

CHAPTER 1 – COLLIDING WORLDS (1450-1600)

The Native American Experience



The First Americans

- 13,000-3,000BC – Archaeologists suggest migration of peoples into Americas across **Bering Land Bridge** during **Ice Age**
- Western Hemisphere cut off from Eastern Hemisphere for 300 generations as ice melts, seas rise, land bridge submerges
- Migrants pushed southward, concentrating most in Central Mexico and Andes Mountains region
- 6000BC – Domestication of crops – **maize** (corn) and potatoes; food surpluses led to large population growth

American Empires

Characteristics shared by both Aztec and Incan Empires:

- Dense populations (Mexico est. 20 million in 1500CE; Peru est. 12 million in 1500CE)
- Productive agriculture
- Aggressive bureaucratic state - king/emperor ruled over warrior-nobles
- System of tribute exploited from surrounding conquered peoples
- Practice of human sacrifice employed by priests

Aztec Empire:

- Capital city **Tenochtitlan** (pop. 250,000)
- Controlled fertile valleys of Mexico
- Strong belief that cosmos connected to their capital, and that gods needed to be appeased through human sacrifice

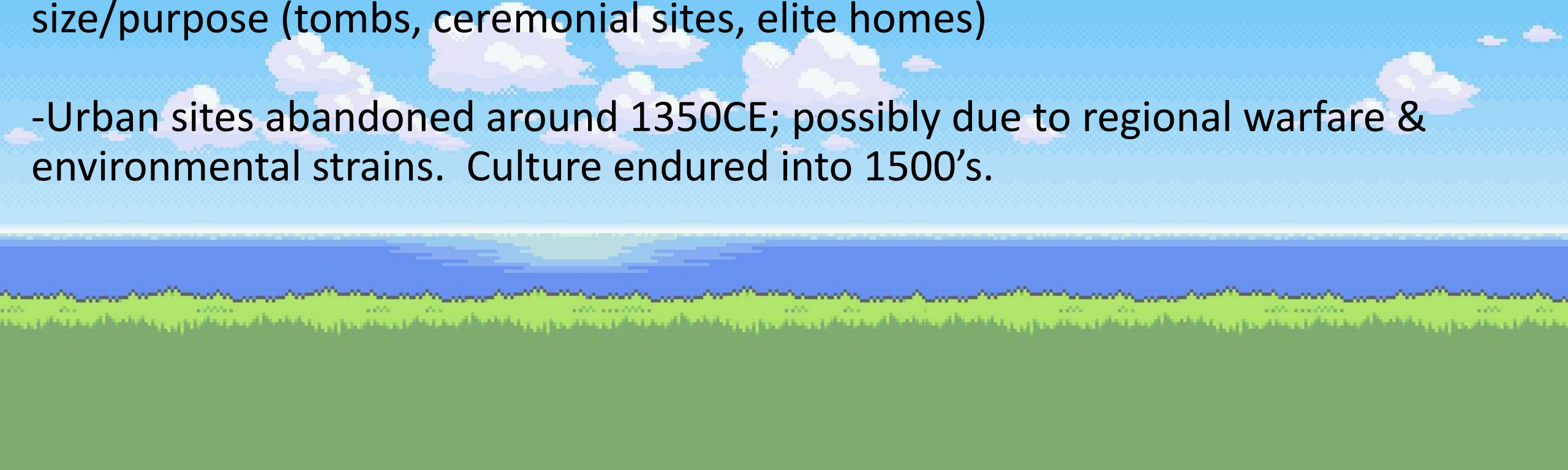
Incan Empire:

- Capital city at **Cuzco** (pop. 60,000)
- Controlled highlands & Andes Mountains to Pacific coast
- Intricate system of roads connected goods/tribute/labor from all regions of empire to capital

Chiefdoms & Confederacies

1. The Mississippi Valley

- Spread of maize by 1000CE, urban sites built up from previous Adena & Hopewell cultures
- Cahokia** (pop. 10,000-30,000) displayed large-scale **mound-building** of varying size/purpose (tombs, ceremonial sites, elite homes)
- Urban sites abandoned around 1350CE; possibly due to regional warfare & environmental strains. Culture endured into 1500's.



Chiefdoms & Confederacies

2. Eastern Woodlands

- “Great Traditions” of common language groups (Algonquin/Iroquois) linked dozens of small tribes
- Three-crop agriculture (maize/beans/squash) mixed with hunting-gathering
- Much of domestic village life/agriculture tended by women while men hunted/fished/made war
- Slash & burn** (swidden) agriculture meant natives seasonally cleared forest for growing crops
- Chiefdoms – tribes ruled by powerful men, some securing loyalty/service/tribute of smaller local chiefs (ex. Powhatan)

Chiefdoms & Confederacies

-Lenni Lenape/Delaware tribes existed as single autonomous units whose landscape names dot the Mid-Atlantic region to this day

-**Iroquois Confederacy** – Political authority granted to councils of sachems (wise men) who banded together

(Five Nations = Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, & Seneca)

-Legend of Hiawatha – Spiritual leader encourages peace/trade to replace years of constant war

-**Matriarchal** society – Power inherited through female lineage

Chiefdoms & Confederacies

3. The Great Lakes

- Multitude of diverse Algonquin-speaking tribes, all mobile via canoes that allowed travel across thousands of lakes and rivers

4. Great Plains / Rocky Mountains

- Small dispersed hunter-gatherer groups, many of whom adapted to using wild horses (introduced by Spanish) to hunt wild bison

- Comanche and Sioux able to extend power over great regions, raiding for horses and trading with other tribes

- Tribes scattered across Great Basin in Rocky Mtns to hunt-gather limited resources (bison/bighorn sheep, salmon, pine nuts)

Chiefdoms & Confederacies

5. Arid Southwest

- Maize agriculture present in Anasazi culture circa 1 CE; followed by **Pueblo** peoples in canyon lands circa 600 CE
- Settlements featured irrigation to manage scarce water, adobe apartment buildings, communities built on cliff slides for protection
- Chaco Canyon** in New Mexico – an urban site for dozen towns; abandoned after 1150 CE due to drought & soil exhaustion

6. Pacific Coast

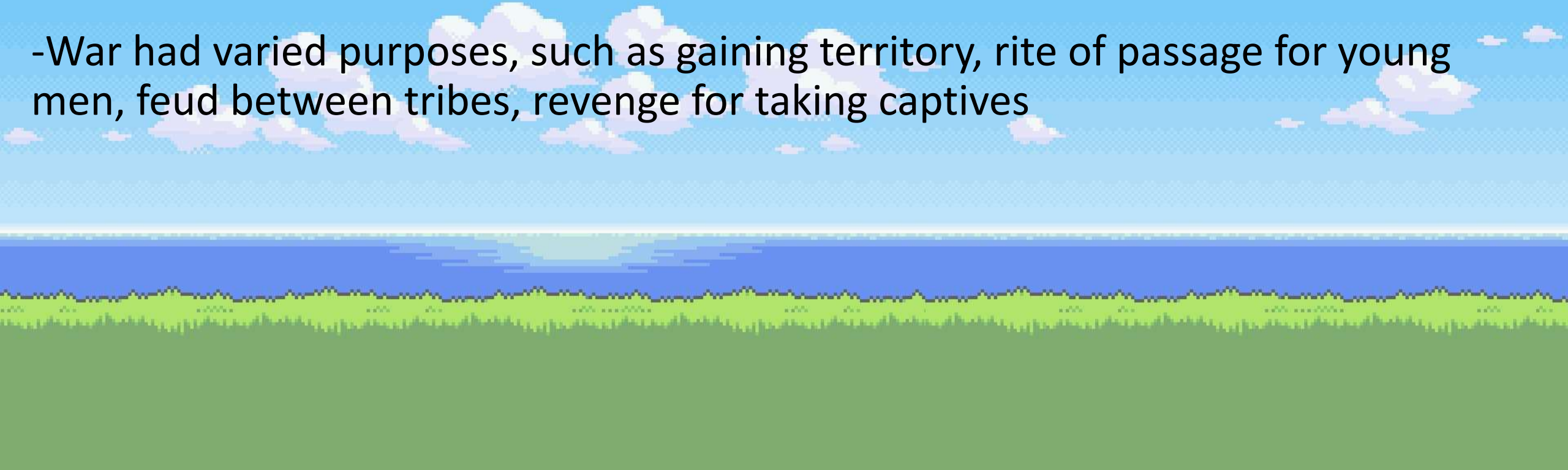
- California coast featured pop. 300,000 in distinct hunter-gatherer tribes spread across diverse landscapes
- Pacific coast saw tribes ruled by powerful families who encouraged warrior traditions, longhouse communal buildings, totem poles

Patterns of Trade

- Trade networks tied together regions that allowed food/raw materials/ritual artifacts/decorative goods to travel thousands of miles
- Trade fairs conducted between hunting & farming tribes – hides/meat for maize/pottery/textiles; exchange in war captives
- Prized regional items found across continent:
copper/mica/obsidian/seashells/grizzly bear claws/eagle feathers
- Powerful tribal leaders hoarded the most wealth, but shared it with tribal subordinates & families; showed sign of good leadership

Sacred Power

- Animism** – natural world suffused with spiritual power; world understood through dreams/visions; rituals appeased guardian spirits
- Female spirituality tied to fertility and connection to Mother Earth; male spirituality tied to hunting prowess and war
- War had varied purposes, such as gaining territory, rite of passage for young men, feud between tribes, revenge for taking captives



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Western Europe



Hierarchy & Authority

- Hierarchical** society – power from above, as kings/princes ruled vast tracts of land, commanded armies, lived off peasant labor
- Nobility often challenged royal authority, or competed to succeed it. Nobles sometimes organized (parlements, House of Lords)
- Patriarchal** society – Power inherited through male lineage; men controlled wives and children
- Primogeniture** – Practice of bestowing all family wealth/goods on eldest son (leaving other siblings poor; lacking personal freedom)



Peasant Society

- Most of Europe were **peasants** – farmworkers of cooperative families who lived in small villages surrounded by fields
- Manor system** – regional lord ruled peasants as serfs, tied to the land via oath of labor for access to portion of crops
- Rent-pay and family landownership led to food surpluses and local market economies
- Seasonal lifestyle meant constant labor; poverty conditions generally harsh as half of all peasant children died before age 21



Expanding Trade Networks

- Western Europe experienced fragmentation while Arab world preserved achievements of Greek & Roman and Mediterranean merchants carried on trade.
- New contacts with Asia for spices, silk, and exotic goods and sailing technology creates opportunities.
- 1100's CE – **Italian city-states** (republics ruled by oligarchies of wealthy merchant families) included Pisa, Genoa, Florence, & Venice
- Venice commanded fleet of 3,000 ships, establishing profitable commerce between merchants, bankers, and manufacturers



Expanding Trade Networks

- Civic humanism** – ideology that praised public virtue and service to the state
- City-states promoted patronage of arts (Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci) & learning that laid foundations for Europe's **Renaissance**
- Hanseatic League** – coalition of trading cities in Northern Europe that facilitated trade in wool, textiles, timber, furs, grains, honey
- Monarchs of Western Europe began to consolidate/centralize power through bureaucracy/taxes/alliances with merchants/nobility
- Guilds** – merchant/craftsmen organizations that regulated trade, set wages and prices, and protected business



Myths, Religions, & Holy Warriors

1. The Rise of Christianity

-**Christianity** – monotheistic religion derived from Judaism that suggested Jesus Christ was both prophet & savior to followers of God

-312 CE – Emperor Constantine converts to and makes Christianity the central belief system of Roman Empire

-After fall of empire, **Roman Catholic Church** becomes unifying force across feudal Europe:

- * Hierarchy headed by Pope who controlled cardinals, bishops, and priests
- * Latin language preserved as common instrument of scholarship/theology
- * Animist traditions converted into Christian rituals & festivals, as peasant life conforms to Church teachings about salvation
- * Heresy – practices seen as oppositional to Church teachings and given over to the influence of sin and of Satan (Devil)



Myths, Religions, & Holy Warriors

2. The Crusades

-632 CE – death of prophet Muhammad sees monotheistic religion of **Islam** spread from Arabia throughout Africa & Middle East

-1096-1291 CE – Holy war **crusades** undertaken by Christian armies (directed by Pope) to conquer Jerusalem and Holy Land

-Crusades failed militarily, but...

- *inspired Christian unity in Europe
- *increased persecution of Jews/Muslims
- *increased access to Asian trade goods
- *initiated rediscovery of Greek/Roman knowledge through contact with Arab scholars
- *and promoted exposure to wider world beyond Europe



Myths, Religions, & Holy Warriors

3. The Reformation

-1517 CE – **Martin Luther** nails 95 Theses to doors of church in Germany, protesting corruption & abuses of Catholic Church, downplaying need for priests and promoting need to read the Bible, and translating Holy Book into vernacular (local languages)

-1536 CE – John Calvin promotes **predestination** - concept of omnipotent God who chooses people for salvation; condemns the rest

-**Protestant Reformation** – movement of radical reformers whose ideologies spread throughout Europe in opposition to Catholicism

-**Counter-Reformation** – Catholic Church wages war against Protestants but also reforms practices; creates **Jesuit** monastic order

-Europe's religious competition spreads to New World (Catholic nations to gain new souls; Protestant nations to create godly communities of true gospel of Christianity)



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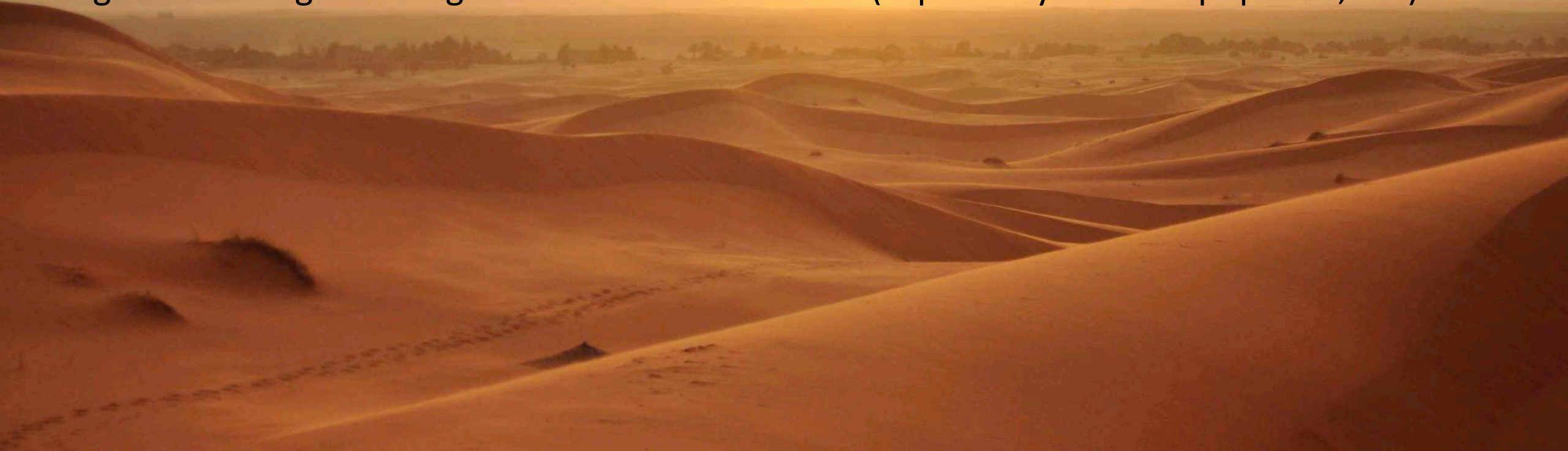
Western & Central Africa

Empires, Kingdoms, & Mini-States

- West Africa home to three climate zones: Sahel (flat plains), savannah (grasslands), & tropical rainforest; 4 major river watersheds
- Sudanic peoples spread across West Africa (9000-1000 BC) bringing domesticated cattle, crops, pottery, cotton, & metalworking
- Three empires established military might to protect trade routes:
 - * **Ghana** (c. 800 CE) – pioneered trans-Saharan camel routes; exported gold
 - * **Mali** (1200's CE) – Muslim influenced kingdom who spread gold to North Africa, Europe, and Asia; capital city of **Timbuktu**
 - * **Songhai** (1400's CE) – eclipsed Mali; controlled smaller vassal kingdoms that became exposed to European contact
- Sub-Saharan Africa populated by small tribes/mini-states that traded and competed for local power & resources

Trans-Saharan & Coastal Trade

- Trans-Saharan route saw West African goods (gold, copper, and slaves) traded for textiles & foreign goods
- Europeans sailed down West African coast to trade with mini-states; regions nicknamed Ivory Coast, Gold Coast, Slave Coast
- Kingdom of Kongo the largest state in Central Africa (capital city boasted pop. 100,000)



The Spirit World

-Numerous sub-Saharan states adopted Islam, while traditional beliefs in animism, polytheism, and belief in divine kingship persisted

-Reverence for ancestors a “great tradition” across many societies; happiness meant large families, many wives/children, even slaves

