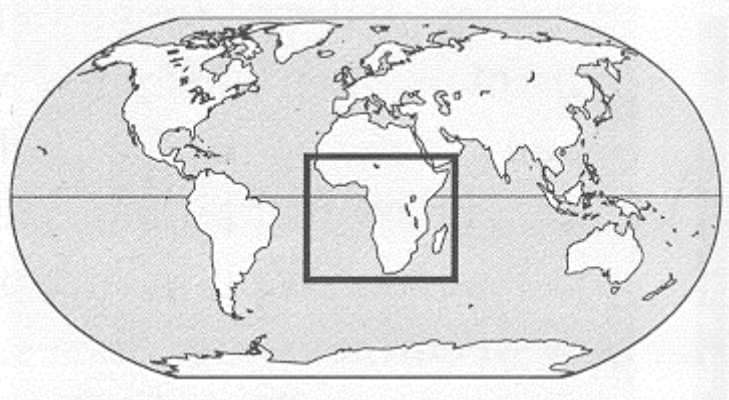


**GLOBAL HISTORY II  
HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS  
DUE FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2009**

## I. The Kingdoms of Africa

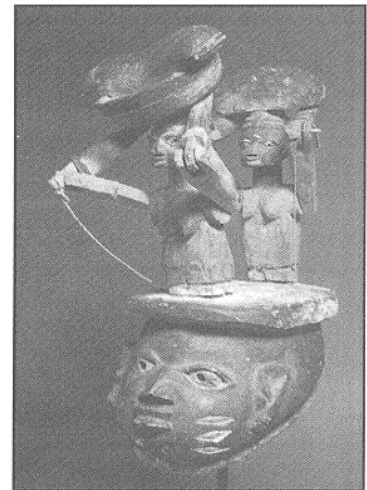
Below and on the following pages, you will find a brief review of the material we have covered in this unit. Be sure to read and study pages 1-3 and complete the exercises on page 4.



### THE GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING

Much of North Africa is occupied by the **Sahara Desert**. Just below this desert is a wide band of grassland known as the **savanna**. The savanna stretches across the entire width of Africa, from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean. South of the savanna lies the tropical rain forests of equatorial Africa.

The Sahara acted as a barrier that separated the peoples of sub-Saharan Africa from the Mediterranean world and the rest of Eurasia. African tribes developed their own customs and beliefs, such as **animism** — the belief that objects in nature, such as trees, have their own spirits. Despite this separation, trade across the desert was never cut off completely. Merchants, traveling on camels able to go several days without water, crossed the Sahara. They were motivated by the gold and other riches they could obtain from trade with West African societies. At the same time, West Africans lacked salt, which is vital to human survival. Merchants, moving in 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.



*African mask showing merchants in the gold-salt trade.*

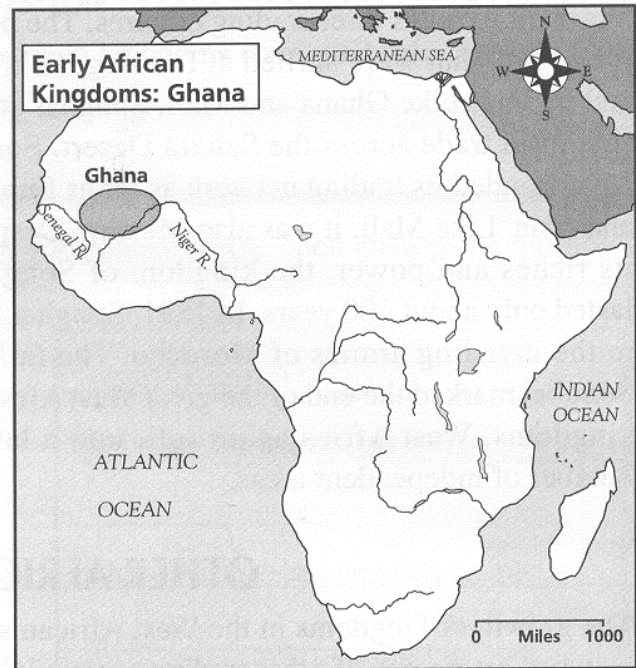
### THE WEST AFRICAN KINGDOMS

Around the eighth century, West Africa saw the rise of a series of powerful kingdoms. For the next thousand years, their civilizations dominated West Africa — leading to an increased exchange of ideas, the rise of cities, and greater wealth.

## **KINGDOM OF GHANA (750–1200)**

The kingdom of Ghana was founded around 750. The people of Ghana used **their** ability to make iron swords, spears, and lances to defeat their neighbors and gain control over West Africa's major trade routes. Caravans would bring salt south to Ghana, and return north with gold from areas southwest of Ghana.

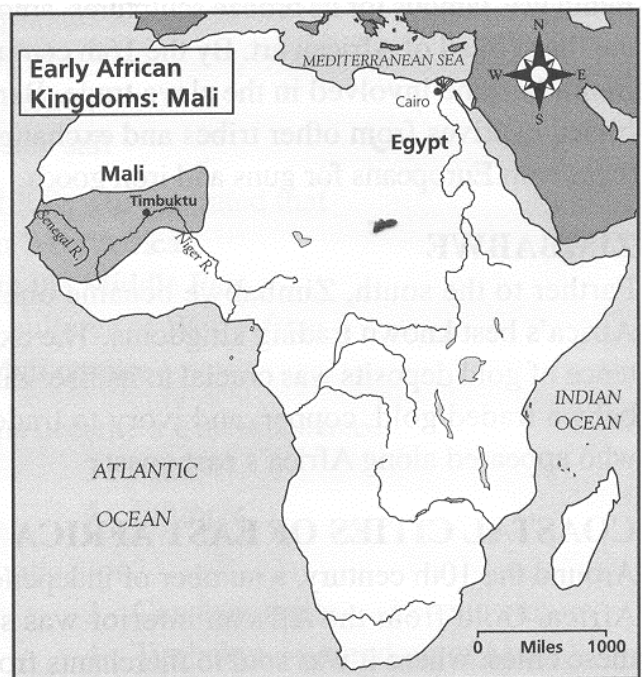
The power of the kings of Ghana rested on their ability to tax all trade passing through the region, especially the salt and gold trade. The rulers of Ghana built a capital city, developed a large cavalry, and governed a wide area. However, in 1076, they were invaded by Muslims from North Africa. Ghana never fully recovered and eventually dissolved into many smaller states.



## **KINGDOM OF MALI (1240–1400)**

In 1240, Mali conquered Ghana. Mali's rulers established a new empire and brought gold and salt mines under their control. Mali's rulers converted to Islam, although most of their people did not adopt that faith.

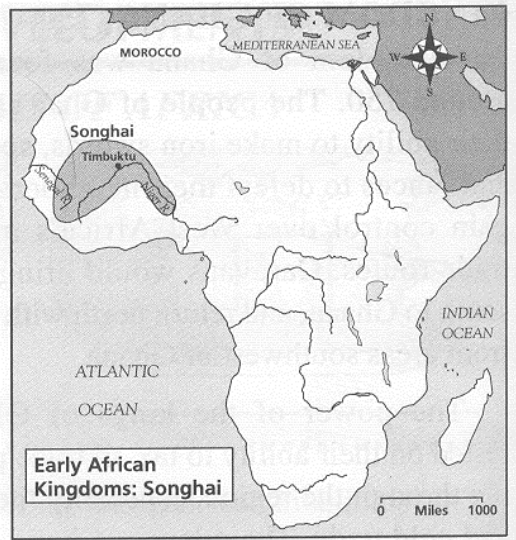
Mali's most famous ruler, **Mansa Musa**, expanded his kingdom greatly. In the 1330s, he made a religious pilgrimage to Mecca. Mansa Musa turned his capital city of **Timbuktu** into a flourishing center of trade and learning. Because of the importance of studying the Qu'ran, more West Africans learned to read and write. 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, the Songhai people captured Timbuktu and brought the middle of the Upper Niger region under their control.

The kingdom of Songhai emerged as the largest of Africa's three trading empires. The people of Songhai were skilled at farming, fishing, and trading. Like Ghana and Mali, Songhai grew rich from trade across the Sahara Desert. Songhai expanded its trading network as far as Europe and Asia. Like Mali, it was also Muslim. Despite its riches and power, the kingdom of Songhai lasted only about 100 years. In 1591, Songhai fell to the invading armies of Morocco. The fall of Songhai marked the end of the great West African kingdoms. West Africa again split into a large number of independent areas.



## OTHER AFRICAN STATES

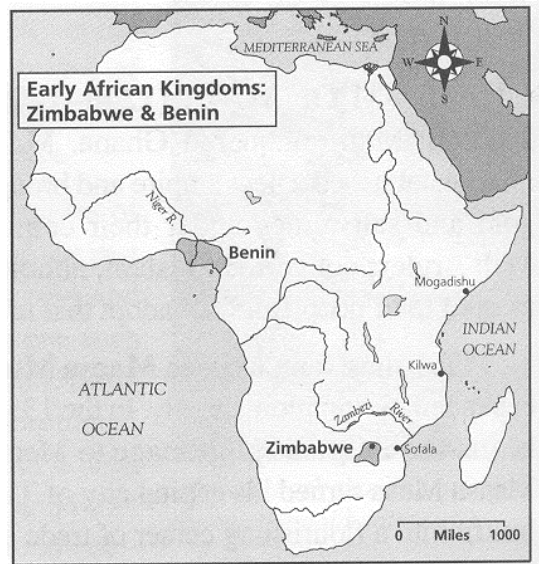
The growth of kingdoms in the West African savanna like Ghana, Mali, and Songhai was matched by the rise of other trading centers in Africa.

### BENIN

Benin developed in the rain forests of West Africa. Benin was famous for its bronze sculptures, among the finest in all of African art. By the 16th century, Benin became involved in the slave trade. Benin traded captives from other tribes and exchanged them with Europeans for guns and iron goods.

### ZIMBABWE

Farther to the south, Zimbabwe became one of Africa's best known trading kingdoms. The existence of gold deposits was crucial to its rise. Zimbabwe traded gold, copper, and ivory to traders who appeared along Africa's east coast.



## COASTAL CITIES OF EAST AFRICA


Around the 10th century, a number of independent city-states arose along the east coast of Africa. Gold from the African interior was sent down the Zambezi and other rivers to these cities, where it was sold to merchants from Arabia and India.

### ETHIOPIA

Ethiopia, a continuation of the ancient kingdom of Axum, became a Christian state in the 4th century. It remained Christian despite the rise of Islam, which cut Ethiopia off from the rest of the Christian world until the 1400s.

## II. Written Exercises

Answer the focus question and complete the exercises below *on a separate sheet of loose-leaf paper*. Take your time with this and complete the activities with attention and care. Very little credit can be given for incomplete or obviously rushed work.

	<b>ANSWERING THE FOCUS QUESTION</b> .....
One of the ways that the West African kingdoms were influenced by geography was _____ _____	

**Directions:** Complete each of the following vocabulary cards. Then answer the multiple-choice questions that follow.

<b>WEST AFRICAN KINGDOMS</b>
<i>Name two West African kingdoms:</i>
(1)
(2)
<i>What factors explain the rise of these kingdoms?</i>

<b>MANSA MUSA</b>
<i>Who was Mansa Musa?</i>
<i>What changes did he bring to his kingdom?</i>

- 1 One reason the kingdoms of the West African savanna prospered was that they
  - 1 were located along the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers
  - 2 had no contact with the rest of the world
  - 3 followed the Hindu beliefs of their rulers
  - 4 controlled an extensive trade in gold and salt
  
- 2 Mansa Musa’s journey to Mecca in the 1300s demonstrated that
  - 1 the Crusades had a great influence on West Africa
  - 2 most African leaders were educated in the Middle East
  - 3 European culture was superior to the cultures of West Africa
  - 4 Islam had a major influence on the Mali empire
  
- 3 Which of the following African kingdoms became a Christian state?
 

1 Songhai	3 Mali
2 Benin	4 Ethiopia
  
- 4 Which city is correctly paired with its civilization?
 

1 Athens — Roman empire	3 Constantinople — Persian empire
2 Mecca — T’ang Dynasty	4 Timbuktu — kingdom of Mali