdom more powerful. During his reign, **Benin** became a major West African state. He strengthened **Benin City**, his capital. High walls surrounded the city. The huge palace contained many works of art.

In the 1480s, trading ships from Portugal came. They sailed into a major port of Benin. Their arrival was historic. It marked the start of a long period of European involvement in Africa.

4. **What was important about Benin?**

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# West African Civilizations

## MAIN IDEA

**ECONOMICS** West Africa contained several rich and powerful states, including Ghana, Mali, and Songhai.

## WHY IT MATTERS NOW

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

## TERMS & NAMES

- Ghana
- Mali
- Sundiata
- Mansa Musa
- Ibn Battuta
- Songhai
- Hausa
- Yoruba
- Benin



## West African Empires, 1000–1500

### Empire of Ghana, A.D. 1000



### Empire of Mali, A.D. 1400



### Empire of Songhai, A.D. 1500



### GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Maps

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





# Africa, 800-1500



**The Americas: A Separate World****Section 1****The Earliest Americans****Terms and Names****Beringia** Land bridge between Asia and the Americas**Ice Age** Time when sheets of ice covered large portions of North America**maize** Corn; the most important crop of the Americas**Before You Read**

In the last chapter, you read about African civilizations.

In this section, you will read about the Americas' first inhabitants.

**As You Read**

Use a chart to list causes and effects of the development of the Americas.

**A LAND BRIDGE** (Pages 235–236)**How did the earliest people come to the Americas?**

North and South America form a single stretch of land. It stretches from the Arctic Circle in the north to the waters around Antarctica in the south. The Atlantic and Pacific Oceans separate the Americas from Africa, Asia, and Europe.

But that was not always the case. From around 1.6 million years ago until about 10,000 years ago, the earth went through an **Ice Age**. During this time, huge sheets of ice called glaciers spread south from the Arctic Circle. The level of the world's oceans went down. The lowered oceans exposed land that is today again covered by water.

One strip of land, called **Beringia**, connected Asia and North America. Wild animals crossed this rocky land bridge and entered North America for the first time. Some of the Asian people who hunted these animals followed them. The people became the first Americans.

No one knows for sure when these first people arrived. Some scholars say the

people came to the Americas as long ago as 40,000 B.C. Others say as late as 12,000 B.C. A discovery in Chile suggests that people were well-settled in that part of the Americas by 10,500 B.C. Since Chile lies far south of the land bridge, some experts say that people needed many thousands of years to travel that far. For this reason, they think that the first people must have crossed the land bridge in about 20,000 B.C.

1. Where did the first Americans come from?

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**HUNTERS AND GATHERERS**

(Page 236)

**How did early Americans live?**

These first Americans lived as hunters. One of their favorite hunting targets was the huge mammoth. Over time, however, all the mammoths died. People were forced to look for other food. They began to hunt smaller animals and to fish.



# The Earliest Americans

## MAIN IDEA

**POWER AND AUTHORITY** The cultures of the first Americans, including social organization, developed in ways similar to other early cultures.

## WHY IT MATTERS NOW

The Americas' first inhabitants developed the basis for later American civilizations.

## TERMS & NAMES

- Beringia
- Ice Age
- maize



**People and Empires in the Americas****Section 2****Maya Kings and Cities****Terms and Names**

**Tikal** Maya city in present-day Guatemala

**glyph** Picture symbol used as part of a writing system

**codex** Book with bark-paper pages; only three of these ancient Maya books have survived

**Popul Vuh** Book containing a Maya story of creation

**Before You Read**

In the last section, you read about societies in North America.

In this section, you will read about the Maya civilization in Mexico and Central America.

**As You Read**

Use a chart to take notes on the major features of the Maya civilization.

**MAYA CREATE CITY-STATES**

(Pages 446–447)

**Who were the Maya?**

A great civilization arose in what is today southern Mexico and northern Central America. This was the Maya civilization. It appeared around A.D. 250. Between then and 900, the Maya built large cities such as **Tikal** and Copán. Each city was independent and ruled by a god-king. Each city was a religious center as well as a trade center for the area around it. These cities were large. Tens of thousands of people lived in these cities. The cities were full of palaces, temples, and pyramids. Archaeologists have found at least 50 Maya cities.

Trade linked these cities. Among the trade goods were salt, flint, feathers, shells, cotton cloth, and ornaments made of jade. Cacao beans, which are used to make chocolate, were sometimes used as money. Maize, beans, and squash were the main foods.

Maya society was divided into social classes. The best warriors and priests were at the top. The merchants and craft workers were at the next level. Peasant farmers—the majority of the people—were at the bottom.

1. What is known about Maya cities?

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**RELIGION SHAPES MAYA LIFE**

(Pages 447–448)

**How did religion shape Maya life?**

The Maya religion was at the center of their society. There were many gods, including one for each day. The actions of the day's god could be predicted, they thought, by following a calendar. The Maya sometimes cut themselves to offer their blood to the gods in sacrifice. Sometimes they killed enemies and sacrificed them.

Section 2, *continued*

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The Maya religion led to the development of mathematics, calendars, and astronomy. Maya math included the idea of zero. They had two calendars. One calendar was religious, and it had thirteen 20-day months. The other calendar was based on the sun. It had 18 months consisting of 20 days each. The Maya linked the two together to identify days that would bring good fortune.

Maya astronomy was very accurate. They observed the sun, moon, and stars to make their calendars as accurate as possible. They calculated the time it takes the earth to revolve around the sun almost perfectly.

The Maya also developed the most advanced writing system in the ancient Americas. Maya writing was made up of about 800 symbols, or **glyphs**. They used their writing system to record important historical events. They carved in stone or recorded events in a bark-paper book known as a **codex**. Three of these ancient books still survive. A famous Maya book called the *Popul Vuh* records a Maya story of the creation of the world.

2. How does Maya writing reflect Maya culture?

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**MYSTERIOUS MAYA DECLINE**

(Page 449)

**Why did the civilization decline?**

In the late 800s, the Maya civilization began to decline. Historians do not know why. One explanation may be that warfare between the different city-states disrupted Maya society. The wars interrupted trade and drove many people out of the cities into the jungle. Another may be that the soil became less productive due to intensive farming over a long time.

Whatever the cause, the Maya became a less powerful people. They continued to live in the area, but their cities were no longer the busy trade and religious centers they had been.

3. Name two reasons that may explain the Maya civilization's decline.

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# Maya Kings and Cities

## MAIN IDEA

**RELIGIOUS AND ETHICAL SYSTEMS**  
The Maya developed a highly complex civilization based on city-states and elaborate religious practices.

## WHY IT MATTERS NOW

Descendants of the Maya still occupy the same territory.

## TERMS & NAMES

- Tikal
- glyph
- codex
- *Popol Vuh*





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Jade Mask

**PRIMARY SOURCE**

Then let the emptiness fill! they said. Let the water weave its way downward so the earth can show its face! Let the light break on the ridges, let the sky fill up with the yellow light of dawn! Let our glory be a man walking on a path through the trees! "Earth!" the Creators called. They called only once, and it was there, from a mist, from a cloud of dust, the mountains appeared instantly.

From the *Popol Vuh*



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Rise and Fall of the Maya		
Traits of Civilization	Strength Leading to Power	Weakness Leading to Decline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Religious beliefs and theocracy</li> <li>Independent city-states</li> <li>Intensive agriculture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>United culture</li> <li>Loyalty to the king</li> <li>Wealthy and prosperous culture</li> <li>Production of more food feeds a larger population</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many physical and human resources funneled into religious activities</li> <li>Frequent warfare occurs between kingdoms</li> <li>Population growth creates need for more land</li> </ul>
<p><b>SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Charts</b></p> <p>1. <b>Recognizing Effects</b> Which trait aids in building a sense of loyalty to the ruler?</p> <p>2. <b>Drawing Conclusions</b> How can intensive agriculture be both a strength and a weakness?</p>		

**People and Empires in the Americas****Section 3****The Aztecs Control Central Mexico****Terms and Names**

**obsidian** Hard, volcanic glass used by early peoples to make sharp weapons

**Quetzalcoatl** Toltec god

**Triple Alliance** Association of city-states that led to the formation of the Aztec Empire

**Montezuma II** Ruler under whom the Aztec Empire weakened

**Before You Read**

In the last section, you read about Maya civilization. In this section, you will read about societies that arose in central Mexico, including the Aztecs.

**As You Read**

Use a diagram to list events in the establishment and growth of the Aztec Empire.

**THE VALLEY OF MEXICO**

(Pages 452–453)

**What civilizations arose in the Valley of Mexico?**

The Valley of Mexico is more than a mile above sea level. It is a good place for people to settle because it has lakes and fertile soil. An early city-state called Teotihuacán (“City of the Gods”) arose in this area in the first century A.D. The city had between 150,000 and 200,000 people at its peak in the sixth century.

The city was the center of a major trade network. The most important trade item was **obsidian**. This green or black volcanic glass was used to make sharp weapons. The huge Pyramid of the Sun, which measured some 200 feet high and 3,000 feet around its base, dominated the city. By 750, Teotihuacán was abandoned. The reasons why are not clear.

The next people to dominate the area were the Toltecs. They rose to power around 900 and ruled over central Mexico for about 300 years. The Toltecs were warlike and worshiped a warlike god.

One Toltec king, Topiltzin, tried to replace the warlike god with a peaceful one. The peaceful god was called **Quetzalcoatl**, the Feathered Serpent. Followers of the warlike god rebelled and chased Topiltzin away. The Toltecs became warlike again. Over time, Topiltzin and Quetzalcoatl became one in Toltec legends. In these legends, someday Quetzalcoatl would return and bring a new reign of peace. This legend lived on in central Mexico for centuries.

1. What was Teotihuacán?

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Section 3, *continued*

**THE AZTEC EMPIRE;  
TENOCHTITLÁN: A PLANNED CITY**

(Pages 453–455)

**How did the Aztecs build an empire?**

Around 1200, the Toltecs were losing control of the region. But another people—the Aztecs—began to gain power. The Aztecs founded a city and, in 1428, they joined with two other city-states to form the **Triple Alliance**. The Triple Alliance became the leading power of the Valley of Mexico. It soon gained control over neighboring regions.

By the early 1500s, the Aztecs controlled a large empire that included somewhere between 5 and 15 million people. This empire was based on military conquest and collecting tribute from conquered peoples.

Military leaders held great power in Aztec society. Along with government officials and priests, they made up a noble class. Below them were commoners—merchants, craft workers, soldiers, and farmers who owned their land. At the bottom of society were the slaves taken as captives in battle. At the top was the emperor. He was treated as a god as well as a ruler.

The capital city—Tenochtitlán—was built on an island in a lake. The Aztecs made long causeways to connect the city to the mainland. The city contained between 200,000 and 400,000 people. It was well-planned and had a huge religious complex at its center.

2. **How was Aztec society organized?**

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**RELIGION RULES AZTEC LIFE**

(Page 456)

**What was the role of religion in Aztec life?**

Religion played a major role in Aztec society. Temples were built in cities for the many different gods. Priests led religious rituals. The most important rituals were for the sun god. Priests made the sacrifice of human blood to make sure that the sun god was happy, and the sun would rise every day. People taken captive in war were sacrificed. The need for a steady supply of victims pushed the Aztecs to fight their neighbors.

3. **Why and how did the Aztecs sacrifice to the sun god?**

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**PROBLEMS IN THE AZTEC EMPIRE**

(Pages 456, 458)

**What weakened the Aztec Empire?**

**Montezuma II** became emperor in 1502. The Aztec Empire began to have problems during his reign. The Aztecs ordered the other peoples they had conquered to hand over even more people to sacrifice. These other peoples finally rebelled against the Aztecs. In the midst of this conflict, the Spanish arrived and made contact with the Aztecs for the first time. Some saw their arrival as the legendary return of Quetzalcoatl.

4. **Why did conquered peoples rebel against the Aztecs?**

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# The Aztecs Control Central Mexico

## MAIN IDEA

**POWER AND AUTHORITY**  
Through alliances and conquest, the Aztecs created a powerful empire in Mexico.

## WHY IT MATTERS NOW

This time period saw the origins of one of the 20th century's most populous cities, Mexico City.

## TERMS & NAMES

- obsidian
- Triple Alliance
- Quetzalcoatl
- Montezuma II







Aztec God



▲ The Pyramid of the Sun (left background) dominates Teotihuacán's main highway, the Avenue of the Dead.



This is an artist's rendition of the inner circle of the Sunstone. In the center is the god Tonatiuh.

The four squares that surround Tonatiuh are glyphs or symbols of the four ages preceding the time of the Aztecs: Tiger, Water, Wind, and Rain.

In the ring just outside the symbols of the previous ages, 20 segments represent the 20 days that made up an Aztec month. Each day had its own symbol and a god who watched over the day. The symbol pointed to here is Ocelotl, the jaguar.

**SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Visual Sources**

- Hypothesizing** *Why do you think the Aztecs put Tonatiuh, a sun god, in the center of the Sunstone? Explain your reasons.*
- Comparing and Contrasting** *How is the Aztec calendar different from the calendar we use today? How is it similar?*

Rise and Fall of the Aztecs		
Traits of Civilization	Strength Leading to Power	Weakness Leading to Decline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Religious beliefs and theocracy</li> <li>Powerful army</li> <li>Empire of tribute states</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>United culture</li> <li>Loyalty to the emperor</li> <li>Adds land, power, and prisoners for religious sacrifice</li> <li>Provides wealth and power and prisoners for religious sacrifice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many physical and human resources funneled into religious activities</li> <li>Need for prisoners changes warfare style to less deadly and less aggressive</li> <li>Tribute states are rebellious and need to be controlled</li> </ul>
<p><b>SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Charts</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Drawing Conclusions</b> <i>How was the tribute system both a strength and a weakness?</i></li> <li><b>Clarifying</b> <i>How are the army and religious beliefs linked in the Aztec Empire?</i></li> </ol>		





**People and Empires in the Americas****Section 4****The Inca Create a Mountain Empire****Terms and Names**

**Pachacuti** Ruler under whom the Incan Empire grew quickly

**ayllu** Small community or clan whose members worked together for the common good

**mita** Requirement for all Incan subjects to work for the state a certain number of days each year

**quipu** Arrangement of knotted strings on a cord used by the Inca to record numerical information

**Before You Read**

In the last section, you read about the Aztec Empire.

In this section, you will learn about the empire of the Inca.

**As You Read**

Use a web diagram to identify the methods the Inca used to build their vast, unified empire.

**THE INCA BUILD AN EMPIRE**

(Pages 459–460)

**Who were the Inca?**

The Inca civilization arose in the Andes of South America. It was built on the foundations made by several earlier cultures.

The Inca united much of the Andes under their rule. They first settled in the Valley of Cuzco, in modern Peru. They built a kingdom there by the 1200s. The Inca believed that their ruler was related to the sun god, who would bring wealth and power to them. Only men from one of 11 noble families believed to be descendants of the sun god could serve as king.

In 1438, **Pachacuti** became the ruler of the Inca. He made conquest after conquest. By 1500, the Inca ruled an empire that stretched along the Andes from modern Ecuador all the way south to Chile and

Argentina. It held about 16 million people. The empire did not grow only through military conquest. Often the Inca offered new peoples the chance to join the empire peacefully as long as they swore loyalty to the emperor. Many peoples became part of the empire in this way. Even when force was needed, afterward the Inca tried to win the loyalty of the conquered peoples through friendship rather than fear.

1. What beliefs and practices related to Inca rulers?

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Section 4, *continued*

**INCAN GOVERNMENT CREATES UNITY** (Pages 460–461)

**How did the government unite the empire?**

The Inca had a highly organized system to govern their empire. Small groups of people known as **ayllu** worked together for the common good. For example, they built irrigation ditches together. The Inca applied this idea to their empire. Families were placed in groups of 10, 100, 1,000, and so on. A chief led each group.

The Inca usually let local rulers stay in place when they conquered a people—as long as the conquered people met any Incan demands. The most important demand was for all adult workers to spend some days each year working for the state. They might work on state farms or build state roads or buildings. This payment of labor was known as **mita**.

The Inca built a complex network of roads. The roads linked all parts of the empire. The Inca also built all government buildings in the same style. This created a common identity for the government throughout the empire. They made all people speak a common language—the Incan tongue, called Quechua.

The Inca controlled the economy. They told people what to grow or make and how it would be distributed. The government also took care of people who needed help, such as the very old or ill.

In spite of all these advances, the Inca never developed a system of writing. All records were kept in peoples’ memories. They did have a device for counting. It was a set of knotted strings called a **quipu**. The Inca also had day and night calendars for information about their gods.

2. What was mita, and what forms did it take?

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\_\_\_\_\_

**RELIGION SUPPORTS THE STATE; DISCORD IN THE EMPIRE**

(Pages 462–463)

**How were religion and government connected?**

The Incan religion played a central role in Inca life. The Inca believed in fewer gods than the peoples of Mexico. The most important of the Incan gods were the creator god and the sun god. Cuzco, the capital, was the most important religious center. It was decorated with gold and other precious objects.

In the early 1500s, the Incan Empire reached the height of its power under the rule of Huayna Capac. However, he died while traveling through the empire. After Huayna Capac’s death, civil war broke out between his two sons, Atahualpa and Huascar. Atahualpa eventually won, but the war tore the empire apart. When the Spanish arrived, they took advantage of Incan weakness to divide and conquer the empire.

3. Why did the Incan Empire fall?

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# The Inca Create a Mountain Empire

## MAIN IDEA

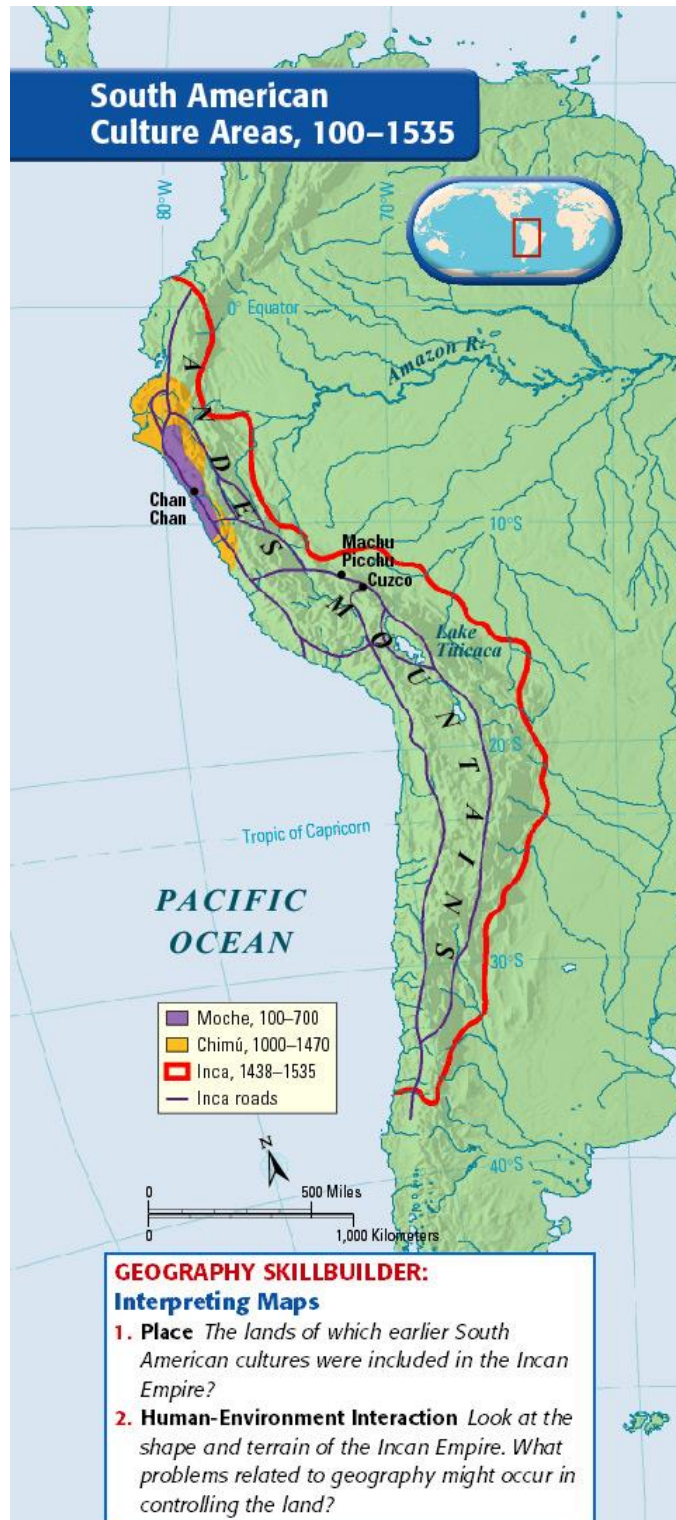
**POWER AND AUTHORITY** The Inca built a vast empire supported by taxes, governed by a bureaucracy, and linked by extensive road systems.

## WHY IT MATTERS NOW

The Incan system of government was similar to some socialist governments in the 20th century.

## TERMS & NAMES

- Pachacuti
- ayllu
- mita
- quipu



▼ Machu Picchu lies some 8,000 feet above sea level on a ridge between two mountain peaks.

also may have served a ceremonial purpose. For example, Machu Picchu, excavated by Hiram Bingham in 1912, was isolated and mysterious. Like Cuzco, Machu Picchu also had a sun temple, public buildings, and a central plaza. Some sources suggest it was a religious center. Others think it was an estate of Pachacuti. Still others believe it was a retreat for Incan rulers or the nobility.



Rise and Fall of the Inca		
<b>Traits of Civilization</b>	<b>Strength Leading to Power</b>	<b>Weakness Leading to Decline</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Religious beliefs and theocracy</li> <li>• Major road systems</li> <li>• Type of welfare state with huge bureaucracy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• United culture</li> <li>• Loyalty to the Emperor</li> <li>• Connected entire empire and aided control</li> <li>• Care for entire population during good and bad times</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many physical and human resources funneled into religious activities</li> <li>• Enemy could also use roads to move troops</li> <li>• People struggle to care for themselves with the elimination of the welfare state</li> </ul>
<p><b>SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Charts</b></p> <p><b>1. Forming and Supporting Opinions</b> <i>In your opinion, which of the three traits leading to power was the most valuable? Briefly discuss your reasons.</i></p> <p><b>2. Comparing</b> <i>Which trait did you find repeated in the Maya and Aztec empires?</i></p>		