

Africa

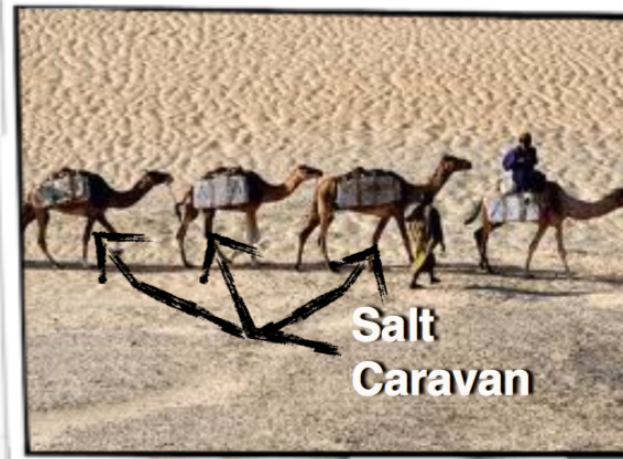
In Central and South Africa... After millennia of being hunters and gathers, the Bantu successfully developing agriculture in subsaharan Africa by Cameroon (See the Red dot on the map). Thanks to the food surplus of agriculture, the Bantu grew rapidly in numbers. Due to overpopulation, they begin to expand. The Bantu Expansion was one of the largest migrations in human history. Between 1500BC-1000AD, the Bantu people migrate through the the entire southern half of Africa, establishing agricultural settlements and spreading their language and culture with them. These settlements grew into small kingdoms.

In West Africa... In 200 AD, West Africa was just beginning to develop its own brand of agriculture. The Berbers, a nomadic tribe living in the Sahara Desert, began to develop a caravan between the Romans in North Africa and the young West African settlements. A caravan is a group of traders that travel across deserts, mainly using camels. The Berbers were in search of salt, gold, ivory, wild animals and slaves to sell to the Romans. Thanks to the Trans-Saharan Trade trade, West African settlements received invaluable money, technology, and information needed to take the next step in expansion. Most importantly, they imported domesticable horses. The settlements rapidly grow into kingdoms and begin expanding.

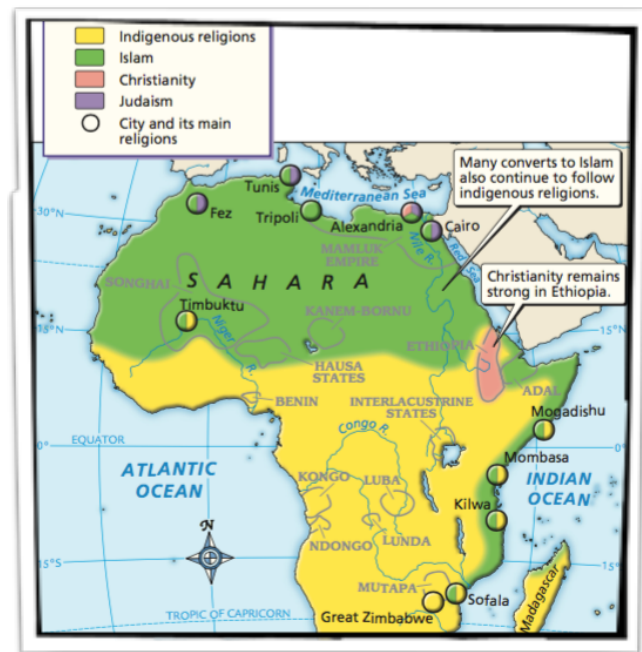
In 830 AD, the Ghana Empire took hold of the Niger River in West Africa. Ghana built its wealth and reputation from its salt, gold, and slave trade. Their main trading partners in the Trans-Saharan trade switched to being the Islamic Arabs, who had conquered all of the North African coast.

The West Africans held to a traditional animist that every living things has a spirit and your ancestors spirits live amongst the people when they die. As trade with the new Islamic empire grew, so to did the Islamic religion. The common religious ties helped solidify the Trans-Sahara trade with the Islamic Arabs, which flooded W. Africa with wealth, resources, technology, education, textiles, and manufactured items from Asia in exchange for gold, salt and slaves.

In 1230 AD, Ghana was conquered by the Kingdom of Mali from its southern border. Mali, with its great king Mansa Musa, continued the traditions of Islam, trade and education. The capital Timbuktu became one of the intellectual and economic capitals of the world, attracting students from Europe and Asia. Mansa Musa had such great wealth that on his Hajj, or pilgrimage to Mecca, he single handedly caused massive inflation along the Mediterranean Sea and indirectly provided some of the wealth for the Renaissance in Italy.



In East Africa... In 100 AD, the Aksumite Empire was established in Ethiopia, by the Red Sea just below Egypt. By 300 AD, the Ethiopia was considered one of the four great powers, along with Rome, Persia and China despite being small in size. In 336 AD, Ethiopia converted to Christianity, making it the first major power to do so. As Islam spread throughout the Middle East, North Africa and West Africa, Ethiopia became isolated. When the Christian European Kingdoms began to establish themselves, the common Christian bond helped them build an alliance. With the speed and strength of the Islamic expansion, both the Europeans and the Ethiopians needed each other's help to survive.



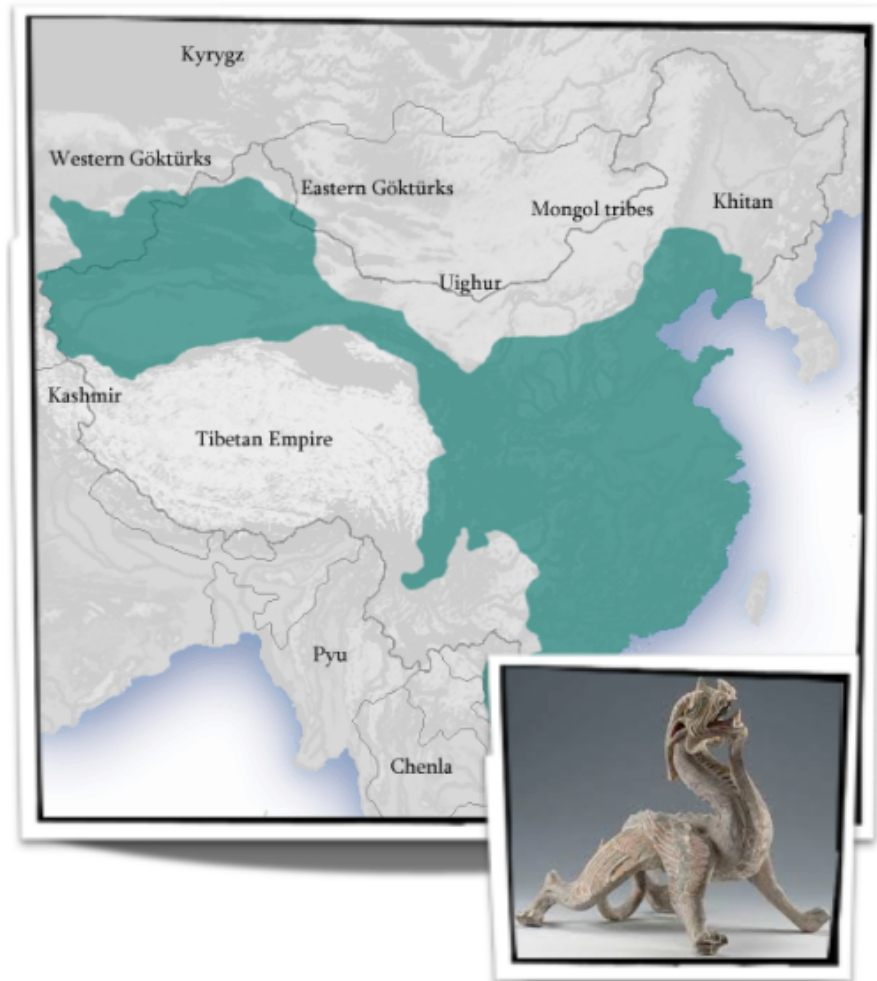
E. Asia Part 1: China

Warring States... After the Han Dynasty collapsed, China entered a period of disunity, chaos, and change. Civil war and strife ate at China from the inside. Barbarians attacked from the outside (mainly the north). From 220-589 was the "Period of Disunity," with six different ruling families. During this time Buddhism spread and became engrained in Chinese culture. The Chinese people found comfort in Buddhism as an escape from their daily suffering. Monasteries were setup and Buddhist schools are opened. Soon, Buddhism became the official religions of China.

Unlike Rome, China was able to reunify their empire under the Sui, Tang, and Song Dynasties.

Sui Dynasty... The Sui Dynasty saw two major accomplishments. The first was the spread of rice from Vietnam to Northern China that could grow in cold weather and could be harvested twice in one year. This meant a massive increase in food, wealth and population. The second was the Grand Canal. It was a man-made river that connected the Yellow and Yangtze Rivers and could take boats either direction. This allowed trade to flourish farther and faster than ever before.

Tang & Song Dynasties... During the Tang Dynasty, trade flourished again. The Great Canal trade route allowed farmers to focus on farming and manufacturers to focus on making things. The Tang made the roads safe again for travel in Asia, reigniting trade. All of the production and wealth led to a new urbanization movement, where people migrated from living in rural farms to urban cities in large numbers.



There was a cultural flourishing as well. The movable type was invented, allowing books to be printed quickly on paper. Iron was forged into steel, making better/stronger weapons and tools. Gunpowder and steel stirrups for riding horses were embraced, improving the speed and deadliness of war. The rudder and compass were invented, allowing ships to travel farther, faster, safer. This led to voyages throughout Asia and (some say) even to the Americas. The finest clothes and goods were made in China. Much of what we consider to be “Chinese Culture” today was developed in this time.

Muslim & China Conflict

The Tang were also expansionists. They tried to expand their borders westward into the Middle East. This brought a clash between the Global Titans: the Islamic Empire, who was conquering Eastward and the Chinese Empire, which was conquering Westward. At the Battle of the Talas River in 751 AD, the Islamic Empire beat the Chinese but, thanks to the Himalayan Mountains, the Muslims did not have the resources left to attack into China. To this day, the Talas River serves as the dividing line between Islamic Middle East and China.



As prosperity returned, there was a change in the cultural tide from Buddhism back to Confucianism. With this shift, the Chinese focused less on military expansion. The civil exam returned, where only those who could pass the week long test could hold a government job.

Japan... The country of Japan began as a collection of small islands off the coast of the giant Chinese empire; much like Britain was an island off the coast of the Roman empire. While the island had an ancient hunting and gathering people, “civilization” did not begin until a migrants arrived from Korea and China around 300 AD.

As the Japanese society grew, they became great copycats: find who has the most power and copy them. Around 600AD, the most powerful country was China. Thus, they borrowed heavily from the Chinese: writing, Confucian ethics, art, architecture and government style. The Japanese even adopted Buddhism as their religion about the same time as China. The Japanese eventually took these borrowed ideas and then put their own twist on them.

In 800 AD, Japan’s kingdom devolved, or fell apart, into feudalism. Much like in Europe, rich and powerful Daiyos (nobles) controlled fiefdoms, or patches of land, with peasants working as rice farmers. Instead of Knights, the Japanese had the famous Samurais. This was a time of much fighting, as Daiyos fought each other for land and power.

As Japan entered 1300, their government had developed into a Shogun: a military dictator with absolute authority in Japan. This marks the beginning of a long marriage in Japan between military and government power.



ASSIGNMENT

- 1) Read & Update the Content Matrix
- 2) Fill out this chart with the the strengths/positives and weaknesses/negatives of each region.

Region	Strengths	Weaknesses
Africa		
E. Asia		

- 3) Create an impact chart. As you read you are to evaluate each area on the level of impact the people in that region had on the world culturally, militarily, and economically.
 - Rate each area as to how impactful you believe them to be at the at 300 CE (■) and at 1300 CE (▲).
 - Draw arrows to show whether they grew or shrunk in impact and influence.
 - If there is change, ask yourself “What caused them to grow or shrink or stagnate in their influence?” and make note of it on your chart.

How to rate each region:

- Local: Mainly Hunter/Gatherers and Small Villages; people barely impacting those outside of their small circles.
- Regional: Kingdoms, Small Empires.
- Continental: Large empire(s) that span across/impact/consume most of the continent.
- Inter-Continental: Massive empire(s) that span across/impact/consume multiple continents.
- Global: Massive empire(s) that span across/impact/consume most of the world.

Examples

