

Chapter Summary

Section 1: Early Civilizations of Africa

Geography affected migration, cultural development, and trade during the time of early civilizations in Africa. The civilization of Nubia rose and flourished before it was invaded by Axum and declined.

Section 2: Kingdoms of West Africa

Farming villages in Africa began to create a surplus of food, which led to increased trade. Kingdoms such as Ghana, Mali, and Songhai grew wealthy from this trade and controlled large regions in West Africa.



Chapter Summary (continued)

Section 3: Kingdoms and Trading States of East Africa

The East African kingdom of Axum grew wealthy through trade and converted to Christianity. Its legacy lived on in Ethiopia. Small city-states on the East African coast were centers of trade and cultural mixing.

Section 4: Societies in Medieval Africa

Society in medieval Africa was based on family units that varied in composition. Governments arose as communities grew bigger. Religion and the arts were very important to African societies.



Objectives

- Understand how geography affected migration, cultural development, and trade in Africa.
- Describe the rise and decline of Nubia.
- Explain how outside forces led to change in North Africa.



Terms and People

- **Sahara** – the largest desert in the world, covering almost all of North Africa
- **savanna** – a grassy plain
- **cataract** – waterfall
- **desertification** – the process by which a desert spreads, often caused by climate change

Terms and People (continued)

- **Bantu** – the root language of a diverse group of West African people who migrated into southern Africa between 1000 B.C. and A.D. 1000
- **Nubia** – an ancient kingdom that flourished in present-day Sudan at the same time as the ancient Egyptians, from about 2700 B.C. to A.D. 350
- **Meroë** – the Nubian capital after 500 B.C., which controlled the Nile's north-south trade route and the east-west trade route from the Red Sea to North Africa



How did geography and natural resources affect the development of early societies throughout Africa?

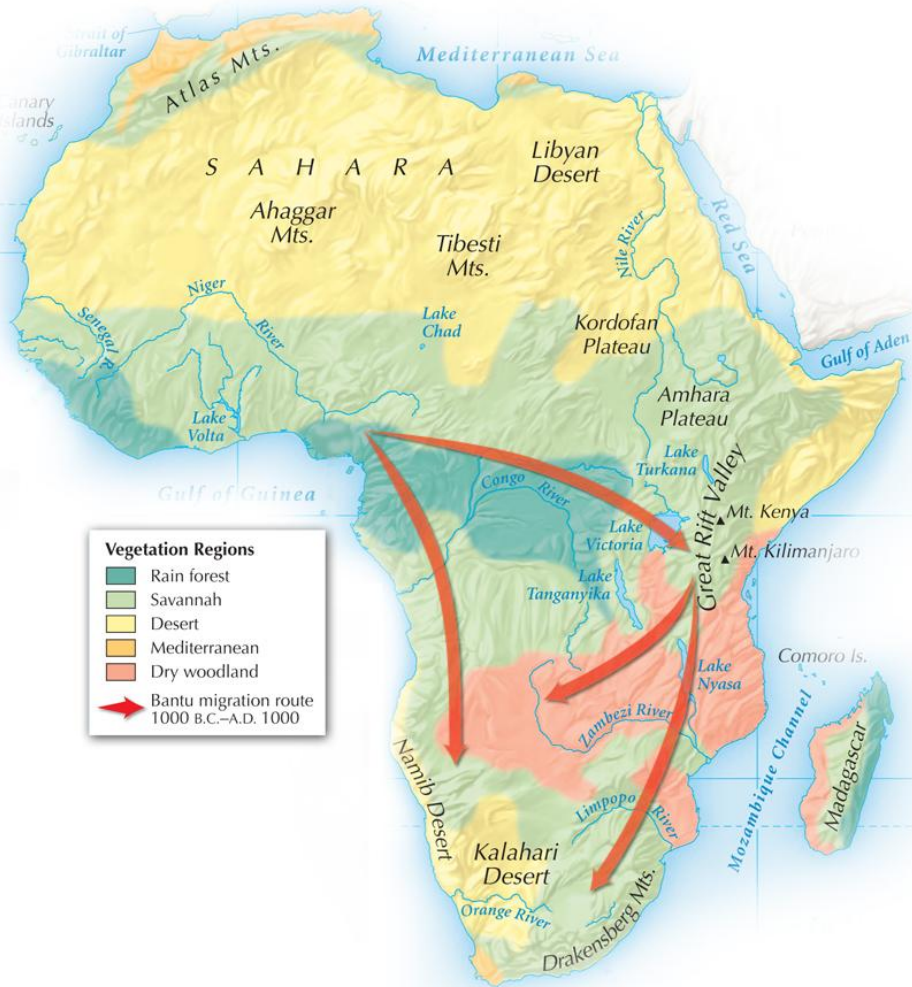
The vast Sahara Desert is one of many **geographic features of Africa that have influenced its history and development.**

Migrations of people and ideas contributed to the rich diversity of this continent.

The variety of climate and geography in Africa influenced its diversity of culture.



One of its most notable geographic features is the vast **Sahara** Desert.



African vegetation regions are wide bands across the continent.

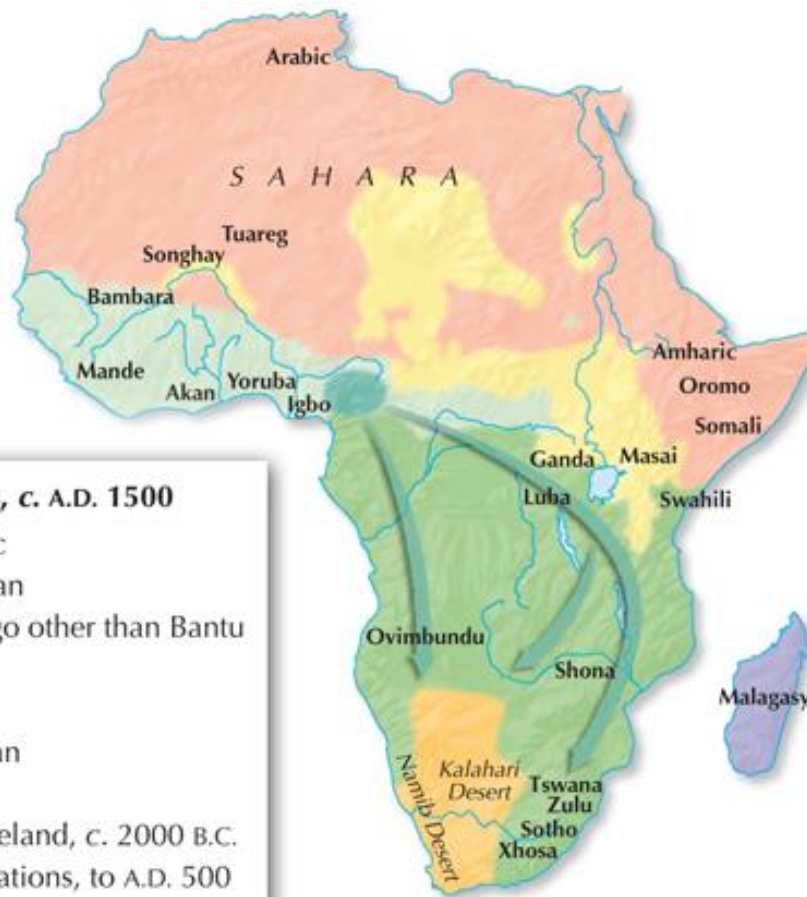
- The most populated regions are the **savannas**.
- Deserts, rain forests, and rivers with **cataracts** hindered easy movement.

Despite the difficulty of travel, trade expanded by A.D. 200 due to camels from Asia.

- They could carry heavy loads 20 or 30 miles a day.
- Merchants on both sides of the Sahara profited from these “ships of the desert.”

Neolithic farmers cultivated the Nile Valley. Villages also appeared in the Sahara.

- The Sahara was a well-watered area at the time.
- However, around 2500 B.C. climate change led to **desertification** of the Sahara.
- As farmland was lost, **people began to migrate south.**

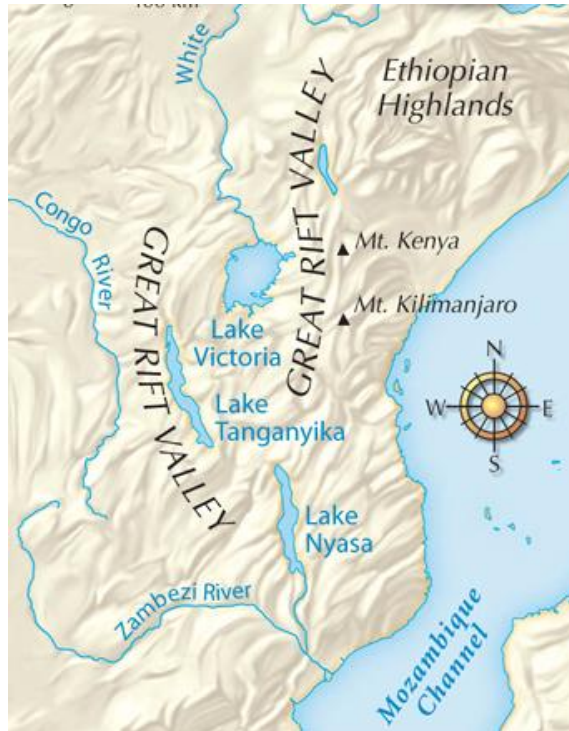


The West Africans who migrated south and east spoke a language called **Bantu**.

Language Groups, c. A.D. 1500

- Afro-Asiatic
- Nilo-Saharan
- Niger-Congo other than Bantu
- Bantu
- Khoisan
- Austronesian
- Igbo Language
- Bantu homeland, c. 2000 B.C.
- Bantu migrations, to A.D. 500

The kingdom of **Nubia** took shape at the same time as the great Egyptian civilization.




- It was located south of Egypt on the upper Nile River.
- Nubia was under the control of Egyptians for many years.
- It was forced to move its capital to **Meroë** because of Assyrian invaders.

People in the Nubian capital Meroë mastered ironworking and the city became a trade center.



Nubians worshipped their own gods and developed their own form of writing.



Ultimately, the civilization declined. Nubia was invaded from the south by the kingdom of Axum in A.D. 350.

Early civilizations in Africa had strong ties to the Mediterranean Sea and were influenced by outsiders.



- Phoenician traders built the city of Carthage, which was powerful between 800 B.C. and 146 B.C.
- Romans farmed North Africa to feed their people.

Islam spread to North Africa in the 690s and became the dominant religion there.



Muslim civilization flourished in cities such as Cairo, Fez, and Marrakesh.

Objectives

- Understand why gold and salt were important in early Africa.
- Describe how the rulers of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai built strong kingdoms.
- Summarize how other West African societies developed.



Terms and People

- **surplus** – more of something than is needed
- **commodity** – valuable product
- **Ghana** – a kingdom created around 800 A.D. in the V made by the Niger and Senegal rivers
- **Sundiata** – the sole survivor, according to tradition, of the Mandinka people who founded the empire of Mali by 1235

Terms and People (continued)

- **Mali** – an empire in Africa founded in 1235 in the upper Niger River region
- **Mansa Musa** – the greatest ruler of the kingdom of Mali, who came to the throne in 1312 and led for 25 years
- **Songhai** – a kingdom that developed in the 1460s at the bend in the Niger River



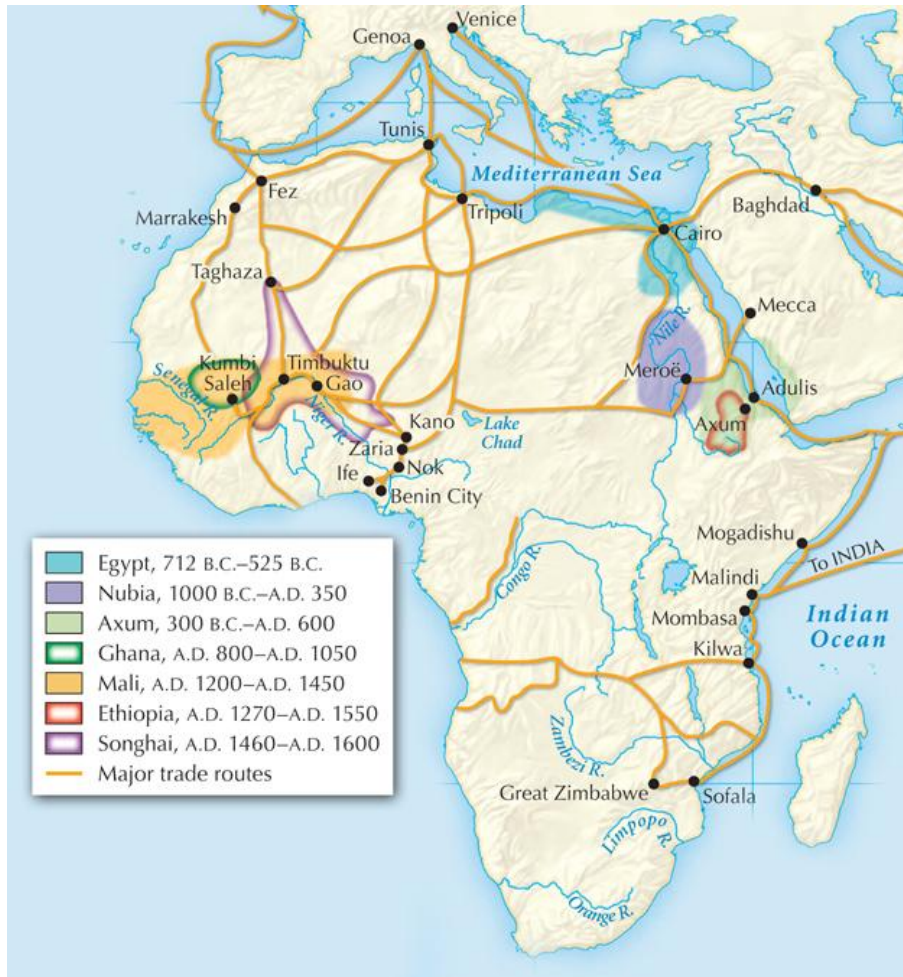
How did the kingdoms of West Africa develop and prosper?

As trade in Africa expanded, cities such as Gao and Timbuktu developed and became wealthy centers of commerce.

Between 800 and 1600, several kingdoms gained control of prosperous cities such as these.

When farmers created **surpluses**, trade expanded across Africa.

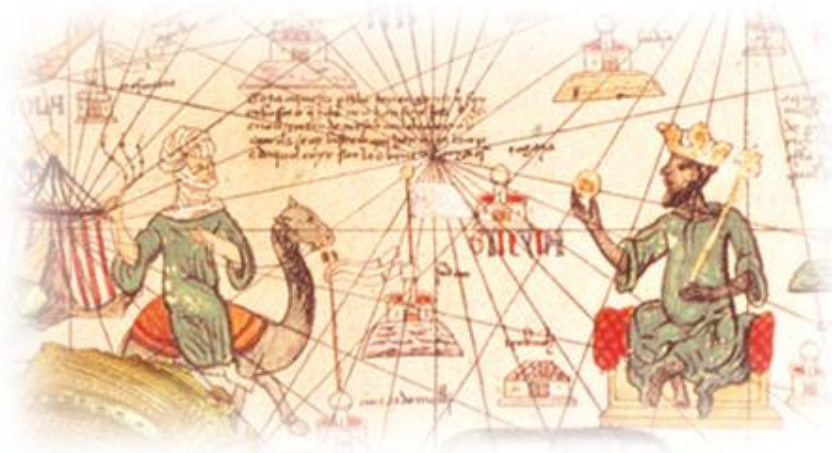
- A trade network took goods from the savannah across the Sahara.
- Gold and salt were two of the most traded **commodities**.
- As trade grew, cities developed on the northern edges of the savanna.
- Monarchs gained control of trade routes and built powerful kingdoms.



Trade routes crisscrossed the African continent between 1000 B.C. and 1600 A.D.

- Travel along desert routes was long and dangerous.

According to tradition, the kingdom of **Mali** was founded in **1235** by a young man named **Sundiata**.



The kings of Mali, or *mansas*, took control of gold-mining regions and salt supplies.

The greatest ruler of Mali, **Mansa Musa**,
came to power in 1312.

He conquered additional territory and converted
to Islam.

He made the pilgrimage to Mecca and brought
back Muslim scholars and architects to Mali.

In the 1400s a new West African kingdom, **Songhai, developed.**

The soldier-king Sonni Ali brought trade routes and cities under his control.

When he died, the emperor Askia Muhammad expanded Songhai territory, holding court at Gao.

He formed strong ties to the Muslim world.

The Songhai kingdom experienced disputes over succession in the late 1500s.

- In 1591, invaders from **Morocco** conquered the **empire**.
- Though the invaders couldn't maintain control, the glory of the Songhai kingdom was over.

Great Kingdoms of West Africa

Kingdom	Notable Cities	Years
Ghana	Kumbi Saleh	800–1050
Mali	Timbuktu	1235–1400s
Songhai	Gao	1464–1591

In addition to the great kingdoms of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai, there were several smaller societies in the region.

- **Benin** rose on the Guinea Coast during the 1300s. Its people knew how to cast bronze and brass.
- The Hausa of West Africa became prominent in the 1300s. They **built walled cities** for protection. They were quite progressive—**many of their rulers were women.**

Objectives

- Explain how religion influenced the development of Axum and Ethiopia.
- Understand how trade affected the city-states in East Africa.
- Describe the economy of Great Zimbabwe.



Terms and People

- **Axum** – trading center, and powerful ancient kingdom in northern present-day Ethiopia
- **Adulis** – an Axum port city on the Red Sea, one of two major cities in the kingdom that commanded a trade network in the region
- **Ethiopia** – a Greek term used by Axumite kings to refer to their kingdom

Terms and People (continued)

- **King Lalibela** – the ruler of Ethiopia in the early 1200s
- **Swahili** – an East African language and culture that emerged by the 1000s from a combination of African, Asian, and Arabic influences
- **Great Zimbabwe** – powerful East African medieval trade center and city-state between 900 and 1500. Located in southern present-day Zimbabwe



What influence did religion and trade have on the development of East Africa?

The kingdom of Axum expanded across East Africa after 100 B.C. **This civilization gained control of the Red Sea and grew rich from trade.**

As East Africans traded and exchanged ideas with people from Asia and the Middle East, a new culture and language emerged.

The kingdom of **Axum** reached from the mountains in East Africa to the Red Sea and flourished between 300 B.C. and A.D. 600.



- The people there were descended from African farmers and Middle Easterners.
- The two cultures blended and created a new language called Geez.

Axum grew very wealthy through trade.

- One of its main cities, **Adulis**, was a port on the Red Sea. Here, goods such as **ivory, animal hides, and gold** were brought to market.
- Axum controlled a triangular trade network between Africa, India, and the Mediterranean.

Axum converted to Christianity in the 300s.

- This conversion **strengthened the kingdom's ties with North Africa** and the Mediterranean.
- However, when Islam spread in the 600s, **Axum became isolated** and declined.

Though Axum faded, its culture did not disappear. Rather, its legacy survived in medieval **Ethiopia**.




- **King Lalibela** came to power in Ethiopia in the early 1200s.
- He directed the building of Christian churches, carved down into solid rock.

Ethiopian Christians kept ties with the Holy Land in the Middle East.



Some made pilgrimages to Jerusalem.

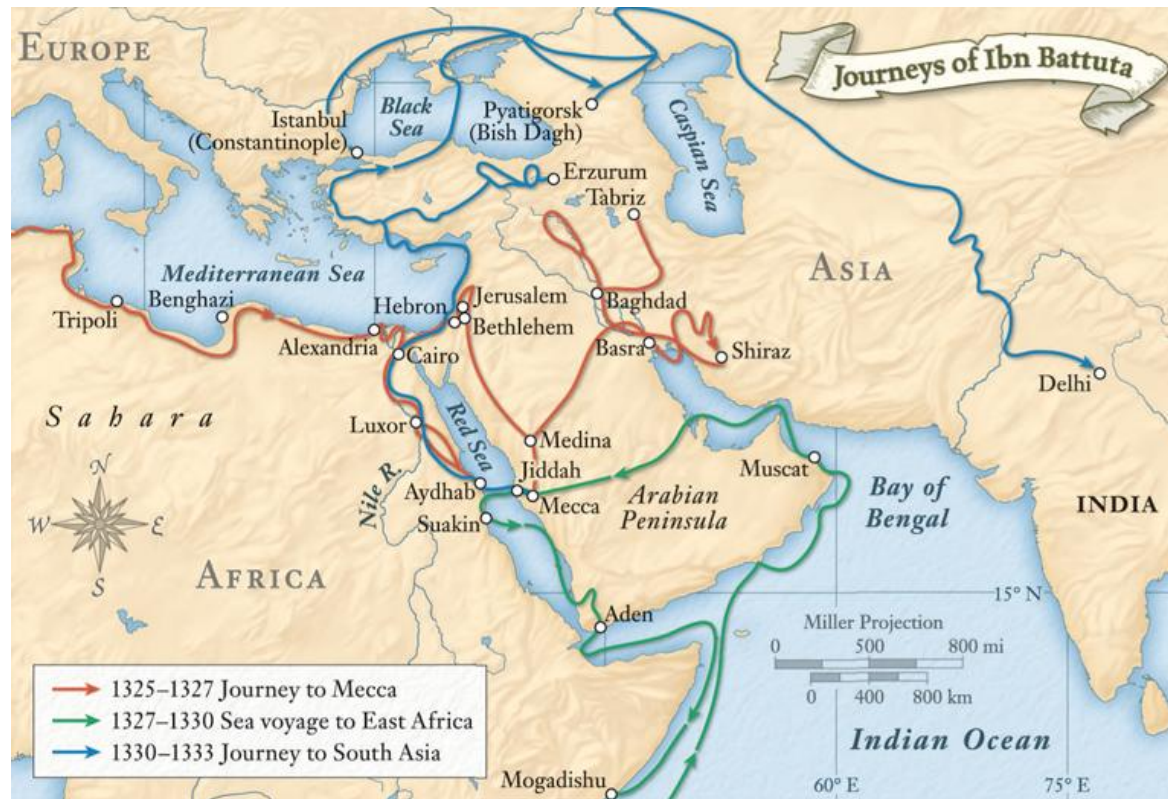


Ethiopian Christianity absorbed local customs over time.

A rich cultural mix existed along the East African coast.

- Phoenician, Greek, Roman, Indian, Muslim, and Asian traders had visited since ancient times.
- Sailors learned that **monsoon winds would carry them** from India to Africa each year. The rulers of East African city-states welcomed ships.

Trade linked distant ports in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.



This vibrant trading culture on the coast of East Africa led to the emergence of a new language.



- **Swahili** developed as greater numbers of people began to settle in East Africa.
- Arabic words were absorbed into the Bantu-based language to create Swahili, an Arabic word meaning “of the coast.”

South of the coastal city-states, a great inland empire existed.

- Bantu-speaking people who lived in this region between 900 and 1500 **built huge stone towers in their capital city.**
- The ruins left behind today are called **Great Zimbabwe.** Archaeologists are working now to learn more about this civilization.

Great Zimbabwe was part of an extensive trade network. It reached its height around 1300.

- **It had artisans and skilled builders.** The ruler was probably a god-king with a large court.
- Zimbabwe declined by 1500, probably due to civil war and slowing trade.

Section Review

QuickTake Quiz



Know It, Show It Quiz



Objectives

- Identify the different ways that the family influenced medieval African cultures.
- Describe the variety of forms of medieval African governments.
- Understand the role of religion and art in medieval societies.



Terms and People

- **nuclear family** – parents and children living and working together as a unit
- **patrilineal** – a family system in which important kinship ties such as inheritance are passed through the father's side
- **matrilineal** – a family system in which inheritance is passed through the mother's side

Terms and People (continued)

- **lineage** – a group whose members claim the same ancestry
- **consensus** – general agreement
- **griot** – a professional storyteller who recited ancient stories in West Africa

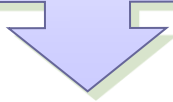


What factors influenced the development of societies in Africa?

Due to Africa's immense size, early societies developed in a variety of ways. **Settled farming communities emerged in areas with good soil and water.**

Transportation advances such as the use of camels connected communities to each other. Each society developed around the **elements of family, government, religion, and art.**

In medieval Africa, the family was the basic unit of society.



- In some societies, the **nuclear family** formed the basic unit. In others, **the extended family all lived and worked together.**
- Some families were **patrilineal**, tracing inheritance through the father's side, and some were **matrilineal**, tracing it through the mother's side.

Belonging to a particular family and lineage gave people a sense of community and responsibility.

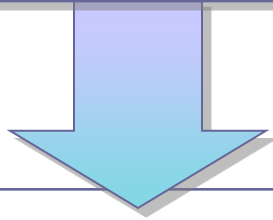


- A **lineage** is a group whose members claim the same ancestry. A clan was made up of several lineages.
- People's place in their community was also determined by age grades in medieval Africa. An age grade was made up of all children born in the same year.

Governments arose in medieval Africa as communities grew. Political patterns varied.

- In smaller communities, **power was shared among many people.** Villages made decisions by reaching a **consensus** after open discussions.
- If villages were part of a kingdom such as Songhai, they **had to obey decisions from a distant court and pay taxes.**

In another system of government, **villages were grouped into districts** and governed by officials named by a king.



An example of this was the kingdom of Kongo, which existed around 1500.



Each village paid taxes in cowrie shells to a governor.

Religious beliefs in Africa before the arrival of Christianity and Islam were complex and tied to nature.

- Like Greeks and Romans, Africans worshipped many gods. Like the Chinese, some Africans believed that the spirits of their ancestors could help them.
- However, they did believe in a supreme being that was above all other gods.

Christianity and Islam spread into Africa by A.D. 1000.

- Africans often associated the God of these religions with their supreme being.
- Christianity and Islam assimilated many local beliefs and traditions

Early and medieval societies in Africa had great artistic and creative power.

Examples of this power can be seen in:

- The ancient rock paintings of the Sahara
- The pyramids of Egypt and Nubia
- The rock churches of Ethiopia

African artists used a variety of materials, such as ivory, wood, and gold.

- They **made decorative items** such as bowls or jewelry.
- African **art often served social or religious purposes**. For example, decorative patterns often had special meaning.

Oral traditions were an important part of preserving African history.



- Professional storytellers call **griots** recited ancient tales.
- Some stories were not spoken—they were communicated by the talking drums of western and central Africa.