

## ■ Essential Question:

- What was Africa like before the introduction of Islam?

## ■ Warm-Up Question:

- Get out your Ibn Battuta reading for a quick HW check.

# What is the geography of Africa?

How might this geography impact Africans?



# Geography of Africa

Africa's  
geography  
was very  
diverse  
& Africans  
lived  
differently  
based on  
where  
they lived



# Geography of Africa



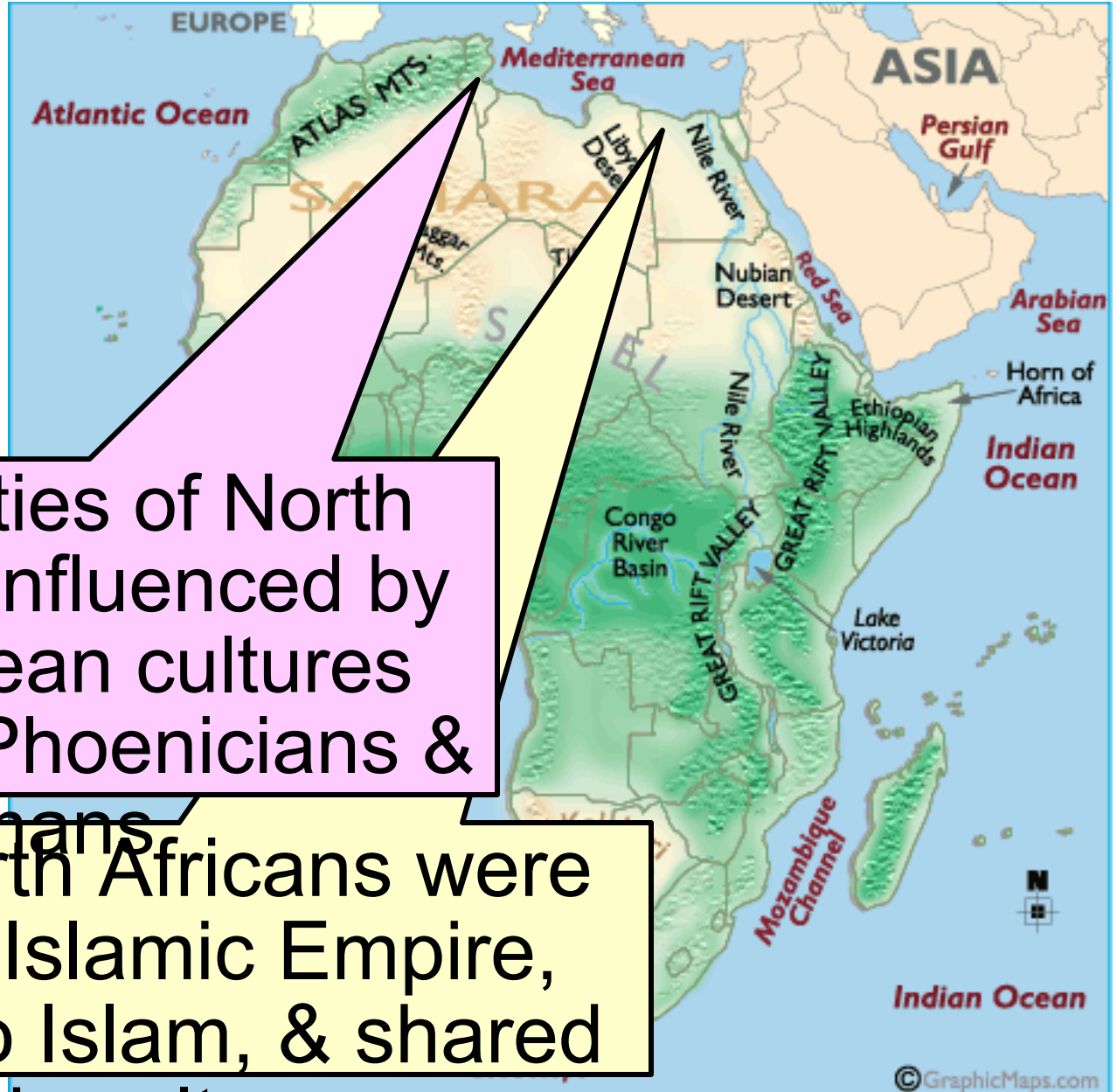
**2** Sahel means "coastline" in Arabic. African people may have named it this because the Sahara seemed like a vast ocean of sand.



The Sahara is the world's largest desert & acted as a barrier to separate North Africa from sub-Saharan Africa



# Early Societies of Africa



Early societies of North Africa were influenced by Mediterranean cultures such as the Phoenicians &

Romans

By 750, North Africans were part of the Islamic Empire, converted to Islam, & shared

# Early Societies of Africa

African societies south of the Sahara were isolated & missed out on the cultural diffusion of the Classical Era



# How did early people in Sub-Saharan Africa live?



# Characteristics of Sub-Saharan Africa

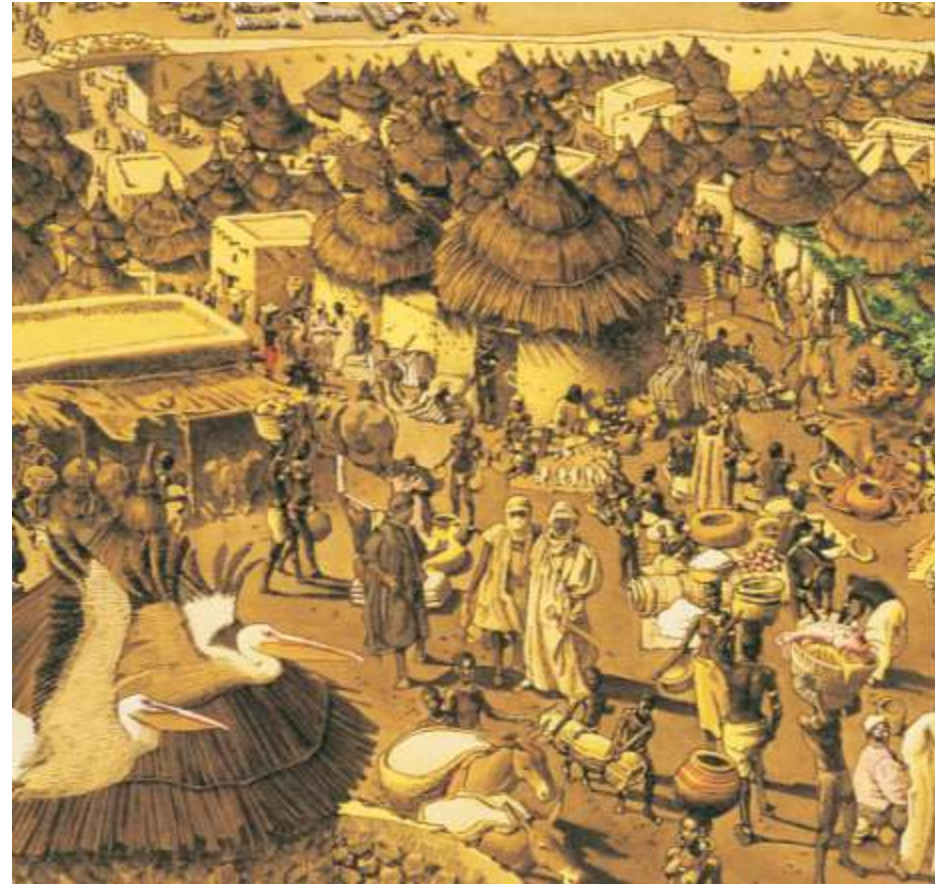
■ While the societies of sub-Saharan Africa were diverse, they shared some similarities:

— Most societies lived in farming villages in family-based clans

— Few societies had written languages;

Histories were shared orally by storytellers (griots)

— Made iron tools





# Characteristics of Africa

- Sub-Saharan people were polytheistic:
- Practiced animism, a religion in which spirits exist in nature & play a role in daily life

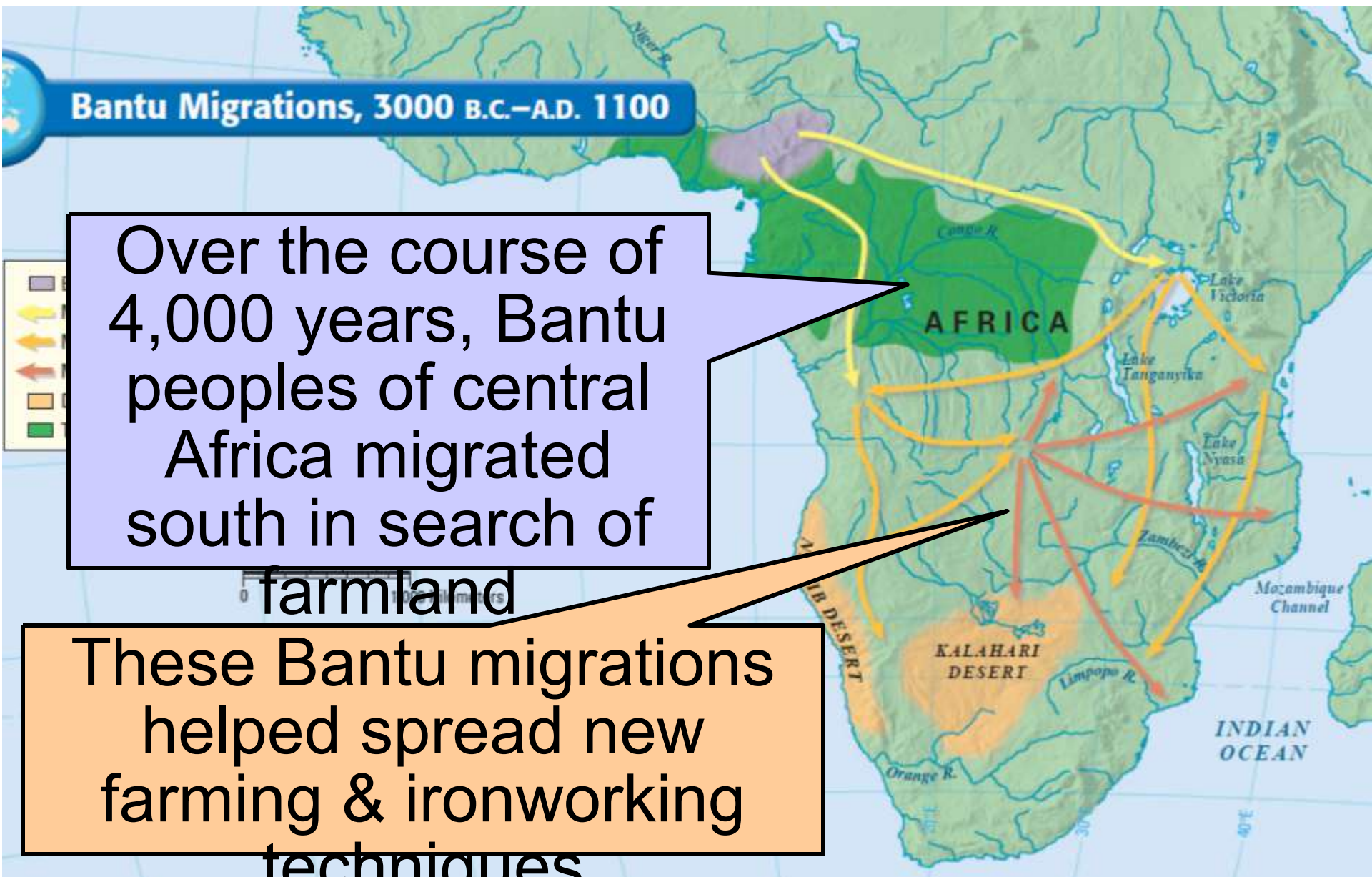


# The Bantu Migration

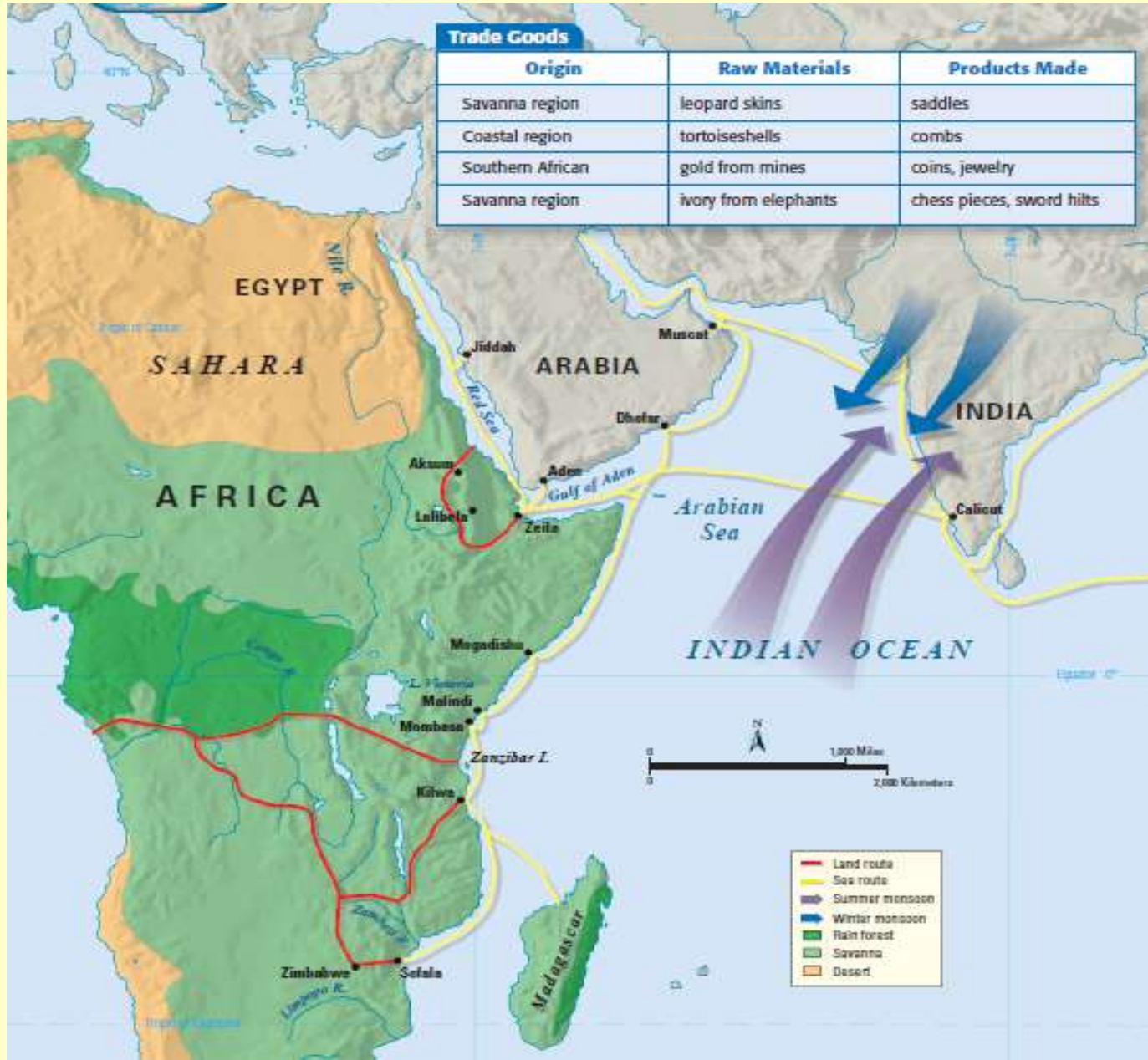
Bantu Migrations, 3000 B.C.—A.D. 1100

Over the course of 4,000 years, Bantu peoples of central Africa migrated south in search of farmland

These Bantu migrations helped spread new farming & ironworking techniques



# What factors shaped the culture of East Africa?





# East Africa

- The societies of East Africa participated in the Indian Ocean trade network & were shaped by cultural diffusion:
- The kingdom of Aksum traded with Persia, India, Arabia, & Rome; Aksum became a Christian kingdom





# Aksum Church



# East Africa



- Arab merchants introduced Islam to East African trade cities
  - The mix of African & Arab cultures led to a new Swahili language
  - Towns had mosques & were ruled by a Muslim sultan
  - But many people kept their traditional religious beliefs

# Closure Activity

- Compare the impact of geography on the development of Greece, China & Africa
- How are Greek myths similar to the myths and folk stories told by Africans?
- Why would someone say that trade is the most important factor in the development of East African and Roman culture?
- What comparisons could you make between African animism and Indian Hinduism?
- How are Swahili and Hellenistic cultures similar? How are they different?

## ■ Essential Question:

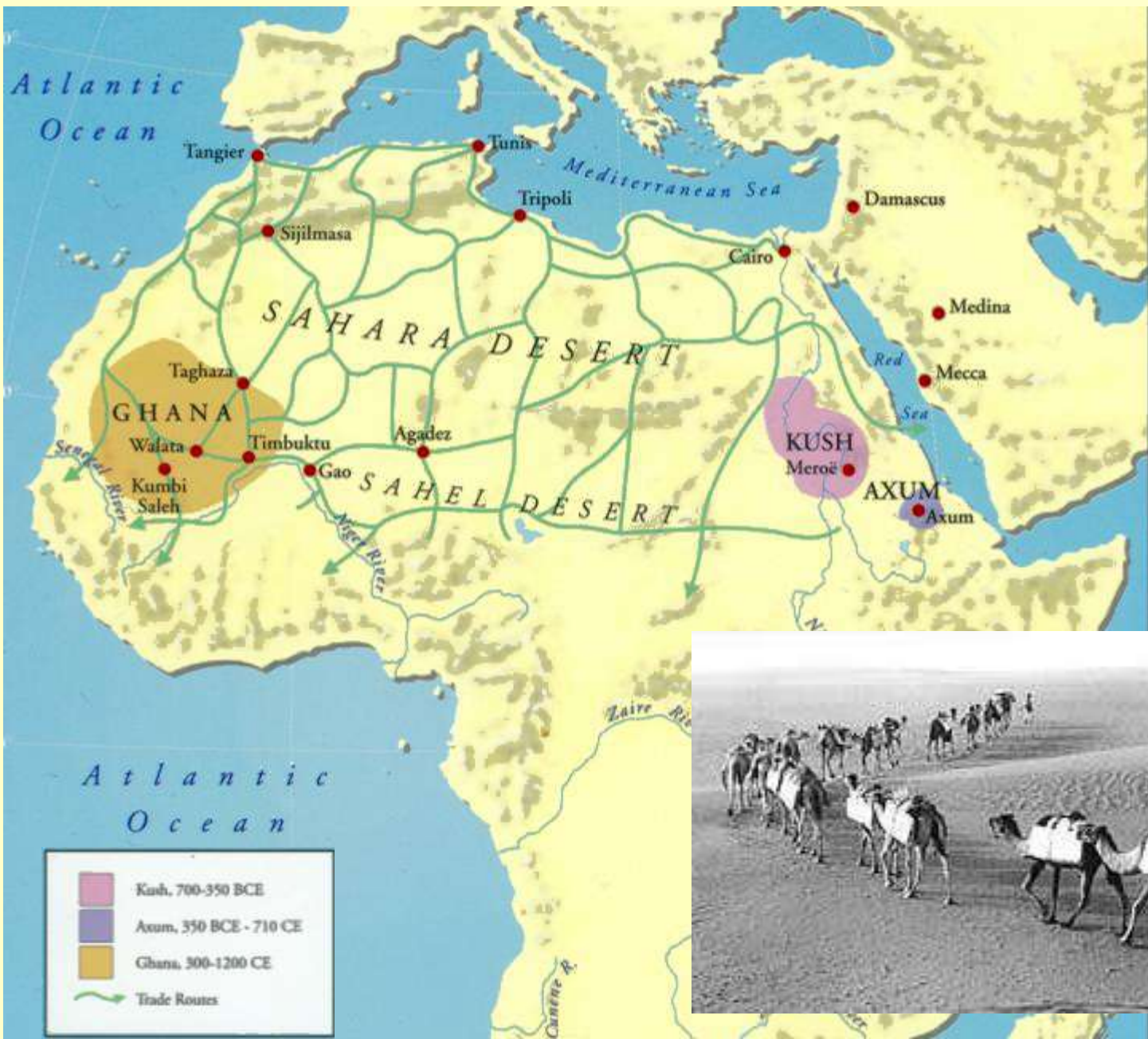
- What was Africa like before the introduction of Islam?

## ■ Warm-Up Question:

- ?

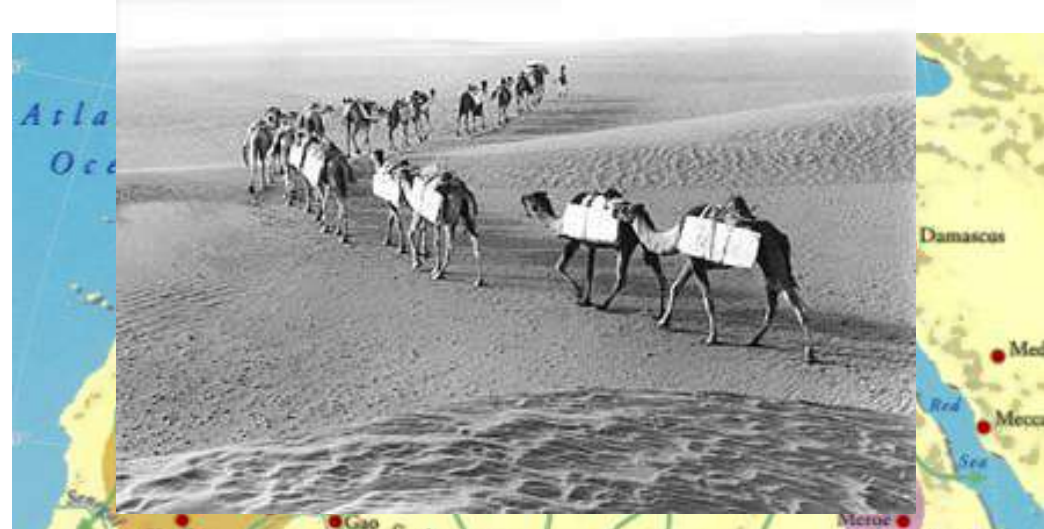


# What factors shaped the culture of West Africa?



# West Africa

- West Africa was shaped by the trans-Saharan trade network:
  - West Africans had large deposits of gold, but lacked salt
  - The gold-salt trade connected North & West Africa



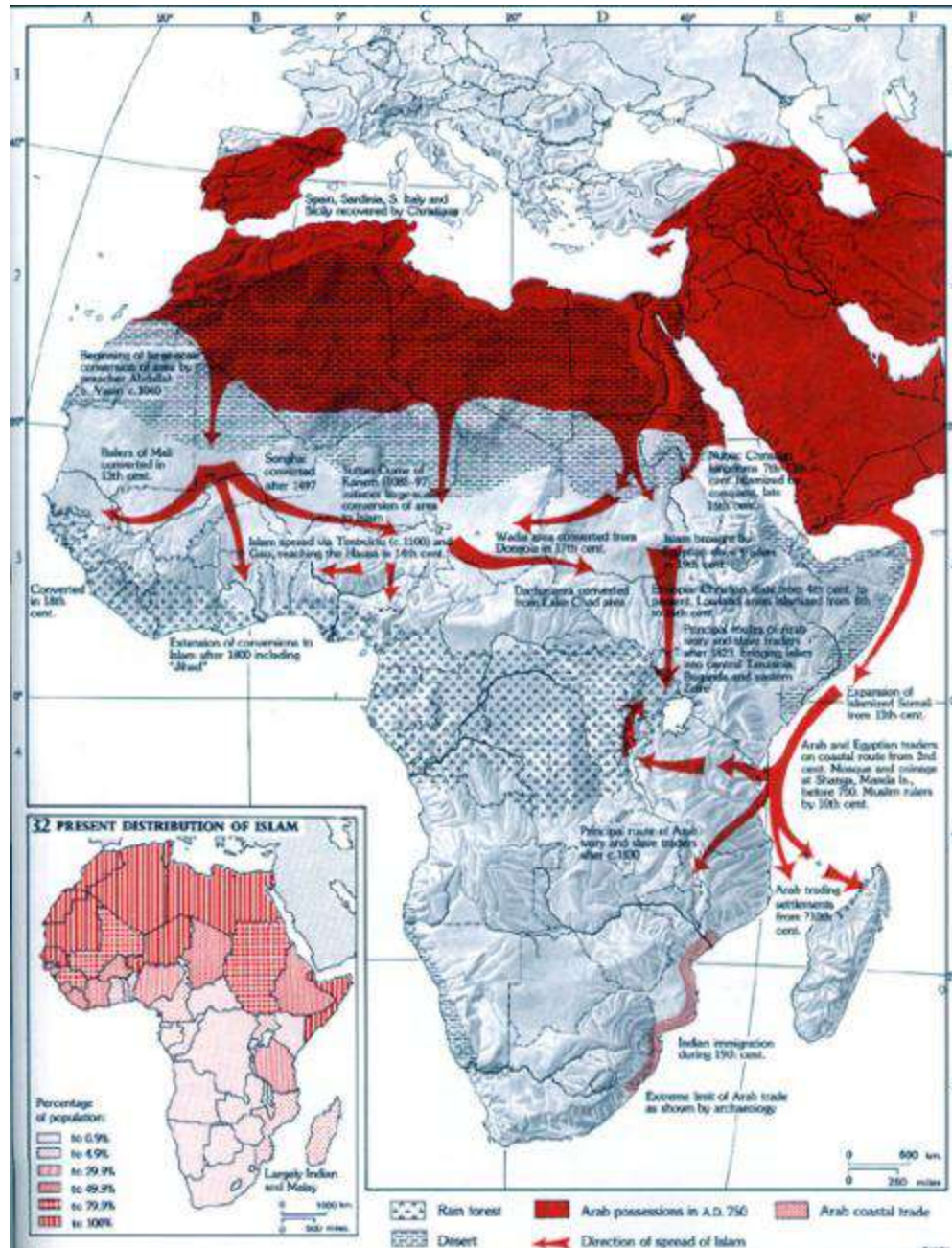


# West Africa

■ The gold-salt trade increased cultural diffusion with Muslim merchants:

— Islam was introduced in West Africa & slowly gained converts

— Many Africans blended Islam with animism or never converted



# West Africa

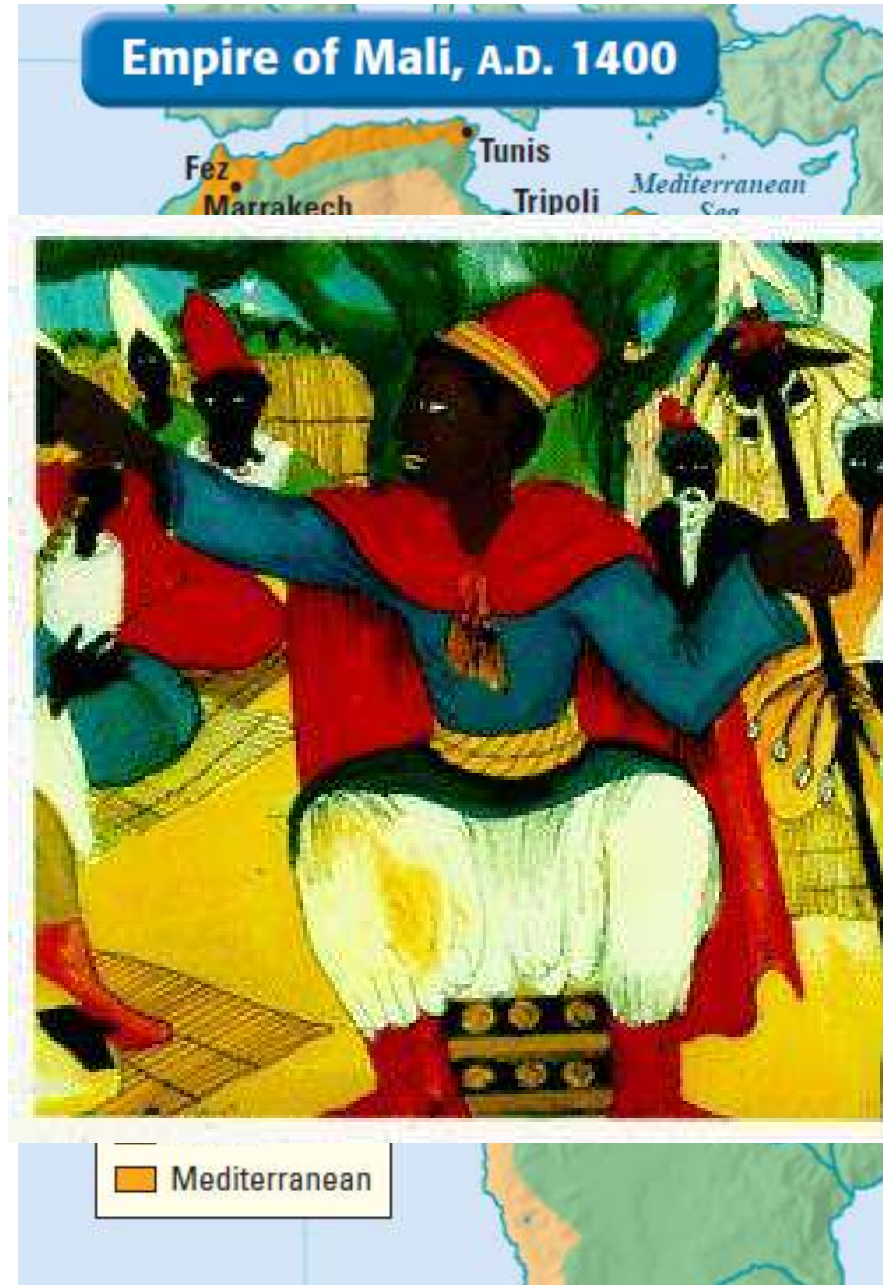
- The gold-salt trade led to wealth & empires in West Africa
- By 800, Ghana became an empire by taxing merchants, building a large army, & conquering surrounding people
  - Ghana kings served as religious leaders, judges, & generals





# West Africa

- Eventually Ghana was overthrown & the Mali empire emerged
- Mali's King Sundiata took over the Ghana kingdom & trade cities in West Africa
  - Sundiata created an efficient gov't, promoted farming, & controlled trade

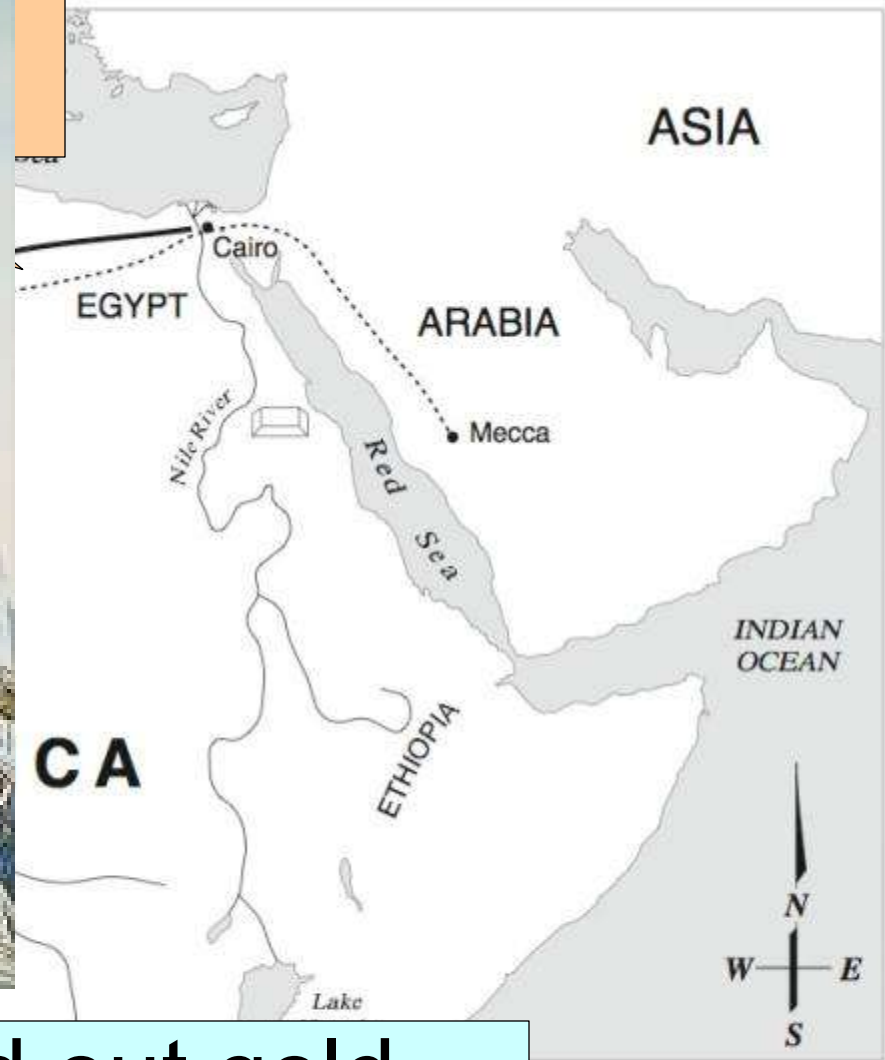


# West Africa

- The kings who ruled Mali after Sundiata converted to Islam
- The most important king was Mansa Musa:
  - He built a 100,000 man army to keep control over Mali
  - He divided Mali into provinces ruled by appointed governors



# Musa

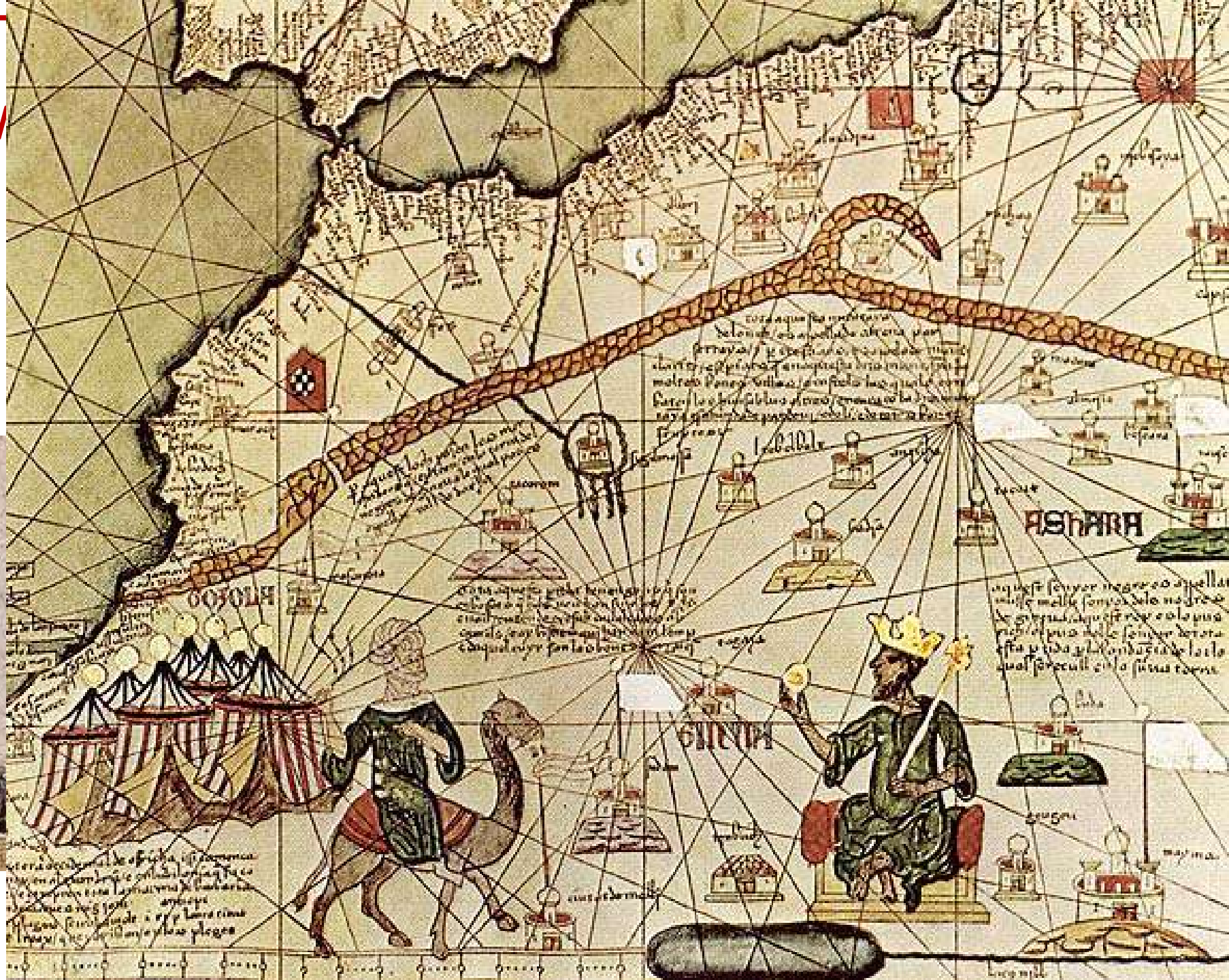


Mansa Musa passed out gold nuggets to the people he met along the way.

Mansa Musa



TV



# West Africa

- When he returned from Mecca, Mansa Musa built mosques throughout Mali, including Timbuktu
- This trade city attracted scholars, doctors, religious leaders
  - It had a university & became an important center for learning





# Timbuktu

Djenne  
Mosque



University





# West Africa

- After Mansa Musa, Mali declined & was replaced by Songhai
- Kings gained control of trade cities along the gold-salt routes
  - Songhai grew into the largest of the West African empires
  - Its fall in 1591 ended a 1,000 year era of empires in West Africa



# Conclusions

■ African societies were transformed by two powerful forces:

- Trade with outsiders
- Introduction of Islam

