

THIRD EDITION

THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

A History of African Americans—Combined Volume



Clayborne Carson • Emma J. Lapsansky-Werner • Gary B. Nash



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- Artifacts as Evidence: Amulet in the Form of Miniature Shackles
- The Atlantic Slave Trade
- The Experience of the Middle Passage

Chapter 3

- Degrees of Freedom in the Chesapeake

Chapter 4

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Chapter 5

- African Americans Fight in the Revolutionary War
- Artifacts as Evidence: Antislavery Medallion
- African Americans and the Rhetoric of Liberty
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- Artifacts as Evidence: "Gold Washers" Snuff Box
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Preface

In This Edition

Teachers familiar with previous editions of *The Struggle for Freedom* will find that this Third Edition expands impressively on its predecessors. The major changes include the following.

Revel for *The Struggle for Freedom*

Revel™

Revel is an interactive learning environment that deeply engages students and prepares them for class. Media and assessment integrated directly within the authors' narrative lets students read, explore interactive content, and practice in one continuous learning path. Thanks to the dynamic reading experience in Revel, students come to class prepared to discuss, apply, and learn from instructors and from each other.

Learn more about Revel

www.pearson.com/revel

The Struggle for Freedom, 3e, features many of the dynamic interactive elements that make Revel unique. In addition to the rich narrative content, *The Struggle for Freedom* includes the following:

- **Engaging Video Program:**
 - **Topical and primary source videos:** The new edition includes topical videos narrated by active scholars, as well as dramatic readings of engaging primary source documents that are illustrated with supporting images.
 - **Artifacts as Evidence videos:** Created in partnership with the Smithsonian Institution, these videos focus on a wide range of unique artifacts from the Smithsonian collection, using these artifacts as starting points for explaining and illuminating the African American historical experience.
- **Key Term Definitions:** Key terms appear in bold and include pop-up definitions inline that allow students to see the meaning of a word or phrase while reading the text, providing context.
- **Social Explorer Maps:** Select maps include interactive census data that allow students to delve deeply into the issues and developments illustrated by the maps.
- **Enhanced and Interactive Images:** Interactive photos allow students to study the details and nuances of the

images by clicking within the image for key commentary and explanation.

- **Assessments:** Multiple-choice end-of-module and end-of-chapter quizzes test students' knowledge of the chapter content, including dates, concepts, and major events.
- **Chapter Review:** The chapter review contains key term flashcards, an image gallery, video gallery, and review questions.
- **Source Collections:** An end-of-chapter source collection includes three to five documents relevant to the chapter content. Each document includes an introduction, questions, and audio. Students can highlight and make notes on the documents. Source collections for selected chapters also include videos created in partnership with the Smithsonian Institution and are accompanied by a brief introduction, questions, and audio.
- **Integrated Writing Opportunities:** To help students reason and write more clearly, each chapter offers three varieties of writing prompts:
 - **Journal Prompts:** These prompts integrated throughout support students' exploration of chapter themes. They are included inline with content and can be shared with instructors.
 - **Shared Writing Prompts:** These prompts encourage students to consider a key concept, event, or theme and provide peer-to-peer feedback in a discussion board, developing critical thinking skills and fostering collaboration among a specific class. These prompts appear between modules.
 - **Essay Prompts:** These prompts appear in Pearson's Writing Space and can be assigned and graded by instructors.

Key Elements to Enhance Student Engagement and Critical Thinking

- **Chapter introductory vignettes** encourage students to see African American history through the eyes of the individuals who lived it.
- **Chapter images, maps, and figures** are much more numerous than in the Second Edition and are in full color. Photographs and pieces of fine art encapsulate emotional and historical meaning. Captions provide valuable information that allows for a fuller understanding of the people who lived the African American story.

- **Learning Objectives** highlight the important issues and themes. Each is linked to one of the chapter's main sections, and they are all emphasized in the chapter overview.
- **Key Terms** throughout the chapters highlight important topics as they are introduced.
- **The timeline** beginning each chapter reinforces the essential points of the narrative.

Supplements for Instructors

Instructor's Resource Center. www.pearsonhighered.com/irc. This website provides instructors with additional text-specific resources that can be downloaded for classroom use. Resources include the Instructor's Resource Manual, PowerPoint presentations, and the Test Bank. Register online for access to the resources for *The Struggle for Freedom*.

Instructor's Resource Manual. Available at the Instructor's Resource Center for download, www.pearsonhighered.com/irc, the Instructor's Resource Manual includes an Introduction to Revel section that walks the user through the Revel product using screen shots that identify and explain the numerous Revel features, detailed chapter summaries, and discussion questions.

Test Bank. Available at the Instructor's Resource Center for download, www.pearsonhighered.com/irc, the Test Bank includes both multiple-choice and essay questions.

PowerPoint Presentations. Strong PowerPoint presentations make lectures more engaging for students. Available at the Instructor's Resource Center for download, www.pearsonhighered.com/irc, the PowerPoints contain chapter outlines and full-color photos, maps, and art. All PowerPoints are ADA compliant.

MyTest Test Bank. Available at www.pearsonmytest.com, MyTest is a powerful assessment generation program that helps instructors easily create and print quizzes and exams. Questions and tests can be authored online, allowing instructors ultimate flexibility and the ability to efficiently manage assessments anytime, anywhere! Instructors can easily access existing questions and edit, create, and store using simple drag-and-drop and Word-like controls.

Approach

Those who profess to favor freedom and yet depreciate agitation, are people who want crops without ploughing the ground; they want rain without thunder and lightning; they want the ocean without the roar of its many waters. The struggle may be a moral one, or it may be a physical one, or it may be both. But it must be a struggle. Power concedes nothing without a demand; it never has and it never will.

—Frederick Douglass

As was true with its first two editions, *The Struggle for Freedom* is a narrative of the black experience in America, using a distinctive biographical approach to guide the story and animate the history. This biographical approach places African American lives at the center of the narrative. In each chapter, individual African Americans are depicted initiating and responding to the historical changes of the era. Life stories capture the rush of events that envelop individuals and illuminate the momentous decisions that, collectively, shape the American past and present.

This book introduces the concepts, milestones, and significant figures of African American history. Inasmuch as that history is grounded in struggle—in the consistent and insistent call to the United States to deliver on the constitutional promises made to all its citizens—this book is also an American history text, weaving African American history into a larger narrative of American history, including developments in the nation's economy, politics, religion, family, and arts and letters.

The biographical approach of *The Struggle for Freedom* uses African American lives as the basis for understanding and analyzing not only the black experience in America but American history as a whole. Too often, expressions such as *the sweep of history*, *the transit of civilization*, *manifest destiny*, and *the march of progress* plant the idea that history is inexorable, unalterable, and foreordained, and beyond the capacity of men and women to change. That idea has been used to justify a winner's history that glosses over both the weaknesses of "winners" and the strength and dignity of "losers." Such an approach diminishes the full humanness of both, belittles those who were captured and traded as slaves, and defaces those who struggled for generations against entrenched prejudice. To promote the understanding that no individual is forever trapped within iron circumstances beyond his or her ability to alter, every chapter in this book is grounded in the experience of *people* as agents of their own liberation rather than simply as victims of oppression.

The human stories in *The Struggle for Freedom* illustrate the ways in which African Americans resisted slavery and became part of an international movement to eliminate the slave trade and ultimately the entire system of slavery. These stories also depict the sustained freedom struggles of African American peasants, who were, in the period after the Civil War, mostly illiterate, without land of their own, and denied basic human rights. Like peasants elsewhere in the world, they pursued a larger vision, educating themselves and their children, migrating in search of greater autonomy, creating their own churches and self-help organizations, and resisting oppression in all its forms. During the twentieth century, just as peasants and the descendants of peasants in Africa and Asia were overcoming colonialism, African Americans overcame the systematic segregation and discrimination of the American Jim Crow system. Over

the ensuing decades, the children of those who once picked cotton gained the power to pick presidents, and, early in the twenty-first century, they indeed helped elect a descendant of an African peasant as president of the United States.

Coverage and Organization

The remarkable and distinctive people and events of American history are all featured in *The Struggle for Freedom*. In these pages, readers will learn of the Europeans' first encounter with native peoples and a new environment; they will see how the American Revolution raised the ideal of human society cleansed of slavery, with voiceless chattel striding toward citizenship and power. They will encounter other pivotal events of American history and African American strategies in response to global and local events and pressures: the Haitian Revolution; the Missouri Compromise; sectional conflicts; wars in Europe, the South Pacific, and Asia, from the Civil War through this century's war against terrorism; and the human rights battles for our times. Readers will also be able to examine cultural and economic trends throughout American history—from the resistance poetry of revolutionary-era Phillis Wheatley and nineteenth-century artists such as Henry Ossawa Tanner, through the development of urban communities and technology that support such movements as modern-day hip-hop.

Chapters 1 through 7 of *The Struggle for Freedom* explore the period up to 1830, when most Africans in North America were enslaved. The book begins, as all human history begins, in Africa with ancient history and the rise of empires in West and Central Africa during the period American and western historians think of as the Middle Ages. European contact with West and Central Africa and the growth of the Atlantic slave trade are followed by an analysis of the new conditions of slavery in the Americas. New maps and images are included to help students understand the connections between these complex, intertwined histories. New data from extensive research in the last decade on the Atlantic slave trade are incorporated in several chapters. Because Africans were not all enslaved in the same ways and in the same conditions, the chapters treat the formation of notions about race and how they figured in the descent into slavery in different zones of European settlement—French, Dutch, Portuguese, and Spanish as well as English—in the Americas. The galvanizing effect of the American and Haitian revolutions and the decades thereafter during which free black people in the North and in the South built families, founded churches, forged friendships and communities, and struggled for freedom and dignity are central themes. Also explored is the rise of the Cotton Kingdom of the Deep South and how coerced migration to newly developed regions touched the lives of almost every enslaved person while spurring attempts to overthrow slavery.

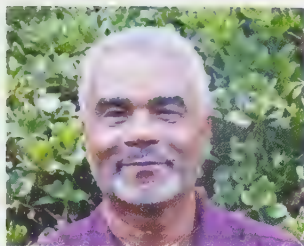
Chapters 8 through 14 examine pivotal junctures in African American history that parallel the American focus on expansion, reform, and nationality. The 1830s marked the first years when the majority of black Americans were not forced immigrants but rather were born on American soil. Echoing the religious reawakening that undergirded both abolitionism and a vigorous defense of slavery, enslaved and free African Americans alike claimed their voice in an international antebellum debate about the future of American democracy. Then, through a long and merciless Civil War, the end of slavery, and the South's attempt to re-create the essence of slavery, black Americans persisted in holding forth, before white Americans and the world, the guarantees of equality and citizenship built into the new constitutional amendments. The post-Civil War dispersal of newly freed African Americans to every corner of North America—and indeed across the globe—shows how, in the face of a still-hostile white America that abandoned Reconstruction, black people built families, communities, viable economic lives, and shaped individualized notions of a “good” life. Churches, mutual aid and literary enterprises, businesses, schools, and publishing ventures reflected the transformation from slaves to soldiers and autonomous citizens, determined to wrest equality and justice, and to claim their place in the America they had helped to build. Highlighted here, also, are some of the black visionaries whose descendants grasped and enriched the legacies of struggle passed down from their forebears. This textbook “names” not only of the lofty leaders, but of many less-well-known figures whom the lofty ones inspired. One of the goals of *Struggle* is to inspire today's youth to notice and honor their own family's place in the larger tapestry. The discussions of black communities in the 1830s and 1840s, violence against abolitionists, the Underground Railroad, slave narratives, and secession have all been significantly revised and updated. Chapters 10 and 11 (the Civil War and Reconstruction) have been reorganized to help clarify developments in this crucial period of African American history.

The last eight chapters of the book, Chapters 15 through 22, illuminate African American life in modern America. The narrative explores the increasing impact of African Americans on the surrounding world. During world wars, the Great Depression, and other momentous national and international transformations, black Americans struggled for justice and full citizenship in a society still marred by racist attitudes and practices. Throughout twentieth-century scientific, technological, and economic changes, one theme permeates African American strategies for securing justice and equal opportunity: the ongoing struggle for a positive sense of identity amidst racism and destructive racial stereotypes. Whether in fighting the nation's

wars; helping build the modern economy; adding to urban dynamics and to the explosion of cultural creativity through innovations in music, art, film, dance, and literature; or playing increasingly prominent roles on the political stage at the local, state, and national level, African Americans in the last century are portrayed as the principal innovators of

the nation's most important liberation movement. All chapters in this section have received substantial revision, and new sections have been added to Chapter 22 on the legacy of Barack Obama's presidency, the state of the contemporary struggle for African American freedom, and the meaning of the 2016 presidential election.

About the Authors



CLAYBORNE CARSON was born in Buffalo, New York, and grew up in Los Alamos, New Mexico. He received his BA, MA, and PhD from the University of California, Los Angeles, and since 1974 has taught at Stanford University where he is now

Martin Luther King, Jr., Centennial Professor of History. He has also been a visiting professor or fellow at the University of California, Berkeley, Morehouse College, Emory University, American University, Harvard University, and the Center for Advanced Studies in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford. Active during his undergraduate years in the civil rights and antiwar movements, Carson has published many works on the African American freedom struggles of the post-World War II period. His first book, *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* (1981), won the Frederick Jackson Turner Award from the Organization of American Historians. He has also published *Malcolm X: The FBI File* (1991) and *Martin's Dream: My Journey and the Legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (2013). He served as senior advisor for the award-winning PBS series on the civil rights movement entitled *Eyes on the Prize*, as well as contributed to many other documentaries, such as *Freedom on My Mind* (1994), *Blacks and Jews* (1997), *Brother Outsider: The Life of Bayard Rustin* (2002), *Negroes with Guns: Rob Williams and Black Power* (2005), *Have You Heard from Johannesburg?* (2010), *Al Helm: Martin Luther King in Palestine* (2013), and *The Black Panthers: Vanguard of a Revolution* (2015). Carson is founding director of the Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute at Stanford, an outgrowth of his work since 1985 as editor of King's papers and director of the King Papers Project, which is producing a comprehensive fourteen-volume edition of *The Papers of Martin Luther King, Jr.* The biographical approach of *The Struggle for Freedom: A History of African Americans* grew out of Carson's vision. He has used it with remarkable results in his Stanford courses, including his online *American Prophet: The Inner Life and Global Vision of Martin Luther King, Jr.*



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tion in Mississippi in the 1960s, she became a historian to try to help correct misinformation about black Americans. Her research and teaching—all informed by her concern for the African American story—focus on family and community life, antebellum cities, Quaker history, religion and popular culture in nineteenth-century America, and the intersections between race, religion, and class. Lapsansky-Werner has published on all these topics, including *Back to Africa: Benjamin Coates and the Colonization Movement in America, 1848–1880* (2005, with Margaret Hope Bacon), *Neighborhoods in Transition: William Penn's Dream and Urban Reality* (1994), and *Quaker Aesthetics: Reflections on a Quaker Ethic in American Design and Consumption, 1720–1920* (2003). She also contributed an article on Benjamin Franklin and slavery to Yale University Press's *Benjamin Franklin, In Search of a Better World* (2005) and to several anthologies on the history of Pennsylvania. She hopes that *The Struggle for Freedom: A History of African Americans* will continue to broaden the place of African American history in the scholarly consciousness, expanding the trend toward recognizing black Americans as not just objects of public policy, but also as leaders in the multifaceted international struggle for human justice. Through stories, black Americans are presented as multidimensional, alive with their own ambitions, visions, and human failings.



GARY B. NASH was born in Philadelphia and received his BA and PhD in history from Princeton University. He taught at Princeton briefly and since 1966 has been a faculty member at the University of California, Los Angeles, where he teaches colonial American, revolutionary American, and

African American history and directs the National Center for History in the Schools. He served as president of the Organization of American Historians in 1994–1995 and was Co-Director of the National History Standards Project in 1992–1996. Nash's many books on early American history include *Quakers and Politics: Pennsylvania, 1681–1726* (1968); *Red, White, and Black: The Peoples of Early North America* (seven editions since 1974); *The Urban Crucible: Social Change, Political Consciousness, and the Origins of the American Revolution* (1979); *Forging Freedom: The Formation*

of Philadelphia's Black Community, 1720–1840 (1988); *Race and Revolution* (1990); *Forbidden Love: The Secret History of Mixed-Race America* (1999; 2nd ed., 2010); *First City: Philadelphia and the Forging of History Memory* (2001); *Landmarks of the American Revolution* (2003); *The Unknown American Revolution: The Unruly Birth of Democracy and the Struggle to Create America* (2005); *The Forgotten Fifth: African Americans in the Age of Revolution* (2006); *Friends of Liberty: Thomas Jefferson, Tadeuz Kosciuszko, and Agrippa Hull* (2008); *Liberty Bell* (2010); *Warner Mifflin: Unflinching Quaker Abolitionist* (2017); and *The American People: Creating a Nation and a Society* (nine editions since 1981). Nash wanted to coauthor this book with two good friends and esteemed colleagues because of their common desire to bring the story of the African American people before a wide audience of students and history lovers. African American history has always had a central place in his teaching, and it has been pivotal to his efforts to bring an inclusive, multi-cultural American history into the K–12 classrooms in this nation and abroad.

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THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

Chapter 1

Ancient Africa



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- 1.4** African Culture
Construct a view on how African culture survived the Middle Passage and may continue to have relevance today.

African Storytelling and African American History

The storytellers of the Yoruba people of West Africa, the *griots*, have a saying passed down for generations: "However far the stream flows, it never forgets its source." This wisdom is as fresh today as it was a thousand years ago.

From their first arrival in the Americas, Africans knew that without history they would be water without a source, trees without roots. Those roots derive from oral cultures in Africa, where young people heard adults tell stories about the origins of their own village-based people. Other stories taught children what it means to live properly. Still others "handed on the torch," as many Africans say, by capturing the sweep of a people's long history.

Once they were wrenched from their homelands, enslaved Africans continued to keep ancient traditions alive—passing down to their children the stories, morals, and values of their ancestors. Under slavery, the desire to preserve memory of long-ago traditions, as well as more recent experiences, intensified. As soon as they could, Africans began recounting the horrors of capture and transport to the Americas (the Middle

Passage), the desperate struggle for survival under slavery, and the bravery and resolve of those who struck out for freedom. History could not ward off a brutal master's blows or break slavery's chains. Nevertheless, it sustained Africans' souls and nourished their hopes for a better life.

For many generations, Africans in America nurtured the collective memory of their history through oral storytelling. They had few opportunities to publish written accounts because most of them were in bondage to masters who forbade them to learn how to read and write. That began to change in the era of the American Revolution. Enslaved Africans such as Phillis Wheatley and free black people such as Venture Smith were the first black writers to find white patrons who helped publish their recorded thoughts and experiences. In the decades before the Civil War, a handful of black

CHRONOLOGY

(BCE means "Before Common Era"; CE means "Common Era," with years coinciding with the Christian "BC" and "AD" dates.)

Ancient ancestors of humans in East Africa.	3,750,000 BCE	
	1,800,000 BCE	The oldest humans, <i>Homo erectus</i> , in East Africa.
Early human ancestors learn to use fire.	800,000 BCE	
	90,000 BCE	<i>Homo sapiens</i> migrate out of Africa.
Pharaohs unify Egypt.	3100 BCE	
	1540–1070 BCE	The New Kingdom in Egypt.
The Kushites rule Egypt.	750–670 BCE	
	c. 800 BCE	Iron smelting begins in east central Africa.
Greece and then Rome control Egypt.	332 BCE–c. 400 CE	
	c. 100–200 CE	Bantu-speaking people migrate south.
The rise of the kingdom of Ghana.	c. 500–1100 CE	
	c. 610 CE	Muhammad founds the Islamic faith.
Muslim faith spreads across North Africa.	632–750 CE	
	c. 1000 CE	The kingdom of Benin takes form.
Mansa Musa's pilgrimage to Mecca.	1324–1325 CE	
	1235 CE	Mali is the major power in West Africa.
Songhay breaks away from the kingdom of Mali.	1435 CE	
	c. 1460s–1590s CE	Songhay kingdom controls West African trade.
Morocco captures Timbuktu and Gao.	1591 CE	

historians, such as Boston's William C. Nell and Philadelphia's William Douglass, published the first histories of black people in North America. Meanwhile, former bondsman Frederick Douglass wrote an autobiographical account of his travails in slavery and his long walk to freedom. His story carried such power and poignancy that it made him an international figure. A people whose memory had been officially suppressed began to regain their voice.

Most nineteenth-century African American histories did not enjoy a wide readership. White Americans, in particular, ignored them. In recent years, however, these accounts have been republished and have attracted a growing audience. They have also inspired contemporary black historians to build on their work. Twentieth-century historians such as W. E. B. Du Bois, Rayford Logan, Carter Woodson, and John Hope Franklin insisted that African American history be included in the American story. Six decades ago, a young preacher named Martin Luther King, Jr., prophesied on the night of the Montgomery bus boycott in 1955, "When the history books are written in future generations, the historians will say, 'There lived a great people—a black people—who injected new meaning and dignity into the veins of civilization.'" King's prophecy has come to be.

The story of humankind began several million years ago in East Africa, where, according to archaeologists, humans first made their appearance on Earth. Egypt gave birth to the first great African civilization. That civilization, in turn, shaped ancient Greece and Rome. The spread of Islam and the emergence of West and Central African kingdoms set the stage for an era in which millions of African people were torn from their homelands and forced across the Atlantic to serve as slaves in the Americas.

This chapter looks at the cultures of these African peoples—and some of the individuals who embodied their ways of life. By understanding the societies these men and women came from, the gods they worshiped, the family traditions they cherished, and the social systems and artistic works they created, we will see them as more than faceless units of labor carried across the ocean. By seeing them as peoples with long, rich histories, we can better understand their—and our own—experiences in the Americas.

1.1 From Human Beginnings to the Rise of Egypt

Assess the relevance of ancient Egypt and Nubia to African American history.

For generations, Yoruba storytellers told young people how Olodumare, the god of the sky, sent two sons down to Earth with a bag, a hen, and a chameleon. The bag contained soft white sand and rich black soil. One son sprinkled the white sand on the water's surface. From the sand sprouted a palm tree. The chameleon gingerly stepped across the sand, discovering that the grains supported its weight. Seeing this, the other son spread the soil over the sand. Then the hen scratched in the dark earth, scattering it in all directions. Pleased with his sons' work, Olodumare sent Aje—goddess of prosperity—from Heaven to dwell there for the rest of her life. The sky god sent his sons additional gifts: maize to plant for food; cowrie shells for trading; and iron bars for forging hoes, knives, and other tools. In this way, Olodumare created Yorubaland.

Like the Yoruba, every human society has developed creation myths to make sense of its beginnings and to understand the mighty forces of nature. Since the emergence of humankind, a rich array of creation stories has arisen. Around the world, these stories yield many interpretations of the first stirrings of humankind. The Yoruba creation story leads us to consider the long history of ancient Africa—from human beginnings through the flourishing of Egyptian civilization to the Roman and Greek conquest of North Africa.

1.1.1 Human Beginnings in East Africa

Scientists offer several explanations of how the Earth was formed and how human beings came to inhabit it. Though much remains to be discovered, the common scientific understanding is that all humans descended from hominids. These humanlike primates had enlarged brains and could walk upright on two legs. Archaeologists have found the oldest fossilized remains of these hominids in eastern Africa. As early as 1871, Charles Darwin proposed in his *Descent of Man* that Africa was probably the birthplace of humankind. But this notion offended Europeans, who saw their own race as superior to that of the African. Some Europeans thus maintained that human life began not in Africa but in Europe—specifically in Germany’s Neander Valley, where fossil remains of an early human species dubbed *Neanderthal man* were discovered in 1856.

Not until 1925, when an archaeologist found a child’s skull in a limestone cave at Taung, in South Africa, did the European origins thesis come under scientific scrutiny. Apelike in appearance, the skull also had human characteristics in its forehead and nose structure. Examination revealed it as the most ancient example of *Australopithecine*—a creature who walked upright around four million years ago. Once again, the notion that humans emerged in Africa gained credence.

Then, in the 1950s, the British anthropologists Louis and Mary Leakey found additional fossils of the *Australopithecine* species in East Africa’s Olduvai Gorge. Scholars soon felt convinced that human life indeed began in Africa. In 1961, the Leakeys found confirming evidence of the evolution from primate to human being—fossil bones resting alongside simple stone tools. Dating technology revealed that members of this first group of human ancestors were toolmakers who lived between 1.5 and 3.75 million years ago in East Africa.

More evidence came to light in 1974 in Hadar, Ethiopia. There, paleoanthropologists (who study human origins) discovered “Lucy,” the first example of *Homo erectus*, or upright human. This exceptionally complete skeleton, about 3½ feet tall, dates back about 1.8 million years. Thanks to this finding, scientists now widely accept the idea that the ancient ancestors of all humans originated in Africa about 200,000 years ago. These ancestors are called *Homo sapiens*—meaning “wise human” (see Map 1.1).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIG IN SOUTH AFRICA

Archaeology students, photographed here in 2015, are excavating a site about fifty kilometers from Johannesburg, South Africa near the Cradle of Humankind Visitor Center, where a new species of our human ancestors, termed *Homo neledi*, has been found.



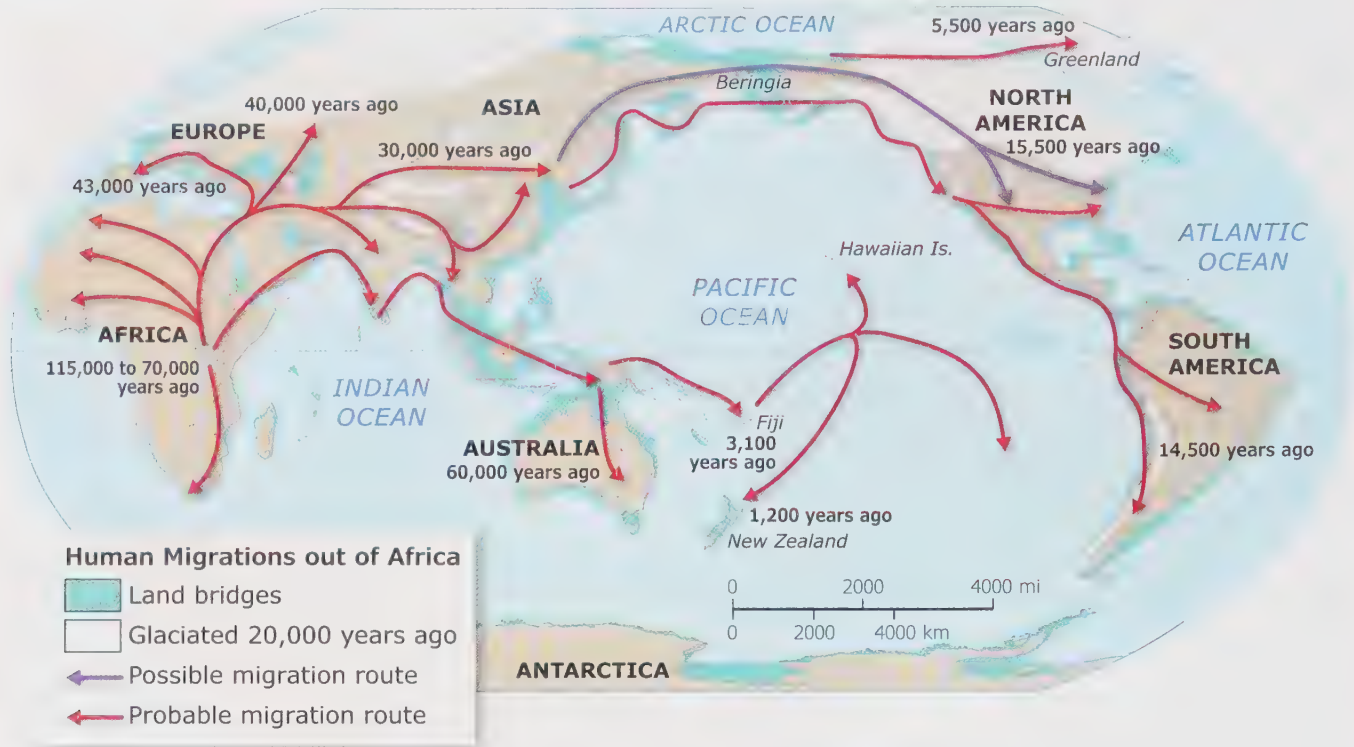
MAP 1.1 Early Hominid Sites



The subject of human origins still generates heated debate, and hardly a year goes by without new archaeological evidence. However, the reigning theory, based on ancient fossil remains, is that humans first emerged in eastern Africa. This map shows the sites where archaeologists have discovered the most numerous ancient human bones. Most of these sites are in eastern and southern Africa. Several in North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula have yielded remains of *Homo erectus*.

Though a small group of dissenters argue that hominids originated in several regions of the world and evolved separately in Africa, the Middle East, Europe, and Asia, new discoveries have consolidated the “out of Africa” scenario. In 2002, for example, three fossilized *Homo sapiens* skulls excavated in Herto, Ethiopia, were dated through argon-isotope analysis to about 160,000 years ago, solidly supporting the “out of Africa” theory. Though many African Americans speak of “Mother Africa” to signify the homeland of their forebears, most modern scientists agree that Africa is the mother of *all* humans.

MAP 1.2 Human Migrations Out of Africa



Scholars will never in our lifetimes halt their investigations of the timing, the motives, and the means of humans migration out of eastern and southern Africa and into all the land masses of the earth.

1.1.2 The Rise of Egyptian Civilization

By at least 70,000 years ago, humans began to migrate out of East Africa to what we today call the Middle East, Asia, and Australia (see Map 1.2). About 30,000 years later, they appeared in Europe. There they made spear and harpoon points for hunting large fish and big animals such as the wild ox and hippopotamus, and they crafted thin scrapers for cleaning hides. These nomadic groups discovered ways to increase their food supply by domesticating and herding animals. They also made simple clothing out of hides to protect themselves against the cold. By about 12,000 BCE, some of these groups began settling in present-day Syria. By 8500 BCE, they were harvesting millet and sorghum (grains used to make bread) as they settled along the Nile, the world's longest river, in today's Egypt. This area became the most densely populated part of the ancient world.

Over the next 4,000 years, Egyptian civilization flourished and spread. Learning to use the predictable flooding of the mighty Nile to irrigate crops in a land of little rainfall, early hydrology engineers transformed Egypt from a sparsely populated and forbidding desert into a thriving civilization. By about 3100 BCE, local kingdoms began to emerge throughout Egypt, led by rulers called *pharaohs*. Over many centuries, rival kingdoms set aside their differences and united along the Nile's 4,000-mile-long banks.

Strong, centralized governments evolved out of these kingdoms, headed by pharaohs who claimed godlike power. Commanding the labor of a vast peasantry, they amassed enough wealth from the production of crop surpluses to erect royal tombs, temples, and pyramids that showcased their power. Pharaohs drew their strength from civil servants who collected taxes, supervised irrigation projects, and compiled and maintained tax and administrative records. To record information, they used a sophisticated system of writing that consisted of *hieroglyphs*, picture signs that represented concepts and numbers.



FUNERARY FIGURES FROM REIGN OF AMENHOTEP III

Funerary figures, called *shabtis*, played an important role in the Pharaohs' burial practices. This one showing the counting of cattle, comes from the reign of Amenhotep III (c. 1391-1353 BCE). Such figures were inscribed with orders to perform tasks that would ease the deceased person's way through the underworld. This practice became common in West and Central Africa.

In the New Kingdom period (1540–1070 BCE), the pharaohs accumulated large armies and led them into wars of expansion against the peoples of Palestine, Syria, and Nubia. The massive statues and temples built by Ramesses II, a visitor attraction today, testify to the power of the empire forged out of conquered lands. As the realm extended its reach, cultural change accelerated as well. Ancient Egypt became a crossroads for merchants and other enterprising men and women seeking to trade with other societies. Within this vast realm, a composite culture arose that comprised Mediterranean peoples from the west, Semitic nomads from the east, and dark-skinned traders and farmers from Kushite and Ethiopian societies to the south.

The Egyptian civilization dominated the lands bordering the Mediterranean Sea for 3,000 years—from about 3100 to roughly 332 BCE, when the Greeks invaded the kingdom. Indeed, ancient Egypt stands as the longest-lasting civilization in human history. Scholars trace about thirty dynasties during this epoch. Perhaps no dynasty has captured the imaginations of students of history more than that of the female pharaoh Hatshepsut, who reigned during the New Kingdom period. This shrewd and skillful ruler built a great temple on the banks of the Nile and restored numerous old temples that foreign invaders had destroyed. Hatshepsut's successor, Thutmose III, became one of Egypt's mightiest pharaohs. Through military expeditions into the eastern Mediterranean region, he extended his empire into Palestine and Syria. Later rulers continued to enlarge the realm while building impressive monuments at home. For example, the three pyramids at Giza still testify to Egyptian achievements in hydraulic engineering, architecture, and sculpture.

Owing to its location, Egypt played virtually no role in the forced migration of Africans to the Americas that unfolded centuries later. Rather, it became a transshipment point for West Africans slated for Muslim slave markets to the east.

1.1.3 Debates over Black Egypt

Since the eighteenth century, African Americans have cited Egypt's greatness as a way to counter charges that "the dark continent" was home to "savages" useful only as labor for other, more civilized peoples. Europeans had long recognized ancient Egypt



**DETAIL (HEAD) OF STATUE OF
CLEOPATRA III**

Detail of statue of Cleopatra VII, c. 51-30 BCE. Carved from basalt, fine-grained volcanic rock, the statue displays her elaborately braided hair.

Semitic peoples

Members or descendants of peoples of ancient southwestern Asia including Hebrews, Akkadians, Phoenicians, and Arabs; in modern times, usually used to define Jews.

as a cradle of civilization and the source of many ideas that powerfully shaped ancient Greece and Rome. In denigrating African peoples, however, these same Europeans mentally plucked Egypt out of Africa and Africans out of Egypt. Yet as any glance at a world map shows, Egypt is solidly part of the African continent.

For generations, African Americans fought the notion that Egypt was not part of Africa. They referred to Egypt as an African society, and many called the Egyptians “Ethiopians.” This name was a reference to nearby Ethiopia, with which Egypt had traded extensively over many centuries. By the 1870s, the first historians who tried to write a comprehensive African American history—such as George Washington Williams and Edward Blyden—pointedly began their narratives with accounts of Egypt (see Chapter 11).

Today, scholars still argue over whether the ancient Egyptians were “black,” “white,” or racially mixed and the degree to which Egypt influenced ancient Greece and Rome. In 1987, Martin Bernal’s *Black Athena: The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization*, set off a furious controversy. Bernal claimed that dark-skinned Egyptian and **Semitic peoples** played a significant role in the making of Greek civilization, especially in its mathematics, philosophy, and religion. Modern Western civilization, he concluded, owes a great debt to ancient Africa.

Though many scholars dispute Bernal’s findings, few deny that they have inspired much new research on the circulation of ideas throughout the Mediterranean basin. Traditional scholarship on ancient Greece now looks much more carefully at Egyptian influences and at the connections among the ancient peoples living around the Mediterranean Sea. *Black Athena* has also provoked discussions about whether identity is determined primarily by race and whether race should be the basis of political empowerment and entitlement programs. Many scholars argue that the ancient Egyptians had no concept of “race” or even “blackness.” Rather, this school of thought holds, white people invented these notions to exclude and exploit people of color.

1.1.4 Egypt and Nubia

Nubia, the state the Egyptians called Kush, has also caught the attention of modern-day African Americans seeking to reclaim a noble past. In ancient times, Nubia lay to the south of Egypt, along the lower Nile from the first great cataract (waterfall) to below the fifth cataract (see Map 1.3). For centuries, Egypt’s rulers sent ships south along the Nile to trade with the dark-skinned Nubians living in Kush. Both societies benefited from this trade. Still, the pharaohs considered Kush part of their empire, so from time to time they sent armies into the region to maintain their control of its valuable assets.

Although Kush adopted many elements of Egyptian culture, it retained its individual character and political structures. Yet power shifted back and forth between Egypt and Kush. By about 1070 BCE, Egypt fell into decline. Emboldened, the Kushite rulers broke away from Egyptian control. By 750 BCE, the Kushite kings had conquered Upper Egypt and its capital city, Thebes, and seized Memphis, the main Egyptian capital. Later, Shabaka became the first Kushite monarch to control all of Egypt. Yet governing a vast empire is complex, difficult work. The Kushites’ rule lasted for less than one hundred years. Slowly, Egypt regained its former stature. During the centuries that followed, the two civilizations—each with its own distinct legacy—remained closely connected. Inter-marriage, trade, and the exchange of artistic traditions renewed the fusion of peoples living in the vast Nile River region.

MAP 1.3 Egypt in the New Kingdom



Visitors to Egypt today flock to see the Luxor Temple and other monumental buildings at Karnak and other Egyptian sites that recall the New Kingdom. This map shows the major temple sites in Egypt as well as temples and fortifications in Kush, which was part of the New Kingdom, as the text explains.

1.1.5 Egypt after the Greek Conquest

In 332 BCE, the twenty-four-year-old Macedonian warrior Alexander the Great swept into Egypt with his armies and added the region to his rapidly expanding collection of conquests (see Map 1.4). Though the last Egyptian dynasty came to an end, Egypt continued to serve as a cultural crossroads in the ancient Middle East as its Greek rulers spread their influence. For the next three centuries, Alexander's general, Ptolemy, and his successors governed Egypt. As one of their most striking achievements, they founded the city of Alexandria, named after the conquering Macedonian king. A port city on the Mediterranean Sea, Alexandria became a vibrant trading and cultural hub. As a crossroads, the city enabled those who lived around the Mediterranean to exchange goods and ideas with people living in the mineral-rich African interior and in Alexander's conquered lands east into India.

Egypt maintained this central cultural position when, around 500 BCE, the Romans began conquering lands as far west as Spain and dominating the Mediterranean. By about 146 BCE, the Romans had supplanted Greek control in northern Africa. The Roman government made Tunisia and Egypt dependent provinces, extracting from them grain, papyrus for papermaking, and even wild animals that were pitted against one another in the vaunted Roman circus games.

In Roman Africa, trade and periodic warfare accelerated the intermingling of peoples (see Map 1.4). A new faith, Christianity, spread through the Roman Empire as a result of this intermingling. Christianity sank its roots deep into Egypt in the first century CE. Alexandria, Egypt's commercial center, became one of the most vital hubs of early Christendom. Gradually, Christianity spread west across North Africa among Berber-speaking peoples. It also moved south from Egypt into Nubia where today, in Ethiopia, it still flourishes.

MAP 1.4 Map of Roman Provinces in North Africa



After destroying Carthage in 146 BCE, the Romans made provinces of Egypt and Tunisia, thus bending the arc of ancient history.

1.2 The Spread of Islam

Explain the success of Islam's expansion throughout the Afroeurasian world.

"The seat of Mansa Sulayman [the sultan] was a sprawling, unwalled town set in a 'verdant and hilly' country," wrote the seasoned traveler Abu Abdallah Ibn Battuta in 1351 CE after visiting the capital of Mali, a kingdom in northwest Africa. "The sultan had several enclosed palaces there . . . and covered [them] with colored patterns so that it turned out to be the most elegant of buildings. Surrounding the palaces and mosques were the residences of the citizenry, mud-walled houses roofed with domes of timber and reed. . . . Amongst their good qualities is the small amount of injustice amongst them, for of all people they are the furthest from it. Their sultan does not forgive anyone in any matter to do with injustice. . . . There is also the prevalence of peace in their country, the traveler is not afraid in it nor is he who lives there in fear of the thief or of the robber by violence. They do not interfere with the property of the white man who dies in their country even though it may consist of great wealth, but rather they entrust it to the hand of someone dependable among the white men until it is taken by the rightful claimant."

This vivid excerpt from one of the greatest travelers of premodern times opens a window onto the theme of this section: the spread of Islam in Africa, beginning in the seventh century. Enslaved Africans later carried this faith to North America. The excerpt's author, Ibn Battuta, embodied the rise of Islam. Born in 1304 CE into a family of Muslim legal scholars in Tangier, Morocco (on the southern shore of the Mediterranean Sea), he came of age as Islam was connecting Europe, Asia, and Africa by dint of religious, cultural, and military force. At age twenty-one, Ibn Battuta made a pilgrimage along well-beaten trading routes to the sacred Muslim city of Mecca in Arabia. For almost thirty years he traveled through much of the eastern hemisphere. He visited territories equivalent to forty-four present-day countries and covered about 73,000 miles—three times the distance covered by the legendary Marco Polo. He recorded the words in the excerpt above as he journeyed in 1351 from Fez across the Atlas Mountains to Sijilmasa, a bustling trade center in southern Morocco. Ibn Battuta's careful recordkeeping provides a rare glimpse into a vibrant era in African history.

1.2.1 The Origins of Islam

Islam, meaning "submission to Allah," was born in 610 CE. That year, a young Arabic-speaking merchant named Muhammad ibn Abdallah began preaching in his Arabian village after he saw a vision of the angel Gabriel. The angel, Muhammad claimed, had commanded him to spread messages from God to peoples throughout the land. A gifted orator, Muhammad attracted numerous followers and became the founder of the new faith. Like Christianity, Islam is monotheistic; it recognizes only one all-powerful god. Muhammad preached that he was God's final prophet. The Qur'an, he avowed, was God's word revealed to him. According to Muhammad, the messages he received from God completed the earlier revelations of the Hebrew prophets and Jesus.

Muhammad won many converts because his message had great appeal. The theological foundation of the faith he advocated was easily understood; it did not require an exclusive, elite class of priests. All believers, Muhammad preached, were equal in the eyes of Allah. Through private prayer, kindness and generosity, and fasting before the holy feast of Ramadan, anyone could embrace the will of the One True God. Islam also provided a code for right living. For example, the rich must demonstrate compassion, share their wealth with the poor, and contribute to public charities such as hospitals. Every Muslim (follower of Islam) must forswear drinking alcohol and gambling. Adherents to the faith must struggle to resist temptation and overcome evil. Muslims also held scholarship in high regard and established strict rules governing commercial activities such as bookkeeping, credit arrangements, and dispute resolution.

1.2.2 Islam's Great Reach

Like Christians, Muslims believed they had a mandate from God to convert all people to their faith. Within a century of Muhammad's death in 632, his followers had reached out aggressively, often militarily, and established control over regions larger than those making up the Roman Empire (see Map 1.5). Spreading rapidly in Arabia, the new faith soon extended into Syria and Mesopotamia. It then moved east all the way to China, west across Mediterranean North Africa to Spain, and south along the Red Sea coast of East Africa. Invaded by Arab Muslims in 639 CE, Egypt became **Islamized**, just as it had earlier been Christianized under Roman influence. By the tenth century CE, Egypt had a predominantly Muslim population. Islam then spread south from Mediterranean North Africa across the Sahara Desert into the savannah region of western Africa, then called the Sudan. (The word *sudan* is Arabic for "black people." Today's Sudan is an East African nation bordering the Red Sea.)

Islam initially made little headway among villagers in the Sudanese countryside because these men and women lived far from the trading routes that accelerated the spread of ideas. But Islam began to build momentum, first along trading routes and in urban commercial centers and then deeper into the countryside. Five centuries later, when Portuguese traders initiated the slave traffic in West Africa, they found that many of the Africans they packed into Atlantic slave ships were devout Muslims.

Along with Muslim conquering armies, relying heavily on camels, came the exchange of Muslim goods, ideas, technologies, and religious belief. With its emphasis on scholarship, the religion fostered the spread of literacy and book-learning throughout West Africa. African rulers began embracing the Muslim faith.

Islam spread much faster in East Africa, the region south of Egypt and bordering the Red Sea and Indian Ocean. From its origins in Arabia, it spread through India, Ceylon, the East Indies, and China. As trading flourished in this region during the tenth century, Arab traders settled in the ports along Africa's east coast and intermarried with native people. A blended culture emerged. Muslim city-states arose across the continent, with Kilwa and Sofala, the southernmost ports on the Indian Ocean trade route, controlling the export of gold and ivory to the east. Visiting the immense palace, vast irrigated gardens, and imposing Muslim mosque in Kilwa in 1331, that avid traveler Ibn Battuta described the city as "one of the most beautiful and well-constructed towns in the world. . . . The whole of it is elegantly built."

1.3 The Kingdoms of West and Central Africa

Consider how understanding the development of West and Central African kingdoms might alter traditional schoolbook accounts of African Americans' distant past.

In 951, a Muslim traveler and geographer named Ibn Hawkal journeyed from Baghdad (in modern-day Iraq) to Sijilmasa, the Moroccan trade center that lay north of the Sahara. There he heard reports that the king of Ghana was the wealthiest of all monarchs on Earth. Traveling south, Ibn Hawkal entered the Ghanaian city of Awdaghost, where he observed a brisk trade in gold. He also learned that the Ghana king's title was *Kaya-Maghan*—Lord of the Gold.

Ibn Hawkal's *Opus Geographicum*, written more than a **millennium** ago, sheds light on why West African kingdoms proliferated with such energy during the tenth century. The gold trade—and the control of the cross-Sahara traffic it required—united peoples of many cultures living in the grasslands of western Africa, historically known as the western Sudan. Societies built on the wealth made possible by the gold trade developed

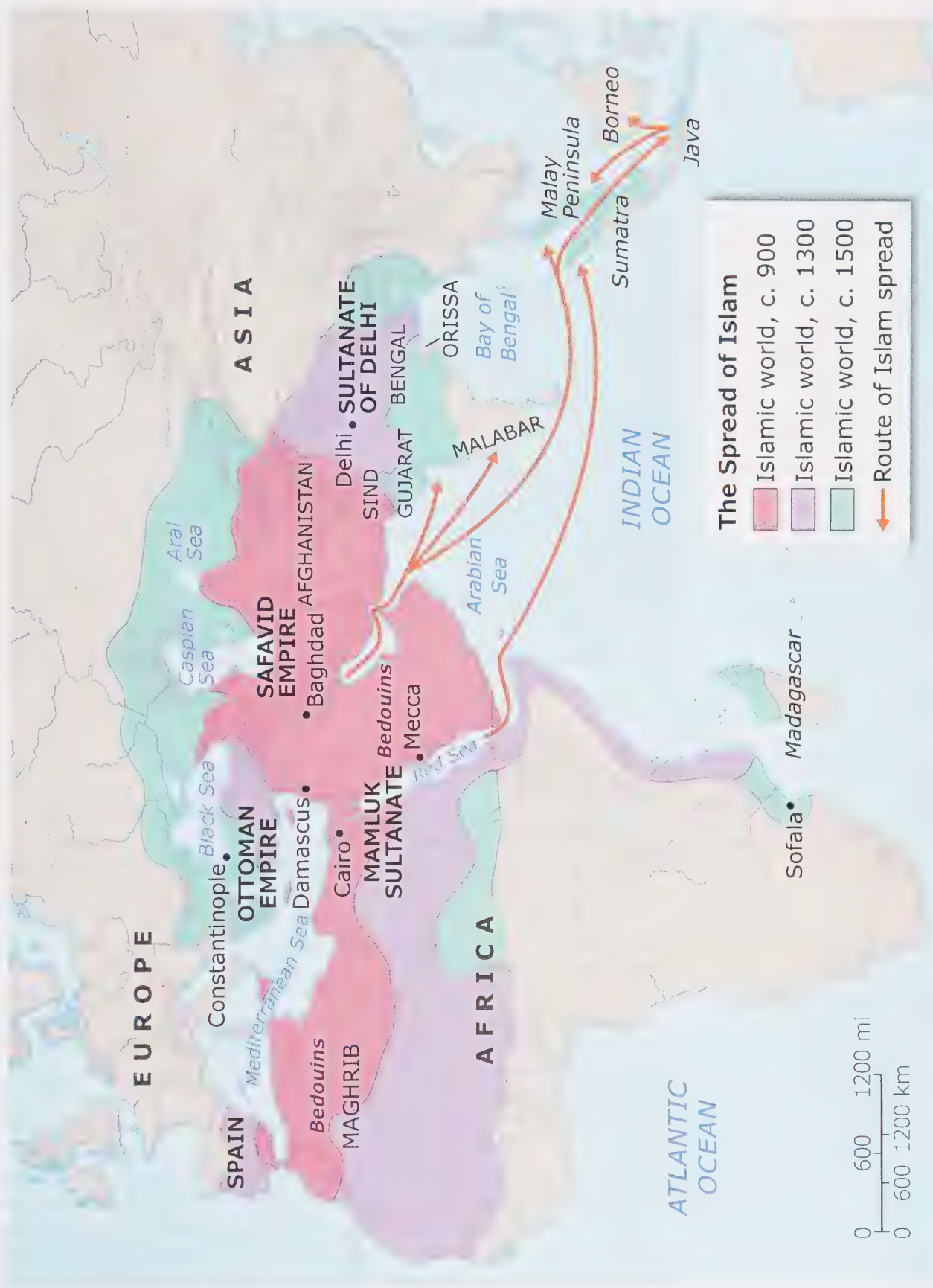
Islamized

Those who converted to the Muslim faith.

millennium

One thousand years

MAP 1.5 The Spread of Islam



This map shows the extensive spread of the Islamic faith after Muhammed began to preach in 610 CE. Converts to Islam in North Africa pushed into southwestern Europe. Through centuries of occupation, ending abruptly in 1492, they left a permanent imprint on the region's architecture, music, religion, and cuisine.

agricultural revolution

As used by historians, denotes the prehistoric transition from hunting and gathering to settled agriculture after humans learned to domesticate plants and thus increased their ability to provide food.

along the trading routes. Over time, ambitious local rulers expanded their control to create centralized kingdoms.

By the tenth century, Islam had spread across the Sahara Desert to West Africa, a vast region encompassing desert, grasslands, forests, and woodlands. Like Europeans, most West Africans tilled the soil, developing sophisticated agricultural and livestock management practices. The West Africans' iron-making skills enabled them to make tools that improved their agricultural production.

Iron production began in east central Africa by 1000 BCE, long before peoples on the European continent mastered this technology. By crushing iron ore and smelting it in a forced-air blast furnace, these early Iron Age Africans produced molten metal that they forged into finely crafted tools for cultivating and harvesting crops. Their agricultural productivity soared, igniting a population boom. With larger populations came greater specialization of tasks. Some workers became experts in tool-making, some in leatherworking. Specialization, in turn, catalyzed greater efficiency and additional technical improvements. This pattern resembled that of the so-called **agricultural revolution** that independently transformed the Americas, Europe, the Middle East, and elsewhere.

West African societies evolved on the southern flank of the Sahara at different rates. Villages and towns in regions blessed by fertile soil, adequate rainfall, and abundant minerals, as in coastal West Africa, grew rapidly, especially with the advent of interregional trade. Meanwhile, groups living in inhospitable deserts or impenetrable forests remained small and changed slowly.

People tend to migrate when their natural environment changes for the worse. For example, the vast Sahara, once a land of flowing rivers and lush pastures and forests, became largely uninhabitable to humans owing to climate changes that raised temperatures and lowered rainfall. As the region dried up between about 4000 and 2500 BCE, Saharan peoples moved south in search of more fertile land. First they migrated to oases situated along a strip of grassland, or savannah, on the desert's southern border. Then they headed farther south to the fertile rainforests of the Niger River basin. In these forests, they built some of Africa's greatest kingdoms, all inland civilizations whose trading routes ran overland rather than by sea.

1.3.1 The Kingdom of Ghana

The first of these inland civilizations was the kingdom of Ghana. Developing between the fifth and eleventh centuries CE (after the Roman Empire collapsed and medieval Europe fell into decline), Ghana occupied a huge territory from the semi-arid belt south of the Sahara Desert to the better-watered savannahs reaching south to the Gulf of Guinea, from the Niger River to the Atlantic Ocean. Ghana evolved from a collection of small villages into a major kingdom noted for its extensive urban settlements, skillfully designed buildings, elaborate sculpture, and effective political and military structure (see Map 1.6).

Through archaeological research, scholars have learned a great deal about the empires of Ghana, Mali, and Songhay in recent years. Still, their main sources consist of the writings of contemporary Arabic historians such as Leo Africanus. This celebrated Moroccan traveled through Songhay in 1510 and 1513 and left a vivid account of the empire at its peak under Muhammad Ture.

The gold trade fueled Ghana's growth and success. The precious metal made Kumbi-Saleh, Ghana's capital, the busiest and wealthiest marketplace in West Africa. The Soninke people of Ghana took advantage of their location just south of the Sahara and north of the Senegal River goldfields to establish trading contacts with Muslim Arabs, who had crossed the Sahara Desert in camel caravans by the eleventh century. In this cross-desert trade, the Soninke exchanged gold for ceramics, glass, oil lamps, and salt from Saharan mines—essential for preserving and flavoring food. From the south,

MAP 1.6 West African Kingdoms, 700–1600

Through archaeological and linguistic research, scholars have learned more and more in recent years about the empires of Ghana, Mali, and Songhay. Still, their main sources consist of the writings of contemporary Arabic historians such as Leo Africanus. The celebrated Moroccan traveled through Songhay in 1510 and 1513, leaving a vivid account of the empire at its peak under Muhammad Ture.

they traded for kola nuts, palm oil, and copper. Their customers carried gold back to Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa, where people used the precious metal to make coins and jewelry.

Gold proved so plentiful that Ghanaian kings devised ways to keep its value high. For example, they maintained a **royal monopoly** over gold bars, allowing traders to deal only in gold dust. The exhaustion of gold mines in Europe and the Middle East helped boost the value of Ghanaian gold. Even so, salt was so equally coveted that it carried the same value, pound for pound, as gold.

By the time of the western Middle Ages, two-thirds of the gold circulating in the Christian Mediterranean region had originated in Ghana, and Ghanaian gold was the preferred currency throughout the vast Muslim trading network centered in Cairo. The thriving caravan trade spread Muslim influence deep into West Africa, and enterprising Arab merchants came to settle in the empire, especially in Kumbi-Saleh.

With the trading of goods came the exchange of ideas, Arabs brought the first system of writing and numbers to West Africa. The Ghanaian kings adopted Arabic script and appointed Arabs to government positions in charge of trade and taxation. As these Arabs gained influence in Ghana, they spread the Islamic faith. Many

royal monopoly

An enterprise such as trade or production that is protected by law from competition, in this case taking the form of the slave trade controlled entirely by and for the benefit of the monarch.

Ghanaian rulers kept their traditional religion, however, which emphasized worship of the natural world, and rejected the Muslim principle of patriarchy, whereby royal succession followed the ruling father's lineage. But numerous Ghanaians, especially those living in the cities, converted to Islam. By 1050, Kumbi-Saleh boasted twelve Muslim mosques.

1.3.2 The Kingdom of Mali

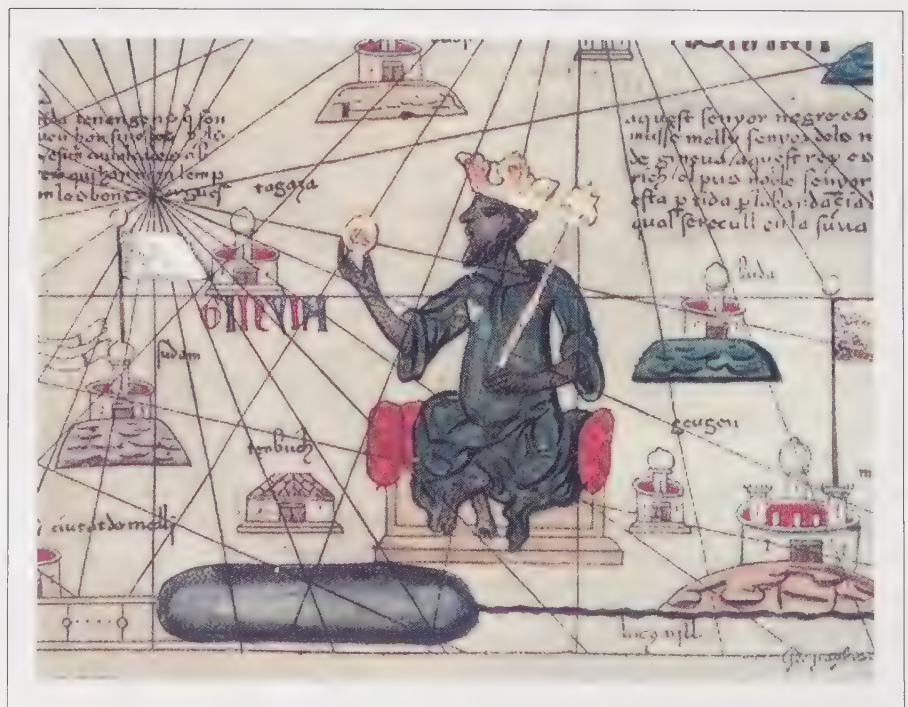
Beginning in the late eleventh century, Muslim Berber warriors swept into Ghana from the north, weakening the realm and sowing religious and political strife. The resulting instability emboldened a ruler of Mali, a state within Ghana, to make war against his overlords. The troops of the Mali king Sundiata crushed Ghanaian warriors in 1235 at the Battle of Kirina, dealing the deathblow to the crippled realm. The Islamic kingdom of Mali, populated primarily by Mandingo people, rose in Ghana's place. The Mandingo quickly mastered agricultural production and seized control of the gold trade. They also cultivated rice and harvested inland deltas for fish, augmenting trade in salt, gold, and copper. Like Ghana before it, Mali grew wealthy from long-distance trade.

Under Sundiata's grandson Mansa Musa, a devout Muslim who assumed the throne in 1307, Mali came to control territory three times as great as Ghana. Young Mansa Musa won fame when in 1324 he began a 3,500-mile pilgrimage across the Sahara, through Cairo, and all the way to Mecca, accompanied by an entourage of thousands. Dispensing lavish gifts of gold, he made Mali gold legendary. His image on maps of the world for centuries thereafter testified to his importance in promoting West Africa's treasures.

Returning home after several years of pilgrimage, Mansa Musa brought Muslim scholars and artisans with him who helped establish the inland city of Timbuktu, a gateway to the Sahara in the Sudanese region of Songhay. Traveling to Timbuktu in the 1330s, the Arab geographer Ibn Battuta wrote admiringly of "the discipline of [the city's] officials and provincial governors, the excellent condition of public finance, and . . . the respect accorded to the decisions of justice and to the authority of the sovereign."

**IMAGE OF MANSA MUSA AS
DEPICTED ON ITALIAN 14TH
CENTURY MAP OF WEST AFRICA
WITH CROWNED MANSA MUSA ON
ROYAL STOOL**

Mansa Musa, seated on his royal stool, draws one's eyes to him on this 1375 map drawn by Mecia de Viladestes, a Majorcan Jewish cartographer.



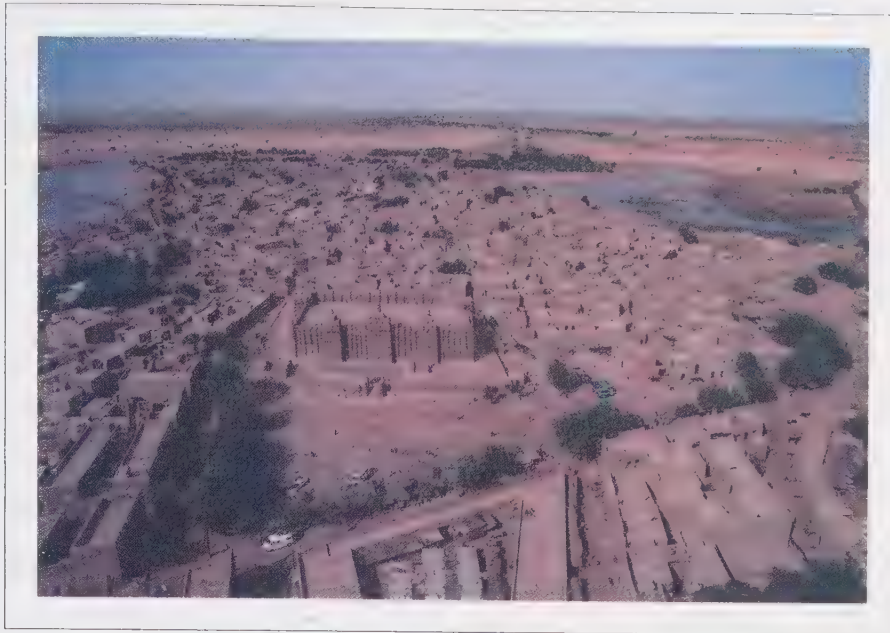


PHOTO OF CENTRAL MOSQUE IN DJENNE, MALI

This photo of Djenné in Mali shows the Great Mosque dwarfing the buildings that surround it.

Noted for its extensive wealth, Timbuktu was also home to an Islamic university with a distinguished faculty who wrote on legal, historical, geographical, and moral topics. Two of the first histories of the western Sudan, both completed in 1665, were written by Timbuktu scholars, Mahmud Kati and Abd al-Rahman as-Sadi. North Africans and southern Europeans flocked to the university to study.

1.3.3 The Kingdom of Songhay

After Mansa Musa died in 1337, his successors could not maintain Mali's dominance in West Africa. The Songhay, a subject people living along the Niger River, saw an opportunity to regain their freedom from the Mandingo. They broke away from Mali in 1435 and began to conquer new territories. Just as Mali had grown out of a state within the empire of Ghana, the new Songhay Empire grew out of a region that had once been part of Mali and became the largest sixteenth-century African empire.

In the late 1400s, when Portuguese traders began establishing commercial links with the Kongo kingdom to the south, the Songhay Empire reached its peak under the Muslim rulers Sonni Ali (1464–1492) and Askia Muhammad (1493–1528). Yet Songhay, too, collapsed, as some tribes, resentful of Muslim kings, began to break away. But the worst threat came from Morocco, in North Africa. There, rulers coveted Songhay's control of salt and gold—the two critical commodities of African trade. Armed with guns procured in the Middle East, Morocco's ruler captured the major Songhay towns of Timbuktu and Gao in 1591. The North Africans maintained loose control of western Sudan for more than a century as the last great trading empire of West Africa faded into history.

During an era when centralized kingdoms began emerging in Europe, West Africa devolved into smaller states. By the time Europeans reached the continent's Atlantic coast, most Africans resided in states no larger than Switzerland or Denmark. As the next chapter shows, conflicts among these small states enabled European slave traders to gain a foothold in the region, persuading tribal leaders to send out warrior parties to capture slaves.

1.3.4 The Forest Kingdoms of Ife and Benin

To the south of Songhay, Yoruba-speaking peoples lived in villages and towns of considerable size. Their territory stretched from the inland savannah woodlands to the long Gulf of Guinea on the Atlantic coast. These peoples—hunters, farmers, and craftsmen—began to cluster in states during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The tropical forest