

1: Spread of Islam in West Africa (part 1 of 3): The Empire of Ghana – The Muslim Times

While the presence of Islam in West Africa dates back to eighth century, the spread of the faith in regions that are now the modern states of Senegal, Gambia, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Niger, Mali and Nigeria, was in actuality, a gradual and complex process.

Spread of Islam in West Africa part 1 of 3: How Islam spread into sub-Saharan region of West Africa, and the great civilizations it established there, taking its inhabitants out of paganism to the worship of One God. Doi Published on 10 Apr Muslim geographers and historians have provided excellent records of Muslim rulers and peoples in Africa. Islam reached the Savannah region in the 8th Century C. Islam was accepted as early as C. They were the first Negro people who accepted Islam. Trade and commerce paved the way for the introduction of new elements of material culture, and made possible the intellectual development which naturally followed the introduction and spread of literacy. Al-Bakri describes Ghana as highly advanced and economically a prosperous country as early as the eleventh century. He also discusses the influence of Islam in Mali in the 13th century and describes the rule of Mansa Musa, whose fame spread to Sudan, North Africa and up to Europe. The famous scholar Ibn Munabbah wrote as early as C. As Islam spread in the Savannah region, it was quite natural that commercial links should also come to be established with North Africa. Trade and commerce also paved way for the introduction of new elements of material culture, and made possible the intellectual development which naturally followed the introduction and spread of literacy, and for which parts of the Sudan were to become famous in the centuries to come. In the Kingdom of Tekur, situated on both banks of the Senegal, Islam was accepted as early as C. This dynasty was the first Negro people who accepted Islam. This gave a uniform Muslim law to the people. Merchants used to bring wool to sell there from Greater Morocco and in return, took with them gold and beads. We have enough documents about the history of this region since it was known to the Arab historians as the Bilad al-Sudan, the land of the Blacks. In the medieval period, the most well-known empires that grew there are known until our day: Besides these scholars, there were local scholars whose works have come down to us. There were famous trade routes, like the one from Sijilmasa to Taghaza, Awdaghost, which led to the empire of Ghana, and another from Sijilmasa to Tuat, Gao and Timbuktu. These routes had made all the above mentioned places famous trade centers. These centers of trade invariably became centers of Islamic learning and civilization. New ideas came through visiting traders in the field of administrative practices. We shall study briefly the expansion of Islam in each of the ancient empires of Western Sudan. Economically, it was a prosperous country. The King had employed Muslim interpreters and most of his ministers and treasurers were also Muslims. The Muslim ministers were learned enough to record events in Arabic and corresponded, on behalf of the king, with other rulers. The city of Ghana consists of two towns lying on a plain, one of which is inhabited by Muslims and is large, possessing 12 mosques one of which is congregational mosque for Friday prayers: The town possesses a large number of jurists, consultants and learned men. Spread of Islam in West Africa part 2 of 3: The Empires of Mali and Songhay Description: A history of the empires of Mali and Songhay. There was a miserable period of drought which came to an end by offering Muslim prayers and ablutions. The Empire of Mali arose from the ruins of Ghana Empire. There are two important names in the history of Islam in Mali: Sundiata and Mansa Musa Sundiata is the founder of the Mali Empire but was a weak Muslim, since he practiced Islam with syncretic practices and was highly disliked by the scholars. Mansa Musa was, on the other hand, a devout Muslim and is considered to be the real architect of the Mali Empire. By the time Sundiata died in , a large number of former dependencies of Ghana also came under his power. After him came Mansa Uli who had made a pilgrimage to Makkah. Mansa Musa ruled from to and in he made his famous pilgrimage to Makkah [Hajj]. When he returned from his pilgrimage, he brought with him a large number of Muslim scholars and architects who built five mosques for the first time with baked bricks. Many scholars agree that because of his attachment to Islam, Mansa Musa could introduce new ideas to his administration. These Muslim scholars and traders contributed to the cultural and economic development of Mali. It was during his reign that diplomatic relations were established with Tunis and Egypt, and thus Mali began to appear on the map of the world. Islam in the Empire

of Songhay Islam began to spread in the Empire of Songhay some time in the 11th century when the ruling Za or Dia dynasty first accepted it. It was a prosperous region because of its booming trade with Gao. By the 13th century it had come under the dominion of the Mali Empire but had freed itself by the end of the 14th century when the dynasty was renamed Sunni. The great cities of Islamic learning like Timbuktu and Jenne came under his power between He even persecuted Muslim scholars and practiced local cults and magic. When the famous scholar Al-Maghilli called him a pagan, he punished him too. The belief in cults and magic was, however, not something new in Songhay. It existed in other parts of West Africa until the time the revivalist movements gained momentum in the 18th century. The scholars called it merely a mockery. The famous family of Agit, of the Berber scholars, had the post of the Chief Justice and were known for their fearless opposition to the rulers. But on his death, the situation completely changed: Islam and Muslim scholars triumphed. When Barou refused to do so, Muhammad Toure ousted him and established a new dynasty in his own name, called the Askiya dynasty. On his coming to power, he established Islamic law and arranged a large number of Muslims to be trained as judges. He gave his munificent patronage to the scholars and gave them large pieces of land as gifts. He became a great friend of the famous scholar Muhammad Al-Maghilli. It was because of his patronage that eminent Muslim scholars were attracted to Timbuktu, which became a great seat of learning in the 16th century. Timbuktu has the credit of establishing the first Muslim University, called Sankore University, in West Africa; its name is commemorated until today in Ibadan University where a staff residential area has been named as Sankore Avenue. Like Mansa Musa of Mali, Askia Muhammad Toure went on a pilgrimage and thus came into close contact with Muslim scholars and rulers in the Arab countries. In Makkah, the King accorded him great respect; he was turbaned. The King gave him a sword and the title of the Caliph of the Western Sudan. On his return from Makkah in the year , he proudly used the title of Al-Hajj. Askia took such a keen interest in the Islamic legal system that he asked a number of questions on Islamic theology from his friend Muhammad al-Maghilli. Al-Maghilli answered his questions in detail which Askia circulated in the Songhay empire. Spread of Islam in West Africa part 3 of 3: Kanem today forms the northern part of the Republic of Chad. Islam was accepted for the first time by the Kanem ruler, Umme-Jilmi, who ruled between C. Mani, credited for bringing Islam to Kanem-Bornu. Umme-Jilmi became a devout Muslim. He left on a pilgrimage but died in Egypt before reaching Makkah. Al-Bakri also mentions that Umayyad refugees, who had fled from Baghdad following plans to liquidate their dynasty at the hands of the Abbasids, were residing in Kanem [21, 22]. With the introduction of Islam in Kanem, it became the principal focus of Muslim influence in the central Sudan and relations were established with the Arab world in the Middle East and the Maghrib. During the reign of Dunama II , a Kanem embassy was established in Tunisia around , as mentioned by the famous Andalusian historian Ibn Khaldun d. It was almost at the same time that a college and a hostel were established in Cairo, named Madrasah Ibn Rashiq. Toward the end of the 13th century, Kanem became a center of Islamic knowledge and famous teachers came from Mali to teach in Kanem. By the middle of the 13th century, Kanem established diplomatic relations with Tuat in the Algerian Sahara and with the Hafsid state of Tunis at embassy level. The Kanem scholars and poets could write classical Arabic of a very high standard. We have evidence of this in a letter written by the Chief scribe of the Kanem court dating from to It is said that Dunama II opened a Talisman Munnî or Mune , considered sacred by his people, and thus brought a period of hardship to his people. This thriving capital continued until He was keen on learning its principles. He, by his own example, persuaded the nobility and Chiefs to limit the number of their wives to only four. We come to know about him through his chronicler, Ahmad ibn Fartuwa. In the 9th year of his reign, he went on a pilgrimage to Makkah and built a hostel there for pilgrims from Bornu. He revived the Islamic practices and made all and sundry follow them. He also set up Qadhis courts to introduce Islamic laws in place of the traditional system of customary law. He built a large number of brick mosques to replace the existing ones, built with reeds. In during the period of Mai Ahmad the glories of the Empire of Bornu came to an end, but its importance, as a center of Islamic learning, continued. The ruling Mai of Bornu of that time we do not have any information about the time welcomed Bayajida and gave his daughter in marriage to him but at the same time robbed him of his numerous followers. He fled from the Mai with his wife and came to Gaya Mai Kano and asked the goldsmith of Kano to make a sword for him. The story tells us that Bayajida helped

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the people of Kano by killing a supernatural snake which had prevented them from drawing water from a well. It is said that the queen, named Daura, married him in appreciation of his service to the people. Bayajida got a son named Bawo from Daura. Bawo, himself, had seven sons:

2: Africa and the Spread of Islam - Emazine

Spread of Islam in West Africa Islam reached the Savannah region in the 8th Century C.E., the date the written history of West Africa begins The Muslim-Arab historians began to write about West Africa in the early 8th century.

The early journeys across the Sahara were done in stages. Goods passed through chains of Muslim traders, purchased, finally, by local non-Muslims at the southern most end of the route. In the 5th century transporting heavy loads long distance was made much easier by the introduction of the camel to the trade routes. There were many trading partners in Sub-Saharan Africa. Gold was the main commodity sought by the North. Until the first half of the 13th century the kingdom of Ghana was a key trading partner with the Muslim North. The great Spanish scholar Al Bakri describes the king of Ghana in the 11th century, Basi, as being a man who: One of these towns, inhabited by Muslims, is large and possesses twelve mosques, in one of which they assemble for the Friday prayer. There are salaried imams and muezzins, as well as jurists and scholars. Another trade route forged by Muslim traders went from Zawila in what today is Southern Libya down to Bornu and Kanem. Al Bakri regarded Zawila as a very important commercial crossroads, and from its description it is clearly a lively and prosperous centre of Islamic faith: It is the first point of the land of the Sudan. It has a cathedral mosque, a bath, and markets. Caravans meet there from all directions and from there the ways of those setting out radiate. After Zawila, carrying on directly South, traders eventually reached the Kingdom of Kanem near Lake Chad, a flourishing commercial centres between the 9th and 14th centuries. Kanem converted to Islam in the 9th century. It was later superseded by the kingdom of Borno. By the 14th century the most powerful kingdom in West Africa was Mali under the leadership of Sundiata. One of his successors, Mansa Musa, made a celebrated hajj pilgrimage to Mecca. His retinue was so huge and luxuriously dressed, and carrying such vast amounts of gold, that he became the talk of the Muslim world. As well as being very prosperous, Mali became a great seat of learning renowned throughout the Muslim world. At each halt he would regale us with rare foods and confectionery. His equipment and furnishings were carried by 12, private slave women, wearing gowns of brocade and Yemeni silk. The majority of the people did not convert until the 18th century, when a series of jihads were launched by the Fulbe, tired of the corrupt ways of the ruling elite. Then the city states were conquered one by one. This was accomplished by the Sokoto jihad under the leadership of Usman dan Fodio - scholar, military strategist and religious leader. Sokoto became the seat of a new Caliphate. Islam leaders spread the faith further into Yorubaland Nupe. Another formidable enemy of the French was Samori Toure who kindled some of the glory of old Mali with his Mandinka Empire and 30, strong army. He used the latest quick loading guns, which his blacksmiths knew how to mend. After his death, his son was defeated by the French in They recognised its power to impose uniformity and spread a degree of literacy. When Queen Victoria sent two bibles to the Abeokuta mission, mindful of the spread of literacy through Koranic schools, she ensured one of them was in Arabic. Colonial officials who had served in Egypt, felt quite at home in the Muslim area of West Africa. In northern Nigeria, the British undertook not to interfere with the Muslim order and exercised colonial authority through the Emirs. At the same time they discouraged people from going to North Africa to further their studies in the Islamic institutes of higher learning there, fearing the broadening of horizons this entailed would lead to a radical outlook. From onwards, Egypt enjoyed independence and stood as an inspiration to many people in Africa still under colonial rule.

3: Spread of Islam in West Africa (All parts) - The Religion of Islam

How Islam spread into sub-Saharan region of West Africa, and the great civilizations it established there, taking its inhabitants out of paganism to the worship of One God. Part 1: Islam reaches West Africa, and a history of the Islamic Empire of Ghana.

It also accentuates the common historical thread running through the international Muslim community. In Global, African, and Near Eastern studies, the role of the African Muslim may be the most overlooked by Western academia, and involve the most tenacious myths about the spread of Islam. Yet, the dissemination of Islam in Africa by first Arabs and then African Muslims, and the role that Islam and Muslims have played in the development of Africa, are essential to a balanced and accurate understanding of African history. With relative ease, Amr claimed Fustat from disillusioned and tired Byzantine troops who eventually fled. Gradually, Muslim armies rode south, along the hypnotizing White Nile a tributary of the Nile in Egypt, exploring the land of Kemet, the Kushite, Ethiopia, and the east African panorama with its jagged coastline, and out into the temperamental Indian Ocean. From Alexandria, the jewel of Alexander the Great, it took Arab Bedouins seventy-five years and four enterprising generals to cross Mediterranean Africa, despite continuous resistance by Berber mountain clans. Arabs thought North Africa contained hidden wealth left by the Romans, but, surprisingly, they found nothing of such riches. Resistance to their encroachments was led by the famous Berber, Kuysaila, who subsequently accepted Islam and rose to fame after assisting the Arab Bedouins along their march through Morocco. After conquering Alexandria, Arab Bedouins met the legendary and revolutionary Berber, Al-Kahina, a woman who, it was said, fought like a man. According to lore, when she was enraged her hair stood on end and her coal-black eyes widened in intensity. Al-Kahina organized thousands of Sanhaja fighters and with cunning and prowess used the mountains they knew so well to surprise, sabotage, and kill Arab soldiers, all the while maintaining hope of independence in the minds of the Berbers who were used to extended foreign invasions. By the twelfth century, Christians essentially disappeared from North Africa, while the Coptic population of Egypt shrunk to less than ten percent. For the most part, the Saharan trade, except for the period when Europeans traded for slaves and gold, remained exclusively a Muslim trade as late as the seventeenth century. On the other hand, during this time, Christians controlled the maritime trade of the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. Although Umar entered Egypt, all of North Africa was soon to become a prime focus under the Umayyad caliph Muawiyya and his son and successor, Yazid. It would not be, however, until the Abbasid reigns of al-Mansur, al-Mahdi, al-Hadi, and the great Harun ar-Rashid, that expenditures from state coffers maintained security in Africa. They adhered to the Maliki School which continues to dominate sub-Saharan Africa. In accordance with the ethics of Islam, the Almoravid, under two great leaders, Abdullah Ibn Yasin and Ibn Tashfin, sought, to reform Africans gravitating away from orthodox Islam as established by the Prophet Muhammad. The Almoravid, who originated on the third cataract of the Northern Senegal River, marched in the hopes of eliminating pagan practices. While they attempted to reinvent the image of Islam in Africa, or duplicate the Abbasid period in Africa, reformists fought against persistent pre-Islamic cultural traditions. The Almohads now sailed from North Africa to re-secure the law and order, and after reconnaissance, they reaffirmed Spain as Muslim, and so it remained until The Muslim world was recovering from a series of unpredictable onslaughts. In North Africa, now imbued with Sufism, we begin to see the wearing of amulets, the worship of saints and intercessors, the practice by some of making predictions about the future, and the dawn of the renowned mystical schools. The Fatimids replaced the Abbasid after their crushing defeat in at the hands of the Mongols in Baghdad, and reinvigorated the authenticity of heredity in Islam. Salah al-Din and his Ayyubids, known for their challenge of the Christian troops during the final Crusades, unseated the Fatimids in Cairo. Acclimatization to the use of Arabic brought about commercial profits and preceded religious conversions. By the eleventh century, an African trading expansion, with an emerging religious culture and the common commercial language of Arabic, became apparent. Conversion meant access to a wider platform of goods, traditional trade routes to the east, credit lines, adjusted pricing, and honor. Tauregs the nomadic Berber people of the Saharan interior of North Africa

roamed both sides of the great divide, linguistically best equipped to profit from the crossroads of trade, and mediate differences between northern Saharans and sub-Saharan. Takur what is now southeastern Mauritania, and Western Mali which was lukewarm to Islam; the loosely governed Kanem what is now the countries of Chad, Nigeria and Libya and its successor-state Bornu; Ghana, although it never claimed Islam as the state religion but is considered by many the first African Muslim nation; Mali, the most written about; and Songhay the most fought over. Despite Islam beginning to penetrate the indigenous consciousness and cause a shift in daily religious practices, local customs and beliefs persisted, which centuries later was used to justify the most violent raids of the Sokoto dynasty under Uthman Don Fodio. The spread of Islam among the Yoruba began late, well after the nineteenth century conversions of Wolof a West African state that ruled parts of Senegal from to , and increased after Fulbe an ethnic group spread over many countries, predominantly in West Africa conquests of the s. Except in Ilorin, because of resilient traditional beliefs, Islam straddled the religion of the people. West Africans developed a unique religious parallelism with Islam and because of its ability to co-exist, shared local authority. There are misunderstandings about the historical role of Arab Bedouin military conquests during the initial spread of Islam in Africa. The second myth purports Arab Bedouin merchants brought Islam to Africa, and Arab military might destroyed African institutions and cultures. The spread of Islam south of the Sahara owes very little to Arab military occupation. What is more accurate is that Arab merchants reported to wealthy Arab sponsors the religious appetite Africans had for Islam. In time, teachers and imams relocated to African towns and became responsible for the spread of Islam. The role of the merchant was the introduction of Islam and a precursor of Arabization. It was, however, the scholarly community, the teachers and imams, who became the agents of Islamization. Merchants certainly inspired an intellectual curiosity about Islam, and on return to their homelands, they reported, as mentioned previously, the eagerness of the Africans to learn more about Islam. Typically, local West African rulers embraced Islam first and became the indigenous progenitors of the process of Islamization. Traveling scholars and imams, as long as they posed no threat to the existing socio-political order, completed the process of Islamization in both East and West Africa. The masses initially considered Islam an innovation, and had difficulty fitting a universalist concept into their local context. The introduction of Christianity in Africa experienced the same social phenomenon and challenge. There is a revealing axiom about religious duality in Africa: In the middle of the fourteenth century, Ibn Batutta attested to the division between indigenous practices and classical Islam. Expressing abhorrence, he wrote of gambling, drinking, sexual deviance, nudity, and idol-worship in Mali under Mansa Musa. Records indicate these practices caused a sterner Askiya Muhammad of the Songhay Empire to be religiously and morally repulsed. At its peak, the Songhay Empire encompassed much of the territory that had belonged to the Mali Empire in the west. Malian hierarchy and early Abbasid infrastructure had its similarities and differences. African scholars of Timbuktu, unusually active in the political sphere, lived with more than a modicum of religious authority. The campaign to determine final authority played out between the civil authority of court qadis judges represented on one side, and the ulama Muslim scholars who embraced Islamic theology, on the other side. In dynastic form, the solution of the Abbasid royal courts was to absorb the ulama into the qadis community, control legal verdicts, and further their absolutist rule. In West Africa, where there was more success, the ulama and the qadis remained separate and empowered, each in their own sphere. As with the Abbasids, the kings of Mali lived in opulence and grandeur, secluded from the lay community. They adorned themselves with imported cloths and jewels. When entering the royal space, visitors sprinkled dust on their necks to designate their lowly position and absolute loyalty to the throne. The Mansas kings or emperors avoided demonstrations of their humanness, so they never slept, ate food, or changed clothes in front of others. By the ninth century, Arab merchants made substantial profits in the marketplace. These Arabs found willing urban consumers, presenting them with abundant supplies of material goods for sale. Even as early as the ninth century, slow commercial expansion of Takrur territories found receptive African converts. Among the newly converted, Islam signaled the religion of transactions, literacy, and recording and documentation, all hallmarks of development and progress. Only by the late twelfth century did religious conversions in West Africa accelerate, marked by such conversions as the King of Gao in and the King of Kanem-Bornu in With the face of universal Islam peering over a pagan, parochial Africa, a second

period begins in the thirteenth century. After southerly Taureg and Almoravid incursions, the empire of Ghana weakened through internal disputes and rival provinces. A pattern of dynastic disagreements and jockeying for the throne eventually shattered its strength, and diffused the wealth from the trade routes. The people of the rural areas, considered servile in status, but loyal to ancient traditions, reemerged, claiming positions of power. The demand from the countryside for increased participation in the towns created stress and political divisions which, like in the Umayyad Empire, ultimately caused its downfall. In the first quarter of the fourteenth century, Sundiata, a descendant of the royal Keita family, rose to take the mantle of the new Mali Empire. A marginal Muslim, Sundiata expanded the empire, increased production from the alluvial gold fields, developed the military, and claimed to be a liaison with the spirit world. During his reign, he sent a signal that tolerance of traditional and indigenous practices would remain; however, he alone would now be the representative of Allah. By borrowing from the larger Muslim world, Musa built a literate nation. He replicated the Abbasid learning centers, and although illiterate himself, Mansa Musa found inspiration in scholarship and encouraged study abroad. Known for his insistence upon civil law and highly reputed for his generosity, Mansa Musa became a household name. Pointing to his generosity with gold, an account of his visit to Egypt while on his way to hajj tells of the Egyptian economy taking a nosedive upon his departure. With internecine squabbling in Mali, succeeding Mansas never embraced the long-range vision of Mansa Musa, and this, along with fiscal mismanagement, resulted in the empire capitulating to the Songhay. In the Songhay, the last of the large Muslim spheres of influence, the ulama were the avowed enemies of the founder Sunni Ali. After years of intense negotiations, though, they reasserted their loyalties to the king and found political justification to back Sunni Ali. He was an ambitious leader, who like Sumanguru of Ghana and Sundiata of Mali, was also a charismatic magician, an astute politician, but, again, a nominal Muslim at best. Amongst the few to travel to Mecca, Muhammad realized the need for outside scholarly assistance, so he encouraged Muslim scholars from Morocco, Syria, and Andalusia to relocate to sub-Saharan Africa. Unlike his predecessors, Muhammad lived in accordance with the Sunnah, read Arabic, and wholeheartedly subscribed to the Maliki School of jurisprudence. In the second half of the sixteenth century, in Jenne, one of the great learning centers in West Africa, a qadi who was a son of the chief of Kala, rejected his royal status to become a scholar. On the east coast of Africa, and based upon its proximity to the Arabian Peninsula, Arabs and Africans quickly became co-religionists, engaging in much cultural exchange. East of the Nile River, Christianity dominated and thus stunted the growth of Islam for more than five hundred years. Until the nineteenth century, Islam in East Africa remained a coastal religion, with the majority of schools, mosques, and trade centered on the coast, whereas in West Africa Islam stretched into the interior. In West Africa, these movements were in the same direction, from north to south, as that taken by Islam. In East Africa on the other hand, migrations and the movements of goods, from the interior to the coast, were contrary to the direction Islam would have taken, that is to say from east to west. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, a religious revival began, with wealthy Muslim landowners and traders uniting to build a Muslim presence. They segregated the sexes, established Muslim cemeteries, built mosques, schools, and libraries filled with manuscripts. The commitment to Islam furthered the reputation of East African Muslims. Thus, in the course of a few decades, East Africa became the home of Ismaili and Sufi communities, and attracted prominent Ahmadiyya scholars from India. The sixteenth century began to heed such warnings, and ultimately brought about the era of classic African reform movements in several regions. During the Songhay Empire, Askiya Muhammad initiated severe attacks on villages which tolerated non-Islamic practices, and battles were fought in Kano during the reign of Muhammad Rumfa, related to the famous Sokoto reformist Uthman don Fodio. Umar Ibn al-Khattab was adamant about his Arab Bedouin soldiers not disturbing the social order of conquered territories. He ordered his troops to ensure that churches, agriculture, and homes not be destroyed. In West Africa, the indigenous people were not invaded by foreign armies, so traditional customs persisted without a dramatic parting with the past. Through the Mali and the Songhay, the foundation of power depended upon the vibrancy of indigenous practices.

4: Islam in Africa | History of Islam

In his article "Spread of Islam in West Africa", he traced the path that Islam as a new religion went through before it spread into sub-Saharan region of West Africa focusing on the Empires of Ghana, Mali and Songhay, the Empires of Kanem-Bornu and Hausa-Fulani Land. He described the influence of.

Best Rate it Muslim geographers and historians have provided excellent records of Muslim rulers and peoples in Africa. Islam reached the Savannah region in the 8th Century C. Islam was accepted as early as C. They were the first Negro people who accepted Islam. Trade and commerce paved the way for the introduction of new elements of material culture, and made possible the intellectual development which naturally followed the introduction and spread of literacy. Al-Bakri describes Ghana as highly advanced and economically a prosperous country as early as the eleventh century. He also discusses the influence of Islam in Mali in the 13th century and describes the rule of Mansa Musa, whose fame spread to Sudan, North Africa and up to Europe. The famous scholar Ibn Munabbah wrote as early as C. As Islam spread in the Savannah region, it was quite natural that commercial links should also come to be established with North Africa. Trade and commerce also paved way for the introduction of new elements of material culture, and made possible the intellectual development which naturally followed the introduction and spread of literacy, and for which parts of the Sudan were to become famous in the centuries to come. In the Kingdom of Tekur, situated on both banks of the Senegal, Islam was accepted as early as C. This dynasty was the first Negro people who accepted Islam. This gave a uniform Muslim law to the people. Merchants used to bring wool to sell there from Greater Morocco and in return, took with them gold and beads. We have enough documents about the history of this region since it was known to the Arab historians as the Bilad al-Sudan, the land of the Blacks. In the medieval period, the most well-known empires that grew there are known until our day: Besides these scholars, there were local scholars whose works have come down to us. There were famous trade routes, like the one from Sijilmasa to Taghaza, Awdaghast, which led to the empire of Ghana, and another from Sijilmasa to Tuat, Gao and Timbuktu. These routes had made all the above mentioned places famous trade centers. These centers of trade invariably became centers of Islamic learning and civilization. New ideas came through visiting traders in the field of administrative practices. We shall study briefly the expansion of Islam in each of the ancient empires of Western Sudan. Economically, it was a prosperous country. The King had employed Muslim interpreters and most of his ministers and treasurers were also Muslims. The Muslim ministers were learned enough to record events in Arabic and corresponded, on behalf of the king, with other rulers. The city of Ghana consists of two towns lying on a plain, one of which is inhabited by Muslims and is large, possessing 12 mosques one of which is congregational mosque for Friday prayers: The town possesses a large number of jurists, consultants and learned men.

5: Effects of Islam on West Africa by Dark Form on Prezi

*Africa was the first continent into which Islam spread from Southwest Asia, during the early 7th century
www.enganchecubano.com one-third of the world's Muslim population resides in the continent.*

Arab Muslim took over North Africa. They also tried to take over Ghana but it was far and protected by the Sahara Desert. The king did not become Muslim and almost all the people did the same thing like the king. The Islamic government gets the rules is getting bigger. After the arrival of Islam, Ghana became a patrilineal. The patrilineal means a family line traced through the father. The ruler passed down from to son. A second change affect the Muslim people believe in highly centralized to Islam. After the king converted to Islam. They begin more control over local rulers. Adopted title use in Muslim lands all the time. The head of religion was called the Sulta, the amir, or emir. Laws were not written, but everyone knew what they were and accepted them from long tradition. A chief or king usually enforced customary law but did not give physical punishments. Instead, the guilty party paid the injured party with gifts or services. The family or clan of the guilty person could also be punished. The qadis hear cases in a court. They listen to witnesses and rule on the basis of the law and the evidence Education and Language Muslim people are encouraged to go to school or get an education. They have a lot of school. All schools were run by an Imam. Imams were respected through Islam. In school they learned about the holy book of Islam, Quran, Islam, law and literature. They could take art, history and geography. During the study they wore a turban. Turban represents light, wisdom, knowledge and excellent moral character. Timbuktu had over Quran school. Where they learn how to read Quran. They did not use any kind of machine they write book by hand and painting. In West Africa they built huge libraries with lots of books. Islam spread throughout West Africa and Arabic language as well. In West Africa Arabic became the language of region, but West Africa they use their own language in every speech. Every Muslim should read Quran and remember the parts. More Muslim started to speak Arabic. In every school they use Arabic language. They wrote and speak in Arabic language. In school they write history of West Africa. They told how people use animal and plants. They write Islamic law, how to use star to find season in Arabic language. And allow writing rules in other country. A Art and Architecture The Africans started to use the Arabic word for God to decorate costumes, fans, and even weapons. The Muslims changed the way the people dressed in West Africa. As West Africa changed to Islam, they did more learning and schools. The people designed mosques for worship. The people made pilgrimages to Mosques. They use geometric styles in their decorative arts.

6: The spread of Islam in Africa

The Berbers were early converts to Islam and Islam spread along those pre-existing trade routes between North and West Africa. The first converts in Mali were traders who benefited from having a religious as well as a commercial connection to their trading partners in the North and the rest of the Mediterranean.

Introduction of Islam in Africa Contributed by Prof. Africa gave the Islamic world its first muezzin, Bilal ibn Rabah. It was home to its greatest historian, Ibn Khaldun and the birthplace of its best-known traveler, Ibn Batuta. It produced one of its few genuine mass movements, the Murabitun movement and provided the manpower for the injection of Muslim political military power into southwestern Europe. It bankrolled the Muslim world with treasures of gold in its historic struggles with the Crusaders and the Mongols and enriched Europe and Asia alike with its human energy and its rich heritage of music, art, culture and history. Yet, it is astonishing how little attention is paid to the history of Muslims in Africa. At best, Africa-along with Indonesia and China-receives a marginal treatment from Muslim historians. It is almost as if Africa is a footnote to West Asia. This is all the more surprising considering that about million Muslims, constituting more than twenty five percent of all Muslims in the world, live in Africa, while another million live in Indonesia, Malaysia and China. One may advance several reasons for this neglect. Oriental scholarship is focused on the Middle Eastern character of Islam, embracing primarily the Arab element and including as a corollary the Turkish and Persian elements. In the larger context, African Muslim history suffers from the same neglect that characterizes Africa in general. One may legitimately infer that European denial of African history is in part a deliberate attempt to deny the African his historical past, which was not less brilliant than that of medieval Europe. How else could one justify the Trans-Atlantic slave trade that lasted more than three hundred years and resulted in the forced shipment of a hundred million men, women and children? To enslave a continent one has to first dehumanize it. Muslim scholarship, aping the West during the colonial era, went along with this denial. Only now is the historical contribution of African Muslims to Islamic history receiving the attention it so richly deserves. Africa is a vast continent, second only to Asia in size and five times the size of Europe. It is home to the most desolate deserts and it has some of the thickest forests. The great expanse of the Sahara separates the Mediterranean world from the rest of Africa. The Nile snakes through the eastern desert, giving life to a narrow patch of green, sustaining more than a hundred million people in Egypt and the Sudan. West of Egypt lies the great Libyan Desert, uninhabitable except for a narrow strip close to the Mediterranean. The Atlas Mountains cover the northwestern territories embracing Algeria and Morocco and protrude into Spain. South of Mediterranean Africa, extending in a broad swath is the Sahara, the largest and the harshest desert on planet earth. It occupies an area of more than three million square miles, almost the size of the United States. Only a few well-defined trade routes traverse this vast terrain, providing civilizational links between the Mediterranean and sub-Saharan Africa. South of the Sahara lies an equally expansive swath of grassland and agricultural land watered by the great rivers, the Niger and Senegal in the west and the Nile and its tributaries in the east. This area, which is also the size of the United States, is the historical Sudan. The reader should not confuse historical Sudan with the modern state of Sudan, which lies south of Egypt. Historical Sudan is a much larger area embracing the entire territory south of the Sahara from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean. East of the Ethiopian highlands, the terrain once again changes to the Somali pastures and desert. As one traverses southward towards the equator, the grasslands change to dense forest. These forests are a few hundred miles deep in western Africa but grow to a dense patch of impassable territory in the Congo basin extending through Zaire, Kenya and Uganda. The forests, until recent times, defined the limit of civilizational influence from the Mediterranean and from the coastline along the Indian Ocean. South of the equator lies southern Africa, which changes gradually from bush land to pastures and agricultural territory towards the modern state of South Africa. The history of Africa is strongly influenced by its geography and its topography. Egypt, situated at the confluence of Asia and Africa, is a child of the Nile. From the time of the Pharaohs, the Nile valley has provided political, cultural and social unity to the area. The fellaheen of the Nile constitute the oldest continuous cultural unit in the world. Egypt also acted as the conduit for African art,

science and culture to the rest of the world. Specifically, the development of Greek thought in the eastern Mediterranean in the 5th century BC owes a great deal to the wisdom of Africa. Egypt belongs to the Mediterranean world and is the doorway to North Africa. It sits astride an axis linking the Mediterranean civilizations with the civilizations of the Indian Ocean. It provides a bridgehead to Asia and its historical influence extends into the Syrian highlands. In turn, Egypt has attracted the attention of Asian conquerors, as happened in the Persian invasion of the 6th century BC, the Roman invasion of the first century, the Arab-Islamic invasion of the 7th century and the attempted Mongol-Crusader invasions of the 13th century. In the Maghrib, the Atlas Mountains are inhabited by the Berbers, a hardy, independent people who have resisted foreign rule through the centuries. Land and sea trade routes interconnect the Mediterranean lands. Ancient empires welded them into a common dominion. The Maghrib, as well as Egypt, was part of the Roman Empire. In the 7th century, as Umayyad armies raced across Asia, Africa and Europe, all of these territories came under the sway of the Islamic Empire. Initially, each of these empires established their presence in fortified towns along the coast, whereas the people of the interior largely remained untouched. Consequently, a certain tension between the settled city population and the pastoral nomadic population of the hinterland has always existed in the Maghrib. In the classical Islamic era, the Maghrib held the key to Spain and southwestern Europe. When the Berbers were supportive, Muslim armies advanced into Spain and France. When there were disturbances in the Atlas Mountains, the advance stopped or there was a retreat. In the 11th and 12th centuries, it was the turbulence in the Maghrib that largely determined the fate of Muslim Spain. Diverse peoples, each with its own rich history, inhabit the grasslands, steppes and agricultural areas of the Sudan belt. In centuries bygone, the proud and independent Tuaregs acted as a conduit between the Maghrib and the western Sudan. The Sudan belt is connected to the Mediterranean by caravan trade routes. From ancient times, five broad routes are identifiable. The second one starts from Djidjida in eastern Morocco through Bechar in western Algeria and ends in the ancient cultural center of Timbuktu in Mali. There were also continuous trade contacts from ancient times between Oman and the Persian Gulf regions with the East African shores. These trade routes were the conduits not only for a two-way exchange of men and material, but also ideas. One such sublime idea was the idea of Islam. Africa was in the cradle of Islam. Among the most honored companions of Prophet Muhammad (p) was Bilal ibn Rabah, the first muezzin of Islam. The proximity of Hejaz to Abyssinia ensured continuous contacts between Africans and the Arabs of Mecca. When enmity of the pagan Arabs to the mission of Islam was at its height, the Prophet ordered some of his Companions to migrate to Abyssinia. Several waves of believers did migrate circa and were received with honor by the Negus, King of Abyssinia. According to oral traditions in western Africa, some of the descendants of Bilal ibn Rabah migrated to Melle, the Arabic name for Mali. Specifically, the Mandinka clan Keita, which is generally credited with founding the great Mali Empire, claims its descent from Bilal ibn Rabah, referred to as Bilali Bunamah in the Mandinka language. Tradition also has it that some of the Companions of the Prophet migrated to Libya and from there to the Lake Chad area further south. Such migrations would be in keeping with the exhortation of the Prophet to his Companions to go forth and spread the message of Islam in the far reaches of the world. Much of the history of early Africa is oral and there is no reason to doubt that African migrants from Mecca established contact with and settled down in the developed regions of West Africa. Islam transformed and uplifted the decaying Byzantine civilization in Egypt, imparted to it a transcendence based on Tawhid, so that the land of the Nile became a cradle of the nascent Islamic civilization. Within forty years of the conquest of Egypt, Umayyad armies had reached the Atlantic Ocean. Uqba bin Nafi, the conqueror of the Maghrib, founded the city of Kairouan circa 670, in modern Tunisia. According to some accounts, Uqba bin Nafi led an expedition towards Mauritania. The Kuntas are a distinguished tribe of learned men who in the course of time produced great scholars like Sidi Muhammad al Kunti who had a profound impact on the introduction of Islam into West Africa. Kairouan soon grew into an important trade center and a magnet for scholars. Large caravans passed through this city carrying goods from the Sudan, the Maghrib and Spain to Egypt and returned loaded with imports from Persia, Khorasan, India and beyond. More significant was the traffic to the cities of Mecca and Madina for the Hajj. As we have pointed out in earlier chapters Madina was the center for the Maliki School of Fiqh. It was natural that Maliki scholars,

attracted by the prosperity of Kairouan and of the Spanish cities, moved to North Africa. Some of these scholars accompanied the trade caravans south of the Sahara to the Sudan belt. For the last thousand years, Islamic jurisprudence of the Maliki School, together with the institution of Hajj, has provided a vital civilizational link between West Africa and the rest of the Muslim world. Mutual trade interests between the Umayyads who controlled the Maghrib and the kingdom of Ghana not to be confused with the modern state of Ghana, the ancient kingdom of Ghana was centered around southern Mali helped the flow of merchants and merchandise. Ghana controlled the gold mines to the south and as trade increased, it required an increasing supply of gold. The Omayyads, as well as successor kingdoms in the Maghrib, saw to it that trade routes were protected. They established trade centers along the caravan routes to enhance the flow of goods and ensure the safety of merchants. The primary export of West Africa was gold. Other products included salt, ivory and kola nuts. In return, the North Africans provided religious and administrative services and brought in horses from North Africa, spices from Asia and books of learning from Kairouan, Baghdad and Bukhara. Slave trade was not a principal element in the Arab-African transactions, as is sometimes claimed by European writers. It was much later in the 17th and 18th centuries that Omani merchants competed with the Europeans for slaves in the Bantu areas of East Africa. It was trade, more than any expedition or migration of Arabs that firmly established Islam in West Africa. These caravan routes were connected to the rich commercial towns in the Sene-Gambia and Niger basins as well as Lake Chad. The Sanhaja who inhabited the Sahara acted as escorts to the trade caravans and were the first to accept Islam as early as the Omayyad period in the 8th century. In the Sene-Gambia and NigerRiver basins, local merchants, noblemen and chieftains led the introduction of Islam.

7: Spread of Islam in West Africa (part 1 of 3): The Empire of Ghana - The Religion of Islam

This lesson explains the gradual spread of Islam into West Africa. In doing so, it discusses the influence of the Berbers and the trans-Saharan caravan trade of the Saharan region.

How Islam spread into sub-Saharan region of West Africa, and the great civilizations it established there, taking its inhabitants out of paganism to the worship of One God. Kanem today forms the northern part of the Republic of Chad. Islam was accepted for the first time by the Kanem ruler, Umme-Jilmi, who ruled between C. Mani, credited for bringing Islam to Kanem-Bornu. Umme-Jilmi became a devout Muslim. He left on a pilgrimage but died in Egypt before reaching Makkah. Al-Bakri also mentions that Umayyad refugees, who had fled from Baghdad following plans to liquidate their dynasty at the hands of the Abbasids, were residing in Kanem [21, 22]. With the introduction of Islam in Kanem, it became the principal focus of Muslim influence in the central Sudan and relations were established with the Arab world in the Middle East and the Maghrib. During the reign of Dunama II, a Kanem embassy was established in Tunisia around, as mentioned by the famous Andalusian historian Ibn Khaldun. It was almost at the same time that a college and a hostel were established in Cairo, named Madrasah Ibn Rashid. Toward the end of the 13th century, Kanem became a center of Islamic knowledge and famous teachers came from Mali to teach in Kanem. By the middle of the 13th century, Kanem established diplomatic relations with Tuat in the Algerian Sahara and with the Hafsid state of Tunis at embassy level. The Kanem scholars and poets could write classical Arabic of a very high standard. We have evidence of this in a letter written by the Chief scribe of the Kanem court dating from. It is said that Dunama II opened a Talisman Munnir or Mune, considered sacred by his people, and thus brought a period of hardship to his people. This thriving capital continued until he was keen on learning its principles. He, by his own example, persuaded the nobility and Chiefs to limit the number of their wives to only four. We come to know about him through his chronicler, Ahmad ibn Fartuwa. In the 9th year of his reign, he went on a pilgrimage to Makkah and built a hostel there for pilgrims from Bornu. He revived the Islamic practices and made all and sundry follow them. He also set up Qadhis courts to introduce Islamic laws in place of the traditional system of customary law. He built a large number of brick mosques to replace the existing ones, built with reeds. In during the period of Mai Ahmad the glories of the Empire of Bornu came to an end, but its importance, as a center of Islamic learning, continued. The ruling Mai of Bornu of that time we do not have any information about the time welcomed Bayajida and gave his daughter in marriage to him but at the same time robbed him of his numerous followers. He fled from the Mai with his wife and came to Gaya Mai Kano and asked the goldsmith of Kano to make a sword for him. The story tells us that Bayajida helped the people of Kano by killing a supernatural snake which had prevented them from drawing water from a well. It is said that the queen, named Daura, married him in appreciation of his service to the people. Bayajida got a son named Bawo from Daura. Bawo, himself, had seven sons: Whatever may be the merit of this story, it tries to explain how Hausa language and culture spread throughout the northern states of Nigeria. Islam came to Hausaland in early 14th century. A mosque was built and a muedthin one who calls to prayer was appointed to give adhan call to prayer and a judge was named to give religious decisions. During the reign of a ruler named, Yaqub, one Fulani migrated to Kano and introduced books on Islamic Jurisprudence. By the time Muhammad Rumfa came into power, Islam was firmly rooted in Kano. In his reign Muslim scholars came to Kano; some scholars also came from Timbuktu to teach and preach Islam. Muhammad Rumfa consulted Muslim scholars on the affairs of government. The book is a celebrated masterpiece and is called The Obligation of the Princes. Al-Maghilli later went to Katsina, which had become a seat of learning in the 15th century. Most of the pilgrims from Makkah would go to Katsina. Scholars from the Sankore University of Timbuktu also visited the city and brought with them books on divinity and etymology. The spread of Islam in Africa is owing to many factors, historical, geographical and psychological, as well as its resulting distribution of Muslim communities, some of which we have tried to outline. Ever since its first appearance in Africa, Islam has continued to grow. The scholars there have been Africans right from the time of its spread. Islam has become an African religion and has influenced her people in diverse ways. Parts of This Article.

8: The Influence of Islam on West Africa - Medieval Africa

After West African kings converted to Islam, they started to exercise more control over local rulers. The kings also adopted titles used in Muslim lands. Often, the head of a region was now called the sultan, the amir, or emir.

In the Muslim tradition, this event is known as the first hijrah , or migration. They were followed by Muslims later in the same year. This mosque has two Qiblas because it was built before the Prophet switched the Qiblah from Jerusalem to Mecca. Islam gained momentum during the 10th century in West Africa with the start of the Almoravid dynasty movement on the Senegal River and as rulers and kings embraced Islam. During this period these Muslims from North and West Africa came to be known by Europeans at large as Moors and were depicted by Europeans as black, swarthy or tawny in skin color. Islam only crossed deeper into Malawi and Congo in the second half of the 19th century under the Zanzibar Sultanate. Then the British brought their labor force from India, including some Muslim-Indian nationals, to their colonies in Africa towards the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. The Mosque of Islamic Solidarity in Mogadishu , Somalia is the largest mosque in the Horn of Africa Islam was introduced to the northern Somali coast early on from the Arabian peninsula , shortly after the hijra. Lewis, the polity was governed by local dynasties , who also ruled over the similarly-established Sultanate of Mogadishu in the littoral Benadir region to the south. Other early notable missionaries include Abdallah ibn Yasin , who started a movement which caused thousands of Berbers to accept Islam. Abu-Abdullah Adelabu has written in his Movements of Islam in face of the Empires and Kingdoms in Yorubaland claims about the early arrival of Islam in the southwestern Nigeria. He seconded the Arab anthropologist Abduhu Badawi on the argument that the early Muslim missionaries had benefited their works from the fall of Kush in southern Sudan and the prosperity of the politically multicultural Abbasid period in the continent which, according to him, had created several streams of migration, moving west in the mid-9th century into Sub-Saharan Africa. One of the earliest universities in the world. Islam has been in Africa for so long, since its emergence on the Arabian peninsula, that some scholars have argued that it is a traditional African religion. Islam in Africa is not static and is constantly being reshaped by prevalent social, economic and political conditions. Different societies in Africa have generally appropriated Islam in both more inclusive ways, or in the more radical ways, as with the Almoravid movement in the Maghreb and Sahara. On the local level, experts assert that Muslims including African Muslims operate with considerable autonomy and do not have an international organization that regulates their religious practices. This fact accounts for the differences and varieties in Islamic practices throughout the African continent. On the global level, Muslims in Africa are also part of the Ummah Arabic: With globalization and new initiatives in information technology, Muslims in Africa have developed and maintained close connections with the wider Muslim world. At core of the struggle are questions about the way in which Muslims should practice their faith. The scholars assert that the majority seems to prefer to remain on the moderate, tolerant course that Islam has historically followed. However, a relatively small, but growing group would like to establish a stricter form of the religion, one that informs and controls all aspects of society. In Africa, most states limit the use of Sharia to "personal-status law" for issues such as marriage, divorce, inheritance and child custody. With the exception of northern Nigeria in West Africa , secularism does not seem to face any serious threat in Africa, even though the new Islamic revival is having a great impact upon segments of Muslim populations. Cohabitation or coexistence between Muslims and non-Muslims remains, for the most part, peaceful. In fact, dozens of women convicted of adultery and sentenced to stoning to death have later been freed. Egypt, one of the largest Muslim states in Africa, claims Sharia as the main source of its legislation, yet its penal and civil codes are based largely on French law. In addition, Sufism , the mystical dimension of Islam, has a presence. The Hanafi fiqh is also followed in western Egypt. The Khartoum - Karima Mosque in Sudan , Nile Valley Sufism, which focuses on the mystical elements of Islam, has many orders as well as followers in West Africa and Sudan, and, like other orders, strives to know God through meditation and emotion. Salafis criticize the folklorists Sufis, who they claim have incorporated "un-Islamic" beliefs into their practices, such as celebrating the several events, visiting the shrines of "Islamic saints",

dancing during prayer the whirling dervishes. Most orders in West Africa emphasize the role of a spiritual guide, marabout or possessing supernatural power, regarded as an Africanization of Islam. These Salafist organizations, often based out of Saudi Arabia, promote a form of conservative reformism and regard Sufism as "heterodox" and contrary to their interpretation of traditional Islam. Academic scholarships to study in Islamic universities in the Middle East are also offered to further Salafism.

9: Spread of Islam - Wikipedia

The spread of Islam among the Yoruba began late, well after the nineteenth century conversions of Wolof (a West African state that ruled parts of Senegal from to), and increased after Fulbe (an ethnic group spread over many countries, predominantly in West Africa) conquests of the s.

Published on Saturday, 29 December Civilizations were altered without being fully drawn into a single Islamic statement. A similar pattern developed in sub-Saharan Africa, as Islam provided new influences and contacts without amalgamating African culture as a whole to the Middle Eastern core. New religious, economic, and political patterns developed in relation to the Islamic surge, but great diversity remained. Africa below the Sahara was never totally isolated from the centers of civilization in Egypt, west Asia, or the Mediterranean, but for long periods the contacts were difficult and intermittent. During the ascendancy of Rome, sub-Saharan Africa like northern Europe was on the periphery of the major centers of civilization. After the fall of Rome, the civilizations of Byzantium and the Islamic world provided a link between the civilizations of the Middle East and the Mediterranean as well as the areas, such as northern Europe and Africa, on their frontiers. In Africa, between roughly A. A number of social, religious, and technological changes took place that influenced many of the different peoples throughout the vast and varied continent. Chief among these changes was the arrival of the followers of the Prophet Muhammad. The spread of Islam across much of the northern third of Africa produced profound effects on both those who converted and those who resisted the new faith. Islamization also served to link Muslim Africa even more closely to the outside world through trade, religion, and politics. Trade and long-distance commerce, in fact, was carried out in many parts of the continent and linked regions beyond the orbit of Muslim penetration. Until about , however, Islam provided the major external contact between sub-Saharan Africa and the world. State building took place in many areas of the continent under a variety of conditions. West Africa, for example, experienced both the cultural influence of Islam and its own internal dynamic of state building and civilizational developments that produced, in some places, great artistic accomplishments. The formation of some powerful states, such as Mali and Songhay, depended more on military power and dynastic alliances than on ethnic or cultural unity. In this aspect and in the process of state formation itself, Africa paralleled the roughly contemporaneous developments of western Europe. The development of city-states, with strong merchant communities in West Africa and on the Indian Ocean coast of East Africa, bore certain similarities to the urban developments of Italy and Germany in this period. However, disparities between the technologies and ideologies of Europeans and Africans by the end of this period also created marked differences in the way in which their societies developed. The arrival of western Europeans - the Portuguese - in the 15th century set in motion a series of exchanges that would draw Africans increasingly into the world economy and create a new set of relationships that would characterize African development for centuries to come. Several emphases thus highlight the history of Africa in the postclassical centuries. Northern Africa and the East African coast became increasingly incorporated into the Arab Muslim world, but even other parts of the continent reflected the power of Islamic thought and institutions. New centers of civilization and political power arose in several parts of sub-Saharan Africa, illustrating the geographical diffusion of civilization. African civilizations, however, built somewhat less clearly on prior precedent than was the case in other postclassical societies. Some earlier themes, such as the Bantu migration and the formation of large states in the western Sudan, persisted. Overall, sub-Saharan Africa remained a varied and distinctive setting, parts of it drawn into new contacts with the growing world network, but much of it retaining a certain isolation. Diversity And Similarities The continent of Africa is so vast and the nature of its societies so diverse that it is almost impossible to generalize about them. Unlike many parts of Asia, Europe, and North Africa, neither universal states nor universal religions characterized the history of sub-Saharan Africa. Yet universal religions, first Christianity and later Islam, did find adherents in Africa and sometimes contributed to the formation of large states and empires. Issues In Understanding Africa Perhaps because of the trends of European history, much of the history of Africa, like the history of the rest of the world, has been written in terms of organized political

entities, states and empires. These political entities have been the units for understanding the past, and their rise and fall have provided the flow of history. Historians of Africa have realized, however, that while some African societies had rulers who exercised control through a hierarchy of officials in what can be called states, other African societies were "stateless," organizing around kinship or other forms of obligation and lacking the concentration of political power and authority we normally associate with the state. The African past reveals that the movement from stateless to state societies was not necessarily an evolutionary development. Stateless peoples who lived in villages organized around either lineages or age sets - that is, groups of people of the same age who are considered to have similar responsibilities to society - did not need rulers or bureaucracies and existed side by side with states; sometimes the stateless societies were larger and more extensive than the neighboring states. Stateless societies had forms of government, but the authority and power normally exercised by a ruler and his court in a kingdom could be held instead by a council of families or by the community, with no need to tax the population to support the ruler, the bureaucrats, the army, or the nobles as was usually the case in state-building societies. In these societies, government was rarely a full-time occupation. Other alternatives to formal government were also possible. Among peoples of the West African forest, secret societies of men and women exercised considerable control over customs and beliefs and were able to limit the authority of rulers. Especially among peoples who had sharp rivalries between lineages or family groupings, secret societies developed that cut across the lineage divisions. The secret societies incorporated their members after an initiation that might have been based on knowledge, skills, physical tests, an initiation fee, or all of these. Members took on an allegiance to the society that transcended their lineage ties. The secret societies settled village disputes; enforcement or punishment was carried out by masked junior members acting on behalf of the secret society so that no feuding between families resulted. The secret societies acted to maintain stability within the community, and they served as an alternative to the authority of state institutions. Throughout Africa many stateless societies thrived, perhaps aided by the fact that internal social pressures or disputes could often be resolved by the splitting off of dissidents and the establishment of a new village in the relatively sparsely populated continent. Fragmentation and a "frontier" open to new settlement were constant features in much of African history. Still, stateless societies found it difficult to meet external pressures, mobilize for warfare, organize large building projects, or create stable conditions for continuous long-distance trade with other peoples. All these needs or goals contributed in various ways to the formation of states in sub-Saharan Africa. Finally, stateless societies left fewer records or traditions of the exploits of great heroes; thus, we know less about them. The existence of stateless societies and their transformation into states are a constant of African history even beyond

Common Elements In African Societies

Amid the diversity of African cultures, it is also useful to note certain similarities in language, thought, and religion that provide some underlying unities. The spread of the Bantu-speaking peoples provided a linguistic base across much of Africa, so that even though specific languages differed, structure and vocabulary allowed for some mutual understanding between neighboring Bantu-speakers. The same might be said of the animistic religion that characterized much of Africa. The belief in the power of natural forces personified as spirits or gods and the role of ritual and worship - often in the form of dancing, drumming, divination, and sacrifice - in influencing their actions was central to the religion of many African peoples, although local practice varied widely. African religions had well-developed concepts of good and evil. Africans, like Europeans, believed that some evil, disasters, and illnesses were produced by witchcraft. Specialists were needed to combat the power of evil and eliminate the witches. This led in many societies to the existence of a class of diviners or priests who guided religious practice and helped protect the community. Above all, African religion provided a cosmology - a view of how the universe worked - and a guide to ethics and behavior. Many African peoples shared an underlying belief in a creator deity whose power and action were expressed through spirits or lesser gods and through the founding ancestors of the group. The ancestors were often viewed as the first settlers and thus the "owners" of the land or the local resources, and through them the fertility of the land, the game, the people, and the herds could be ensured. Among some groups working the land took on religious significance, so the land itself had a meaning beyond its economic usefulness. Religion, economics, and history were thus closely intertwined. Then too, the family, lineage, or

clan around which many African societies were organized had an important role in dealing with the gods. Deceased ancestors were often a direct link between their living relatives and the spirit world. Veneration of the ancestors and gods were part of the same system of belief. Such a system was strongly linked to specific places and people. It showed remarkable resiliency even in the face of contact with the more generalized principles of religions such as Islam and Christianity. The economies of Africa are harder to describe in common terms than some basic aspects of politics and culture. North Africa was fully involved in the Mediterranean and Arab economic world, and stands clearly apart. Sub-Saharan Africa varied greatly from one region to the next. In many areas, settled agriculture and skilled ironwork had been established before the postclassical period or advanced rapidly during the period itself. Specialization encouraged active local and regional trade, the basis for many lively markets and the many large cities that grew both in the structured states and in the decentralized areas. The bustle and gaiety of market life were important ingredients of African society, and women as well as men participated actively. Trade was handled by professional merchants, in many cases in hereditary kinship groupings. Participation in international trade increased in many regions in this period, mainly toward the Islamic world and often through the intermediary of Arab traders. While African states benefited from their ability to tax the trade, they stood at some disadvantage in trading unprocessed goods, such as gold, ivory, salt, or slaves, for more elaborate products made elsewhere. International trade stimulated political and cultural change and furthered the growth of African merchant groups, but it did not induce rapid technical or manufacturing shifts within Africa, except for some important innovations in the excavation of mines. Finally, we should note that one of the least known aspects of African societies prior to the 20th century is the size and dynamic of their populations. This is true not only of Africa, but of much of the world. By 1000, Africa may have had 30 to 60 million inhabitants. The Greek city of Cyrene c. 400. After the age of the Pharaohs, Egypt conquered by Alexander in 332 b. Toward the end of the Roman Empire, Christianity had taken a firm hold in Mediterranean Africa but in the warring between the Vandals and the Byzantines in North Africa in the 5th and 6th centuries A. During that period, the Berber peoples of the Sahara had raided the coastal cities. As we have seen with Egypt, North Africa was also linked across the Sahara to the rest of Africa in many ways. With the rise of Islam, those ties became even closer. The Arabs originally used this word as the name for eastern North Africa and Maghrib for lands to the West. By 711, Arab and Berber armies had crossed into Spain. The message of Islam found fertile ground among the populations of North Africa. Conversion took place rapidly within a certain political unity provided by the Abbasid dynasty. This unity eventually broke down and North Africa divided into a number of separate states and competing groups. In opposition to the states dominated by the Arabic rulers, the peoples of the desert, the Berbers, formed states of their own at places such as Fez in Morocco and at Sijilimasa, the old city of the trans-Saharan caravan trade. By the 11th century, under pressure from new Muslim invaders from the East, a great puritanical reformist movement, whose followers were called the Almoravids, grew among the desert Berbers of the western Sahara. Launched on the course of a jihad, a holy war waged to purify, spread, or protect the faith, the Almoravids moved southward against the African kingdoms of the savanna and westward into Spain. In another reformist group, the Almohades, followed the same pattern. These North African and Spanish developments were an essential background to the penetration of Islam into sub-Saharan Africa. Islam offered a number of attractions within Africa. Its fundamental teaching that all Muslims are equal within the community of believers made the acceptance of conquerors and new rulers easier.

Come, O come, my lifes delight Thomas Campion, Horatio Parker Graham-Lewis family Children-the early years European Manual of Otorhinolaryngology, Head And Neck Surgery (European Manual of Medicine) History of France (Dodo Press) Preface: Bearing Witness Technology investment strategy for the next two decades Report of the work of the Invalided Soldiers Commission, Canada, May 1918. Combat : tournament karate Chris hedges books rar Bibliography Suggested Reading P. 197 A resources centre is a state of mind. Ground Failures Under Seismic Conditions Grade 12 calculus questions and answers Wormwood Volume 1 Maurice Blondel, social Catholicism, and action francaise Digestion in stomach in humans The complete book of squash Ill take another one of those, please! (orgasms in pregnancy) Precious Love (Black Satin) Critical success factors : the incubator perspective Bluegrass Guitar Solos Every Parking Lot Picker Should Know Canon c300 manual deutsch The Elves and the Shoemaker (Read It Yourself) Playground problem Failures of explanation in darwinian ecological anthropology Political theology and the life of the church The epic of greater America. Microeconomic theory concepts and connections Chemistry With Technology And Key Guide And Student Solutions Manual Tiger scroll of the Koga Ninja Ansi c programming by balaguruswamy latest Tri-horse plans The Silence Living in Houses Origin of the Communist autocracy How to grow herbs for gourmet cooking, including 100 recipes from 25 countries Design of cascade aerator Exhibiting an assertive connection Principles of data management facilitating information sharing The Mild Traumatic Brain Injury Workbook