Chapter 12 - Kingdoms and Trading States of Africa. (750 BC - AD 1586).

(1) Early Civilizations of Africa.
(2) Kingdoms of West Africa.
(3) Trade Routes of East Africa.
(4) Many peoples. Many Traditions.

(1) Early Civilizations of Africa.

**Vocabulary.**
savanna - grassy plain.
desertification - area becoming desert.
outpost - distant military station.

Setting the Scene.
Africa is second biggest continent. After Asia. Three times size of U.S.
Africa holds one-fifth of earth’s land surface. Its varied climates and landforms contribute to many traditions and civilizations.

Climate Zones.
Setting is in tropics: amid Tropic of Cancer (N) and Tropic of Capricorn (S).
Distinct climate zones have major impact on its development.

(1) **Rain Forest.** (5%).
Damp. Insects. Disease. Malaria. Yellow fever. Tsetse fly (sleeping sickness) can affect animals as well as humans so there is no cattle raising.

(2) **Savanna.** (50%).

(3) **Deserts.** (40%).
In north: Sahara, world’s largest desert.
In south: Kalahari and Namib, both drier than Sahara.
*Getting across desert changed when camels were brought to North Africa from Asia by AD 200.

(4) **Mediterranean.** (5%).
Early on, the north and south tips of continent was area of fertile farmland.
People in northern Africa had frequent contact with Mediterranean world.

Movement.
Enormous coastline. But few natural harbors.
Much of interior is high plateau. Rivers cascade through rapids to coast.
Much migration within Africa. Followed by much trade.

Resources.
Migration of People.

Great Rift Valley of East Africa (Ethiopia) was home of earliest people.

Changing Sahara.
5500 BC. Sahara was a well-watered zone. Really!
   Ancient rock paintings show Sahara full forest, rivers.
2500 BC. Sahara dries up.
   Desertification is process of area turning into desert.

Bantu Migrations.
AD 500. West African farmers and herders migrate east and south.
- 1500. Spoke root language Bantu.
   Migration led to a diversity of cultures.

Nile Kingdom of Nubia.
750 BC. Nubian king (Piankhi) conquers Egypt. (Nubia. Kush. Sudan.)
650 BC. Nubians leave Egypt to Assyrians.
500 BC. Nubian rulers move capital to Meroe.

   Nubia sent to Mediterranean: gold, ivory, animal skins, perfumes, slaves.
   But Meroe was rich in iron ore. Furnaces fueled by large amounts of timber.
   Nubia worshipped own gods, including iron-headed warrior god.
   Nubia created own system of writing (not hieroglyphs) but Nubian alphabet has yet to be deciphered.

Axum.
AD 350. Kingdom of Axum on Red Sea beats up Nubian army.
   King Ezana of Axum boasts that he destroyed everything.
   (Later in Section 3 under Trade Routes.)

North Africa.
800 BC. Carthage dominates trade in western Mediterranean and north Africa.
   It ends after Punic Wars with Rome (in 146 BC).

Roman Rule.
The Romans built roads, dams, aqueducts, and cities across north Africa.
   Under Roman rule Christianity spread to the cities of north Africa.

St. Augustine, the most influential Christian scholar in late Roman empire, born in Algeria,
was bishop (395-430) of Hippo, city near Carthage.

Camels and trade.
Camels were called ‘ships of the desert’ and came from Asia by AD 200.

Spread of Islam.
600s. Islam replaces Christianity as dominant religion.
   Arabic replaces Latin as language in north Africa.
(2) Kingdoms of West Africa.

Vocabulary.
surplus - an excess.
commodity - valuable product.
mansa - king (Mali).
oba - king (Benin).

Setting the Scene.
Between 800 and 1600 several powerful kingdoms got control of prosperous Sahara trade, to wit: West African states of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai.

Trading Gold and Salt.
Two products dominated the Sahara trade: gold and salt. Yes, salt! Gold was plentiful in present-day Ghana, Nigeria, and Senegal. But getting gold required work in hot, tropical areas. People ran the risk of dehydration unless they had salt in their diet. But they did not have salt. Salt was plentiful in Sahara where people built homes of salt blocks. A block of salt in the savanna (where there was none) was worth its weight in gold.

Gold Wealth of Ghana.

Influence of Islam.
King hires Muslims: written language, coinage, business practices, styles of architecture.

Kingdom of Mali.
1235. Sundiata wins control of gold trade route. Founds Mali. Mali is Arabic for ‘where the king lives.’ Mansa is Arabic for ‘king.’
1324. Mansa Musa makes hajj. Pilgrimage to Mecca.
1400s. Timbuktu becomes Mali city. Leading center of learning.

New Empire in Songhai.
1450. Gao is new capital of new kingdom of Songhai.
1586. Disputes over succession lead to civil war. Songhai splits into many small kingdoms.

Other Kingdoms.
1300s. Walled City-States of the Hausa.
1300s. Forest Kingdom of Benin. Benin learns to cast bronze and brass. Famed sculptures.
(3) Trade Routes of East Africa.

Setting the Scene.
Ethiopian tradition says first emperor was son of Israelite Solomon and Queen of Shheba (Makeda). Ethiopia remains Christian (through Coptic Church) while African kingdoms around it go Islamic. Isolation follows.

Axum And Successors.
AD 350. King Ezana of Axum conquers Nubia. (Axum was SE Nubia.)
Axum people had Jewish religious traditions.
Axum people had unique written/spoken language, Geez.

Spread of Christianity.
AD 350. King Ezana of Axum converts to Christianity.
At first Axum bring Christian tied it to North Africa and Mediterranean world (also Christian).
AD 600s. Islam spreads across Africa.
Axum (Christian) becomes isolated from:
- its own trade network.
- faraway Europe.
- former trading partners.

Kingdom of Axum declines due to (1) civil wars, (2) economic decline.

Ethiopia: A Christian Outpost.
Ethiopia (today) was the interior upland of Axum. Protected by mountains the people were able to protect their independence for centuries. Ethiopians stuck to Christianity that led to a unique sense of identity and distinctive culture.
AD 1200s. King Lalibela let Christian monks build many churches.
One group practiced Judaism. Another, Christianity.

Ethiopian Jews (Falasha). Famine. Evacuated to Israel.

East African City-States.
Visitors to East African coastline included the following:
- Phoenicians. Greeks. Romans. Indian traders. Then Arabs post AD 600s.
- Bantu-speaking peoples migrated east. Adopt Islam.

Growth of Trade.

Early sailors took heed of monsoon winds to fix their direction.
From Africa. Go to India (summer). Return from India (winter).

Blend of Cultures.
Marriage between African women and non-African (Muslim) men furthered the spread of Islam. Their children (Muslim) often became local leaders.
Swahili. New Language. Fuse Arabic on top Bantu base. Write in Arabic.

Great Zimbabwe. (Inland.)
AD 900. Bantus. Great Zimbabwe is ‘great stone buildings.’
1500. Decline. Overfarming? Civil war? Dwindling trade?
Portuguese traders push inland to look for gold!


(4) Many Peoples, Many Traditions.

**Vocabulary.**
nuclear family - mom, pop, kids living together.
patrilineal - inheritance through father’s side.
matrilineal - inheritance through mother’s side.
lineage - family group with common ancestor.
griot - professional poet who recited ancient stories.

**Setting the Scene.**
Different religious traditions contributed to diversity of vast Africa.

**People and the Environment.**
Over thousands of years Bantu-speaking peoples migrated across Africa.
They had (1) farming skills and (2) knowledge of ironworking.
They settled. Adapted to local environment. Absorbed local ideas.

**Hunting and Food Gathering.**
Sometimes they went to fringe areas.
Example: The Khoisan people adapted to harsh conditions of Kalahari Desert by gathering roots and herbs and hunting small game.

**Herding and Fishing.**
Some people raised cattle in parts of the savanna (grasslands) which were free from the tsetse fly (sleeping sickness).
Nomads had to protect their herds so they had to be good at warfare.
Along the coasts fish was the basic food .. caught by nets.

**Settled Farming Societies.**
Farmers raise crops from grains to root crops (yams) or tree crops (bananas). Practice slash and burn agriculture (see Vocabulary) that is still in the news.
Wrecking land leads to continuous moving on for farmers to wreck some more.

**Forms of Village Government.**
Both men and women planted for food.

**Sharing Power.**
Power in preurban societies was shared, not centralized in simple leader.
Chief had a lot of authority. But elders made major decisions. Sometimes, (West Africa) women were dominant in economy or official peacemakers.
Villages made decisions by consensus - open discussion, general agreement.
Example: Kingdom of Kongo (c. AD 1500). Run by consensus.

**Family Patterns.**
Family was basic unit of society. **Nuclear** (immediate) family was typical.

**Lines of Descent.**

**Wider Ties.**
Each family belonged to a **lineage** or group claiming **common** ancestor.

**Religious Beliefs.**
Spirits of dead ancestors (like saints).

**Literature.**
Arabic would become common written language.
In west Africa **griots** are pro poets who tell ancient stories. Oral historians.