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African History from Dawn of Time

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Compiled by P. Hunziker
Layout by K. Gyax
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I. LIVING HISTORY

1. INTRODUCTION

"Sometimes we need myths, legends, heroes and heroines, and in the process we may...deify some people... That does not mean that all history is based on fiction. Very often, the historian works with facts but it's the question of interpretation that leads to different layers of truth."

Dr. Wilhelmina Donkoh, Kwame Nkrumah University, Kumasi, Ghana.



"As a historian, you may be yourself oriented towards looking at a certain situation in a particular way, because you are you. You may be favourably disposed towards peasants or kings...you see history through the role of kings or see history through peasant movements."

Professor Ali Mazrui, who lectures at Binghamton University, New York.

What are the political uses of history? Who has been telling Africa's History? And, can a historian in Africa make a living? These are only a few of the many issues historians grapple with during the process of reconstructing past events in the continent.

At a major conference of the African Studies Association of the United States, held in Nashville, Tennessee, BBC reporter Bola Olufunwa hosted two debates with eight historians about the importance of Africa's history. Their thoughts and comments were recorded to make two radio programmes which you can listen to and read about.

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If you wish to add your comments to these debates please contact our forum area.

2. WHERE SHOULD RESEARCH BE DONE?

Most historians invited to discuss African history at the African Studies Association conference live and work in the United States. However most African specialists emphasise the need for Africa to be the primary source for research.

Although the Internet, universities and libraries in the west provide access to information on the continent, Africa itself contains the archives and the oral informants essential to the reconstruction of history. Therefore, travelling to the continent is an imperative.

"You cannot do African history from outside...Many of us travel there every summer to do our fieldwork. Many of our archives are there. Many of our oral informants cannot move to America. The epicentre of African history remains in the continent."

Professor Atieno Adhiambo, Rice University, Houston, Texas.

2.1. ISSUES IN FIELDWORK

Equally, being based in Africa may not necessarily be an advantage - research work and establishing contact with oral informants may not be easily achieved.

"There are also other constraints that work against us. We may be very close to our sources but funding is a problem, time is a problem..."

For historians in Africa, teaching loads are very high. In the USA teachers teach four hours a week. In Africa, there are eighteen hours of teaching a week and very little time for research."

Dr Edmund Mazibuko, Rutgers University, New Jersey.

2.2. PUBLISHING AND TEACHING IN AFRICA

Historians working in Africa are faced with vast problems. Teaching and university resources are overstretched. Another constraint is the lack of publishing possibilities for historians based in Africa. In the west, the publishing business is broad, competitive and varied.

"The problem is when you are based in Africa, it's even harder to get the breakthrough from over there, when all publishing houses are out here."

Professor Sylvia Ojukutu-Macauley, Truman State University, Kirksville, Missouri.

"If you go to lecture halls in most African countries, there are old articles, textbooks. And large class sizes are also a problem. Colleagues may be engaged in some research of some kind besides their teaching. But they don't go further, in terms of publishing articles.

What I'd like to see for the future is if there could be more links between colleagues that are overseas and those that are in Africa...It would help our brothers in Africa in terms of publishing articles jointly with people here."

Professor Edmund Mazibuko, Rutgers University, New Jersey.

2.3. GOVERNMENT INVESTMENT

African governments prefer to invest resources on projects that will ensure economic growth. History is not seen as a subject that enables people to obtain jobs. Neither is it seen as a potential avenue for the development of the nation. Therefore, funding is diverted to other fields, such as the sciences.

The lack of resources affects historians who struggle to make their careers economically viable.

"Considering the severe economic problems that African countries are experiencing now, the primary concern is how they're going to make a living. Unfortunately, that's why a lot of us are in the US and in Britain right now, because we realise that we cannot make a living as historians on the continent."

Professor Sylvia Ojukutu-Macauley, Truman State University, Kirksville, Missouri.

2.4. AFRICAN ARCHIVES

Another point of concern is the condition of the archive centres in Africa. These are noticeably under-funded. Professor Arthur Abrahams offers a sorry example of what goes on at some of the archive centres he has visited in Sierra Leone.

"There is no electricity and there are no photocopying machines. The documents are kept in poor conditions. Humidity is destroying most of these documents.

So there are two options, you either sit there and spend all your time copying word for word, or you pay off some of the attendants to turn their eyes away and then rip off the documents and take them. So, actually, the size of the archive is shrinking all the time."

Professor Arthur Abrahams, Virginia State University, Petersburg, Virginia.

To hear this discussion, listen to the 'Talkabout History' programme on The Future of African History

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/1audio1a.ram>

3. USEFUL LINKS

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Principles and Standards of the Oral History Association

<http://chnm.gmu.edu/roy/newguide.html>

Website by Center for History and New Media.

Introduction to Oral History.

www.baylor.edu/%7Oral_History/Introduction.html

Website by the Institute for Oral History, at Baylor University, Texas.

Comprehensive site on Africa, South of the Sahara.

www.sul.stanford.edu/depts/ssrg/africa/history.html

By Karen Fung, Hoover Library, Stanford University.

Prime Origins Project.

www.primeorigins.com/index.htm

South Africa.

Africa site.

www.wsu.edu:8000/%7Edee/

Part of the World Civilizations site, provided by Richard Hooker, Washington State University.

Africa website.

www.fordham.edu/halsall/africa/africasbook.html

Internet African History Sourcebooks, edited by Paul Halsall, History Department, Fordham University, New York.

Black History and Culture.

<http://lcweb.loc.gov/exhibits/african/afam001.html>

The Library of Congress Studies, Washington,

Rare reports and manuscripts on slavery.

<http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/slavery/>

Broadside Collection, Special Collections Library, Duke University.

Countries of Africa Resources.

www.uiowa.edu/%7Eafricart/toc/countries.html

Art and Life in Africa, The University of Iowa.

Peoples of Africa Resources.

www.uiowa.edu/%7Eafricart/toc/people.html

Art and Life in Africa, The University of Iowa.

Languages of Africa.

www.sil.org/ethnologue/countries/Africa.html

Ethnologue Languages of the World site.

Africa-related Exhibitions.

www.nmfa.si.edu/exhibits/currexhb.htm

Smithsonian National Museum of African Art.

Wonders of the African World

www.pbs.org/wonders

PBS. D.C.

II. EARLY HISTORY

1. INTRODUCTION

"So far the evidence that we have in the world points to Africa as the Cradle of Humankind."

George Abungu, Director-General of the National Museums of Kenya.



Most of the available scientific evidence suggests Africa was the continent in which human life began.

We can however never be absolutely sure. There is always the possibility of fossil discoveries being made in another part of the world, which could make us believe otherwise.

Listen to Thabo Mbeki, President of South Africa, on the contribution of the continent towards the development of humanity.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/2audio0a.ram

It is in Africa that the oldest fossils of the early ancestors of humankind have been found, and it is the only continent that shows evidence of humans through the key stages of evolution.

Scientific techniques, ranging from fossil identification, radiocarbon dating and analysis of DNA - the human genetic blueprint passed down from one generation to the next - all support the notion that Africa, and in particular the eastern and southern regions, is the cradle of humankind.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/2audio0a.ram

2. ORIGINS OF THE HUMAN RACE

Researchers believe that members of the human family - hominids - and African apes once had a common ancestor, perhaps as recently as 5 to 10 million years ago. At some stage the hominids split off from the apes and began to develop one of the first and perhaps most important human characteristics - the ability to walk upright.

The earliest ancestors of humankind are known as Australopithecines - commonly known as 'ape men'.

2.1. AUSTRALOPITHECUS

The first example of Australopithecus was found in 1925 in a limestone cave near Taung, in South Africa, by the anthropologist Raymond Dart. He found the skull of a six year old creature with an ape-like appearance but human characteristics. Australopithecines were small, with long arms, prominent skulls and small brains and retained the ability to climb trees.

Since 1925 there have been numerous finds of Australopithecus fossils in East and Southern Africa, mainly based around the Great Rift Valley - a fracture in the earth's surfaces that runs 3,500 kilometres from the Red Sea to Mozambique. The non-acidic nature of the Rift Valley soil and sediment has made it the ideal environment for the preservation of specimens.

In 1997 an Australopithecus skull and skeleton was found in a cave in Sterkfontein north of Johannesburg. It is thought to be around 3.5 million years old. The bones are likely to be of a hominid, who fell through a shaft and died while trapped underground.

One of the most famous finds was in Ethiopia's Omo Valley in 1974. It was the skeleton, about 40% complete, of a young girl known to the outside world as **Lucy** and to Ethiopians as Dinqish - the wonderful or precious one. She was about the same age as **Sterkfontein** man.

Australopithecus split into several different species. Some developed powerful teeth and jaws and became known as 'robust' while others were more lightly built and dubbed 'gracile'.

2.2. HOMO HABILIS

By around 2.5 million years ago a more recent ancestor - Homo habilis or 'man, the tool-maker' appears to have evolved. It is not clear whether Homo habilis developed directly from Australopithecus, but if so, it is likely to have been from one of the gracile, rather than robust species.

Homo habilis was an individual whose larger brain size enabled it to manufacture simple stone tools, usually pebbles which were split and then chipped to give a cutting edge.

Such technology is most clearly on display in the excavations at Olduvai Gorge in Tanzania - one of Africa's most extraordinary geological sites. The gorge cuts through five colourful volcanic layers, each representing a different period in time, ranging from two million to 500 thousand years ago.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/2audio1b.ram

2.3. HOMO ERECTUS

With this species, which evolved around 1.5 million years ago, we encounter an ancestor who looked a good deal like a modern human. Homo erectus was taller than Homo habilis, more robust and had a larger brain. They developed tool-making further, producing a characteristic hand axe known as the 'Acheulian'.

Fossils of Australopithecus and Homo habilis have been found only in Africa, but examples of Homo erectus have been found in the Far East and China while the hand axe has been found in Asia and Europe.

The widely held belief is that these other parts of the world were populated by Homo erectus who left Africa.

2.4. LAUNCHED IN AFRICA

"There is no question that Africans contributed towards the development of human beings as we know them today. They were the first to use their physical capabilities to enlarge their brains.

They were able to develop the technology of stone tools...they were the first ones to move out of trees and walk upright...and they were the first ones to explore....crossing the seas and going out to Asia and Europe....and to me this is the greatest achievement that humanity has ever done."

George Abungu, of the National Museums of Kenya

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/2audio1a.ram

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/2audio0a.ram

3. HOMO SAPIENS: OUT OF AFRICA

By the time the most advanced species of modern man, Homo sapiens, had evolved, about 120,000 years ago, there is evidence of rapid population growth around the globe. So how did Homo sapiens spread?

While it is generally accepted that the forerunner to Homo sapiens - Homo erectus - left Africa about 1.5 million years ago to populate other parts of the world, there are two main theories about the spread of Homo sapiens.

The first theory, known as the 'Out of Africa' model, is that Homo sapiens developed first in Africa and then spread around the world between 100 and 200,000 years ago, superseding all other hominid species. The implication of this argument is that all modern people are ultimately of African descent.

The other theory, known as the 'Multi-regional' Model, is that Homo sapiens evolved simultaneously in different parts of the world from original Homo erectus settlers. This means that people in China descended from the Homo erectus population there, while Australians may have descended from the Homo erectus population in South East Asia.

Both theories have their staunch defenders who cite DNA evidence - analysis of the genetic blueprint passed down from generation to generation - to advance their case. Out of Africa theorists, for example, say that most genetic variation in human populations is found in Africa, suggesting that humans have evolved there for the longest period.

Although the debate is far from concluded, it is probably fair to say that the bulk of scientists support the 'Out of Africa' hypothesis and believe that all humans share a common origin.

4. FROM HUNTING TO FARMING

One of the more immediate ancestors of modern humans, *Homo erectus*, lived between 500 thousand and 1.5 million years ago and it is with this species that we see the first signs of organised hunting activity based around communities. They tended to live near water sources - along the banks of rivers or lakes.

On the basis of evidence found at one of Africa's most important geological sites, Olduvai Gorge in Tanzania, we know they constructed small structures made out of tree branches as shelter.

4.1. EVERYDAY LIFE

"The size of the shelters would suggest they lived in small family groups, and that each family would have its own residential unit.

The men would go out to hunt, and the women would have gone out to collect vegetable foods - roots, fruits, nuts and insects - that formed an important component of the diet. We know that boys were taught to become hunters and the girls gatherers."

Simiyu Wandibba, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Nairobi.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/2audio2.ram

Much of the evidence of the likely way of life in these early settlements comes from the study of communities such as the Khoisan of Botswana who still retain some elements of the hunting and gathering lifestyle.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/2audio1c.ram

When it came to hunting, early humans tended to seek out smaller animals such as rodents, and use clubs to kill them. They would avoid actually attacking larger animals such as giraffe, zebra or elephants, waiting for them to be killed by other beasts or die of natural causes.

By the middle and later stone age - between 150 and 40 thousand years ago - humans had developed more sophisticated tools, shaping stone points to use as spearheads and developing the bow and arrow. The spears could be tipped with a vegetable poison. They also used a wide range of implements made of bone that were used as needles or fish hooks.

4.2. THE RISE OF FARMING

We do not know how exactly it happened but around 10,000 years ago humans took a hugely important step that revolutionised life. They began to domesticate animals and cultivate crops.

However dramatic it may seem from our standpoint, it is likely that these developments occurred very gradually and over a long period of time.

4.3. SOCIAL ORGANISATION AND FOOD SOURCES

"After long periods of hunting and gathering we assume that these people did some experimentation with some of the plants and some of the animals. They found some animals - like the ancestor of the cow - were more friendly than others and so they brought them home and looked after them. With plants, they might try a fruit and someone dies, so they say, 'No, that's not a good fruit' and finally they would strike on the right plants and animals.

Once they have enough food, societies become more secure. Now people have time for each other. Men and women, the father and mother, have more time and one sees population explosion coming into being.

With more people you get more social stratification and specialisation. People become full time craftsmen and experts in different fields. This gives rise to trade and the first markets begin to emerge."

Henry Mutoro, Associate Professor of Archaeology, University of Nairobi.

The main crops to be developed were cereals such as wheat, barley, sorghum and millet. Some areas produced their own distinctive grains such as the Ethiopian highlands where the staple food 'tef' is still used to make the spongy traditional bread, injera.

Domestication of animals such as sheep and goats as well as the cultivation of plants meant that early humans were able to settle for longer periods of time in one area so they could oversee the sowing and reaping of crops. This meant that shelters became more permanent constructions made of mud or brick. The communities also needed more implements such as stones for grinding and pots for storage.

However, one of the main results of domestication was a rapid increase in population.

Food surplus could now be traded with other communities such as those who had retained a hunting and gathering tradition. Maize, for example, might be traded for a supply of wild honey.

4.4. ART

A more settled lifestyle also prompted people to express themselves through arts and crafts. Of all the continents, Africa is one of the richest in **rock art**. Images painted with vegetable dye adorn caves in the Sahara, Tanzania and South Africa. Such art gives us a unique glimpse into the life of these people, showing them not only at work - hunting and fishing - but also at play, dancing and socialising.

"The various scenes depicted in African rock art can be said to be a sort of documentary film of everyday life in prehistoric times."

Burkinabe historian Professor Joseph Ki-Zerbo, Unesco General History of Africa.

"Art reflects but also stimulates action and these prehistoric carvings and paintings proclaim the relentless struggle of African man to dominate nature but also to add to his own nature through the divine joy of creation."

5. SKILLS AND TOOLS

We know from archaeological data that by about the fifth century after the birth of Christ the skills and technology required for iron working had spread throughout much of central, eastern and southern Africa.

It is not known exactly how this transmission of knowledge and expertise took place, but it is believed to be linked to a mass movement of people across the continent, known as the 'Bantu migration.' This episode in Africa's past has often been ignored but its implications for the future development of the continent is crucial.

Bantu is the word widely used as a description of a body of people originally based in west or central Africa who, over the course of three thousand years, moved to populate east and southern regions.

It's not clear how the Bantu gained their skills in iron working. The great smelting tradition of the Kushite Kingdom of **Meroe** (around 500 BC) did not spread either further west or towards the south, although we do not know this for sure.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/3audio4.ram

In West Africa, the knowledge of iron working may have come from the Phoenicians who in 800 BC founded the colony of Carthage on the North African coast. The skills may have crossed the Sahara desert with the Berber nomads who dominated much of the North African plains.

It has also been suggested that iron smelting may have started in Africa itself, without any outside influences, but so far none of the theories are conclusive. What we do know is that iron smelting was established in Nigeria, central Niger and southern Mali by around 500-400 BC, spreading to other parts of West Africa by 1000 AD.

Iron smelting is a difficult process because the extraction of iron from rock involves a chemical process. Crushed iron ore and charcoal were placed in furnaces and lime was added. After several hours of heating, the crude iron was taken from the furnace and forged into weapons.

Iron Ore is widely available in much of tropical Africa but because iron rusts easily few examples of implements have survived from the pre-historic period.

Armed with this technology the Bantu then dispersed across Africa.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/2audio1a.ram

6. PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

Armed with iron smelting technology the Bantu of west and central Africa dispersed across the continent, changing its linguistic and cultural landscape. A number of theories have been put forward to explain this migration.

6.1. NEED TO MOVE

"When people move they move for a reason. They move because the population has expanded. They move because the resources which support the population in the settlements have become more or less inadequate. They move because there are changes to the climate and they move for the sake of finding better areas in which to live."

Professor Leonard Ngcongco, University of Botswana.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/2audio5.ram

6.2. SLOW BUT STEADY

One theory is that there were waves of migration, one moving through the east of Africa and another making its way through the centre of the continent. In Zambia, there is evidence of at least three routes of migration - from the great lakes, from the Congo forest and from Angola.

There is evidence that the Bantu ancestors of the modern Swahili peoples mastered sailing technology and possessed canoes and boats so they could make their way along the Zambezi river.

"Chief among the reasons for migration is environmental stress and population increase in West Africa, forcing people to move. It is important to realise that these people are not moving across the landscape like bugs bunny or the energiser bunny, but essentially they are moving slowly, gradually inhabiting areas that were good for farming and livestock raising."

Dr Chapirukha Kusimba, Field Museum, Chicago.

6.3. CONQUERORS, COLONISERS OR ADVENTURERS?

Most historians appear to believe that rather than arriving en masse like a conquering horde, the migrations were more sporadic with small pockets of people moving from one point to another.

It is not entirely clear how the Bantu reacted when they came upon existing communities but it is likely that there was considerable absorption, assimilation and displacement of other peoples during the migration period. The Bantu were armed with superior weapons and their iron implements allowed them to cultivate land and clear forests efficiently.

If they came as colonisers, then it is unlikely to be in the sense we understand the term today.

Historians believe there was social interaction and intermarrying and trade.

6.4. EVIDENCE

The evidence for migration is based on three main areas of research. They are:

Linguistic

A comparative study of languages spoken in some parts of eastern, central and southern Africa show similarities with the mother tongues originally spoken in West Africa. There are some 450 known languages in the Bantu family from Gikuyu in the north to Setswana in the south.

Pottery

There is evidence of similar pottery technology in eastern, southern and western Africa. Iron Age farmers were skilled pot makers and decorated their pots with grooves and patterns. Related groups of peoples used similar styles of decoration.

Iron

There is little or no evidence of iron working in east and southern Africa before the arrival of the Bantu suggesting that new technology was spread by the migrants.

The Bantu proved enormously successful at adapting to their new environments and it has been argued by some historians that they brought not only new methods of survival but the development of the system of statehood that we still find today.

"In some areas they brought notions of government, controlling people, development of leadership, chieftaincy, state-craft and organising people for campaigns for battles and also maybe a kind of advanced religion."

Professor Leonard Ngcongco.

But as with most areas of early African history there is a note of caution to be sounded when discussing the Bantu migration. There is even an argument for saying that it did not happen at all.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/2audio1.ram

6.5. DID IT HAPPEN?

"The question concerning whether or not the Bantu migration actually occurred will await further research. It's very easy to assume that we know so much. Actually we know so little because very little research has been done. So far there is a huge area in DR Congo, Rwanda and Uganda where no field work has been done and these are areas that the Bantu peoples would have passed through."

Dr Chapurukha Kusimba, Field Museum, Chicago.

Listen to The Bantu Migrations, the fourth programme in the BBC landmark radio series The Story of Africa, presented by Hugh Quarshie

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/2audio5a.ram

7. FORCES FOR CHANGE

7.1. DATING FOSSILS

To find out what happened millions of years ago archaeologists have to recover, analyse and date ancient fossils and tools.

Fossils are formed when animal or plant remains are trapped between layers of rock. When the rock is broken open, an imprint is revealed.

Since the 1940's researchers have used radiocarbon (Carbon-14) **techniques** to date fossils. What happens is the following: living animals and plants absorb tiny amounts of carbon from the atmosphere. When they die, the carbon declines at a slow, measurable rate. By finding out how much carbon there is in the fossil, researchers can make an approximate guess of the age.

However, radio carbon dating is only accurate when testing fossils less than 100,000 years old. For anything older, tests need to be done on the surrounding rock and assumptions made about fossil ageing. Assessments can also be made by measuring the rate of potassium and uranium decay. Basically the deeper something is found, the older it is.

7.2. DNA

The study of DNA - the genetic blueprint found in all cells - has made a huge impact on the analysis of African history. Study of DNA and in particular mitochondria DNA (mtDNA), which is passed down the female line, has allowed scientists to reconstruct the past history of human populations. Each molecule of mtDNA carries a history of its lineage.

It is through this genetic analysis that most scientists have concluded that modern man evolved in Africa and then spread throughout the rest of the world. Some geneticists have even argued that every woman alive today carries the mtDNA of just one African woman who lived 10,000 generations ago.

8. EARLY HISTORY TIMELINE

5-3 Million BC:	First hominids walk East and Southern Africa, known as Australopithecines or "Ape-Men."
3-1.5 Million BC:	Early Stone Age Emergence of Homo habilis "the toolmaker", using flaked stone scrapers.
3-1.5 Million BC:	Evolution of Homo erectus used of hand axes and shaped stone scrapers.
1 million-40,000 BC:	Middle Stone Age, Evolution of early form of Homo sapiens - modern man. Shaped stone points used for spearheads.
40,000-10,000 BC:	Later Stone Age Rise of Homo sapiens. Development of bow and arrow Evidence of rock paintings. Hunter gathering lifestyle.
9,000-3,000 BC:	Last major wet period in Africa. The Sahara is habitable with savannah, grassland and rivers. Baked clay pottery found in African stone age communities. Beginnings of agriculture and domestication of animals.
500 BC:	Evidence of iron smelting in Nigeria and central Niger. Spreads to rest of West Africa by 1000 AD.
200-500 AD:	Movement of Bantu peoples to east and southern Africa, "The Bantu Migrations."
1925:	Discovery of Australopithecus near Taung, South Africa.
1960's:	Homo habilis skulls found in Olduvai Gorge, Tanzania and Lake Turkana, Kenya.
1974:	Semi-complete skeleton of "Lucy" found in Omo Valley, Ethiopia.
1975:	Thirteen Australopithecus remains found in Hadar, Ethiopia. Homo Erectus skull found Lake Turkana.
1976:	Australopithecus footprints found in Laetoli, Tanzania.
1997:	Discovery of Australopithecus in Sterkfontein, South Africa.

9. FURTHER READING

UNESCO General History of Africa 1. Methodology and African Prehistory. Edited by J. Ki-Zerbo.

Africa: A Biography of the Continent. By John Reader. Vintage Books, September 1999.

History of Africa. By Kevin Shillington. St. Martin's Press, August 1995.

Africans, The History of a Continent. By John Iliffe. Cambridge University Press.

Nations' Negres et Culture. By C.A.Diop. Paris Presence Africaine.

Oral Tradition as History. By J.Vansina. James Currey.
Africa in History. By Basil Davidson. Simon & Schuster

10. USEFUL LINKS

The BBC is not responsible for the content of external Internet sites

Hominid Lucy

www.zstarr.com/iho/science#lucy

Website by Institute of Human Origins, a research organisation affiliated with Arizona State University.

Sterkfontein World Heritage site

www.primeorigins.com/related/sterkfontein/background.htm

Prime Origins Project, South Africa

Rock Paintings and Engravings

www.museums.org.za/sam/resource/arch/painting.htm

South African Museum.

Bantu Peoples and Languages

www.britannica.com/bcom/eb/article/5/0,5716,13375+1+13220,00.html

Encyclopaedia Britannica site.

Fossil dating

<http://exn.ca/hominids/datinggame.cfm>

Discovery Channel website.

Fossil Man Ate Termites

http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/sci/tech/newsid_1119000/1119359.htm

Part of BBC Science and Technology site.

Fossil Challenge to Africa Theory

http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/sci/tech/newsid_1108000/1108413.htm

Part of BBC Science and Technology site.

"Oldest" Apeman Fossils Unearthed

http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/sci/tech/newsid_1055000/1055105.htm

Part of BBC Science and Technology site.

Find Well-Preserved Early Human Fossil

www.nytimes.com/learning/students/ask_reporters/articles/wilford-fossil.htm

South African Scientists. Published in 1998, The New York Times.

Study Roots Humans in Africa

http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/sci/tech/newsid_1058000/1058484.htm

Part of BBC Science and Technology site.

The Evolution of Man Directory

www.wf.carleton.ca/Museum/man/tit1.html

Compiled by Hooper Natural History Virtual Museum.

Encounters in the Kalahari:

www.und.ac.za/und/ccms/visuala/kalahari_history.htm

A Revisionist History. Published in Visual Anthropology. In association with University of Natal, the Smithsonian, Michigan State University.

Hunter-gatherers of Southern Africa

www.museums.org.za/sam/resource/arch/khoisan.htm

Compiled by South Africa Museum.

The San of Southern Africa

www.kalaharipeoples.org/san.htm

Compiled by the Kalahari Peoples Fund.

On the Human Origins Debate
<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2001/01/0111origins.html>
National Geographic Site

III. NILE VALLEY

1. BLACK KINGDOMS OF THE NILE EPISODE

The great temples of Abu Simbel are located south of Aswan, in northern Nubia. This monument was built by pharaoh Ramses II -- some say as a gesture of love for his wife Nefertari -- between 1290 and 1224 B.C., when most of Nubia was under Egyptian rule.

The Abu Simbel temples were carved out of a mountain on the west bank of the Nile. There are two: the colossal temple of Ramses, which was dedicated to the Egyptian gods Ra-Horakhty, Amun, and Ptah, and to the deified pharaoh himself. The smaller temple of Nefertari was dedicated to Hathor, the cow-headed Egyptian goddess of love. In the doorway to the main temple are four statues of Ramses, each more than 20 meters high, accompanied by smaller statues of the Queen Mother and Nefertari. Above the doorway stands a figure of the falcon-headed sun-god Ra-Horakhty. Inside, eight statues of Ramses hold up the roof of the Hypostyle Hall; the reliefs on the wall show the pharaoh victorious in various battles. In the next hall, Ramses and Nefertari are shown in front of the gods and the solar barques that will carry them to the underworld. The innermost chamber is the sacred sanctuary, where the gods (including Ramses) sit on their thrones. Every February 22 and October 22 at sunrise, light penetrates the temple and illuminates the faces of these figures.

Construction of a reservoir for the **Aswan High Dam** (www.pbs.org/wonders/Episodes/Epi1/Episodes/Epi1/aswan.htm) in the mid-1960s threatened the Abu Simbel temples, so an international team reassembled them on higher ground. This reconstruction effort -- which required that entire mountains be cut into blocks, moved, and reconstructed -- took more than four years and cost \$40 million.

The River Nile has for centuries given work and spiritual sustenance to millions of people in Africa. In a region with unreliable rainfall and poor soil its waters have offered people a bounteous opportunity to build great societies like the Egyptian, Kushite and Meroitic civilisations.

At 6,695 kilometres, the Nile is the longest river in the world, stretching from its source at Lake Victoria, in modern day Uganda, to the Nile delta where it joins the Mediterranean sea.

The White Nile winds its way through Uganda and into Sudan where, just north of Khartoum, it joins the Blue Nile tumbling down from the Ethiopian highlands. This confluence of the two rivers is crucial to the region's history.

The White Nile brings a steady flow of water all year round, but the Blue Nile builds into a torrent after summer rains cause floods in what we now call the Nile Valley.

The Nile would break its banks each year, saturating the surrounding countryside. When the waters subsided, a rich, fertile silt ideal for crop growing would be left. The main flooding took place around present day Aswan in Southern Egypt, now the site of a major dam.

Undoubtedly one of the key reasons for the rise of Egyptian civilisation was the development by early settlers of a way to control the flooding of the river Nile.

The ancient Egyptians used a variety of techniques to trap the water, using canals, basins, dams and dykes. Their ability to develop techniques of irrigation created the fertile environment, which could provide the foundation for the great civilisations that followed.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/3audio0.ram

2. EARLY SETTLERS

As far back in time as archaeological evidence can take us we know that man has been living in the Nile Valley. Artefacts from the early Stone Age, particularly pebble tools, have been found from Sudan to Egypt.

It is likely that settlement took place over thousands of years perhaps moving north from the Rift Valley of Eastern Africa, the so-called 'Cradle of Humankind', where it is widely believed that human life began.

2.1. CLIMACTIC CHANGE

From the end of the Neolithic Age, around 3,300 to 2,400 BC, the now-arid regions of North-west Africa and the Sahara were wet enough to allow cattle rearing and agriculture. In this

period people did not need to rely upon the Nile (www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/3generic5.shtml#1)

But climate change meant that the Sahara became drier and many people moved themselves and their livestock eastwards to the Nile Valley, joining societies who were already exploiting the resources of the river.

By about 3,000 years BC the fertile sediments left by the annual flooding of the Nile left a long strip of arable land supporting an estimated 1.8 million people. The key populations appear to have been around Aswan in southern Egypt, and the region just south of the Nile Delta, which is now the site of modern Cairo.

Differing groups of people settled at various points along the valley and this pattern may have given rise to the territorial divisions or 'nomes' which formed the later political structure of Egypt.

Although there may have been competition among the people of the Nile to secure land, it is believed that the early settlers would have lived a relatively prosperous life.

"The population was very much smaller compared to today and therefore there was a lot of wealth in Egypt. Food was no problem and I think it was a very opulent kind of landscape.

You had a lot of grapes, dates, figs, cucumbers, tomatoes, tamarisk trees...all sorts of vegetation. There was a lot of fishing and fowling and we know they had crops like barley and wheat...and also bee honey."

Fayza Haikal, Professor of Egyptology, American University, Cairo.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/3audio1.ram

3. EGYPT

The Nile is without doubt the source of one of the most extraordinary and long lasting of civilisations, bequeathing an almost immeasurable legacy to Africa and the world.

The formation of Egypt as a unified state came when the regions known as Upper and Lower Egypt were united. According to tradition, the first ruler was Menes or Narmer who began the first of thirty ruling dynasties.

It was to take hundreds of years of consolidation before political stability was actually achieved. The Kings of the first two dynasties, or the archaic period, were mainly concerned with conquest and it was not until the Third dynasty of King Zoser that Egypt was secure as a united kingdom.

3.1. DIVINE RULE

The rulers of Ancient Egypt, known as Pharaohs, were regarded as gods on earth. They were also the embodiment of public service and responsible for national security and the well-being of their people.

The ancient Egyptians had no single religious system but worshipped a wide range of deities. The most important ones were Ra, the sun god, from whom Egyptian kings claimed descent, and Osiris, king of the dead. In addition, there were numerous other gods who were worshipped in specific localities or temples.

There was an important belief in reincarnation - life after death - and the ancient Egyptians regarded burial rites as of supreme importance. It was believed that by doing good deeds in the first life, the deceased would be assured a place in eternal paradise.

The bodies of the wealthy were embalmed and mummified so they would stay in good condition before being put in a tomb, which was then filled with food and offerings that might be needed in the next life.

It was believed that once the body arrived in the Kingdom of the Dead, the ka, or double of the earthly person, would be judged by Osiris and was either condemned to torture or sent to a heavenly realm.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/3audio2b.ram

3.2. PEASANTS AND SCRIBES

The Pharaoh, as King, was at the top of a rigid hierarchy. Below him were the priests of the temples and a vast army of officials including literate and wealthy scribes and civil servants.

At the bottom of the hierarchy were the vast mass of the people - peasants who lived along the Nile in small mud huts, growing cereals, vegetables and fruit and caring for goats and cattle.

The relationship between the administrators and the peasants appears to have been largely based on economic exploitation.

Most years, the flooding of the Nile left the surrounding soil fertile enough for the farmers to harvest a large surplus. They were not allowed to keep it. Instead the civil servants would put the surplus in huge government stores.

Officials also monitored the rise and fall in the levels of the Nile in order to calculate the amount of tax the peasantry was expected to pay in a given year.

There was little chance of avoiding the officials. Egypt was divided into forty districts, each with its own governor. As every part of the kingdom could be reached by boat on the Nile, there were few hiding places.

3.3. TEMPLES AND PYRAMIDS

Many of Egypt's most important building projects were also inspired by spiritual beliefs, with temples and shrines built to a range of important gods.

The Old Kingdom was the great age of pyramid building and this period saw the construction of the Great Pyramids of Giza built as a burial chamber for Cheops or Khufu.

It used to be thought that pyramids were built by slave labour. Greek historian Herodotus, writing in the fifth century, believed 100,000 men were forced to take part in the construction.

"In the building of the Great Pyramid, King Cheops brought the people to utter misery, for he compelled all the Egyptians to work for him. The stones were quarried in the Arabian mountains and dragged to the Nile. They were carried across the river in boats and then dragged up the slope to the site of the pyramid..."

the people worked in gangs of 100,000 men, each gang for three months..."
Herodotus of Halicarnassus, Greek Historian.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/3audio2c.ram

But such theories are challenged by modern Egyptologists, including Zahir Hawass, Director of the Pyramids in Cairo, who has carried out extensive excavations over many years.

He believes fewer than 25 thousand labourers were involved and that far from being slaves they were peasants who were well cared for and proud to take part in a 'national project', out of love and respect for their Pharaoh and his divine authority.

"The myth of slavery is very good for everyone...it looks good for movies. In reality slavery can build huge buildings but can never produce something like this civilisation. If you look at every inscription and every scene in a tomb it shows love...it shows the idea of a national project.

Ancient Egypt had a system called family support...every household in the north and the south used to participate in building the pyramid instead of paying tax. The pyramid was a national project for the whole nation."
Zahir Hawass, Director of the Pyramids.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/3audio2d.ram

The construction of such buildings showed the Egyptians had an outstanding grasp of the principles of astronomy, mathematics and geometry - we can only marvel at these today.

By the New Kingdom period, pyramid building had largely been abandoned and the Pharaohs were instead building stone tombs in the Valley of the Kings, in southern Egypt.

The tombs were filled with golden treasures, priceless jewelry and lavishly decorated pottery and artifacts. The discovery of the tomb of the young Pharaoh **Tutankamun** in 1920 gave the public an extraordinary insight into the fabulous wealth of the ancient kings.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/3audio2a.ram

3.4. HIEROGLYPHICS

Among the many achievements of the Egyptians was the development of one of the oldest forms of writing in the world, hieroglyphics.

This was a system of pictorial images, each of which represented a sound or meaning, which could either be inscribed in stone or written on **papyrus**- an ancient form of paper made from dried reed pulp.

Hieroglyphics were used for administrative purposes, such as recording crop yields or the level of the Nile but also for inscribing prayers around temples and tombs and recording the feats and lineages of ruling families.

4. KEY EVENTS

4.1. AEGYPTIACA

Our main source for the description of who was who in Ancient Egypt is a priest from the Ptolemaic period called Manetho. He wrote the *Aegyptiaca*, a text which organised the country's history into thirty dynasties.

Egyptian history is broadly broken into the following key periods:

4.2. PRE-DYNASTIC AND ARCHAIC (3200-2755 BC)

This period marked the first appearance of Egyptian writing or hieroglyphics. It also saw the uniting of the disparate states that made up the early Nile Valley settlements into one administration.

4.3. THE OLD KINGDOM (2755-2255 BC)

These years see the building of the first pyramids. The architect, physician and priest **Imhotep** revolutionised pyramid construction by using stone rather than mud to build the famous Step Pyramid for the ruler Zoser. King Cheops later built the Great Pyramid of Giza.

The Old Kingdom Egyptians also made huge advances in academic fields such as navigation, astronomy and medicine.

4.4. THE FIRST INTERMEDIATE PERIOD

A chaotic period was sparked by the death of the Sixth dynasty King Pepi the second, who had ruled for ninety-four years. There was increasing decentralisation and political confusion, as well as a period of civil war as local princes clashed with each other.

4.5. THE MIDDLE KINGDOM (2134-1784 BC)

Egypt was again reunited and the country's administration reorganised under Mentuhotep, who based his capital at Thebes. He managed to maintain the unity of the state against regional insurgencies.

The twelfth dynasty king Sesostri I and his successor Sesostri III built fortresses in Nubia and formed standing armies to fight against the Nubians.

4.6 THE SECOND INTERMEDIATE PERIOD

The Hka-Hasut, or Hyksos, migrated to Egypt from Western Asia introducing the horse and chariot. He established a dynasty in the middle and north of the country which battled with the Theban-based ruler Kamose.

Kamose's brother, Ahmose I, eventually defeated the Hyksos and reunited Egypt.

4.7. THE NEW KINGDOM (1570-1070)

Amenhotep I began a new period of expansion into Nubia and Palestine. Queen Hatshepsut ruled for two prosperous decades and organised an expedition to the land of Punt, to the south of Egypt. She was overthrown by Thutmose II who extended the Egyptian empire by waging seventeen foreign campaigns. With the country politically stable Egyptian art and building revived under Amenhotep III.

This period also sees the short rule of the young Pharaoh **Tutankamun** whose richly furnished tomb was found in 1922. Ramses the second waged war against the Hittite peoples from Asia and conducted successful campaigns in Palestine and Syria.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/3audio2a.ram

4.8. THE THIRD INTERMEDIATE PERIOD

Towards the end of the New Kingdom the power of the Pharaohs was challenged by the priests of the god Amun. Eventually Egypt was divided between Kings ruling from Tanis in the north and high priests based in the southern town of Thebes.

4.9. THE LATE PERIOD (767-671 BC)

The Kushite kings of the 25th Dynasty emerge as rulers of Egypt inaugurating the period of 'black pharaohs', from a culture which showed far more African influences than previous administrations. The Kushites were eventually ousted by the Assyrians.

4.10. THE GREEK AND ROMAN PERIODS

Alexander the Great occupies Egypt in 332 BC and one of his governors, Ptolemy, founds a dynasty, which comes to an end with the famous Queen **Cleopatra**. Cleopatra's forces were defeated by the Roman legions under the Roman commander, Octavian, and Egypt effectively became a province of the Roman Empire.

5. NUBIA

When discussing the civilisations of the Nile Valley, many histories focus almost exclusively on the role of Egypt.

But this approach ignores the emergence further south on the Nile of the kingdom known to the Egyptians as Kush, in the region called Nubia - the area now covered by southern Egypt and Northern Sudan.

The relationship between Egypt and Kush was a complex one, which changed depending on the political and economic climate of the time.

"Nubia was the meeting place of the Mediterranean and African civilisation. The relationship between Egypt and upper Nubia was completely different from time to time and period to period. If the Egyptian king's power is widespread it catches everything under its control and Nubia comes under Egyptian authority, but if it is weak, then upper Nubia is ruled by itself."

Osama Abdel Meguid, Director of the Nubian Museum in Aswan.

5.1. KERMA AND NAPATA

The Kushites were first based in Kerma, and then at Napata - both towns in what is now northern Sudan.

Kerma was an advanced society and archaeological evidence shows that ceramics were being produced by 8,000 BC - earlier than in Egypt. By about 1700 BC, the town had grown into a town of 10,000 people with a complex hierarchical society.

Egypt could not ignore its southern neighbour although its interest was predominantly economic. Nubia was rich with minerals such as stones needed for the building of temples and tombs, and gold, needed for jewelry. Indeed Kush was one of the major gold producers of the ancient world.

At one stage Nubia, was occupied by Egypt for about 500 years and then the tables turned. From around 850 BC, the Egyptian state fell into such decline that what became known as the twenty-fifth dynasty rose in Nubia, with authority over all of Egypt.

This dynasty based at Napata was known as the 'Ethiopian' dynasty. Although it was heavily influenced by Egyptian culture and religion, it was in many ways the first great African power.

"They dealt like Egyptians, they dressed like Egyptians, but they were still proud of their black faces."

Osama Abdel Meguid, Director of the Nubian Museum in Aswan.

In 713 BC King Shabaka came to power in Kush and brought the Nile Valley as far as the Delta under his control. The name of one of his successors, King Taharqa, is found on inscriptions throughout the Valley.

5.2. MOVING TO MEROE

The dynasty ended following a military defeat at the hands of the Assyrians and in about 600 BC the capital of the Kushite kingdom was moved from Napata to **Meroe**, further south along the Nile.

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This, symbolically, was a move closer to black Africa, and the kingdom that grew up around Meroe was one that very much reflected African influences. The Meroites have been given much less historical attention than the Egyptians but in many ways it was a kingdom that rivaled Egypt in material wealth and distinctive cultural development.

"From the graves and from the images painted on tombs we can see that people looked much more African than Mediterranean. The jewelry is really of an African nature - like anklets, bracelets, ear studs and earrings - and you can still find the style of the jewelry used by the Meroites on tribes of the savannah belt south of Khartoum."

Dr Salah el-Din Muhammed Ahmed, Director of Fieldwork at the National Museum in Khartoum.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/3audio4b.ram

Meroe was a complex, advanced and politically stable society. It relied on elected kingship with elaborate coronation ceremonies in which the Queen mother played an important role. Excavations of the large ancient city have revealed palaces, royal baths and temples.

5.3. EXPANDING KINGDOMS

Meroe's wealth was partly based on trade and commerce, particularly after the Second Century when the camel was introduced to Africa and there was a flourishing of caravan routes across the continent. Its position gave Meroe strategic access to trading outlets on the Red Sea. Pottery, jewelry and woven cloth were all produced to a high standard of craftsmanship.

The kingdom also had the resources needed for the smelting of iron: ore, water from the Nile and wood from acacia trees to make charcoal. Iron gave the Meroites spears, arrows axes and hoes, allowing them to develop a mixed farming economy to exploit to the full the tropical summer rainfall.

Although influenced by the Egyptian state gods, such as Amun, Meroe developed its own forms of religious worship. The most important regional deity was the Lion God, Apedemek - often portrayed with a lion's head on a human body.

As Meroe became more distanced from Egypt, so too was the Egyptian language replaced as the spoken language of the court. Instead a Meroitic alphabet and script were introduced, which to this day researchers have been unable to decipher.

The Kingdom of Meroe began to fade as a power by the first or second century AD, sapped by war with Roman Egypt and the decline of its traditional industries. The iron industry had used up huge quantities of charcoal leading to deforestation and the land began to lose its fertility.

In around 350 AD, an army led by Ezana, King of the growing kingdom of **Axum** in what is now Ethiopia, invaded Meroe - but by then Meroites had already dispersed, replaced by a people described by the Axumites as Noba.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/3audio4a.ram

6. THE PEOPLES OF THE NILE VALLEY

For many years now there has been a debate about whether the ancient peoples of the Nile Valley were 'black' or 'white'. Much Western scholarship, particularly in the early twentieth century, refused to accept that black peoples could have built such a great civilisation.

In 1930 for example, Charles Seligman (1873-1940), an English ethnologist who wrote a book titled 'The Races of Africa' said that the ancient civilisation of Egypt was created by a race he called 'Hamites', who he regarded as coming from Asia.

Some African historians, including the Professor of Anthropology at the University of Nairobi, Simiyu Wandibba, believe that European writers developed such theories to discredit Africa and make it easier for the continent to be colonised.

"In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries there were theories that Africa was inhabited much later than Asia and that the people occupying Africa today were the result of waves of migration from western Asia, the Middle East and the Far East. I want to say that this is not true. But if you want to rule a people, you don't want to give them credit."

Professor Simiyu Wandibba, University of Nairobi.

One of the main academic proponents of the view that the ancient Egyptian civilisation was founded by black Africans was the Senegalese historian Cheikh Anta Diop.

"Ancient Egypt was a Negro civilisation. The history of Black Africa will remain suspended in the air and cannot be written correctly until African historians dare to connect it with the history of Egypt. The African historian who evades the problem of Egypt is neither modest nor objective nor unruffled. He is ignorant, cowardly and neurotic. The ancient Egyptians were Negroes. The moral fruit of their civilisation is to be counted among the assets of the Black world."

Cheikh Anta Diop, taken from The African Origin of Civilisation.

In his two major works *Nations Negres et Culture* and *Anteriorite des Civilizations Negres* he profoundly influenced thinking about Africa around the world.

Cheikh Anta Diop argues that:

As humankind began in East Africa it was likely that people were black skinned.

People populated other continents by moving either through the Sahara or the Nile Valley.

In the period before the start of the great Egyptian dynasties the whole of the Nile river basin was taken over by these negroid peoples.

To support his theory, Diop cited the writings of several Greek and Latin writers who had described the ancient Egyptians.

The Greek historian Herodotus, for example, described the Colchians of the Black Sea shores as "Egyptians by race" and pointed out they had "black skins and kinky hair."

Apollodorus, the Greek philosopher, described Egypt as "the country of the black-footed ones" and the Latin historian Ammianus Marcellinus said "the men of Egypt are mostly brown or black with a skinny desiccated look."

Diop also argued that the Egyptians themselves described their race as black and that there were close affinities between the ancient Egyptian tongue and the languages of Africa.

The issue of the peopling of Egypt came to a head in 1974 when UNESCO hosted a conference in Cairo aimed at discussing the latest research.

The symposium provoked ferocious debate and many of Diop's theories were strongly challenged, however, the meeting concluded with the following statement, "the overall results...will be very differently assessed by the various participants."

The closing statement also pointed out that not all participants had prepared for the conference as painstakingly as Professor Diop or his academic ally Theophile Obenga of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The argument still remains largely unresolved to the extent that UNESCO's General History of Africa is somewhat cautious in its final analysis of the issue.

"It is more than probable that the African strain, black or light, is preponderant in the Ancient Egyptian, but in the present state of our knowledge it is impossible to say more."

The issue was given more impetus with the publication in 1987 of Martin Bernal's Black Athena in which he argued that Classical civilisation had its roots deep in Afroasiatic cultures which had been systematically suppressed for mainly racist reasons.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/3audio5.ram

7. FORCES FOR CHANGE

7.1. IRRIGATION

Undoubtedly one of the key reasons for the rise of Egyptian civilisation was the development, by early settlers, of a way to control the flooding of the river Nile. The Nile would break its banks each year, saturating the surrounding countryside. When the waters subsided, a rich, fertile silt ideal for crop growing would be left.

The ancient Egyptians used a variety of techniques to trap the water and irrigate the land, using canals, basins, dams and dykes. The early settlers then manually watered more outlying fields by carrying water in jars.

7.2. PAPYRUS

Papyrus was effectively the note paper of the ancient Egyptians allowing them to record daily events throughout the kingdom. It was made from the stem of the papyrus plant, cut into a horizontal row of strips. A layer of resin was applied and a second row of strips was placed on the surface - this time vertically. The layers would then be pressed and allowed to dry. Papyrus sheets could be made to any size.

8. NILE VALLEY TIMELINE

- 8,000 BC: Evidence of pottery and agricultural production in Nile Valley
- 3200-2755 BC: Pre-dynastic/Archaic Early Nile Valley settlements united into one administration. First appearance of Egyptian writing or hieroglyphics.
- 2755-2255 BC: The Old Kingdom. The building of the first pyramids. Architect, physician and priest Imhotep revolutionises pyramid construction by using stone rather than mud to build the famous Step Pyramid for the ruler Zoser. King Cheops later builds the Great Pyramid of Giza. The Old Kingdom Egyptians make huge advances in academic fields such as navigation, astronomy and medicine.
- 2200-2160 BC: The First Intermediate period. Chaos sparked by the death of the Sixth dynasty King Pepi the second after ninety-four years of rule. Central authority collapses leading to civil war as local princes clashed with each other.
- 2134-1784 BC: The Middle Kingdom. Egypt reunited and the country's administration reorganised under Mentuhotep who based his capital at Thebes. He maintains the unity of the state against regional insurgencies. The twelfth dynasty king Sesostris I and his successor Sesostris III build fortresses in Nubia and form standing armies to fight against the Nubians.

- 1783-1570 BC: The Second Intermediate Period. The Hka-Hasut or Hyksos migrate to Egypt from Western Asia introducing the horse and chariot and establish a dynasty in the middle and north of the country which confronts Theban-based ruler Kamose. Kamose's brother, Ahmose I, eventually defeats the Hyksos and reunites Egypt.
- 1570-1085 BC: The New Kingdom. Amenhotep I begins new period of expansion into Nubia and Palestine. Thutmose II extends the Egyptian empire by waging seventeen foreign campaigns. With the country politically stable Egyptian art and building revives under Amenhotep III. The young Pharaoh Tutankamen dies aged 18 and his richly furnished tomb is found in 1922. Ramses the second wages war against the Hittite peoples from Asia and conducts successful campaigns in Palestine and Syria.
- 1450 BC: Egypt destroys Kushite kingdom of Kerma and occupies Nubia for 500 years.
- 1085-767 BC: The Third Intermediate Period. The power of Pharaohs is challenged by the priests of the god Amun. Egypt is divided between Kings ruling from Tanis in the north and high priests based in the southern town of Thebes.
- 1075 BC: Governors of Kush begin to assert independence.
- 850 BC: Rise of the Kushite state of Napata.
- 767-671 BC: The Late Period. The Kushite kings of 25th Dynasty emerge as rulers of Egypt starting the period of "black pharaohs" from a culture which shows far more African influences than previous administrations. The Kushites are eventually ousted by the Assyrians.
- 553 BC: Kushite kings move to Meroe.
- 332 BC: Alexander the Great occupies Egypt and one of his governors, Ptolemy, founds a dynasty which ends with the famous Queen Cleopatra.
- 30 BC: Cleopatra's forces are defeated by the Roman legions under the Roman commander, Octavian, and Egypt effectively became a province of the Roman Empire.
- 12 BC-12 AD: Golden age of Meroitic culture under King Netekamani.
- 300 AD: Decline of Meroe.

9. FURTHER READING

UNESCO General History of Africa, Volume Two. Edited by G Mokhtar.

The African Origin of Civilisation: Myth or Reality. Written by Cheikh Anta Diop. Edited by Mercer Cook. Lawrence Hill & Co., September 1983.

Black Athena. The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization: The Archaeological and Documentary Evidence. By Martin Bernal. Rutgers University Press, July 1991.

Egypt Revisited. Edited by Ivan van Sertima. Transaction Publishers.

The Search for Africa. By Basil Davidson. James Currey

10. USEFUL LINKS

The BBC is not responsible for the content of external Internet sites

The Nile

www.robinsonresearch.com/AFRICA/THE_LAND/Nile_River.htm

Robinson Research World of Knowledge.

Tut-Ankhamun

<http://touregypt.net/museum/stat.htm>

Egyptian Museum, Cairo.

Papyri

<http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/papyrus/>

Duke Papyrus Archive, Duke University.

Imhotep and his architecture

<http://emuseum.mnsu.edu/prehistory/egypt/history/people/imhotep.html>

Minnesota State University.

Cleopatra

<http://ce.eng.usf.edu/pharos/alexandria/History/cleo.html>

University of South Florida.

Meroe

www.orient.ru/eng/resour/meroe/state.htm

Eurasian Orientalist Server.

Egyptian history, mythology, people, museums, hieroglyphics and mathematics

www.dmoz.org/Society/History/Africa/Ancient/Egypt

Produced by dmoz - Open Directory Project.

Languages spoken in Egypt

www.sil.org/ethnologue/countries/Egyp.html

Ethnologue Languages of the World website.

Profile on Egypt

<http://memory.loc.gov/frd/cs/egtoc.html>

Library of Congress Country Studies.

Ancient African empires and states

<http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/aoi/resources/hg/ancient.html>

Written by Malaika Mutere, scholar at Howard University. Kennedy Center African Odyssey Interactive site.

The Hieroglyph Translator

www.torstar.com/rom/egypt

Royal Ontario Museum.

The Rosetta Stone

www.houseofptolemy.org/houeros.htm

The House of Ptolemy Portal.

Irrigation of Egypt and the Nile

<http://www-geology.ucdavis.edu/%7EGEL115/115CH17oldirrigation.html>

University of California Davis, Department of Geology, California.

Priest Manetho's Aegyptiaka text

<http://users.interact.net.au/%7Epwaa/giza2.html>

Personal site by Bill Alford.

Secrets Of The Pharaohs

www.pbs.org/wnet/pharaohs

PBS

IV. WEST AFRICAN KINGDOMS

1. INTRODUCTION

"Listen then sons of Mali, children of the black people, listen to my word, for I am going to tell you of Sundiata, the father of the Bright Country, of the savanna land, the ancestor of those who draw the bow, the master of a hundred vanquished kings."

13th century account handed down orally and delivered in 1960 by Mali griot, Djeli Mamdoudou Kouyate, master in the art of eloquence.

Over three thousand years ago there were two important developments in West Africa: long distance trade, and the ability to manipulate stone, clay and metals to sophisticated degree.

Against this background, there arose a number of kingdoms and empires starting in the 5th century through to the 16th century. Common to each of these great empires was extensive trans-saharan trade with the North, large standing armies and an effective system taxation.

The empire of Ghana (not to be confused with modern Ghana which is some four hundred miles south east of where it was) was first referred to by an Arab scholar in the 8th century. Two centuries later the kingdom of Kanem arose north east of Lake Chad.

In the 13th century Mali rose under the leadership of the Malinke Sundiata to become renowned throughout the Arab world for its wealth and learning. A hundred years later it fell into decline and became the target of Tuareg raids; the Songhay then took over the territory, reduced in size, under the leadership of Askiya Mohammed. Trade was revived as was the position of Timbuktu as a centre of learning. The Songhay remained in control until the Moroccan invasion.

By the 18th century the northern part of West Africa was a patchwork of city states and kingdoms; further South the Asante state (in modern Ghana) rose to preeminence. In the early 19th century Muslim reformers changed the political landscape of large parts of West Africa, most notably in what is now northern Nigeria, under the leadership of Usman dan Fodio.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/4audio0a.ram

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/4audio0b.ram

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/4audio0c.ram

2. ANCIENT GHANA

2.1. GEOGRAPHY

Despite its name, the old Empire of Ghana is not geographically, ethnically, or in any other way, related to modern Ghana. It lies about four hundred miles north west of modern Ghana. Ancient Ghana encompassed what is now modern Northern Senegal and Southern Mauritania.

2.2. ORIGINS

Nobody is sure when Ghana came into being. But some time at the beginning of the first millennium AD, it is thought that a number of clans of the Soninke people, (in modern Senegal) came together under a leader with semi-divine status, called Dinga Cisse.



There are different accounts of who he was, but all reports emphasise that he was an outsider who came from afar. It is likely that this federation of Soninke was formed possibly in response to the attacks of nomadic raid-

ers, who were in turn, suffering from drought, and seeking new territory. Further west was the state of Takrur in the Senegal valley. It was linked to the north via a coastal route leading to Morocco via Sijilmasa.

2.3. GOLD

What is clear, is that the Empire derived power and wealth from gold. And the introduction of the camel in the Trans-Saharan trade boosted the amount of goods that could be transported.

Most of our knowledge of Ghana comes from Arab writers. Al-Hamdani, for example, describes Ghana as having the richest gold mines on earth. These were situated at Bambuk, on the upper Senegal River. The Soninke also sold slaves, salt and copper, in exchange for textiles, beads and finished goods. The capital of Kumbi Saleh became the focus of all trade, with a systematic form of taxation. Later Audaghost was another commercial centre.

ROYALTY GORGEOUSLY ATTIRED

"The King adorns himself like a woman wearing necklaces round his neck and bracelets on his forearms and he puts on a high cap decorated with gold and wrapped in a turban of fine cotton. He holds an audience in a domed pavilion around which stand ten horses covered with gold-embroidered materials...and on his right, are the sons of the vassal kings of his country, wearing splendid garments and their hair plaited with gold.

At the door of the pavilion are dogs of excellent pedigree. Round their necks they wear collars of gold and silver, studded with a number of balls of the same metals."
10th century geographer Al-Bakri, quoted in *Corpus of Early Arabic Sources for West African History*.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/4audio1a.ram

2.4. SACRIFICE

The wealth of Ghana is also explained mythically through the story of Bida, the black snake. This snake demanded an annual sacrifice in return for guaranteeing prosperity in the kingdom. Every year a virgin was offered up, until one year, the fiancé of the intended victim, (his name was Mamadou Sarolle) rescued her. Cheated of his sacrifice, Bida took his revenge on the region. A terrible drought took hold of Ghana and gold mining fell into decline.

Archaeologists have found evidence that confirms elements of the story, showing that until the 12th century, sheep and cows, as well goats, were abundant in the region. But after that only the tougher, more drought resistant goats were common.

2.5. TRADE

The route taken by traders of the Maghreb to Ghana would have started in North Africa in Tahert, sweeping down through Sijilmasa in Southern Morocco. From there the trail went south and inland, roughly running parallel with the coast. Then it curved round to the south east through Awdaghost, finally ending up in Kumbi Saleh - the royal town of Ghana.

2.6. ISLAM

Inevitably traders brought Islam with them. Initially, the Islamic community at Kumbi Saleh remained a separate community some distance away from the king's palace. It had its own mosques and schools. But, the king retained his traditional beliefs. He drew on the book-keeping and literary skills of Muslim scholars to help run the administration of the territory. The state of Takrur to the west had already adopted Islam as its official religion and evolved ever closer trading ties with North Africa.

2.7. MUSLIMS IN ANCIENT GHANA

"The city of Ghana consists of two towns situated on a plain. One of these towns, which is 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. The king's town is six miles distant from this one..."

The king has a palace and a number of domed dwellings all surrounded with an enclosure like a city wall. Around the king's town are domed buildings and groves and thickets where the sorcerers of these people, men in charge of the religious cult, live. In them too are their idols and the tombs of their kings."

Taken from an account by geographer Al-Bakri.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/4audio1b.ram

2.8. DECLINE

There were a number of reasons for Ghana's decline. The King lost his trading monopoly. At the same time drought was beginning to have a long term effect on the land and its ability to sustain cattle and cultivation. But the Empire of Ghana was also under pressure from outside forces.

There is an Arab tradition that the Almoravid Muslims came down from the North and invaded Ghana. Another interpretation is that this Almoravid influence was gradual and did not involve any sort of military take-over.

In the 11th and 12th century new gold fields began to be mined at Bure (modern Guinea) out of the commercial reach of Ghana and new trade routes were opening up further east. Ghana became the target of attacks by the Sosso ruler Sumanguru. Out of this conflict, the Malinke emerged in 1235 under a new dynamic ruler, Sundiata Keita. Soon Ghana was totally eclipsed by the Mali Empire of Sundiata.

3. KANEM

Kanem was situated north east of Lake Chad. Its early origins are thought to lie in the 7th century with the settlement of the Zaghawa people. In the early 11th century, the Kanuri-speaking Sefawa dynasty was established, displacing the Zaghawa.

There appears to have been a corresponding shift in lifestyle from being entirely nomadic to combining a pastoralist way of life with agricultural cultivation. The state became more centralised; a place called Njimi was thought to be its capital. Nobody knows its exact location.

3.1. ISLAM AND TRADE

Kanem converted to Islam under the ruler Hu or Hawwa (1067-71). There is some speculation that this ruler might have been a woman. But the faith was not widely embraced until the 13th century. Certainly, Muslim traders would have played a role in bringing Islam to Kanem.

The wealth of Kanem derived from the ability of its rulers to control trade in the region. Their main exports were ostrich feathers, slaves and ivory. Their exports were crucial to their power and ability to dominate their neighbour. They rode horses, which they imported from the north.

3.2. GIFTS

In addition to trade, there seems to have been a good deal of formal exchanges of presents between the kings of Kanem and the sultans of the north. Most memorably, a giraffe was presented by the king of Kanem and Bornu to the Hafsid Sultan al-Mustansir of Tunis in the 13th century.

3.3. HEIGHT OF POWER

Kanem reached the height of its power under the long rule of Mai Dunama Dibalami (1210-1248). His cavalry numbered over 40,000. But over the next hundred years, a combination of overgrazing, dynastic uncertainties and attacks from neighbours led the rulers of Kanem to move to Borno, which had previously paid tribute to Kanem. At this point, the state is sometimes referred to as Kanem-Borno.

3.4. KANEM-BORNO

The move to Borno brought new trading partners in the form of the Hausas, (based in what is now northern Nigeria) and closer contact with the Muslim world. Borno became a centre of learning and scholarship.

In the latter part of the sixteenth century, the army of Borno was modernised and expanded. Firearms (still relatively new in Europe) were imported from North Africa and Turkish mercenaries were recruited. The decline of Borno in the 18th century is not at all well documented. However, it appears to have been gradual and in the main peaceful.

There are a number of descriptions of Kanem-Borno by Arab writers. Several allude, confusingly, to it being near the Nile. In fact, the Nile is over 1,000 miles east of Lake Chad where Kanem was situated.

KANEM: THROUGH THE EYES OF VARIOUS ARAB AND GREEK WRITERS

IDOLATRY

"The inhabitants of Kanem are idolatrous Sudan. It is said that there exists in those parts a clan descended from the Umayyads, who took refuge there when they were persecuted by Abbasids. They dress in the fashion of the Arabs and follow their customs."

The Spanish muslim scholar Al-Bakri.

BEDOUIN KING

"The King is a wandering Bedouin. When he sits on his throne, his subjects make obeisance to him and fall on their faces. His armies, including cavalry, infantry, and porters, number 100,000. Between Aljama and Yalamlam there dwell a great many unbelievers...the king of Kanem has five minor kings under his sway. His horses are small. Kanem is a vast region through which the blessed Nile flows."

14th century Egyptian historian Al-Maqrizi.

POET FROM AFAR

"Kanem ...is part of the land of the Berbers in the farthest west in the land of the Sudan. Some say that the Kanem are a people of the Sudan. At the present day there is a poet at Marrakesh in Maghrib known as al-Kanimi (the one from Kanem) whose excellent work is attested to, but I have never heard any of his poetry nor learnt his proper name."

12th century Greek bookseller and scholar Yaqut. Born in Greece, he was sold into slavery to a Syrian merchant. He was later freed and travelled widely.

GARDEN CITY

"Njimi is the capital of the land of Kanem. There resides the sultan of Kanem, well known for his religious warfare. He is a descendant of Sayf b. Dhi Yazan. On a level with Njimi, he possesses a town with gardens and a pleasure ground. It is on the west bank of the Nile which comes to Egypt and is 40 miles from Njimi. There are fruits there which do not resemble our fruits, as well as pomegranates, peaches and sugar cane."

13th century Syrian politician and scholar Abu 'l-Fida, quoting Ibn Sa'id.

ARROGANT AND FEEBLE

"Their soldiers wear the mouth muffler. Their king despite the feebleness of his authority and the poverty of his soul, who has an inconceivable arrogance; despite the weakness of his troops and the small resources of this country, he touches with his banner the clouds in the sky. He is veiled from his people. None sees him save at the two festivals, when he is seen at dawn and in the afternoon. During the rest of the year nobody, not even the commander-in-chief speaks to him, except from behind a screen."

4. MALI

4.1. ORIGINS

"Mali guards its secrets jealously. There are things which the uninitiated will never know, for the griots, their depositories, will never betray them."

Oral history, recited by Malian djeli (or oral historian) Mamadou Kouyate.

Mali emerged against the back-drop of a declining of Ghana under the dynamic leadership of Sundiata of the Keita clan. But the region he took over had a past rich in trade and powerful rulers.

4.2. JENNE

There was also the city of Jenne-Jeno (ancient Jenne), which archaeologists have now established was first settled in 200 BC, and only began losing its pre-eminence in the 12th century. Between whiles, it was a vital crossroads in the north-south trade. Recent excavations reveal high levels of craftsmanship in pottery, iron-work and jewellery making. This suggests the people of Jenne imported iron ore, stone grinders and beads.



SUNDIATA THE HERO

"He was a lad full of strength; his arms had the strength of ten and his biceps inspired fear in his companions. He had already that authoritative way of speaking which belongs to those who are destined to command."

SOUMAORO THE VILLAIN

"Since his accession to the throne of Sosso, he had defeated nine kings whose heads served him as objects in his macabre chamber. Their skins served as seats and he cut his footwear from human skin."

Taken from *The Epic of Old Mali*, recited by the griot (oral historian) Djeli Mamadou Kouyate, edited by D. T. Niane.

4.3. CONSOLIDATION¹

Sundiata Keita rose to power by defeating the king of the Sosso - Soumaoro (Sumanguru), known as the Sorcerer King, in 1235. He then brought all the Mandinke clans rulers (or Mansas) under his leadership, declaring himself overall Mansa. He took Timbuktu from the Tuareg, transforming it into a substantial city, a focus for trade and scholarship.

A significant portion of the wealth of the Empire derived from the Bure goldfields. The first capital, Niani, was built close to this mining area.

Mali at its largest was 2,000 kilometres wide. It extended from the coast of West Africa, both above the Senegal River and below the Gambia River, taking in old Ghana, and reaching south east to Gao and north east to Tadmekka.

4.4. LAND

Gold was not its only mainstay. Mali also acquired control over the salt trade. The capital of Niani was situated on the agriculturally rich floodplain of upper Niger, with good grazing land further north. A class of professional traders emerged in Mali. Some were of Mandinka origin, others were Bambara, Soninke and later Dyula. Gold dust and ag-



¹ Additional Information about Sundiata see Chapter IV. 12, page 51

ricultural produce was exported north. In the 14th century, cowrie shells were established as a form of currency for trading and taxation purposes.

4.5. ZENITH

Mali reached its peak in the 14th century. Three rulers stand out in this period. The first one, Abubakar II, goes down in history as the king who wanted to cross the Atlantic Ocean.

MALI DISCOVERS AMERICA?

"So Abubakar equipped 200 ships filled with men and the same number equipped with gold, water, and provisions, enough to last them for years...they departed and a long time passed before anyone came back. Then one ship returned and we asked the captain what news they brought.

He said, 'Yes, Oh Sultan, we travelled for a long time until there appeared in the open sea a river with a powerful current...the other ships went on ahead, but when they reached that place, they did not return and no more was seen of them...As for me, I went about at once and did not enter the river.'

The Sultan got ready 2,000 ships, 1,000 for himself and the men whom he took with him, and 1,000 for water and provisions. He left me to deputise for him and embarked on the Atlantic Ocean with his men. That was the last we saw of him and all those who were with him.

And so, I became king in my own right."

Mansa Musa, talking to Syrian scholar Al-Umari.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/4audio3.ram

Abubakar II's successor, Mansa Musa (1312-1337) was immortalised in the descriptions of Arab writers, when he made his magnificent pilgrimage to Mecca in 1324.

4.6. MANSA MUSA'S PILGRIMAGE TO MECCA

"It is said that he brought with him 14,000 slave girls for his personal service. The members of his entourage proceeded to buy Turkish and Ethiopia slave girls, singing girls and garments, so that the rate of the gold dinar fell by six dirhams. Having presented his gift he set off with the caravan."

Cairo born historian al-Maqrizi.

Mansa Musa also spent his wealth to more permanent effect. He commissioned the design and construction of a number of stunning buildings, for example, the building of the mosques at Gao and Jenne. At Niani he was responsible for the construction of a fantastic cupola for holding an audience in. Timbuktu became a place of great learning with young men linked to Fez in the north.

The other famous Malian ruler was Mansa Suleiman. Less is known of him. The historian Ibn Khaldun describes the considerable gifts he assembled for a Sultan in the north. But Ibn Battuta criticises his meanness.

IBN BATTUTA TAKES ON MANSA SULEIMAN

On arriving in Mali, Ibn Battuta does not mince his words.

"He is a miserly king, not much giving is to be expected from him. It happened that I stayed this period and did not see him because of my sickness..."

Finally Mansa Suleiman sends Ibn Battuta a gift, but it is definitely not up to Ibn Battuta's standards.

"Behold - three circular pieces of bread, a piece of beef fried in gharti, and a calabash of sour milk. When I saw them, I laughed and wondered a lot..."

So he complains.

"I stood before the sultan and said to him, 'I have indeed travelled in the lands of the world. I have met their kings. I have been in your country four months and you have given me no hospitality and not given me anything. What shall I say about you before the Sultans?'"

And that does the trick. Mansa Suleiman claims that he had not even realised Ibn Battuta was in town and hastily makes amends for the previous omissions in hospitality.

"Then the Sultan ordered a house for me in which I stayed and he fixed an allowance for me...He was gracious to me at my departure, to the extent of giving me one hundred mitqals of gold."

4.7. RELIGION

The court of Mali converted to Islam after Sundiata. As in Ghana, Muslim scribes played an important role in government and administration. But traditional religion persisted. Arab historians make much of the Islamic influence in Mali, whereas oral historians place little emphasis on Islam in their histories.

4.8. GOLD

The relationship between the Mansas of Mali and the people who worked on the gold fields is worth noting. The rulers received taxes from the miners in the form of gold, but they never exercised direct control over the mining process. At one point, the miners stopped working when the Mansas tried to convert them to Islam.

A HISTORIAN COMPARES ANCIENT MALI TO ANCIENT GHANA

"To some aspect they look the same, the gold, the way they made trade. But to the opposite of Ghana, I think Mali was really able to have more territory beyond some of the area Ghana went to, like Taghaza, the salt gulf, that was all part of the empire of Mali.

So territorial position was one of the greatest differences between Ghana and Mali. And also, the kind of ties Mali was able to make with peoples outside of Africa, is one of the great differences between the two empires...Mali was much much more international than Ghana was."

Tereba Togola, Head of Archaeology at the Institute of Human Sciences, Bamako. He is responsible for all archaeological research in Mali.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/4audio3a.ram

4.9. DECLINE OF MALI

A combination of weak and ineffective rulers and increasingly aggressive raids by Mossi neighbours and Tuareg Berbers gradually reduced the power of Mali. In the east, Gao began its ascendancy while remaining part of the Mali Empire.

In the early 1400's, Tuareg launched a number of successful raids on Timbuktu. They did not disrupt scholastic life or commercial activity, but fatally undermined the government by appropriating taxes for themselves.

Meanwhile Gao had become the capital of the burgeoning Songhay Empire which, by 1500, had totally eclipsed Mali. But the idea of Mali regaining its former splendour and glory, remained strong in the minds of many Mandinka for generations to come.

SALIF KEITA

One of the most internationally famous Malians today is musician Salif Keita. He is the descendant of Mansa Sundiata, born into a noble but poor family. His decision to become a musician was very much frowned upon by his family, since music was the province of a lower caste, the djelis.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/4audio3b.ram

5. SONGHAY

5.1. ORIGINS

The wealth and power of Songhay can be traced back to the Sorko fishermen who were skilled canoeists, living along the Niger, south east of Gao. By the 9th century they were part of a state known as Songhay. They began to develop trading relations with Muslim traders in Gao, which then became a part of Songhay.

During the 14th century Songhay fell within the orbit of the Empire of Mali, but the rulers of Mali never managed to collect taxes from the people of Gao.

5.2. RISE

In the fifteenth century Songhay rose to pre-eminence under Sonni Ali the Great, while Mali fell into a decline. His military forces consisted of a cavalry of expert horsemen, and fleets of canoes. He was a great military leader, with a keen understanding of tactics on land and water. He had the added advantage of being regarded as a leader with magical powers.

Songhay oral history portrays him as a conquering hero. Sonni Ali the Great expanded the territory of Songhay considerably, so that it stretched across the Niger valley, west to Senegal and east to Agades (modern Niger). He remained attached to the traditional rites of his mother's birthplace, Sokoto. He captured Timbuktu from the Tuareg and disrupted the tradition of scholarship. His lack of respect for Islam gets him a bad press from Arab chroniclers who portray him as ruthless and oppressive.

5.3. ZENITH

After Sonni Ali's death one of his generals, Mohammed Ture, seized power in 1493. He was a devout Muslim of Soninke origin, who established the Askiya dynasty. Continuing the expansion of Songhay that Sonni Ali had started, he brought Songhay to the height of its power.

In contrast to his predecessor, all his actions were informed by his commitment to Islam. His raids against the Mossi took on a religious dimension. These jihads (Holy Wars) were a success on the military front; but although defeated, the Mossi still refused to convert to Islam.

5.4. HIGH PROFILE

Mohammed Ture Askiya promoted Songhay in the Muslim world. He went to Mecca. He visited the Caliph of Egypt, who in turn made him Caliph of the whole of Sudan. Sudan was a loose term for a large area in sub-Saharan Africa usually embracing Mali, Chad, north west Nigeria, and Niger. In government matters, he took the advice of three distinguished jurists, or qadis. Generally the government of the Askiya dynasty was more centralised than that of the Mansas of Mali.

5.5. TRADITION AND TRADE

Some aspects of traditional religion were preserved, including the sacred drum, the sacred fire, and the old types of costume and hairstyle. As in Mali, there was a privileged caste of craftsmen, and slave labour played an important role in agriculture. Trade improved under Mohammed Ture Askiya, with gold, kola nuts and slaves being the main export. Textiles, horses, salt and luxury goods were the main imports. In 1510 and 1513, The Spanish Moroccan writer and traveller Leo Africanus visited Gao, the capital of Songhay. He was amazed at the wealth of the ruling class:

"The houses there are very poor, except for those of the king and his courtiers. The merchants are exceedingly rich and large numbers of Negroes continually come here to buy cloth brought from Barbarie (Morocco) and Europe..."

Here there is a certain place where slaves are sold, especially on those days when the merchants are assembled. And a young slave of fifteen years of age is sold for six ducats, and children are also sold. The king of this region has a certain private palace where he maintains a great number of concubines and slaves."

Leo Africanus's visit to Timbuktu causes him to remark on the intellectual and professional classes.

"Here there are many doctors, judges, priests and other learned men, that are well maintained at the king's cost. Various manuscripts and written books are brought here out of Barbarie and sold for more money than any other merchandise.

The coin of Timbuktu is of gold without any stamp or superscription, but in matters of small value, they use certain shells brought here from Persia, four hundred of which are worth a ducat and six pieces of their own gold coin, each of which weighs two-thirds of an ounce."

5.6. FALL OF SONGHAY

In the late 16th century Songhay slid into civil war. Echoing the fates of Ghana, Mali and Kanem. The wealth and power of Songhay was also undermined by environmental change, causing droughts and diseases. But Songhay might have survived all this. The decisive factor in its downfall was the determination of the Moroccans to control the sub-Saharan gold trade.

In 1591 the Moroccan army invaded. The Songhay were caught unawares and were defeated by the superior fire power of the Moroccan army. Morocco won the war but lost the peace. The Sultans of Morocco eventually lost interest. The Moroccan garrison stayed but took to freelance looting and pillaging. The old empire split up, with the Bambara kingdom of Segu emerging as an important new force.

WOMEN PRAISE SINGERS OF SONGHAY

"In the early days of the Songhay empire there were no griots (praise singers). When the rulers returned from war, their own wives used to sing their praises. They used to massage the bodies of their husbands, saying 'My husband, you're really brave and tired. You must rest, I'm your wife....'

One day the wives had the idea of accompanying their praises with a music instrument. One wife had the idea of making a small instrument. So she went to get a calabash and a goat's skin. She covered the calabash with the skin and she started to play the instrument. Little by little she learned how to play. From then on she told her husband she would sing his praises with this instrument."

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/4audio4.ram

6. HAUSA STATES

There are a number of theories and stories connected with the Hausa people, who today live in northern Nigeria, parts of Ghana, Niger and Togo. Some centre on the idea of migration.

6.1. LAKE CHAD

For example, there is a theory that all the Hausas once lived by Lake Chad, but had to move west when the lake shrank. Certainly, oral and musical traditions connect Kanem-Borno (by Lake Chad) with the Hausas.

There's also a shared Islamic history. The Hausa skill in horse riding is also thought to come from Kanem-Borno. And finally there is music. The musicians of the court of the present Emir of Zazzau in Zaria say their instruments derive from Bornu.

6.2. NORTH CONNECTION

Another theory identifies the Hausas as originally desert people, living in the Sahara. The connection goes even further north; the palace at Daura contains a sword, which people believe, came from the Pharaohs.

6.3. ETHIOPIAN CONNECTION

The Dan Masanin of Kano, Maitama Sule, is a historian and leading figure in the Kano Emirate. He believes there is a connection, spanning the continent, linking the Hausas and the

people of Ethiopia. He cites as evidence, linguistic similarities, and a shared worship of the sun, prior to Islam and Christianity arriving.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/4audio5.ram

6.4. BAGHDAD ROYALTY

Many other Hausas subscribe to the view that they had a common Arab ancestor whose descendants founded the Hausa city-states. According to this, the King of Baghdad's son, Bayajidda or Abuyazidu, quarrelled with his father, left Baghdad and ended up in the state of Daura (directly north of Kano in present day northern Nigeria). There, the people were terrorised and deprived of water by a snake which lived in a well.

6.5. GRATITUDE

Bayajidda gained the gratitude of the king of Daura by killing the snake. In return the king gave his daughter's hand in marriage. Bayajidda and his wife had a son, Bawo, who married and in turn had six sons who then became rulers of Kano, Zazzau (Zaria), Gobir, Katsina, Rano and Daura; a seventh state Biram is added to the list. These are the Hausa Bakwai, the seven Hausa states.

There is also an extension to this story, which can be seen as a way of explaining a number of other states, which fell under Hausa influence, while retaining some of their own customs. This story tells of Bawo having a further seven sons by his concubine. These became rulers of the Banza Bakwai, or seven 'illegitimate' Hausa states: Zamfara, Kebbik, Nupe, Gwari, Yauri, Yoruba and Kororofa.

6.6. ENCLOSED

There is a general consensus that Hausa city-states were founded some time between the end of the 900s and the beginning of the 13th century. It is thought they emerged out of a number of small communities, typically surrounded by stockades, enclosing not only houses but also agricultural lands.

Eventually these various communities grouped together to form larger groups, which in turn acquired the size and status of city-states. The custom of creating a fortified surrounding wall was maintained. These city walls can still be seen today.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/4audio5b.ram

6.7. TENSION

Initially there seemed to be harmony between the states and a good deal of trade. Each city-state had its own speciality. For Kano it was leatherwork and weaving (later dyeing), for Zazzau it was slaves. Slave labour was used to maintain city walls and grow food. In time, the city-states began to fight with each other. Internally, their rulers and administration became corrupt.

6.8. JIHAD

By the 18th century a number of jihads were being launched by Fulbe. (The Fulbe are nomadic people who today travel through much of northern West Africa.) These were mounted from the states of Futa Jalon and Futa Toro.

This set the scene for the son of a Fulbe teacher, Usman dan Fodio from Gobir, to launch a much more far-reaching jihad among the city-states. One of his initial goals was to convert Fulani pastoralists who had so far resisted Islam. But his jihad challenged the old Hausa aristocracy. The region was ripe for reform and the peasants had long felt badly used by their rulers.

SETTING A BAD EXAMPLE

"One of the ways of their government is succession to the emirate by hereditary right and by force to the exclusion of consultation...whomsoever they wish to kill or exile or violate his honour or devour his wealth, they do so in pursuit of their loss without any right in the Sharia.

One of the ways of their government is their imposing on the people monies not laid down by the Sharia being those which they call Jangali (cattle tax) and Kudinsala (annual gifts to rulers).

Therefore do not follow their way in their government and do not imitate them, not even in the titles of their kings."

Shehu Usman dan Fodio's denunciation of the Hausa emirates.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/4audio5.ram

6.9. SOKOTO

Uprisings sprung up in Katsina, Kano, Kebbi, Zamfara, Zaria and finally Gobir. The old Hausa aristocracy fell and Usman dan Fodio established a caliphate at Sokoto in 1809, which had authority over all the city-states.

He retired to a religious life and his son Mohammed Bello took up the reigns of government. By the time Mohammed Bello died in 1837, the empire of caliphate of Sokoto had a population of ten million.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/4audio2.ram

14TH CENTURY QUEEN AMINA OF ZAZZAU

"Queen Amina was one of the great queens or traditional rulers in the northern state. The origin of Zaria or Zazzau started seventy miles from here and then the father of Queen Amina moved to establish ancient Zaria city. When the father died, she succeeded him and became the first and the last queen and during her time she waged many wars to extend Emirate and succeeded in many of these.

Unfortunately she died down south. Wherever she conquered, she used to order people to build a wall around the town or city, so we still maintain what we call 'the walls of Amina.'"

Is it true she never married or had any offspring? I've also heard that she had many lovers but that as soon as she had one lover she moved to another town and killed him so he didn't spread her secrets?

"This is what we are not sure about. The only thing we know is that she did not marry. But as far as picking a boyfriend, I don't know about that. Some people say this but I don't know if it is true. Our history is scanty there."

The Emir of Zazzau in Zaria, in conversation with BBC 'Story of Africa' producer Bola Olufunwa

7. ASANTE

7.1. FOUNDATION

The Asante people were originally one of a number of Akan people, all paying tribute to the Denkyira. They lived in what today is modern Ghana - not to be confused with Ancient Ghana.

7.2. EXPANSION

In the 1670's, a new and extremely effective ruler emerged among the Asante called Osei Tutu. He overthrew the Denkyira and established Kumasi as his seat of power. By the 1700's, Osei Tutu had control over all the gold fields. With gold, the Asante could buy the best in modern weaponry from Europeans.

7.3. TRADE

Opoku Ware, Osei Tutu's successor, carried on expanding the kingdom, so that it covered most of Ghana. The kingdom combined a strong military tradition, with great agricultural productivity. Out of Asante spread a great trade network leading west across the Atlantic Ocean and North across the Sahara, dispatching gold, slaves, ivory and kola nuts.

7.4. SLAVERY

Besides gold, the slave trade was also a source of great wealth. The number of slaves exported annually at the end of the eighteenth century, from what was then called the Gold Coast, is estimated to have risen to as much as 6,000-7,000 a year.

Many of these slaves ended up crossing the Atlantic. Others worked in the gold fields. States that were subservient to the Asante kingdom often paid their tributes in the form of slaves.

Later in the 19th century slavery, along with human sacrifice, became a point of contention between the Asante and the British. The reluctance to give either practice up prompted the British to make the first moves towards annexation, beginning with the loss of the Asante southern territories in 1874.

7.5. IMPERIAL INTERVENTION

In 1896 the Asantehene (the king of the Asante) had to endure public humiliation at the hands of the bullying British Governor Maxwell. Unable to pay an enormous fine for failing to keep to the demands of the Treaty of Fomana of 1874, the encounter ended with the Asantehene and his entourage being sent, quite out of the blue, into exile.

7.6. GOLDEN STOOL

The power of Asantehene was invested in the Golden Stool. The Golden Stool represented the people, the soul of the nation and the good fortune of the nation. The importance of the stool was crudely grasped by the British at a time of aggressive imperial expansion.

Although the Asantehene was in exile, this was not enough to break the resistance of the people. In 1900, the British Governor of the Gold Coast, Sir Frederick Hodgson, demanded the Golden Stool in the most offensive manner possible at a meeting of Ashanti chiefs.

"Where is the Gold Stool? Why am I not sitting on the Golden Stool at this moment? I am the representative of the paramount power; why have you relegated me to this chair?"

Verbatim transcript of Sir Frederick Hodgson's address to Ashanti chiefs January 1900.

Sir Frederick then ordered soldiers to hunt out the Golden Stool.

"The white man asked the children where the Golden Stool was kept in Bare. The white man said he would beat the children if they did not bring their fathers from the bush. The children told the white man not to call their fathers. If he wanted to beat them, he should do it. The children knew the white men were coming for the Golden Stool. The children did not fear beating. The white soldiers began to bully and beat the children."

Eyewitness account of Kwadwo Afodo, quoted by Thomas J. Lewin in his book *Asante before the British: The Prempean Years 1875-1900*.

7.7. REVOLT

The search for the Golden Stool sparked off a full-scale military revolt, led by the Queen Mother (Yaa Asantewa). This culminated in the Governor being besieged in Kumase. The Queen Mother was only defeated by a British expeditionary force in July 1900. In 1901, Asante was annexed by the British.

7.8. EXILE AND RETURN

Prempeh spent most of his exile in the Seychelles, for some of the time in the company of the Kabaka (king) of Buganda and the Kabagarega (king) of Toro. After nearly 30 years in exile Prempeh I returned home to much excitement.

A GRAND RECEPTION

"Thousands of people, white and black, flocked down to the beach to welcome him. They were sorely disappointed when the news flashed through that Nana Prempeh was not to be seen by anyone, and that he was to land at 5:30 pm and proceed straight away to Kumasi by a special train.

Twenty minutes after the arrival of the train, a beautiful car brought Nana Prempeh into the midst of the assembly. It was difficult for us to realise even yet that he had arrived. A charming aristocratic-looking person in a black long suit with a fashionable black hat held up his hand to the cheers of the crowd. That noble figure was Nana Prempeh."

Extract from the Gold Coast Leader newspaper, 27 Dec 1924.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/4audio6a.ram

The monarchy was not restored until 1935. To this day the first thing new national leaders do on coming to power is pay their respects to the Asantehene.

8. IFE AND BENIN

Magnificent terracotta objects have been found in Nok, in Nigeria, dating back to a period some time between 500 BC and 500 AD. These are the earliest known sculptures on the continent, next to those of Ancient Egypt.

Later around 900 AD, the Igbo-Ukwo was making finely and intricately worked, bronze ceremonial objects. Against this background of creativity and craftsmanship, the Yoruba kingdoms of Benin and Ife sprang up between the 11th and 12th centuries.

8.1. ORIGINS

In Yoruba mythology, Ife was founded by a senior deity Oduduwa, acting on the order of the supreme deity Olorun (also known as Oludmare). Oduduwa became the first ruler, or Ooni, of Ife.

We know little of how these early Ooni exercised power or how their territory was administered, or precisely when the kingship started. We know that the landscape out of which Ife (and Benin) emerged consisted of a mixture of tropical forests and savannah land, affording very fertile soil and a high rainfall.

8.2. FOOD & ART

One of the keys to understanding the success and wealth of these kingdoms was the ability to provide a significant food surplus. This released labour, which could then be channelled into creating great works of art centred largely on celebrating kingship.

We can still see today an astounding range of objects made of bronze, brass, copper, wood, ceramic and ivory. The superb level of Ife craftsmanship expressed, using the "lost wax" method, is comparable with the finest examples of metal-work in Europe from Classical and Renaissance times.

VIEWS OF TWO HISTORIANS

"The art was largely motivated by the culture, the cultural practices of the people. They had to produce certain objects, which they used for certain ritual purposes."

Dr. Ohioma Pogoson, historian and lecturer at University of Ibadan, The African Institute, Nigeria.

"The art of Ife and Benin is so important because one gives birth to the other. The Ife art was the most ancient in the forest region of Nigeria, simply because the Ife civilisation goes as far back as 300 - 500 BC. Therefore, it had developed a lot of artefacts, which marks the history of Ife.

Ife later gave birth not only to Benin, but also to the art of Igbo, the Onitsha art, even going as far as to the hinterland of the Igbo, Igbo Ukwu."

Dr. Omotoso Eluyemi, director of National Museums and Monuments.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/4audio7a.ram

8.3. OYO

Ife was at one time considered the most senior Yoruba state. But by the 17th century it was eclipsed by Oyo. Lying further north, Oyo had the military advantage of a cavalry, and the right agricultural conditions to grow cereal. In the 18th century Oyo reached its peak, largely by profits of the slave trade. With the abolition of slavery its power waned. Today Ife continues to be regarded as the spiritual centre for all Yoruba, and the Ooni of Ife has considerable influence in the country.

8.4. BENIN

The kingship of Benin is closely related to Ife. The first king, or Oba, of Benin is traditionally supposed to be a descendant of Oduduwa, the founder of Ife. The most distinctive examples of Benin craftsmanship are the bronze plaques, which adorned the palace walls. As in the artwork of Ife, the craftsmen of Benin produced bronze and copper heads celebrating the power of the Oba.

The capital of Benin (not to be confused with the modern state of Benin, formerly Dahomey) was south west of Ife. One of the few early written accounts of this centre of power and trade is given by a Portuguese slave trader Joao Afonso Aveiro, who was astounded by what he described as the 'great city of Benin'. Over a hundred years later, a Dutch visitor compared it favourably with Amsterdam. Most of the art was looted by the British in 1897.

LOST WAX METHOD

"A precise model of the object to be made is constructed out of wax. A mould - usually made out of clay - is then formed round the wax model. This is left to harden. The whole thing is then heated. The wax melts away, hence the expression "lost wax."

This leaves a hollow space in the shape of the model. Molten metal is then poured into this space, filling it completely. When the metal has cooled down and hardened, the mould is broken, leaving the object in its metal form."

9. WEST AFRICAN KINGDOMS TIMELINE

- 200 BC: City of ancient Jenne thought to have been established.
- 500 BC: Earliest evidence of Nok culture found in Nigeria.
- 7th century: Zaghawa people settled next to Lake Chad. Thought to be the early founders of Kanem.
- 9th century: Fishing community form the nucleus of early Songhay.
- 10th century: First Hausa state thought to have been formed.
- 900 AD: Igbo-Ukwo bronze ceremonial objects start being made in Nigeria.
- 1st millennium AD: A number of clans of the Soninke people come together under Dinga Cisse, a leader with semi-divine status.
- Early 11th century: Sefawa dynasty displaces Zaghawa in Kanem. Yoruba kingdoms of Ife and Benin thought to have been founded.
- 1060's: Kanem converts to Islam.
- 1076: Almoravid campaign against ancient Ghana and enter its capital.
- 11th-12th century: Gold fields begin to be mined at Bure, out of the commercial reach of Ghana. New trade routes open up further east.
- 1210: Mai Dunama Dibalami becomes ruler of Kanem, leading it to the height of its power. The centre of government moves to Borno. The state becomes known as Kanem-Borno.

1230's:	The Ancient Empire of Ghana declines. Empire of Mali comes to prominence under Mansa (king) Sundiata Keita after he defeats Sosso ruler Sumanguru.
14th century:	Empire of Mali reaches its peak. Queen Amina of Zazzau expands the Zaria emirate through a series of wars.
1310's:	Mansa Abubakar II sets out to cross the Atlantic Ocean and is never seen again. Mansa Musa succeeds him as ruler.
1324:	Mansa Musa of Mali makes his magnificent pilgrimage to Mecca.
1464:	King Sunni Ali becomes leader of Songhay and defeats Mali.
1493:	Mande Muslim general, Askia Muhammad, seizes power and expands Songhay.
1510:	Moroccan writer Leo Africanus visits Gao, the capital of Songhay.
1513:	Leo Africanus visits Timbuktu.
1591:	Moroccan army defeats Songhay.
1670's:	Osei Tutu defeats Denkyira and establishes Asante empire.
17th century:	Ife eclipsed by expanding Oyo kingdom.
18th century:	Kanem-Borno goes into decline.
1804:	Usman dan Fodio launches Jihad in northern Nigeria.
1809:	Sokoto caliphate established.
1874:	Asante lose territory to the British under Treaty of Fomana.
1881:	Prempeh I becomes Asantehene (King of the Asante).
1896:	Prempeh I sent into exile by British.
1897:	British soldiers loot city of Benin taking valuable bronzes and other objects.
1900:	Yaa Asantewa (Asante Queen Mother) leads a revolt against the British.
1901:	Asante annexed by the British.
1924:	Prempeh I returns from exile to Kumasi.
1935:	The Asante monarchy restored.

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Ibn Battuta in Black Africa. Edited by S. Hamdun and N. King. Markus Wiener.
Precolonial Black Africa. By C.A. Diop. Lawrence Hill.

11. USEFUL LINKS

The BBC is not responsible for the content of external Internet sites

Kingdoms of Gold

www.castilleja.org/academics/history/africaweb/kingdoms.html

Castilleja School, California.

African Empires

www.cocc.edu/cagatacci/classes/hum211/timelines/htimeline2.htm

Site produced by Central Oregon Community College.

Civilisations in Africa: Ghana

www.wsu.edu:8080/%7Edee/CIVAFRCA/GHANA.HTM

By Richard Hooker, World Civilisations site.

Mali Interactive

www.ruf.rice.edu/%Eanath/arch/mali-interactive

Website by Rice University.

The Dogon Blacksmiths

<http://archeo.unige.ch/inagina/dogon.gb.html>

Laboratory of Prehistory and Ethnoarchaeology, Universite de Geneve.

Background to Sundiata Keita

<http://courses.wcupa.edu/jones/his311/notes/sundiata.htm#society>

West Chester University Department of History.

Empires of Mali and Ghana

www.pbs.org/wonders/fr_wn.htm

PBS

Imperial Africa

www.geocities.com/cjmasonm/afempire.html

Black Studies Library Website, Ohio State University Libraries.

Kanem-Borno

www.wsu.edu:8000/%7Edee/CIVAFRCA/KANEM.HTM

World Civilisations site. By Richard Hooker.

Advent of Islam to West Africa

<http://web-dubois.fas.harvard.edu/dubois/baobab/narratives/Islam/WestTrade.html>

Baobab Project, W.E.B. DuBois Institute.

Further reading:

Book: "Background to the epic of Sundiata Keita" by James A. Jones, Ph.D. West Chester University Department of History, Copyright 1998, All Rights Reserved
Source: D. T. Niane, SUNDIATA, AN EPIC OF OLD MALI, translated by G. D. Pickett (Harlow, England: Longman Drumbeat, 1982), 96pp.
Topics: **Geography, Religion, Society and Politics**
<http://courses.wcupa.edu/jones/his311/notes/#society>

12. ADDITIONAL OVERVIEW ABOUT SUNDIATA

12.1. GEOGRAPHY

The "Bright Country": The region is only a few degrees north of the equator, so it gets strong sunlight all year. It is also very dry, so there is little cloud cover to diminish the sunlight. The soil is generally fairly light in color--yellow and red predominate--adding to the sensation of intense light.

Brightness is also a reference to a religious belief that the physical and spiritual worlds are connected through light. The "Bright Country" is the place where that connection occurs, or in other words, this region is the place where the physical world is in closest contact with the spiritual world.

The Niger River: This is the major river in the region and at 2548 miles in length, the third longest in Africa. It flows from the Futa Djalon mountains northeast to the edge of the Sahara Desert at Timbuktu, then curves southeast and flows to the Atlantic in modern Nigeria. It is divided into three navigable stretches by two sets of rapids, one of which is located near Koulikoro (mentioned in the epic of Sundiata). The navigable stretch downstream (northeast) from Koulikoro is known locally as "Djoliba," and that name appears frequently in the epic.

The Beledugu Plateau: This is a plateau of rolling hills at the northernmost area where rainfall farming is possible in the region. As a result, it is home to widely scattered villages of farmers, plus semi-nomadic groups of pastoralists. During the dry season, which can be as long as ten months in this area, both groups compete for the available water which is usually drawn from wells.

The Futa Djalon: This is a mountain range located west of the Mali that is the source of several major rivers including the Niger, Senegal and Gambia. It is much wetter and cooler than the "Bright Country" surrounding the Niger River Valley, and its inhabitants had much less contact with pastoralists throughout history. This region is the source of gold which figured so prominently in the Sahara Desert trade and in the stories of Mansa Musa's pilgrimage to Mecca in 1324-1326. The "Futanke," as they are known, did not form major empires of their own, but were occasionally incorporated (after much difficulty) into empires that developed in the Niger River Valley.

The Sahara Desert: This is the large dry region that forms a barrier between the Niger Valley and the northern parts of Africa. It is the source of salt, an important, life-giving substance that provided one of the staple commodities of trade. It is also the home to nomads who challenged the northernmost settlements of farmers, although the nomads were never numerous enough to directly attack strong empires. More often, the nomads and farmers traded with each other.

12.2. RELIGION

Worldview: According to one author, "The Bambara . . . make of man a universe, and of the universe a system in which there is a place and a role for everything, from the stars to the objects of daily use, from the soul to the detritus. . ." In other words, the Bambara (a subgroup of the Malinke), the physical and spiritual worlds are all part of one large, coherent universe.

The Creator: In Bambara religion, the creator of all things is named Faro. Faro is all-powerful, abstract, and too distant to humans to know. Faro presides over a universe that contains all of the physical world, plus all of the spiritual powers and beings.

All objects are invested with an inherent spiritual force called nyama. Nyama animates all living beings, including plants and animals, and controls the powers of nature itself, governing crop production and rainfall.

The Malinke people organize the practice of their religion within "secret societies." The most powerful of these societies is called Komo, and its membership is composed of all males except sorcerers. Other secret societies are devoted to civic morality and the relations between families, protection against sorcerers, inducing rain to produce rich harvests, and organizing the lives of boys prior to their initiation.

The Ancestors: The creator made the first humans out of mud and wood, and "breathed" the life force (nyama) into the resulting figures. As those humans produced offspring, became old and died, they did not disappear. Instead, they moved closer to the creator and became ancestors. The process is repeated by everyone who dies, and consequently death is viewed as a positive transition in the direction of the creator of all things.

Even more importantly, living humans appeal to the ancestors to intercede for them with the creator or to exercise power on their behalf. Consequently, a major component of religion involves ritual communication with ancestors.

The Elders: If ancestors are the intermediaries with the creator, then elders are the living human beings who are closest to the ancestors. They are also the humans with the longest memories and most experience, which earns them respect and authority.

Initiation: This is the process by which a human child becomes a full adult member of the Komo society. It involves a training period to learn the secrets of religion, and a ceremony to signify entry into adulthood. Children participate in initiation with other members of their age-class, and form bonds that remain influential in their lives for the rest of their lives. In the epic, Sundiata remains close to several members of his age-class (half-brother Manding Bory, cousin Siara Kouman Konate, friends Fran Kamara and Kamandjan) and they aid him in the final battles against King Soumaoro Kante of Sosso.

Sorcerers: These are living humans who possess special knowledge that allows them to use spiritual powers normally reserved to the ancestors. There are good sorcerers and bad sorcerers.

Islam: In the epic of Sundiata, his family lineage is traced back to an individual named Bilali who was one of the original followers of Muhammed, the founder of Islam (see "The First Kings of Mali"). Whether it was true or not, this detail shows that by the time of Sundiata, Islam was firmly established in the area.

Islam first reached West Africa south of the Sahara in the ninth century AD thanks to the arrival of traders from the north. Traders found Islam useful because it provided them with a common language and gave them access to assistance from other Muslims wherever they went. However, African leaders were slow to convert to Islam because conversion threatened to undermine the traditional religion on which their leadership was based.

Historians believe that Sundiata was not a devout Muslim, and that his descendants were the ones who made Islam the official religion of the nobility. One descendant, Mansa Musa, made a famous pilgrimage to Mecca in the 14th century, and Islam was the official religion of the empire that succeeded Mali (the Songhay Empire). Nevertheless, traditional Malinke religion survived the arrival of Mali and is still practiced in the region today.

12.3. SOCIETY

Farmers: The farmers are the largest portion of Malinke society. They work the land and provide the economic basis for the rest of society. They also provide the source of the Malinke nobility.

Pastoralists: The area is also home to groups of semi-nomadic non-Malinke pastoralists who supported themselves by herding animals. During periods when the farmers were united, they created kingdoms and empires that protected them from competition with the pastoralists, but during periods of farmer disunity, the pastoralists were often able to gain control over villages of farmers and require them to provide food and other goods.

Castes: Malinke society also contains several hereditary castes whose position in society is the matter of some controversy. While oral traditions often refer to them as inferior to farmers, they also contain many examples where caste members exercised power over the rest of their society. For instance, the head of the Komo society (devoted to Faro) is a member of the caste of blacksmiths. The smiths, who possess the secret knowledge of metal-working, are generally considered to be the most powerful caste. Other important castes include the griots (discussed below), leatherworkers, pottery makers, and fishermen.

Gender roles: Within Malinke society, men and women have very precisely defined roles. For instance, women are responsible for raising the children, providing the sauce for the standard meal, and in a farming family, tending to the livestock. Men are responsible for providing the millet used in the meal, maintaining the structure of the house, and handling relations with other families.

Malinke society is polygamous, so children are identified by their mother, since many children can have the same father, but only immediate siblings have the same mother.

In addition to their family responsibilities, women in royal families had a diplomatic role to play by marrying into the families of other leaders.

The Role of the Family: The family is the essential element of Malinke society. It produces new humans, it is led by elders, and it provides a means to connect every individual to the group as a whole. Individuals are identified by the names of their family (not by their profession or place of birth).

For farmers, membership in a family was essential for obtaining access to land for farming, since there was no private ownership of land. Instead, land belonged to Faro and was administered by Faro's representatives on earth (the elders) after consulting with Faro's messengers (the ancestors). The elders then distributed land to the members of their families for use.

Slaves: At the time of Sundiata, slaves were present in Malinke society. Most often, they were war captives who could not be ransomed back to their own people, but people could also be enslaved by someone to whom they owed wealth or service, or because they lost all of the rest of their family through some kind of tragedy. The conditions of slavery varied, but they had little in common with plantation slavery of American history, which treated individuals as economic units of production. Slavery in Malinke society was most often a means to connect individuals to a family where no biological or marriage connection existed. The conditions could still be harsh, but as a "member" of a family, the slave had some rights.

12.4. POLITICS

The fall of Ghana: In the area where Sundiata founded his empire, an earlier empire existed. The Ghana Empire was founded around 800AD to the north, at the southern edge of the Sahara Desert, with a capital at the important desert trading town of Kumbi-Saleh. Ghana began to fall apart in the 11th century following an invasion by the Muslim Almoravids from the north. About the same time, the Sosso empire began to develop further to the south in the Beledugu Plateau.

During the 12th century, Fulbe pastoralists managed to dominate the Malinke farming villages. Historians view the formation of Sundiata's empire (as well as the Sosso empire) as the act of farmers who united to stop pastoral raids for tribute.

Political centers: Farmers lived in villages that were inhabited by members of a few extended families. The elders of the families provided leadership in the village and the elder of the oldest family served as the head of the village. Keep in mind that families intermarried, so it is more accurate to imagine a village inhabited by people who are members of an immediate family and who are distantly related to everyone else in the village.

Threats to the village came from outsiders, most often nomadic pastoralists who entered the area to find food and water for their animals. This was most likely to occur during the dry season, when water supplies were scarce everywhere. Since this was also the period when farmers were not engaged in agriculture, the dry season was the most likely season for war.

Following the decline of the Ghana Empire in the 11th century, pastoralists moved into the area and began to compete with farmers. By the end of the 12th century, farming villages began to unite against the pastoralists and create new kingdoms. As described in the epic of Sundiata, these kingdoms were based on walled towns headed by a royal family. They were surrounded by supporting villages whose leaders provided taxes to the king in the form of gifts and service, in exchange for protection, justice, and access to the king's religious powers.

Tributary relationships: Villages formed larger political unions through the use of tributary relationships symbolized by gift-giving (tribute). This was an extension of the family relationships that were familiar to everyone in Malinke society--parents provided presents to their children on special occasions like initiation and marriage, and in return, the children provided their parents with respect and work.

Kings and councils: Hereditary kings ruled communities of farmers, but under normal circumstances, their power is mitigated by the acts of a council of elders, composed of respected members of the most important families. In this way, kings are restrained from becoming despots, and every individual in society is represented by an elder family member in the councils of power. The situation in Sosso (described in the epic) was not typical, because the King (Soumaoro Kant,) used his sorcerer's power to rule unimpeded by anyone else.

The role of the griot: Sundiata's griot, Balla Fasseke, is a pivotal figure in the story. Griots are professional historians who serve a ruler in much the same way that modern rulers are served by written constitutions, legal staff, and archival staffs. Griots recall what earlier leaders have done to advise current leaders on how to handle problems.

Griots also serve as orators who relay the words of the kings to the rest of the population, much as ancestors serve as intermediaries between Faro and living humans. One author described the relationship between griots and nobles in these terms: the griot has the power to speak, and the noble has the power to act. Since wider action requires the communication of the noble's will, the griot plays a crucial role in motivating an entire population to coordinated effort.

Africa is a continent of magnificent treasures and cultures -- from the breathtaking stone architecture of 1,000-year-old ruins in South Africa to an advanced 16th century international university in Timbuktu. However, for centuries, many of these African wonders have been hidden from the world, lost to the ravages of time, nature and repressive governments. Explore the richness of these African Wonders by selecting an episode below, or by selecting a specific Wonder from the map at right.

13. USEFUL LINKS

13. 1. Black Kingdoms of the Nile

www.pbs.org/wonders/Wonders/Episodes/Epi1/1_wondr1.htm

www.pbs.org/wonders/Wonders/Episodes/Epi1/1_wondr2.htm

www.pbs.org/wonders/Wonders/Episodes/Epi1/1_wondr3.htm

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www.pbs.org/wonders/Wonders/Episodes/Epi1/1_wondr5.htm

13.2. The Swahili Coast

www.pbs.org/wonders/Wonders/Episodes/Epi2/2_wondr1.htm

www.pbs.org/wonders/Wonders/Episodes/Epi2/2_wondr2.htm

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13.3. Slave Kingdoms

www.pbs.org/wonders/Wonders/Episodes/Epi3/3_wondr1.htm

www.pbs.org/wonders/Wonders/Episodes/Epi3/3_wondr2.htm

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13.4. The Holy Land

www.pbs.org/wonders/Wonders/Episodes/Epi4/4_wondr1.htm

www.pbs.org/wonders/Wonders/Episodes/Epi4/4_wondr2.htm

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www.pbs.org/wonders/Wonders/Episodes/Epi4/4_wondr7.htm

13.5. Road to Timbuktu

www.pbs.org/wonders/Wonders/Episodes/Epi5/5_wondr1.htm

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www.pbs.org/wonders/Wonders/Episodes/Epi5/5_wondr7.htm

13.6. Lost Cities of the South

www.pbs.org/wonders/Wonders/Episodes/Epi6/6_wondr1.htm

www.pbs.org/wonders/Wonders/Episodes/Epi6/6_wondr2.htm

www.pbs.org/wonders/Wonders/Episodes/Epi6/6_wondr3.htm

www.pbs.org/wonders/Wonders/Episodes/Epi6/6_wondr4.htm

13.7. The Africa & the African Diaspora Web Site

www.geocities.com/cjmasonm/Africa/BSLIndex.html

Formerly:

<http://www.geocities.com/cjmasonm/BSLIndex.html>

or

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Olympus/7566/Africa/BSLIndex.html>

Formerly:

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Olympus/7566/BSLIndex.html>

V. THE SWAHILI

1. INTRODUCTION

The Swahili is the name given to the coastal people who historically could be found as far North as Mogadishu (Somalia) and as far south as the Rovuma River (Mozambique). They share a common language, widely spoken by non-Swahilis, called Ki-Swahili, and enjoy a city-based fusion of African and Arab culture.

"Men of greatest stature, who are pirates, inhabit the whole coast and at each place have set up chiefs."

From *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, 100 AD.

The contact between the East African coast and Arabia, Persia and even China, goes back long before Islam came in the 8th century. Greeks and Romans called the area Azania. The Arabs talk about the Land of Zanj. Arguably coastal Africans were closer to the people of Arabia and the Gulf of Persia than to African societies in the central interior.

"From of old this country has not been subject to any foreign power. In fighting they use elephant tusks, ribs and wild cattle's horns as spears, and they have corselets and bows and arrows. They have twenty myriads of foot-soldiers. The Arabs are continually making raids on them."

From *Compendium of Knowledge*, by Tuan Ch'eng-shih, 8th century.

The Coast of East Africa has had a long history of trade, involving constant exchanges of ideas, style and commodities for well over two thousand years. Marriage between women of Africa and men of the Middle East created and cemented a rich Swahili culture, fusing urban and agricultural communities, rich in architecture, textiles, and food, as well as purchasing power.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/5audio0.ram

2. EARLY INHABITANTS

"From of old this country has not been subject to any foreign power. In fighting they use elephant's tusks, ribs and wild cattle's horns as spears, and they have corselets and bows and arrows. They have twenty myriads of foot-soldiers. The Arabs are continually making raids on them."

From *Compendium of Knowledge* by the Chinese scholar, Tuan Ch'eng-shih, 8th century.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/5audio1a.ram

2.1. THE MYTH OF ARAB DOMINATION

Until quite recently, the history of the East Coast of Africa has been portrayed - by Europeans and Arabs alike - as one of Muslim-Arab domination, with the African people and rulers playing a passive role in the process. Some 19th century and early 20th century British writers were contemptuous of a culture they regarded as 'half-caste' or 'mongrel'.

But oral and archaeological evidence suggests that Swahili society was both dynamic and coherent. The relationship between people on the African main land on the one hand, and those from Arabia and Persia on the other, was in fact, one of mutual dependence and benefit. Therefore it does not make sense to talk of the Arabs 'appearing' on the East African coast and 'taking over' African societies.

2.2. EARLY SEAFARERS ACCOUNTS: THE PERIPLUS

The earliest description of the East Coast of Africa was written in the 2nd century AD. It comes from a sailor's guide, probably compiled in Alexandria (modern Egypt) in 100 AD by a Greek trader. It's called the [Periplus of the Erythraean Sea](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/5generic5.shtml#1), (www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/5generic5.shtml#1) and it vividly shows that routes along the coast of East Africa were, at the time of writing, well-sailed and yielding considerable trade. The tone of this document conveys respect for the people of the coast.

"Two days' sail beyond the island lies the last mainland market town of Azania, which is called Rhapta, a name derived from the small sewn boats the people use. Here there is much ivory and tortoiseshell. Men of the greatest stature, who are pirates, inhabit the whole coast and at each place have set up chiefs."

The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea.

The principal town mentioned in the Periplus is Rhapta, believed by some to have been near Zanzibar and Dar Es Salaam, while recent scholarship has pointed to it being closer to the island of Lamu. Coins from Northern Africa and Persia, dating back to the 3rd century AD, have been found in Zanzibar and Northern Tanzania, suggesting a strong tradition of trade between the Mediterranean world and African world.

2.3. COASTAL SETTLEMENT

Oral histories of the Swahili tend to start with the arrival of Muslims from either Arabia or the Persian Gulf. Archaeological evidence, in what is now southern Somalia, suggests that a mosque was built in the 8th century near Lamu. The absorption of Arabs into African coastal society seems to have been largely achieved without friction, with the odd exception of settlements like Kua.

Learn more about Dialogue & Resistance.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/5chapter5.shtml

2.4. PERSIAN CONTACT

There is also another tradition, a very strong one, that the first Muslims came from Shiraz in Persia - they were known as Shirazis.

"Then came Sultan Ali bin Selimani the Shirazi, that is, the Persian. He came with his ships, and brought his goods and his children. One child was called Fatima the daughter of Sultan Ali. We do not know the names of the other children. They came with Musa bin Amrani the Beduin.

They disembarked at Kilwa, that is to say, they went to the headman of the country, the Elder Mrimba, and asked for a place in which to settle at Kisiwani. This they obtained. And they gave Mrimba presents of trade goods and beads. Sultan Ali married Mrimba's daughter. He lived on good terms with the people."

Excerpt from *The Ancient History of Kilwa Kisiwani*. Taken from *East African Coast, Select Documents*.

3. COASTAL TRADE

3.1. TRADE WINDS

The climate of the Indian Ocean dictated the pattern of trade between Africa and the near East. Traders from the near East could sail to the East Coast anytime between November and February when the winds blew West. There was then a small window of commercial opportunity between March and April. By April, the winds would start blowing East and the traders would depart once again.

3.2. IMPORTS AND EXPORTS

There is little information about patterns of trade off the East Coast of Africa before the advent of Islam. One of the earliest written sources is a first century manual for travelers, the [Periplus](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/5generic5.shtml#1) (www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/5generic5.shtml#1) of the Erythraean Sea.

Commodities referred to in the Periplus include, ivory, rhino horn, tortoise shell and coconut oil.

Find out more about Swahili Early Inhabitants

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/5chapter1.shtml

Ivory was a hugely sought after product. It was strong, easy to carve and both functional and decorative. Ivory could be regarded as the plastic of its day. After the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BC and the division of his empire into three, we know there was an increase in ivory imports from Africa. This was because trade with India, the other main source of ivory, became subject to higher tariffs.

The African coast of the Red Sea (in the North East) became staked out for delivery and consignment of elephant tusks. Gold from southern Africa was also much sought after in the Near East and in North Africa. Coins from Northern Africa and Persia, dating back to the 3rd century AD have been found in Zanzibar and Northern Tanzania, suggesting a strong tradition of trade between the Mediterranean world and the African world.

3.3. TEXTILES

Trade routes from East Africa went North as well as East. For example, the people of the Empire of Aksum traded with the people of the East Coast for gold. There is a vivid description of this in the 6th century account of the Greek merchant, Cosmas Indicopleustes.

"They take with them to the mining district oxen, lumps of slate, and iron, and when they reach its neighbourhood they make a halt at a certain spot and form an encampment, which they fence round with a great hedge of thorn.

Within this they live, and having slaughtered the oxen, cut them in pieces, and lay the pieces on the top of the thorns, along with the lumps of salt and the iron.

Then come the natives bringing gold in nuggets like peas, called tancharas, and lay one or two or more of these upon what pleases them - the pieces of flesh or the salt or the iron, and then they retire to some distance off.

Then the owner of the meat approaches and if he is satisfied he takes the gold away, and upon seeing this its owner comes and takes the flesh or the salt or the iron."

Cosmas Indicopleustes in East African Coast, Select Documents.

Among the expensive textiles imported, such as embroidered silks, blue cotton cloth was hugely prized. Blue dye was unknown in East Africa and the colour was regarded as having special powers. Blue cloth was unpicked and the prized strands were woven into white cloth.

3.4. SLAVES

In the 19th century, the Sultans of the East Coast made themselves immensely rich through buying and selling slaves, playing off the French against the Portuguese.

From 1834, the Portuguese were keen buyers of slaves after the Atlantic slave trade was closed down by the British.

One of the key traders with whom they did business was the Swahili traveler and trader Tippu Tip. He made himself a hugely rich and influential man in the region. A ruthless and commercially clever man, he specialised in long and dangerous treks into the interior to buy and capture slaves to sell at the coast, and had the monopoly of trade across an enormous territory stretching back from the coast. The Zanzibar slave market was only closed down in 1873.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/5audio2a.ram

4. GARDEN CITIES: RISE AND FALL

4.1. ARCHITECTURE

Swahili mosques and tombs before the 18th century had a style quite unique to the Swahili and independent of Arabia. Doors of houses were, and still are, ornately carved. There was a very large population of craftsmen, working in wood, stone and metal. The ruling classes (the Sultan, his family, and government officials) lived in large houses, some several stories high. Their plates were porcelain and came from China.

4.2. KILWA

One of the greatest cities was **Kilwa**. Situated on an island very close to the mainland, Kilwa had by the 13th century broken the hold that Mogadishu had on the gold trade. By the 14th century it was the most powerful city on the coast. The Moroccan scholar and writer, Ibn Battuta, describes the Sultan of Kilwa being both gracious and kind. He also describes him making regular raids into the interior and looting the settlements of people there. Kilwa is now in ruins.

4.3. KILWA THROUGH THE AGES

Early Times

"Of the original people who built Kilwa Kisiwani, the first were of the Mtakata tribe, the second the people of Jasi from the Mranga tribe. Then came Mrimba and his people. This Mrimba was of the Machinga tribe and he settled at Kisiwani." Oral tradition.

16th Century

"The city comes down to the shore, and is entirely surrounded by a wall and towers, within which there are maybe 12,000 inhabitants. The country all round is very luxurious with many trees and gardens of all sorts of vegetables, citrons, lemons, and the best sweet oranges that were ever seen... The streets of the city are very narrow, as the houses are very high, of three and four stories, and one can run along the tops of them upon the terraces... and in the port there were many ships. A moor ruled over this city, who did not possess more country than the city itself."

Gaspar Correa describing Vasco da Gama's arrival in Kilwa.

17th Century

"The woods are full of orange, lemon, citron, palm trees and of a large variety of good fruit trees. The islands grow millet, rice, and have large groves of sugarcane, but the islanders do not know what to do with it."

Franciscan friar, Gaspar de Santo Berndino account on visiting in 1606.

18th Century

"We the King of Kilwa, Sultan Hasan son of Sultan Ibrahim son of Sultan Yusuf the Shirazi of Kilwa, give our word to M. Morice, a French National, that we will give him a thousand slaves annually at twenty piastres each and that he shall give the King a present of two piastres for each slaves. No other but he shall be allowed to trade for slaves..."

Slave treaty between French trader and Sultan of Kilwa, dated 1776.

19th Century

"the town of Quiloa [Kilwa], [was] once a place of great importance, and the capital of an extensive kingdom, but is now a petty village. The greatness of Quiloa...was irrecoverably gone. The very touch of the Portuguese was death. It drooped never to recover..."

Like other cities then on this coast, said to be flourishing and populous, it sunk from civilization, wealth and power into insignificance, poverty and barbarism."

James Prior, surgeon on the frigate Nisus, visiting Kilwa as part of a hydrographical survey of the western Indian Ocean.

All excerpts from East African Coast, Selected Documents.

4.4. DESTRUCTION

The Portuguese came on the scene in 1498 when they sailed round the southern tip of Africa and went north up the East African coast. Just five years later, they began a relentless campaign to subjugate local rulers and take control of the trade in gold, textiles, spices and ivory. They did an immense amount of damage to some of these cities, pounding them with their guns to force their Sultans to give tributes to the King of Portugal. The first place to be attacked was Zanzibar in 1503; two years later Kilwa and Mombasa were attacked and looted.

"Then everyone started to plunder the town and to search the houses, forcing open the doors with axes and iron bars...A large quantity of rich silk and gold embroidered clothes was seized, and carpets also; one of these was without equal for beauty, was sent to the King of Portugal together with many other valuables."

Eye witness account of the sack of Mombasa by Francisco d'Almeida and Hans Mayr. Taken from East African, Coast, Selected Documents.

Mombasa suffered the greatest damage as its Sultan refused to give in to the Portuguese. In 1599, the Portuguese completed their largest fortress in Mombasa, Fort Jesus, which still stands today.

5. GARDEN CITIES: GOOD LIVING

The Swahili coast was dotted about with around 40 cities, small to large in size, starting in the North with Mogadishu (which is now in the capital of Somalia) and ranging south to Sofala (in modern Mozambique). Each city was well supplied with fruit and vegetables from the cultivated areas within and without the city boundaries.

The Moroccan scholar and traveler Ibn Battuta visited the coast in 1331. He described in detail the splendour of the Sultan parading through Mogadishu.

"All the people walked barefoot, and there were raised over his head four canopies of coloured silk and on the top of each canopy was the figure of a bird in gold. His clothes that day were a robe of green Jerusalem stuff and underneath it fine loose robes of Egypt. He was dressed with wraps of silk and turbaned with a large turban. Before him drums and trumpets and pipes were played..."

From Ibn Battuta in Black Africa, by Said Hamdun and Noel King.

Ibn Battuta also remarks on the rich variety of food along the coast, noting how fat the people of Mogadishu were. He himself ate handsomely there, taking chicken, meat and fish and vegetables, with side dishes of bananas in milk and garnishes of pickled lemons, chillies and mangoes.

On two separate occasions, the Portuguese traveler **Vasco da Gama** stopped along the coast and received food for his crew. From the King of Mombasa in 1498, he obtained oranges, lemons and sugar cane, along with a sheep. In 1499, from the gardens of Malindi, he received oranges again for his scurvy-ridden crew. But it was not until 1820 that intensive agricultural cultivation was practised. It was then that Sultan Seyyid Said set up large clove plantations in Zanzibar, using slave labour.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/5audio2.ram

6. DIALOGUE AND RESISTANCE

6.1. EARLY ALLIANCES

The Arabs asserted themselves first on the East Coast as traders and were in the main gladly met by people on the Coast and from the interior. Similarly, several waves of migration from Persia, notably in the 11th century, resulted in a fusion of culture and religion. But coastal settlements were always open to attack from people of the interior. Sometimes these attacks had been provoked by Swahili, like the Sultan of **Kilwa**, who under the banner of Holy War or jihad launched raids in search of cattle or slaves. Sometimes the settlement of Arabs led to friction as this oral history recounts:

"The origin of Kua was that foreign Arabs came, and that when they arrived they came to the people who owned the town of Kua. These people were Shirazi, who had come long ago from Persia, and the Arabs asked for a place to build in; and they were given a site.

The Arabs were given the north part of the first town here, which was called Mkokotoni. The Shirazi said to the Arabs: Let us join together, that is you build here, and we shall be here, and we shall be neighbours together...

After a short time, when the Arabs had made themselves masters, they began to act wrongly, and first of all they cut off the hand of the chief of the builder so that he should not go elsewhere. The builder found himself in abject poverty and thought with bitter resentment of his work.

Then the Arabs built a small prison cell under the Royal Palace and barred it up. Here the people suffered much trouble."

History of Kua recited by Shaikh Mwinchande bin Juma, formerly Jumbe of Kua, to G.S.P. Freeman-Grenville in 1955.

6.2. PORTUGUESE COERCION

From the 15th century onwards, people on the East African coast were under commercial and political pressure from the Portuguese, as well as traders and rulers from the East. Many Coastal kingdoms were bullied by the Portuguese into paying regular tribute to the Portuguese crown and giving trading concessions.

The King of Malindi submitted to the Portuguese early on; the King of Mombasa by contrast, refused, and Mombasa was turned into a fortified city under Portuguese control in 1599, when they built Fort Jesus.

In 1631 there was further rebellion against the Portuguese; the catholic priest, Father Prior, and the Chaplain of Fort Jesus were killed on command of the Sultan of Mombasa for refusing to become Muslims.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/5audio1.ram

6.3. SHIFTING ALLIANCES

The East Coast of Africa was a complicated patchwork of power bases and alliances. Enemies could become friends overnight, concessions and compromises were made according to the rough and violent circumstances of the day.

For example, the Zimba people from the interior were regarded by the Portuguese priest Father Joao dos Santos in the 16th century with terror - he even referred to them as cannibals. He happily however described their alliance with the Portuguese in order to beat the Turks. This incident led the Portuguese to behead the Sultan of Lamu ostensibly for helping the Turks.

In the 18th century the French surgeon, M. Morice became a dear and honoured friend of the Sultan of Kilwa who gave him land and exclusive buying rights in the slave trade.

6.4. OMANI CONTROL

From the 1780's the Sultans of Oman reasserted their control over the east coast, moving their capital to Zanzibar in 1840. The Omanis were opposed by the Swahili rulers of the mainland and Zanzibar.

6.5. A SWAHILI VIEW OF ARAB-SWAHILI RELATIONS IN THE 19TH CENTURY

"Few of us cared much about going to Oman, as the proud Omani ladies rather regarded Zanzibar women as uncivilised creatures...all the members of our family born in Oman thought themselves much better and of higher rank than any of their African relations. In their opinion we were somewhat like negroes...and our speaking any other language but Arabic, i.e. Kiswahili, was the greatest proof of barbarity in their eyes."

Princess Salme, one of the daughters of Sultan Seyyid Said, quoted by Abdul Sheriff in *Slaves, Spices and Ivory in Zanzibar*.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/5audio5.ram

6.6. GERMAN INTERESTS

In the 19th century, the east coast became the object of German imperial ambition. In 1885 Germany declared a protectorate over the mainland of Tanganyika, contracting out administration to a commercial company. A series of rebellions ensued throughout the next decade. As part of the same European 'scramble' for Africa, Britain declared Zanzibar a Protectorate seeking to rule indirectly through the Omani Arabs. Zanzibar's relationship with the mainland, on the one hand, and Arabia and Persia on the other, remained complex. The ties with the Persian Gulf and Arabia were finally severed in the 1964 revolution, resulting in the death and mass exodus of most of the old Arab ruling class.

7. THE SWAHILI TIMELINE

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| 100: | First written eye witness account of East African Coast compiled. |
| 570: | Birth of Mohammed. |
| 610: | Mohammed called to be prophet. |
| 622: AH - Anno Hegira: | year zero in Muslim calendar, dating from flight of the Prophet Mohammed from Mecca to Medina. |
| 632: | Death of Prophet Mohammed. |

639:	Muslim invasion of Egypt under Amr Ibn al-As challenging Roman Byzantine rule.
750:	Governing centre of Muslims moves from Mecca to Baghdad.
8th Century:	First Muslims on East Coast of Africa.
10th Century:	Persian sailor Buzurg ibn Shahriyar of Rahmhormuz writes his collection of sailors' tales.
1009:	Destruction of Church of Holy Sepulchre Jerusalem.
1062:	Famine in North Africa. Fatimid dynasty in decline.
1086:	Almoravid Muslims invade and conquer southern Spain.
Early 14th Century:	Collapse of Mongol Empire.
1317:	Dongola Cathedral converted to Mosque.
1324:	Mansa Musa Emperor of Mali begins magnificent pilgrimage.
1348:	Black Death reaches Maghreb from Sicily and kills over quarter of population of North Africa.
1453:	Ottoman Turks take Constantinople.
1543:	Ethiopians defeat Muslim army of Kingdom of Adal with help of Portuguese.
1599:	Fort Jesus built by Portuguese.

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9. USEFUL LINKS

The BBC is not responsible for the content of external Internet sites

Periplus of the Erythraean Sea

www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/periplus.html

Travel and Trade in the Indian Ocean by a Merchant of the First Century. Taken from Ancient History Sourcebook site, edited by Paul Halsall.

Kilwa Kisiwani port city

<http://archaeology.about.com/science/archaeology/library/weekly/aa102200a.htm>

Published by About.com.

Vasco da Gama

www.ucalgary.ca/HIST/tutor/eurvoya/vasco.html

Department of History, University of Calgary.

Swahili language lesson

<http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/plc/kiswahili/>

Provided by African Studies Center, University of Pennsylvania.

Swahili Service

www.bbc.co.uk/swahili/

BBC World Service.

The Swahili of Eastern Africa

www.grmi.org/%7Ejhanna/obj49.htm

Christian Caleb Project.

Fort Jesus Museum in Mombasa

www.museums.or.ke/backgrounds/fort.htm

National Museums of Kenya site.

Swahili architectural heritage

www.unesco.org/whc/exhibits/afr_rev/africa-k.htm

Text by George H.O.Abungu. Part of Africa Revisited site, UNESCO World Heritage Centre.

Swahili Gallery

www.time.com/time/europe/timetrails/selassie

Part of National Museums of Kenya website.

Swahili town of Gede

www.museums.or.ke/reggede.html

Featured in the Gede Museum. Part of National Museums of Kenya website.

Cosmas Indicopleustes

<http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/%7Eawiesner/cosmas.html>

By Andrew James Wiesner. University of Pennsylvania.

VI. TRADITIONAL RELIGIONS

1. INTRODUCTION

Religion has always been central to people's lives in Africa. Although the majority of Africans are now Muslim or Christian, traditional religions have endured and still play a big role. Religion runs like a thread through daily life, marked by prayers of gratitude in times of plenty and prayers of supplication in times of need. Religion confirms identity on the individual and the group.

There are a huge number of different religious practices on the continent. They share some common features: a belief in one God above a host of lesser gods or semi-divine figures; a belief in ancestral spirits; the idea of sacrifice, often involving the death of a living thing, to ensure divine protection and generosity; the need to undergo rites of passage to move from childhood to adulthood, from life to death.

In the history of the continent, religion has had a powerful effect on political change: spirit mediums have led revolts against European and African rulers, ancestral spirits have commanded acts of destruction and called for the overthrow of rulers and chiefs. People have sought the help of priests and medicine men to achieve power and wealth.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/6audio1d.ram

2. ONE GOD AND MANY DEITIES

A supreme power, ruling over everything and everyone appears to be a feature of all African religions. This supreme power is the prime mover and creator, who is all knowing and eternal, and was there at the beginning of time. It goes under many different names, and it varies considerably from society to society, as to how near or how remote this supreme power is.

The Abaluyia of Kenya, the Bambuti of the Congo area, and the Galla of Ethiopia are among those who pray directly to the supreme deity on a regular basis. Here is the example of a common prayer of the Nandi, in Kenya, which reflects the importance of cattle in their community:

**God guard me, the children and the cattle,
God guard for us the cattle,
God give us good health!**

In other cultures, the supreme being cannot be approached directly. The Igbo, of southeastern Nigeria, talk about 'the rich man' who can only be approached through his many servants.

Most societies have a host of different intermediaries who can be consulted.

2.1. THE YORUBA OF NIGERIA

In Yoruba belief, the prime mover is Oludmare, who gives life to the newborn and consigns the wicked to a place of punishment after death. But beneath Oludmare are hundreds of deities, or 'orisas'.

Each has a different province, for example, Orunmila knows every language of earth, Ogun is concerned with iron making and hunting, Shango (or Chango) is a manifestation of Oludmare's anger, drawing on thunder and lightening to express this.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/6audio1.ram

2.2. THE BAGANDA OF UGANDA

Similarly in Uganda, Katonda is the supreme deity of the Baganda. But beneath him are fifty or so guardians or 'balubaale', including Walumbe a figure of death, Kibuka presiding over war and Nagaddya, who deals with marriage and harvest.

There are many stories which explain conflict, sin, disorder in this world and the general alienation of human beings from their Creator. Often this has resulted from humans acting in

some way to disappoint or anger God. The Judaic-Christian tradition takes up the same theme with Eve breaking the harmony of Paradise by eating from the tree of knowledge. The Barotse, of Zambia, were similarly punished for eating animals, when they were expressly forbidden from doing so.

2.3. SACRIFICE

Besides praying to God and the deities, there is a common theme of sacrifice in African religions, echoed in ancient religions throughout the world. Sacrifice is about giving something up that is very precious for any number of reasons including continuing good fortune and avoidance of disaster.

The sacrifice may be in the form of food, or drink (home made or imported from the West), it may be an animal, or even a human being. With the Dinka, of Southern Sudan, the sacrifice will be their most valued possession: cattle.

Sacrifice can be something you only do in a time of crisis or something you do every day, a form of insurance policy to guard against things going wrong. Yoruba blacksmiths sacrificed a dog, every fortnight. The Barotse, for example, give up a ration of water every day.

The Soninke people of the ancient empire of Ghana believed that all their wealth and prosperity, which derived largely from gold, could only be ensured if a young maiden was sacrificed annually to the snake Bida. But one year the intended victim was rescued from the jaws of Bida by her fiancé. The snake retaliated by punishing the Soninke. Their source of gold dried up and their empire was afflicted with drought and famine. This story is echoed in northern Europe in the legend of St. George and the dragon, which could only be kept from terrorising a kingdom by being given a young girl to devour.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/6audio1c.ram

2.4. THE CREATION MYTH OF BASHONGO

In the beginning, in the dark, there was nothing but water, and Bumba was alone. One day Bumba was in terrible pain. He stretched and strained and vomited up the sun.

After that, light spread over everything. The heat of the sun dried up the water until the black edges of the world began to show. Black sandbanks and reefs could be seen. But there were no living things. Bumba vomited up the moon and then the stars, and after that the night had its light also. Still Bumba was in pain.

2.5. SUPREME DEITIES

SUPREME DEITIES A selection from different peoples		
Peoples	Supreme Deity	Location
Akan speakers	Nyama	Ghana
Luba	Kalumba	Congo
Baganda	Katonda	Uganda
Yoruba	Oludmare (Olurun)	Nigeria
Zulu	Nkulunkulu	South Africa
Fulani	Dondari	West Africa
Igbo	Chuikwu or Chukwu	Nigeria
Bashongo	Bumba	Zambia

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/6audio1b.ram

3. TWO WORLDS

Religion in Africa is not a discreet human activity, separate from other aspects of living. This is in contrast to many branches of Christianity, where the spiritual is separate from the physical, and heaven is entirely separate from earth. In African traditional religion, as in many other ancient belief systems in other parts of the world, religion, or the spiritual permeates every aspect of life.

3.1. LANDSCAPE

The landscape is a source of spiritual contemplation and worship. The Gikuyu of Kenya, for example, pray facing Mount Kenya. The Shona, of Zimbabwe, have sacred hills and caves. The Lugbara and Langi, both from Uganda, venerate sacred rocks. The landscape may also be populated by many spirits, some good some bad.

3.2. ANCESTORS

The ancestral spirits also mediate between this world and the spirit world. They play a large part in most cultures, are easily accessible, and generally considered to be benevolent. When alive these ancestors led lives judged to be honourable and well respected. They are well placed to give advice and warnings. They are, in many ways, as real to the people who talk to them, as the living.

3.3. ILLNESS

Illness is a particular area where the physical and spiritual meet. There is no fixed demarcation between body and soul. Interestingly, this holistic approach is beginning to be rediscovered in the industrialised countries of the West and America.

In Africa illness may be treated with herbs very successfully. But often it will have a spiritual dimension. It may be seen as a punishment from God or the deities, or it might be the result of ill will from an enemy. In this case some form of spiritual power will be needed to combat it; a medicine man or woman will then be consulted.

3.4. WITCHCRAFT

There is a common belief that if the illness has been brought about by an enemy, then the likelihood is that the enemy consulted a witch. The concept of witchcraft is a complicated one. People judged to be witches are usually women. They are outsiders; they may be very old, or very ugly, without children or family. They may admit to witchcraft, they may not. The point is they are seen as a threat to the community.



The issue is obscured by a belief that the witch not only operates secretly at night, she may not even know that she is a witch. It's hard to get a fair trial once accused of witchcraft. In northern Ghana, there is a home for women accused of witchcraft. They are protected there from their accusers, but in one sense they are prisoners.

Listen to the son of the Chief of Gambaga in northern Ghana, explaining trial by ordeal to establish if a woman is a witch or not

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/6audio2a.ram

3.5. ACTS OF CREATIVITY

Every individual has the power to commune with divine beings through prayer and sacrifice, but the well being of each individual is tied up with the well being of the community. Theatre, dancing, singing and music are communal forms of religious expressions. They may act as a prelude to war, celebrate a good harvest, mark a birth, a marriage, or a death.

Equally, works of art have traditionally had a religious significance. With the coming of Europeans, an element of satire and comment began to infuse the work of wood carvers, and the performance of dancers and actors. Europeans were mimicked and made fun of.

4. RITES OF PASSAGE

4.1. BIRTH

The human cycle of birth, growing up, marriage and death is marked all the way with religious observances in Africa. Birth is a time of huge rejoicing. In many cultures there's a period of waiting before the celebrations begin, making sure first that the baby is healthy and strong enough to survive. The Akamba, of West Africa, wait three days before slaughtering a goat, at which point the child is named. The Gikuyu, in Kenya, have a period of four to five days of seclusion for both mother and child, where only close relatives can visit.

4.2. NAMES

Since almost all African names have a clear meaning, naming a child has huge significance. The name chosen may be influenced by circumstances of the birth - if it rained, the child's name will reflect that. The child's features may prompt the name to come from an ancestor or recently deceased member of the family. The name will be given some time after the birth. The Akamba chose a name on the third day: the Wolof, in coastal Senegal, one week after birth.

4.3. PUBERTY

The move from childhood to adulthood in traditional societies is carefully marked and charted. Most ceremonies involve an element of withdrawal. Boys or girls are taken away from the community for a period of instruction. This will also involve an element of endurance and some physical ordeal.

The Nandi, in Kenya, have their girls circumcised in a long drawn out ceremony. In all cases, there is a much emphasis on bravery and enduring pain without complaint.

The Akamba and the Massai, in East Africa, are just two groups where circumcision of the boys is the central rite of passage.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/6audio3.ram

4.4. MARRIAGE

Marriage is another sacred rite of passage, but one involving all the community. Traditionally, a man or woman will marry someone known and approved by both families. If the man is married already, then his first wife, or wives, will be consulted. Traditionally, polygamy was not encouraged unless the man was rich enough to support his wives in a decent fashion. It was seen as a way of reducing infidelity and giving women insecurity. Taking a girl friend in addition to having several wives was very frowned upon.

The Yoruba, of southwestern Nigeria, and Krio, in Sierra Leone, have a pre-wedding ceremony in which the intended bride is kept hidden when her fiancé comes to see her. He calls for her, and her family keep producing different women, who are often very old. The fiancé spots the mistake each time and each time calls for his intended. Eventually she is produced to much excitement.

Bride price or 'lobola' is paid in many parts of Africa. This and the cost of a wedding can be hugely expensive. But usually, the expense is met by contributions from all the family.

4.5. DEATH

There are a huge variety of different customs associated with death. Many of them are concerned with the transition of the soul, and laying the soul of the dead person finally to rest. This may take some years. Considerable thought is devoted to burial places. Some bury their dead underneath the compound or house. For others, it is important to remove the body to a burial ground some distance away. The Baganda, in Uganda, prepare a grave for each individual when they are still children.

There are all sorts of rules governing how the dead are buried, what they should wear, and what food they should take with them. Echoing the funeral rites of ancient Egypt, there is a belief that death is a journey and one must be equipped for that journey.

In Old Calabar, southeastern Nigeria, the funeral of a king was accompanied by the sacrifice of a number of slaves, who would, it was believed, serve him in the after-life. But in 1852 all

this changed. King Archibong was seriously taken ill. The slaves of the Duke Town plantations banded together, in protest of the possibility of being buried with their king. When he recovered inhumation or slave burial was forbidden.

ACHOLI SONG LAMENTING SOMEONE'S DEATH

Fire rages at Layima,
 It rages in the valley of river Cumu,
 Everthing is utterly destroyed;
 Oh, my daughter,
 If I could reach the homestead of Death's mother,
 I would make a long grass torch;
 If I could reach the homestead of Death's mother
 I would utterly destroy everything.
 Fire rages at Layima.

5. GUIDE FOR LIVING

THE ODU ONARA-MEJI ORACLE ON LYING

Lying does not prevent one from becoming rich.
 Covenant breaking does not prevent one from reaching old age.
 But the day of death will bring retribution.

African religions provide detailed regulations related to daily life. This very practical side of traditional religion protects the community and strengthens its collective sense of identity. There are taboos, some of which involve food. It is taboo, for example, to eat a certain type of mushroom in the Butiko (Mushroom) clan of the Baganda.

Relations between the sexes are governed by a number of rules. For example, there is often a period of withdrawal from public places demanded of women during menstruation. Sexual relations are forbidden while a woman is still breast feeding.

There are also plenty of hints and advice about getting on with fellow humans and the community at large in the form of sayings and proverbs. Indeed your very name may give you a guide to decent living. Names from the Igbo peoples of Nigeria include:

Somaadina 'let me not exist alone'
Oraka 'the community is greater'
Adinigwe 'it is better to be better'

Hospitality and generosity are prized and essential to the well-being of the community. Respect for parents and elders is universal. But lying, stealing and the act of murder are unreservedly condemned. Where a crime is committed the individual rarely stands alone. The crime and the feelings of guilt will be felt collectively by the family or community.

In his novel *Things Fall Apart*, Chinua Achebe explores many aspects of morality in a pre-colonial setting. At one point, the hero's father is chastised by the priestess for not striving in this world to make the best of what God has given him:

" 'Hold your peace,' screamed the priestess, her voice terrible as it echoed through the dark void. 'You have offended neither the gods nor your fathers. And when a man is at peace with his gods and ancestors, his harvest will be good or bad according to the strength of his arm.

You, Unoka, are known in all the clan for the weakness of your machet and your hoe. When your neighbours go out with their axe to cut down virgin forests, you sow your yams on exhausted farms that take no labour to clear. They cross seven rivers to make their farms; you stay at home and offer sacrifices to a reluctant soil. Go home and work like a man.' "

6. ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY

Christianity came first to the continent of Africa in the 1st or early 2nd century AD. Oral tradition says the first Muslims appeared while the prophet Mohammed was still alive (he died in 632).

Thus both religions have been on the continent of Africa for over 1,300 years. Some would argue that both Islam and Christianity are indigenous African religions. Not everyone shares this view.

Read more about Christianity

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/index_8.shtml

Certainly the first Muslim teachers and Christian missionaries had little respect for the traditional religions they came across. Both Islam and Christianity are religions of the book; their doctrinal authority lies in their scriptures.

African traditional religions produced no written works, but derived their authority from oral history, custom and practice, and the power of priests, kings and others gifted in dealing with spiritual issues. This lack of scriptures led to the assumption that people in Africa were not capable of 'proper' religious observance. But some European missionaries and explorers were struck by the intense spirituality of Africans.

Islam sits more comfortably with some aspects of traditional religion than Christianity. A key area is marriage. Christianity demands monogamy, that is, not more than one wife. Islam, by contrast, allows a man to take several wives. So Islam had a better chance of being accepted in the polygamous societies of Africa. If a man converted to Christianity, he was obliged to dismiss all but one of his wives; this was the cause of much resentment and bitterness.

Read more about Islam

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/index_7.shtml

The degree to which, either Muslim or Christian teachers, demanded strict adherence to the tenets of their respective faiths, varied considerably. Early Christian missionaries in sub-Saharan Africa were less exacting than the missionaries of the 19th century.

Islam sat side by side with African traditional religions. The King of the ancient Empire of Ghana of the 11th century was essentially a traditionalist, but that did not stop him employing Muslim scribes and administrators in his government. The Muslims, for their part, did not try and convert the King and his people.

At the end of the day, spiritual faith was not the only issue determining whether Christianity or Islam succeeded in converting people in Africa. The adoption of either of these religions involved a good deal of material and political interests, involving African and European leaders, as well as a host of traders hungry for profit.

In the 1880's and 1890's, Mwanga, the Kabaka (or ruler) of Buganda played off Catholic, Protestant and Muslim emissaries against each other, basing his strategy on who would best strengthen his power as king.

Many communities mixed Muslim or Christian practices with traditional ones. The Wolof, in Senegal, might go to the Mosque to pray for rain. If that failed they would ask the women to do a rain dance. In Calabar, in south eastern Nigeria, there is a mixture of Christian and traditional practices living side by side.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/6audio5a.ram

WHERE'S THE RAIN?

"We like you as well as if you had been born among us; you are the only white man we can become familiar with (thoaela); but we wish you to give up that everlasting preaching and praying; we cannot become familiar with that at all.

You see we never get rain, while those tribes who never pray as we do obtain abundance.' This was a fact; and we often saw it raining on the hills ten miles off, while it would not even look at us 'even with one eye.'"

Taken from an account of Living with the Bakwain, by Scottish missionary David Livingstone.

7. RELIGION AND POLITICS

Religion and politics have always been interconnected. This is reflected in leadership: most Kings and chiefs have traditionally ruled by divine right. Many are able to trace their ancestry back quite precisely, through oral histories, to a semi-divine figure. The Baganda, in Uganda, trace their right to rule back to Kintu, the first Kabaka or king. For the Yoruba, in Nigeria, it is Oduduwa, who began life as a junior deity and then became the first King, or Ooni of Ife.

7.1. RESURRECTION

The Sonjo, of Tanzania, have a founding father called Khambageu, who appeared among them, seemingly from nowhere. There are parallels between his life and that of Jesus Christ, although there is no historical connection.

Khambageu's mission was entirely benevolent. He was, among other things, a healer and judge. Later he was rejected by the community, and died alone. But when people came to dig up his grave they found it empty, except for sandals; there were reports of him flying to the sun. He is now a semi-divine figure.



Even today, many rulers retain vestiges of divinity. It may, for example, be forbidden to see where they sleep. Such is the case of the Kabaka of Buganda. In addition, the king may not be allowed to touch the ground with his feet - such is the case of the Lunda of Congo and Nyamwezi of Tanzania. Likewise, the death of a king is often kept secret for a period of time and it is not referred to directly.

7.2. CULTS

In times of political turmoil and change, new religious cults have sprung up. For example, the Mourimi movement in southern Mozambique emerged in 1913-14, a time of famine and military defeat. The Mcapei cult in Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and Nyasaland (Malawi) was active at the end of the Second World War, a period of great change.

7.3. THE SEARCH FOR THE GOLDEN STOOL OF THE ASANTE

The power of Asantehene, king of the Asante (in modern Ghana), was invested in the Golden Stool. The Golden Stool represented the people, the soul of the nation, the good fortune of the nation. The importance of the stool was crudely grasped by the British at a time of aggressive imperial expansion.

The Asantehene was sent into exile in 1896. But the key to his power - the Golden Stool - remained beyond the reach of the British. In 1900 the British Governor of the Gold Coast, Sir Frederick Hodgson, demanded the Golden Stool in the most offensive manner possible at a meeting of Asante chiefs.

"Where is the Golden Stool? Why am I not sitting on the Golden Stool at this moment? I am the representative of the paramount power; why have you relegated me to this chair?"

Verbatim transcript of Sir Frederick Hodgson's address to Asante chiefs, January 1900.

He then ordered soldiers to hunt out the Golden Stool.

The white man asked the children where the Golden Stool was kept in Bare. The white man said he would beat the children if they did not bring their father from the bush. The children told the white man not to call their fathers. If he wanted to beat them, he should do it. The children knew the white men were coming for the Golden Stool. The children did not fear beating. The white soldiers began to bully and beat the children.
Eye Witness account of Kwadwo Afodo, quoted in Thomas J. Lewin's book *Asante before the British: The Prempeh Years 1875-1900*.

The search for the Golden Stool sparked off a full scale military revolt, led by the Queen Mother (Yaa Asantewa). This culminated in the Governor being besieged in Kumase. The Queen Mother was only defeated by a British expeditionary force in July 1900.

7.4. SPIRIT MEDIUMS

Spirit mediums had a key role in shaping society politically and socially. In Zimbabwe, there is a strong tradition of the spirit Ambuya Nehanda. She is an ancestral Shona spirit who has taken possession of women a number of times. The two most famous episodes took place in the 1890's and again in the 1970's.

In 1896, Ambuya Nehanda entered the body of a peasant woman, who then led a Shona uprising against the British in 1896. She was subsequently executed but predicted her bones would rise again.

Less than eighty years later in 1971, Ambuya Nehanda entered the body of another woman. She was recognised by ZANU rebel forces, fighting Ian Smith for independence. Her role was again quite short lived - she died in 1973. But she had a profound effect on the fighters she came into contact with.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/6audio6a.ram

7.5. BELIEF IN A NEW POLITICAL BEGINNING

One of the most tragic incidences, bringing ancestral spirits on a collision course with European ambition, involved the Xhosa people of South Africa. They had fought the Dutch, and then took on the British. But by 1854, the British had stripped the Xhosa chiefs of power and planted them as salaried functionaries in the colonial administration.

This loss of power and land was devastating, materially and psychologically. The final blow came when their cattle, integral to their economic survival and sense of communal identity, became infected with a lethal lung infection, killing as many as 80 per cent of some chiefs' cattle. Their world order and sense of purpose collapsed, and the Xhosa turned to their religion to find the reasons behind these disasters.

A sixteen-year-old prophetess said she was in touch with the ancestors. Their message was that the Xhosa leaders should create a new beginning for their people. The Xhosa leaders, in turn, believed this could only be achieved by wiping out the old status quo. That meant killing what remaining cattle the Xhosa had. The Xhosa people became divided over what to do. But in February 1856, the Xhosa began killing cattle; a total of 400,000 were killed. 40,000 Xhosa died as a result of this and many of those that lived had to work in Cape Town or as labourers on farms.

Read more about the Xhosa in the South Africa section.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/index_12.shtml

8. TRADITIONAL RELIGIONS TIMELINE

1-1000 AD:	Some time in this period Oduduwa, son of supreme God, Olurun (Oludmare), founds dynasty of Kings (Ooni) at Ife.
500 AD:	Kintu - semi-divine first Kabaka or king of Baganda.
1st - 2nd Century:	Christianity comes to North Africa.
630's:	Islam comes to North Africa.
1852:	Calabar slaves successfully resist traditional burial of slaves on death of king.
1856:	Xhosa kill cattle on advice of ancestral spirits.
1886:	Christian pages executed by Kabaka Mwanga.
1896:	Shona ancestral spirit, Ambuya Nehanda, takes human form in fight against British.
1914:	Mourimi movement emerges in Mozambique.
1971:	Shona ancestral spirit, Ambuya Behanda, takes human form to support fight against white minority rule in Rhodesia.

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10. USEFUL LINKS

The BBC is not responsible for the content of external Internet sites

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VII. ISLAM

1. INTRODUCTION

"The Mohammedan Negro has felt nothing of the withering power of caste. There is nothing in his colour or race to debar him from the highest privileges, social or political, to which any other Muslim can attain."

Edward W. Blyden, Liberian writer and thinker.

According to Arab oral tradition, Islam first came to Africa with Muslim refugees fleeing persecution in the Arab peninsula. This was followed by a military invasion, some seven years after the death of the prophet Mohammed in 639, under the command of the Muslim Arab General, Amr ibn al-Asi. It quickly spread West from Alexandria in North Africa (the Maghreb), reducing the Christians to pockets in Egypt, Nubia and Ethiopia.

Islam came to root along the East African coast some time in the 8th century, as part of a continuing dialogue between the people on the East coast and traders from the Persian Gulf and Oman. Like early Christianity, Islam was monotheistic, that is, Muslims worship only one God.

Islam was a modernising influence, imposing a consistent order among different societies, strengthening powers of government and breaking down ethnic loyalties.

Unlike Christianity, Islam tolerated traditional values, allowing a man to have more than one wife. For many, this made conversion to Islam easier and less upsetting than conversion to Christianity.

In the early centuries of its existence, Islam in Africa had a dynamic and turbulent history, with reforming movements and dynasties clashing and succeeding each other. Gaining power depended on securing trade routes into gold-producing areas in Sub-Saharan Africa. Islamic rulers expanded north as well as south. In the last quarter of the 11th century, Islam dominated the Mediterranean world.

In the 14th century the Black Death came from Europe and seriously undermined the social and economic life of North Africa, or the Maghreb, as it is known. However Islam remained the dominant religion.

From the 16th to the 19th century, much of the Maghreb was under Ottoman rule. By the 1880's, Islam had taken root in one third of the continent.

All dates are given according to the western calendar but can be converted online.
www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/9generic5.shtml

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/7audio0.ram

2. INTELLECTUAL TRADITIONS

2.1. THE KORAN

The main source of teaching for Muslims is the **Koran**. It was written down over a long period of time by **Prophet Mohammed** (www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/7generic5.shtml#1), dictated to him by the Angel Gabriel. The word Koran means 'recitation'. It is made up of 114 chapters, laying down clearly rules on domestic and political, as well as spiritual matters. The style is both simple and yet poetic. It has, through the ages, served as an inspiration to Arabic literature.

2.2. SCHOLARSHIP

Muslims of Arabia and the near East brought to Europe as well as Africa an immense amount of scholarship. Muslim society was unique in developing branches of learning, astronomy and medicine for example, distinct from religious thinking and magic.

Modern mathematical knowledge owes much to al Kwarizmi, whose book *The Calculation of Integration and Equation* dealt with equations, algebra and measurement. He and other Muslim scholars gave us:

Numerals and counting in tens

Use of the decimal point

Algebra

Geography was another area where the Muslim world excelled. The most famous geographer, born in the 12th century, was al Idrisi, who visited Spain, North Africa and Anatolia. He drew up maps, which for their time, were extremely accurate. There are many other Muslim writers and travelers - Ibrahim ibn Yaqub, 9th century; Ibn Jubair, 12th century; and **Ibn Battuta**, in the 14th century.

2.3. LITERATURE

The written word and the book are central to Muslim society. Shaykh Bay Al-Kunti's library in Timbuktu was a legal reference point for a large part of Sub-Saharan Africa in the 1930's. In the 9th century the library in Cordoba, in Islamic Spain, contained 500,000 volumes, while the largest Christian library in Europe, in St. Gallen, Switzerland, contained at that time just 36 volumes.

2.4. MODERNISING

By the 19th century Muslim scholarship had fallen behind modern European scholarship. The Egyptian pan-Islamicist, al Afghani, believed that Islam had become weighed down by its past and wanted to revitalise it academically, without westernising it. He was hugely influential in West Africa and East Africa. The British at first were happy to let Koranic schools take the burden of education, but later helped build a small number of schools for Muslims, which had a non-religious component as well as religious strand to their syllabuses.

These include: the Gordon Memorial College in Khartoum (1902); the first school for Muslim girls in Kenya in 1938. In Nigeria, schools were built in Kano (1911), and Sokoto (1912), with a Teachers Training College built in Katsina, in 1923.

3. PRACTICES

3.1. FLEXIBILITY AND REFORM

The way Islam

has been practised has varied tremendously at different times and in different places. In some parts of the continent Islamic rules became modified, tolerating and accommodating traditional customs and practices. In other places, Holy Wars have been launched by Muslims against other Muslim communities, perceived as practicing the faith imperfectly. The most noted example of this being the Holy War of Usman dan Fodio in the early 19th century in West Africa.

3.2. RULES

Islam is a very practical religion, offering guidance on all aspects of everyday life, even the correct way to urinate. It is not an obscure religion to follow, with less divisions and heresies than Christianity. There is no complicated hierarchy of priests. As in Christianity, there is much emphasis on charity and simplicity of life style. It is not an exclusive religion, but acknowledges some Judaic and Christian traditions - both Abraham and Jesus are cited as prophets in the Koran. Like **Christianity** it welcomes all converts.

3.3. RELIGIOUS PRACTICE

Islam is very clear about what it demands of its followers. This can be summed up in five essential requirements - The Five Pillars of Islam. They are:

- **Faith: the declaration of faith is called the Shahada, and is expressed in the following words: There is no god worthy of worship except God and Muhammad is His messenger.**
- **Prayer: Muslims perform obligatory prayers, or Salat, five times a day.**
- **The Zakat: Every Muslim sets aside a percentage of his/her capital, for those in need.**

- **The Fast:** all Muslims fast once a year in the month of Ramadan, abstaining from food, drink and sexual relations.
- **Pilgrimage (Hajj):** every Muslim must make the pilgrimage to Mecca at least once a year.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/people/features/memorable_sounds/sounds/mem_sounds5.ram

3.4. PERSONAL RELATIONS

An important aspect of the Islamic faith was that it allowed a man to take more than one wife. Christianity did not. So conversion to Islam did not force a man to choose one of several wives, risking pride, anger and humiliation on all sides. If a man is traveling and can't take his wife, he is also allowed to take a temporary wife through a contract drawn up by the Imam.

IBN BATTUTA'S PRAISE FOR THE GOOD MUSLIMS OF MALI, 1352
<p>HONESTY "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."</p>
<p>PIETY "...they meticulously observe the times of prayer...When it is Friday, if a man does not come early to the Mosque he will not find a place to pray because of the numbers of the crowd."</p>
<p>CLEANLINESS "... putting on of good white clothes on Friday. If a man among them has nothing except a tattered shirt he washes and cleans it and attends the Friday prayer in it."</p>

4. NORTH AFRICA AND ETHIOPIA²

Islam arrived in North Africa (the Maghreb) just seven years after the death of the Prophet Mohammed in 639. The 4,000 strong Arab invading forces came from Mecca under the leadership of the military ruler Amr ibn al-Asi. The Arabs were not entirely foreign to North Africa - they were well known as traders. There were also some well-established Arab communities. Within three years of arriving, the Arabs moved South, in retreat from the Byzantine fleet, to found the city of Cairo.

4.1. ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY

At the time of invasion the Christian Coptic Church was being persecuted on doctrinal grounds by the Byzantine church in Constantinople. Many Christians welcomed the Muslim forces as possible allies against Byzantium. After an initial display of force, the Muslims treated the Church leaders with deference.

In the long term, those that refused to convert to Islam were penalised. They had to pay high taxes and were barred or evicted from positions in government. There was periodic persecution, notably at the end of the 10th century and at the beginning of the 11th century, but no executions. Pockets of Christians remained in Egypt; there was also resistance to Islam from the Berbers and from the Christian church in Nubia.

"Here (Dongola) is the throne of the King. It is a large city on the banks of the blessed Nile, and contains many churches and large houses and wide streets. The King's house is lofty with several domes built of red-brick and resembles the buildings in Iraq."

Traveler and writer, Abu Salih's description of 11th century, Dongola.

² All dates given are according to the Western Calendar.

In the Horn of Africa, Ethiopia became the focus for Christianity following the decline of the Kingdom of **Aksum** www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/8generic5.shtml#3 in the 8th century.

4.2. CHANGE AND CONTINUITY

The history of the Maghreb from the 7th to the 16th century was dynamic and turbulent, with reforming movements and dynasties clashing and succeeding each other. This took place against a background of vigorous trade and urban growth.

The Umayyad dynasty was followed by successive dynasties, operating across the Maghreb. These included the Abbasid dynasty, the Fatimid dynasty (claiming direct descent from the Prophet's daughter, Fatima) and the Ayyubid dynasty of Saleh al Din ibn Ayub (known as Saladin by English speakers).

A number of ruling dynasties began life as reforming movements, which launched jihads (Holy Wars) and then often took on the mantle of government. The most powerful and far-reaching was the **Almoravid** movement (al-Murabitun) in the West. This movement started in what is today modern Mauritania in 1070, and moved South as well as North, conquering Southern Spain in 1086.

Almoravids were overtaken by the Almohads in the 13th century. They in turn collapsed into three states by the 15th century. By this time Islam's hold over the Mediterranean was giving way to the Christian kingdoms of Aragon, Castile and Portugal.

4.3. FROM MECCA TO BAGHDAD

A crucial change for North Africa came in 750. This was when the Islamic centre shifted from Mecca to Baghdad (modern Iraq). In the long term this meant that Muslim society in the Maghreb became more independent, strengthening its ties with the flourishing economies in Sub-Saharan Africa, as well as establishing new Indian Ocean routes from the Horn of Africa.

4.4. PLAGUE

Another critical event was the arrival of the Plague or **Black Death** in 1348 from Europe via Sicily. It reduced the population of the Maghreb between a third and a quarter. It seriously undermined the economy both in terms of trade and agricultural production.

"Civilisation decreased with the decrease of mankind. Cities and buildings were laid waste, roads and way signs were obliterated, settlements and mansions became empty, dynasties and tribes grew weak. The entire inhabited world changed..."

Excerpt from The Muqaddimah: an Introduction to History by Tunisian historian Ibn Khaldun, who lost both his parents in the plague.

4.5. ETHIOPIAN CHURCH

The Ethiopian Church continued through the centuries to resist Islam. However, from the 12th century to the 16th century, Ethiopian rulers were under periodic attacks from Muslim neighbours, starting with the Sultan of Shoa and culminating in 1543 with a decisive victory over the Muslim King of Adal, achieved with the help of the Portuguese.

4.6. OTTOMAN RULE

Ottoman control over the Maghreb ran from the 16th century to the 19th century through rulers of varying independence. North African politics then became increasingly caught up in Anglo-French rivalry and burgeoning nationalism and religious revival, particularly in Sudan and Egypt.

A CHRISTIAN ACCOUNT OF THE MUSLIM INVASION OF EGYPT

MUSLIMS ENTER ALEXANDRIA

"...the Muslims captured the city of Alexandria, and destroyed its walls and burnt many churches with fire and they burnt the church of Saint Mark, which was built by the sea, where his body was laid..."

Address of Leader of Muslim Forces, Amr ibn al-Asi, to Benjamin, Patriarch of the Coptic Church in Alexandria.

The Patriarch's response:

"Resume the government of all your churches and of your people, and administer their affairs. And if you will pray for me, that I may go to the West and to Pentapolis, and take possession of them, as I have of Egypt, and return to you in safety and speedily, I will do for you all that you shall ask of me."

Then the holy Benjamin prayed for Amr, and pronounced an eloquent discourse, which made Amr and those present with him marvel, and which contained words of exhortation and much profit for those that hear him; and he revealed certain matters to Amr, and departed from his presence honoured and revered."

Taken from History of The Patriarchs of Alexandria, 642, The Internet Medieval Sourcebook.

WHY COME TO AFRICA?

"I think this (the Muslim invasion of North Africa in 639) is an historical and strategic matter. No one can be in Palestine and Syria without being concerned about Egypt...and vice versa.

Egypt is the threat or the potential threat to those who are in Palestine or in Syria and those in Palestine and Syria are also a potential threat to Egypt.

Those who wanted to control the whole area of the Levant or the eastern Mediterranean must control Egypt. It is a historical must. We know from the time of the Pharaohs."

Dr Kassem Abdou Kassem, Professor of Medieval History at Zagazig University, North of Cairo.

5. THE BERBERS

"They belong to a powerful, formidable, brave and numerous people; a true people like so many others the world has seen - like the Arabs, the Persians, the Greeks and the Romans.

The men who belong to this family of peoples have inhabited the Maghreb since the beginning."

Ibn Khaldun, 8th century Tunisian historian.

The **Berber** people had a particularly interesting role to play in the Maghreb. They alternately resisted and accepted new beliefs and political regimes, and yet remained ethnically a coherent group. They are found as far south as northern Nigeria and as far north as Morocco. They range in colour from dark to fair.

Some Berbers resisted the rules and regulations of Islam; many more accepted it, while others took on the role of reformers. Some Berbers became Christians, but evolved their own austere and uncompromising Donatist doctrine. This put them in direct conflict with the Church in Alexandria, which regarded them as heretics.

Famous Berbers
Jugurtha King of Numidia, defeated by Romans 111 BC.
The Kahina Priestess in the 7th century. Fought the Arabs, while prophesying their eventual victory.
St. Augustine of Hippo Saint and evangelist.
Ibn Battuta 14th century traveler, writer and historian.
Abd el Krim 1882 -1963 nationalist, chief of the Rifains Berber people of Morocco, fought Spanish.
Matoub Lounes Musician and Berber activist killed 1998

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/7audio4a.ram

Many Berbers became the mainstay of the Arab armies, indispensable for their riding and fighting skills. Berbers were at the centre of the Almoravid movement, which began with the piety of one man, the scholar and holy man, Abdallah Ibn Yasin. The Berbers maintained their historical role of being independently minded and tenacious fighters right into the twentieth century. From their retreat in the High Atlas, they resisted the French and Spanish attempts at colonisation successfully, until 1933.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/7audio4.ram

6. EAST AFRICA

In contrast to **North Africa**, East Africa was never subject to one wide, sweeping Muslim takeover. Islam came to the East African coast in many waves and at different times. There is no single date in the records, but it is thought that Islam had taken root by the 8th century. The first Muslims came from different directions:

- Most obviously from the Arab peninsula, which at one point is separated by less than fifty miles of sea from the Horn of Africa.
- Egypt, where Islam first came to North Africa.
- Somalia further up the coast, where the port of Zeila became very important in the 10th century in response to the political centre of the Muslim world moving from Mecca to Baghdad.
- And Persia. There is a tradition that the first Muslims came from Shiraz in Persia. They are known as the Shirazis.

"Then came Sultan Ali bin Selimani the Shirazi, that is, the Persian. He came with his ships, and brought his goods and his children. One child was called Fatima, the daughter of Sultan Ali: we do not know the names of the other children. They came with Musa bin Amrani the Beduin; they disembarked at Kilwa, that is to say, they went to the headman of the country, the Elder Mrimba, and asked for a place in which to settle at Kisiwani.

This they obtained. And they gave Mrimba presents of trade goods and beads. Sultan Ali married Mrimba's daughter. He lived on good terms with the people."
Excerpt from *East African Coast, Select Documents*, G.S.P. Freeman-Grenville.

Undoubtedly there was **early contact** and dialogue between peoples on the East African coast and the peoples of the East - Arabia, Persia, India and even China, going back long before the prophet Mohammed was preaching in the 600's. There is also some oral evidence of a pre-Islamic empire, called the Shungwaya empire, exercising power along the coast.

What is clear, is that once people arrived they intermarried with the people of the coast very early on, forming a new kind of coastal society, the Swahili, with their own architecture, style of dressing and music.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/5audio2.ram

6.1. CONVERSION

Muslim outsiders did not arrive on the Coast with the main aim of converting people; they came as traders, with influence. Not everyone became Muslim. There was a constant movement of slaves and traders coming from inland to the coast. On the whole, they only converted to Islam if they attained some permanent position in coastal society, as a leading trader, or craftsman, or in the case of women, as a wife or concubine to a rich man. There are few accounts of how these people came to be converted to Islam.

As in North Africa, trade was a powerful strand in the conversion of people to Islam. East Africa offered gold, ivory and slaves, and later on very fine woven cotton. In return, traders from the East and Persian Gulf brought textiles, spices, porcelain and other finished goods.

In the 19th century, Tippu Tip followed in this trading tradition, making himself a hugely rich and influential man in the region. A ruthless and commercially clever man, he specialised in long and dangerous treks into the interior to buy and capture slaves to sell at the coast. He had the monopoly of trade across an enormous territory stretching back from the coast.

A FORGIVING ISLAMIC CONVERT

"A group of Persian sailors were shipwrecked off what is present day Mozambique. They were taken to the court of a local king who helped them resume their journey. Before they went they tricked the king into boarding their ship. They then kidnapped him and sold him into slavery in Oman.

Years later, after many adventures the king succeeds in reclaiming his throne. By this time he has converted to Islam. By chance the sailors who originally kidnapped him turn up at his court. They are amazed and terrified to find him back in power. But he forgives them, saying they were the instrument of his becoming a Muslim."

Summarised from a 10th century account by Persian sailor, Buzurg Ibn Shahriyar. Taken from *East African Coast*, edited by G.S.P. Freeman-Grenville.

By the 14th century Kilwa was the most powerful kingdom along the coast - situated on an island some 200 miles South of Dar Es Salaam. But the power of Kilwa met a serious challenge in the late 15th century when the Portuguese arrived. The latter added a third and violent strand to the African and Arab interests making up the economy and politics of the coast.

By the end of the 17th century the Portuguese began to lose their commercial hold over the trade routes, confining their activities to the southern part of the Coast. French and British commercial forces emerged but accepted the rule of local rulers. The Swahili fell under the control of the Sultans of Oman. Attempts at converting Coastal Muslims to Christianity, whether in the 16th century or in [David Livingstone's](#) www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/8chapter4.shtml day in the mid 19th century, were rarely successful.



"In that place there was a Moorish woman who had two small sons; I wanted to baptize them, thinking that they were not the sons of Moors. They went running from me to their mother, and told her that I wanted to baptize them; and she came crying to me asking me not to baptize them because she was a Moor and did not want to be a Christian, still less did she want her sons to be."

St Francis Xavier: A visit to Malindi and Socotra, in 1542.

7. WEST AFRICA

7.1. TRADE

Islam first came to West Africa as a slow and peaceful process, spread by Muslim traders and scholars. 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** [www .bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/index_section4.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/index_section4.shtml) was a key trading partner with the Muslim North.

7.2. WEST AFRICAN KINGDOMS: THE KINGDOM OF GHANA

The kings of Ghana in the 11th century were not Muslims, but Muslims played a crucial role in their government. The great Spanish scholar Al Bakri describes the king of Ghana in the 11th century, Basi, as being a man who:

"...led a praiseworthy life on account of his love of justice and friendship for the Muslims...The city of Ghana consists of two towns situated on a plain. 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."

Al Bakri, from the *Book of Routes and Realms*, *Corpus of Early Arabic sources for West African History*, Levtzion and Hopkins.

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 a town without walls and situated in the midst of the desert. 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. There are palm groves and cultivated areas which are irrigated by means of camels..."

Al Bakri, from the *Book of Routes and Realms*, quoted in *Corpus of Early Arabic sources for West African History*, edited by Levtzion and Hopkins.

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.

"We used to keep the Sultan company during his progress, I and Abu Ishaq al-Tuwayjin, to the exclusion of his viziers and chief men, and converse to his enjoyment. At each halt he would regale us with rare foods and confectionery.

His equipment and furnishings were carried by 12,000 private slave women, wearing gowns of brocade and Yemeni silk."

An account of Emperor Mansa's hajj, given to Ibn Khaldun by Al-Mu'ammār, quoted from the *Muqaddima* by Levtzion and Hopkins in *Corpus of Early Arabic sources for West African History*.

7.3. ISLAMIC REFORM AND CONQUEST IN WEST AFRICA

By the 14th century the ruling elite of the Hausa city states were all Muslim. They comprised Gobir (most northern), Katsina, Kano, Zazzau (the most southern), Zamfara and Kebbi.

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.

First the Muslim states of Futa Jallon (modern Guinea) and Futa Toro (southern Senegal) were established. 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. Dan Fodio's sons Mohammed Bello and Abdullahi took over the practical running of this great Muslim territory.

[Listen to the court musicians of the current Emir of zazzau in Zaria, Northern Nigeria](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/7audio6.ram)
www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/7audio6.ram

7.4. FIGHTING THE FRENCH

The momentum of reform was continued by Umar Tal, a Tukulor scholar who conquered three Bambara kingdoms in the 1850's-1860's. The territory was taken by the French in the 1890's. Another formidable enemy of the French was Samori Toure who kindled some of the glory of old Mali with his Mandinka Empire and 30,000 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 1901.

7.5. ISLAM AND COLONIALISM IN WEST AFRICA

The British colonial administrators had some respect for Islam. 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 1922 onwards, Egypt enjoyed independence and stood as an inspiration to many people in Africa still under colonial rule.

8. GLOSSARY

caliph - (calif or khalifa) ruler (literally successor to Prophet Mohammed)

caliphate - office or position of caliph

Fellahin - peasant

hajj - pilgrimage

ibn - son of

infidel - nonbeliever

jihad - Holy War (sometimes spelt djihad)

kaffir - nonbeliever

khedive - Turkish title of ruler of Egypt

Koran - Holy Book of Islam

Maghreb (sometimes spelt maghrib) North Africa

madrassa - centre of learning

qadi - judge or lawyer (also spelt khadi)

sultan - ruler

emir - ruler or governor

pasha - governor or high ranking military officer (Turkish)

vizier - chief minister or governor (Turkish)

9. FORCES FOR CHANGE

9.1. THE CAMEL

The camel was used for journeys across the Sahara in the 5th century. Its ability to walk on sand and store fat in its hump make it ideal for travelling through the desert. The camel became a very valuable animal. In Somalia, love songs were composed in praise of the camel.

9.2. CORAL

The art of building with coral blocks began in the 10th century in East Africa. Porites coral was used, which, for best results, had to be carved under water. As soon as it comes out of the water it becomes very hard and difficult to manipulate. This tradition of craftsmanship seems to have come from Red Sea communities, including those on the Dhalak Archipelago off what is now modern Eritrea.

10. ISLAM TIMELINE

5th C.:	Sack of Rome
6th C.:	Kanem founded
570:	Birth of Mohammed
610:	Beginning of call
622:	AH - Anno Hegira: year zero in Muslim calendar, dating from flight of the Prophet Mohammed from Mecca to Medina.
632:	Death of Prophet Mohammed.
639:	Muslim invasion of Egypt under Amr Ibn al-As challenging Roman Byzantine rule.
640 –750:	Umayyad Caliphate.
642:	Byzantine administration expelled from Alexandria. Cairo founded South of Alexandria.
657:	Kharjitism (Kharjite Movement) starts in West of Maghreb (North Africa).
670:	Kairwan founded (in modern Tunisia).
690:	Byzantine fleet defeated at Carthage, Tunis built.
Early 8 th century:	Western Algeria and Morocco conquered Old Ghana first mentioned in Arabic documents.
711:	Atlantic coast of Morocco reached by Arabs.
717:	Heavy taxation moves large numbers of Coptic Christians to convert to Islam.
740:	Beginning of Kharjite revolt, leading to overthrow of Umayyad dynasty
750:	Abbasid dynasty. Governing centre of Muslims moves from Mecca to Baghdad.
800:	Aghlabid dynasty established in Ifriqiya

- late 9th century: Egypt ruled by Turkish Military Governors & multi-ethnic army.
- 910: Fatimid dynasty came to power in Kairwan and gains control of Central Maghreb.
- 934: Fatimid fleet sacks Genoa in Italy.
- 950: Fatimid dynasty gains control of Northern Tunisia and Algeria.
- 969: Fatimid dynasty takes Egypt from Turkish military rulers.
- 996-1021: Persecution of Copts under Caliph el-Hakim.
- 1009: Destruction of Church of Holy Sepulchre Jerusalem.
- 1055: Almoravid (al-Murabitun) movement gains control over gold trade through capturing Sijilmasa in North and Awdaghust in South.
- 1062: Famine in North Africa. Fatimid dynasty in decline.
- 1067: Al Bakri compiles travelers' accounts of Ghana.
- 1070: Almoravid establishes Marrakesh.
- 1083: Almoravid conquer all Maghreb west of Algiers.
- 1086: Almoravid enter Spain.
- 1147: Almohad take Marrakesh led by Mohammed Ibn Tumart.
- 1171: Fatimid dynasty rule shrunk to Egypt, and is overthrown by Kurdish Vizier Saladin (Saleh al Din ibn Ayub) who starts Ayubbid dynasty.
- 1212: Almohad defeated in Spain by Christians. Almohad state collapses into three.
- 1250: Ayyubid dynasty overthrown by Mamluk troops.
- 1268: Monastery of Debra Libanos built at Shoa.
- 1269: Marinid rule Morocco from Fes for two centuries. Hafsids rule Ifriquya until 16th. Century.
- Early 14th century: collapse of Mongol Empire.
- 1317: Dongola Cathedral converted to Mosque.
- 1324: Mansa Musa Emperor of Mali begins magnificent pilgrimage.
- 1348: Black Death reaches Maghreb from Sicily and kills over quarter of population of North Africa.
- Late 14th century: decline of Mali.
- 15th century: rise of Songhay.
- 1433: Tuareg capture Timbuktu.
- 1453: Ottoman Turks take Constantinople.
- 1517: Ottoman Turks take Egypt from Mamluk rulers.
- 1543: Ethiopians defeat Muslim army of Kingdom of Adal with help of Portuguese.
- 1591: Moroccans invade Songhay.

- 1737: Tuareg seize Timbuktu, capital of old Mali.
- 18th century: Jihads launched in Futa Jalon.
- 1750: Fulbe rise up supported by Muslim traders and conquer settled farmers.
- 1808: All Hausa states under rule of Sokoto Caliphate of Usman dan Fodio.

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West Africa and Islam. By P. Clark. Edward Arnold.

12. USEFUL LINKS

The BBC is not responsible for the content of external Internet sites

Koran

www.wsu.edu:8000/%7Edee/ISLAM/QURAN.HTM

Part of the World Civilizations site, provided by Richard Hooker, Washington State University.

Ibn Battuta

www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/batuta.html

Medieval Sourcebook. Fordham University.

Five pillars of Islam

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/people/features/world_religions/islam.html

Life of the prophet Mohammed and the Islamic scripture. Part of Your Guide to the Religions of the World site, BBC World Service.

Almoravid peoples

www.unesco.org/culture/al-andalus/html_eng/fall.htm

UNESCO site.

Black Death

<http://campus.northpark.edu/history/WebChron/WestEurope/BlackDeath.html>

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Berber People

www.uiowa.edu/%7Eafricart/toc/people/Berber.html

University of Iowa site.

Introduction to Islam

www.usc.edu/dept/MSA/fundamentals/prophet/profbio.html

Centre Culturelle Islamique, Paris, 1969.

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www.wsu.edu:8080/%7Edee/CIVAFRCA/ISLAM.HTM

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Berbers: The Proud Raiders

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/people/highlights/010423_berbers.shtml

VIII. CHRISTIANITY

1. INTRODUCTION

Christianity first arrived in North Africa, in the 1st or early 2nd century AD. The Christian communities in North Africa were among the earliest in the world. Legend has it that Christianity was brought from Jerusalem to Alexandria on the Egyptian coast by Mark, one of the four evangelists, in 60 AD. This was around the same time or possibly before Christianity spread to Northern Europe.



Once in North Africa, Christianity spread slowly West from Alexandria and East to Ethiopia. Through North Africa, Christianity was embraced as the religion of dissent against the expanding Roman Empire. In the 4th century AD the Ethiopian King Ezana made Christianity the kingdom's official religion. In 312 Emperor Constantine made Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire.

In the 7th century Christianity retreated under the advance of Islam. But it remained the chosen religion of the Ethiopian Empire and persisted in pockets in North Africa.

In the 15th century Christianity came to Sub-Saharan Africa with the arrival of the Portuguese. In the South of the continent the Dutch founded the beginnings of the Dutch Reform Church in 1652.

In the interior of the continent most people continued to practice their own religions undisturbed until the 19th century. At that time, Christian missions to Africa increased, driven by an antislavery crusade and the interest of Europeans in colonising Africa. However, where people had already converted to Islam, Christianity had little success.

Christianity was an agent of great change in Africa. It destabilised the status quo, bringing new opportunities to some, and undermining the power of others. With the Christian missions came education, literacy and hope for the disadvantaged. However, the spread of Christianity paved the way for commercial speculators, and, in its original rigid European form, denied people pride in their culture and ceremonies.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/8audio0.ram

2. NORTH AFRICA

North Africa was an early cradle of **Christianity**. Indeed Christianity's links with Africa started nearly two thousand years ago, just weeks after the birth of Jesus when according to the bible, the holy family fled the wrath of King Herod.

"An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream saying: 'Arise, take the young child and his mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word, for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.

When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night and departed for Egypt, and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, 'Out of Egypt I called my Son.'

St Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 3, verses 13-15.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/8audio1.ram

Christianity spread to North Africa less than 150 years after the death of Christ. Christian beliefs were introduced by missionaries from Jerusalem and spread among the Jews of Alexandria, on the Egyptian Coast, some time in first century AD or second century. There, the new faith was adopted by the Greek community from the Jews. Christianity spread west, and was taken up across North Africa. It reached as far as modern-day Morocco, where it was enthusiastically embraced by the Berber people. It is quite possible that Christianity came to Africa before it came to Britain and other regions in Northern Europe.

2.1. CHRISTIANITY AS DISSENT

Under the Greeks and during the early years of Roman rule, Egyptians had worshipped their traditional gods as they had during the time of the Pharaohs. Some historians believe that there were elements within such traditional religion that made people receptive to the Christian message.

"Consider how the pharaoh Akhenaton more than one thousand years before Christianity taught and preached how there

was one creator for the universe. Look at the statues in ancient Egypt...there is the sign of the cross which was engraved upon it. It was called the ankh - the sign of life, of life after death.

Even the idea of the trinity...in Memphis there was the trinity of Isis, Osiris and Horus, all combined into one. So many of the teachings of Christianity were not foreign at all."

Fouad Megially, former Assistant Professor at the universities of Alexandria and Cairo.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/8audio1a.ram

The branch of Christianity that developed in Egypt was named after the language spoken by the mass of the Egyptian population - Coptic. Two thousand years later it is still used in Church liturgy.

The early Christian fathers in Egypt developed a strong monastic tradition. There were hundreds of monasteries throughout the country as well as cells and caves occupied by hermits. An anonymous fourth century writer observed:

"There is no town or village in Egypt that is not surrounded by hermitages as if by walls and the people depend on their prayers as if on God himself, through them the world is kept going."

Christianity was embraced as the religion of dissent and opposition to oppressive Roman rule. It was also, under the teaching of the theologian Origen, a religion emphasising wisdom and physical hardship. Martyrdom became a feature of Christian communities.

One of the earliest documented martyrs was Perpetua, a twenty-year-old wife and mother born in Carthage near Tunis. In 203 AD, she was sentenced to death for her beliefs and her refusal to make a sacrifice to the Roman gods.

"We walked up to the prisoner's dock. All the others when questioned admitted their guilt. Then, when it came to my turn, my father appeared with my son, dragged me from the step, and said: 'Perform the sacrifice - have pity on your baby!'

Hilarianus the governor.... said to me: 'Have pity on your father's grey head; have pity on your infant son. Offer the sacrifice for the welfare of the Emperors'.

'I will not' I retorted.

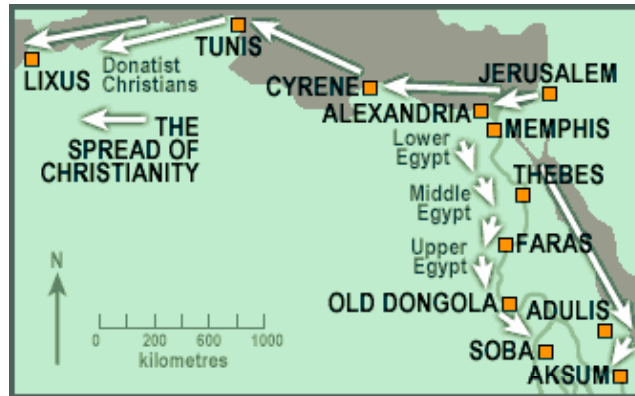
'Are you a Christian?' said Hilarianus.

And I said: 'Yes, I am'...

Then Hilarianus passed sentence on all of us; we were condemned to the beasts, and we returned to prison in high spirits."

Perpetua's account of her last days, taken from Acts of the Christian Martyrs.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/8audio1b.ram



From the early fourth century, under the Roman Emperor Diocletian, the attacks became more widespread and violent. Churches were destroyed, bibles burned, and Christians faced imprisonment, torture and death.

2.2. DIVISIONS WITHIN CHRISTIANITY

Persecution of the Christians ceased in 312, when the Roman Emperor Constantine declared Christianity the official religion of the Empire. By now, different forms of Christian belief were beginning to emerge and diverse groups of worshippers were beginning to congregate. The most long lasting split over doctrine centred on the nature of God and developed in 451. The Church in Constantinople (modern Istanbul), from where the Roman Empire was now administered, held to the idea that God was both human - in the form of Jesus - and divine. In contradiction to this, the church in North Africa said God was one indivisible unity and wholly divine. This Monophysite belief became the central tenet of the Church in North Africa, which subsequently became known as the Coptic Church.

2.3. DONATISM

In the Western regions of North Africa, a more militant, rigid form of Christianity grew up. It was unforgiving of those who collaborated with Roman persecutors. This form of Christianity was known as Donatism and it became identified by the newly Christianised Byzantine authorities as a heresy and equated with dissent and rebellion. It was outlawed by **St Augustine of Hippo** in his capacity as Bishop of Hippo (in modern Algeria). When Islam came to North Africa in 639, Christian communities were weakened by these divisions and so were less able to resist conversion to the new faith.

3. ETHIOPIA & NUBIA

3.1. AKSUM

The Ethiopian branch of Christianity first emerged in the kingdom of **Aksum** in the northern corner of the Ethiopian highlands. The person who introduced Christianity to Aksum is said to be Fremnatos - known as Frumentius in Europe, later a saint. He is variously described as a trader, philosopher and theologian.

The story goes he was on his way to India when he was kidnapped in Aksum. He obviously made a good impression, because he ended up being the tutor to the future King Ezana. The King adopted Christianity as the official religion in 333 AD. Fremnatos was rewarded for this by being consecrated Bishop of Aksum at a ceremony in Alexandria. When the Aksum dynasty collapsed the Ethiopian centre of power moved south and east, taking the Christian tradition with it.

3.2. QUEEN OF SHEBA

The most popular story connected to the region is the ancient account of the **Queen of Sheba**. As told in the Old Testament, she travelled from Aksum to Jerusalem to meet the famed **King Solomon** (King of the Israelites) in Jerusalem.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/8audio2d.ram

"And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came to prove him with hard questions. And she came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bare spices, and very much gold, and precious stones; and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart."

1 Kings, 10, v.1-2, Old Testament.

Although there is no evidence that the Queen of Sheba did come from Aksum, it has become part of the Ethiopian church's central tenets.

"The Ethiopians say she travelled from Aksum across the Red Sea...and visited Solomon there. It was said they had romantic relations and she had a son...and she came back and he was born to the north of Aksum.

When he was old enough, she sent him back to his father to get his blessing and his father blessed him and sent him back to Ethiopia...and this son established a new dynasty...the Solomonic dynasty. The name of the son was Menelik I...

Like all legends they serve the question of establishing an identity, very strong identity. I myself believe this is a post Christian legend...it developed only after the Ethiopians started to have direct contact with the books of the Bible, from about the middle of the 6th Century...

And then it became a very important constitutional device and an act of faith. I cannot publicly speak against it in front of the patriarch of the orthodox church, for example, because then he would say, you are no longer an Orthodox Christian.

In the days of Emperor Haile Selassie you couldn't speak against the tradition because it would be treasonable to talk against it."

Professor Tadesse Tamrat, Professor of History, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/8audio2.ram

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/8audio2e.ram

3.3. SPREAD OF ISLAM

In the 5th and 6th centuries the scriptures were translated into Ge'ez. The ancient forerunner of the Ethiopian language Amharic. With the spread of Islam in the 7th century the Ethiopian Church fell into something of a decline, although there was a revival in the 13th century. In 1621 the Ethiopian Emperor Susenyos became Catholic. With his abdication however, links with Rome were abandoned and Jesuit priests were banned.

Although autonomous in its rulings, the Ethiopian church remained connected to the Coptic Church until the mid-20th century.

3.4. THE NUBIA

Christianity spread South from the North of Egypt to Nubia (modern day Southern Egypt and Northern Sudan) some two hundred years after the collapse of the powerful **Nile Valley** kingdom of **Meroe** in the 4th century AD. It was brought by traders from Egypt and by travelers from Aksum.

Archaeological remains suggest that Christianity was a religion of the poor people to begin with and only later became popular with the elite. A missionary who came to Nubia from Constantinople found everybody well versed in Christian doctrine in 580. Initially the Nubian Church developed under the control of the Egyptian Coptic church. When Islam swept through the North of the continent in the 7th century, the Nubian rulers sought help from the Christian Emperor in Constantinople.

The Arab forces did their best to conquer Nubia but were forced back by the skills of the Nubian archers.

"One day they arrayed themselves against us and were desirous to carry on the conflict with the sword. But they were too quick for us and shot their arrows, putting out our eyes. The eyes they put out numbered 150. We at last thought the best thing to do with such a people was to make peace."

The Arabic writer al-Baladhuri.

The Arabs agreed a peace treaty with the Nubians, which allowed the Nubian kingdoms to flourish as a Christian state for 700 years. The two northern kingdoms, Nobadia and Makuria merged into one - Dongola. Dongola entered something of a golden age; the bible was translated from Greek into Nubian and beautiful churches were built throughout the Nile Valley.

The Church in Nubia finally yielded to Islamic conversion in the 14th century and the massive Cathedral in Dongola was converted into a mosque in 1317.

While the Nubian church dissolved, with only a few architectural remnants to recall its former glory, the Ethiopian Church not only persisted but acquired great significance outside the Horn of Africa in the 19th and 20th centuries.

The ancient nature of the church, combined with the Ethiopian defeat of the Italians in 1896, gave hope and inspiration to the anti-colonial movement in South Africa, and the Gold Coast, as well as to African-Americans suffering from prejudice and segregation.

4. EARLY MISSIONARIES

4.1. THE KONGO

In 1490 the first missionaries came to Sub-Saharan Africa at the request of King Nzinga of Kongo (also known as the Manikongo). They came with craftsmen who rebuilt the Manikongo's capital in stone at Mbanza Kongo (in the North of modern Angola), and baptised the King. King Nzinga's son Afonso (born Nzinga Mbemba) was sent to Portugal to study and amazed the catholic hierarchy with his intelligence and intense piety.

"It seems to me from the way he speaks as though he is not a man but rather an angel, sent by the Lord into this kingdom to convert it; for I assure that is he who instructs us, and that he knows better than we do the Prophets and the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and the lives of the saints and all the things concerning our Holy Mother the Church...For he devotes himself entirely to study, so that it often happens that he falls asleep over his books, and often he forgets to eat and drink in talking of the things of Our Lord."

The Franciscan missionary, Rui d'Aguiar, writing to King Manuel of Portugal about the piety of the Mani Kongo, King Afonso of the Kongo, 25th May 1516.

Afonso's son, Henrique, subsequently became the first black African bishop in the Catholic church. But the kingdom of the Kongo was ruined by the slave trade, which caused a massive drain on manpower.

4.2. THE SOYO

The Soyo people were initially junior partners in an alliance with the Manikongo, but this changed in the 17th century. The Soyo traded with the Dutch from whom they bought firearms in exchange for slaves, ivory and copper. The Soyo eventually usurped the Manikongo and laid waste Sao Salvador, the Kongo seat of power. The Soyo set up their capital in Mbanza Soyo (now modern Porto Rico on Zaire river in northern Angola). By 1665 the Kongo empire had largely disintegrated.

4.3. THE SOYO ELITE

Capuchin missionaries from Portugal established themselves as crucial intermediaries between the Soyo and Europe. They were helped by eight or ten interpreters, many related to the ruler, bound by a vow of secrecy and governed by many rules. The interpreters were a privileged group and did not pay tax or do military service. Their job was to translate during confession, prepare the altar and teach. By the late 17th century the ruler of Soyo was attending mass three times a week, carried in a hammock, wearing a cross of solid gold.

However, there was conflict between the Capuchins and the Soyo over the issue of monogamous marriage and traditional religious practices. The Capuchins did not want the Soyo to sell baptised slaves to the English or other non-Catholic traders. They insisted that baptised slaves could only be sold to the Portuguese.

4.4. POSSESSION

At the beginning of the 18th century there was an attempt to revive the fortunes of the Kongo empire. In 1704, Dona Beatriz Kimpa Vita, a young Kongolese woman, born to a noble Catholic family, claimed to be possessed by the spirit of St. Anthony. Inspired by this visitation she set about fighting to reestablish the preeminence of the old Kongo empire. She led a crusade of a thousand followers to Sao Salvador in 1704. Two years later she was burnt at the stake for heresy.

Christianity persisted in the region, although it evolved in its own way, specific to the area. Missionaries who turned up in the 19th century, expecting to convert the local population, found people practising their own Africanised form of Christianity. All Souls Day had merged with the veneration of ancestors (a fusion repeated in many other parts of Africa), and the Virgin Mary had become something of a fertility symbol.

In the rest of Africa, Christianity made little headway in the 18th century. Rulers in West Africa were mildly interested at first, seeing Christianity as something to add on to their own religions. But they grew hostile when told they had to make a choice: it was either Christianity or traditional religion. South Africa was the site of greater Christian missionary activity. The Moravian Brethren (closely linked to the Lutherans) of Eastern Europe, established a mission in 1737. In 1799 the London Missionary Society (LMS) followed suit.

5. 19TH CENTURY WHITE MISSIONARIES

At the beginning of the 19th century, very few people in Africa were practising Christians, apart from Ethiopians, Coptic Egyptians and people living in the remnants of the Kongo Empire (modern Congo Brazzaville and western DR Congo).

In the 1800's, Catholic missionary expeditions were launched with new vigour to the West, in Senegal and Gabon. Protestant missionaries took up work in Sierra Leone in 1804. The missionaries represented a big spectrum of denominations or churches: Catholic, Protestant, Anglican, many of them in competition and conflict with each other.

The abolition of slave owning in 1807 and slave trading in 1834 throughout the British Empire proved to be two important turning points. Outlawing the slave trade and converting freed slaves became a powerful motive for setting up European Christian missions. Human compassion in Europe for the plight of slaves meant that money could be raised to fund the considerable expenses of setting up a mission.

The Protestants spread the Christian gospel through the slaves who were liberated from slaving ships along the West Coast after 1834. The application of Christian doctrine was much stricter than it had been in previous centuries. The success of Christian missionary programmes can be linked to the education they offered. Many people in Africa wanted education; and missionaries taught people to read, in order that they might understand the word of God.

5.1. RESCUED FROM SLAVERY

The missionary traveler **David Livingstone** (1813-1873) believed that the slave trade could only be suppressed by a combination of Christianity and trade. He travelled extensively from east to west in southern Africa dedicated to bringing Christianity to all, but never staying very long anywhere. He was most successful among the Tswana people (in modern Botswana), even though conversion to Christianity upset the status quo of this community.

Neither Livingstone nor other missionaries had much impact on the slave trading which went on between the interior and the East coast. They failed to convert any significant numbers of Muslims to Christianity. Livingstone's well-intentioned call for colonisation as an antidote to the horrors of slavery, paved the way for a host of missionaries and speculators to follow in his footsteps and cause immense hardship for the people of southern Africa.

5.2. DEDICATION AND DECEIT

Many European missionaries worked extremely hard running their missions, risking their lives and good health in the process. They varied enormously in their ability to contribute to the quality of life of those they lived with. Some remained dedicated but contemptuous of those they claimed to be converting. Others developed deep affection and respect for those they worked with and made a long lasting impression.

The Scottish factory worker, Mary Slessor was one such missionary. She spent over 40 years in southern Nigeria, in Calabar. She learnt the local language and lived a life of total simplicity. She dealt head-on with some of the customs of the region, such as throwing twins into the bush to die, and negotiated an end to this. Today she is still revered and loved as a local figure.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/8audio4.ram

Among the least admirable missionaries in history is reckoned to be the Reverend Helm of the Christian Missionary Society (CMS) who deliberately mistranslated a document drawn up between **King Lobengula** of the Ndebele and the British South Africa Company of Cecil Rhodes. This resulted in King Lobengula giving away all his land to speculators, thinking he had only signed away a limited mining concession. He was one of the rulers of southern Africa who had consistently refused to convert to Christianity.

Another runner up for the title of villainous missionary is the Catholic priest, Friar Antonio Barroso, who persuaded the illiterate Dom Pedro V, King of the Congo to sign a note in 1884. He believed it was a thank you letter for a gold-backed chair; in fact it was an oath of loyalty and submission to the King of Portugal.

Portuguese missionaries in Angola and Mozambique in the late 19th century and 20th century were renowned and feared for their willingness to work hand in glove with the Portuguese colonial authorities. As a result of this alliance between church and state, Protestant missions proved very popular and many of Angola and Mozambique's leading nationalists were educated in Protestant missionary schools.

TWO STAGES IN THE CONVERSION OF CHIEF SECHELE OF THE BAKWAIN
<p>LITERACY & OBESITY "As soon as he had an opportunity of learning, he set himself to read with such close application, that from being comparatively thin, the effect of having been fond of the chase, he became quite corpulent from want of exercise.</p> <p>Mr. Oswell gave him his first lesson in figures, and he acquired the alphabet on the first day of my residence at Chonuane.</p> <p>He was by no means an ordinary specimen of the people, for I never went into the town but I was pressed to hear him read some chapters of the Bible. Isaiah was a great favourite with him; and he was wont to use the same phrase nearly which the professor of Greek at Glasgow, Sir D.K. Sandford, once used respecting the Apostle Paul, when reading his speeches in the Acts: 'He was a fine fellow, that Paul!'"</p>
<p>BAPTISM & DIVISION "Seeing several of the old men actually in tears during the service, I asked them afterwards the cause of their weeping; they were crying to see their father, as the Scotch remark over a case of suicide, 'so far left to himself.' They seemed to think that I had thrown the glamour over him, and that he had become mine.</p> <p>Here commenced an opposition, which we had not previously experienced. All the friends of the divorced wives became the opponents of our religion. The attendance at school and church diminished to very few besides the chief's own family."</p> <p><small>Description of Chief Sechele of the Bakwain or Bakuena, a group within the Bechuana people (of modern Botswana) taken from <i>Missionary Travels and Research in South Africa</i> by David Livingstone, 1857.</small></p>

6. 19TH CENTURY BLACK MISSIONARIES

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6.1. FREED SLAVE COLONIES

Sierra Leone and Liberia, both colonies set up by freed slaves, became important centres of Christian practice in West Africa by the 1830's. The freed slaves who arrived in these colonies, who came from America, were already Christians when they arrived. Liberia's first President J. R. Roberts was a man of Christian piety as well as enterprise.

"...The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. He works in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform, though it seems hard at this time, God does all things well for them that love and fear him.

You cannot tell what cause he had thought proper to remove your husband from this world of bustle and confusion, for his part, he is gone to the realms above, he is gone to Abraham's bosom and expects to meet you there."

Joseph Roberts' letter to Mrs. Colson, the widow of his great friend and business partner, Mr. Colson, on the occasion of that man's death in 1836.

6.2. THE FIRST AFRICAN BISHOP

Christian missionaries knew that if Christianity was to flourish, Africans would have to be ordained. Samuel Ajayi Crowther was one of the most famous African representatives of a European church (in this case the Anglican Church).

He was the first African Bishop in the Anglican church. And he was a formidably able man. He had been taken as a slave around 1822, but the slave ship in which he was held was intercepted and he was taken to Freetown. He was educated and baptised and sent to London for further instruction. He kept his own name Ajayi, but also took the name Crowther from a member of the Church Missionary Society (CMS).

He was commissioned by the CMS to set up the Niger Mission; the first expedition to do so resulted in the death of a third of the party, all of which Crowther carefully documented in his journal. He supervised the setting up of a mission in Badagry, and later Abeokuta, (both in the south west of Nigeria), steering a difficult path between rulers in the region, some hostile to Christianity, some of whom were in conflict with each other. He later met Queen Victoria and read the Lord's prayer to her in the Nigerian language of Yoruba, which she described as soft and melodious. His missionary work expanded outside Yorubaland in south west Nigeria, founding a mission station in Onitsha, in the East of the territory.

He published many works including the first written grammar of the Yoruba language and first Nupe grammar. In 1864, against considerable opposition from jealous fellow missionary Henry Townsend (another Niger Mission missionary), Crowther was made Bishop of 'West-ern Equatorial Africa' beyond the Queen's Dominions.

A generation after Samuel Crowther, another formidable African churchman emerged in Nigeria: the Anglican priest, the Reverend J. J. Ransome Kuti. He carried out his ministry in defiance of the traditional priests with total confidence, as vividly described by Wole Soyinka in his autobiography *Ake*.

"... Rev J.J. was away on one of his many mission tours. He travelled a lot, on foot and on bicycle, keeping in touch with all the branches of his diocese and spreading the Word of God. There was frequent opposition but nothing deterred him.

One frightening experience occurred in one of the villages in Ijebu. He had been warned not to preach on that particular day, which was the day for an egungun outing, but he persisted and held a service. The egungun procession passed while the service was in progress and using his ancestral voice, called on the preacher to stop at once, disperse his people and come out to pay obeisance. Rev J.J. ignored him.

The egungun then left, taking his followers with him but, on passing the main door, he tapped on it with his wand three times. Hardly had the last member of his procession left the church premises then the building collapsed. The walls simply fell down and the roof disintegrated.

Miraculously however, the walls fell outwards - anywhere but on the congregation itself. Rev J.J. calmed the worshippers, paused in his preaching to render a thanksgiving prayer, then continued his sermon..."

6.3. PERSECUTION

In East Africa, Christianity was carefully considered by the Kabaka Mutesa, who started out favouring Islam but turned to Christianity in old age. His son Kabaka Mwangi was at first favourably disposed towards Christians, but under pressure from factional intrigue among his chiefs he constantly changed his mind about religion. He ordered the murder of Anglican Bishop Hannington, who was on his way to see him, and had a number of Christian pages murdered - the pages are sometimes referred to as 'readers' because they learnt to read when they became Christian. He was ousted from office for some years by his own chiefs, later reinstated and finally sent into exile by the British.

PROTESTANTS & CATHOLICS IN BUGANDA

"...Mwanga (Kabaka or King of Buganda in exile) sent us a written proposal, saying, 'I wish to return to my throne,' we invited him and he ran away from the Catholics and returned to us and we restored him to the throne.

Further we assigned to all the Catholics a district of Uganda, viz. Budu, and there they lived apart. We told them, 'we do not wish to mix with the Catholics again.'

At the present time we Protestants have possessed ourselves of a very large district and all the islands; and now the Mohammedans (Muslims) are applying to us to assign them a district, where they may settle and cease fighting with us: but the terms are not yet finally agreed upon..."

Letter from Anglican missionary, Henry Wright Duta Kitakule, to a missionary in Zanzibar, April 1892.

6.4. BLURRING THE BOUNDARIES

The line between Christian and African religious practice was not always very clearcut. In West Africa, a broad spectrum of religious beliefs emerged - traditional beliefs, Islam and Christianity flourishing side by side, sometimes in the same family. Nigerian politician, Chief Awolowo Obafemi, recounts the religious beliefs of his parents in the early 1900's. Of his mother he says,

"After her marriage to my father, even though she attended church regularly with my father and discharged all her financial obligations as well as rendering voluntary services to the church, she remained unbaptised, and a mere proselyte at the gate.

It was a condition precedent to the consent to her marriage with father, stipulated by her parents, that she should not be baptised, and admitted to the Christian fold. Her mother worshipped the river god (Oluweri, i.e. Owner and Ruler of the Rivers).

When she gave birth to my mother, she had dedicated her to this god of the rivers, and she was not going to break her vow under any circumstances. Though mother, after her marriage, learnt to read in the vernacular and was, thereafter, able to read the Bible, the Prayer Book, and to sing hymns, and though she continued to attend church after father's death, it was some years after her own mother's death that I succeeded in getting her to break her mother's vow to the river god, and become a baptised Christian."

The first African Catholics Bishops were not appointed until 1939 - Joseph Kiwanuka in Uganda and Joseph Faye in Senegal. Elsewhere African missionaries were appointed by the Presbyterian Church in Cameroun in 1896. Many people went to study in America and came back to preach the word of God. Often, like John Chilembwe, branching out on returning home to set up an independent African church.

7. CONTRASTS AND PARALLELS

7.1. TENSIONS

Christianity was taken up enthusiastically by large numbers of people from the 1880's in West, South and parts of East Africa. But many missionaries who came from Europe from the 1800's onwards were disapproving of how Africans worshipped. They demanded monogamy where polygamy was central to the health and wealth of the community; they disapproved of some traditional dress, and dances. They wanted all the objects or animals which people worshipped, destroyed.

There were also tensions between missionaries and Africans when they converted to Christianity. It was not long before African Christians wanted to worship without any European intermediaries, and, to the distress of many missionaries, in their own style.

7.2. PARALLELS

There were aspects of Christianity which were quite familiar to people coming across it for the first time: the idea of a supreme power; the idea of the material world - this world; and

another world - the spiritual world; and the idea of revelation and prophesy, through dreams and through visions. These were all present to a greater or lesser extent in traditional religions. Redemption through Christ's sacrifice had its echo in sacrificial rites of traditional religions.

Missionaries had, from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, been tolerant of African religious practices merging with Christianity. So for a time, polygamy was not considered adultery but assigned the lesser sin of concubinage. In Europe the same thing had happened: European pagan practices had been adapted to Christian ones when Christianity first spread in Europe.

8. AFRICAN CHURCHES

8.1. RACE, CUSTOM AND CHRISTIANITY

In the colonial administration, the senior positions of power were held by Europeans. This racial divide was not so easy to justify in the church. What was attractive about Christianity, and Islam for that matter, was that these religions offered something to everyone; they did not only serve the rich, the powerful, or those of a certain race or from a certain region, clan or people. In practice, however, the prejudices of Europeans led to double standards.

8.2. NIGERIA

In Nigeria, in Lagos, in the 1930's one of the churches was reserved for Europeans only. The only Nigerian allowed in was the composer, musician and organ scholar Fela Sowande. For obliging the Europeans by playing the organ there, on several occasions he incurred criticism from fellow Nigerians. The Sowande family were typical of the Christian educated elite in Lagos; they put up with these racial slights because they had their eyes set on prizes further afield. Fela ended up composing music for the BBC and his brother became a London based barrister.

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8.3. THE GOLD COAST

In the neighbouring Gold Coast, Akans expelled from the Methodist Church reacted by setting up their own church with its own heavenly language, Musama Christo Disco or the Army of the Cross of Christ. The Akan lay preacher and composer Ephraim Amu broke with Methodist convention when he was refused ordination because he wore African cloth in church. AMU, who died a few years ago in his nineties, also composed music and lyrics for many hymns, as well as the national anthem.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/8audio7.ram

8.4. SOUTHERN AFRICA

In southern Africa, the increasingly segregated Dutch Reform Church and the growing exclusion of Africans from social and political life, led to a huge number of churches springing up, many of them going under the name of Ethiopian (a tribute to Ethiopia's ancient church).

Among these Ethiopian churches was Nehemiah Tile's founded in 1882 and Mangena M. Mokone's Tembu National Church established in 1892. The other important Christian movement was the Watchtower Movement, a precursor of the Jehovah Witnesses. Their followers believed in the end of the colonial rule and the end of the world. They were prominent from the late 19th century onwards in Nyasaland (modern Malawi) and Northern Rhodesia (modern Zambia).

The assertion of African identity was a driving force in many churches, for example, The Church of Christ for the Union of the Bantu and Protection of the Bantu Customs. The African-American Christianity also had great weight in southern Africa, the main church being the African Methodist Episcopal (AME). It was very influential in Zimbabwe, and South Africa, as well as Liberia and Sierra Leone. Local churches continue to flourish and be founded today; in times of war or famine their role becomes particularly important.

8.5. THE HOLY SPIRIT

In East Africa a number of churches sprung up. After the First World War, Ruben Spartas Mukasa, formerly with the King's African Rifle, formed a church for 'the redemption of all Africa'.

In Kenya the concept of the Holy Spirit played a big role. Speaking in tongues was a regular feature of the services of the Holy Ghost Church, Dimi ya Roho, founded in 1927 and the Joroho Church, founded in 1932.

The Watu wa Mngu (People of God) were a Gikuyu religious group founded between the World Wars. Their mode of praying inspired the title of Jomo Kenyatta's social and anthropological book, Facing Mount Kenya.

"Their prayers are a mixture of Gikuyu religion and Christian; in these they add something entirely new to both religions. They perform their religious duties standing in a picturesque manner.

In their prayer to Mwene-Nyaga (God) they hold up their arms to the sky facing Mount Kenya; and in this position they recite their prayers, and in doing so they imitate the cries of wild beasts of prey, such as lion and leopard, and at the same time they tremble violently.

The trembling, they say, is the sign of the Holy Ghost, Roho Motheru, entering in them. While thus possessed with the spirits, they are transformed from ordinary beings and are in communion with Mwene-Nyaga...

Some of their shrines were closed down by the Government, on the assumption that they were used for secret meetings of a political character...It was also stated that very offensive and unedifying attacks were made, in the name of Christ, on the Christian neighbouring missionaries."

Taken from Facing Mount Kenya by Jomo Kenyatta.

In Tanzania the African National Church of Tanganyika was founded in the 1930's. One of its attractions was that it tolerated polygamy.

8.6. PERSECUTION IN CONGO

In the Congo, the church had a strong anti-colonial strand. Along with the Eglise des Noirs (Church of the Blacks) was Simon Kimbangu's EJCSK (Eglise de Jesus sur la Terre par le Prophete Simon Kimbangu), or Church of Jesus on Earth through the Prophet Simon Kimbangu. The latter was founded in 1921 and its followers refused to pay taxes and withheld their labour. Simon Kimbangu died in prison in 1951, but his church spread in the Congo and Oubangui-Chari (modern Central African Republic).

A CHURCH FOR AFRICA

"We must seek to bring into the Native Church the Chiefs and other men of influence. Do not expect of them the perfection, which a narrow philanthropy exacts. Consider the conditions under which Europe received the Gospel.

Had the hard conditions now imposed upon African Chiefs been required of European sovereigns and chiefs, Christianity might never have been permanently established on the West of the Bosphorus.

The first Christian Emperor, Constantine, was half a pagan to the end. He erected in his new capital, Constantinople, a statue of himself. At the base of this statue, it is said, he placed a fragment of what he believed to be the true Cross.

In the same place he deposited the Paladium, the cherished relic of Pagan Rome, which Aeneas was said to have rescued from the flames of Troy, and which Constantine himself stealthily removed to his new capital. This was his fetish, brought over from heathenism."

Liberian thinker and writer, Edward W. Blyden. Excerpt from Proposals for a West Africa Church.

9. FORCES FOR CHANGE

9.1. LITERACY

The promise of literacy is what made Christianity very attractive to many people. Most of sub-Saharan Africa had no form of writing until the arrival of Europeans.

There were however a number of different scripts in the north of the continent. Ethiopia developed its own script for religious purposes in the 5th century.

Arabic script came to sub-Saharan Africa some time in the 11th century. Nobody knows the origin of the Vey script which was used on the border of Sierra Leone and Liberia. It was translated in the late 19th century by a member of the Church Missionary Society.

SACRED WORDS IN NIGERIAN PIDGIN ENGLISH

"For de first time, noting been be - only de Lawd He be. An' de Lawd, He done go work hard for make dis ting dey call um Earth.

For six days de lawd He work an He done make all ting - everyting He go put for Earth. Plenty beef, plenty cassava, plenty banana, plenty yam, plenty guinea-corn, plenty mango, plenty groundnut - everyting.

An for de wata He put plenty fish, an for de air, He put plenty kinda bird. An' after six days de Lawd He done go sleep an' when He sleep, plenty palaver start for dis place day call 'um Heaven."

From The Book of Genesis in Pidgin English. Quoted by H. W. Bolden in The Times, London, October 2001.

10. CHRISTIANITY TIMELINE

- 29, 30 or 33: Crucifixion of Jesus
- 100 - 2nd Century: Christianity comes to Alexandria from Jerusalem
- 180: 12 Christians executed for beliefs in Carthage
- 181: In Carthage Perpetua refuses renounce Christianity and is sent to the lions.
- 182: Emperor Diocletian launches great persecution against Christianity.
- 4th Century: Collapse of Meroe kingdom
- 5th -7th Century: Scriptures translated into Ge'ez in Ethiopia.
- 311: Donatist split
- 312: Constantine makes Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire.
- 333: Ethiopian King Ezana makes Christianity official religion
- 451: Schism (divide) with Rome on nature of God, marks the beginning of separate Coptic Church I in North Africa (taking Monophysite line, i.e. Jesus is not human as well as the son of God.
- 6th Century: Christianity comes to Nubia.
- 639: Islam comes to North Africa, displacing Christianity on a large scale.
- 1317: Nubia turns Muslim; Dongola cathedral converted to Mosque.
- 1490: First missionaries come to Kongo from Portugal.
- 1621: With the abdication of Emperor Susenyos, the Ethiopian Church is restored as the official church, after a period of Catholicism.

1652:	Dutch settle in the Cape; beginning of Dutch Reformed Church.
1706:	Emperor Susenyos of Ethiopia becomes Catholic; Dona Beatriz Kimpa Vita, of Kongo, is burnt at stake having claimed to be possessed by spirit of St. Anthony.
1737:	Moravian Brethren set up in South Africa.
1799:	London Missionary Society (LMS) set up in South Africa.
1804:	Protestant mission in Sierra Leone.
1807:	British declare abolition of slave trade.
1839:	Pope Gregory XVI issues Papal Bull condemning slavery.
1840:	David Livingstone arrives in Africa.
1865:	Samuel Ajayi Crowther became first black Anglican Bishop in Nigeria.
1868:	White Fathers Mission Society established by Lavignerie, Archbishop of Algiers. Dedicated to mission work in Africa.
1882:	Nehemiah Tile's Ethiopian church founded in South Africa.
1886:	Execution of Christian pages in court of Buganda by Kabaka Mwanga.
1892:	Mangena M. Mokone's Tembu National Church founded in South Africa.
1921:	Simon Kimbangu founds EJCSK (Eglise de Jesus sur la Terre par le Prophete Simon Kimangu) or Church of Jesus on Earth through the Prophet Simon Kimangu.
1927:	Dimi Ya Roho (Holy Ghost Church) founded in Kenya.
1939:	1st African Catholic Bishops: Joseph Kiwanuka of Buganda, and Joseph Faye of Senegal.
1960:	Dutch Reformed Church expelled from the World Council of Churches.

11. FURTHER READING

Journal of an Expedition up the Niger and Tsadda Rivers undertaken by MacGregor Laird in 1854. By Samuel A. Crowther. International Specialized Book Service, December 1970.

Facing Mount Kenya. By Jomo Kenyatta. Random House, June 1962.

Ake: The Years of Childhood. By Wole Soyinka. Vintage Books, November 1989.

Awo, The Autobiography of Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Cambridge University Press.

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The Colonial Moment in Africa. Edited by Andrew Roberts. Cambridge University Press, November 1990.

Staying Power. By Peter Fry. Pluto Classic

Black Spokesman, Selected Published Writings of Edward Wilmot Blyden. Edited by Hollis R. Lynch. Cass.

Themes in the Christian History of Central Africa. Edited by T. O. Ranger and J. Weller. London.

Christianity in Tropical Africa. Edited by C. G. Baeta. London

12. USEFUL LINKS

The BBC is not responsible for the content of external Internet sites

Jesus Christ

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/people/features/world.religions/christianity.shtml

Guide to the Religions of the World site, produced by the BBC World Service.

Augustine of Hippo

<http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/jod/augustine.html>

Professor James O'Donnell, University of Pennsylvania website.

Axum

www.wsu.edu:8080/%7Eedee/CIVAFRCA/AXUM.HTM

Site entitled World Civilizations, provided by Washington State University

King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba

www.bethel.edu/%7Eletnie/AfricanChristianity/EthiopiaMakeda.html

Bethel College & Seminary.

Meroe

www.orient.ru/eng/resour/meroe/state.htm

EurAsian Orientalist Server.

Ndebele King Lobengula

www.britannica.com/bcom/eb/article/3/0,5716,49833+1+48674,00.html

Encyclopaedia Britannica

History of Christianity

www.yale.edu/adhoc/research-resources/links.htm

Yale Divinity Library, Yale University

Monuments and manuscripts

www.unesco.org/whc/exhibits/afr_rev/africa-l.htm

Africa Revisited site, provided by UNESCO World Heritage Centre.

Classic Christian books in electronic format

www.ccel.org/wwsb

Christian Classics Ethereal Library, Calvin College, USA

Queen of Sheba

www.ucalgary.ca/unicomm/NewsReleases/queen.htm

University of Calgary website.

Ark of the Covenant

<http://tlc.discovery.com/tlcpages/ark/ark.html>

Discovery site.

The Coptic Orthodox Church

www.stgeorge-philly.atfreeweb.com/Coptic.htm

By Father Marcos A. Marcos, St. George Coptic Church of Greater Philadelphia.

The Lord's Prayer in 365 languages

www.christusrex.org/www1/pater/index.html

Provided By Christus Rex organisation.

Ethiopian Christianity and the Orthodox Church

www.bethel.edu/%7Eletnie/EthiopiaHomepage.html

Bethel College & Seminary.

History of Christianity

www.britannica.com/bcom/eb/article/5/0,5716,108295+1+105945,00.html

Site provided by the Encyclopaedia Britannica.

Cecil Rhodes

www.fordham.edu/halsall/africa/africasbook.html

Internet African History Sourcebook. Edited by Paul Halsall, History Department, Fordham University.

Christianity in Egypt.
www.interoz.com/egypt/chiste3.htm
Saints which contributed to the growth of Christianity in Egypt.

IX. SLAVERY

1. INTRODUCTION

"They seize numbers of our free or freed black subjects, and even nobles, sons of nobles, even the members of our own family."

Excerpt from letter from Affonso, King of Congo, to King of Portugal João III, 18 October 1526.

Within the space of four hundred years millions of people were forcibly taken from Africa as slaves. The majority of them went to the Americas, although many were taken to the Middle East and North Africa.

Slavery had been practised all over the world for thousands of years, but never before had so many people from one continent been transported to another against their will.

It is hard to be precise, but around 15 million Africans in total were forcibly taken from the continent into slavery. Large scale slave trading in Africa ceased towards the end of the 19th century, but its legacy of suffering continues today.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/9audio0.ram

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/9audio0a.ram

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/9audio0b.ram

2. THE ROOTS OF SLAVERY

The term slave has its origins in the word slav. The slavs, who inhabited a large part of Eastern Europe, were taken as slaves by the Muslims of Spain during the ninth century AD.

Slavery can broadly be described as the ownership, buying and selling of human beings for the purpose of forced and unpaid labour. It is an ancient practice, mentioned in both the Bible and the Koran.

As for those of your slaves which wish to buy their liberty, free them if you find in them any promise and bestow on them a part of the riches which God has given you. Koran, Chapter 24, Verse 32.

Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.

Old Testament, Ephesians 6, Chapter 6, Verse 8.

Indeed, the main religious texts of Judaism, Islam and Christianity all recognise slaves as a separate class of people in society. Going back further in time the Mayans and Aztecs kept slaves in the Americas, as did the Sumerians and Babylonians in the Near East. The Egyptians employed huge numbers of slaves, including the Jews, Europeans and Ethiopians.

The Greeks and Romans kept slaves as soldiers, servants, labourers and even civil servants. The Romans captured slaves from what is now Britain, France and Germany. Slave armies were kept by the Ottomans and Egyptians.

In Imperial Russia in the first half of the 19th century one third of the population were serfs, who like slaves in the Americas, had the status of chattels and could be bought and sold. They were finally freed in 1861 by Emperor Alexander II. Four years later slavery was abolished in the southern states of America following southern defeat in the American Civil War. In Africa there were a number of societies and kingdoms which kept slaves, before there was any regular commercial contact with Europeans, including the Asanti, the Kings of Bonny and Dahomey.

Find out more in African Slave Owners

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/9chapter2.shtml

3. AFRICAN SLAVE OWNERS

Many societies in Africa with kings and hierarchical forms of government traditionally kept slaves. But these were mostly used for domestic purposes. They were an indication of power and wealth and not used for commercial gain. However, with the appearance of Europeans desperate to buy slaves for use in the Americas, the character of African slave ownership changed.

3.1. GROWING RICH WITH SLAVERY

ROYALTY

In the early 18th century, Kings of Dahomey (known today as Benin) became big players in the slave trade, waging a bitter war on their neighbours, resulting in the capture of 10,000, including another important slave trader, the King of Whydah. King Tegbesu made £250,000 a year selling people into slavery in 1750. King Gezo said in the 1840's he would do anything the British wanted him to do apart from giving up slave trade:

"The slave trade is the ruling principle of my people. It is the source and the glory of their wealth...the mother lulls the child to sleep with notes of triumph over an enemy reduced to slavery..."

LIVING WITNESS

Some of the descendants of African traders are alive today. Mohammed Ibrahim Babatu is the great great grandson of Baba-ato (also known as Babatu), the famous Muslim slave trader, who was born in Niger and conducted his slave raids in Northern Ghana in the 1880's. Mohammed Ibrahim Babatu, the deputy head teacher of a Junior secondary school in Yendi, lives in Ghana.

"In our curriculum, we teach a little part of the history of our land. Because some of the children ask questions about the past history of our grandfather Babatu.

Babatu, and others, didn't see anything wrong with slavery. They didn't have any knowledge of what the people were used for. They were only aware that some of the slaves would serve others of the royal families within the sub-region.

He has done a great deal of harm to the people of Africa. I have studied history and I know the effect of slavery.

I have seen that the slave raids did harm to Africa, but some members of our family feel he was ignorant...we feel that what he did was fine, because it has given the family a great fame within the Dagomba society.

He gave some of the slaves to the Dagombas and then he sent the rest of the slaves to the Salaga market. He didn't know they were going to plantations...he was ignorant..."

[Listen to Mohammed Ibrahim Babatu, great great grandson of the famous Muslim slave trader Baba-ato](#)

SONGHAY

The young Moroccan traveler and commentator, Leo Africanus, was amazed at the wealth and quantity of slaves to be found in Gao, the capital of Songhay, which he visited in 1510 and 1513 when the empire was at the height of its power under Askiya Mohammed.

"...here there is a certain place where slaves are sold, especially on those days when the merchants are assembled. And a young slave of fifteen years of age is sold for six ducats, and children are also sold. The king of this region has a certain private palace where he maintains a great number of concubines and slaves."

SWAHILI

The ruling class of coastal Swahili society - Sultans, government officials and wealthy merchants - used non-Muslim slaves as domestic servants and to work on farms and estates.

The craftsmen, artisans and clerks tended to be Muslim and freed men. But the divisions between the different classes were often very flexible. The powerful slave and ivory trader Tippu Tip was the grandson of a slave.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/5audio2a.ram

The Omani Sultan, Seyyid Said, became immensely rich when he started up cloves plantations in 1820 with slave labour - so successful was he that he moved the Omani capital to Zanzibar in 1840.

Find out more about the Swahilis

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/index_section5.shtml

3.2. PUNISHED FOR KEEPING SLAVES

The Asanti (the capital, Kumasi, is in modern Ghana) had a long tradition of domestic slavery. But gold was the main commodity for selling. With the arrival of Europeans the slaves displaced gold as the main commodity for trade. As late as 1895 the British Colonial Office was not concerned by this.

"It would be a mistake to frighten the King of Kumasi and the Ashantis generally on the question of slavery. We cannot sweep away their customs and institutions all at once. Domestic slavery should not be troubled at present."

British attitudes changed when the King of the Asanti (the Asantehene) resisted British colonial authority. The suppression of the slave trade became a justification for the extension of European power. With the humiliation and exile of King Prempeh I in 1896, the Asanti were placed under the authority of the Governor of the Gold Coast and forced therefore to conform to British law and abolish the slave trade.

3.3. SLAVERY DECREED BY THE GODS

In 1807, Britain declared all slave trading illegal. The king of Bonny (in what is now the Nigerian delta) was dismayed at the conclusion of the practice.

"We think this trade must go on. That is the verdict of our oracle and the priests. They say that your country, however great, can never stop a trade ordained by God himself."

4. THE EAST AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE

In East Africa a slave trade was well established before the Europeans arrived on the scene. It was driven by the sultanates of the Middle East. African slaves ended up as sailors in Persia, pearl divers in the Gulf, soldiers in the Omani army and workers on the salt pans of Mesopotamia (modern Iraq). Many people were domestic slaves, working in rich households. Women were taken as sex slaves.

Arab traders began to settle among the Africans of the coast, resulting in the emergence of a people and culture known as **Swahili**. In the second half of the 18th century, the slave trade expanded and became more organised. There was also a huge demand for ivory, and slaves were used as porters to carry it.

There were three main reasons why more slaves were required:

- The clove plantations on Zanzibar and Pemba set up by Sultan Seyyid Said, needed labour.
- Brazilian traders were finding it difficult to operate in West Africa because the British navy was intercepting slave ships. The Brazilians made the journey round the Cape of Good Hope, taking slaves from the Zambezi valley and Mozambique.
- The French had started up sugar and coffee plantations in Mauritius and Reunion.

A number of different people -Arabs and Africans - were involved in supplying slaves from the interior, as well as transporting ivory. They included:

- the prazeros, descendants of Portuguese and Africans, operating along the Zambezi,
- the Yao working North East of the Zambezi
- the Makua operating East of the Yao, closer to the coast

- the Nyamwezi (or Yeke) operating further north around Lake Tanganyika under the leadership of Msiri and Mirambo, who established a trading and raiding state in the 1850's which linked up with the Ovimbundu in what is now modern Angola.

The most famous trader of all was **Tippu Tip**, (Hamed bin Mohammed) a Swahili Arab son of a trader, and grandson of an African slave. He was born in Zanzibar of African Arab parentage and went on to establish a base West of Lake Tanganyika, linking up with Msiri. He and his men operated in an area stretching over a thousand miles from inland to the coast.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/9audio2a.ram

5. THE ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE

Before the sixteenth century, slavery was not regarded by anyone (outside or inside Africa) as a particularly African institution. The association between Africa and slavery emerged in the fifteenth century. It was then that **ship design** made it possible for sailors from the Mediterranean to make long journeys down the coast of Africa and ultimately across the Atlantic to the Americas.

By the time the slaves reached the coast, they had already undertaken a long journey from inland. They were often bought and sold several times along the way. Many of these transactions were conducted in the market place.

5.1. CASE STUDY: THE SALAGA SLAVE MARKET

Salaga, in northern Ghana, was the site of a major slave market. Today, there are still descendants of people who were slaves. The history is vivid in peoples's minds.

5.2. OUAMKAM BAYOU

"Ouamkam means bathing. Bayou means slave. So literally it means 'Bathing slaves.' This is the place where all the slaves were bathed. They would bathe them here, rub them with shea butter and make them shine, and they gave them food to eat, to make them look big; then they'd take them to the slave market for sale."

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/9audio4.ram

5.3. THE PARAMOUNT CHIEF OF SALAGA

"Salaga is in the southern part of the northern region. Salaga was an old slave market. Caravans used to come all the way from northern Nigeria and other places, Burkina Faso, Mali and so on. Salaga became important for its market in human beings.

The slaves were brought in here. There were places to store them and most of the time they were actually tied around trees...in the market. There were just one or two rooms that can even be seen up to this date. But most of the time they were tied around, big, big trees, guava trees, close to the market...

Slavery became a commercial venture. Even local chiefs benefited. When the slaves were brought, the chiefs took a certain number for themselves and sold them to the buyers. People benefited. If you were not a victim, of course, then you benefitted. Sometimes, even the people themselves became victims. Because it was so inhuman that there was no sympathy between them. If you quarrelled with your friend and you managed to capture him you could take him to the market - to sell him.

With hindsight, we feel remorse that these things happened and our great great grandfathers took part in the trade. But at that time it was a normal thing. It's just like what is happening today. It was a market; people were buying. There was no transaction in cash. It was just gunpowder or guns in exchange for human beings. Sometimes you look at it from a human and religious point of view, sometimes you feel it was a very bad thing...but it happened. "

[Listen to Paramount Chief Of Salaga](#)

"Slaves were the most important commodity as opposed to other commodities like salt and other mercantile goods that were brought from the south. But definitely slavery dominated the activities here.

Everybody here in Salaga is a descendant of a slave. Everybody in Salaga, except those of us who have moved in now. But you see people don't feel easy speaking about it. But everybody knows that he is a descendant of slaves. The Gouruma, the Hausa, the Zaboroma, the Hausa, the Dagomba. All the tribes in Salaga, there are thirteen tribes in Salaga, know."



5.4. RECRUITING SLAVES

The Portuguese were particularly keen to explore Africa for wealth and material gain; at the same time they had started up colonies in the Americas, and needed labour to work on plantations there. In the 1440's Africans were captured and taken to Portugal.

Fifty two years later in 1492 the Italian adventurer Christopher Columbus made the first of his visits to the Caribbean, arriving somewhere near the Bahamas. His aim was to gain wealth for himself and his patrons, Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand of Spain. In 1518 the first slaves were dispatched across the Atlantic.

Soon Britain, the Netherlands and France were competing with Spain and Portugal for a share of the profits of slavery. This new transatlantic slave trade was very different from the kind of slavery that had existed before.

5.5 SCALE OF TRADE

The sheer number of slaves taken was unprecedented. The large scale of trading destabilised the social and economic order. By the end of the 18th century one historian estimates 70,000 people a year were captured and taken against their will to the Americas. What is now Angola was reduced in parts to a wasteland. In total, at least 12 million Africans were forcibly removed from the continent.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/9audio6a.ram

5.6. DANGEROUS AND LONG JOURNEY

The Transatlantic slave trade involved an immensely long and terrible journey to the Americas, the Middle Passage.

Find out more in [The Journey: The Middle Passage](#).

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/9chapter5.shtml

5.7. COMMERCIAL FORCES

The Atlantic slave trade was shaped and driven by commercial forces of profit and new patterns of consumption. In the past, slavery had a social and cultural context, rooted in kingship, which imposed definition and restraints on the slave master relationship. In the 15th century the chief goal was profit. Conditions for slaves were very harsh.

5.8. THREE PORTRAITS OF SLAVERY

5.8.1. Caribbean

"Poor Daniel was lame in the hip, and could not keep up with the rest of the slaves; and our master would order him to be stripped and laid down on the ground, and have him beaten with a rod of rough briar till his skin was quite red and raw... This

poor man's wounds were never healed and I have often seen them full of maggots...He was an object of pity and terror to the whole gang of slaves, and in his wretched case we saw, each of us, our own lot, if we should live to be as old."

A saltworks in the West Indies, described by former slave Mary Prince, *The History of Mary Prince*.

5.8.2. America

"When their day's work in the field is down, the most of them have their washing, mending and cooking to do, and having few or none of the ordinary facilities for doing either of these, very many of their sleeping hours are consumed in preparing for the field the coming day; and when this is done...they drop down side by side on one common bed - the cold damp floor..."

A plantation in the deep south, described by former slave and abolitionist Frederick Douglass, *The Narrative Life of Frederick Douglass*.

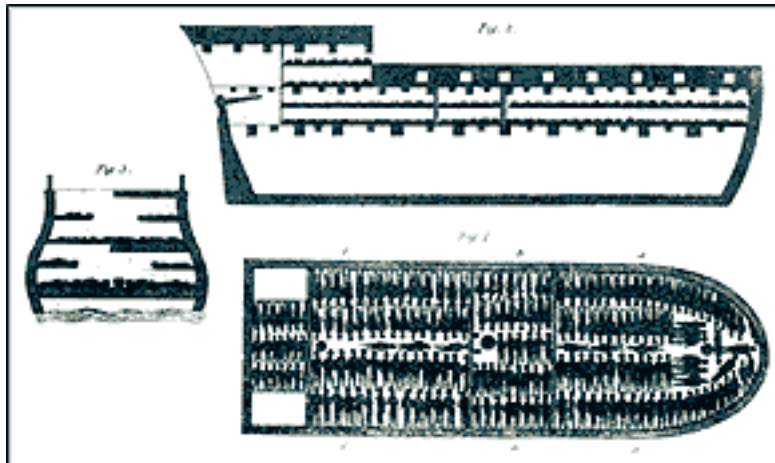
5.8.3. Brazil

"The men and women who created this first great sugar boom in the world lived well. Many stories are told of the opulence of the planters in old Brazil, their tables laden with silver and fine china bought from captains on their way back from the East, doors with gold locks, women wearing huge precious stones, musicians enlivening the banquets, beds covered with damask; and an army of slaves of many colours always hovering."

Excerpt taken from Hugh Thomas, *The Story of the Atlantic Slave Trade*.

There was no hope of returning home; the vast majority of slaves were stuck in the Americas for the rest of their lives. The stigma of slavery remains in America today.

5.9. RACISM AND THE LOSS OF STATUS AND PROSPECTS



The status of slaves in America was different to that of those in Africa and Europe. In ancient times a slave in North Africa, Greece or Rome, or in Arab countries, could rise to a position of public prominence. Women might marry into the ruling class.

No slaves married their masters or mistresses in the Americas, although there were secret relationships, usually forced upon the slave. Whether badly or well treated, slaves were, in American society at large, marked out and despised for the colour of their skin, and so were their descendants.

"I...took the little sufferer in my lap. I observed a general titter among the white members of the family...The youngest of the family, a little girl about the age of the young slave, after gazing at me for a few moments in utter astonishment, exclaimed: 'My! If Mrs. Trollope has not taken her in her lap, and wiped her nasty mouth! Why I would not have touched her mouth for two hundred dollars'...The idea of really sympathising in the sufferings of a slave appeared to them as absurd as weeping over a calf that had been slaughtered by the butcher."

Excerpt from Fanny Trollope's *Domestic Manners of the Americans*. The author is nursing a slave girl who has accidentally taken poison.

Listen to a BBC dramatisation of Fanny Trollope's account, taken from *Domestic Manners of the Americans*
www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/9audio6.ram

6. THE JOURNEY: THE MIDDLE PASSAGE

6.1. HOW MANY WENT WHERE

At the height of the slave trade in the 18th century an estimated six million Africans were forced to make a journey across the Atlantic often totalling over 4,000 miles. Over 54,000 voyages were made in the course of three hundred years between the 16th and 19th centuries.

The large proportion of slaves ended up in the Caribbean, approximately 42%. Around 38% went to Brazil, and much fewer, about 5%, went to North America. The journey from Africa to North America was the longest. The journey could take as little as 35 days, just over a month (going from Angola to Brazil). But normally British and French ships took two to three months.

6.2. INSIDE A SHIP

Ships carried anything from 250 to 600 slaves. They were generally very overcrowded. In many ships they were packed like spoons, with no room even to turn, although in some ships a slave could have a space about five feet three inches high and four feet four inches wide. The slaves were kept between the hold and the deck in appalling conditions.

Olaudah Equiano gave the first eyewitness account of life on a ship from a slave's point of view.

"I was soon put down under the decks, and there I received such a salutation in my nostrils as I had never experienced in my life: so that, with the loathsomeness of the stench, and crying together, I became so sick and low that I was not able to eat, nor had I the least desire to taste anything.

I now wished for the last friend, death, to relieve me; but soon, to my grief, two of the white men offered me eatables; and on my refusing to eat, one of them held me fast by the hands and laid me across I think the windlass, and tied my feet, while the other flogged me severely.

I had never seen among any people such instances of brutal cruelty; and this not only shewn towards us blacks, but also some of the white themselves. One white man in particular I saw, when we were permitted to be on deck, flogged so unmercifully with a large rope near the foremast, that he died in consequence of it."

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/9audio5.ram

If sea was rough portholes had to be closed. This often left them gasping for breath and prone to disease.

"...the excessive heat was not the only thing that rendered their situation intolerable. The deck, that is the floor of their rooms, was so covered with the blood and mucus which had proceeded from them in consequence of the flux, that it resembled a slaughterhouse."

Alexander Falconbridge, a surgeon aboard slave ships and later the governor of a British colony for freed slaves in Sierra Leone.

Women and men were kept separately. Men were chained together. In some ships there was a place in the bilges for defecating and urinating over the edge of the ship, in others there were brimming buckets.

It was very difficult to get to the right place at the right time manacled to other slaves, especially if a slave had diarrhea. After forty or fifty days at sea, the slave ship would stink of urine, faeces, and vomit. As it came into port people could smell it almost before they could see it.

6.2.1. WOMEN

Women were allowed more freedom than men, being considered less of a threat, and often went out on deck and helped with the cooking. But they paid a price for this in some ships by

being the object of constant sexual harassment and even rape, either at the hands of the crew or the captain.

6.2.2. FOOD

Food was plentiful although not always of good quality. Daily rations might include yam, biscuits, rice, beans, plantain, and occasionally meat, but the way it was served - one bucket among ten men - induced quarrels and infection. Water was part of daily rations but could be in short supply and unpleasant to drink. The records of one Liverpool slave ship show it carried rather generously a massive 34,000 gallons of water for crew and slaves.

6.2.3. TREATMENT

Unless slaves proved rebellious the captain and crew were at pains not to ill treat them. This was not out of kindness but for commercial reasons. If a slave died, money was lost. However, some captains were notoriously brutal to slaves and crew alike. A ship's surgeon was employed to oversee eating and exercise. Male slaves might be allowed out twice a week on deck and dancing and drumming was encouraged sometimes with words, sometimes with a whip.

"Exercise being deemed necessary for the preservation of their health they are sometimes obliged to dance when the weather will permit their coming on deck. If they go about it reluctantly or do not move with agility, they are flogged; a person standing by them all the time with a cat-o'-nine-tails in his hands for the purpose."

Taken from Alexander Falconbridge, An Account of the Slave Trade on the Coast of Africa.

There are accounts of rebellious slaves being tortured by having hands, arms and legs cut off, on order of the captain as a lesson to the rest of the slaves, and of women being attacked and disfigured.

6.3. CAUSES OF DEATH

The chief causes of death on ship were dysentery, followed by small pox. A third cause was sheer misery; sometimes slaves willed themselves to die out of sheer depression and hopelessness. They would refuse to eat, and the crew would resort to force feeding, or they would jump over the edge and drown in the sea.

Losses were recorded but most of these documents have disappeared. It's estimated that an average of twenty percent of slaves were lost in transit, and as many as half the slaves have been known to die in one journey. The worst moment for crew and slaves alike was leaving the African coast.

"From the moment that the slaves are embarked, one must put the sails up. The reason is that these slaves have so great a love for their country that they despair when they see that they are leaving it for ever; that makes them die of grief, and I have heard merchants...say that they died more often before leaving the port than during the voyage.

Some throw themselves into the sea, others hit their heads against the ship, others hold their breath to try and smother themselves, others still try to die of hunger from not eating."

Jacques Savary, businessman, writing at the end of the 18th century.

7. AFRICA'S LOSSES

Calculating the statistical dimensions of the slave trade, whether in terms of deaths or number of slaves taken from Africa since the 15th century is not easy. Figures for the Spanish and Portuguese colonies are less reliable than those for North America. The continuation of slavery within Africa in the 19th century after abolition is also poorly documented.

7.1. ARAB SLAVE TRADE

Historical documents containing statistics are not always very reliable. For example, figures for Arab slavery produced by the British government after abolition were inflated as part of the propaganda war against the Arabs in East Africa.

Indeed there remains a great deal of dispute over the figures for the Arab slave trade. One historian produced a total of 17 million slaves, but this is for a period spanning 13 centuries and encompassing trade in North Africa, the North East and South Africa.

A more helpful comparison can be made by looking at the figure for slaves leaving Africa annually for Arab lands from East Africa in the first half of the nineteenth century. This figure exceeds 3,000, compared with the estimate for slaves crossing the Atlantic in the late 18th century at an annual rate of 44,000.

7.2. REPARATIONS

In recent years the slave trade has increasingly been referred to by African Americans as a holocaust (wholesale destruction), and comparisons have been made with the fate of Jews under Nazi rule, as well as the original inhabitants of the Americas at the hands of the first Europeans.

There are a number of movements calling for reparations (financial compensation) to be made by the countries that used to be slave trading nations. These movements are concerned with not just how many people made the journey, but also the impact of the slave trade on population growth over the centuries.

7.3. THE NEAREST WE CAN GET

Shipping records are a central source; there are also documents relating to the running of plantations and deeds of ownership. The numbers become clearer in the late eighteenth century as the slave trade reaches its peak and the movement for abolition begins to get under way.

Estimates as high as 50 million have been floated, and for a long time an accepted figure was 15 million, although this has in recent years been revised down.

Most historians now agree that at least 12 million slaves left the continent between the fifteenth and nineteenth century, but ten to twenty percent died on board ships. Thus a figure of 11 million slaves transported to the Americas is the nearest demonstrable figure historians can produce.

7.4. IMPACT ON POPULATION GROWTH

A number of slaves would have died at the point of capture and more in course of the journey to the coast. A merchant of Luanda in the late 18th century, Raymond Jalama, observed that nearly half of those captured inland were dead by the time they reached the coast.

The vast majority taken were men and this must have had a huge effect on the population they left behind particularly in a polygamous society.

It has been calculated through computerised projections that the population in Africa in the mid 19th century would have been double what it was had the slave trade not happened - that means that if there had been no slave trade the population of Africa in 1850 would have been 50 million instead of 25 million.

7.5. WHO AND HOW MANY PEOPLE WERE ENSLAVED?

People often became slaves for reasons rooted in local disputes, and wars; or they became slaves as a demonstration of wealth and power on the part of a local ruler. However, enslavement at a local level could often lead to a chain reaction of sales from merchant to merchant ending up at the coast where the final sale resulted in being dispatched across the Ocean.

7.6. WAR

A large number of people began the journey into slavery as prisoners of war. The Baganda in East Africa, for example, often went to war with their neighbours and took Bunyoro and Basoga people as slaves.

With the rise of a large commercial slave trade, driven by European needs, enslaving your enemy became less a consequence of war and more and more a reason to go to war. This was particularly so in West Africa where, for example, the conflict between the kingdoms of Oyo and Dahomey resulted in prisoners of war being taken as slaves on both sides and then sold on to the coast.

7.7. PUNISHMENT

Some people were taken into slavery as a punishment. The crime might be witchcraft, theft, or adultery.

"Every trifling crime is punish'd in the same manner... They strain for crimes very hard in order to sell into slavery."

Francis Moore, Royal Africa Company, writing in the 1730's.

7.8. DEBT DISCHARGE

Selling someone into slavery could be a way of discharging a debt.

7.9. FEEDING THE ORACLE

In Bonny, the largest slave market in the delta of the river Niger many slaves were sold by order of the oracle, Chukwu. The slaves were then sold to merchants, but the oracle was said to have eaten them.

7.10. TRIBUTE

In the area of Senegal, in the 17th century, slaves were given to the king as part of a village's tribute to him, along with brandy, tobacco and cloth.

7.11. KIDNAP

A large number of people were quite simply kidnapped while going about their everyday tasks. Igbos were particularly wary of being kidnapped and always fortified their houses if they left their villages; but some like Olaudah Equiano were caught unawares.

Elsewhere in West Africa Savanna horsemen would sweep down from the north to launch annual slave raids on agricultural people.

Occasionally Europeans would kidnap people and turn them into slaves, although by doing this they ran the risk of annoying the chain of African middlemen which extended from the interior to the coast.

"It was customary for parties of sailors and coast blacks to lie in wait near the streams and little villages, and seize the stragglers by twos and threes when they were fishing or cultivating their patches of corn."

Richard Drake, recalling life under the command of Captain Fraley of Bristol, whom he served in 1805.

7.12. VULNERABLE & UNWANTED

In times of famine children might be sold. Orphans, widows and poor relations were equally vulnerable.

7.13. BORN INTO SLAVERY

Some slaves were born into slavery in Africa. Traders and captains of slave ships preferred these because they were less trouble, having never known anything but slavery.

8. AFRICAN RESISTANCE

Although slavery is an ancient practice it has had its critics long before the 18th century. In West Africa there were a number of people who kept out of the slave trade, refusing to negotiate with Europeans at all, for example the Jola of Casamance and the Baga (modern Guinea), the last renowned for being unbeatable in battle.

8.1. ON LOCATION

Paramount Chief Koro Liman IV of the Gwolu Area, in the Sisala West District of Ghana, describes the fortifications constructed to protect the people against the slave raiders.

"I'm standing in front of the inner wall of the Gwolu protective wall, which protected the great Gwolu from slave raiders and encroachments into Gwolu city in ancient times. We have two walls and this is the inner wall."

In ancient times when slavery was rampant, our great great ancestor King Tanja Musa built the wall to ward away slave raiders and slave traders from coming into Gwolu to enslave our people.

The reason we have the inner and outer wall is that between the two walls we had ponds and farms, so that the inhabitants would be protected from being kidnapped by slave raiders.

First, there was only the inner wall. Then they realised that people who went to farm, find firewood and fetch water were kidnapped by slave raiders. The king found it necessary to construct a second wall and that is why it is a two-walled city. And I know that in the whole of Ghana there are only two such walls."

8.2. CRITICS IN AFRICA

The King of Benin (now part of Nigeria) had allowed major slave trafficking in the early sixteenth century. After 1530 the king or Oba could see this was draining the kingdom of male manpower and he banned the sale of slaves. He did keep domestic slaves, but by 1550 there was no slave trade in Benin. Pepper and elephant tusks became the main exports.

Afonso I, King of the Congo similarly saw the slave trade rapidly grow out of control to the detriment of his authority and the wealth of his kingdom.

"There are many traders in all parts of the country. They bring ruin...Every day people are kidnapped and enslaved, even members of the King's family."

Excerpt from letter from Afonso I, King of the Congo to King of Portugal Joao III, 18th October 1526. Quoted by Hugh Thomas' *The Slave Trade*.

The Muslim leader and reformer Nasr al-Din denounced slavery to the people of Senegal in the 1670's and banned the sale of slaves to Christians there, undermining the French trade in slaves. Even some of the captains in charge of slave ships knew it was wrong.

"I can't think there is any intrinsic value in one colour more than another, that white is better than black, only we think it so, because we are so, and are prone to judge favourably in our own case..."

Captain Thomas Phillips, in his account of his life published in 1694.

In 1851, some 17 years after slave owning was declared illegal by the British, locally owned slaves in Calabar (now Nigeria), rebelled against the practice of being killed and buried when a king or chief died. The occasion for the revolt was the illness of King Archibong I of Duke Town. Fearing his imminent death, the slaves of Duke Town plantations got together and took an oath never to allow themselves funeral sacrifices to happen again, and then went on the rampage. King Eyo Honesty II of Creek Town (himself the owner of thousands of slaves) then forbade any more killing and burying of slaves when leaders died.

8.3. ABOLITIONISTS OF AFRICAN DESCENT

Many abolitionists were of African descent, campaigning in Britain or in the Americas. As freed slaves, their personal experience lent poignancy to their arguments. Quobna Ottobah Cugoana was born in Ghana and captured at the age of 13. His "Thoughts and Sentiments on the Evil of Slavery", published in 1787, argued eloquently and passionately for an immediate end to slave-owning and trading.

"...kings are the minister of God, to do justice, and not to bear the sword in vain, but revenge wrath upon them that do evil. But if they do not in such a case as this, the cruel oppressions of thousands, and the blood of the murdered Africans who are slain by the sword of cruel avarice, must rest upon their own guilty heads..."

Olaudah Equiano (also known as Gustavus Vassa) offers a vivid and detailed account of his life from early childhood in what is now eastern Nigeria through to enslavement. *The Life of Olaudah Equiano*, published in 1789, was a bestseller.

"As I was the youngest of the sons, I became, of course, the greatest favourite with my mother, and was always with her; and she used to take particular pains to form my mind. I was trained up from my earliest years in the art of war; my daily exercise was shooting and throwing javelins; and my mother adorned me with emblems, after the manner of our greatest warriors. In this way I grew up till I was turned the age of eleven, when an end was put to my happiness..."

A quarter of a century later the writer and journalist and former slave Frederick Douglass published his Narrative of The Life of Frederick Douglass in 1845.

"The whisper that my master was my father, may or may not be true; and, true or false, it is of but little consequence to my purpose whilst the fact remains, in all its glaring odiousness, that slaveholders have ordained, and by law established, that the children of slave women shall in all cases follow the condition of their mothers..."

Douglass travelled all of Europe campaigning for abolition.

8.4. SOLIDARITY WITH AFRICA

With the French Revolution in 1789, resulting in violence and executions of the nobility, many abolitionists in Britain were suspected of agitation and undermining the social order. In 1794 working class men in Sheffield made common cause with slaves, calling for their emancipation: "We are induced to be compassionate to those who groan also" (the cutlers of Sheffield quoted by Peter Fryer in his book *Staying Power*). Similarly the London Corresponding Society, campaigning for the working man's right to a vote, under John Thelwall, saw the corrupt ruling class as both the root of slavery as well as working class oppression.

8.5. ABOLITION BECOMES LAW

In August 1834, Parliament decreed all children under six free in the West Indies. Remaining slaves were to become apprentices, labouring for six years and receiving no wages. Planters, on the other hand, were given financial compensation.

9. THE END OF SLAVERY

Slavery has always had its **opponents**. But the movement to abolish the slave trade only took off in the late 1770's. In 1771 Granville Sharp brought the case of the escaped slave James Somerset before the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Mansfield. Somerset had escaped and been recaptured in England by his American owner. Mansfield declared,

"A foreigner cannot be imprisoned here on the authority of any law existing in his own country."

Somerset was set free. But slaves continued to be sold in Britain and British slaves ships carried on operating, taking slaves to the Caribbean.

In the 1780's the Quakers under Granville Sharp began to publicly campaign against slavery. At this time slavery was not merely something that happened far away - slaves could be seen for sale in Liverpool and Bristol. West Indian planters took to coming to England with their slaves, pricking the consciences of those who might otherwise not have given slavery a second thought.

9.1. WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

William Wilberforce became a leading abolitionist, tirelessly lobbying public opinion and parliament. Abolitionists also got involved in **the Resettlement of Freed Slaves** in Africa.

There were a number factors which hastened the end of slavery:

- the industrial revolution in Britain brought a new demand for efficiency, free trade and free labour; all this was out of step with slavery.
- Britain's ties with America were loosened when she lost her colonies in the American war of independence in 1776.
- Thirteen years later, the French Revolution brought ideas of universal liberty and equality which both inspired those seeking an end to slavery (for example, Toussaint L'Ouverture who led a successful slave revolt in Saint Domingue, (now Haiti), and frightened the pro-slave lobby into stubborn resistance to abolition.

The nation who had profited most from the trade was Great Britain. In 1807 the British government declared the buying, transporting and selling of slaves illegal, but it was not against the law to own slaves until 1834. In August 1834 Parliament passed a bill freeing all children under six in the West Indies. All other slaves were called apprentices and had to work for nothing for six years. Planters were given compensation totalling £20 million.

Celebrations were held on all plantations. But the apprenticeships were cruel and exploitative; they were outlawed in 1838. Many ex-slaves stayed on the plantations having no work else to do. Those that left were replaced in the West Indies by indentured Indians. Back in Britain, abolitionists turned their attention to slave ownership in America causing huge resentment.

They also campaigned against slaves in India, and East Africa, where **David Livingstone** thought the only way of putting a stop to slavery was to take over the territory where it was going on, thus galvanising imperial ambition in Africa. Slavery continued in South America. Slavery was finally abolished in America after the Civil War with the defeat of the southern states in 1865. But the freed slave in the south continued to suffer.

"Though no longer a slave, he is in a thralldom grievous and intolerable, compelled to work for whatever his employer is pleased to pay him, swindled out of his hard earnings by money orders redeemed in stores, compelled to pay the price of an acre of ground for its use during a single year, to pay four times more than a fair price for a pound of bacon and to be kept upon the narrowest margin between life and starvation...."

Life and Times of Frederick Douglass.

All the indignities of segregation remained: inequality in courts of justice and violent harassment from white Southerners, sometimes resulting in torture or murder. This continued unabated until the **civil rights movement** of the 1960's brought the issue of racism forcibly to the attention of legislators.

Meanwhile in Africa slavery of the old traditional variety continued in small pockets through the second half of the 19th century and into the 20th century; it was not, for example, finally outlawed in northern Nigeria until 1936. Slavery has still not disappeared. **Slavery exists today** behind closed doors in many parts of the world including Britain, Africa and the Middle East.

10. RESETTLEMENT OF FREED SLAVES

The Sierra Leone resettlement scheme was designed to provide a new life for 400 destitute mainly black people in London. This was also seen by some as a good way of disposing of a troublesome minority. Olaudah Equiano was appointed commissary of provisions and stores for the emigrant poor going to Sierra Leone.

Following the American war of independence there was also a large number of slaves and freed slaves who had fought for the British. These black loyalists were rewarded with land in Nova Scotia, but the hostility of white loyalists and the harsh climate made them sign up for Sierra Leone too.

They were followed by Maroons - slaves who had rebelled against the British in Jamaica and been sent to Nova Scotia as punishment; given the choice, the Maroons left Nova Scotia too for Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone was made a colony in 1808 and the hinterland was proclaimed a protectorate in 1896. In the early years of the colony Sierra Leoneans were great traders. In the middle of the 19th century, Sierra Leone became a great centre for **education** in West Africa and beyond.

Liberia was colonised in 1822 by freed slaves coming directly from America through the administration of the American Colonisation Society. Independence was achieved in 1847 under **J.J. Roberts**, who was born a free man in Norfolk Virginia. He was a successful and ambitious trader, with great diplomatic skills, and was noted for his public speaking.

"When we look abroad and see by what slow and painful steps, marked with blood and ills of every kind, other states of the world have advanced to liberty and independence, we can not but admire and praise that all gracious Providence, who by his unerring ways, has, with so few sufferings on our part, compared with other states, led us to this happy stage in our progress towards those great and important objects..."

He will miraculously make Liberia a paradise, and deliver us, in a moment of time from all the ills and inconveniences consequent upon the peculiar circumstances under which we are placed..."

J.J. Robert's Inaugural Address.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/9audio9.ram

However much Liberians resented America it continued to be a point of reference for the Liberian elite. The indigenous people in turn were hostile to these newcomers from overseas and harassed and attacked them regularly throughout the 19th century.

"The natives have been kept in a state of rebellion, by influence of one Grando, a chief, who was always opposed to the life of civilisation. Although he sold a tract of land to the government, and received payment, giving his signature, still he has always acted the rogue. He has ever kept Bassa tribe in a state of hostility to the emigrants and the government."

History of Republic Liberia, by a resident of Monrovia.

Back in America some abolitionists attacked Liberia for being a place to dump freed slaves, so confusing the issue of emancipation. Like the elite of Sierra Leone, the Liberians of Monrovia focussed more and more on the professions - medicine, law, administration - rather than trade. Education at home and abroad became hugely prized.

In the 1880's Liberia came up against European colonial ambition, first losing territory to British-ruled Sierra Leone; then the south east of the country was taken by France in 1891 with subsequent territorial losses around the 1900's. However, Liberia along with Ethiopia had the distinction of being self-ruling in Sub-Saharan Africa, where everywhere else was under colonial rule.

11. FORCES FOR CHANGE

11.1. MARINE TECHNOLOGY

By the 15th century a number of important changes to ship design had occurred making long journeys across the ocean possible; the first was the invention of the stern rudder, improving steering; the second was the replacement of one big sail by three masts and many sails. This made handling the ship much easier.

11.2. GUNS

A vast amount of slaves were traded for guns. The first small portable firearms came into use in the middle of the 15th century. German gunsmiths are thought to have designed the first trigger. Locksmiths refined the design with a spring mechanism.

"The report of the guns...seemed to them thunder. As storms were very common in their country, they believed that their fallen brethren had fainted at the sudden claps, and would easily be waked again with a little dawa (magic drugs)."

Description of a battle with warriors of the African Sultan of Mkahuja. From The Life of Tipu Tip.

11.3. SUGAR

Two thirds of all slaves captured in the 18th century went to work on sugar plantations. This reflected the enormous demand for sugar in food and drink at the time. In the 16th century a pound of sugar in Britain cost the equivalent of two days wages for a labourer. By the 17th century the price of sugar fell by half. In the space of 150 years sugar consumption in Britain rose by 2500 percent. By the late 1790's what had been a luxury only enjoyed by the aristocracy was part of the diet of poor families in Britain. Sugar's cheapness in the 18th century was made possible by slave labour.

11.4 COTTON

In 1793 Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin which enabled cotton to be processed on a large scale (by separating the lint from the seeds). The previous year North America exported 138,328 pounds of cotton, two years later and with gins working full tilt, America exported over one and a half millions pounds of cotton.

Huge plantations sprung up in Georgia and Carolina. There was a dramatic increase in slaves - between 1800 and 1810 slaves in the United States increased by one third. By 1825 the number of slaves in United States totalled a third of all those in Americas. And yet the actual trading of slaves had dwindled to almost nothing. But new slaves were not being imported from overseas - they were born on American soil.

12. REMARKABLE FACTS

- In 1462 Pope Pius II declared baptized Africans should not be enslaved. Columbus never saw North America. He visited many Caribbean islands and the northeastern tip of South America, as well as the Eastern coast of Central America, but never the mainland.
- The father of Olaudah Equiano, one of the most famous former slaves and leading abolitionists, kept slaves.
- An English surgeon thought that two thirds of deaths on the journey were due to melancholy - people captured in slavery just willed themselves to die.
- A Sonyo prince from the Congo region was captured whereupon the Sonyo people refused to trade anymore with the Dutch; he was returned with apologies.
- In 1726 the King of Dahomey suggested Europeans should establish plantations in his kingdom - he would supply the slaves.
- One of the few successful on ship slave rebellions took place in 1840 on the **Amistad**.
- In 1930, the Liberian government was accused by the League of Nations of using forced labour to carry out public works.

13. SLAVERY TIMELINE

- 1444: First slaves brought to Portugal from northern Mauritania.
- 1444-5: Portuguese make contract with Sub-Saharan Africa.
- 1471: Portuguese arrive in the Gold Coast.
- 1482: Portuguese begin building Elmina Castle on the Gold Coast.
- 1488: Bartholomew Diaz goes round the Cape of Good Hope.
- 1490: First Portuguese missionaries go to Congo.
- 1500: Sugar plantations established on island of Sao Tome two hundred miles from coast of West Africa.
- 1510: First slaves shipped to Spanish colonies in South America via Spain.
- 1516: Benin ceases to export male slaves, fearing loss of manpower.
- 1518: First direct shipment of slaves from Africa to the Americas.
- 1652: Dutch establish colony at Cape of Good Hope, South Africa.
- 1700: Asanti begin to consolidate power.
- 1720: Kingdom of Dahomey expands.
- 1780's: Slave trade at its peak.
- 1776 – 1783: American War of Independence.
- 1787: 'Thoughts and Sentiments on the Evil of Slavery' by Quobna Ottobah Cugoana published by the Foundation of the Society for the Abolition of Slave Trade.
- 1789: French Revolution. 'Life of Olaudah Equiano' published.
- 1791: Slave uprising in Haiti (Saint Domingue) led by Toussaint L'Ouverture.
- 1804: Danes pass law against slave trade Haitian independence
- 1807: British law passed declaring buying, selling and transporting slaves illegal (ownership continues).

- 1808: North America abolish slave trade.
- 1814: Dutch outlaw slave trade.
- 1823: Founding of Anti-slavery Committee London.
- 1834: British law passed declaring ownership of slaves illegal.
- 1839: Amistad slave ship rebellion.
- 1848: French abolish slavery
- 1860-65: American Civil War.
- 1865: 13th Amendment abolishes slavery in America.
- 1869: Portugal abolishes slavery.
- 1873: Slave market in Zanzibar closed.
- 1886: Slavery abolished in Cuba.
- 1888: Slavery abolished in Brazil.
- 1936: Slavery made illegal in Northern Nigeria.

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The African Slave Trade from 15th to the 19th Centuries, UNESCO Reports and Papers 2, 1999.

15. USEFUL LINKS

The BBC is not responsible for the content of external Internet sites

UNESCO Slave Route

www.saltdal.vgs.no/prosjekt/slavrute/welcome.htm

This is an extensive information base linking to a large number of sites concerned with the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

Modern Civil Rights Movement

www.infoplease.com/spot/civilrightstimeline1.html

Learning Network.

Anti-slavery campaigns

www.antislavery.org/selection.htm

Current reports on slavery around the world. Website by Antislavery International, London.

Life story of J.J.Roberts

<http://users.vsi.net/%7Ecwt/ljr-hp.html>

Columbus's life

<http://deil.lang.uiuc.edu/web.pages/holidays/Columbus.html>

Lingua Center, University of Illinois, Urbana-Campaign.

Site on Frederick Douglass

www.history.rochester.edu/class/douglass/HOME.html

Department of History, University of Rochester.

American Independence, Native Americans and Slavery

www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/modsbook12.html

Internet History Sourcebooks Project, edited by Paul Halsall, Fordham University, New York.

Liberia

<http://lcweb.loc.gov/exhibits/african/afaam003.html>

African-American Mosaic, a resource guide for the study of black history, The Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

History of early firearms

www.middelaldercentret.dk/english/cannon2.htm#kildekrudt

Website by David Lazenby, Middelaldercentret, Denmark.

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Eyewitness accounts of slavery

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Global Slavery Resource Center site

www.ant-slavery.org/global/index.html

American Antislavery Group.

On Slavery

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/arts/highlights/000831_uncletom.shtml

BBC Site

African Ancestry Site

www.africanancestry.com/news.html

Compiled by Howard University

Africana Library

www.library.cornell.edu/africana/Library/Texts.html

Cornell University

X. CENTRAL AFRICAN KINGDOMS

1. INTRODUCTION

Central Africa is a fertile area, rich in mineral deposits. Here a number of states emerged with sophisticated metal working techniques after 1000 AD in what is referred to as the 'late iron age.'



To the East, between the rivers Zambezi and Limpopo, the grassland zone was rich in cattle, and gold. A distinctive and elaborate form of pottery was made. By the 13th century an empire known as Great Zimbabwe emerged, which left stone ruins of what must have been a spectacular fortified palace.

By the 15th century this empire had collapsed, taken over by the Mutapa rulers. The Portuguese appeared around the same time attracted by gold and slaves. They made commercial inroads across the width of southern Africa, from what is now Angola in the West, to Mozambique in the East.

They came across a number of power kingdoms. Among them: the Kongo in the West (present day northern Angola and part of DR Congo); the decentralised and flexible state of Lunda in the centre; and the Lundu Kingdom in the east, which cultivated the cassava and maize which the Portuguese imported with great success.

Also in the East, was Monumutapa, under Mutapa rule, which resisted all attempts by the Portuguese at subjugation. Reduced in size, it maintained its vigour under the military dynasty of Changamires. By contrast the Kongo Empire was, by the 17th century, devastated by the slave trade.

By the 18th century the slave trade was sufficiently lucrative and brisk at the coast for the Portuguese to have not need to assert their power in any systematic way in the interior. The states and kingdoms of the interior confined their dealings to middlemen in search of ivory, slaves and gold for sale to coastal traders, both African and European.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/10audio0a.ram

2. GREAT ZIMBABWE

2.1. ENDURING LEGACY

The monument of Great Zimbabwe is the most famous stone building in southern Africa. Located over 150 miles from Harare, it stands 1,100 km above sea level on the Harare Plateau in the Shashe-Limpopo basin. It is thought to have been built over a long period, beginning in 1200 and ending in 1450.

2.2. WHO WERE THEY?

Not everyone agrees who the rulers of Great Zimbabwe were; but there is evidence that they were the Karanga, a branch of the Shona-speaking people. The pottery the Karanga make is very similar to that found in Great Zimbabwe.

There is also a theory that the people of Great Zimbabwe may be descended from a community which lived on the site of Leopards Kopje, less than a hundred miles away from Great Zimbabwe, near present day Bulawayo. The remains of a prosperous iron age society, dependent for its wealth on cattle, have been discovered there.

AFRICAN ORIGINS DENIED

"When African nationalists were demanding independence in the 1960s, the Smith regime actually sanctioned historians to write a fake history on the origins of Great Zimbabwe, denying its African origins.

This was not different from the accounts of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century antiquarians, which linked Great Zimbabwe with Phoenicia, with Saban Arabs, with the Egyptians and the rest of the near East. We would call that, in the scholarly world, 'antiquarian revisionism' - trying to use old values to support a wrong cause altogether. "

Dr. Innocent Pikirayi, lecturer in history and archaeology, University of Zimbabwe.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/10audio1.ram

2.3. SCOPE

In terms of political power and cultural influence, the archaeological evidence indicates Great Zimbabwe covered a huge area between the Limpopo River and the Zambezi River, spilling out into Mozambique and Botswana, as well as the Transvaal area of northern South Africa.

2.4. BUILDING

The Great Zimbabwe monument is built out of granite which is the parent rock of the region - i.e. it predominates locally. The building method used was dry-stone walling, demanding a high level of masonry expertise. Some of the site is built round natural rock formations. The actual structure comprises a huge enclosing wall some 20 metres high.

Inside there are concentric passageways, along with a number of enclosures. One of these is thought to be a royal enclosure. Large quantities of gold and ceremonial battle axes, along with other objects have been found there.

There is also what is thought to be a gold workshop, and a shrine which is still regarded as sacred today.

2.5. WEALTH

The wealth of Great Zimbabwe lay in cattle production and gold. There are a number of mines to the west of Great Zimbabwe, about 40 kilometres away. One theory is that the rulers of Great Zimbabwe did not have direct control over the gold mines, but rather managed the trade in it, buying up huge quantities in exchange for cattle.

The evidence suggests that Great Zimbabwe was at the centre of an international commercial system, which on the continent of Africa, encompassed settlements on the East African Coast such as Kilwa, Malindi and Mogadishu. But this trade network also extended to towns in the Gulf, in western parts of India, and even went as far as China.

2.6. DECLINE

There are several theories about the decline of Great Zimbabwe. One is environmental: that a combination of overgrazing and drought caused the soil on the Zimbabwe Plateau to become exhausted. It is estimated that between 5,000 to 30,000 people lived on and around the site. A decline in land productivity would easily have led to famine.

The other explanation is that the people of Great Zimbabwe had to move in order to maximise their exploitation of the gold trade network. By 1500 the site of Great Zimbabwe was abandoned. Its people had moved in two directions: North to establish the Mutapa state and South to establish the Torwa state.

AFTER GREAT ZIMBABWE

"The Mutapa rulers continued the tradition of building structures in stone, similar to Great Zimbabwe, although considerably smaller in size. The Torwa state was established in south west Zimbabwe around the same time as Mutapa. The capital of the Torwa state was Khami.

The Torwa were defeated during the 1640's in a civil war. From this period onwards we begin to hear about the Changamire Rozvi. They built their elaborate capital at Danangombe, in the middle part of Zimbabwe. This state was brought to an end by the Nguni during the 1830's, but before that the Rozvi had already broken up into several smaller groups.

The Nambya established themselves near Victoria Falls, and their capital was probably Bumbuzi. The other Rozvi groups dispersed over most of the Zimbabwe Plateau.

The most notable group of them all established its authority on the Venda people in the Zoutpansberg mountains in South Africa. Their capital was at Dzata."

Dr. Innocent Pikarayi, lecturer at University of Zimbabwe

3. KONGO

3.1. ORIGINS

The origins of the Kongo lie in a number of small Iron Age communities lying just north of the Malebo Pool in the River Congo (formerly River Zaire). This strategic location provided fertile soil, iron and copper ore, a rich source of fish, and a river which was navigable for thousands of miles upstream.

By the early 15th century these communities had grown in wealth and size to form a loose federation centred on one kingdom, led by a king or Manikongo. Following the defeat of a branch of the Mbundu, the focus of power had shifted 200 kilometres south west, south of the River Kongo, where a capital was established called Mbanza Kongo (Sao Salvador under Portuguese rule).



www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/10audio2.ram

3.2. CRAFTSMANSHIP

A broad range of crafts emerged from the Kongo and its client states: metal work, pottery and raffia textiles, much of it practised exclusively by the ruling class. The expansion of the Kongo was effected less through military conquest, and more through trade, alliances and marriages.

The sovereignty of the Manikongo was exercised through a number of governors. To the west and north were three important states, which were allies - Loango, Ngoyo and Kakongo.

3.3. EXPANSION

With increased population density in the region, food supplies began to be outstripped by demand. A number of expeditions were launched in search of new territory. These were headed by chiefs chosen by the Manikongo. They set off west, north east and south to establish new outposts to the Kongo empire.

At its height, Kongo was the biggest state in western Central Africa. It stretched from the Atlantic in the west to the Kwango River in the east, encompassing what today is northern Angola, part of DR Kongo and part of Congo Brazzaville.

CELEBRATING EXPANSION OF KONGO

On our departure from Kongo there were nine caravans under nine chiefs with their staff of office.

We brought with us the basket containing the relics of our ancestors, which are used in the installation of chiefs.

We brought the grass rings for the chiefs' roof-tops.

The paths we travelled were safe.

The villages we built were peaceful...

We kept all together.

We were careful not to separate.

From a 'boasting song', collected by the Belgian missionary J. Van Wing, quoted by Roland Oliver and Anthony Atmore in *The African Middle Ages*

3.4. ARRIVAL OF PORTUGUESE

The first European to arrive in sub-Saharan Africa was the Portuguese navigator, Diogo Cao. Having come south down the coast from what is now Elmina in Ghana, he sailed into the estuary of the River Congo. His initial encounter with the people of Soyo, on the coast, made it immediately clear that he was on the edge of a great empire.

When asked who the ruler of the region was, he was told of the Manikongo and his seat of power in Mbanza Kongo, even though it was over 300 km inland.

TODAY'S PRIDE IN A TRAGIC PAST

"People (the BaKongo) remember that the Manikongo (the king of the Kongo) agreed to open his kingdom to modern influences very early on. They say that they themselves are less civilized than white people, but more civilized than other Kongo people. They say the country can only be saved if the Kongo lead the country.

The other people say to the Kongo people, 'you are too arrogant. You think that you are the only people that can save the country - why?' And this has created a big problem."

Dr. Remi Bazenguissa, anthropologist at Ecole des Haut Etudes, Paris, France, who is making a special study of the BaKongo today and their sense of identity.

Two years later Diogo Cao actually visited the capital. Trade began in earnest between the BaKongo and the Portuguese and the **kings** began to correspond.

Gradually the Transatlantic **slave trade** began to overshadow the relationship between these two empires, and drain the region of its manpower.

4. TRADE

4.1. FROM EAST TO WEST

Before the arrival of Europeans, the Kongo in the west and Great Zimbabwe in the south east of the continent offered two different trading models.

Before the late 15th century, in the west, there was no Transatlantic trade, although there was commerce up and down the coast. Great Zimbabwe by contrast, through its management of gold production stood at the heart of a massive trade network which extended east across the Indian Ocean, through the Persian Gulf, to India and even as far as China.

4.2. CHAIN OF TRADE

It was not until the 18th century that east-west trade routes on the continent were followed through by single caravans. Before that, there is evidence that goods and products could make their way across great distances, but only through a chain of transactions, involving many different traders. An interesting example of this is the discovery in the **Great Zimbabwe** site of five double-ironed gongs. These were manufactured in Katanga province, southern part of modern DR Congo.

4.3. SLAVE TRADE ORIGINS

The BaKongo, located as they were in the lower basin of the River Kongo, traded copper and iron for salt, food and raffia textiles. Within a few years of the Portuguese arriving in the estuary of the River Congo, the BaKongo were trading with them. **Slaves** were an important aspect of that trade from the beginning, but the Portuguese also imported copper, silver, ivory and peppers.

4.4. EUROPEAN IMPORTS

The BaKongo took a broader view of what they wanted from the Portuguese. They were interested in textiles, horses and crafted goods, in particular those made of metal. They also wanted to acquire skills - the skills of masons and carpenters to build European style buildings, and education and literacy, in order to communicate directly with Europe.

The rulers of the Kongo, starting with Manikongo (or king) Nzinga a Nkuwu, demonstrated a strong fascination with the Christianity which the Portuguese brought with them.

4.5. GROWTH OF SLAVE TRADE

Trade between the two kingdoms became rapidly dominated by slaves, and the relationship between the two kings, which had started out as one of equals, rapidly became unequal. Portugal was importing slaves to satisfy a seemingly bottomless demand for manpower in Latin America.

By the end of the 16th century an annual average of 5,000 to 10,000 slaves were leaving Luanda for Brazil. Kongo's alliance with Portugal increasingly benefited only one side: that of the Portuguese.

4.6. LOSING CONTROL

By the second half of the 17th century, the Portuguese stopped launching any further military conquest. And while they continued to benefit from the slave trade, they began to lose control of the trade network which bought and sold the slaves.

Aside from the Dutch, British and French appearing on the scene in the 17th century, a host of other communities and groups tapped into the trade network, both on the east and west of the continent. Increasingly, these traders acted independently of both the Portuguese crown and traders based in Lisbon.

4.7. INDEPENDENT

Among the many independent groups were the Portuguese pombeiros who went deep into western central Africa in the 16th century, initially acting on behalf of the Portuguese traders on the coast. There were also the Yaka and Imbangala, who although of different origins, were equally adept at making a living off other communities, ruthlessly pillaging crops and cattle, as well as slaves.

4.8. KASANJE

With the defeat of the Kongo in 1665, the Vili, (located north of the Kongo estuary), took on a greater commercial role, travelling regularly the 800 km to Kasanje, a new powerful broker state bordering on the Lunda kingdom.

The same destination attracted the Ambaquista, a community of traders of African-European descent, who lived in the Cuanza valley, south of Luanda.

The slave trade, under the auspices of Portugal, ruined the economic and political stability of the Kongo. Ultimately it ruined Portugal too, as this small European kingdom let itself float in the destructive slip-stream of profit, without pausing to invest.

The brutality of the slave trade was later echoed in Central Africa, in the 19th century, by the regime of forced labour imposed by the Belgians in the rubber plantations it set up.

4.9. ACROSS THE CONTINENT

By the late 18th century, long distance trade routes began to be established, and by 1850, Ovimbundu traders (in the middle of modern Angola) had reached the Lamba of Northern

Rhodesia. In 1856 the Nyamwezi trader king, Msiri, established his base in Katanga (in the southern part of what is today DR Congo), and sent out caravans both to the western and eastern coasts.

4.10. INDIAN OCEAN

On the Indian Ocean seaboard, the commercial scene was very different from the Atlantic sea board in the late 15th century. The Arabs had been trading with the Swahili coastal people for centuries before the Portuguese appeared. Trade went east through the Persian Gulf and India, and on to the Far East. **The Portuguese** arrived in the late 15th century with the principle aim of capturing the gold routes which drove this trade. In this they failed.

4.11. DEFEAT IN ZIMBABWE

The Shona kingdom of Mutapa, ruled by the Monumutapa (or Mwene Mutapa, as it is sometimes spelt) proved impossible to defeat. It was eventually displaced as the dominant power in the region by the Changamire of Burwa. In the process, Portuguese backwoodsmen, the sertanejos, found themselves pushed off the Zimbabwe Plateau in 1694.

4.12. OMANI REVIVAL

Having bullied the sultans of the east African coast for the last two centuries, the Portuguese found themselves by the end of the 17th century overwhelmed by the Arabs of Omani. However, a Portuguese commercial presence remained on the coast.

At the same time, the mixed race prazeiros established themselves as traders in ivory and slaves in the Zambezi valley.

4.13. ABOLITION

Then in the first half of the 19th century a number of Portuguese and Brazilian traders experienced a final flush of prosperity. With the abolition of the slave trade by the British in West Africa, the demand in the Americas for slaves from southern Africa surged. This continued in concert with the Arab trade in slaves, until the British closed the slave market in Zanzibar in 1873.

FROM WEST TO EAST

"I would like to think there could have been trade between the Kongo and Great Zimbabwe; it could have been indirect because we do not know much of what happened between the BaKongo and the Luba Lunda in the south eastern part of what is now DR Congo, and the Luba Lunda and the copper producers of central Zambia.

But these commercial conducts did take place directly or indirectly. "

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/10audio3.ram

5. PORTUGUESE INTERVENTION IN THE WEST

5.1. SMALL KINGDOM

The main aim of the Portuguese, when they first came to sub Saharan Africa in 1443, was to enhance and enrich the Portuguese Crown. With a very small population, Portugal had for centuries struggled to define itself in Europe against its larger neighbour Spain. It had only acquired independence in the mid 13th century.

5.2. LOOKING FOR STATUS

By the 15th century Portugal was comparable to many kingdoms in Africa, although possibly less rich and less well endowed scholastically than Mali and Ghana. The Jewish and Moorish populations had been expelled from Portugal in the mid 15th century severely depleting the cultural and intellectual life. But already by the beginning of the 15th century Portugal had begun to excel in one area - navigation.

5.3. A POWERFUL RULER

In 1482 Diogo Cao completed a journey of nearly 8,000 km from Portugal, down the West African coast, arriving at the mouth of the River Congo. He was the first European to travel this far down the West African coast, and he quickly realised there was a very powerful ruler in the region.

This Manikongo, or king, resided over 300 km inland at Mbanza Kongo, and yet everyone knew him and paid tribute to him at the coast. So for the Portuguese there was a leader to negotiate with, who had authority over many people, in a region with great commercial potential. The main commodities were ivory and copper, and of course slaves. **Slaves** were an important aspect of that trade from the beginning, but the Portuguese also imported silver and peppers.

5.4. FATAL FASCINATION

But there is another strand to the Portuguese intervention in West Africa. Having made contact with each other, the two kings - Nzinga a Nkuwu, the Manikongo, (or king of the Kongo), and King Joao II of Portugal began what in later years under their successors was to become an intensely religious relationship. And the Manikongo developed a fascination for all things European.

5.5. FASHIONABLY PORTUGUESE

Within eight years of first arriving, the Portuguese had made a deep impression on the ruling class of the Kongo. Four young Bakongo men were sent to be educated in Portugal. The Manikongo was baptised Dom Joao I (the same name as his Portuguese counterpart), along with his son, Nzinga Mbemba, who became Affonso.

The newly named Dom Joao I took possession of an entourage of carpenters and masons, large amounts of European cloth, a selection of horses and cattle, and a piece of revolutionary technology: a printing press, complete with two German printers. The first printing press had only been invented forty years earlier.

5.6. LOSING CONTROL

By the second half of the 17th century, the Portuguese stopped launching any further military conquest. And while they continued to benefit from the slave trade, they began to lose control of the trade network which bought and sold the slaves.

Aside from the Dutch, British and French appearing on the scene in the 17th century, a host of other communities and groups tapped into the trade network, both on the east and west of the continent. Increasingly, these traders acted independently of both the Portuguese crown and traders based in Lisbon.

5.7. EXTRAORDINARY PIETY

When Affonso became king in 1506, he set out to learn everything there was to learn about the Portuguese ruling class, court etiquette, the laws of the country and the Catholic Church. (After an initial bout of enthusiasm, his father's commitment to Christianity had faded).

Later, Affonso's son, Henrique, was to become the first black Bishop in the Catholic Church.

The Franciscan missionary Rui d'Aguiar was amazed at King Affonso's piety and dedication:

"It seems to me from the way he speaks he is not a man, but an angel, sent by the Lord in this kingdom to convert it. For I assure you, it is he who instructs us. He devotes himself entirely to study, so that it often happens that he falls asleep at his books, and often he forgets to eat and drink in talking of the things of our Lord."

In 1512 the King of Portugal ordered a coat of arms be drawn up for the Manikongo. But good will between kings and the piety of the newly converted king were not enough to deal with the rush of commercial greed which soon enveloped the Kongo.

The demand for manpower in the New World meant the **slave trade** soon took over all other commercial transactions, and it attracted a mass of rootless, ruthless entrepreneurs, some BaKongo, or neighbours of the BaKongo, some Portuguese and people from mixed races.

WARRIOR QUEEN

Dona Anna de Sousa Nzinga first emerged in the Ndongo Kingdom in the 1620s. She dealt with a catalogue of disaster and disadvantages, emerging finally as an extraordinary strategist, warrior and negotiator. Her father, the king of Ndongo, was deposed, her son was killed by her half-brother, Mbandi, and she was driven out of the kingdom.

Under pressure from the Portuguese, Mbandi finally called on Nzinga for help. She returned and negotiated with the Portuguese on his behalf, agreeing to a Christian baptism in the process.

When the Portuguese betrayed their agreement, Nzinga sought allies among the Jaga people. She took the opportunity to avenge the death of her son by killing Mbandi.

Forced out of her kingdom once more, she built up a huge military following with the help of the Jaga and a large number of slaves. From her base in Matamba she attacked Ari, the new king of Ndongo, whom she considered a puppet of the Portuguese.

For nine years she fought the Portuguese relentlessly supported by the Dutch and the Jaga. Finally she was defeated in 1656. According to a Dutch emissary she dressed like a man and kept a harem of men at home. She died in 1663 and was succeeded by her sister Dona Barbara.

5.8. GREED AND PROFIT

As early as 1514, the Manikongo, Affonso I, complains, writing from his palace in Mbanza Kongo, to Manuel I about the behaviour of the former Governor of Sao Tome Fernao de Melo:

"He sold our goods at the lowest price possible. With the money he bought a slave from Goa and another. He sent us them in one of the first ships, saying they were the carpenters. At the same time he sent us some blue cloth all gnawed by rats...all this we have been able to endure because of the love of our Jesus Christ."

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/10audio4.ram

Later on in Affonso's reign, it was obvious that whatever the initial rewards in terms of material goods and skills, the slave trade was beginning to undermine the fabric of the kingdom. On 18th October 1526, Affonso complained to the Portuguese King. He claimed the slave trade was robbing the country of its best men.

"Sir, there is in our kingdom, a great obstacle to God. Many of our subjects crave the Portuguese merchandise which your people bring to our kingdom so keenly. In order to satisfy their crazy appetite they snatch our free subjects, or people who have been freed.

They even take noblemen and the sons of noblemen, even our kinsmen. They sell them to white men who are in our kingdom, after having transported their prisoners on the sly in the dead of night. Then the prisoners are branded. The white men...cannot say from whom they have bought the prisoners. "

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/10audio5.ram

As the 17th century proceeded, the voracious demands of the slave trade and the breakdown of loyalty among Kongo's client states, all conspired to undermine the position of the Manikongo. The special relationship between the BaKongo and the Portuguese turned sour, as alliances and enmities increasingly turned solely on profit.

In 1665 the Kongo army was defeated by the Portuguese at the battle of Mbwila. The head of the Manikongo was cut off and put in the chapel situated on the bay of Luanda.

5.9. BRIEF REVIVAL

In 1704 a young Kongo woman called Dona Beatriz Kimpa Vita claimed to be possessed by

St. Anthony and declared it her mission to restore Kongo to its former glory. She founded a church in Mbanza Kongo, then called Sao Salvador by the Portuguese, which became very popular.

Her following attracted jealousy and criticism. She was burnt at the stake for heresy, along with her baby son in 1706. Pedro IV, ruler of the Kimbundu, ordered her death with the encouragement of Catholic priests.

6. PORTUGUESE INTERVENTION IN THE EAST

6.1. LOOKING EAST

The people of the east coast of Africa were not to be as easily impressed by European ways as those of the Kongo. They had, after all, already been importing ceramics and textiles from India and China for many centuries.

The leader of the Portuguese expedition round the Cape, Vasco da Gama, was not intending to stay anyway, being on his way to India. But the prosperity of Mombasa and Malindi, and the existence of gold made east Africa worth more than an occasional stopping off point.

GORGEOUSLY ATTIRED

"The king wore a robe of damask trimmed with green satin, and a rich turban. He was seated on two cushioned chairs of bronze, beneath a round sunshade of crimson satin attached to a pole. An old man, who attended him as a page, carried a short sword in a silver sheath.

There were many musicians...two trumpets of ivory, richly carved, and of the size of a man, were blown from a hole in the side, and made sweet harmony... "

Vasco da Gama's description of the ruler of Malindi, 1498.

The east coast of Africa was part of a huge trade network, driven largely by the gold of Great Zimbabwe and extending as far as China. The trading partners of the coastal Swahili were Arabs and Persians. Many coastal rulers had converted to Islam; Christianity held little allure.

6.2. BREAKING ARAB TRADE

In the long term, the Portuguese attempted to breach the Arab trade monopoly. They tried to force coastal rulers to take an oath of loyalty to the Portuguese crown. Then they built fortresses at Kilwa, Mozambique and Sofala. Later, in 1593, they built Fort Jesus, the biggest fortress of all in Mombasa, hoping to crush the opposition of the sultan permanently.

6.3. MUTAPA STATE

Moving inland, the Portuguese seized Swahili trading posts at Sena and Tete. This meant they were able to deal directly with the ruler of the Mutapa state, the Monumutapa (Mwene Mutapa, meaning 'master pillager') and carry out trading on the Zimbabwean Plateau.

For a time, a satisfactory trading relationship was maintained. But this was not enough for the Portuguese and they tried to gain total control of the gold mines. In 1571, they launched all out war, but were defeated by the Monumutapa. Thereafter, the Portuguese paid tribute to the Mutapa state in return for the right to limited mining.

With the defeat of the Swahili traders in the Zambezi Valley, Portugal asserted its commercial presence through the African-Portuguese prazeiros (estate owners) who settled in the area.

In the 17th century the Mutapa state fell into decline. Other states emerged, such as Barwe, and most noticeably the Butwa state under its ruler who held the title of Changamire. In 1684, the Changamire called Dombe defeated the Monumutapa and went on to take control over a huge gold producing area.

MOMBASA

BEFORE THE PORTUGUESE...

"It is a fair place, with lofty stone and mortar houses, well aligned in streets after the fashion of Kilwa. The wood is well-fitted with excellent joiner's work. It has its own king, himself a Moor. The men are in colour either tawny, black, or white and also their women go very bravely attired with many fine garments of silk and gold in abundance. This is a place of great traffic, has good harbour, in which are always moored crafts of many kinds and also great ships."

...AND AFTER

"The king of this city refused to obey the commands of the King our Lord (of Portugal) and through this arrogance he lost it, and our Portuguese took it from him by force. He fled away, and they slew many of his people and also took captive many, both men and women, in such sort that it was left ruined and plundered and burnt.

Of gold and silver great booty was taken here, bangles, bracelets, ear-rings, and gold beads, and also a great store of copper with other rich wares in great quantity, and the town was left in ruins."

Portuguese trader, Duarte Barbosa, writing in 1517-1518

6.4. SULTAN'S REVENGE

On the coast the Portuguese enjoyed considerable power for over 30 years, until 1631 when the Portuguese garrison at Fort Jesus was massacred by the ruler of Mombasa, Dom Jeronimo Chingulia, or Muhammad Yusif bin Hassan - his Muslim name.

He was one of the many Swahilis whom the Portuguese attempted to convert to Christianity. In his case he was actually sent to Goa to study, but reverted to Islam as soon as he returned to Africa. Fort Jesus was rebuilt but finally fell to the Arabs of Oman in 1698.

Once more Arab sea power dominated the Indian Ocean. The Portuguese meanwhile were confined to the coastland of what is today modern Mozambique, and experienced a late flush of prosperity when the British banned slave trading off the West African coast.

6.5. AFRICANISED

The intervention of the Portuguese was periodically highly disruptive, but the people they encountered on the east coast had a more profound effect on them than vice versa. The Portuguese became in many ways Africanised, while the people of the Swahili coast retained their culture with remarkably little change over the centuries.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/10audio5.ram

7. CONGO & GREAT ZIMBABWE & PORTUGUESE TIMELINE

2nd century AD:	Beginning of Iron Age.
10 th Century:	Late Iron Age, cattle-keeping community established at Leopard's Kopje, near modern Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.
11 th Century:	Late Iron Age.
1200:	Beginning of Great Zimbabwe state.
1400:	Most of Great Zimbabwe stone buildings completed. Capital of BaKongo kingdom fixed at Mbanza Kongo.
1482:	Portuguese adventurer, Diogo Cao, arrives at the mouth of the River Kongo. First European contract with BaKongo.
1491:	Manikongo (king) of Kongo, Nzinga a Nkuwu, is christened Joao II.
1500:	Great Zimbabwe finally abandoned.

1506:	Afonso I (formerly Nzinga Mbemba) becomes Manikongo (king) of Kongo.
15 th Century:	Great Zimbabwe decline. Movement of people North East to found Mutapa state and towards the south to establish Torwa state.
1512:	Portuguese design coat of arms for Manikongo.
1593:	Portuguese build Fort Jesus in Mombasa.
1631:	Sultan Muhammad Yusif bin Hassan massacres Portuguese garrison in Fort Jesus.
1639:	Queen Nzinga of Ndongo, in modern Angola, begins military campaign against Portuguese.
1665:	Kongo defeated by Portuguese at battle of Mbwila.
1689:	Fort Jesus falls to Omani Arabs.
1704:	Dona Beatriz Kimpa Vita claims to be possessed by St. Anthony. She founds a church and launches a mission to revive Kongo's former glory.
1706:	Dona Beatriz Kimpa Vita burnt at stake for heresy.
1850:	Ovimbundu traders, in the middle of modern Angola, reach Lamba of Northern Rhodesia.
1856:	Msiri, Nyamwezi trading king, establishes his seat of power in Katanga, in the southern part of modern DR Congo.
1873:	Zanzibar slave market closed down.

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XI. AFRICA AND EUROPE BETWEEN 1800 AND 1914

1. INTRODUCTION

"Neither imperialism nor colonialism is a simple act of accumulation and acquisition..."

Out of imperialism, notions about culture were classified, reinforced, criticised or rejected."

Taken from *Culture and Imperialism*, Edward W. Said.

The nineteenth century saw immense changes in Africa. Some were driven by famine and disease. Some changes were the result of the territorial ambitions of African rulers. As the century progressed alliances with merchants and missionaries from Europe began increasingly to have a bearing on how African leaders achieved their goals.

At the beginning of the century, Europeans were still hugely ignorant of the continent. The systematic colonisation of Africa, which gathered momentum in the 1880's, was not even on the horizon in the first half of the 19th century. Europeans had confined themselves to trading mainly along the coast. Inland the trade in slaves and commodities was handled by African and Arab merchants.

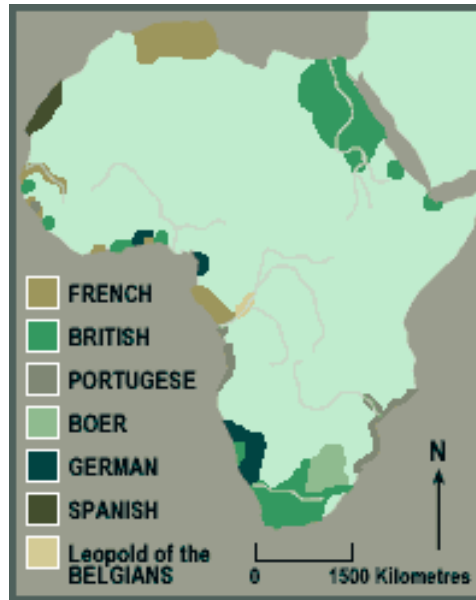
With the British abolition of the slave trade in 1807, the British navy took to patrolling the coasts, intercepting other nations's slave ships.

In the last two decades of the 19th century conflicts and rivalries in Europe began to affect people in Africa directly. In the 1880's European powers divided Africa up amongst themselves without the consent of people living there, and with limited knowledge of the land they had taken.

In 1914 conflict in Europe came to a head and the First World War broke out. The contribution of African people to the war effort was crucial.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/11audio0.ram

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/11audio0a.ram



2. BLACK EXPLORERS

At its widest point, from West to East Africa is 4,600 miles wide (7,400 km) and 5,000 miles long from North to South (8,000 km). The North of Africa, or the Maghreb as it is known in Arabic, is separated off from the rest of the continent by desert which forms a band some 3,000 miles (4,830 km) across the northern part of the continent. Throughout history the people of Africa have made immense journeys. Some were one-way journeys involving the complete **relocation** of a society.

There were three main reasons for making these long and dangerous journeys:

- Trade
- Famine and climate change, and
- War

2.1. GROWING RICH WITH SLAVERY

For thousands of years merchants made the trip across the Sahara, taking gold and slaves from the interior of West Africa up to the North and bringing back textiles and finished goods, later guns.

The journey could take three months with temperatures as high as 135 degrees Fahrenheit, falling to freezing point at night. It was a test of endurance for merchants, camels and slaves alike. A typical caravan in the 19th century would not have been much different from one of the 11th century, comprising about 1400 camels and four hundred merchants and slaves.

"The camels walked slowly and with effort for they were almost exhausted...The sight of this numerous caravan, destitute of water, scattered over the arid land, was truly dismal...the plain was interspersed with hills of coarse red sand mixed with gravel...The heat was stifling...The allowance of water was every time more and more scanty. We suffered beyond all expression."

Excerpt from *Journal d'un Voyage a Temboctou et a Jenne dans l'Afrique Centrale*, by Rene Caillie.

2.2. CENTRAL AFRICA

The Nymawezi people and the Yao, were also prodigious travelers, moving from the East coast to the centre of Africa looking for slaves and ivory.

The Arab-African merchant Tippu Tip made himself a fortune by ceaseless journeys into the interior to capture and sell slaves. He proved indispensable to H.M. Stanley, the brutal, self-glorifying American news reporter, who was looking for the missionary David Livingstone. Stanley's men were on the point of revolt, having been worked six months beyond their engagement of two years. Tippu Tip saved the day with a rousing address:

"... they said: 'This European is a churl. He gives us nothing without putting it down - not even clothes does he give us; not a single loin fabric does he give.' I said to them: 'let that be my care. I will give you as much as you want. Only go on.'

Then they answered me: 'What then are we to do? We are not afraid of you, because of the words you have spoken. But with this European we have nothing to do. Our time was up more than six months ago.' But I said to them: 'Your words are idle. Do as I tell you.' And they did."

From *Tippoo Tip: The Story of His Career in Central Africa*, by Heinrich Brode.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/5audio2.ram

Every European explorer owed his life to experienced African travelers. Stanley was grudging in his appreciation of Tippu Tip. Others, like the Hungarian anthropologist Emil Torday, who traveled through the Congo in the 1900's, paid fulsome tribute to his Bambala guide:

"...Mayuyu was the best of all. Higher praise is impossible. It was always Mayuyu who went to reconnoitre; it was Mayuyu who by his charming ways and invariably good temper managed to dispose the natives in our favour even before our arrival... He answered insults with flattery, sufficiently tinged with sarcasm not to be mistaken for fear.

An invitation to a fight met with ready acceptance - on condition that the challenger accepted an invitation to a dinner, previous to combat 'Let us talk before we kill each other; we won't be able to do it after,' he would say - and the swashbuckler was appeased by his blandishments."

2.3. WEST AFRICA

Although best remembered as the first black Anglican Bishop, Samuel Crowther did an immense amount of travelling in the course of his work as a missionary. His passion for exploring was already evident in 1830 in Sierra Leone where he worked as a school teacher, but he devoted his spare time to visiting Temne villages.

Through his missionary work he travelled up the Niger every year, for over twenty years of his life, only stopping when he was 84. His achievement as a traveler, linguist and student of different cultures was recognised by The Royal Geographical Society which rewarded him with a gold watch.

2.4. AFRICAN AMERICAN EXPLORERS

A number of travelers in Africa, while not being African, were of African descent. The restless civil war veteran and journalist George Washington Williams journeyed all round Africa, stopping off in Cairo, Zanzibar and South Africa.

He spent six months going through the Congo by foot and on steamer, witnessing first hand

the horrors of forced labour under the Belgian regime there, leaving him "disenchanted, disappointed and disheartened." His accounts of what he saw at the hands of the Belgians contributed to raising public awareness of the brutal treatment of the people of the Congo.

Recently the diaries of three African Americans who travelled in the interior of West Africa have come to light. The starting point of George Seymour and James Sims was Liberia where they had emigrated from America. But tiring of Monrovia society they set off, attracting interest and attention wherever they went, some friendly and some decidedly unwelcome.

"Friday evening, the 15th of January, we entered Passilla, situated on the banks of St. Paul's river. This town consisted of some two hundred houses and a mixed population of Goulah and Passah people - who crowded around me in such a manner that I was nearly suffocated. I was not a little surprised at this, nor could I conjecture what it was about my person, unless it was my clothes, that attracted their attention; as nearly one half of the people in the town was of a lighter complexion than myself.

But the great secret was simply this - I was a 'white man' - white because I was a 'Merica man' - 'Merica man, because I Sarvy book,' and every body who 'Sarvy book,' except the Mandingoes, are 'white.' They say the Mandingoes would be white too if they would only dress like white people.

I did all that I could to convince them that I was not white, but I was unsuccessful; they would have it that I was white, and therefore I had to undergo, and submit to the most minute inspection. The inspectors were chiefly ladies, and very inquisitive ones too."

Quoted from Freedom to Roam, African Americans Journeys Inland from Liberia in the 19th century, by Dr. James Fairhead, Tim Geysbeek, Professor Svend Holso and Dr. Melissa Leach

Levin Ash, born a freeman in America where slavery was still practised in the southern states, now found himself in danger of losing his freedom in Africa.

"Brother Ash was absent twenty-three days; and, when he returned, he was an object of pity. I had myself fallen away in flesh, from being dreadfully scratched with grass. Brother Ash was bare headed, and looked very wild.

After he got a little rested, he informed me that, when we were attacked, he put down his knapsack, and gave the native sign of battle, by flourishing his walking stick. They followed his motion by a charge of arrows, which came so plentifully, that he soon took to the water, dove like a duck, but one arrow hit him, which was in the shoulder blade. It stuck in his flesh, and it was some time before he got it out, in the water. In the creek he lost his cap...

He continued his journey from day to day, till he was arrested, stripped naked, and a large stick fastened to his leg by an iron strap. He was kept in this condition ten days. He was then taken as a slave, with one hand tied to his neck, and driven to the large towns to be sold for a gun; but they could make no sale of him, and took him back to the town where he was captured; and after being without his clothes fifteen days, they were restored to him."

Quoted from Freedom to Roam, African Americans Journeys inland from Liberia in the 19th century.

2.5. EXPLORERS OF NORTH AFRICA

Making long journeys is central to the Islamic culture. Every Muslim tries to visit the Holy City of Mecca, at least once in a lifetime. This hadj or pilgrimage can be an immense journey taking months, depending on where the pilgrim lives. And if you are travelling in a land where Muslims live then you can be sure of hospitality. Another central tenet of Islam is going out and finding converts.

Added to this is the academic tradition describing and noting strange and new societies. So there were three main reasons Muslims took to the road:

- Observing the faith by going on pilgrimage
- Spreading the faith among nonbelievers, and
- Academic interest

The earliest documented Muslim explorer was the Arab Ibn Haukal who in the 10th century, went to the ancient Kingdom of Ghana (part of modern Mali). Three hundred years later the learned Berber **Ibn Battuta** travelled both in West and East Africa. In the 16th century Leo Africanus, who was born in Granada of North African descent (he would have been described as a Moor), travelled extensively in West Africa. He visited Hausaland (modern northern Nigeria) Timbuktu and Bornu. He saw the Niger but thought it flowed to the West.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/11audio2.ram

3. WHITE EXPLORERS

European explorers shared some of the reasons for travelling round Africa with Muslim fellow travelers, but had others peculiar to the time. They went in search of:

- scientific & geographical knowledge
- fame and celebrity, and
- people to convert to Christianity

3.1. POWER AND KNOWLEDGE

European travelers hugely increased a general understanding of geography, climate and resources. Some accounts of the people were objective (as far as an outsider can be objective), others were willfully misleading. All the information these travelers brought back - wrong and right - contributed to devising an imperial strategy for controlling Africa.

3.2. SOURCES OF RIVERS

For Europeans the golden age of travelling was the early 19th century. The first half of the century was dominated by a desire to establish the sources of two of Africa's great trading arteries, the Niger and the **Nile** respectively.

The sort of men who undertook journeys across regions which were unknown to Europe were in the main strong willed, eccentric, sometimes cruel and prejudiced. The African Association was founded in 1788 with the aim of finding Timbuktu and the origin of the Niger. The popular opinion for hundreds of years had been that the Niger was somewhere along the line, linked to the Nile.

The Scots explorer Mungo Park died in 1805 trying to establish the truth, taking over 40 people with him. He relied on two African guides, Isaaco (described as "an African trader") and Amadi Fatouma. Other British travelers continued to look for the Niger including the Lander brothers.

3.3. CENTRAL AFRICA

The Englishman Denham and Scotsman Clapperton set off in 1822 in search of Central Africa. They argued the entire length of their journey from Kano to Lake Chad. Denham alone reached Mabah on the northern side of Lake Chad, but failed in his goal to get to the eastern side of the lake. He was accompanied by Arab merchant Bhoo Khaloom and Maramy, a slave of the king of Kouka.

3.4. THE SAHARA

The German, Heinrich Barth, explored the major trade routes of Sahara and Sahel, in particular Sokoto and Borno, writing a detailed five volume work. Rene Caillie, one of the few French explorers in West Africa, was the first European to have entered Timbuktu in the late 1820's. He nearly died crossing the Sahara disguised as a Muslim. Caillie was accused of making up the accounts of his trip, until Heinrich Barth verified it thirty years later.

3.5. FALLING OUT

In East Africa it was the sources of the Nile which exercised the European imagination. Commissioned by the Royal Geographical Society and the Foreign Office, Richard Burton and John Hanning Speke set off to find the origins of the Nile.

Richard Burton determined to fulfill an ambition to go where no man (i.e. European) had been before. A brilliant linguist, Burton combined great scholarship with a sexually obsessive, sadistic turn of mind and sweeping prejudice. He teamed up with the energetic, boyish, but less bookish John Hanning Speke.

After enduring great illness and hardship travelling from Zanzibar to Tanganika, they parted company and then fell out publicly over the source of the Nile, with Speke dying mysteriously the day before a debate appointed to bring the two men and their theories together.

3.6. ACROSS THE CONTINENT

Perhaps the most famous British traveler of all was **David Livingstone** who was the first European, although not first African, to cross the continent from the Zambezi to Luanda on the West Coast. His experiences in Africa were described in sensational terms by the newspaper reporter turned traveler Henry Morton Stanley.

Livingstone believed that imperialism would ultimately benefit people in Africa, but he could be an observant man with a sense of relative values; he could see the point of view of those who did not want to be converted:

"The only avowed cause of dislike was expressed by a very influential and sensible man, the uncle of Sechele.

'We like you as well as if you had been born among us; you are the only white man we can become familiar with; but we wish you to give up that everlasting preaching and praying; we cannot become familiar with that at all. You see we never get rain, while those tribes who never pray as we do obtain abundance.'

This was a fact; and we often saw it raining on the hills ten miles off, while it would not look at us 'even with one eye.'"

Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa, by Dr. David Livingstone.

In another instance, he gave a detailed account of the prejudices of the Afrikaners. His fellow explorer and devoted friend was Chuma. When Livingstone died at Lake Bangweulu, it was Chuma who organised the embalming of his body and made the ten month journey with his body back to Bagamoyo on the coast and on to Britain.

3.7. WOMEN ON THE MOVE

Mary Kingsley was one of the few women travelers of the 19th century. She moved around West Africa, finding out more about animals and plant life. She wrote with an unusual degree of detachment, wit and observance for her generation of Europeans. In the 1890's she visited Liberia, Sierra Leone, Angola and Cameroun. She died while nursing soldiers during the Boer war in 1900.

4. THE EUROPEAN SCRAMBLE

Commercial greed, territorial ambition, and political rivalry all fuelled the European race to take over Africa. This culminated in Africa's partition at the Berlin Conference 1884-5. The whole process became known as "The Scramble for Africa".

4.1. ANGLO FRENCH RIVALRY

Until the 19th century the French had played a smaller role in Africa than the British, but their defeat in the Napoleonic War made them look to Africa for compensation. North Africa became a theatre for Anglo-French rivalry, illustrated most dramatically by the Fashoda incident, where troops from both powers marched from opposite directions to meet in the wilderness in southern Sudan, bringing the two European powers to the brink of war.

There were few French **explorers** but there was growing interest in the idea of using North Africa to play off the Germans against the British. This was what triggered off what became known as the "Scramble for Africa."

"Gentlemen, in Europe such as it is today, in this competition of the many rivals we see rising up around us, some by military or naval improvements, others by the prodigious development of a constantly growing population; in a Europe, or rather in a universe thus constituted, a policy of withdrawal or abstention is simply the high road to decadence! In our time nations are great only through the activity they deploy; it is not by spreading the peaceable light of their institutions...that they are great, in the present day."

Jules Ferry, Prime Minister of France [1880-1881, 1883-1885].

4.2. EGYPT

For centuries Egypt was ruled by the Ottomans based in what is now Turkey. Then in 1811 an Albanian army officer, Mohammed Ali, took power. Under his rule Egypt's economy and infrastructure expanded. Sudan fell under Egyptian control in the 1820s. By the middle of the century Britain grew concerned about Egypt's influence in the region and increasingly intervened in the commercial and political direction of the state.

By the late 1870s a nationalist movement began to take root. Using a Government over-spending as an excuse the French and British imposed dual control. Riots and military rebellion then prompted the British to send in an army of occupation in 1882. This provoked a rift between the British and the French.

4.3. ALGERIA

In 1830 the French occupied Algiers; they subsequently came up against the **Berber** jihad launched by the Qadiriyya brotherhood under the leadership of Abd al-Kadir. Persistent and tireless in his opposition to the French Abd al-Kadir was not defeated until 1847 when he was sent into exile. But Berber and Arab fighters continued to resist the French until well into the 20th century.

4.4. TUNISIA

At the beginning of the 19th century, Tunisia had a prosperous economy and cosmopolitan culture. Under Ahmed Bey there was a modest programme of modernisation. As in Egypt, the debts mounted up giving France an excuse to establish a Finance Commission. Tunisia became a French Protectorate in 1881.

4.5. MOROCCO

Morocco alone in North Africa remained independent in the 19th century. European style modernisation was instituted under Mawlay al-Hasan (1873-94) but plans for secular education and the levying of taxes met with resistance from Muslim clerics. Morocco finally lost independence in 1912 and was partitioned between France and Spain. Ten years later, the nationalist movement in Egypt triumphed and Egypt gained independence in 1922.

4.6. LIBYA

In 1911 Italy invaded Libya, then under Ottoman rule. Ottoman resistance collapsed and Libya was accorded nominal independence (without consulting the people of Libya). But Italy continued to occupy Libya. The commander of the fighting force of the Sanussi brotherhood, Umar al Mukhtar, defied the Italians until 1931 when he was executed.

4.7. SENEGAL

In 1854 Louis Faidherbe began the French conquest of the Senegal valley, and in 1863 Porto Novo (capital of modern Benin) was declared a French protectorate. There followed a series of treaties with rulers in the Ivory Coast.

4.8. CONTRASTING STYLES

By the end of the century the French had conceived a type of colonial rule which was highly centralised and made little effort to involve local rulers. This contrasted with the British colonial style, which in northern Nigeria took the form of indirect rule through the local Emirs and chiefs.

4.9. NEW & OLD PLAYERS

Despite the missionaries and the search for new trading outlets, Europeans in the first 80 years of the 19th century were not driven by any desire to rule and administer Africa. In 1865 the House of Commons committee in Britain recommended that Britain give up all her concerns on the West coast of Africa except for Sierra Leone.

Elsewhere in West Africa, leading African merchants still worked on equal terms with European traders in the 1860's, and even enjoyed the attention of Queen Victoria.



"We were favoured with sight of the beautiful baptismal present our beloved Queen has made to the infant of Mrs. J.P. L. Davies of Lagos, a lady well known as having enjoyed the high honour of being a protégé of her majesty.

The royal gift consists of a beautiful gold cup and salver, with knife, fork and spoon of the same metal and design, manufactured by J. Turner of New Bond Street, London. The cup and salver are both inscribed as follows: To Victoria Davies."

Queen Victoria quoted in the Anglo African newsletter, October 3rd 1863, on the occasion of the birth of a baby born to the leading African trader J.P.L. Davies and his wife, who was goddaughter to the Queen.

4.10. CONTROL

In the second half of the 19th century the piecemeal patchwork of alliances, trading colonies, protectorates and understandings yielded to sweeping changes imposed by the Europeans. No longer content with improvising as they went along, the British and the French were determined to put things in order and establish a clear administrative hierarchy with Europeans at the top and Africans below. Meanwhile, some of the oldest trading nations in Europe abandoned Africa and new players emerged. The Dutch and Danes left the continent whilst Germany, Italy and Belgium moved in. The Belgian claim to the Congo proved the most disastrous of all.

4.11. EXPLOITATION

Elsewhere the mineral wealth of the continent fixated and dazzled European adventurers. But soon casual commercial dealings were replaced by systematic exploitation and control. At the beginning of the 19th century the European grasp of African geography was confined mainly to the coast. But by the end of the century Europeans were straddling the continent with **railways** and roads. Now it was possible to take control - politically and commercially.

4.12. UNRESOLVED TENSION

The Scramble for Africa had the effect of defusing and displacing tensions between the European powers in Europe, but eventually the tradeoffs and alliances could not disguise the fact that Imperial Germany was on a collision course with Britain and France. Now for the first time, Africans found themselves dragged into a conflict which had its origins in the war rooms of Berlin and London. The moral posturing of European powers, supposedly representing civilisation, wisdom, reconciliation and order, soon disintegrated into the chaos, death and destruction of **World War I**.

5. THE AFRICAN SCRAMBLE

A number of states in central and southern Africa collapsed in the 19th century, others flourished. In the 1850s the Imbangla of Kasanje lost their monopoly as long distance traders doing business with Ambaquista and Ovimbundu. Shambaa (in what is now north east of modern Tanzania) broke up in the 1860s, as did the kingdom of Luba (in what is now south east DR Congo). The Lunda empire (now part of DR Congo) was taken over by the Chokwe by the 1880s.

In what is now western Uganda the Bunyoro lost out in 18th and early 19th century to the aggressively expansionist Baganda. Later in the 19th century with new arms at their disposal, the Bunyoro reasserted themselves, while the Baganda fell into factions allied to different Arab and European groups.

The Ethiopian Empire had been in decline and fragmented in the 19th century, but Emperor Menelik changed its fortunes and by 1896 the Ethiopians were strong enough to inflict a crushing defeat on the Italians at Adowa. Kingless, stateless and nomadic, the Masai successfully exercised their territorial ambitions by moving into the Rift Valley and attacking the sedentary farmers. Later their victories came to nothing because of internal disputes.

Other rulers took advantage of trade with Europeans to become rich and powerful, for example, Jaja of Opoba, the palm oil trader in the Niger Delta, and the Swahili slave trader **Tipu Tip**.

Find out more about Opposition and Resistance

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/11chapter9.shtml

[Find out more about Slavery](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/index_section9.shtml)

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/index_section9.shtml

5.1. CHANGING SOUTH AFRICA

Down in the South of the continent the beginning of the 19th century was marked by tremendous political upheaval with the emergence of the powerful Zulu kingdom under the highly disciplined military leadership of Shaka. The territorial expansion of the Zulus forced neighbouring peoples to move north and establish new kingdoms, displacing others in their wake. Thus the Kololos were driven North, in turn displacing the Lozi. At this point Europeans were still confined mainly to the Cape trading colony, but the discovery of diamonds in the late 1860's and gold in the 1880's inflamed European territorial ambition.

Commercial interest became underpinned by one man's vision of imperial rule in Africa - adventurer and diamond magnate, Cecil Rhodes dreamt of Britain controlling the continent from the Cape to Cairo.

As the century unfolded traditional rulers either learnt new strategies or fell from power. A king or chief stayed in power or was deposed depending on his ability to acquire new technology (and this meant modern guns), and by his ability to communicate efficiently and mobilise his army swiftly. These qualities became more important than ancient genealogy, ritual, inheritance and splendid isolation.

[Find out more about Southern Africa.](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/index_section12.shtml)

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/index_section12.shtml

6. EGYPT AND THE SUDAN

6.1. RULED BY OUTSIDERS

Since the decline of the pharaohs, Egypt had been occupied and ruled by successive waves of outsiders: the Greeks, the Romans, the Persians and Arabs.



In the 16th century all of North Africa, apart from Morocco, fell under Ottoman rule and remained so until the 19th century. In 1811 Mohammed Ali, a high ranking Albanian army officer serving the Ottoman Empire ousted the Governor of Egypt and appointed himself ruler. He remained nominally under Ottoman authority and was carefully observed by the British, who were determined to strengthen their position in North Africa. To begin with, Mohammed Ali pursued an independent domestic and foreign policy.

"Egypt may now almost be said to form part of Europe. It is on the high road to the Far East. It can never cease to be an object of interest to all the powers of Europe, and especially to England..."

The population is heterogeneous and cosmopolitan to a degree almost unknown elsewhere. Although the prevailing faith is that of Islam, in no country in the world is a greater variety of religious creeds to be found amongst important sections of the community."

First British Viceroy of Egypt, Earl of Cromer's account of why the British took over Egypt.

In 1820, with the encouragement of Britain, Mohammed Ali invaded Sudan in search of slaves and to keep his army occupied. The Funj sultanate was deposed. Southern Sudan was devastated and the Dinka still refer to the invasion as 'The time when the earth was spoilt'. Sudan was now under Egyptian rule.

6.2. NEW VISION

At home, Mohammed Ali was an energetic man with great vision. He launched an extensive modernisation programme for Egypt inviting foreigners to come and give technical expertise.

Factories, primary and technical schools were built, irrigation projects were constructed, and vast tracts of land were put under cotton cultivation; the appointment of thousands of barber vaccinators greatly reduced the spread of small pox.

6.3. BRITISH PRESSURE & THE CANAL

For the first time Egypt had a growing number of Egyptians in its army (as opposed to foreign mercenaries). The British became anxious that Egypt was becoming too strong a force in the region. In 1838 they compelled Mohammed Ali to reduce his army and drop his protectionist trade policies. As a result, Egypt became flooded with British goods and local industry collapsed. British investment grew in Egypt and North Africa became a focus for Anglo-French rivalry. Mohammed Ali's successor Abbas, appointed General Gordon, Governor of Khartoum under pressure from the British. Under his rule, the 90 mile long Suez Canal was built with French engineering and Egyptian labour.

"The canal is a marvellous thing and shows how the Europeans can always do whatever they set about doing. It is as long as from Mengo to Wakoli's, eighty seven miles, and is all cut through the sand, and is so deep that it will take vessels seven stories high. It is not wide - one could throw a stone or an orange across from side to side; and when two ships meet they tie on up to posts on the bank to let the other pass..."

We found workmen widening it in some places, and saw how camels worked in carrying away the sand; each camel knelt down till its panniers were filled, and then got up and went away when it was ordered to do so."

Account of the 1902 journey from Buganda to Britain, by Ham Mukasa, official secretary to the Katikiro of Buganda. Taken from Sir Apolo Kagwa Discovers Britain.

The canal opened up a shipping route from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean for the first time (avoiding going round Africa via the Cape of Good Hope). But in the process Egypt was tipped into bankruptcy, with a debt that grew from £3 million in 1863 to £100 million in 1879. The British and French had the excuse they needed to move in and establish dual financial control of Egypt.

Mohammed Ali's successor, Ismail, was deposed and replaced by his son Tewfik. Resentment of British intervention grew among members of the burgeoning nationalist movement. The idea that Islam could be blended with modern scientific thought and technology grew with The Modern Movement (Salafiyya) under Mohammed Abduh who taught at the Azhar mosque university.

Find out more about Islam

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/index_section7.shtml

6.4. OCCUPATION IN EGYPT, REVOLT IN SUDAN

In June 1882 Alexandria broke out in riots, leaving several Europeans dead. The British retaliated, the Egyptian army mounted a rebellion, and by August, Tewfik's government had collapsed. The British army secured the Suez Canal and then assumed the role of an army of occupation. This intervention marked the end of Anglo French cooperation over Egypt. Taking advantage of the crisis in Egypt, the Mahdi rose up against Governor Gordon defeating him and retaining control over Sudan until General Kitchener defeated him in the battle of Omdurman. Egypt finally achieved independence in 1922.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/11audio5.ram

7. RELIGIOUS CONVERSION

Christian missionaries were another force against slavery and their presence increased throughout the 19th century. Sometimes they fostered trade, at other times they fell out with trader and government officials alike. The first Catholic missionaries had come to Central Africa from Portugal in 1458. But the first Protestant mission was not established until the 1792 - the Moravian Brethren in the Cape.

Find out more about Christianity

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/index_section8.shtml

Some missionaries combined conversion with exploration and geography. David Livingstone, a Scottish mill worker, and the first European to cross the continent from East to West, is the obvious example.

As more people became converted to Christianity in Africa, an increasing number became missionaries with broadly the same aims as their European colleagues: of converting people in the interior. African rulers and their people took a pragmatic approach to government emissaries and missionaries.

Kabaka Mutesa I to Colonel Gordon, 24th March 1876:

"To Sir Colonel Gordon, My dear Friend, I wish you good day. It is I, M'tesa, King of Uganda who sends you this letter. I wish to be the friend of the white men. Therefore, hear my words which I say.

**I want a priest who will show me the way of God.
I want gold, silver, iron and bronze.
I want clothing for my people and myself to wear.
I want excellent guns and good cannons.
I want to cause to be built good houses for my country.
I want my people to know God."**

Missionaries offered some advantages besides salvation and a new faith. They provided a link between African rulers and European rulers, who might have arms or other commodities to sell. And they introduced literacy.

Learning to read was an essential part of Christian conversion, so that the bible could be read in English or in an African language. The skill of reading was to change the status quo for ever. Some African rulers like the King of Rwanda and the Kabaka of Buganda opposed the spread of literacy, because it empowered people and upset the social order.

8. RELIGIOUS RESISTANCE

8.1. ISLAMIC RESISTANCE

While the British were trying to stamp out the slave trade and spread the word of Christ, Berbers and Fulanis continued to preach the **Islamic faith** in West Africa.

Already by 1809 all the Hausa states were under Muslim rule and Sokoto was established as the Caliphate for the region. In East Africa, Islam came from the East with the rule of the Omani sultanate; but many coastal people remained Muslim even though the power of the Sultanate began to give way to the British and Germans.

It is estimated that nearly two thirds of Africa would have been converted to Islam had the European powers not embarked on the 'Scramble for Africa' in the 1880's.

Islam, compared to **Christianity**, had a great deal more to say about the precise nature of political rule and administration. In one sense, the order imposed by Islam impressed the Europeans - the British liked to work through Muslim leaders. On the other hand, Islam also endorsed the idea of sacred war, or jihad, a war launched against nonbelievers in order to spread the word of Islam, something the British saw as a threat to colonial control.

8.2. NORTH AFRICA

In the 1880s Mohammed Ahmed, the Mahdi (The Redeemed one) established himself as a Muslim leader, and set out to establish a new society in Sudan. The British were determined to crush him. When he died he became celebrated as a martyr in many parts of the Muslim world.

In Central Sudan one of the Mahdi's disciples, Rabin ibn Fadl Allah, led a resistance against the French. On his death his son followed in his footsteps and fought the French for 15 years until he died in 1901.

In Libya the Sanussi Brotherhood fought the Italians tenaciously for twenty years until 1932.

8.3. WEST AFRICA

The Tukuloor Empire, located in what is now modern Mali and Burkina Faso, was founded in the 1860s by the hugely effective and militarily successful Al Haj Umar. His son Ahmadu came under growing pressure from the French in 1880s. He tried to negotiate with them in the face of growing disunity in the Empire. The French were keen to take advantage of this

and very late in the day Ahmadu decided to launch a Holy War against them, calling on Muslims throughout the region; the response was weak and he was defeated by the French in 1890.

A far more successful and formidable enemy of the French was Samori Toure who kindled some of the glory of old Mali with his Mandinka Empire, defended by an army 30,000 strong. He kept this force very mobile, constantly surprising the French and had a tremendous sense of military tactics. 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 1901.

8.4. SPIRIT MEDIUMS

A number of rebellions against European powers were inspired by spirit mediums. This tradition of fighting off bullets with magic potions and spells goes back hundreds of years. In the 19th century these acts of resistance were common throughout Africa.

8.4.1. MAJI MAJI

The hated regime of cotton growing provided the impetus for rebellion against German colonial rule in Tanganyika. The leader of the Maji Maji movement was Kinjikitile Ngwale, a medium possessed with a snake spirit called Hongo. He encouraged his supporters to sprinkle their bodies with magic water, known as maji maji, which they believed would protect them from bullets.

His movement spread from his base in Ngarambe, some 200 miles south from Dar Es Salaam. Five missionaries were murdered and German reinforcements were sent in. In the end, the magic water which they thought would protect them from the German guns failed.

Thousands were killed in battle. German revenge was terrible; a scorched earth policy wiped out whole villages and all their crops. It's estimated 250,000 died from famine.

8.4.2. AMBUYA NEHANDA

The Chimurenga wars 1896-7 in Matabeleland and Shonaland (in modern Zimbabwe) were inspired by traditional prophets and priests or svikiro. They blamed the Europeans for all hardship: the hut tax, forced labour, drought, rinderpest. The most famous svikiro was Ambuya Nehanda. Some 8,000 Africans died in these wars. Four hundred and fifty Europeans were killed.

8.4.3. CHRISTIAN DISSENT

John Chilembwe was an American trained missionary who returned to his native Nyasaland (now Malawi). He believed in a new African society based on Christian values but independent of Europeans. He attacked tax and recruitment, and led an armed insurrection against the British. He was executed in 1915.

In Nigeria Garrick Braide called himself Elijah II and claimed the British were about to leave Nigeria because of the war - his prophesies contributed to a revolt in Kwale Ibo.

9. ROYAL RESISTANCE

The colonisation of Africa by European powers provoked an enormous amount of resistance from different quarters - both rulers and people - all over the continent. Conflict and frustration was sparked off as African rulers tried to retain or even increase power while acquiring European support to fight their enemies.

9.1. TRADE

The colonial powers, in turn, took advantage of this to increase their spheres of influence. By the 1880's one of the main points of contention was trade, as African rulers tried to hang on to their monopolies and right to impose tariffs, and Europeans pressed for free trade, which put the new big trading houses in Europe at an advantage.

A number of rulers were not prepared to compromise with European powers. Sometimes this ended in humiliation, as was the case with the Asante. For the Baganda under Mwanga

it was a time of total confusion as he changed sides constantly. For the neighbouring Bunyoro, resistance proved useless. For the Ethiopians resisting the Italians ended in a resounding success. Emperor Menelik defeated the Italians at the battle of Adowa.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/11audio8.ram

9.2. HUMILIATION

The Asante (in modern Ghana) came into conflict initially over the question of slave owning. Kumasi was ransacked by the British in 1874 and the Asantehene (King Prempeh) was fined.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/11audio7.ram

In 1895 the new Colonial Secretary, Joseph Chamberlain, began to pursue an aggressive colonial policy, based on enforced submission and humiliation. In 1896, the Asantehene was forced into exile in the Seychelles via Sierra Leone and the Asanti fell under the authority of the Governor in Accra.

There followed a full-scale military revolt, led by the indefatigable Yaa Asantewa (Queen Mother). This culminated in the Governor being besieged in Kumasi. Yaa Asantewa was only defeated by a British expeditionary force in July 1900. In 1901, Asante was annexed by the British.



9.3. CONFUSION

Mwanga Kabaka (the king) of the Baganda was deeply suspicious of the British; he ordered the murder of the Anglican Bishop Hannington and had thirty pages in his court put to death because they had learnt to read. His policy towards Christians, both Catholic and Protestant, and Muslim emissaries fluctuated. Factions sprang up among the Baganda chiefs, and Mwanga fled from his kingdom. He later returned to his throne with a wide range of foreigners in tow: British Missionaries, French priests, Swahili traders, German adventurers, even an Irish trader in German uniform (Charles Stokes) - all hoping for a profitable agreement.

Finally Buganda was made a Protectorate in 1894. Already under suspicion of planning a rebellion against the British, Mwanga decided to throw in his lot with his neighbour, the King of the Bunyoro (the Kabarega). Both kings were captured and sent into exile in 1899.

Now there were three African kings in the Seychelles under order of the British. The Kabarega of the Bunyoro returned to his homeland in 1923. King Prempeh did not return to his homeland until 1924. Kabaka Mwanga died in the Seychelles in 1903.

9.4. TRIUMPH

The ill-prepared Italian attempt at colonisation of Ethiopia (Abyssinia as it was known then) ended in a resounding defeat for Italy in 1896 at the battle of Adowa. The Italians lost of 7,000 troops. Ethiopia lost 6,000. In October Emperor Menelik had the satisfaction of witnessing Italy recognise "absolutely and without reserve the independence of the Ethiopian Empire" in the Treaty of Addis Ababa.

The news was greeted with rejoicing in St. Petersburg - Russia and Ethiopia enjoyed a special relationship because each had an Orthodox Church. Under Emperor Menelik's rule Ethiopia experienced unprecedented modernisation and economic growth. Foreigners were welcomed for their expertise.

10. POLITICAL RESISTANCE

The colonisation of Africa by European powers provoked an enormous amount of resistance from different quarters - both rulers and people - all over the continent.

British colonial rule was less centralised. French colonial rule was more so. In the early 1900's a desire for change began to be expressed in the form of regional movements and delegations to conferences overseas.

At this stage politics was not national in character, except in **North Africa**, but rather centred on people's relationship to their chiefs and rulers, on the one hand, and colonial officials, on the other.

An educated urban minority emerged which began to conceive of a new kind of society which would be determined neither by Europe nor by traditional rulers, neither by the past nor the present. It lay in the future, although what that might be precisely was not yet clear.

Aborigines' Rights Protection Society was formed in the Gold Coast in 1897 as an association critical of colonial rule. In 1908, the People's Union was founded in Nigeria. The Young Senegalese Club was founded in 1910. And in 1912, Anti-Slavery and Aborigines' Protection Society was founded in Nigeria. It was in Southern Africa that the first two political movements in Sub-Sahara emerged in 1912.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/11audio7a.ram

10.1. LIGA ANGOLANA

Liga Angolana was formed by a group of educated civil servants (African & mestico) with the rather vaguer aim of improving the lot of Angolans.

10.2. ANC

The ANC was founded under the name of the South African Native National Congress. The issues at stake were loss of land and voting rights - the Cape was the only part of the Union of South Africa with universal franchise, irrespective of ethnic origin. The ANC was conceived as an organisation representing the Rhodesias (modern Zambia and modern Zimbabwe), Basutoland (modern Lesotho), Bechuanaland (modern Botswana) and Swaziland.

10.3. JOURNALISTS & WRITERS

The first **newspapers** in Sub Saharan Africa appeared in Liberia and Angola. In the second half of the 19th century they contained increasing criticism of the European presence.

In West Africa two leading critics were: P.Jackson, the Liberian editor of the Lagos Weekly Record, and Edward Blyden, who emigrated to Liberia from the West Indies and believed that an European style education was damaging to African people. He believed that Islam was better suited to their customs and outlook. He argued for African history to be taught and a university to be founded in West Africa.

"...you must see at once that when a youth is sent for education from African to Europe, he must lose a great part of the very training for which he has been sent to school - viz to prepare for the work of his life. The man who, in the process of his education has not imbibed a large race feeling, in whom there is not developed pride of race, has failed in a great part of his education.

And whatever else may be acquitted in Europe, it is evident that, for the Negro, race feeling must be kept in abeyance. And what is a man without this feeling? It is this strong race feeling - this pride of race having been instilled in the mind of the Jew from his earliest infancy, which has given to that peculiar people their unquenchable vitality."

In Angola a vociferous and energetic circle of writers and journalists emerged in the 19th century. They have been described by historians as 'proto-nationalists' and include Jose de Nascimento (1838-1902), Joaquim Dias Cordeiro da Matta (1857-94) and Jose de Fontes Pereira (1838-91).

In Mozambique, a comparable group of educated people formed the Associao African, and in 1910, published one of the earliest protest journals, Brado Africano.

11. TAX WARS

11.1. TERRIBLE TAX

One of the central pillars of colonisation was tax. The European powers did not want Africa to be a drain on their treasuries, and they wanted the colonies to pay their own way. They also wanted people to enter into the cash economy. Taxation was a way of driving people into working for money.

The competence of a French colonial official might often be measured by how much tax he was able to collect. This could be in the form of a poll tax or a tax on homes. For the ordi-

nary people, especially those who were not earning money through labour or selling goods, taxation was an intolerable burden. Resentment turned to anger in many parts of Africa.

11.2. ANGOLA'S FIRST REBELLION

The Portuguese were the earliest Europeans to arrive in Sub-Saharan Africa back in the 15th century. But their activities were, like those of other European powers, confined largely to trading. In the late 19th century they attempted to impose some administrative control. In 1902 a tax collection exercise in Bailundo, in the centre of what is now Angola, went badly wrong when local people rebelled violently, attacking tax collectors and traders (both European and African). This was the first time that Africans had rebelled against the Portuguese in Angola.

11.3. SIERRA LEONE HUT TAX

The imposition of a tax on individual property in 1898 was the final straw for Temne and Mende chiefs who had seen a big increase in British intervention in the Protectorate in the 1890's, including: stamping out slavery, seizing any land without title deeds, appointing district commissioners, and increasing levels of policing.

The Hut Tax resulted in the death of some British officials and anyone suspected of collaborating.

Cardew, the British Governor of Sierra Leone noted 'the growing political consciousness of the African, and his increasing sense of his worth and autonomy.'

11.4. GENOCIDE

In South West Africa (now Namibia) the Germans played off the Herero against the Nama. But the Herero soon regretted the treaty of protection they had signed with the Germans; they were forced to pay taxes, their land was stolen. In 1904, frustrated and betrayed, they took the Germans on, destroying some farms and killing a hundred people. The German response was out of all proportion.

"The Herero nation must leave the country. If it does not do so I shall compel them by force...Inside German territory every Herero tribesman, armed or unarmed, with or without cattle, will be shot. No women and children will be allowed in the territory: they will be driven back to their people or fired on.

These are the last words to the great Herero nation from me, the great General of the mighty German Emperor."

General von Trotha's extermination proclamation quoted by H. Bley's South West Africa under German Rule.

The Germans drove the Herero into the Omaheke desert, sealing the last water holes off before erecting a fence to keep them out. Around 50,000 Herero died.

12. TRADE WARS

12.1. FROM SLAVES TO NEW TRADE

With the British abolition of the slave trade in 1807, the British navy took to patrolling the coasts for other nations' slave ships. The motives of the British were not entirely humanitarian. Having given up the commercial benefits of the slave trade, the British were determined to make everyone else do the same. Had they not, their share of African trade would have been much smaller.

The anti-slave trading crusade, although inspired by moral righteousness, became a way for Britain to assert itself both commercially and territorially in Africa.

However, stopping the slave trade was not easy. On the East coast the British met with considerable resistance from **Arab merchants** and the Sultan of Zanzibar himself.

Meanwhile, in South Africa the Afrikaners were beginning to formulate a way of life not only profoundly religious but also one in which the role assigned to Africans was essentially static and subservient with no vision of change or movement.

12.2. THE STORY OF JAJA, KING OF THE OPOBA

In West Africa the tension grew between African merchant kings and European government officials who wanted to dismantle all monopolies and tariffs imposed by local rulers. This move towards free trade meant African monopolies being replaced by much larger European monopolies in the long term. Jaja, King of Opobo, in the Niger Delta (part of Nigeria today) had been a crucial ally of the British in the sacking of the Asanti capital Kumasi. In 1885 he asked for British Protection through the consul - Hewitt. Hewitt replied:

"...the Queen does not want to take your country or your markets, but at the same time she is anxious that no other nations should take them. She undertakes to extend her gracious power and protection, which will leave your country still under your government: she has no wish to disturb your rule..."

Letter 8th January 1884, quoted by Michael Crowder in *The Story of Nigeria*.

British Protection was usually offered on condition that all local trade monopolies were dropped. In the case of Jaja he successfully retained his monopoly. He was determined not to lose his position as middleman and that none of his neighbours should deal with European merchants. But within two years, in 1886, the Royal Niger Company had succeeded in taking the monopoly of all trade in the region. Jaja was eventually deported to the West Indies with a pension of £800 a year.

13. RAILWAYS

Africa's network of railways was started in 1852 in Alexandria, Egypt and continued until the 1960's. Most of the main lines were completed by the 1920's. They were hugely expensive to build, both in terms of lives lost and financial cost. Most of them were government owned and run.

13.1. WHY THE RAILWAY NETWORK WAS BUILT

The reasons for embarking on these great railway projects were varied:

13.1.1. TRADE

Abbas I, the Egyptian ruler, masterminded the first railway on the continent in the mid 1850's. He was driven by a desire to bring Egypt in line with Europe (the first train ran in Britain in 1825). He also wanted to use the trains to stimulate trade.

Emperor Menelik of Ethiopia had similar motivation. While in Egypt the railways carried goods which were already being manufactured and exported. In other parts of Africa the railways created new demands and so stimulated trade where there had been none. This was particularly the case with the Ugandan Railway running from Mombasa (on the coast of modern Kenya) to Lake Victoria (modern Uganda). The train could cut transport costs by 90-95%. Many people who earned their livelihoods as carriers were put out of work because of it.

13.1.2. WAR

Railways were built so that Europeans could better fight opponents to colonialism. In Sudan the railway from Wadi Halfa to Khartoum was part of Kitchener's subjugation of the region. Later a line was extended from Atbera eastwards to Port Sudan, initially for the purpose of transporting troops and supplies during the **First World War**.

13.1.3. CONTROL

The railway network provided Europeans in Sub-Saharan Africa with a means of controlling the areas where they had colonies, linking one part of a region to another. This made it possible to impose the same sets of laws and regulations over vast areas.

The construction of the line from Lagos to Kano made the idea of a Nigerian state, embracing two very different regions, a possibility.

13.1.4. MINING

A large number of lines were built simply to transport minerals from mines to ports, with little benefit to communities on the way. In the Belgian Congo, copper from Katanga was taken to the port of Lobito in Angola on the Benguela railway. In Liberia a railway was built from the iron producing region of Nimba country to the port in Buchanan.

13.2. RESISTANCE AND REVOLT

Although some African rulers like Emperor Menelik and Abbas I were in favour of trains, others were suspicious and disapproving. They could see that a railway not only changed the geographical landscape but also the landscape of power and trade. The Damal of Cayor, Lat Dior Diop, in Senegal was adamant in his opposition.

"As long as I live, be assured, I shall oppose, with all my might the construction of this railway."

Damal of Cayor, Lat Dior Diop, to French Governor Servatius.

The ruled, as well as their African rulers, were hostile. The Ugandan Railway, running from Mombasa (coast of modern Kenya) to Lake Victoria (modern Uganda) was built with labour from India, since Africans refused to do the back breaking work of preparing the ground and maneuvering sleepers and track into position. Once the railways were built the people who worked on them were in a strategic position, and could have huge impact on the economy if they withheld their labour.

Strike Week

"This has been a very exciting week. What a pity we haven't daily papers in Freetown. By this time it's rather stale to talk of the splendid fight which Railway and Public Works Men have put up for their war bonuses (given to Indian and European mechanics)..."

If R. Barker, the blundering Acting General Manager and locomotive Superintendent of the Railways did think once that Sierra Leoneans could only bark without biting, then he is shockingly disillusioned. It is grand the way the fellows have stuck together."

Sierra Leone Weekly News, 19 July 1919, 'Rambling Talks' by the Rambler.

In Southern and East Africa segregation of the staff and their facilities caused friction.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/11audio12.ram

TIMETABLE FOR COMPLETION OF MAJOR TRACKS

NORTH AFRICA

country	starting point	finish	date of completion
Egypt	Alexandria	Cairo	1856
Sudan	Wadi Halfa	Khartoum	1898
Morocco	Casablanca	Rabat	1923
Tunisia	Tunis		1919
Algeria	Algiers		1919

EAST AFRICA

country	starting point	finish	date of completion
Djibouti/Ethiopia	Djibouti	Addis	1917
Kenya/Uganda	Mombasa	Lake Victoria	1901
Tanganyika	Tanga	Usambara hills	1905

WEST AFRICA

country	starting point	finish	date of completion
Sierra Leone	Freetown		1909
Nigeria	Lagos	Kano	1912
Ghana	Sekondi	Kumasi	1903
Congo	Brazzaville	Pointe Noire	1932

SOUTHERN AFRICA

country	starting point	finish	date of completion
South Africa/ Zimbabwe	Capetown	Bulawayo	1897
Congo/Angola	Copper belt	Benguela	1931

14. FORCES FOR CHANGE

14.1. DISCOVERY OF QUININE

One of the main obstacles to European penetration of large parts of Africa was malaria. Africans had lived with mosquitoes spreading Malaria for generations, many had some sort of resistance or capacity to fight a malaria attack. This was not the case with Europeans who died in great numbers. The coast of Sierra Leone was known as the White Man's Grave because of this.

Once Europeans could protect themselves from malaria with quinine, which they began to use in the 1850's, they became increasingly less reliant on Africans helping them achieve their objectives.

14.2. STEAM ENGINE

The steam engine was invented in 1804 by Richard Trevithick. The first engine used to pull carriages was Stevenson's Rocket in 1825. Only 28 years later in 1853, the first railway track on the continent of Africa was opened in Egypt between Kafr-el-Zayat and Alexandria, commissioned by the Khedive of Egypt, Abbas I.

14.3. TELEGRAPH

In 1885, the African Direct Telegraph company was formed to lay a cable from Europe to the West Coast of Africa. The first cabled news came through Reuters to Nigeria in 1910. The Nigerian Daily Times was the first subscriber.

14.4. GUN DESIGN

The old muskets first made in the 17th century took one whole minute to load before giving off one shot, which three times out of ten misfired. These gave way to the breech loading rifles in 1866 which were quick loading, (cartridges were used, not loose gunpowder), shot further and were more accurate. Even more fire power was afforded by the repeating rifles which the French adopted in 1885 in West Africa. In the 1830's, Africans and Europeans had comparable firepower. By the 1880's, Europeans had superior fire power.

Arab-Swahili slave trader Tippu Tip in conversation with explorer H. M. Stanley:

""With this gun you can fire fifteen shots at a time.'(said Stanley). But we knew nothing of a fifteen shot gun...I asked him: 'From one barrel?' And he replied: 'They come out of one barrel.' Then I said to him: 'Fire it off, that we may see.' But he said: 'I will sooner pay twenty or thirty dollars than fire off a single cartridge.'

Then I thought in my heart: 'He is lying. That is a rifle with one barrel, and the second thing there must be the ramrod. How can the bullets come one after another out of the one barrel...'

Then he rose at once, went outside and fired twelve shots. He also seized a pistol and let off six shots. After this he came back and seated himself. We were mightily astonished. I begged him, 'Show me how you load.' He showed me."

Superior European fire power was clearly demonstrated in the battle of Omdurman fought in 1898 by the British against the Mahdi; 10,800 Sudanese were killed, but the British only lost forty nine.

14.5. RUBBER TYRES

In 1890 Dunlop produced the first rubber tyres, greatly improving the comfort of a bicycle ride and later driving a car. King Leopold meanwhile, was getting into debt with his Free State of Congo. Luckily for King Leopold and most tragically for everyone who lived in the Congo, wild rubber grew there. The King set about forcing production in a regime of terror, where whole communities were destroyed. People were killed and their hands severed if they refused to collect enough rubber.

"Lined up...are 40 emaciated sons of an African village, each carrying his little basket of rubber. The toll of rubber is weighed and accepted, but...four baskets are short of the demand. The order is brutally short and sharp - quickly the first defaulter is seized by four lusty 'executioners', thrown on the bare ground, pinioned hands and feet, whilst a fifth steps forward carrying a long whip of twisted hippo hide. Swiftly and without cessation the whip falls, and the sharp corrugated edges cut deep into the flesh - on back, shoulders and buttocks blood spurts from a dozen places. In vain, the victim twists in the grip of the executioners, and then the whip cuts other parts of the quivering body..."

Following hard upon this decisive incident was another. Breakfast was just finished when an African father rushed up the veranda steps of our mud house and laid upon the ground the hand and foot of his little daughter, whose age could not have been more than five years."

From an account given by Rev. John Harris, Baptist Missionary recently returned from Congo 1906, quoted in King Leopold's Ghost, by Adam Hochschild.

15. REMARKABLE FACTS

Egypt like other parts of Africa suffered from plague and cholera in the first half of the 19th century, with 200,000 people dying in 1835 alone.

One theory about the source of the Niger proposed that the river flowed into a great lake, where it evaporated like water in a sink.

The sister of King Leopold of Belgium became the Empress of Mexico. She went mad when her husband was executed by Mexican rebels.

16. AFRICA & EUROPE TIMELINE

1805: Mohammed Ali comes to power in Egypt.

1807: British abolish slave trade.

1808: Sierra Leone declared a colony.

1816: Gambia occupied by British.

1820: British settlers land on Eastern Cape.

1820-34: Mfecane (crushing) establishes Zulus as leading kingdom in South Africa.

1822: Liberia colony established.

1830: French occupy Algiers.

1834: Slavery abolished in British Empire.

- 1835: Great Trek across Orange and Vaal rivers begins.
- 1838: Piet Retief killed by Dingane & Zulus & Vortrekkers in Natal. Boers beat Dingane Zulus.
- 1842: Britain takes Natal.
- 1847: Liberia declares independence. Slavery abolished throughout the French Empire.
- 1852: Transvaal declared independent.
- 1854: Louis Faidherbe conquers Senegal Valley for the French. First railway on continent in Egypt (from Alexandria).
- 1861: US recognises Liberia. Britain occupies Lagos
- 1863 : French declare Protectorate over Porto Novo (Dahomey).
- 1866: French establish trading posts on Guinea Coast.
- 1867: First diamonds found in South Africa - Hopetown, Cape Colony.
- 1868: French Protectorate treaties Ivory Coast. Emperor Theodor of Ethiopia commits suicide. British annex Basutoland at invitation of King Mosheshwe.
- 1869: Completion of Suez Canal.
- 1879: Lobengula becomes king of Ndebele. Diamond rush to Griqualand South Africa.
- 1872: Cape Colony made self-governing.
- 1874: Kumasi, capital of Asanti, sacked by British.
- 1876: Egypt bankrupt - Anglo French control established. King Leopold of Belgian founds International African Association.
- 1877: Britain annexes territory from Walvis Bay (modern Namibia) to Cape. Shepstone annexes Transvaal for British despite protest of Afrikaners
- 1878: Berlin Congress.
- 1879: Zulu War.
- 1881: French proclaim protectorate in Tunisia Boers invade Natal and are defeated.
- 1882: Egypt occupied by British army after riots in Alexandria.
- 1884: The Berlin Conference. USA recognises King Leopold's so called Congo Free State
- 1885: First telegraph cable laid between West Africa and Europe. Mahdi takes Khartoum, death of Governor General Gordon. Germany annexes East Africa. British declared Protectorate over Bechuanaland. Bishop Hannington murdered on order of Kabaka (king) of Buganda
- 1886: Christians put to death in Buganda by Kabaka (king) Mwanga.
- 1890: Dunlop invents the pneumatic tyre.
- 1894: Uganda made Protectorate.
- 1896: Asantehene (king of Asanti) forced into exile by British. Chimurenga war breaks out in Southern Africa.
- 1897: Khartoum retaken for British by Lord Kitchener.
- 1899: Kabaka (king) of Buganda and Kabarega (king) of Banyoro sent into exile by British.

- 1904: 50'000 Herero driven into desert by Germans and die.
- 1912: ANC established as South African Native Congress. Trade in fire arms forbidden by Portuguese in Angola. Liga Angolana established.
- 1914: Outbreak World War.
- 1916: Tax riots in Yorubaland (Nigeria).

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18. USEFUL LINKS

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David Livingstone

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The Death of General Gordon

www.fordham.edu/halsall/islam/1885khartoum1.html

Internet History Sourcebooks Project, edited by Paul Halsall. History Department, Fordham University, New York.

Charles George Gordon

www.britannica.com/bcom/eb/article/printable/7/0,5722,38167,00.html

Encyclopædia Britannica.

Ethiopia's Decisive Victory at Adowa

www.thehistorynet.com/MilitaryHistory/articles/1997/10972_text.htm

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XII. SOUTHERN AFRICA

1. INTRODUCTION

**"...They resemble us, but in appearance are the colour of pumpkin-porridge...
They are rude of manners and without any graces or refinement.
They carry a long stick of fire.**

With this they kill and loot from many nations."

Zulu impression of first white men, taken from Zulu epic poem, Emperor Shaka the Great, translated by Mazisi Kunene, drawing on the memories of a number of Zulu oral historians.

In the early part of the 19th century the history of southern Africa is marked by the massive expansion of the Nguni empire under the military leadership of Shaka. This had a knock on effect throughout southern Africa displacing other peoples.

People in southern Africa also felt the economic and political impact of a minority of Europeans from the 17th century onwards. These Europeans set about taking over, and profiting from, other people's land.

Farming and mining were the principle activities from which white settlers profited, with the Dutch, or Afrikaners as they became known, mainly interested in agriculture.

The Englishman Cecil Rhodes led the initiative to exploit the country's mining potential. His long term goal was to colonise the whole continent with white settlers.

The Afrikaners had a huge social impact on southern Africa. Wherever they set up a community they pursued a policy of racial segregation, based on a belief in the racial superiority of Europeans, wherever they set up. This reached its most organised form in the system of apartheid created by the National Party of South Africa from 1948 until the 1980's, when it began to be dismantled.

While most of Africa had achieved independence by the early 1960s, it took much longer for southern African colonies to become independent. Tanzania, Malawi, Botswana, Swaziland, Zambia and Lesotho all achieved independence by the end of the 1960s. But Angola and Mozambique had to wait until 1975. Zimbabwe achieved majority rule in 1980. Namibia shook off South African domination in 1990.

It was not until 1994 that South Africa itself was returned to her people and governed through majority rule.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/12audio0.ram

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2. ZULU RISE & MFECANE

2.1. THE RISE OF SHAKA

In the first two decades of the 19th century, the Zulu people grew in power and expanded their **territory** under their leader, **Shaka**. This expansion, was in some measure a response to drought, putting pressure on the Zulus to find new land.

In addition, the movement of Europeans into new territory, which was not theirs, contributed to a situation of flux of which the Zulus took advantage. However, the Zulu expansion and the defeat of rival Nguni kingdoms is hard to imagine without Shaka's hugely forceful personality and exacting military discipline.

2.2. EMPEROR SHAKA THE GREAT

**From the tales of the war and their fame in Nguniland,
the Zulus knew how popular their fight was against Zwide.
Shaka, proud of these achievements and eager to encourage his army, addressed the regiment:**

**"Great nation of Zulu,
You have shown courage against a superior enemy.
The nations that spoke of you with contempt are chilled by your songs.
Kings and princes shiver in their little thrones.
Enemies flee to hide in the mountain caves."**

This excerpt celebrates Shaka's victory against King Zwide of the Ndwandwe Kingdom, in 1818 at the Mhlatuse River. Taken from Zulu epic poem, Emperor Shaka the Great, translated by Mazisi Kunene, drawing on a number of Zulu oral historians.

Shaka created a standing army of 40,000 warriors, made up of regiments separated out into age groups. The communities he defeated were plundered for cattle and grain. These attacks were not free for all, with Zulu soldiers taking what they wanted, but highly organised raids, with all the booty becoming the property of Shaka.

2.3. EFFECTS OF ZULU EXPANSION

**The Ngwane moved northwards in response to form the Swazi kingdom.
The Ndwandwe also went north to establish the Gaza kingdom.
The Ndebele moved in 1840 to what is now south western Zimbabwe.**

2.4. MFECANE 1817-1828

More destruction was caused by those whom Shaka defeated, than by his own forces. Such was the case of the Hlubi and the Ngwane. Bereft of all social order, these refugees took to looting and pillaging wherever they went. They reduced the landscape in the Natal and much of the Orange Free State into a wasteland. This period of change became known as the **Mfecane**, which is said to derive originally from a Zulu word meaning "crushing". For the past ten years the word and ideas behind it have aroused much debate and argument.

Many South African historians now believe that Europeans, and slave traders in particular, played a much larger part in upheaval in the region in the first quarter of the 19th century than was previously thought, and that too much emphasis has been put on Shaka's impact.

The black south African writer and journalist Sol **Plaatje** wrote movingly about this period after Shaka's death, in a novel. Entitled *Mhudi*, it focussed on the Ndebele defeat of the Barolong in the 1830's. This is believed to be the first novel written in English by an African.

2.5. THE ADVANCE OF THE NDEBELE

"Mzilikazi's tribe (the Ndebele) originally was a branch of the Zulu nation which Shaka once ruled with an iron rod. Irritated by the stern rule of that monarch, Mzilikazi led out his own people who thereupon broke away from Shaka's rule and turned their faces westward.

Sweeping through the northern areas of Port Natal, they advanced along both banks of the Vaal River, driving terror into man and beast with whom they came into contact.

They continued their march very much like a swarm of locusts; scattering the Swazis, terrifying the Basuto and Bapedi on their outposts; they drove them back to the mountains at the point of the assegai; and, trekking through the heart of the Transvaal, they eventually invaded Bechuanaland where they reduced the Natives to submission."

Taken from Sol Tshekisho Plaatje's book *Mhudi*.

Other people profited from the chaos, and new kingdoms arose, notably the kingdoms of Gaza and Swaziland. The Sotho under the canny leadership of King Moshoeshe, retreated to the mountain of Thaba Bosiu. Here he built a mountain kingdom (modern Lesotho) that was easy to defend against invaders.

He also cultivated the friendship of missionaries as a way of purchasing guns and horses. But he remained in danger of being swallowed up by the Afrikaners of Natal Province. For this reason, he agreed to become a Protectorate under the British (Basotholand), forfeiting some of his land in the process.

3. OPPRESSION OF KHOIKHOI AND XHOSA

The hunger for land is a central theme of southern African history from the 17th century onwards. It generated conflict, sparked off wars and displaced hundreds of thousands of people.

3.1. EXPANSION

The first Europeans in southern Africa confined themselves at first to the western part of the region, centring their activities on the Cape of Good Hope. Here the Dutch East India Company was established in 1652. Gradually the Dutch colony expanded north and east, displacing, in the first instance, the oldest known inhabitants of this region, the Khoikhoi (referred to by the Dutch as 'hottentots').

3.2. TRADITION DENIED

The Khoikhoi were part of a larger group called the Khoisan, spread across southern Africa, sharing much of the same language. The San branch were hunter gatherers; the Khoikhoi were herdsman. As a whole, the Khoisan needed large amounts of land in order to hunt and graze their cattle. The Dutch refused to recognise their traditional grazing and hunting rights.

3.4. DEFEAT

The Dutch both stole and bought cattle off the Khoikhoi. In 1659, the Khoikhoi fought the Dutch over grazing land south of Table Bay and lost. Soon the Khoikhoi way of life disintegrated.

NOT WIDE ENOUGH FOR BOTH OF US

"They objected that there was not enough grass for both their cattle and ours.

'Are we not right therefore to prevent you from getting any more cattle? For, if you get many cattle, you come and occupy our pasture with them, and then say the land is not wide enough for us both! Who then, with the greatest degree of justice should give way, the natural owners, or the foreign invader?'"

Jan van Riebeeck describing the Khoikhoi objections to the Dutch invasion of their pastures, quoted by Kevin Shillington in History of Africa.

The Dutch, who came to be known as Afrikaners (as well as Boers, which means farmers) started to expand their activities. They cultivated land and hunted across large distances. Subsequently, they acquired the title of Trekboers, when they embarked on long journeys or treks to get away from British officialdom in the Cape Colony.

3.4. SUBJUGATION

The Khoikhoi often ended up as slaves, either working in the Cape Colony, or as farm labourers for the Dutch. The final blow came to them in 1713 when they fell victim to a small pox epidemic brought on a Dutch ship. The descendants of the Khoikhoi and San can be found in the deserts of Botswana and Namibia today.

3.5. XHOSA

The second group of original inhabitants who suffered in the 19th century were the Xhosa. They had their western settlements between the Bushmans River and Fish River. They came into conflict with both the Dutch and then the British.

There were two major battles in the 1830's and 1840's. By 1854 the British had stripped the Xhosa chiefs of power and planted them as salaried functionaries in the colonial administration.

3.6. COLLAPSING WORLD ORDER

The loss of power and land was devastating, materially and psychologically. The final blow came when their cattle became infected with a lethal lung infection, killing as many as 80 per cent of some of the chiefs' cattle. Their world order and sense of purpose collapsed and the Xhosa turned to their religion to find the reasons behind these disasters.

3.7. PROPHECY & SUICIDE

A sixteen year old prophetess claimed to have been in touch with the ancestors who called on Xhosa leaders to create a new beginning for their people. This, the ancestors said, could only be done by wiping out the old, and that meant killing the remaining cattle.

3.8. THE SPIRITS COMMAND

"You are to tell the people that the whole community is about to rise again from the dead. Then go on to say to them all the cattle living now must be slaughtered, for they are reared with defiled hands, as the people handle witchcraft.

Say to them there must be no ploughing of lands, rather must the people dig deep pits, erect new huts, set up wide, strongly built cattlefold, make milksacks, and weave doors from buka roots..."

The words of the spirits, talking to 16-year-old Nongqawuse, as recorded by W.W. Qqoba in his narrative of the Cattle killing, based on oral sources. Quoted by J.B. Peires, in his book *The Dead will Arise*.

3.9. DIVISION

The Xhosa people became completely divided over what to do. The amathamba 'soft' believers thought they must obey; the amagogoty a or 'hard' unbelievers rejected the culling.

3.10. CATTLE KILLING

In February 1856, the Xhosa began killing their cattle. A total of 400,000 were culled. 40,000 Xhosa died as a result of this and many of those that survived had to work in Cape Town or as labourers on farms.

3.11. AFTERMATH

"Every day King Williams Town was thronged and its inhabitants distressed at the sight of emaciated living skeletons passing from house to house. Dead bodies were picked up in different parts within and around the limits of the towns, and scarcely a day passed over, that men, women or children were not found in a dying state from starvation.

My consulting room was every day surrounded with emaciated creatures craving food, having nothing to subsist on but roots and the bark of the mimosa, the smell of which appeared to issue from every part of the body, and to whom it would be a mockery to say, you must seek employment, or proceed on to the colony."

Dr. John Fitzgerald Founder of the Native Hospital, King Williams Town. Quoted by J.B. Peires, in his book *The Dead will Arise*.

4. AFRIKANERS VERSUS ENGLISH

The British arrived at the Cape of Good Hope in 1795 and immediately came into conflict with the Dutch over the issue of slavery. The initial aim of the British was to secure a stop-off on the way to Asia, but they soon became involved in the business of the colony. In 1807, the British banned slave ownership.

4.1. TREK

The British finally subdued the Dutch in 1806, and in 1834 they banned the trade in slaves. The Afrikaners hugely resented this and set off north over the Orange River, taking their cattle, wagons and servants with them to pursue their own way of life. Ironically, the land they occupied, the Transvaal, became a magnet for every European speculator in the region, since it contained some of the largest gold deposits in the world. By moving north, the Afrikaners clashed with the Ndebele, and most famously with the Zulus in 1838 at the battle of Blood River.

4.2. NEW STATE

The Afrikaner Republic of the Orange Free State was established in 1852; that of the Transvaal in 1854. The British meanwhile set up a colony in the west of South Africa in Natal. Here, they appropriated land and created reserves for Africans, bringing in large numbers of Indians to work on five year contracts.

4.3. IMPERIAL AGGRESSION

In 1890, Cecil Rhodes became Prime Minister of the Cape Colony. Five years later the British acquired a new Secretary of State, Joseph Chamberlain. Aggressively imperialist by nature, Chamberlain and Rhodes proved a lethal combination. First they took on the Afrikaners in the war of 1899 (known as the Boer war) and then many Africans. It is estimated that between 10,000 and 30,000 Africans fought alongside the British in the Boer War.

4.4. SOL PLAATJE

The most famous African to support the British effort was Solomon Plaatje who kept a diary throughout the famous siege of **Mafeking**. **Sol Plaatje** was a hugely talented writer and journalist. On the political front he is remembered for being the founding Secretary General of the South African National Congress (later renamed the ANC). He was born of Tswana-speaking Barolong parents and was a prolific writer, journalist and lecturer.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/12audio3.ram

4.5. SCORCHED EARTH

The Afrikaners were far harder to beat than the British had imagined; towards the end the British grew increasingly ruthless, resorting to a scorched earth policy and the confinement of Afrikaners - women and children - into huge concentration camps. Nearly 28,000 died of disease and dysentery.

4.6. RUSSIAN SUPPORT

Far away in Imperial Russia great interest was taken in the plight of the Boers (Afrikaners). The song, "Transvaal, Transvaal, My Beloved Country", was composed in support of the Afrikaners.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/12audio3a.ram

4.7. MARTYRDOM

The war generated a powerful image of martyrdom, bravery and defiance, which became mythologised by the National Party in 1948. The memory of the British aggression was ingrained in the minds of many Afrikaners.

4.8. EYE WITNESS OF BOER WAR

"It [the house] was full of people - women and children - including ...Mrs. P. Sidzumo. It pulled and shook the whole house upon them: pieces of shell or the house cut off her toes, shattered legs and injured her face and head. The left leg was broken below the knee (and the thigh completely shattered). The other people remained alive in the debris. The poor husband, coming to see the remains of his house, was met with the ruins of his wife just pulled out of the debris.

He became so senseless that he returned to the fort hardly knowing what he was doing until they told him his wife wanted to see him. He jumped up in joyous bewilderment - for he had imagined that she was dead already - and had a look at her before she was moved to the hospital. This was 3:45 and she died at 6:00 in the evening, leaving the husband and a little girl to mourn her I."

Extract from Sol Plaatje's Diary of the Siege of Mafeking, 14 December 1899.

4.9. UNION

It took another 11 years for a solution to be hammered bringing the Transvaal, Orange Free State, Natal and Cape Colony together into the Union of South Africa. The cultural differences between the two remained sharply defined. The Afrikaners held on to their language (a dialect of Dutch) and the majority clung to the idea of racial superiority.



4.10. TENSION

On paper, South Africa was a self-governing Dominion of the British Commonwealth. British interests were entrenched commercially. Politically and culturally the British continued to be in conflict with the Afrikaners for years to come, but happy in the main to take advantage of a system which provided cheap African labour and a high standard of living for whites.

5. MINING

The 1860's saw the British embark on serious mineral exploitation. They started diamond mining in Griqualand West. Gold mining began in Witwatersland in 1886.

Southern African gold had been exported for thousands of years to the Arab Peninsula and the Persian Gulf, but it had never been exploited on a massive scale. Now it was to be the focus of reckless European speculators and the investment houses of the world.

5.1. DECEIT

In 1889, **Cecil Rhodes**, already hugely wealthy from diamond mining, set his ambitions north of the Limpopo and tricked Lobengula, the King of the Ndebele into handing over his land. Ndebele thought he was granting Rhodes a limited mining concession.

In August 1889 the King wrote to Queen Victoria to complain:

"The white people are troubling me much about gold. If the queen hears that I have given away the whole country it is not so."

Cecil Rhodes made his views on African rights clear, eight years earlier, when he wrote to his friend W.T. Stead in August 1891:

"I contend that we are the first race in the world, and that the more of the world we inhabit the better it is for the human race."

5.2. INEQUALITY

Between 1903 and 1973, 42,000 men died on the gold mines. Ninety per cent of these were African. African miners were not allowed to move on to skilled work, which was reserved for white miners.

Between 1911 and 1969, salaries of white miners rose by over seventy per cent in real terms, while those of black miners remained the same. White miners had their own union, and carried out a number of strikes, notably in 1922 with the Rand Rebellion. But white miners showed no solidarity with their African fellow workers.

5.3. LABOUR UNREST

In 1941, African workers formed the African Mine Workers Union. In 1946 they called a general strike. Nine men were killed, and seventy men were dismissed. The union was subsequently banned. The need for more cheap black labour after the Second World War led the South African government to look for migrant workers outside South Africa, mainly from Mozambique and Malawi.

AFRICAN TRADES UNIONISM: THE WHITE RESPONSE

"A trade union organisation would be outside the comprehension of all but a few educated natives of the urban type; it would not only be useless, but detrimental to the ordinary mine native in his present stage of development."

South African Chamber of Mines quoted by Francis Wilson in *Labour in the South African Gold Mines 1911-69*.

5.4. POWER

In the 1970's Anglo American was the biggest mining group in southern Africa. It had a high commercial profile, worldwide. Anglo American had a controlling interest in mines in Botswana and Zambia.

6. IMPERIAL RACISM

6.1. DECEIT

The Afrikaners had a fixed belief that they were racially superior to all Africans, and that the people of Africa had no rights. In general, the British were less doctrinaire about the issue of race than the Afrikaners. They did not see racial purity as a key to survival of their own people, which was the case with Afrikaners, and with Germans under Hitler.

However, the second half of the 19th century brought a surge in pseudo-scientific writing on race in Europe, most of it dedicated to proving that most races were inferior to white Europeans. Some of the British ruling elite was very taken with these ideas.

Cecil Rhodes, the Prime Minister of the Cape Colony, and mining millionaire, was one:

"I contend that we are the first race in the world, and that the more of the world we inhabit the better it is for the human race."

Cecil Rhodes writing to his friend W.T. Stead.

6.2. A HYDRA-HEADED MONSTER

The end of apartheid became a goal that united all African countries in the 1960's. But back in the 1930's, people in the Gold Coast were not only contesting colonial rule, but also denouncing European racial attitudes.

In 1936, an essay competition was set by the Gold Coast Times with the title: 'How can Youth Develop Cooperation and Harmonious Relations Among the Races of the Earth?' The competition was won by a young South African, Wycliffe Mlungisi Ttotsi of the Blythwood Institution, Butterworth, South Africa.

"...there has appeared of late years a veritable Gorgon, a hydra-headed monster which threatens humanity with utter destruction. Racialism, while it contains all the evils of nationalism, has none of its redeeming features..."

As I write, the South African Government is in turmoil regarding the advisability of retaining or abrogating the native vote. Owing to the fear of the 'Black Menace' an unnecessary conflict has been created between the principles of democracy and trusteeship...

...Youth, strike now! Undaunted by the threatening bombshells of blood thirsty governments, go forth about your business which is no less than to create a new humanity..."

South Africa was not the only part of the British Empire where racial segregation was practised. In Kenya and Rhodesia it was as thoroughly institutionalised as in South Africa. In other parts of the Empire it was more piecemeal and not written into the legislation.

Much segregation centred on Europeans building residential areas separate from the local people; health was a common reason given for this. It resulted in Europeans being detached and lacking in information about the views and needs of the community.

In Sierra Leone, Europeans lived high up above Freetown on the Hill Station. In Kenya, Europeans were fond of living in the Kenyan Highlands. The barriers between Africans and Europeans tended to increase when women started accompanying their husbands to Africa. Segregation occurred in clubs, bars, churches and hotels, although there were no obvious signs forbidding Africans to enter or be served.

6.3. SEGREGATION IN LAGOS

In the 1950's one of the senior officials in the Colonial Office was of Sierra Leonean English descent. His name was Ivor Cummings. Arriving at the Bristol hotel in Lagos on colonial business with a white colleague, known in this account only as Keith, he found himself delayed at the reception desk by the Greek hotel owner.

"Pray have you got the name Ivor Cummings on your reservation list?" Cummings asked.

'Oh yes, of course, his name is here,' said the hotel manager but now addressing his **question to Keith, 'and when is he coming?'**

'I am Ivor Cummings,' retorted the black official. 'This is Ivor Cummings,' Keith said

simultaneously, and exasperated. The Greek blushed and it was very noticeable. He quickly vacated the reception counter, leaving behind the untidy business to be concluded by the African clerk behind the desk.

The poor clerk stammered as he tried to explain that black people were not admitted into the hotel.

"You mean as guests? For you are black yourself," said Ivor Cummings angrily and stormed out of the hotel."

Excerpt from *The Mystery Gunman*, by Kayode Eso.

7. APARTHEID ORIGINS

The roots of apartheid go back long before the National Party came to power in 1948 with the idea of apartheid, a system for systematically separating the races.



In 1685, a law in the Cape Colony forbade marriage between Europeans and Africans, although it did permit Europeans and mixed race people to marry. Back in the 1850's, the missionary and traveler **David Livingstone**, noticed the Afrikaner obsession with race. He wrote:

"The great objection many of the Boers had and still have to English law is that it makes no distinction between black men and white. They felt aggrieved by their supposed losses in the emancipation for their Hottentot slaves, and determined to erect themselves into a republic, in which they might pursue without molestation, the 'proper treatment of the blacks.'

It is almost needless to add that the 'proper treatment' has always contained in it the essential element of slavery, namely, compulsory unpaid labour..."

Extract from *David Livingstone's Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa*

.7.1. THE LAW

By the mid-19th century, equality for all before the law was, in theory, a principle established by the British, regardless of the race or religion of the litigant.

In 1853, a franchise was established in the Cape, determined by a person's wealth, but not restricted in any way by race; as long as you were rich enough, you could vote whether black, white or mixed race.

7.2. RESTRICTED FRANCHISE

In the 1870's, Rhodes changed the franchise to exclude 'unwesternised' peasant farmers. Natal also briefly had a nonracial franchise, although this ended in 1896.

In the run up to the creation of the Union of South Africa, the Cape Colony was alone in sending delegates who weren't European to the constitutional conference. But the Afrikaners were determined to deprive Africans and people of African ancestry of political power.

7.3. LAND STOLEN

A turning point in African European relations was reached in 1913 when hundreds of thousands of Africans were forced off land which they either owned or were squatting on. It became compulsory to live in African 'reserves' (Natives Land Act).

Around the same time, segregation began to be introduced into the mines so that Africans were barred from taking jobs involving any skilled labour.

7.4. ANC

The ANC (African National Congress) was formed largely in response to these early segregation laws. But the momentum proved impossible to stop. In 1936 the African and mixed race people of the Cape lost the right to vote. From here on the majority of people in South Africa lost any control over the running of their country.

8. APARTHEID LAW

After the Second World War, the National Party came to power in 1948 on a ticket of racial segregation and support for poor Afrikaners.

A large number of laws were passed to establish the apartheid structure of government. The three most important blocks of legislation were:

The Race Classification Act. Every citizen suspected of not being European was classified according to race.

The Mixed Marriages Act. It prohibited marriage between people of different races.

The Group Areas Act. It forced people of certain races into living in designated areas.

8.1. THE STRANGE WORLD OF RACIAL CLASSIFICATION

The apartheid regime had a number of pseudo scientific tests for classifying people as belonging to one of four main groups: White, Black, Indian, Coloured (mixed race). One of these tests involved putting a comb through hair - if it got stuck, that meant the person being tested was identified as African.

Every year, people were reclassified racially. In 1984, for example:

518 Coloured people were defined as White
2 whites were called Chinese
1 white was reclassified Indian
1 white became Coloured
89 Coloured people became African

Vic Wilkinson's case is significant. He was originally classified mixed race. Later he was defined as White. But the process of classification did not end there. He was also classified as Coloured, went back to being registered White, and conclusively became Coloured in 1984.

Interestingly the word 'African' was never used by the authorities. The problem was it translated back in the Boer language into the word Afrikaner, which was the very name the white Dutch descendants called themselves. Africans were referred to by white officialdom as black or Bantu.

8.2. THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH

The Afrikaner sense of identity is tied up closely with Christian worship. This religiosity sat curiously alongside a strong conviction in white racial superiority.

In 1957, the Native Laws Amendment Act contained a 'Church Clause' which allowed Africans to be barred from a service if they were considered to be 'causing a nuisance'.

In the 1950's, Drum magazine began investigating the day to day realities of apartheid. Can Themba, one of their top writers, took on the churches setting himself the task of visiting a number of different ones, with white congregations, to see what kind of reception he would get.

8.3. TURNED AWAY FROM THE HOUSE OF GOD

"The Presbyterian Church in Noord Street allowed me in, yet the one in Orange Grove refused me admittance. They explained that the hall was rented from some boys' club whose policy did not allow Non-whites into the hall. They also said something about the laws of the country.

At the Kensington DRC (Dutch Reform Church), an aged church official was just about to close the doors when he saw me. He bellowed in Afrikaans: 'What soek jy? (What do you want?) 'I've come to church,' I said.

He shoved me violently, shouting for me to get away. I walked off dejected.

A few doors away was the Baptist Church, and as I walked towards it I began to think that people didn't want me to share their church. As I walked through the Baptist door I was tense, waiting for that tap on the shoulder...but instead I was given a hymn book and welcomed into the church. I sat through the service...This up and down treatment wasn't doing my nerves much good."

From anthology of works of Can Themba, entitled The Will to Die.

Apartheid also affected the world of beauty pageants. Whites were chosen as representatives of the South African peoples.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/12audio6.ram

9. COLD WAR

9.1. FEAR OF COMMUNISM

Fear of Communism haunted the white minority government of South Africa from the 1950's to the collapse of single party rule in Eastern Europe in 1989. South Africa, along with Egypt, were the first two countries on the continent to give rise to Communist parties - both in the 1920's. But the significance of this in domestic politics was only felt after the Second World War.

After 1945, Africa became caught up in the confrontation between America and the Soviet Union, the so-called Cold War. Anti-Communism informed almost every aspect of the South African government's foreign policy and much of its domestic policy.

9.2. SUPPORT FROM WEST

The South African government's stand found support in the Portuguese colonial regimes of Angola and Mozambique, which hung on until 1975, and the white government of Ian Smith in Rhodesia (modern Zimbabwe), which only yielded to majority rule in 1980.

All these regimes equated political opposition with a desire to overthrow capitalism and nationalise the private sector. In this they were discreetly supported by most of Western Europe and America. The West was willing to turn a blind eye to institutionalised racism and minority rule government, if that meant keeping commercial and mining investments safe from nationalisation.

The Zairean leader President **Joseph Mobutu** was similarly supported by the West for making a public stand against Communism, while at the same time he systematically stripped his country of its wealth and resources.

9.3. SOVIET SUPPORT

For its part the Soviet Union was happy to give military support to the governments of Angola and Mozambique and to the ANC. They had tried to achieve their goals of majority rule through peaceful means and failed. Now they had to contemplate using violent means.

Aside from military aid, the Soviet Union also offered a number of educational scholarships to young people, mainly in the former English and Portuguese territories.

But the Soviet Union gave little in the way of aid or trade. There was no great Soviet strategy for taking over Africa, and generally the Soviet Union was under informed about history, political structures and the needs of the countries it supported.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/12audio8.ram

9.4. BELIEF IN SOCIALISM

The level of ideological commitment or interest in socialist doctrine varied among all the different governments and movements which received Soviet military aid. Their main aim was not socialist revolution, but to be free of military aggression from South Africa and see independence with majority rule throughout the continent. Had the West offered assistance, there would have been much less need to look to Moscow.

At another level the anti-capitalist, socialist outlook at the heart of communism was very attractive to people in a region where mineral and human resources had been so ruthlessly exploited for the sake of profit for the very few. But for many leaders, it made more sense to evolve an African form of socialism, drawing on African traditions than following in the footsteps of the Soviet Union.

AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS WHICH RECEIVED DIPLOMATIC OR MILITARY SUPPORT FROM THE SOVIET UNION	
Angola	under Agostinho Neto and Eduardo dos Santos.
Mozambique	under Samora Machel.
Guinea Bissau	under Amilcar Cabral.
Congo (Conakry)	became a Marxist Leninist state in 1970, under Major Ngouabi.
Egypt	under Nasser in 1954-69.
Somalia	under Siad Barre. Allied in 1969, but soon changed sides to become violently anti-Soviet. During the Cold War period, it was the only government to do so under the same leader in Africa.
Ethiopia	under Mengistu Haile Mariam, following the revolution in 1974.
Uganda	briefly under Milton Obote in 1969.
Benin	declared a Marxist Leninist state in 1974, under Mathieu Kerekou.

10. SOUTH AFRICAN AGGRESSION

The revolution in Portugal led to the end of colonial rule in Africa. In 1975, Angola and Mozambique became independent and South Africa lost an important ally. South Africa refused to establish diplomatic relations with these new majority rule governments, but rather gave support to the opponents of those governments.

By the 1980's the principle opposition in Angola was UNITA, while in Mozambique it was RENAMO. Both movements were supplied with military hardware and equipment from South Africa and America. The French and the Israelis also supplied arms and military transport.

South Africa pursued a two-pronged policy:

It harassed its neighbours with military incursions and bombing raids.

It also organised sabotage campaigns, concealing mines, placing bombs and planning assassinations. This affected countries with no military support from the Soviet Union, like Botswana and Lesotho.

In the case of Angola, South African aggression began only months after independence, with an invasion at the Namibian border which took the South African Defence Force (SADF) 300 kilometres north to Lubango.

While South Africa carried out its destabilising policy, the front-line states continued to be economically dependent on South Africa. Mozambiquan men, for example, continued to cross the border to South Africa to work on the mines.

When Zambia had an election there would be an influx of South African goods in the shops. Hastings Banda, the President of Malawi, alone had diplomatic relations with South Africa.

10.1. BEGINNING OF A NEW ERA

The South African government wreaked havoc throughout southern Africa for thirty years. In the end, it was forces of change outside the continent that shored up its aggressive behaviour. In 1989 the Berlin Wall was breached and the rule of Communism began to falter. The anti-Communist message seemed now very hollow.

In South Africa, the whole edifice of apartheid was by now beginning to feel the strain. Multinationals were increasingly sensitive to the stigma attached to investing in South Africa and perceived it to have a negative effect on their corporate image.

10.2. UNPOPULAR WAR

The war South Africa had waged on its neighbours was no longer even supported by the majority of white South Africans. For them, an unacceptably high number of young white South African men had died because of it. With the end of Communism and the Cold War, the white minority regime in South Africa lost its pivotal role as far as America was concerned. For its part, the new Former Soviet Union no longer had any desire to be involved in expensive wars abroad.

10.3. MULTIPARTY DEMOCRACY

The clamour everywhere from the public was for multiparty democracy. Finally it was the big economic institutions and the private sector which brought South Africa, and the single party states of Africa, to heel. Without democracy there would be no aid, no trade, no investment. That was the message from the multinationals and the IMF alike.

GLOSSARY	
Cold War	a state of hostility between America and the Soviet Union (and their respective allies) but with no military engagement.
Socialism	a political theory and system where the means of production and distribution are controlled by the people.
Capitalism	an economic system based on private ownership and driven by the motivation of profit.
Communism	Karl Marx's theory, describing a historical process in which capitalism is overthrown by the working class, with the state taking over property. It is also a system of government.
Marxist Leninism	Marx's theory modified by Lenin's idea that imperialism is the final stage of capitalism.
Front-line States	countries bordering on South Africa. It includes Lesotho, which is surrounded by South Africa.

A MARXIST VISION FOR AFRICA
<p>"For the oppressed peoples and classes, for the peoples and workers who have taken control of their destiny, Marxism is a shining path, a sun of hope and certainty that never sets, a sun that is always at its zenith.</p> <p>Marxism, the science of revolution, is the fruit of practice, of mankind's struggle for a better future and so is renewed and developed through human practice. The experiences of revolutionary struggle of the Mozambiquan people provides an illustration of this principle.</p> <p>Dear comrades, our history validates the thesis that the motive force of history is class struggle. Class struggle was and is a reality on the African continent." President Samora Machel of Mozambique. Speech given in Berlin, 11 April 1983.</p> <p>Less than a year later, President Machel was pressured by the Americans into a humiliating peace agreement with President P.W. Botha of South Africa, who immediately broke the letter and spirit of the accord by continuing his support of the rebel Renamo movement.</p>

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/12audio9b.ram

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/12audio9.ram

11. CLINGING ON

Where Europeans owned and farmed land the determination to resist majority rule was strong. In Zambia and Malawi, the white minority gave in and those countries became independent in 1964. Angola and Mozambique remained tightly bound up with the ruling colonial power of Portugal until the latter itself underwent a revolution in 1974.

LEISURE FOR SOME
<p>"I have seen wives of men with modest salaries, who in Europe would have no servants at all, habitually spending the whole day at bridge and tennis, while leaving the care of their children and even the keys of the storeroom in hands of native servants. Yet they were constantly complaining about the native dishonesty and inefficiency." Letter published in the Sunday Express, Johannesburg, 31 Dec 1936.</p>

11.1. UDI

Rhodesia was a different case altogether. In 1922 it was declared a self-ruling colony, with the governing being done by Europeans. There were considerable tensions between white Rhodesians and the British Colonial Office, which felt an obligation to monitor, however feebly, the interests of the African population.

In 1961, the Zimbabwean African People's Union (ZAPU) was formed. Two years later, in 1963, the Zimbabwean African National Union (ZANU) was formed after splitting off from ZAPU. Both were banned during that year. In 1965, 35 colonies in Africa were already independent under majority rule. Ian Smith, the Prime Minister of Rhodesia, made a Unilateral Declaration of Independence, or UDI, as it became known.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/12audio10a.ram

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/12audio10b.ram

11.2. NEGOTIATION

This was against all the wishes of the British government, who hoped to help Rhodesia towards majority rule in line with the rest of the continent. Rhodesia left the Commonwealth and Britain imposed economic sanctions.

It took another fifteen years of negotiation and fighting before Rhodesia, renamed Zimbabwe, became independent under majority rule with Robert Mugabe leading the government in 1980.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/12audio9.ram

"In the course of human affairs, history has shown that it may become necessary for a people to resolve the political affiliations which have connected them with another people, and to assume amongst other nations a separate and equal status to which they are entitled."
Ian Smith explaining his Unilateral Declaration of Independence on Rhodesian radio, 11 Nov 1965.

12. COLLAPSE OF APARTHEID

12.1. PROTEST AND RETALIATION

In the 1940's, African **miners** were early protesters against a system based on racial segregation.

In 1958 passes were introduced, restricting the movement of the African population. This was a tremendous humiliation and inconvenience. In 1960, sixty nine people were shot dead in a protest against these pass laws, an event which became known as the Sharpeville massacre. In 1961, the Commonwealth made it clear that unless South Africa made preparations for majority rule it would no longer be welcome. South Africa left before it was pushed.

12.2. INCREASED OPPRESSION

In 1964, the then lawyer and ANC activist, Nelson Mandela, was imprisoned for life on a charge of treason. He became a source of inspiration to people living inside and outside South Africa.

In 1976 hundreds of people were killed in protest against the compulsory use of Afrikaans in schools. The following year the head of the Black Consciousness Movement, **Steve Biko**, was murdered in police detention.

12.3. BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS

"I think basically Black Consciousness refers itself to the black man and to his situation, and I think the black man is subject to two forces in this country.

He is first of all oppressed by an external world through institutionalised machinery, through laws that restrict him from doing certain things, through heavy work conditions, through poor education, these are all external to him, and secondly, and this we regard as the most important, the black man in himself has developed a certain state of alienation, he rejects himself, precisely because he attaches the meaning white to all that is good..."

Steve Biko speaking in court, following a demonstration in support of Mozambique's FRELIMO party, September 1974. He was subsequently found guilty under the Terrorism Act and died in custody three years later.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/12audio11.ram

In the 1980's, South Africa reached a crisis point internally, with rioting, protests and confrontation; while pressure mounted externally to dismantle apartheid. Foreign investments began to decline. A sporting boycott had been effective throughout the 1980's and arguably hurt the morale of the government and white South African people more than being diplomatically isolated.

12.4. COLLAPSE OF APARTHEID

South Africa's war against Angola and Mozambique proved to be costly in terms of money and lives. When Communism began to collapse in 1989 the South African government was deprived of the principle reason for its aggressive foreign policy. The will to maintain the system of apartheid began to flag.

Nelson Mandela was finally released in 1990 and the country went to the polls in the first nonracial election, resulting in a resounding win for the ANC - under Nelson Mandela.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/12audio11b.ram

13. SOUTHERN AFRICAN TIMELINE

Millennia BC: Hunter-gatherers, ancestors of the Khoisan, live in Southern Africa.

By AD 300: Ancestors of the Bantu-speaking majority of the population settle south of the Limpopo River, joining Khoikhoi and San who have lived there for thousands of years.

1487: Portuguese explorer Bartholomeu Dias reaches Cape of Good Hope. The Dutch East India Company was founded at Cape of Good Hope.

1803: Dutch (Batavian Republic) regain the Cape Colony by treaty.

1806: Britain reconquers the Cape Colony.

1815: Rising of frontier Boers (later known as the Slagtersnek rebellion).

1816-1828: Shaka creates the Zulu Kingdom; Africans battle throughout much of Southeastern Africa (the Mfecane). British settlers land in the Cape Colony.

1828: The Cape colonial government repeals the pass laws.

1834-1838: Cape colonial slaves emancipated.

1834-1835: Xhosa defeated by British and colonial forces.

1835-1840: Five thousand Afrikaners, known as voortrekkers, abandon the Cape Colony with their 'Coloured' clients. The journey is later referred to as the Great Trek.

1838: An Afrikaner commando defeats the Zulu army at the battle of Blood River.

1843: Britain annexes Natal.

1846 - 1847 : British and colonial forces defeat Xhosa.

1852, 1854: Britain recognises the Transvaal and Orange Free State as independent Afrikaner republics.

- 1856-1857: The Xhosa cattle-killing.
- 1867: Diamond mining begins in Griqualand West.
- 1868: Britain annexes Lesotho ('Basutoland').
- 1877: Britain annexes the Transvaal.
- 1868: Gold mining in the Witwatersrand.
- 1877: Britain annexes the Transvaal.
- 1886: Gold mining in the Witwatersrand.
- 1899-1902: War: Britain conquers the Afrikaner republics.
- 1910: The Cape Colony, Natal, the Transvaal, and the Orange Free State unite. Create the Union of South Africa.
- 1912: South African Native National Congress (NNC) founded; eventually becomes the African National Congress (ANC).
- 1913: Natives Land Act limits African land ownership to the reserves - segregation laws passed.
- 1914-1919: South Africa participates in World War I, as member of the British Empire.
- 1917: Anglo American Corporation of South Africa founded.
- 1921: Creation of Communist party.
- 1939-1945: South Africa fights with the Allies in World War II.
- 1946: Over 70,000 African gold-mine workers strike for higher wages; troops control them.
- 1948: The Afrikaner National party wins a general election. Initiates apartheid policies.
- 1950: Legislation grants government with vast powers over people and organizations.
- 1952: ANC and its allies initiate a passive resistance campaign.
- 1953: Government in full command of African education.
- 1958-1966: Verwoerd elected prime minister.
- 1959: Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) founded.
- 1960: African and Coloured representation in Parliament (by Whites) ends.
- 1961: South Africa becomes a Republic.
- 1964: Nelson Mandela and other ANC and PAC leaders sentenced to life imprisonment.
- 1966-1968: Lesotho, Botswana, and Swaziland become independent states.
- 1975-1976: Mozambique and Angola become independent states.
- 1976-1977: Over 575 people die in confrontations between Africans and police in Soweto and other African townships.
- 1978-1984: Botha elected prime minister.
- 1980: Zimbabwe (previously Rhodesia) becomes independent. South African forces invade Angola and launch attacks on Lesotho, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and Zambia. ANC guerrillas sabotage South African cities.

- 1983: United Democratic Front (UDF) formed.
- 1984: Africans limited participation in the central government. Botha becomes state president.
- 1986: Pass laws repealed. The government prohibits the press, radio, and television from reporting unrest.
- 1986-1995: Violent conflict between Zulu supporters of Inkatha and the ANC in Kwa Zulu and on the Witwatersrand.
- 1987: 250,000 African mineworkers strike.
- 1989: De Klerk elected first leader of the National Party, then president.
- 1990: De Klerk unbans the ANC, PAC, and SACP. Releases Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners. 1913 and 1936 Land Acts, Group Areas Act, Population Registration Act, and Separate Amenities Act repealed. Political organisations unbanned. State of emergency revoked.
- 1994: ANC wins first nonracial election (April 27-30). Mandela is sworn in as president (May 10). Forms Government of National Unity.

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15. USEFUL LINKS

The BBC is not responsible for the content of external Internet sites

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XIII. BETWEEN WORLD WARS 1914 –1945

1. INTRODUCTION

"...people, especially the youth are no more satisfied with the old order, which admits of little or no progressive adjustments as time goes on."

Editorial in *The Comet*, edited by Nnamdi Azikwe, 24 Dec 1936.

The period between the world wars was a time of intense political and intellectual change for people in Africa. For Europeans, it was a time of consolidation, during which they tried to build up a more effective colonial administration. The urban population in Africa began to call for more say in how things were run. To make their voices heard new movements and associations were formed. But the political activity engendered by World War One had no sooner built up momentum than a second world war was on the horizon.

The people of Africa put aside their grievances and once more made a crucial military contribution. When the war ended, people felt that having fought for freedom in Europe, they were entitled to it for themselves.

When India gained independence in 1947, the movement towards self-rule became unstoppable. In a space of over 70 years, Britain and France had built up and dismantled the huge machine of colonial rule. Imperialism was a fleeting episode in African history, but one which left an indelible mark on the continent, both economically and socially.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/13audio0.ram

2. WORLD WAR 1: RECRUITMENT

2.1. SUPPORT FOR THE WAR EFFORT

Many people in Africa had only the vaguest understanding of what the First World War was about. Certainly the reasons for it were not easy to understand. It was triggered by the assassination of Arch Duke Ferdinand of Serbia, and in Europe, people thought it would be all over by Christmas of 1914.

Without the cooperation of local leaders and chiefs, European powers would not have been able to raise the troops and carriers they needed, and some chiefs were very willing to help.

"This is one of the most important services that I have done for the peace of the protecting government and for the peace of the whole world.

A war against Britain was a war against Buganda, and so, when I was appointed to lead some soldiers, I at once left for Kampala with 5,000 men. There I was told not to go to the battlefield at once, but to wait in my country and do as I was directed. While waiting, these are some of the things I did:

- (a) I did all I could to recruit men for the armies.
- (b) I sent in a lot of carriers.
- (c) I very much encouraged the growing of food...
- (d) I encouraged further the growing of cotton...
- (e) Because I very much wanted peace I tried my best to get into contact with the British armies for I did not want the enemy to get to our city London."

The Record of My Service by Buganda chief Samwiri Mukasa.

In Nigeria, there was a general rallying round among urban educated Nigerians. Speeches were made and money collected.

"Our kith and kin have gone to fight in our stead, and it is only right that we should give them all the support necessary... Ingratitude is the greatest reproach that could be flung at a native, and I therefore urge upon all to contribute their quota to this national fund so that it might not be said we are ungrateful to the British Government for many benefits conferred."

Dr. Obasa, described in *West Africa* magazine as the "well-known Lagos public man," speaking at a meeting of chiefs at Glover Memorial Hall, Lagos.

2.2. RECRUITMENT

People were recruited in a number of ways. One was through a direct appeal for volunteers. This happened first in Egypt, where peasants were attracted by the wages offered.

Another was recruitment through chiefs. The British enlisted the help of chiefs and left them to find the men however they could. Although officially nobody was supposed to be forced into signing up, inevitably they were.

"We came back one night from our yam farm. The chief called us and handed us over to a government messenger. I didn't know where we were going, but the chief and the messenger said that the white man had sent for us and we must go. After three days we reached the white man's compound.

Plenty of others had arrived from other villages far away. And the white man wrote our names in a book. And tied a brass numbered ticket round our necks and gave each man a blanket and food.

Then he told us we were going to the Great War to help the king's soldiers who were preventing the Germans coming to our country and burning it. We left and marched far into the bush. The government police led the way and allowed no man to stop behind."

A first hand account of what it was like to be recruited. As told by No.1475, a carrier who was recruited in 1914. Quoted in *The African Contribution to the Second World War*.

There was also forced recruitment. This happened under the British in northern Rhodesia. In the Congo, the Belgians forced 260,000 men to be porters carrying soldiers, equipment and provisions.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/13audio1.ram

2.3. CONSCRIPTION

Men were also conscripted. In 1912, the French set about creating a permanent black army. There was compulsory military service for all African males. After the outbreak of the war, 14,785 troops were signed up in West Africa. Then in 1915-16, 50,000 more were recruited through chiefs.

African troops under French command were combatant. The 'tirailleurs' in charge of artillery, with their distinctive red fezes, were famous. In 1918, Blaise Diagne, the Senegalese politician and the first African Deputy in the French Chamber of Deputies, was appointed High Commissioner of Recruitment of black troops.

In East Africa, the British instituted a compulsory service order in 1915 covering all males aged 18-45. This was extended to the Uganda Protectorate in April 1917.

3. THE FIRST WORLD WAR: IN ACTION

The First World War gave rise to a crucial change in the relationship between Europe and Africa. Over two million people in Africa made huge sacrifices for the European Allies. 100,000 men died in East Africa and 65,000 men from French North Africa and French West Africa lost their lives.

Not since the American War of Independence, when 14,000 slaves and freemen fought as black loyalists alongside the British, had such a huge number of people of African descent been involved in fighting for Europeans. Very few were combatant, most of them were used as porters. They were recruited to carry heavy weapons and supplies. They were badly paid and given food which was either of poor quality or entirely foreign to them. While travelling through new territories for them, they often fell sick and were affected by different types of malaria.

3.1. THEATRES OF WAR

On the continent of Africa, there was action along the coast. In the West and South the Allies attacked Germany's African ports. They attacked Lome (in Togo), Douala (in Cameroun), Swakopmund and Luderitz Bay (in South West Africa).

In the East, German-held Dar Es Salaam was bombarded. In the North, the main concern of the British was to safeguard the Suez Canal.

German South West Africa was brought under allied control in the first few months. Cameroun took longer to capture. The East Africa campaign took even longer, with the Germans led by brilliant German General von Lettow-Vorbeck. African troops from French West Africa saw action in Western Europe, but the British never took African soldiers out of the continent.

3.2. MUTINIES AND UPRISINGS

Where there were political tensions and frustrations the war only made them worse. In Nysaland (now modern Malawi), the American-trained missionary John Chilembwe led an uprising. It was religious as well as anti-colonial in character. Importantly, it was triggered by the high level of forced military recruitment of Nysas, many of whom were subsequently killed in large numbers in the first few weeks of fighting.

Further south, a number of Afrikaners, sympathetic to Germany and hostile to the Allies, tried to raise an armed rebellion. This was put down by the British educated Afrikaner leader General Smuts, who went on to play a key military role against the Germans in the First World War and in the settlement afterwards.

In the Niger Delta, Farrick Braide, also known as Elijah II, preached that the beginning of the First World War marked the end of British rule.

In Kenya, the Mumbo cult rejected Christianity and predicted Europeans would disappear from the African continent. Resistance to taxation also continued throughout the war, as in Yorubaland where there were riots in 1916.

4. THE AFTERMATH

The war had demanded huge sacrifices of people in Africa, intertwining the fate of Africa and Europe more intimately. The idea grew on the part of Europe of obligations to Africa, but not liberation and equality.

An increasing number of Africans reasoned that a war in which Europeans slaughtered fellow Europeans, meant that colonial regimes had little right to lecture African leaders and people about how to conduct their affairs.

The savage effects of the war were compounded by a world wide influenza pandemic in 1918-1919. It is estimated that two percent of the population in Africa fell victim to the spread of this dangerous type of influenza and died.

4.1. THE PEACE SETTLEMENTS

In 1919, the Versailles peace Conference was convened to provide for a lasting peace in Europe and punish Germany. African nationalists saw this as an opportunity for their grievances to be heard.

However India was the only country allowed to send delegates. Others were turned away. For example, Liberia was not allowed to attend. Members of the ANC (known then as the South African Natives Congress), and the Egyptian nationalist, Sa'ad Zaghlul, wanted to attend Versailles along with Egypt's Prime Minister Husayn Rushdi. Sierra Leoneans also felt their demands should be taken into account.

Instead the European powers divided up Germany's African colonies without consulting anyone in Africa, and without any attention being paid to the geographical spread of different ethnic groups.

"After Africa's sons had shed their blood on the altar of liberty and after having experienced that terrible plague called the influenza epidemic, are we not the same manna loving people?"

The South African Natives Congress has decided to send a delegation to England to place before the Imperial authorities the disabilities of which the coloured people complain. Liberia has asked for a place in the Peace Conference. What is Sierra Leone doing? We have been sleeping too long. It is high time we take up the world's cry and work - reconstruction!"

Sierra Leone Weekly News, 8 March 1918

4.2. EFFECTS OF THE WAR IN AFRICA

Although some railways were built for military reasons, the First World War generally had a negative effect on trade and development. Many major public works projects such as buildings and the construction of roads were postponed.

Within Africa, the price of commodities went up. However, in the case of cotton grown in Egypt, the increase was not passed onto the growers.

All negotiations ceased with Germany, which had been a big trading partner to many colonies. Sierra Leone's trade had been 80 per cent dependent on Germany. In Calabar, on the Coast of Nigeria, there were shortages of milk, sugar and salt, causing panic hoarding.

As large numbers of Europeans went off to fight, more Africans moved into key positions. This was particularly true in French West Africa where jobs previously held only by Europeans, were now held by Africans. But when Europeans came home Africans were again demoted.

In Britain the demobbing of black seamen and service men resulted in bitter competition for jobs. In 1919 racist mobs caused riots and waves of vicious anti-black feeling in Liverpool, Cardiff and London. Many seamen were simply signed off from work to make way for demobbed white soldiers. The Trinidadian Felix Eugene Michael Hercules voiced the bitterness suffered by people from the Caribbean as well as Africa.

"He (Caribbean and African man) fought with the white man to save the white man's home...and the war was won... Black men all the world over are asking to-day: "What have we got? What are we going to get out of it all?"

The answer, in effect, comes clear, convincing and conclusive: 'Get back to your kennel you damned dog of a nigger.'

Felix Eugene Michael Hercules, quoted by Peter Fryer in his book *Staying Power*.

The shabby treatment of African and Caribbean people in Britain prompted a large number to return home, disaffected, but also politicised and radicalised. There was a growing sense of solidarity among people of African descent in America, the Caribbean as well as Africa, and the black Diaspora took political expression in a number of **Pan African Congresses**

5. EARLY NATIONALISM

The period between the World Wars saw a huge increase in political activity in Africa, much of it led by the younger generation.

In 1919 in Egypt, demonstrations and strikes were followed by the arrest of the nationalist leader Sa'ad Zaghlul. Three years later, the British gave into the strength of nationalist feeling and after some considerable tension granted Egypt independence. Elsewhere there were strikes in different parts of the continent.

5.1. LABOUR UNREST IN THE CONTINENT

5.1.1. SUDAN

"Tramwaymen On Strike. There was a lightning strike of tramway men this morning and many official and businessmen were obliged to use other means of transport...This appears to be the first strike of its nature in Sudan and it is all the more regrettable as the tramwaymen seem to have no legitimate grounds for striking."

British-owned Sudan Daily Herald, 19 Dec 1936.

5.1.2. NIGERIA

"Strikes Of Inspectors Threatened - Alleged Maltreatment. Streams of sanitary inspectors were seen early this morning moving to and fro with evident signs of dissatisfaction on their faces. One of their main grievances is reported to be the placing of an untrained and illiterate sanitary inspector to supervise their work...A petition has been addressed to the Senior Resident of the Province. "

Nigeria Daily Times, 2 Dec 1936.

5.1.3. SOUTH AFRICA

"Strike At Krugersdorf. Thirty nine natives on shaft sinking contracts at East Champs d'Or, Krugersdorf, refused to start work and tried to prevent others working...they wanted higher pay, although they had signed up to contract."

Rand Daily Mail, 5 Dec 1936.

Political organisations sprung up, often regional in outlook and driven by a determination to have more control in the running of the colonies. One of the most important of these was the National Congress of British West Africa, the NCBWA.

In East Africa, Jomo Kenyatta was already in the 1930's emerging as an immensely articulate and convinced anti-colonialist.

"The African is conditioned, by the cultural and social institutions of centuries, to a freedom of which Europe has little conception, and it is not in his nature to accept serfdom for ever.

He realises that he must fight unceasingly for his own complete emancipation; for without this he is doomed to remain the prey of rival imperialisms, which in every successive year will drive their fangs more deeply into his vitality and strength."

Jomo Kenyatta, Facing Mount Kenya.

5.2. AMBITIONS

While mining, plantation agriculture and road construction created a wage earning labouring class, the educated, professional classes also expanded. Some went to Europe and America to get further education. The number of doctors and lawyers, although small, increased steadily.

A number of professional and welfare associations were formed, firstly among civil servants and teachers. Cocoa traders also formed their own associations. All these people were ambitious for their children and increasingly insistent that they themselves should be paid the same and treated the same as their European peers.

5.3. AFRICANS FOR EUROPEANS

"It is the policy to appoint Africans to take the place of Europeans, but the real point of disagreement is as to the rate this process should proceed. The government feels this process is too fast. The people, that it is too slow."

Sierra Leone Daily Mail, 3 Dec 1936.

5.4. AFRICAN LABELS

"...exception was taken to the prefixing of the term 'African' to high appointments held by coloured civil servants. 'African' before Assistant Colonial Secretary, Assistant Colonial Treasurer, Assistant Storekeeper, and Assistant Director of Education is no less a cheapening of the status of the black office holder, than it is an abuse of adjectival function. Even if white subheads of department became officially known as 'European Assistants' thereby leaving no ground for imagining any slight to African subheads, still the offense against standard English would be regrettable."

Sierra Leone Weekly News, 26 Dec 1936.

The range of skilled labour changed. Leather and metal working went into decline, but bicycle repairing and car maintenance increased. The importation of the sewing machine created a huge class of tailors all over the continent. In terms of leisure and fashion, European clothes, films and music were popular. In West Africa, the middle class took what interested them from Western culture and mixed it with African fashion and custom.

5.5. FRENCH SPEAKING AFRICA

Political movements in French-speaking Africa tended to ally themselves with radical movements. This was the case in Paris. For example, in 1924 the Ligue Universelle pour la Defense de la Race Noire was founded by Dahomean lawyer Prince Kojouhoun Houeou. The Comite de la Defense de la Race Negre, under the leadership of Tiemoho Garan-Kouyate, followed.

In Senegal the principle figure championing the rights of Africans was Blaise Diagne who was elected to the French Chamber of Deputies in 1914. Later he was criticised for serving the interests of the French at the expense of the Africans.

In Dahomey, Louis Hankerin was a key political figure during the early twenties when prices for palm kernels were low and taxes were high. Hankerin wrote in the American as well as French press and set up local branches of the Ligne des Droits de L'Homme and the Comite de la Defense de la Race Negre.

5.6. THE PEOPLE AND THE KINGS

The European colonial rulers and their officials were not the only group opposed by the new political movement. In some areas there was considerable dissatisfaction with African rulers.

For example, in Basotholand (modern Lesotho) a Council of Commoners was formed in 1919, influenced by the South African Communist Party. It criticised the chiefs for driving round in big cars and taxing the people.

In Uganda, The Young Baganda Association turned against the Baganda Kabaka (king) and chiefs, accusing them of being disorganised and immoral. Three of its leading lights were imprisoned in 1922 for publishing an attack against the king.

In the case of Ethiopia, the Italian invasion in 1935 only served to strengthen the people's loyalty to Emperor Haile Selassie. Unable to resist the Italians, he was forced into exile in 1936. The case of Ethiopia or Abyssinia, as it was then known, provoked a great deal of sympathy.

"Abyssinia Relief Fund (Ondo Branch)

Public meeting convened by the Rev. Canon M.C. Adeyemi, the Rev. T.O. Dedeke, and the Chief Seriki Akinrosotu...

"...the chief object of the meeting...was to discuss ways and means of assisting our brothers and sisters who were suffering as a result of the aggressive war waged on them by the Italians...Mr. D.L. Akinola gave a good lead by paying at once into the fund...on the whole, the meeting was very successful."

Daily Times of Nigeria, 5 Dec 1936.

6. THE PAN-AFRICAN VISION

In Africa, there was a general assumption on the part of colonial powers that Africans must wait patiently for limited political concessions and better career opportunities. Ex-servicemen and the educated urban classes became disillusioned and were only too willing to listen to socialist ideas based on concepts of equality and a new world order.

In London, the Socialist Club attracted a wide audience of people who felt marginalised - Africans, Irish Nationalists and German Jews. Drury Lane was the site of a club exclusively for black soldiers.

"They had been disillusioned with the European war, because they kept on having frightful clashes with English and American soldiers, besides the fact that the authorities treated them completely differently from the white soldiers..."

I was working at that time in London in a communist group. Our group provided the club of Negro soldiers with revolutionary newspapers and literature, which had nothing."

Letter from Jamaican writer and socialist, Claude McKay to Trotsky in 1922.

6.1. 1919 - THE FIRST PAN AFRICAN CONGRESS

Racist treatment reinforced a sense of solidarity within the Diaspora. This found expression in a series of Pan-African meetings. In 1909 the first Pan African Conference was held. In 1919 the first of five Pan-African Congresses was held. This was organised by the African American thinker and journalist, W.E.B. DuBois. Fifty seven delegates attended representing fifteen countries. Its principal task was petitioning the Versailles Peace Conference, then meeting in Paris. Among its demands were:

- a) The Allies administer the former German territories in Africa as a condominium on behalf of the Africans who lived there.
- b) Africans should take part in governing their countries "as fast as their development permits" until, at some unspecified time in the future, Africa is granted home rule.

6.2. 1921 - THE SECOND PAN AFRICAN CONGRESS

This congress met in several sessions in London, Paris and Brussels. The Indian revolutionary Shapuiji Saklatvala was introduced. The Ghanaian journalist W.F. Hutchinson spoke. This Congress was considered by some to be the most radical of all the meetings. The London session resulted in the Declaration To The World, also called the London Manifesto.

"England, with all her Pax Britannica, her courts of justice, established commerce, and a certain apparent recognition of Native laws and customs, has nevertheless systematically fostered ignorance among the Natives, has enslaved them, and is still enslaving them, has usually declined even to try to train black and brown men in real self-government, to recognise civilised black folk as civilised, or to grant to coloured colonies those rights of self government which it freely gives to white men."

The London Manifesto.

The one dissenting voice was that of Blaise Diagne who, although African, was effectively a French politician, representing Senegal in the French Chamber of Deputies. He thought the declaration dangerously extreme and soon abandoned the idea of Pan Africanism.

6.3. 1923 - THE THIRD PAN AFRICAN CONGRESS

This congress was held in London and Lisbon. Badly organised, it was also not very well attended. But it repeated the demand for some form of self-rule, defining the relationship between Africa and Europe, as well as mentioning the problems of the Diaspora in a number of ways:

- a) the development of Africa for the benefit of Africans and not merely for the profit of Europeans.
- b) home rule and responsible government for British West Africa and the British West Indies.
- c) the abolition of the pretension of a white minority to dominate a black majority in Kenya, Rhodesia and South Africa.
- d) the suppression of lynching and mob law in US.

6.4. 1927 - THE FOURTH PAN AFRICAN CONGRESS

This was held in New York and adopted similar resolutions to those in the 3rd Pan African Congress.

6.5. 1945 - THE FIFTH PAN AFRICAN CONGRESS

This was held in Manchester in the north west of England. There were ninety delegates, twenty six from all over Africa. These included Peter Abrahams for the ANC, and a number of men who were to become political leaders in their countries, such as Hastings Banda, Nkrumah, Obafemi Awolowo and Kenyatta. There was also Marcus Garvey's wife and Trinidadian radical George Padmore.

There were thirty three delegates from the West Indies and thirty five from various British organisations including the West African Students Union. W.E.B. DuBois, the man who had organised the first Pan African Congress back in 1919, was there too at the age of 77.

Despite the turnout, this conference scarcely got a mention in British press. There were many resolutions passed, including one calling for racial discrimination to be made a criminal offense. The main resolution decried imperialism and capitalism:

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/13audio5.ram

"We are unwilling to starve any longer while doing the world's drudgery, in order to support, by our poverty and ignorance, a false aristocracy and a discredited imperialism.

We condemn the monopoly of capital and the rule of private wealth and industry for private profit alone...

We shall complain, appeal and arraign. We will make the world listen to the facts of our condition. We will fight in every way we can for freedom, democracy and social betterment."

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/13audio5a.ram

7. SOCIALISM

7.1. PEOPLE POWER

The frustrations of Africans in the face of colonialism did not escape the attention of the very recently emerged Soviet Union. It had come into being in 1917 when there was still a year more of The First World War to go.

The Russian Revolution had swept through Imperial Russia toppling the Emperor and ruling class. The leader of the revolution, Lenin, was convinced by Karl Marx's theory that capitalism would collapse and give way to a socialist society run by the workers, with no exploitation and equality for all.

7.2. MARXIST THEORY IN AFRICA

It was difficult applying Marxist theory to Africa. With the exception of South Africa and North Africa, the continent was largely rural, with no large-scale industry. There was trade but it did not amount to capitalism. There was scarcely any banking system and no significant urban working class. But there was colonialism and imperialism, both of which Lenin, and his successor **Stalin** regarded as evidence of European capitalism in its death throes. So Africa was included in the Marxist Leninist vision.

"Not only the vegetable and mineral rich materials of the colonies are essential to the imperialists. They also need compliant human material, and there's no shortage of that in the colonial and semi-colonial territories. They need obedient and cheap workers...the dutiful young lads who make up the recruits for the so called 'coloured forces'. And these the imperialists throw into action against their very own revolutionary workers without any hesitation. This is why they call their colonies the 'inexhaustible reserve.'"

Joseph Stalin, *The Strategic Importance of the Colonies.*

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/13audio6.ram

7.3. EARLY COMMUNISM IN AFRICA

By the 1920's Africa's first Communist Parties were established in Egypt and **South Africa** respectively. The Communist Party of South Africa was formed in 1921. Initially it only had white members. By 1928, the majority of its members were black. In 1927, the ANC President J.J. Gumede visited the Soviet Union. Three communists, J.B. Marks, E. Mofutsanyana and Moses Kotane went to Moscow in 1932. By this time, Stalin was in power in the Soviet Union.

The Trinidadian revolutionary, George Padmore, was editing the *Negro Worker*, a publication, inciting people of African origin to throw off colonial rule. He distributed the publication throughout the black Diaspora by merchant seamen. Padmore broke with Moscow in 1934 and later became a close friend and mentor to Kwame Nkrumah.

"The Negro Worker takes pride in the fact that despite all obstacles, the message is penetrating the slave pens of British Imperialism and is causing discomfort to the exploiters.

We can assure the gallant and noble colonial secretary and his ilk that we shall leave no stone unturned to break through the barriers erected and carry to the native toilers the message of revolutionary struggle as the only way out of the barbarous slave exploitation and national oppression to which they are subjected by the British ruling class."

Editorial, *The Negro Worker*, Sept 1934.7

7.4. WEST AFRICANS AND SOCIALIST IDEAS

Meanwhile in America, a young Ghanaian student Bankole Awoonor-Renner first came across socialist thought, when he attended a Negro Workers' Conference in 1925, which was supported by the Communist party in the Soviet Union. Another point of contact was made by the Sierra Leonean radical Ita Wallace Johnson, who went to study in Moscow. There he met George Padmore.

SOVIET SUPPORT FOR NATIONALISM

With the end of the Second World War the Soviet Union moved from being a key ally in the war, to being in opposition to the western powers. Large parts of Eastern Europe had fallen under the Soviet army and now they remained under Soviet control, including half of Germany. The Soviet Union, while it had few historical connections with Africa, increasingly offered support and encouragement to African nationalists, whenever they met with indifference or persecution from the colonial powers.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/13audio6a.ram

8. NEWSPAPERS

8.1. EARLY NEWSPAPERS

The first English newspaper on the continent of Africa was published in Cape Town in 1800. The following year in Sierra Leone *The Royal Gazette* and *Sierra Leone Advertiser* was published in Freetown. Both were European undertakings concerned with matters of government.

In 1826 Charles Force, an American freed slave, published the *Liberia Herald*. He died some months later, but the title was revived in 1830 by Edward Blyden, the anti-colonial thinker and academic, who moved from the Caribbean island of St. Thomas to Liberia. This marked the beginning of an African press which was critical of the European presence in Africa.

From the mid-19th century onwards a number of papers were published in Luanda, Angola, by a distinct group of educated, mixed race (mesticos) Angolans. Jose de Fontes Pereira and Joaquim Dias Cordeiro da Matta were regular contributors, writing articles highly critical of Portuguese rule.

8.2. WEST AFRICAN NEWSPAPERS

The first African produced paper in West Africa was Charles Bannerman's *Accra Herald*, produced in 1858 in the Gold Coast (modern Ghana). The following year the first Yoruba newspaper was produced, *Iwe Ihoṛin* ('The Paper with the News') which cost 30 cowrie shells. In 1863 a West Indian immigrant called Professor Robert Campbell brought out the *Anglo African*.

"We were favoured with sight of the beautiful baptismal present our beloved Queen has made to the infant of Mrs. J.P. L. Davies of Lagos, a lady well known as having enjoyed the high honour of being a protégé of her majesty... The cup and salver are both inscribed as follows: To Victoria Davies Queen Victoria."

Excerpt from the *Anglo African* newsletter, 3 Oct 1863, on the occasion of the birth of a baby born to the leading African trader J.P.L. Davies and his wife, who was goddaughter to the Queen.

In 1926 in Lagos, Nigeria's most enduring and popular newspaper, *The Nigeria Daily Times* was published. Its editor, Ernest Ikoli, was also head of the renowned school, King's College, Lagos, and considered an outstanding man in his day. The paper was published on a sound commercial basis, carrying a lot of expatriate advertising, but it could be critical of the colonial establishment:

"...the appointment of Mr. O Jibowu MA BCL Oxon as Police Magistrate in Lagos is no more than an experiment...It is astonishing that no African has been found qualified to be on the judicial staff in the newly constituted Protectorate Courts."

Daily Times, 12 Dec 1936.

8.3. WEST AFRICA MAGAZINE

The West Africa magazine was published in London in 1917 with the commercial backing from Elder Dempster Shipping Line and John Holt trading company. Although published in London, its editor set out to publish a magazine that was an open forum for the discussion of all questions affecting the welfare of people - both African and European. There were contributions from colonial officials and expatriates, but also from the educated African urban elite, including Gold Coast nationalist Kobina Sekyi.

NATIVE OR FOREIGNER - WHICH ARE YOU?

**"There's many a difference quickly found
Between the different races
But the only essential differential
Is living in different place.
Yet such is the pride of the prideful man,
From Austrians to Australians
That wherever he is
He regards as his
And the natives as aliens."**

Published in Sierra Leone Weekly News, 19 Dec 1936.

The most dynamic and energetic West African journalist in the 1930's was the nationalist Nnamdi Azikwe, later to be first President of Nigeria. He had been educated in America and strongly influenced by black radical journalism there. He established the African Morning Post with I.T.A. Wallace Johnson. They described it as "independent in all things and neutral in nothing affecting the destiny of Africa."

In 1927 Azikwe established the West African Pilot in Lagos. Its lively mix of radical politics, gossip, plus a woman's page proved very popular. The Comet was another popular Nigerian publication. Edited by a radical Egyptian, Duse Mohammed Ali, who had been educated in London. The Comet kept a keen eye on events at home and abroad.

"Sin-possessed and intoxicated with authority, Mussolini, the Fascist Dictator with his "smash and grab" doctrine of civilisation has announced his East African spoils to the world. He is also said to be having his hands in the Spanish mists. This is as should be expected of a child of darkness - he must always be found in the misty corners of the world.

There by him we find his brother Hitler, the German dictator, dreaming his usual day-dreams - a German Empire, with Russia as his armrest; France as his footstool, England as his manufacturing nation, and the colonies as labourers to work in his Nazi vineyard. His continuous dream is of world subjugation..."

The Comet, 5 Dec 1936.

In French West Africa the press was dominated by French publishers. The first major African publication was La Voix du Dahomey in 1927. More papers followed in Ivory Coast and Senegal.

8.4. EAST AFRICA

Africans in East Africa were not as well served by the press as in West Africa. By the 1930's the English speaking press was dominated by the Standard Group, whose titles included the East African Standard (originally The African Standard started by the Asian journalist A. M. Jeevanjee), The Mombasa Times, the Tanganyika Standard and the Uganda Argus.

The African run-press in East Africa took off in the 1920's and 1930's. One of the earliest known newspapers in an African language was Sekanyola, published in 1920, written in Luganda and aimed at the Baganda in Uganda and Kenya.

The Kampala suburb Katwe was known as the Fleet Street of Uganda; other Luganda titles included Gambuze which came out in 1927 and Dobzi Iya Buganda in 1928. The first Gikuyu paper was Muigwithania which was initially published in 1925 and was edited by the future President of Kenya, Jomo Kenyatta. He also sponsored other political publications in Gikuyu. The other notable Swahili title was Kwetu, edited by Muganda Eric Fiah.

8.5. SOUTH AFRICA

In South Africa, the first African edited paper was Isigidimi Sama Xhosa. It came out in 1876 with the backing of the Lovedale missionary press. One of its editors, John Tengo Jabavu, a devout Methodist and Pan Africanist, who was educated in Britain and America, then went on to publish and edit Imvo Zabantsundu in 1884. This was a bilingual paper with an English and Xhosa speaking readership.

In 1903, John L. Dube, later to be President of the ANC, published Ilanga Lase Natal. Once the ANC became established as the leading opponent to white rule, it voiced its concerns primarily through the publication Abantu Batho. It survived attempts to close it down by the authorities, but finally folded for financial reasons.

The fortunes of the African press in South Africa reflected the slow and uneven march towards segregation and the loss of rights experienced by black South Africans.

The main newspaper group to emerge in the 1930's was The Argus Group. It saw profit in publishing titles for black as well as white readers. It bought up the Bantu Press, which had a number of successful titles read by black South Africans, and removed all the Africans employed in management. By World War II there were only three black owned and edited newspapers, two of which were published by the Communist Party of South Africa, including the Socialist Worker. During the years leading up to the Second World War all the newspapers - both European and African - keenly observed events in Europe and debated the implications for Africa. When the war was in progress the newspaper in English and French colonial Africa broadly supported the Allies - only a few spoke out against supporting the war effort.

Enlist today!

Your country needs you!

Not for learning how to shoot the big howitzers

Or how to rat tat tat the machine guns

Or how to fly o'er peaceful countries

Dropping bombs on harmless people

Or how to fix a bayonet and charge at

The harmless workers of another clime

Your country needs you

For the rebuilding of your shattered homeland -

Your homeland ruined by exploitation

By the tyrants of foreign nations

Who would use you as their catspaw

While they starved you to subjection.

George Padmore's pacifist poem, published in the African Standard, 28 July 1939, two months before war broke out.

9. RADIO AND WRITING

The first radio broadcasts in Sub-Saharan Africa were made in the early 1920's. The earliest recording of a radio broadcast was made in 1923 in South Africa. It was Mendelssohn's "Auf Fluegeln des Gesanges."

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/13audio8.ram

Kenya had its own radio station in 1927, followed by Mozambique in 1933, and Senegal in 1939. But these were only broadcasting programmes made for expatriates.

It wasn't until World War II that radio broadcasting was tailored to the needs of people in Africa. People wanted local news but also information about the theatres of war where their relatives and friends had gone to fight. For the first time there were broadcasts in African languages and dialects. People in Lagos could listen to the news in pidgin.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/13audio8c.ram

There were broadcasts in Hausa. The distinguished Hausa broadcaster (later Northern politician) Isa Kaita was based in Accra and unusually for that time gave detailed accounts of what was happening in the region, including a description of his own journey from Lagos to Accra under attack from German U-Boats.

Hear Isa Kaita's account of broadcasting in the war

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/13audio8d.ram

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/13audio8b.ram

During the war the first language service for Africa was set up by the BBC. It was in Afrikaans and aimed to counterbalance the pro-Nazi stands taken by some Afrikaners. After the Second World War radio expanded throughout the continent broadcasting news, music and even drama. The radio became a key tool of government, and in the event of a coup, the radio station was the first stop for the coup makers, where they would then get their message broadcast to the nation.

Listen to Perci Nyayi, chief minister of Gambia, speaking on the inaugural broadcast of Radio Gambia

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/13audio8a.ram

HUNGER FOR CONTACT

"There has been considerable interest shown in the question of petitions sent by the Ijebu Igbo Patriotic Society embodying requests for the opening of a Telegraph and Post Office at this town...But at present the ordinary man in the street who has to dispatch letters and telegraph messages has to go eleven miles to do so."

Nigerian Daily Times, 4 Dec 1936.

9.1. BREAKING LINGUISTIC BARRIERS

Linguistic barriers began to be broken down as European literature was translated into African languages. **Sol Plaatje** for example translated Shakespeare into Tswana. There were different forms of creative writing from an African perspective in Ibo, Swahili and Nyanja.

In 1911 the Gold Coast thinker Casely Hayford wrote the first substantial imaginative piece of prose in English. Called *Ethiopia Unbound* it was a collection of reflections on the history of Ethiopia.

The first historical novel in English, *Mhudi*, was written by Sol Plaatje in 1912 and published 1920.

Themes of urban life and exploitation of labour were explored by the Senegalese writer Ousman Diop and Rene Maran, an official from Martinique, serving in the French administration in West Africa. Rene Maran's novel *Batoula* won the top French literary prize, the Prix Goncourt in 1921.

The growth in literacy was reflected in the expansion of mail services, in the twenties and thirties.

IMPORTED DANCES

"As announced in these columns last month, the Ladies Private Social Club had a very happy time with their friends on Christmas day when they were entertained by our esteemed guest E.O. Kogbe...Prizes were won in dancing by M.E. Norman Coker and Mrs. Phebean Taylor, Mr. B. Taylor and Mrs. E. Offiong and Mr. N.J. Ashwood with Mrs. B. Coker in waltz, foxtrot and one-step respectively."

Daily Times, Nigeria, 1 Jan 1930.

9.2. IMPORTED DRAMA FOR CHILDREN

"Many will be pleased to learn that students of King's College Budo are giving a performance of their pantomime, *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves* in the museum grounds at old Kampala...A pantomime with one hundred performers is certainly somewhat of a novelty to Kampala and it would seem worth taking opportunity of treating our young folk to an afternoon's entertainment."

Uganda Herald, 2 Dec 1936.

10. AIR AND ROAD

People in Africa travelled more in the 1930's than they had ever done before. Roads and railways took migrant workers far and wide. They travelled from the cocoa farms of the Gold Coast, to the groundnut plantation of Senegal as well as to the mines of South Africa and coffee plantations of Uganda. This resulted in a constant exchange of tastes, ideas and perceptions, as well as a sense of place beyond the confines of the village or town.

10.1. CARS AND LORRIES

Cars made their appearance in French West Africa at the turn of the century, not so very long after they took to the road in Europe in the 1890's.

In 1907 the first car in Ethiopia arrived overland from Djibouti. The Alafin (king) of Oyo's car was described in 1927 by the Pioneer newspaper:

"a Daimler-de-luxe in aluminum with sky ventilator and nine dazzling head-lights..the cynosure of all eyes."

Lorries became common in the 1920's. They were extensively used for transporting groundnuts to the railway in Senegal. This was despite the fact that properly surfaced roads only became common in the 1950's. On a noncommercial level, motorised transport increased the number of Muslims in Africa making their hajj (pilgrimage) to Mecca.

Not everyone took to cars straight away. Although the Katikiro (Prime Minister) Apolo Kagwa of Buganda (in modern Uganda) was quite happy to travel by train, he was suspicious of the car when he first came across it in 1902 in England:

"After our friend Mr. Miller had returned from the dentist we got ready to go and stop with Sir T. Fowell Buxton, and drove to Liverpool Street station and got into the train.

At the end of our journey we found a carriage, and another kind of vehicle called a motor-car, which was driven by gas that comes off from some chemical, and was a very clever thing; however, we refused to go in it as it made so much dust and we got into the carriage and arrived safely to find out friends awaiting us and tea ready."

Ham Mukasa secretary to Apolo Kagwa, Excerpt from Apolo Kagwa Discovers Britain.

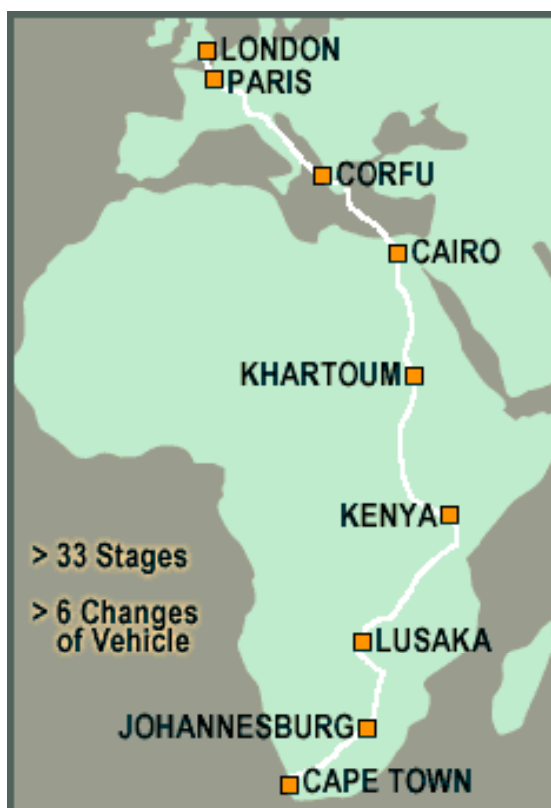
In Nigeria as early as 1919 people were concerned about the lack of affordable imported cars:

"I am pleased to see a colleague who is a recognised authority in the motor world make a strong appeal to the head of our motor industry not to neglect the great West African market. He says he has first hand information that "there are not a dozen British cars or lorries in the whole country..."

The loss of this trade is quite simple to account for. The British vehicle is high-priced, ill equipped in the matter of accessories, and does not lend itself so well as the American machine to local requirements and conditions."

West Africa magazine, 9 Aug 1919.

By the 1930's the wealthy men of West Africa and East Africa, whether European or Africa, were driving cars. As in Europe lack of highway code and excess speed could result in accidents.



"A collision occurred on the Kijura Road near Kahangi between cars belonging to Mr. M. Stead and the Kahuma of Burahya. One side of the Kahuma's car was badly bent. Mr. Stead's car had one wheel almost torn off. The collision occurred on a fairly open bit of road, and it is understood that legal action is pending"
Uganda Herald, 9 Dec 1936.

In the 1930's, Nigeria's first car importer died.

10.2. THE PASSING OF W.A. DAWODU

"The death of William Akinola Dawodu in his 51st year is of double significance: it marks the further depletion of a once very large family as well as the end of a unique career of African enterprise...William Akinola, born in 1879 and educated at the CMS Grammar School, learned mechanics at the Hussey Charity, where he afterwards became a master...

He established a small workshop at the Marina in 1905 and in 1907 his business had so well expanded that he had to remove to the site where his office and works now stand. In those palmy days he had another store at Egerton Square and a shop under his two storey building at Bishop Street.

A pioneer in vehicular trade, he introduced the famous Ford cars in Lagos and by 1919 he was sole agent for the Firestone Tyres, Dodge, Charlotte and Reo Motors and for the English, Star, Premier and Hobart cycles.

Like many pioneers he suffered terribly from the loss of his important motor agencies, which European firms eventually captured...He will be long remembered as one of our great captains of industry and a good and useful citizen."

Daily Times, 7 Jan 1930.

10.3. AEROPLANES

The first aeroplanes in Africa were used in military campaigns. As early as 1911 the French used airpower in their campaign in Libya against the Sanussi. In 1916 the Egyptians used planes in Sudan's Dafur region against the Mahdists. The RAF bombed the Nuer in Sudan in the 1920's.

In 1936 Nairobi became an airbase for the RAF. In Liberia, in West Africa, Robertsfield Airport started its life as an American airbase during the Second World War.

10.4. THE MAIL SERVICE

The other main function of aeroplanes was to carry mail. In January 1932, Imperial Airways set up the first mail service from England to Africa, going through Cairo and then south on to Cape Town. The journey took 11 days.

Passenger services remained limited to short flights and ships remained the preferred way of travelling from Africa to Europe. In 1921 the Emir of Katsina took a ride in a Bristol aircraft while in Britain on the way to Mecca. He enjoyed the experience:

"We have finished the sights of the earth and have grasped them. Today we are seeing the sights of the heavens."

For further information see [African railways](http://www.bbc.co.uk/world-service/africa/features/storyofafrica/11chapter12.shtml) in the 19th century. (www.bbc.co.uk/world-service/africa/features/storyofafrica/11chapter12.shtml)

11. WOMEN

The position of women changed in society partly in line with what was happening to men. In the rural areas, more and more men were taking up paid work in agriculture or mining, which often took them far away from their homes. So women and children ended up doing more agricultural work.

In towns and cities women's education under a Christian missionary direction took root. The oldest girls' school in Sub-Saharan Africa, the Annie Walsh Memorial School, was set up in Sierra Leone in 1847. In 1907 the first girls' school was established in Lagos.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/13audio10.ram

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/13audio10a.ram

Women's views and interests began to be voiced in newspapers and magazines, for example the Nnamdi Azikwe's publication *The Pilot* had a women's page in it. The Sierra Leone Daily Mail featured women's points of view and snap shots of domestic life on a regular basis.

"When my husband has finished a boiled egg, he always reverses the shell in the egg-cup, making the egg appear untouched. This childish habit never fails to annoy me."
Female Contributor to the Daily Mail, 1936.

Women's organisations sprung up all over the continent. In Nigeria, the Lagos Women's League was founded. In Mombasa, Kenya, Muslim dance societies were set up. In South Africa the Bantu Women's League was created. A number of South African women writers emerged. Victoria Swaartbooi, Lilith Kakaza, and Violet Dube produced short stories and short novels, in Xhosa and Zulu.

11.1. POLITICAL WOMEN

Politically women had been active down the ages, often in prominent positions as spirit mediums or queens. For example, Queen Nzinga of Angola in the 16th and 17th century; Yaa Asantewa (1830-1921) of the Ashanti and Nehanda of Zimbabwe in the 19th century.

Between the world wars there are a number of instances of women challenging colonial authority. In 1929 political protest triggered among other things by high taxes in south eastern Nigeria, took on a form of mass militancy. Women went about attacking factories and government offices in Owerri Province.

During the Second World War, in Senegal, the Joola priestess Aline Siteo protested against the demands put on farmers to produce large quantities of rice. Some women built on the status they acquired through their husbands. For example Mrs. Roberts, the wife of the first President of Liberia J. J. Roberts, was an energetic fundraiser and travelled abroad for that purpose long after her husband's death.

"During a visit to London in 1910, this writer met Mrs. Roberts at the home of Mr. William Archer, the first coloured man to become Mayor of Battersea, a district of the Metropolis. Mrs. Roberts notwithstanding the weight of ninety one years, was clear in mind and wonderfully active. She was in England on official business.

In previous years she had secured considerable money to erect a hospital in Monrovia, and was endeavouring to enlist the support of English friends to supplement the same through generous gifts."

Haile Q. Brown, *Homespun Heroines*.

12. WORLD WAR TWO: SOCIAL IMPACT

12.1. WORLD WAR 2

The Second World War was sparked off by the territorial ambitions in Europe and Africa of Germany's Chancellor, Adolf Hitler. Africa was drawn in at a number of levels. Hitler wished to regain the German colonies which had been confiscated after the First World War. Hitler's ally, Mussolini, the Italian leader, had invaded Ethiopia in 1935, arousing much indignation.

"Sin-possessed and intoxicated with authority, Mussolini, the Fascist Dictator with his "smash and grab" doctrine of civilisation has announced his East Africa spoils to the world. He is also said to be having his hands in the Spanish mists. This is as should be expected of a child of darkness...

There by him we find his brother Hitler, the German dictator, dreaming his usual day-dreams - a German Empire, with Russia as his armrest; France as his footstool, England as his manufacturing nation, and the colonies as labourers to work in his Nazi vineyard. His continuous dream is of world subjugation..."

The Comet, 5 Dec 1926.

12.2. RECRUITMENT

As in the First World War, the colonial powers needed African manpower. This time African troops (with the exception of those from South Africa who were not allowed to bear arms) were to play a much more combatant role both in and outside Africa. Half a million Africans fought for the French and the British during the war.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/13audio12.ram

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/13audio12b.ram

Recruiting policies were much more sophisticated than they had been in the First World War. Anti-fascist propaganda was broadcast on the radio and disseminated through newspapers and poster campaigns, with dramatic cartoons and drawings depicting what life might be like under German rule.

On the whole people rallied to the war effort, angered by the invasion of Ethiopia.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/13audio12c.ram

Enlistment to the armed forces was supposed to be voluntary. However, a good deal of pressure was also employed through local chiefs, and forced labour was used in mining and agricultural areas.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/13audio12a.ram

Despite a generally cooperative mood, there were some dissenting voices, notably that of ITA Wallace Johnson, Editor of the African Standard and tireless critic of the British in Sierra Leone. They responded by interning him for the duration of the war. He saw the war as simply serving the interests of capitalism and colonialism:

ENLIST TODAY!

**Enlist today!
Your country needs you!
Not for learning how to shoot the big howitzers
Or how to rat tat tat the machine guns
Or how to fly o'er peaceful countries
Dropping bombs on harmless people
Or how to fix a bayonet and charge at
The harmless workers of another clime**

**Your country needs you
For the rebuilding of your shattered homeland -
Your homeland ruined by exploitation
By the tyrants of foreign nations
Who would use you as their catspaw
While they starved you to subjection
African Standard, 28 July 1939.**

12.3. EFFECTS OF WAR

With access to Asian markets cut off, African commodities assumed great importance during the war. So in Liberia rubber production increased. The Belgian Congo was relied on for key minerals.

Britain tried to increase tin mining production in Nigeria to offset losses in the Far East. Workers were forced to work in the mines in appalling conditions and production rose only slightly. The scheme was abandoned in 1944. In 1945 there was a General Strike in Nigeria.

In 1941 miners in the Belgian Congo went on strike because of the high cost of living. The strike was broken by the army, and seventy strikers were killed.

Many imports were under license and food prices increased. Sea ports in Cape Town, Free-town, Mombasa, and Takoradi, as well as landing facilities for planes, were upgraded. Once America entered the war in 1942, Robertsfield Airport was built for B47 bombers to refuel, giving Liberia the longest runway in Africa to this day.

13. WORLD WAR TWO: AREAS OF CONFLICT

Conflict began in 1935 when Italy invaded and then occupied Ethiopia. The Emperor went into exile in Britain. This invasion led to a widespread willingness on the part of people in Africa to fight fascism. By 1941 with the help of African soldiers from west, east and South Africa the Italians were defeated in Ethiopia. Emperor Haile Selassie was then restored to his throne.

North Africa was the other main theatre of war in Africa. Here the allies came very close to defeat at the hands of the Germans. But by 1943 Germany's Afrika Corps had surrendered. In the same year African troops joined with American and British troops to invade Italy.

13.1. AFRICA AND FRANCE

Britain was never invaded by the Germans. But France was occupied in 1942. There was a Free French government in exile led by Charles De Gaulle. African colonies had to choose with whom to side. In Chad the black governor, Felix Eboue, originally from French Guyana in South America, made a bold and swift decision to support the Free French. The Governors of other French Equatorial territories fell in behind him. The capital of the French Congo, Brazzaville, became a temporary capital for Free France.

By contrast governors in French North Africa and French West Africa declared their loyalty to Marshall Petain's puppet regime in France (the Vichy Government) which cooperated with the German occupation. When in 1942 the allies regained control of North Africa, the West African colonies abandoned their Vichy loyalties and declared for Free France.

FRENCH COLONIES IN WEST AFRICA
SHOWING TWO MAIN REGIONS AND COUNTRIES WITH MODERN NAMES
French West Africa (A.O.F. Afrique Occidental Francaise)
Senegal
Togo
Guinea
Benin
Mauritania
Tunisia
Mali
Bourkina Faso
French Equatorial Africa (A.E.F. Afrique Equatorial Francais)
Chad
Central African Republic
Congo Brazzaville
Gabon
Niger
Cameroun

13.2. AFRICA AND THE FAR EAST

In 1942 African troops from the Gold Coast and Kenya fought in Burma against the Japanese. The conditions were very hard and African troops were crucial in the campaign. The route to Burma went through India. Here nationalist leaders were already preparing for independence. This made a huge impression on African soldiers.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/13audio12b.ram

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/13audio11a.ram

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/13audio11c.ram

13.3. END OF WAR

When the war ended African troops were left with experiences which changed their lives. They also felt, more than ever, that European colonial powers owed them a great deal for the sacrifice they had made. Many men found themselves out of work when they returned home, and still, of course, under the rule of Europeans. As it was after the First World War, there was a feeling of disappointment, and a sense of being let down.

Listen to Corporal Agwu talking to his commanding officer about his future
www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/13audio11.ram

In Britain some hotels and restaurants still operated a colour bar. In 1948, for example, Tom Boatin, a West African lecturer at London University, was refused service at Rules Restaurant in Maiden Lane. The management was forced to apologise after intervention by the Minister of Food.

The same year there were racist riots in Liverpool with members of the predominantly black sea faring community. At one point, a crowd of 2,000 attacked a hostel where black seamen lodged. But by this time the movement for independence was beginning to gather momentum.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/13audio11f.ram

14. FORCES FOR CHANGE

14.1. RECORDED MUSIC

The first gramophone players arrived in Africa shortly after they came into commercial use in Europe. In the 1930's, the idea of catering for African modern music tastes was taken seriously by HMV. They produced a series of records (78 rpm shellac discs) under the title Gramophone Victor.

To begin with, the series featured music from Latin America and particularly Cuba, bands like Don Carlos and his Casino Orchestra and Rico's Creole Band. They were hugely popular in East and West Africa and were known as GVs.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/13audio13a.ram

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/13audio13.ram

15. BETWEEN WORLD WARS TIMELINE

1914: Beginning of World War I.

1916: Riots in Yorubaland (Nigeria) over taxation.

1917: Russian Revolution.

1918: End of World War I.

1919: 1st Pan-African Congress meets in London, Paris & Brussels. Conference at Versailles to determine conditions of peace. Young Baganda Association formed in Uganda. Commoners Council formed in Basotholand.

1920: Neo Destour party founded by Bourguiba in Tunisia. The National Congress of British West Africa is founded by B. Casely Hayford of the Gold Coast and Dr. Akiwande Savage of Nigeria. It establishes branches in Sierra Leone, Gambia, Nigeria and the Gold Coast.
Calling for elected element in territorial legislature.

1921: 2nd Pan African Congress meets in London & Lisbon. Communist Party of South Africa formed.

1922: Independence for Egypt.

- 1923: 3rd Pan African Congress. Nigerian National Democratic Party founded by Herbert Macaulay. (Elections of Lagos member of the legislative council, universal education, Africanisation of civil service, free trade and equal treatment of traders.)
- 1924: 'Ligue Universelle pour la Defense de la Race Noire' founded in Paris by Dahomean lawyer Prince Kojo Tovalou Houeou.
- 1925: West African Students' Union founded in London.
- 1927: 4th Pan African Congress held in New York. Meeting in Brussels of Berlin-based "League against Imperialism."
- 1928: First Gikuyu newspaper, Muigwithania, published. Gold Coast Federation of Cocoa Farmers founded.
- 1929: Youth League founded by ITA Wallace Johnson in Sierra Leone and Gold Coast. African Organisation of Tanganyika.
- 1933: Hitler comes to power in Germany.
- 1934: Nigerian Youth Movement established.
- 1935: Italy invades Abyssinia (Ethiopia).
- 1936: Emperor Haile Selassie goes into exile.
- 1939: Beginning of World War II.
- 1941: Emperor Haile Selassie returns to Ethiopia.
- 1942: West Africans Burma campaign.
- 1943: Vichy France gives up French West Africa.
- 1944: Kenya Africa Union established. Syndicat Agricole Africain formed in Ivory Coast by Felix Houphouet-Boigny.
- 1945: End of World War II. 5th Pan African Congress held in Manchester, United Kingdom.

16. FURTHER READING

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The Colonial Moment in Africa: Essays on the Movement of Minds and Materials, 1900-1940. Edited by Andrew Roberts. Cambridge University Press, November 1990.

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West Africans at War. By P. Clarke. Ethnographica.

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Let Freedom Come. By Basil Davidson. Little Brown & Co.

The Making of Modern Africa. By B. Freund. Macmillan.

African Responses to Colonialism. By A. Boahen. Johns Hopkins University Press.

17. USEFUL LINKS

The BBC is not responsible for the content of external Internet sites

Pan-African Congresses

www.africana.com/tt_658.htm

Written by Kwame Anthony Appiah. Africana.com website.

George Padmore

www.blackbritain.co.uk/documentaries/bhm/bio/bio.asp?name=15

Compiled by Black Britain.

Josef Stalin

www.bbc.co.uk/education/modern/stalin/stalihtm.htm

Compiled by BBC Education.

Modern World History Timeline

www.bbc.co.uk/education/modern/timeline/timehtm.htm

Site provided by BBC Education

The 1945 Pan-African Congress

www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/30/058.html

Written by Simon Katzenellenbogen, Department of History, University of Manchester.

Article: When Anti-imperialism and Civil Rights Were in Vogue

www.igc.org/solidarity/atc/84Lang.html

Written by Clarence Lang, PH D candidate University of Illinois. Features Marcus Garvey, George Padmore and James I.T.A. Wallace-Johnson.

Marcus Mosiah Garvey

<http://hometown.aol.com/capzpsyche/pan-africanism.3htm>

W.E.B. DuBois, Aime Cesaire, George Padmore, Kwame Nkrumah, I.T.A. Wallace Johnson and Jomo Kenyatta. Published by Freedom Journal: Notes in Black History.

Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie, 25 years after his death

www.time.com/time/europe/timetrails/selassie/

Written by Michael Brunton. TIME Europe.

Emperor Haile Selassie speeches

www.terravista.pt/portosanto/4330/haile_selassie_ing.htm

Compiled by the Rastafari House of Enoch, Portugal.

Grigori Evseyevich Zinoviev

<http://looksmart.infoplease.com/ce6/people/A0853443.html>

Columbia University Press.

Joseph Stalin

<http://csf.colorado.edu/mirrors/marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin>

Reference Archive. Compiled by Marxists Internet Archive.

Joseph Stalin

www.britannica.com/bcom/eb/article/0/0,5716,114890+1,00.html

Site compiled by Encyclopaedia Britannica.

XIV. INDEPENDENCE

1. INTRODUCTION

"After independence we will have to stand on our own and rely on our own resources, the unifying force, the cement...which had hitherto been supplied by the United Kingdom Government will be removed, and will have to be replaced by new virtues of our own which must be capable of keeping all the diverse elements of the country together, in mutual trust and harmony and with a common national purpose."

Excerpt taken from Awo, the Autobiography of Chief Obafemi Awolowo of Nigeria.

After the Second World War people in Africa wanted change. Only Egypt, Liberia and Ethiopia were independent at that point. But it was Indian self-rule which triggered the momentum leading to independence. Everywhere the mood was hopeful as people were inspired by the vision of a new society free of European control.

In Southern Africa, European settlers wanted to cut the ties with Britain and Portugal, but retain white minority rule, excluding the African population. The fighting resulting from this was violent and destructive to the infrastructure of the countries involved and their independent neighbours. Burdened by apartheid for decades, South Africans were the last people on the continent to attain majority rule. Meanwhile the Cold War conflict between America and the Soviet Union distorted politics at a regional level particularly in the South.

Attaining economic independence proved harder than gaining political independence. In some areas drought and famine destroyed agricultural production; elsewhere war has brought economic activity to a halt.

Political instability on the continent has been both the result and cause of economic difficulties. The cost of living has spiralled, hitting a fast growing urban population.

Attempts to create a strong manufacturing base failed in the main; many African currencies went through substantial periods when they could not be converted into Western currencies.

These negative trends have both caused the intervention of western economic institutions, like the IMF and World Bank, and been the result of that intervention. As a consequence there has been a steady migration of people from the continent to Europe and America looking for a better and more stable quality of life.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/14audio0.ram

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/14audio0a.ram

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/14audio0b.ram

2. TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE

2.1. THE 1950's

The 1950's was a time of accelerated political change. At the end of the Second World War there were only three independent countries in Africa:

Liberia, which had been founded by freed slaves and declared itself independent in 1847.

Ethiopia, which was an ancient territory, had never been colonised by a European power despite the attempts of the Italians in the 1880's and 1930's.

and Egypt, which had achieved independence in 1922.

In 1951 Libya was granted independence from Hitler's former ally, war-weary Italy. Egypt renounced its historic control over Sudan. Britain had little choice then but to grant full independence to Sudan in 1956. In the same year, Morocco and Tunisia became independent of France.

2.2. INFLUENCES: INDIA

The country which made the biggest impact on African nationalists was India which was led to independence by Mahatma Gandhi in 1947. His confident doctrine of nonviolence, and his track record battling racial prejudice in South Africa made him a hugely influential model among African nationalists. He was assassinated in January 1948.

2.3. PAN-AFRICANS

Already in 1945 at the 5th Pan African Congress in Manchester, UK, there were a number of delegates who were later to bring their countries to independence. These included Hastings Banda (later President of Malawi), **Kwame Nkrumah** (later President of Ghana), Obafemi Awolowo (later Premier of the South West Region Nigeria) and **Jomo Kenyatta** (later President of Kenya).

But nobody could have predicted that within fifteen years of the meeting in Manchester, the vast majority of African countries would be independent. In the early 1950's, Julius Nyerere estimated that complete independence would not happen until the 1980's.

2.4. AFRICA & USA & SOVIET UNION



On the world stage America wanted an end to colonialism for reasons of free trade (easy access to African markets which had previously bought from Europe) and political influence. The Soviet Union wanted an end to colonialism and capitalism for reasons of ideology and to increase its sphere of influence.

While African nationalists took a pragmatic view of soviet style communism, the British government was concerned about the Soviet influence on Africa. And where African nationalists met with resistance or persecution from

Europe, many welcomed the support and interest of the Soviet Union.

"...generally speaking, it is the detribalised native who responds best to communism, as he misses the narrow confines of tribal life and a leader on whom to bestow loyalty. This gives the Rand, with its inflow of immigrant labour, its special importance in the diffusion of communism in Africa..."

Communism has made the least progress where the influence of Islam is strongest. Though in the past year the communist picture has been one of retrogression on some fronts, there are signs of increased interest in anti-colonialism from Moscow."
British Foreign and Colonial Office, Notes on the Aims, Strategy and Procedure of the Communists in Africa, 1 May 1950.

2.5. THE SOUND OF FREEDOM

Listen to Independence Day announcements and celebrations in the following countries:

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/14audio3c.ram

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/14audio3c.ram

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/14audio8c.ram

3. FRENCH AND BRITISH COLONIAL STYLES

3.1. CONTRASTING PICTURES

People in Africa were burdened by colonial perceptions of who they were. The British believed Africans were essentially different from Europeans and would stay that way. This point of view invited racism, implying that Africans were not just different but also inferior.

The French, by comparison, were prepared to treat Africans as equals, but only if they learnt to speak French properly and adopted the values of French culture. If they reached a sufficient level of education Africans might be accepted as French citizens. To fall below the required level was to invite charges of racial inferiority.

France encouraged an increasing closeness with her colonies on the eve of independence and thereafter. Britain took the view that it would give limited support to its colonies as they moved into independence; for the British independence meant being independent of Britain.

Back in 1914 there was already an African politician in the French National Assembly (the equivalent of the British House of Commons). This was Blaise Diagne, representing Senegal. Another leading figure was Leopold Senghor. Before he became a politician, he was a teacher. In the 1930's he took the post of senior classics teacher at the Lycee in Tours, France. No British public school or grammar school at that time would have accepted an African as a teacher no matter how brilliant.

At a military level, there was a continued reliance on African soldiers by the French. Senegalese soldiers continued to be in the French army after World War II. This stands in contrast with the British, who immediately demobbed African soldiers after the war.

Acquiring the values and language of the French brought opportunities and prospects for people in the French colonies. But these were not enough for the growing number of nationalists.

In the 1950's African delegates in the French National Assembly came together to form the Rassemblement Democratique Africain (RDA) under the leadership of Felix Houphouet-Boigny from the Cote D'Ivoire. Senghor broke with the RDA in 1948 and formed the Bloc Democratique Senegalais, or BDS. He was determined that Senegal should be the leading political force in the region.

"I would like to assure the whites of our unshakable will to win our independence and that it would be stupid as well as dangerous for them to wish to make the clock march backwards. We are ready, if necessary as a last resort, to conquer liberty by any means, even violent ones."

Leopold Senghor talking in August 1946.

SOLDIER'S POINT OF VIEW

"I got into the French army during the colonial period...and first I was a private, then I became a sergeant in the army after four months....This was 26 July 1956. I really felt fine when I was in the French army...but unfortunately for me, after independence in my country, Senegal, our former Prime Minister, Mamadou Dia, asked us to leave the French army, but we didn't join our Senegalese army...instead I was sent to work in our ministry of finance.

I liked to be in the French army because it gave me more opportunities than the Senegalese army. With the French army, I could have easily become a captain, whereas with the Senegalese army that was not possible. This is why I really wanted to be a French citizen, because it gave me better prospects for my future.

I didn't become a French citizen because I was told at that time that if I became a French citizen I would no longer have the opportunity to see my family. This is the only reason why I decided not to become a French citizen and remain Senegalese."
Isidore Mandiouban, retired Senegalese soldier.

In 1960 independence came to most of the French colonies. In the same year Nigeria, the Gambia, Cameroun and Somalia became independent of British rule. Nigeria, because of its size and strong regional power bases, opted for a federal structure at independence.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/14audio3f.ram

Sierra Leone was brought to independence under leadership of a Mende Prime Minister, Milton Margai, sending a message to the old Krio elite that their days were over.

Uganda's independence was affected by an uncomfortable alliance between the Kabaka (king) of Buganda and the Prime Minister, Milton Obote.

Under Nyerere and his party TANU (the Tanganyika African National Union) Tanganyika, (later Tanzania) swept to independence. Nyerere had the advantage of the Swahili language, which was an African lingua franca understood nationwide and beyond. This was a key element, along with his charismatic leadership, to the people of Tanganyika having a sense of national unity, despite the many ethnic groups in the country.

The neighbouring island of Zanzibar became independent of British rule, but remained under Arab domination until 1964.

3.2. FOUR CASE STUDIES OF INDEPENDENCE

Read about Guinea Conakry

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/14chapter5.shtml

Read about Algeria

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/14chapter6.shtml

Read about Congo

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/14chapter7.shtml

Read about Kenya

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/14chapter8.shtml

4. GOLD COAST TO GHANA

4.1. FIRST FOR SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Unlike Portugal which was determined to hang on to its colonies, Britain had by the end of the war reckoned that running the Empire was more trouble than it was worth. At the same time African Nationalists were increasingly vociferous in their demands for self rule. But it was not clear how to dismantle the colonial machine, or when to dismantle it.

In the event it was African nationalists who took charge of events, starting in West Africa. People like K.B. Asante, former teacher and diplomat, who were educated and ambitious, also put their weight behind the independence movement.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/14audio3a.ram

The Gold Coast in the 1950's was a country with the highest level of education in the whole of Sub-Saharan Africa. The Gold Coast supplied many of the civil servants working in Nigeria. Gold Coast nationalists had campaigned for home rule before the Second World War. But it was Kwame Nkrumah who harnessed his leadership to the mood of the people.

Already in 1947 Nkrumah was a full time politician, installed as General Secretary of the United Gold Coast Convention. He was imprisoned by the British for inciting people to revolt against the British but returned in 1948 and formed the more radical Convention People's Party, or CPP.

In 1951 he was imprisoned for inciting strikes. Later in the year, elections were held for a larger and newer Legislative Council, with Africans in the majority. The CPP won. Nkrumah was released. He negotiated a new constitution with the British and in 1954 he became Prime Minister. Independence was now on the cards and there was a sense of excitement abroad. Three years later he led his country to independence.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/14audio3.ram

The touch-paper had been lit for the rest of Africa. In 1959 an independent Ghana hosted the Accra All African People's Conference. Hastings Banda and Kenneth Kaunda, among others, were there, ready to be inspired with the vision of a new political future for their countries: Nysaland (to become Malawi) and Northern Rhodesia (to become Zambia) respectively.

The path to independence in the **Southern African states** proved more problematic. The black majority was up against a white settler population who wanted independence. This minority was, in the main, hostile to majority rule.

At the same time the Portuguese refused to negotiate with the nationalist movements of Angola, Mozambique, Guinea Bissau and Sao Tome.

5. THE NATION STATE

5.1. GENERATING UNITY

The borders of the countries which African leaders inherited at independence were created by Europeans in the 19th century. This 19th century map was drawn up with no regard to the boundaries between different ethnic groups, linguistic variations and regional power bases.

Somalia stood alone as a unit which was uniform both ethnically and linguistically. There was general agreement among the new leaders of Africa to stick with these borders.

One of the major tasks facing these leaders was to generate a sense of national unity which went beyond the unity created by being in opposition to colonial rule. This meant creating an effective administrative machinery and good communications. It also meant having a shared vision and sense of identity. The obvious person to generate this vision was the head of state.

5.2. CULT OF PERSONALITY

Originally the cult of personality grew in response to a need to bring people together. Through oratory and image, the African leader himself became more than a leader, he became symbolic of something bigger, which brought all people together. So Houphouët-Boigny of the Ivory Coast was known as The Ram who Defends his People; Kenyatta of Kenya was The Flaming Spear of Kenya; Nyerere of Tanzania was Mwalimu or teacher. Banda of Malawi combined a severe European look of trilby, and three piece suit, with an extraordinary capacity to play the crowd.

THE ORGANISATION OF AFRICAN UNITY - OAU

In 1963, The Organisation of African Unity was established in Addis Ababa, providing a forum for all African heads of state. There were still another nineteen nations waiting to become independent, but the occasion was a moving one, representing the idea of an African collaboration and strength in unity. The main things on the agenda were:

colonial rule, especially in Portuguese colonies;
South African control of Namibia;
the white minority in Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe);
and support for nationalist movements.

Many people attended the opening ceremony from different parts of the black Diaspora, including [Miriam Makeba](#).

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/14audio4a.ram

5.3. SOVIET FRIENDSHIP

In terms of philosophical outlook, socialism was attractive to new leaders. It rejected the premise of profit and accumulation of capital, which Europeans had so ruthlessly put to work in Africa. The Soviet Union was ideologically committed to helping newly independent countries, as well as increasing its sphere of influence in a world increasingly defined by the Cold War and antagonistic relations between America and the Soviet Union.

When Europeans turned their backs on the efforts and needs of new leaders, or else proposed economic and political relationships with African countries which were one-sidedly in favour of the West, the Soviet Union offered help, mainly military. In the hysterical climate generated by the Cold War, any African leader visiting Moscow or accepting material support was branded a communist.

5.4. IDEALS, PHILOSOPHIES AND VISIONS

Despite contact and support from the Soviet Union there was not a single Marxist Leninist among the first generation of African leaders in the 1960's. Rather, people like Nkrumah were searching to define different brands of African socialism. But many western observers were obsessed with trying to spot ideological converts, and so assign the status of Soviet puppet to leaders with policies they did not like.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/14audio1.ram

This was particularly so at the time of the Belgian Congo's independence.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/14audio7.ram

Many African leaders had a sense of purpose which went beyond the borders of their own country.

Kaunda of Zambia, for example, became increasingly concerned with the problems of the front-line states confronting an aggressive apartheid in South Africa. At home he evolved an outlook called Humanism, combining socialist ideas with Christianity.

Nkrumah had a pan-African vision with a modern industrialised and socialist Ghana at the helm.

Colonel Gamal Abd al-Nasir (referred to by the British as Nasser) dreamed of a pan Arab unity and was a major influence on Nkrumah, introducing him to an Egyptian woman who became his wife.

Coming to power in 1954, after a coup in 1952 had overthrown a corrupt monarchy and aristocracy, Al-Nasir was a model for many African people and leaders. He distributed land among the peasants and defied the British and French by nationalising the Suez Canal, (a crucial shipping route for Europe), nationalising many businesses.

Despite his economic policy and his 'Philosophy of Revolution', al-Nasir was never a Marxist.

Sekou Toure of Guinea having said no to a union with France at independence, evolved a policy of what he called 'positive neutralism.' This amounted to continuous purges of those he suspected of opposition. He justified this in part by drawing on what he described as traditional collectivism:

"Africa is fundamentally communocratic. The collective life and social solidarity give it a basis of humanism which many peoples will envy. These human qualities also mean that an individual cannot imagine organising his life outside that of his family, village or clan...The ability of intellectuals or artists, thinkers or researchers, is only valid if it coincides with the life of the people..."

Sekou Toure, quoted by UNESCO General History of Africa Volume VIII.

In Tanzania **Julius Nyerere** took up major and largely unsuccessful social engineering. He believed in a form of collectivisation, bringing together different groups of peasant farmers, so that they might benefit from communal cultivation, shared facilities and infrastructure such as roads, schools and water.

In practice, people didn't want to move and when they did the new facilities were often not there.

MEMORIES OF RADIO CAIRO IN THE 1950'S

"We heard on the radio of the Egyptian revolution. We were told that this had put the people of Egypt in control of their destiny. So dreams were actually exported to us through the soundwaves into the island of Zanzibar, and we were living a dream as reality.

The Radio Cairo broadcaster talked about British Imperialism and came up with the phrase, 'the bloody dogs of imperialism.' I've never taken dope, but this was the nearest that I can imagine one would have felt, when I listened to Radio Cairo."
Journalist and political observer Mohammed Adam.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/14audio4.ram

6. CASE STUDY: GUINEA CONAKRY

The passage towards independence of Guinea and Algeria was traumatic in different ways. Algerian nationalists had to fight a bitter war against French white settlers and the French army.

Other French colonies - Togo, Senegal, Mali, Benin, Haute Volta (later Burkina Faso), Cote d'Ivoire, Chad, Central African Republic, Gabon and Mauritania - accepted the French umbrella, and arrived at independence relatively smoothly.

Madagascar's path to independence was violent. It underwent a major insurrection in 1947 which slid into a guerilla war in the course of which over 90,000 people were killed by the French.

By 1956, all French colonies in West Africa had internal self-government and majority rule. But this related only to domestic policy as France retained controlled over military and foreign affairs as well as economic planning.

In 1958, President de Gaulle offered a choice to Africans in West Africa: "Oui" or yes to a partnership with the French which was essentially paternalistic, or "Non" which meant total independence and the breaking of all links with France, and all support.

Guinea alone under Sekou Toure voted for a total break with France. Guinea and Sekou Toure paid the price for saying no. The French left en masse, depriving the country of all technical expertise and worse, removing all key government files, even ripping out office telephones. Sekou Toure responded defiantly. To general applause in the black Diaspora and the Eastern bloc he brought the country to independence in 1959.

7. CASE STUDY: ALGERIA

7.1. PAINFUL INDEPENDENCE

Algeria was the only French colony in Africa occupied by a white settler population. Known as the *pieds noires* they numbered nearly a million. They took the most fertile 23 per cent of the country's farmland, leaving seven million Algerians with the rest. The French government clung to the idea that Algeria was France. The Algerians were determined to be independent. The result was violence on an appalling scale, with widespread indiscriminate killing and torture of civilians.

Troops were even brought in from other parts of Africa to fight on the side of the French. In 1960, after six years of conflict, the French Government finally gave in and started to negotiate. In 1962, Ahmed Ben Bella, leader of one of the main factions fighting the French, led the country to independence.

A SENEGALESE VIEW OF THE ALGERIAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

"Fighting African people on behalf of the Europeans doesn't mean that I'm not proud of being black. I'm very proud of being black. But what I want to make clear is that I had no choice. As a French soldier, I had to obey the orders. I fought my African brothers, simply because I didn't have a choice.

I was under the orders of the French army. When we first arrived in Algeria, the Algerians didn't want to shoot us, because we were black people - we were their brothers. But when they realised that we were obliged to fight them, they didn't hesitate to shoot at us.

I lost many of my friends and relatives in Algeria. And even now sometimes, when I sleep at night, I can see them in my nightmares - just the way I'm seeing you. This is a very painful situation. I an old man here in Dakar who walks the streets saying, "I'm going mad, I'm going mad", because it's still a nightmare. In 1956, the French were also fighting the Vietnamese; people who fought that battle, even now are still having nightmares. Even when they are not sleeping, they too feel they are going mad. So it is a very painful experience.

I regret a lot of things of course, because I lost many of my friends and relatives in the war, and because I had to kill many people. One of my friends and I were going on patrol and he was shot down by an Algerian and he was killed. That shocked me. We were recruited on the same day. We went into the field for training together. After that, we came back here to Dakar then went on to France, to Marseilles. After Marseilles we went to Strasbourg, and from Strasbourg we left for Algeria. And when we arrived in Algeria, we were in the same company and his bed was over mine. I was sleeping under him. And he was killed when we were patrolling together.

When I just returned from Algeria, I used to see the fighting quite often in my dreams. I used to have nightmares. And even when I look at my photos, those sad memories come back to my mind and I'm sad. But since I've been a civilian for a long time, I'm used to thinking of those sad images without being affected by them."

Isidore Mandiouban. Former soldier in the French army.

8. CASE STUDY: CONGO

8.1. DR CONGO³

Independence for Congo followed a strange course of events unlike anything else in the rest of Africa. The Belgian Congo was huge and underdeveloped. After the war, new cultural organisations like ABAKO, Association des Bakongo and the Lulua-Freres, emerged in the 1950's.

But it was the attitude of the Belgians which bred a new political consciousness in the 1950's. In the first place, the Belgians like the Portuguese, were resolutely untouched by the drive towards independence in the early 1950's. De-colonisation was first discussed in 1956, but seen as something that would happen thirty years into the future.

On the eve of independence, the Congo, a territory larger than Western Europe, bordering on nine other African colonies/states, was seriously underdeveloped. There were no African army officers, only three African managers in the entire civil service, and only 30 university graduates. Yet Western investments in Congo's mineral resources (copper, gold, tin, cobalt, diamonds, manganese, zinc) were colossal. And these investments meant that the West was determined to keep control over the country beyond independence.

8.2. HANDOVER

Following widespread rioting in 1959, the Belgians to the surprise of all the nationalist leaders said elections for independence could go ahead in May 1960. This in itself caused confusion and a rush to form parties. In the event 120 different parties took part, most of them regionally based. Only one, Mouvement National Congolais or the MNC, led by **Patrice Lumumba**, favoured a centralised government and had support in four of six provinces.

The actual independence day was a mixture of huge excitement and bad temper on the part of the former colonial power. King Baudouin of Belgium made a patronising speech; and Patrice Lumumba's speech was spirited.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/14audio7.ram

Within days things fell apart. The army mutinied against Belgian officers. The main mining area, Katanga, declared itself a separate state under Moise Tshombe, but with strategic support and encouragement from Belgian mining interests. Belgian troops then intervened unasked; Lumumba invited UN peacekeeping forces to help but they steered clear of fighting Tshombe's Katanga regime.

8.3. DEATH OF LUMUMBA

Americans followed events closely. Lumumba's great speechmaking skills and his contacts with the Soviet Union all conspired to turn the Americans against him. He was described by Alan Dulles, chief of American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), as a "mad dog" and President Dwight Eisenhower authorised his assassination. This was carried out through Lumumba's opponents in the Congo. In November 1960 he was kidnapped and taken to Katanga. In January 1961 he was shot in Elizabethville; his body was then dumped by a CIA agent. Tshombe eventually became Prime Minister, but not for long.

In 1965 Joseph Mobutu seized power with American backing in a bloodless coup. He had waited in the shadows for his opportunity since the late 1950's, all the while cultivating his pro-West image for the Americans. Once in power he began a 32-year reign of greed and corruption, indulged by America and the West in return for a solidly anti-Soviet pro-western stance.

9. CASE STUDY: KENYA

Kenya, during the 1950's, was dominated by the Mau Mau uprising against the British. A central feature of this revolt was a desire on the part of the Kikuyu, along with some Embu and Meru people, for land taken by the Europeans.

The Mau Mau uprising also marked a turning point in the struggle for independence. Kikuyu resistance to European colonisation was well established before the Second World War. The

³ Formerly Zaire, before that, Belgian Congo

Kikuyu Central Association was active in the 1930's under **Jomo Kenyatta** who campaigned energetically for the Kikuyu in Europe.

In 1951, Kenyatta was arrested and imprisoned by the British for being a leading light in the Mau Mau movement. With his detention Mau Mau expanded.

In October 1952, the British declared a state of emergency, which continued until 1960. The State of Emergency was in response to an increase in attacks on the property and persons of white settlers, as well as African chiefs who were seen as collaborators.

There was also an increase in oath taking. This was a ceremony, affirming loyalty to the Mau Mau cause and war against the Europeans. About 2,000 Kikuyu were killed by Mau Mau fighters for refusing to take the oath. Private secretary J.M. Kariuki was one of the few people in post-independent Kenya prepared to speak in favour of oath taking.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/14audio8b.ram

A far larger amount, about 13,000, were killed fighting the British, and a further 80,000 were kept in detention camps. The number of Europeans who died in the course of the emergency totalled just 32. The number of original Mau Mau fighters was hugely increased by Kikuyu squatters who were expelled from European land after 1952.

The main military leaders were Dedan Kimathi and Warihu Itote, also known as General China. Dedan Kimathi was captured and executed in 1956. General China was eventually released.

Kenyatta was not released until 1961. The Kenyan African National Union (KANU) had voted him their President while he was still in prison.

The other main party to emerge in the run up to independence was the Kenyan African Democratic Union KADU. In the event, KANU gained a majority in the Legislative Assembly and Jomo Kenyatta led Kenya to independence in December 1963.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/14audio8.ram

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/14audio8c.ram

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/14audio8a.ram

10. EDUCATION

10.1. ANCIENT LEARNING

The oldest institute of higher learning on the continent of Africa was al Azhar University founded over a thousand years ago and dedicated to a broad range of Muslim studies. In Timbuktu there was a flourishing university in the 16th century. The hunger for knowledge was great all over the continent. Of all the things that Europeans had to offer, education had been the most prized in Africa.

THIRST FOR EDUCATION

"The Katikiro (Prime Minister of Buganda, Apolo Kagwa) spoke and told the people how we wanted to learn to do work of all kinds, and wanted teachers; teachers both of the Gospel and also of handy work of all kinds - carpenters, smiths, builders, traders in cotton goods and other things, brickmakers and coffee planters. After he had finished, everyone clapped their hands and cheered..."

Ham Mukasa, secretary to the Apolo Kagwa, quoted from his book *Sir Apolo Kagwa Discovers Britain*, recording the visit of the Prime Minister of Buganda to Britain, in 1902.

Just as the Muslims of the north of the continent brought with them Koranic schools, so did the missionaries set up Christian schools. But while the Koranic schools for many centuries restricted their curriculum to religious texts, which meant working exclusively in Arabic, Christian schools taught in European languages and soon broadened their curriculum to take in more than the Bible and the liturgy of the different Christian denominations. A number of Muslims then took to attending both Koranic and Christian schools. Some Muslim schools

organised broader curriculum to take in western subjects, but generally Christian and Muslim educationalists remained apart.

Everywhere, education became a key to change and self-improvement. In Angola, the Portuguese authorities took fright at the surge of ambition. In 1901, a law was passed stipulating that anyone wanting to be a telegraph operator had to pass exams in Latin and geography; Angolans were then unable to apply because these subjects were not taught in Angola.

10.2. PRIMARY SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES

At independence, governments were torn between providing more primary education and creating more universities and graduates. Only a minority of people in the continent had received primary education. Even Ghana, which next to Ethiopia had the highest level of primary education in Sub Saharan Africa, had a glaring contrast between the number of schools in the north and the south of the country.

In 1961, African leaders met in Addis Ababa to come up with a policy for not only expanding education but making it more relevant to the African child:

"African educational authorities should revise and reform the content of education in the areas of the curricular, textbooks, and methods, so as to take account of the African environment, child development, cultural heritage, and the demands of technological progress and economic development, especially industrialisation."

UNESCO report quoted in UNESCO General History of Africa Volume VIII.

A year later delegates met to discuss higher education at university level.

10.3. HIGHER LEARNING

Before World War II there were very few institutes of higher learning in Sub Saharan Africa. Young Africans had been sent to Europe for education since the 16th century when the son of the King of the Congo went to study in Portugal. Within the continent, Fourah Bay College in Sierra Leone stands as one of the oldest colleges of further education, founded in 1827, with an academic reputation which extended throughout West Africa. The first women were admitted in the 1940's, led by Lati Hyde Forster, who went on to be principal of the Annie Walsh Memorial School.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/13audio10.ram

Liberia College was founded in the 19th century and Fort Hare in 1916 under the name of the South African Native College.

"Our history struggled through the white man's version of the so-called Kaffir Wars, the Great Trek, the struggles for control of South Africa and...we had to give back in our examination papers the answer the white man expected."

Z.K. Matthews lawyers and graduate of Fort Hare, quoted by Leonard Thomson.

In 1921, Makerere was founded as a Technical College, becoming University College Makerere in 1937. It was affiliated to London University and achieved independent university status in 1963. Lovanium College was established in 1949 in the Congo, although none was admitted until 1954. Ibadan University was opened in 1948, also affiliated to London University.

In all cases, girls' education lagged somewhat behind that of the boys. The earliest girls school on the continent was probably the Annie Walsh Memorial School founded in 1848 in Freetown Sierra Leone.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/13audio10a.ram

11. POST INDEPENDENCE

11.1. CRACKS IN NATIONAL UNITY

For many African countries, the transition from colony to independent state was not easy. Every new state contained all sorts of conflicting interests, competing power bases and ethnic groups. Africa's nationalists had, on the whole, accepted the boundaries drawn up in the 1880's. But these were boundaries which cut across ethnic groups and across the grazing grounds of cattle owning people.

BROADCASTING CHANGE: A SELECTION OF COUP ANNOUNCEMENTS

Two of **Ghana's** five coups:

Acheampong (announcement).

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/14audio10.ram

J.J. Rawlings (announcement).

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/14audio10a.ram

Kenya

In 1982, attempted coup.

Zambia

In 1990, a coup is launched and cancelled.

Gambia

Attempted coup in 1981. Alhaji Ismail Suso describes being made to announce a coup.

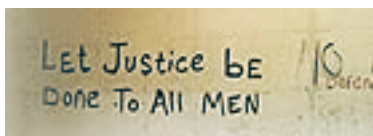
Sierra Leone

In 1992, Valentin Strasser's announces a coup.

Sudan

Osman Khald Mudawi explains to Robin White how he failed to launch his coup, because he didn't know how to operate the radio station.

In other instances, two rival kingdoms or nations were put under one central administration. Somalia alone had a linguistic unity to strengthen its political unity.



The Post-Independence years have been punctuated with changes of government all over the continent. These have sometimes been military coups or civilian takeovers. The first inkling people would have would be from a radio announcement. And radio stations were, and continue to be, commandeered for that purpose.

For some countries, a deep and continuous divide has remained unresolved. Sudan and Chad, for example, are divided between an Arab Muslim north and an African Christian south. Both countries have suffered destructive civil wars over the decades. In Uganda, the divide was very broadly between the Baganda of the south and Acholi northerners.



President Milton Obote manipulated the divide both times he was President. The first time in power, during the 1962-71 term, he burnt the Palace of the Baganda down and drove the Kabaka (king) into exile. The second time he took power, during 1980-85, he launched a military campaign of destruction in the south. It was left to President Yoweri Museveni to harmonise the different regions when he came to power in 1986.

In Nigeria, one of the largest countries in Africa with an estimated population of 120 million, the divide went very roughly three ways: the Muslim north, Ibo east and Yoruba south. In 1967, the country collapsed into civil war with the eastern part (Biafra) led by Colonel Ojukwu declaring Biafra an independent state.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/14audio10a.ram

The forces of President Gowon took three years to defeat the Biafran forces. Since 1967 Nigeria has, despite its wealth and population, held together despite tensions between Muslim communities and Christians ebbing and flowing.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/14audio10.ram

11.2. BORDER DISPUTES

In addition to internal stresses and strains, a number of countries have nursed disputed borders since independence, despite the broad acceptance of the boundaries set by Europe in the 1880's.

Chad and Libya have fought over the Aozou strip in northern Chad.

Ethiopia and Somalia were locked in a battle over the Ogaden region.

Nigeria and Cameroun have disagreed on the border at Bakassi.

Morocco continues to contest the border running along the Western Sahara.

11.3. REALITIES

Whatever vision African leaders have had for their countries, there were a number of factors beyond their control, undermining the practical realisation of their ideals:

drought and famine in east and southern Africa.

plummeting commodity prices for a wide range of products, including agricultural and mineral products, on the world market.

A leap in oil prices in the 1970's for non-oil producing countries.

mounting debts resulting from money borrowed.

weak currencies many of which became non-convertible.

pressure from the IMF and World Bank, forcing governments in the 1980's to remove subsidies on the sort of products which the urban populations of Africa relied on, most importantly sugar and petrol.

All this created tension and unrest which had huge political consequences.

12. ONE PARTY STATES

12.1. RISE AND FALL

Very soon after independence, multiparty democracy gave way to the one party state or military rule. The problem with multiparty democracy was that it had led to the formation of many parties, each with a regional outlook, and none representing the interests of the country as a whole. The rise of the one party state was also influenced by the Soviet model, which declared the people and the party as one.



In the 1970's, the first self proclaimed Marxist Leninist leaders took charge in Africa, setting up one-party systems.

In 1974, the Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia was deposed in a revolution. He was eventually replaced by Mengistu Haile Mariam who initiated a purge of all opponents. In response Somalia under Siad Barre switched from being pro-Soviet to pro-western. It was the only country in Africa to do this under the same government.

12.2. MULTIPARTY REVIVAL

The collapse of Communism in the Eastern bloc in 1989 signalled a revival of multiparty democracy. Rulers found themselves under pressure: firstly from the people, disenchanted with the track record of single party rule, and secondly, from the IMF and the World Bank, which made it a precondition of further loans and aid.

13. FORCES FOR CHANGE

13.1. PETROLEUM

The discovery of petroleum in Africa created immense wealth for some countries in the early days, and balance of payment problems for other countries when the international price of oil went up. In the long term oil rich countries sometimes found their wealth distorted economic growth; Nigeria is a good example.

13.2. TELEVISION AND RADIO

Radio came to Africa under colonial rule in the 1920's. It had a profound effect on people's sense of national unity at the start of independence. State-run radio stations in many countries made great efforts to record and broadcast the voices and songs of different parts of the country.

13.3. BEVERAGES FROM TINNED MILK TO GUINNESS

Certain tastes acquired under colonial rule stayed in Africa. Tinned milk, Guinness and beer are good examples. The brewing industry is one of the most successful on the continent, even in times of war.

14. INDEPENDENCE TIMELINE

Before WW2: Ethiopia; Liberia; Egypt

- 1950's: Libya; Sudan; Morocco; Tunisia; Ghana; Guinea.
- 1960: Cameroun; Togo; Senegal; Mali; Madagascar; Zaire; Somalia; Benin; Niger; Bourkina Faso (originally Upper Volta/Haute Volta); Cote D'Ivoire (Ivory Coast); Chad; Central African Republic (called Oubangui Chari at independence); Congo (Brazzaville); Gabon; Nigeria; Mauritania.
- 1961: Cameroun (British part); Tanzania; Sierra Leone.
- 1962: Burundi; Rwanda; Algeria; Uganda.
- 1963: Zanzibar (union with Tanganyika 1964); Kenya.
- 1964: Malawi; Zambia (formerly Northern Rhodesia).
- 1965: Gambia.
- 1966: Botswana; Lesotho.
- 1968: Mauritius; Swaziland; Equatorial Guinea.
- 1974: Guinea Bissau.
- 1975: Mozambique; Cape Verde; Comoros; Sao Tome and Principe; Angola; Western Sahara.
- 1976: Seychelles.
- 1977: Djibouti.
- 1980: Zimbabwe (formerly Southern Rhodesia).
- 1990: Namibia (formerly South West Africa)

15. FURTHER READING

UNESCO General History of Africa. Volume VIII.

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Facing Mount Kenya. By Jomo Kenyatta, Random House, June 1962.

Freedom & Socialism: Uhuru Na Ujamaa; a Selection from Writings and Speeches, 1965-1967. By J.K. Nyerere. Oxford University Press, January 1968.

Black, French and African, a Life of Leopold Sedar Senghor. By Janet G. Vaillant, Harvard University Press, August 1990.

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History of Africa. By Kevin Shillington, St.Martin's Press, August 1995.0

16. USEFUL LINKS

The BBC is not responsible for the content of external Internet sites

Kwame Nkrumah

www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1961nkrumah.html

Edited by Peter Halsall, Fordham University.

Jomo Kenyatta

www.rcbowen.com/kenya/government/kenyatta.html

Information on the Kenyan Constitution, history and geography. Produced by R.C. Bowen.

Miriam Makeba biography

www.music.org.za/artists/makeba.htm

Making Music Productions.

Patrice Lumumba

www.britannica.com/seo/p/patrice-lumumba/

Encyclopaedia Britannica.

Kwame Nkrumah's fight for independence

www.greatepicbooks.com/epics/november97.html

Great Epic Books.

Nkrumah's nonviolent, noncooperation

www.comptons.com/encyclopedia/ARTICLES/0050/00736768_A.html#P16

Convention Peoples' party (CPP). Compton's Encyclopedia.

Lt. Colonel Odumegwu Ojukwu

<http://emeagwali.com/photos/biafra/photos-essay-on-bisfra.html>

Biafran bank notes, stamps and the principles of revolution. Philip Emeagwali's personal site on Biafra.

Nigeria: Chronology Of The Struggle For Stability And Democracy

<http://allafrica.com/stories200008240352.html>

Africa Policy Information Center.

Soyinka and the Nigerian Civil War

www.thecore.nus.edu.sg/landow/post/nigeria/civilwar.html

African Postcolonial Literature in English, Prof. George P.Landow, Brown University.

Who'll Save Africa? The Hunger Business

www.channel4.com/nextstep/africa/pr.html

Written by Dr Patrick Davies, St Anthony's College, Oxford. Channel 4 website.

On Kwame Nkrumah's Vision of Africa

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/people/highlights/000914_nkrumah.shtml

BBC Site

Botswana History

<http://ubh.tripoid.com/bw/index.html>

History Department - University of Botswana

XV. Websites of the Story of Africa is a twenty four part narrative history of the continent, taking listeners from the Dawn of Man to Independence. (30 minutes duration each.)

1. Origins of Mankind

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/2audio0.ram

Looking at the great civilisations of Egypt and Kush and assessing the links between the Nile Valley and other parts of Africa.

3. The Berbers

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/7audio4.ram

How the original peoples of North Africa reacted to wave upon wave of colonisation at the hands of Phoenicians, Romans and Arabs.

4. The Bantu Migrations

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/2audio5a.ram

One of the most extraordinary population movements in history - how the Bantu spread into East and Southern Africa transforming the culture and linguistics of the continent.

5. Traditional Religions

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/6audio1d.ram

How African traditional beliefs, the veneration of ancestors and the power of taboos has affected history.

6. The Coming of Christianity

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/8audio0.ram

The rise of Christianity in Egypt and the establishment of powerful Christian states in Axum and Nubia.

7. The Coming of Islam

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/7audio0.ram

The rise of Arabic dynasties, and the spread of Islam throughout north and sub-Saharan Africa.

8. The Empire of ancient Ghana

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/4audio0.ram

How early settlements developed into vital commercial centres growing rich on Saharan trade.

9. The Kingdoms of Mali and Songhay

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/4audio0.ram

The emergence of Timbuktu as a centre of learning and the glories of an empire built on gold.

10. The Swahili Coast

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/5audio0.ram

The development of coastal communities from small trading settlements to city-states and the emergence of the Swahili language and peoples.

11. Central Africa&the Coming of the Portugese

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/10audio0.ram

The Kingdoms of Great Zimbabwe and Kongo, and the impact of Portuguese trading on inland Africa.

12. The Art of Ife and Benin

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/4audio0b.ram

An extraordinary cultural flowering which reaches its peak in the twelfth century. And the role of artistic expression in Africa's history.

13. Hausa City States and the Fulani Jihad

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/4audio0c.ram

The role of Usman dan Fodio, and the foundation of the city-states of Hausaland.

14. Roots of African Slavery

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/9audio0.ram

A look at the concept of slavery in Africa before the arrival of Europeans.

- 15. The Transatlantic Slave Trade**
www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/9audio0a.ram
 Eyewitness accounts of slave raids on African towns and villages and the horror of the Middle Passage.
- 16. East African Slavery**
www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/9audio0b.ram
 Accounts from Zanzibar and Bagamoyo on the Arab slave trade and the role of African traders such as Tippu Tip.
- 17. Africa on the Eve of Colonialism**
www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/11audio0.ram
 Looking at urban and rural societies, pan-African trade and culture on the eve of European exploitation.
- 18. The Mfecane**
www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/12audio0.ram
 African resistance to the Boers, the rise of the Zulu peoples and their expansion northwards at the expense of other Bantu groups.
- 19. Partition and Resistance**
 How the Scramble for Africa led to an arbitrary redrawing of the map of Africa by European diplomats at the Congress of Berlin.
- 20. Life under Colonialism**
www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/13audio0.ram
 Eyewitness accounts from throughout the continent on what it was like to live under British, French, German and Portuguese rulers.
- 21. The Challenges to Colonialism**
www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/14audio0.ram
 The beginnings of resistance and the emergence of anti-colonial religious, cultural and political movements.
- 22. Independence**
 Looking at how a variety of colonies achieved independence - some peacefully, some through violence.
- 23. Apartheid**
www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/12audio0.ram
 The struggle against the racist white government and the eventual overthrow of apartheid culminating in the release and election as President of Nelson Mandela.
- 24. Nation State**
www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/14audio0b.ram
 The emergence of independent states and the political, social and economic challenges facing those who led them.
- 25. Talkabout History**
 Historians from Africa and America in conversation
www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/rams/1audio1.ram
The importance of African History (half an hour)
The future of African History (half an hour)
 The programmes are presented by the Ghanaian actor, Hugh Quarshie, and produced by David Stead, Bola Olufunwa, Fiona Ledger and Penny Boreham.

