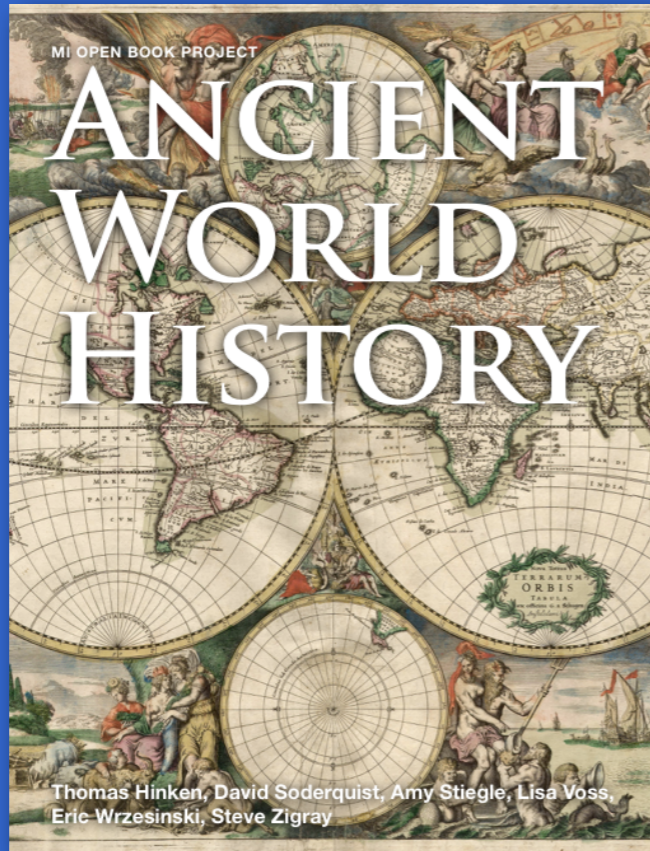


MI OPEN BOOK PROJECT

ANCIENT WORLD HISTORY

Thomas Hinken, David Soderquist, Amy Striegle, Lisa
Voss, Eric Wrzesinski, Steve Zigray



This is version 1.1.4 of this resource, released in August 2018.

Information on the latest version and updates are available on the project homepage: <http://textbooks.wmisd.org/dashboard.html>



MICHIGAN
OPEN BOOK PROJECT



MICHIGAN **OPEN BOOK PROJECT**

The text of this book is licensed under a Creative Commons NonCommercial-ShareAlike (CC-BY-NC-SA) license as part of Michigan's participation in the national #GoOpen movement.

You are free to:

Share — copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format

Adapt — remix, transform, and build upon the material

The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms.

Under the following terms:



Attribution — You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use.



NonCommercial — You may not use the material for commercial purposes.

No additional restrictions — You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits.



Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike CC BY-NC-SA

The Michigan Open Book Project

Project Manager: Dave Johnson,
Wexford-Missaukee Intermediate School
District

7th Grade Team Editor - David Klemm,
Muskegon Area Intermediate School Dis-
trict

Authors

Tom Hinken, Montague Area Public
Schools

David Soderquist, Three Rivers Public
Schools

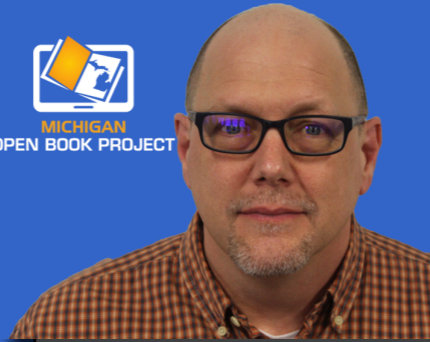
Amy Striegle, Hamilton Community
Schools

Lisa Voss, Holland Public Schools

Eric Wrzesinski, Pewamo-Westphalia



MICHIGAN
OPEN BOOK PROJECT



David Soderquist

Three Rivers Public Schools

Three Rivers Middle School

For the Past 11 years David has taught 6-8 grade Social Studies for Three Rivers Middle School. He serves as Department Head, School Improvement Member and Social Studies Rep for his area. Over the past few years he has completed his Masters Degree in Curriculum and Instruction and become a state recognized Instructional Coach.

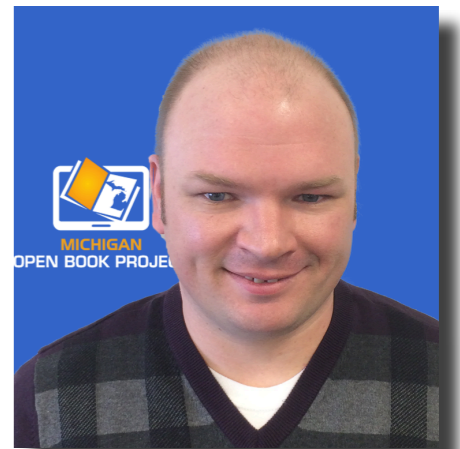


Tom Hinken

Montague Area Public Schools

Nellie B Chisholm Middle School

Tom teaches world geography and history at NBC Middle School in Montague. A graduate of the Defense Language Institute, Tom served as an Arabic Linguist in the U.S Air Force before receiving both bachelors and masters degrees from Grand Valley State University. He is currently pursuing Masters in Education Technology from MSU. Along with teaching Tom is also the advisor for the NBC Robotic club and the student leadership organization. When away from school Tom and his wife Kristin love to travel and spend time outdoors; biking, hik-



Amy Striegle

Hamilton Community Schools

Hamilton Middle School

Amy has been teaching 7th grade Social Studies and Economics at Hamilton Middle School for 17 years. She has a BA in Geography/ Social Studies and a Masters Degree in Middle School Education both from Western Michigan University. She is also a PASST assessment participant and the Social Studies Department Chair. When not in the classroom she enjoys traveling with her husband Dan.



Lisa Voss

Holland Public Schools

East K-7

Lisa Voss has been teaching at Holland's East K-7 since 1993 working with students in grades 5-8. She enjoys teaching adolescents to be global thinkers in her geography and world studies classes. Teaching in Holland has been fulfilling and challenging in so many ways for Mrs. Voss. She studied education and trained at Michigan State University and then earned her masters degree at Grand Valley State University. She starting teaching elementary social studies content and methods to aspiring teachers for Hope College's Education Department in 2010. Lisa and her husband Jon have four sons and they live in Zeeland.

Eric Wrzesinski

Pewamo-Westphalia Community Schools

Pewamo-Westphalia Middle/High School

Eric is a social studies teacher at Pewamo-Westphalia Middle/High School where he teaches 7th grade world history, 8th grade U.S. history, and AP U.S. History. He also serves as social studies department head, was a TRIG coach, worked on the schools strategic plan, and is a member of the school improvement team. He graduated with an undergraduate degree from Central Michigan University and grew up near Lansing, MI. He currently resides in Portland, MI with his beautiful wife who he enjoys travelling and spending time with.



Steve Zigray

Concord Community Schools

Concord Middle School

Steve Zigray is a 6th grade teacher. He holds a Bachelor's Degree from Central Michigan University and a Masters Degree in K-12 Administration from Eastern Michigan University. Honors Steve has been awarded are the 2001 Junior Achievement Educator of the Year and he was nominated for Jackson Magazine's, Educator of the year in 2014. He has also coached high school and middle school sports, worked on various school improvement committees, wrote the 6th grade Common Assessment tests for Jackson County ISD and is an active member in the community as well as the PTO. He lives in southeast Jackson County with his

The Michigan Open Book Project Team would like to thank the following individuals for their help in reviewing some content in the book and guiding the development process.

Eric Hemenway - Director of Repatriation, Archives and Records, Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians

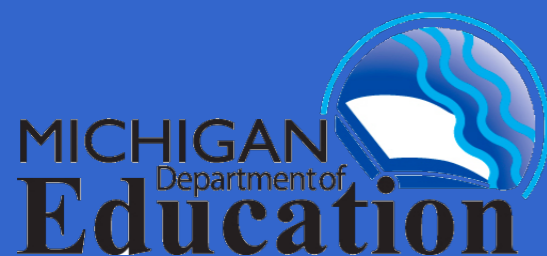
Jim Cameron, Michigan Department of Education

Phil Gersmehl - Michigan Geographic Alliance

Christine Schneider - Michigan eLibrary



**MICHIGAN
OPEN BOOK PROJECT**



David Klemm

Editor

Muskegon Area Intermediate School District

David Klemm is the Social Studies and Special Projects Consultant for the Muskegon Area Intermediate School District (MAISD), serving 12 local school districts and numerous charters and private schools. While spending most of his time with the Social Sciences, he also works with Art, Music, World Language and Physical Education teachers. He has successfully directed two Teaching American History grants, coordinated We the People and Project Citizen programs, developed companion materials for the award-winning film documenting African-American migration to the Muskegon area, "Up from the Bottoms: The Search for the American Dream," worked with community development partners including the Michigan Humanities Council's Prime Time Family Reading Program, made numerous state and national presentations and worked with individual schools and teachers on curriculum, instruction and assessment. Mr. Klemm is a charter member of the Board of Directors of the Muskegon Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies and currently serves on the National Council for the Social Studies Board of Directors. Prior to his current position at the Muskegon Area ISD, Mr. Klemm taught high school U. S. History for 15 years and served 3 years as

David A. Johnson

Project Manager

Michigan Open Book Project

Dave began his career teaching 8th grade United States History in Mesick, Michigan. After almost a decade in the classroom, he took a job at Wexford-Missaukee Intermediate School District (WMISD) as an Instructional Consultant for Social Studies. He is shared across 11 ISDs in Northern Michigan that form the Northern Michigan Learning Consortium. He completed his Masters in Educational Leadership through Central Michigan University in 2011 and is Co-Project Director of the Performance Assessments of Social Studies Thinking (PASST) Project in addition to his duties as the Project Manager for MI Open Book.



Chapter 6

Does Geography Influence Trade? A Case Study Of Three Continents

1. Why weren't empires that developed in the sub-Saharan Belt Region of Africa become as developed as those along the Nile River?
2. How do cultural diffusion and successful trade networks depend on one another?
3. How did the motivation behind colonization drive conquest?



Section 1

Introduction

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE INQUIRY

1. Why didn't empires develop in the sub-Saharan Belt Region of Africa as was developed along the Nile River?
2. How do cultural diffusion and successful trade networks depend on one another?
3. How did the motivation behind colonization drive conquest?

Did you play Little League baseball? Maybe you started out on a t-ball team and tried to hit the ball off of the tee before you ran to first base. American kids often participate in a form or exercise or recreation that helps them to be active while getting to know other children. Learning the rules of the games and applying those concepts with our actions is part of our culture.



A modern example of cultural diffusion is the sport of baseball. Stories and legends indicate that baseball was invented in Cooperstown, New York in 1839, yet the origin story of baseball is much older. The game most likely started in the New England colonies during the 1700s. Baseball is often referred to as the “Great American Sport” or “America’s Pastime,” and yet it has been part of many other cultures across the globe. An example is Japan, which was exposed to Baseball while American soldiers were stationed there during World War II. One major effect of travel and trade was the diffusion or spread of activities into other cultures. This chapter will explore the conflicts and consequences that occurred because of those global interactions.



This chapter will focus on trade between world regions and some effects of these connections. Before identifying these interactions it is important to understand the term cultural diffusion. **Cultural diffusion** is the spread of cultural beliefs and social activities from one group to another. There are many ancient examples of cultural diffusion; one example is the chariot. We see the long lasting impact of chariots as we

watch movies, binge-watch streamed programs, and play video games. Did you know that people north of the Caspian Sea invented chariots? Over time through migration and trade, people took the chariot as far south as Mesopotamia and Egypt and as far east as China. The Chinese symbol for chariot closely resembles some pictographs and models found in burial mounds near the Black Sea. As people interacted through travel and trade, they started to share inventions and ideas like the chariot.



African Civilizations to the 1500's

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE INQUIRY

1. Why didn't empires develop in the sub-Saharan Belt Region of Africa as was developed along the Nile River?
2. How do cultural diffusion and successful trade networks depend on one another?
3. How did the motivation behind colonization drive conquest?

Let's think like historians. Imagine time traveling to a few places. The first historical regions described in this chapter are located on the continent of Africa. Many of these regions were affected by an African group called the Bantu. The term Bantu refers to a family of languages whose people share a lot of cultural practices. There are hundreds of Bantu languages, one of the most widely used today is Swahili. The Bantu initially lived in West Africa and eventually migrated to the east and south. This migration is another example of cultural diffusion and it had both positive and negative effects on early African civilizations.

Positive effects include the introduction of:

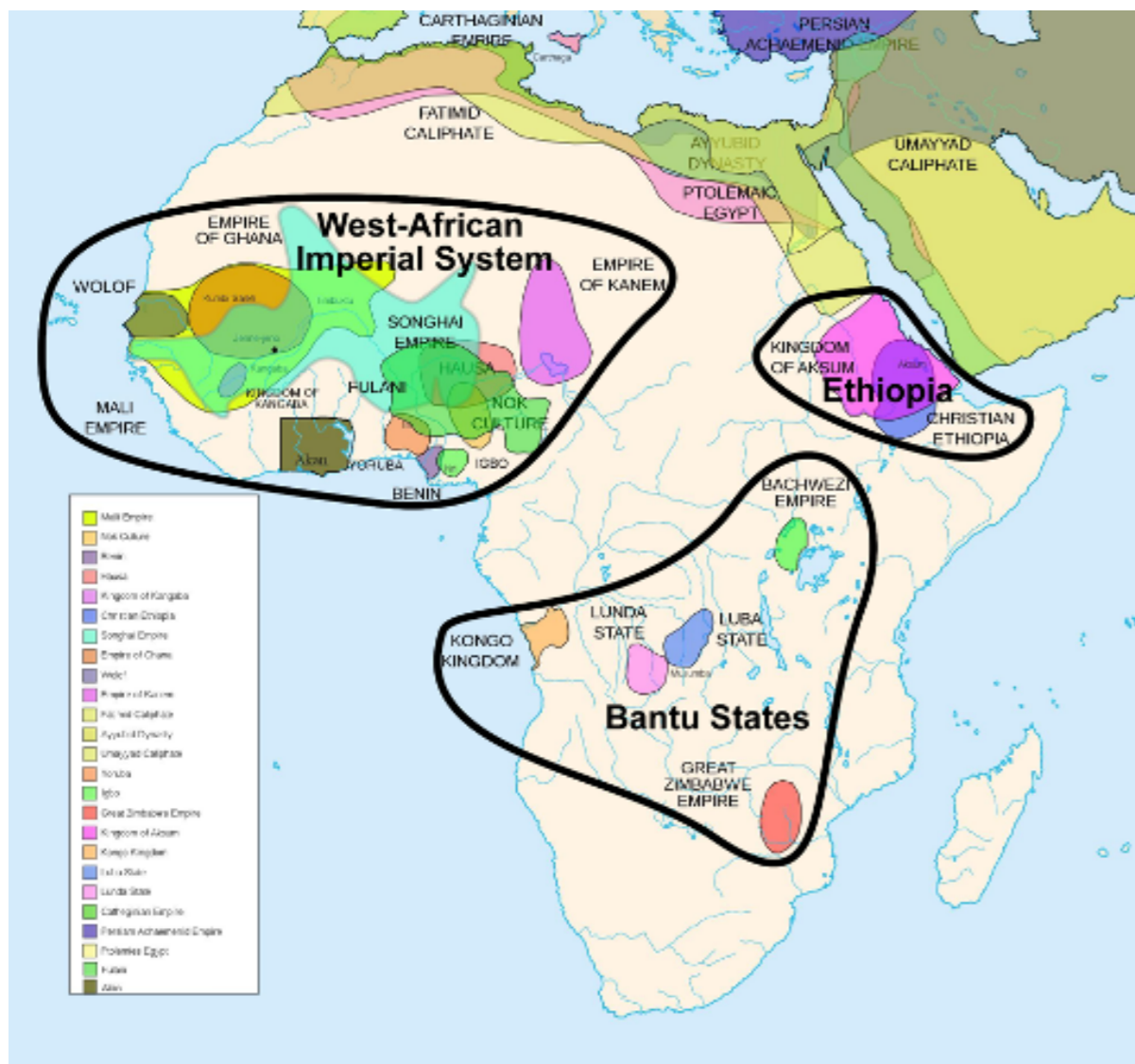
- Ironworking, and the tools developed, caused an increase in food production and the growth of new crops
- A centralized system of government where the king acted as the overall ruler
- A system of building permanent homes
- Subsistence agriculture where farmers were able to grow enough food for their families and the rest could be kept in case of shortages, or used in trade. The fact that ancient people now had more food meant that civilizations would increase in size because they could feed more people throughout the entire year.

A negative impact of the Bantu expansion was the loss of culture and language for the other groups they encountered. As the Bantu culture spread and their populations grew, resources in the areas were pressured. They needed more land, food, water, and other natural resources. Human activities like agriculture, the cultivation of plants and animals, changed the eco-systems. The impact can be serious if non-native plants and animals are introduced through the expansion of groups.

Interactive 6.1 The Bantu Migrations



Click here to learn more about the Bantu Migrations



Aksum/ Ethiopia

The Kingdom of Aksum lasted from 100 CE-940 CE and was located in East Africa near the Red Sea. Aksum was a very powerful region of Africa because of the trade routes along the Red Sea. Aksum was considered a major trade partner with the Roman Empire and Ancient India. Traders from Central Africa, Egypt, Rome, Persia, and India all came to Aksum to trade for salt, gold, ivory, gems, cloth, glass, and olive oil. The slave trade was also present in this region during this time. The end of this chapter will address the involuntary use of human labor as an economic commodity to further the goals of the leading groups.

The Aksumites even created their own currency and written language. Their first coins were heavily influenced by the Greeks, which they made in order to utilize in the trade with both the Greek and Roman Empires.



(Above Left) This particular Aksumite coin depicts their King Endubis, ~270-300 CE, and the writing around the coin is written in Greek, "King of the Aksumites."



(Above Right) Harrison Ford, right, with the Ark of the Covenant prop in the 1981 "Indiana Jones: Raiders of the Lost Ark" movie produced by Lucasfilm Ltd.

Aksum's location along these trade routes resulted in the diffusion of many cultural traits. One particular trait was religion.

Christianity became a major religion under one of the most powerful leaders, King Ezana, who ruled from 325-360 CE.

Aksum is even thought to be the resting place of the Ark of the Covenant, which is a gold-covered wooden chest containing the two stone tablets of the Ten Commandments. The Ark of the Covenant is described in the Book of Exodus, the second book of the Torah, or the Old Testament in the Bible. You read about the

significance of these sacred writings in Chapter 5, and understand that the term covenant refers to a solemn agreement between believers and their God.

Islam, the world's third monotheistic religion, spread to Aksum in the 7th century.

The faithful Muslims were being persecuted in their holiest city, Mecca. They escaped and sought refuge in two regions: Aksum, part of Abyssinia which later became known as Ethiopia, and in Medina, another sacred place in Saudi Arabia. This time of migration or emigration is known as the first Hijrah, also spelled Hejira or Hijra. Aksum started to decline as a kingdom once major Islamic Empires began to control the Red Sea and Nile trade routes.

Interactive 6.2 Aksum



[Learn more here!](#)

Swahili Coast

Just south of where Aksum once was is the Swahili Coast, a region made up of many city-states. This region succeeded due to trade networks that spanned the Indian Ocean. The eastern coast of Africa had two dramatic changes around 1000 CE. First, the Bantu migrated from West Africa and settled along the eastern coast from Kenya to South Africa. Second, merchants and traders from the Muslim world and India realized the importance of trade along the east coast of Africa. There were many opportunities for wealth, so they began to settle there. From 900 AD onwards, the east coast of Africa saw an increase of Arab and Indian settlements. Over time, the coastal areas started to be controlled by Muslim merchants from Arabia and Persia.

The language that grew out of the mix of Arabs and Bantu is Swahili or Kiswahili (from the Arabic word sawahil which means "coast"). Swahili is primarily a Bantu language written in the Arabic alphabet. Like the language, the Swahili culture was a mixture of the two cultures, Bantu and Arabic, and we call the civilizations of the African east coast "Swahili" to reflect this.

What did they trade?

<i>Exports from the Swahili Coast</i>	<i>Imports from Europe and Asia</i>
Ivory	Cottons, Silks, Woolens
Sorghum, Millet (grain/animal feed)	Fragrances, Cosmetics (such as kohl)
Gold, Copper, Iron	Glass
Sesame Seeds	Pottery
Coconut Oil	Beads, Jewelry
Vinegar	Paper
Myrrh (used as perfume, incense, and medicine)	Porcelain (think of the china dishes your aunt has in her cupboard)
Dried Fish	Silver and Brass
Hardwoods	Sailcloth
Tobacco	Rice
Mangrove Boats	Coffee, Tea, and Spices
Sisal, Coir Fibers (for crafting ropes and mats)	Swords, Daggers, Arms, and Ammunitions (such as gunpowder)
Rock Crystal	Books
Rubber	Paints and Ink

How did geography determine the destiny of the Swahili Coast?

A popular port along the Swahili Coast was Zanzibar, an island 22 miles off the coast of Africa. The first people to live there were Africans, yet the unique trade winds brought many people. In 1498, an explorer named Vasco da Gama claimed Zanzibar for Portugal and they became the first European rulers of Zanzibar. That foreign rule lasted for the next 200 years. Being ruled by a faraway government likely reminds us of colonization from previous years of social studies. What groups, times, and places come to your mind as you consider rule by another in school, home, the world, etc.?

Merchants used the dependable winds that came with the winter and summer monsoons to help them travel between the Arab peninsula, India and the African east coast, across the Indian Ocean, and back. Watch the video to see this phenomenon explained: A kids Explanation of Indian Sea Trade

Interactive 6.3 Swahili Coast History

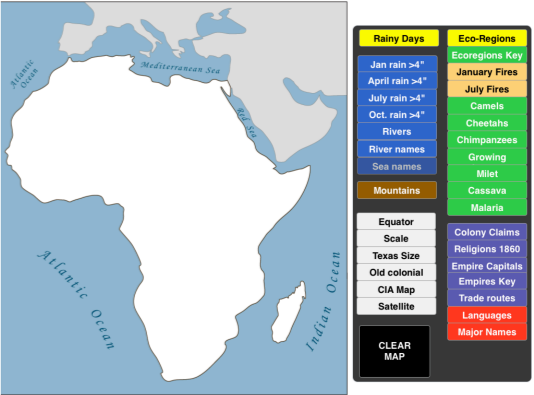


Learn more here!

Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe, which is located in Southern Africa, is believed to have been settled as early as the 11th century by the people from the kingdom of Mapungubwe, which is also in Southern Africa. More than 18,000 people lived in this ancient city and the ruins are a popular Southern African tourist spot today. There is evidence that these ancients brought the artistic stone masonry traditions of the Mapungubwe, creating elaborate and enduring architectural structures. Without the help of mortar, the “glue” that holds stones or bricks together, these builders were able to create structures that were more than 16 feet tall, or greater than five meters. This building style is another example of cultural diffusion. The Zimbabweans controlled the ivory and gold trade and mined gold, copper, and iron. Watch the video for more details: Great Zimbabwe video

Interactive 6.4 Africa Clickable Atlas



Interactive 6.5 Great Zimbabwe



Learn More Here!

Ghana: The Land of Gold

The empire of Ghana was located in West Africa and ruled from 300 CE to about 1200 CE. Ghana means ‘warrior king’ and had a feudal government with local kings paying homage to the high king. The main resources for Ghana included iron that was used to make weapons and tools, and gold that was used to trade for salt, ivory, and the crafts of local artisans. Ghana established trade routes with peoples from Northern Africa and the Middle East. Caravans of camels were used to travel the Sahara Desert and carry these commodities.



“Chunks” of Salt used for Trading https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Salt_selling_Mopti_Mali.jpg

The Aken were a group from the ancient Empire of Ghana. Here is a quote about their trading habits.

“If you could choose between a pile of salt and a pile of gold, you would probably choose the gold. After all, you know that you can always buy a container of salt for about forty-five cents at the local supermarket. But what if you could not easily get salt, and without it you could not survive? In fact, throughout history salt has been very difficult to obtain in many parts of the world, and people feared a lack of salt the way we in the industrialized world fear a shortage of fuel oil.

Once cultures began relying on grain, vegetable, or boiled meat diets instead of mainly hunting and eating roasted meat, adding salt to food became an absolute necessity for maintaining life. Because the Akan lived in the forests of West Africa, they had few natural resources for salt and always needed to trade for it. Gold, however, was much easier to come by. Every Akan knew how to find tiny grains of gold sparkling in the river beds after a rainfall. The people who lived in the desert of North Africa could easily mine salt, but not gold. They craved the precious metal that would add so much to their personal splendor and prestige. These mutual needs led to the establishment of long-distance trade routes that connected very different cultures.

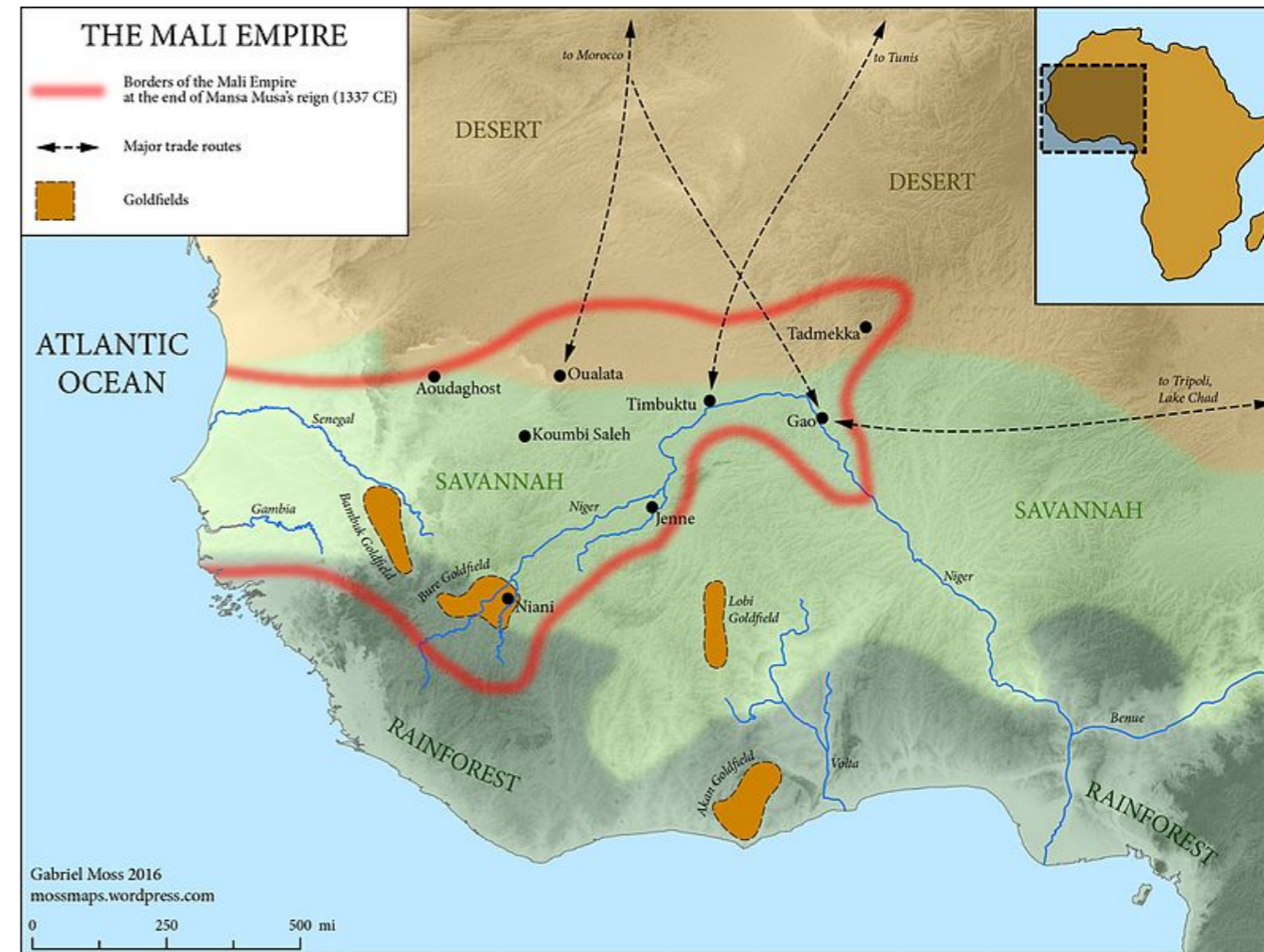
Camel caravans from North Africa carried bars of salt as well as cloth, tobacco, and metal tools across the Sahara to trading centers like Djenne and Timbuktu on the Niger River. Some items

for which the salt was traded include gold, ivory, slaves, skins, kola nuts, pepper, and sugar”. -Smithsonian Center for Educational and Museum Studies

Mali - Impacts of Trade and Religion

The Empire of Mali began around 1235 CE in West Africa near the upper Niger River and took over the Empire of Ghana. Like Ghana, Mali's most successful trade goods were gold and salt. The religion of Islam was a very important part of the Mali Empire. The most famous Mali leader was Mansa Musa who became famous by making a pilgrimage to Mecca known to Muslims as the Hajj, which is expected of all Muslims once in their lifetime. Mansa Musa's epic trip across North Africa increased the cultural diffusion between Mali and the cities along the route to Mecca. Mansa Musa is still considered to be one of the richest humans in history.

He spread gold along the trade routes of the Sahara, Europe, and the Middle East and brought back many scholars to help make his kingdom stronger. Mansa Musa also built a capital at Timbuktu where he built schools, libraries, and mosques. Mali controlled the trade routes through the Sahara and gained much wealth through trading salt and gold. Mansa Musa died in 1332 CE and without his strong leadership, the empire weakened as nearby areas became independent. Mali's capital of Timbuktu was lost to the Tuareg peoples in the 1430's and was eventually taken over by the Songhai Empire in the 1460's.



Songhai- Planned Government

The Songhai of West Africa were located along the Niger River. The Empire lasted from 1464-1591 CE. The emperor Askia Muhammad brought Songhai to its height of power taking control of the gold and salt trade from Mali. Most Songhai people of this time made their living by herding animals. Being a devout Muslim Askia, Muhammad took over the surrounding lands and spread Islam as he went. During the Songhai reign, Timbuktu became a major cultural center, complete with a university that drew scholars from all around the Islamic World.

Consider this legacy:

Let's think about our local governments, our state government, and our nation. Americans often think of the legacy of the Ancient Greeks and Ancient Romans having the main impacts on U.S. history and governance. As you read the upcoming excerpt, consider how governments are organized. There are multiple places and peoples in Africa that were highly organized like the Greeks and Romans. These African governments as far back as the eras known as ancient and medieval times may remind you of how leadership can be organized.

This chapter's focus is trade, so how does government impact the flow of trade, and how are both examples of cultural diffusion?

Civilizations of the Americas to the 1500s

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE INQUIRY

1. Why didn't empires develop in the sub-Saharan Belt Region of Africa as was developed along the Nile River?
2. How do cultural diffusion and successful trade networks depend on one another?
3. How did the motivation behind colonization drive conquest?

Maya

In the tropical lowland region of modern-day Guatemala and Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula, the Maya civilization became powerful. Artifacts prove that the Maya were innovative as far back as the sixth century. Their most notable accomplishments include: agriculture, pottery, hieroglyph writing, calendar-making and mathematics. The Maya also left behind an astonishing amount of impressive architecture and symbolic artwork giving historians a lot to analyze. It is clear from studying the ruins of the great stone cities of the Maya that something caused them to abandon their cities by 900 CE. Since the 1800's scholars have not been able to agree on what might have caused this dramatic exit from Maya's cities.



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/El_Castillo,_Chichen_Itza

Early Maya, 1800 BCE to 250 CE

Without successful farming, a stable food supply cannot be achieved. The earliest Maya settlements were home to agricultural innovators. By 1800 BCE, they grew corn, beans, squash and manioc, a root vegetable also called cassava or yuca. They used “slash and burn” agriculture, advanced irrigation, and terrace farming. Maya farmers used both highland and lowland regions to cultivate these crops which usually surrounded their cities.

At its peak, around 250 CE, the Maya population may have reached 2,000,000. Excavations of Maya sites have unearthed plazas and palaces. Archaeologists found temples, pyramids, and courts for playing the ball games. These sites were ritually and politically significant to Maya culture according to research.

Social scientists have concluded that the Maya were deeply religious. They worshiped various gods related to nature, including the gods of the sun, the moon, rain and corn. The Maya called their kings “kuhul ajaw;” this term also refers to them as “holy lords” because they were believed to be related to gods and followed a hereditary succession which also included elective principles. These leaders served as mediators between the gods and people on earth, and they performed the elaborate religious ceremonies and rituals.

Decorating their temples and palaces with elaborate raised designs and inscriptions, the Classic Maya built in a stepped pyramid shape. The Maya have a reputation as the great artists of Mesoamerica because they designed these structures. The Maya also made significant advances in mathematics and astronomy. They were the first people to use the concept of zero and they developed a complex calendar system based on 365 days.

At first, researchers concluded that the Maya were a peaceful people with priests and scribes, yet later evidence found in artwork and inscriptions on their temple walls that showed the less peaceful side of Maya culture. There were wars between rival Mayan city-states, and the infamous role of torture and human sacrifice in their religious rituals.

The Decline of the Maya

The decline of the Maya is still somewhat of a mystery. Over time, the southern cities were abandoned. By 900 CE, Maya civilization in that region collapsed. There are three popular theories:

- Some social scientists believe that the Maya had overused the natural resources in a way that could no longer support a large population.
- Other Maya scholars argue that numerous battles among city-states led to the downfall of trade alliances and the breakdown of the ruling families.
- An environmental change happened that was serious enough to destroy the Maya civilization. This change could have been an extremely long, intense period of drought.

Like most cause and effect relationships, a combination of all three of these factors most likely wiped out the Maya. History is often complicated and this is one such example.

The two main geographic regions may have declined in ways that were unique to their locations. Maya life in the southern lowlands fell earlier than the highlands. In the highlands of the Yucatan, a few Maya cities were able to flourish from 900-1500 CE. These cities, Chichén Itzá, Uxmal and Mayapán, were in the highlands of the Yucatan Peninsula. By the time the European invaders arrived from Spain, however, most Maya were living in agricultural

villages, their great cities were buried in a layer of rainforest plants.



The Aztecs

The Aztecs arrived in Mesoamerica around 1200 CE. Researchers believe that the Aztecs started as a nomadic tribe in northern Mexico. They built a magnificent capital city called Tenochtitlán. The Aztecs were the ruling empire in central Mexico because they advanced their social, political, religious, and trade systems. These organized ways brought many of the region's city-states under Aztec control by the 15th century. The decline of the Aztecs happened when invaders led by the Spanish conquistador Hernan Cortés captured Tenochtitlán in 1521 CE.

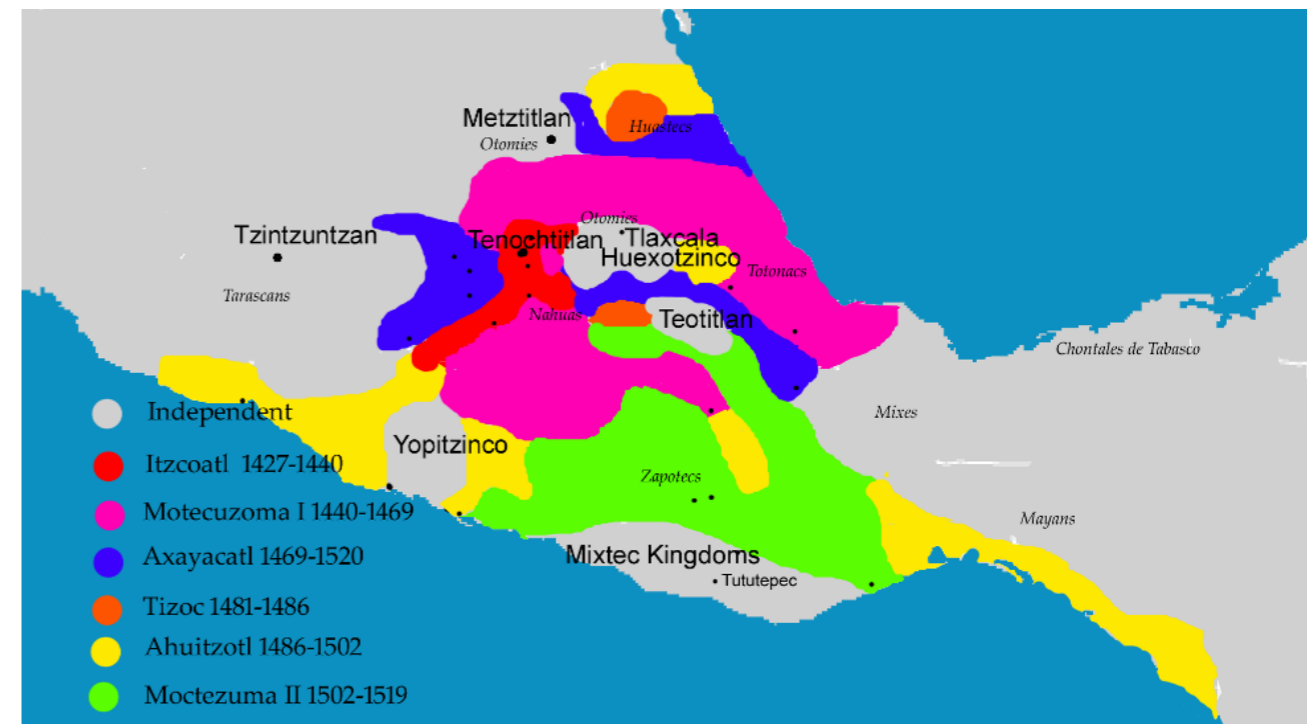
Early Aztec History

The Aztec people most likely originated as a northern tribe of hunter-gatherers in what is now Mexico. Like the Maya, the Aztecs were great agriculturalists. They grew crops such as maize (corn), beans, squashes, potatoes, tomatoes and avocados. They also survived by fishing and hunting local animals such as rabbits, armadillos, snakes, coyotes and wild turkey.

The Aztec Empire

In 1428, under their leader Itzcóatl, the Aztecs formed a three-way alliance with the Texcocans and the Tacubans. Their goal was to defeat their rivals in the region, the Tepanec, and conquer their capital of Azcapotzalco. Itzcóatl's successor Montezuma I

took power in 1440 CE. A great warrior, Montezuma is known as the father of the Aztec empire.



The Aztec empire grew through commerce and conquest to almost six million people covering 500 small states by the early 1500s CE. Their capital city Tenochtitlán had a population of 140,000, making it the most densely populated city in all of Mesoamerica.

Interactive 6.6 Tenochtitlan



[Learn more here!](#)

The highly developed Aztec society had a strict caste system. This social structure ranking included nobles at the top, and serfs, indentured servants, and slaves at the bottom. The religion of the Aztecs was similar to the Maya in that they both had multiple

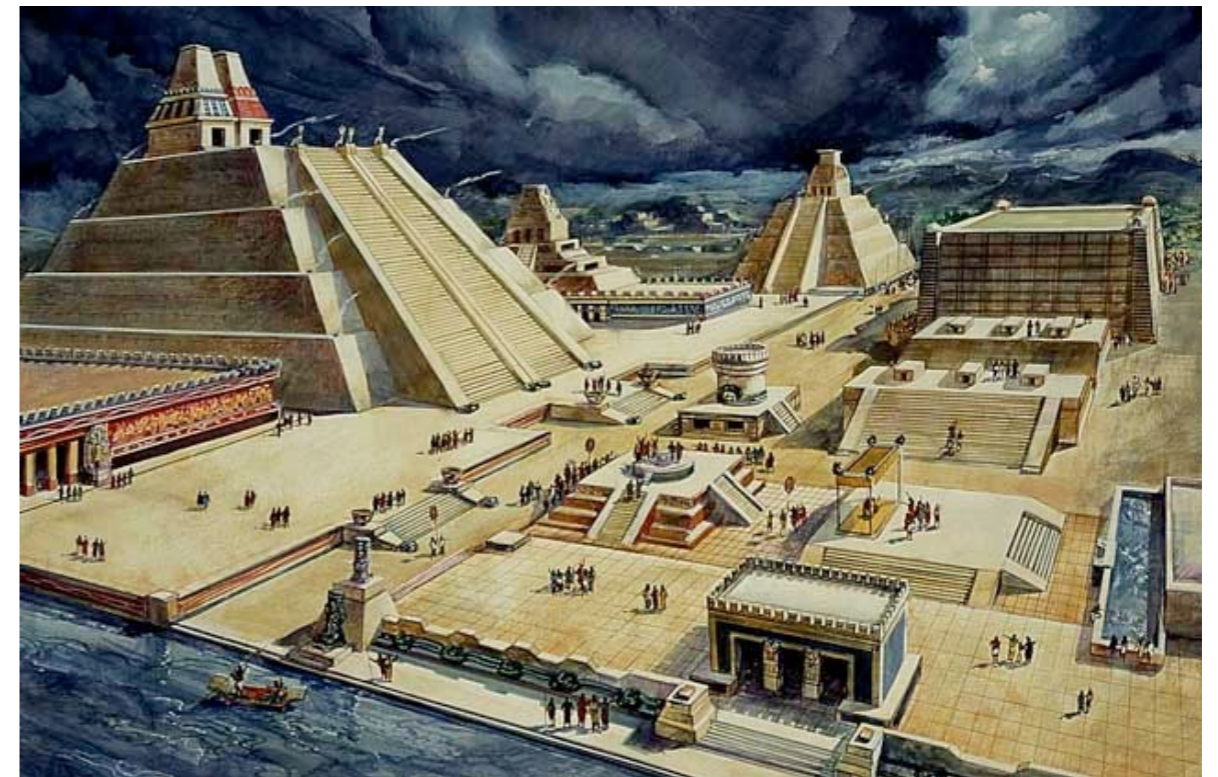


The Aztec calendar was based on a solar cycle of 365 days and a ritual cycle of 260 days. The calendar held a central role in the religion and rituals of Aztec society.

gods, numerous rituals and human sacrifice. They built massive monuments to honor their gods.

European Invasion & Fall of the Aztec Civilization

Francisco Hernández de Córdoba may have been the first European to visit Mexico looking for slaves. He arrived in Yucatán from Cuba with about 100 men in early 1517 CE. After he left, Hernan Cortés arrived two years later and tried to conquer the region for Spain, yet the native inhabitants resisted. He learned about the Aztec leadership from the natives, and founded the city of Veracruz on the southeastern Mexican coast, where his army trained.



<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Conquista-de-Tenochtitlan-Mexico.jpg#/media/File:Conquista-de-Tenochtitlan-Mexico.jpg>

Cortés marched further into Mexico's capital with 400 soldiers and a native woman known as Malinche, called Doña Marina by the Spanish, who served as a translator of multiple languages. Months later, Cortés and his men were greeted as honored guests in Tenochtitlan, which is present-day Mexico City.

Throughout his travels, Cortés was able to form alliances with other native peoples, notably the Tabascans, who were then at war with Montezuma II. These alliances increased the size of his army. Cortés turned on the Aztecs by capturing and killing Montezuma II and one of his garrisons killed over 600 Mexican nobles, and killed thousands of Mexicans during a ritual dance ceremony. The Aztec forces had thousands of soldiers, but their weapons were inferior to the Spanish weapons and armour. The Spaniards also brought diseases like measles and smallpox which weakened the native soldiers. It is believed that about 240,000 people died during the capital city's conquest. Cortés destroyed Tenochtitlan and built Mexico City on its ruins. Cortés enslaved the Aztecs and forced them to build Spanish churches and government buildings using parts of their Aztec temples.

Interactive 6.7 The History of the Aztecs



[Learn more here!](#)



Cortés returned to conquer Tenochtitlan with a much larger army and massacred the Aztecs. Who might have created this image?

Inca

The Incas were located in Peru's Andes Mountains and ruled over most of the west coast of South America from around the 1400's to 1532 CE when Francisco Pizarro and the Spanish arrived. Cuzco was the capital of the Inca, and at its height the Inca Empire had over 12 million people. The ruins of Machu Picchu are famous for their well-made adobe buildings. They spoke Quechua, had no writing system, yet kept records with a complicated system of colored knots called quipus.

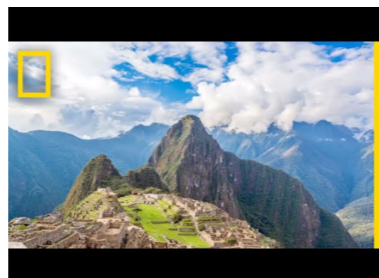
Multiple crops like corn, squash, tomatoes, peanuts, and cotton were grown. The Incas were the first to have grown potatoes and their quinoa was a valuable crop that stored in its dried form and served as plant-based protein source which helped the Incas survive bouts of extreme weather and conflict. The Incas also raised ducks, guinea pigs, alpacas, and dogs. Their llamas were used as work animals.

Watch the following videos to learn more about the accomplishments of the Inca and the advanced architecture that they used.

Interactive 6.8 The Inca Civilization



Interactive 6.9 Advanced Technology



D.



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Inca_road_system_map-en.svg

Other Indigenous Peoples of the Americas

The first inhabitants of the Americas are often called Indians, yet a more accurate term to describe these groups is Indigenous Peoples. In earlier years of Social Studies, you learned that the word indigenous means the native, or original inhabitants of the area.

In North America, many words are directly related to the multiple languages of the Indigenous Peoples. Languages leave a mark on the world. We mix words from other cultures and times into our own language. Do you live in a place that named its highways, counties, parks, or foods using the language of the Indigenous Peoples?

Earlier in this chapter, you read that African and Latin American cultures had all sorts of agricultural innovations. The crops raised by the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas were exported to other continents like Europe. The explorers may have been looking for gold, but they found valuable plants, animals, and methods of farming that the peoples native to the Americas developed. These innovations helped to sustain human life and advance populations in their region. These ideas and products were valuable commodities that had numerous impacts.

The explorers, sometimes called conquerors, took this wisdom and brought it all over the globe. Often times these valuables were forcibly taken and the events that happened in the past

were both unfair and unkind. As Americans we share a history where theft is sometimes described as trade. For example, native peoples may have freely shared their land and resources, then the European way of life was to profit from this generosity. The work of historians and archaeologists help us to understand the gifts of these Indigenous People from the New World. The explorers from the Old World collected the treasures of the Americas, fed their growing populations, and made themselves and their leaders richer.

Trade Networks

The ways that people adapt shows us their problem solving skills. To survive, we have to change, or adapt. The crops that were grown had to be plants that could survive in the geographic conditions. The people then needed to develop ways to use their harvest in every possible way.

Think about popular Mexican foods tortillas and tamales. Once the native people of the Mexican highlands domesticated the oldest type of maize, or corn, it spread all over the Americas. These plants grew in the region as long ago as 7000 BCE. Corn kernels can be dried and soaked, cooked, and ground into flour which stores easily without spoiling. This flour is called masa harina and when water is added a dough forms, and then a tortilla can be rolled out. With tamales, the masa harina is made into a dough and wrapped around a filling of meat, fruit, peppers and/or cheese. The mixture is held together in a corn husk during steaming. Be sure you do not eat the husk wrapping when you enjoy your first tamale!

Trade changes lives, and the Columbian Exchange was the name given to the trade network that is sometimes referred to as the triangular trade route. The famous trade route was originally named after the voyage by Christopher Columbus in 1492. This trip from the Old World in Europe and Africa to the New World in the Americas changed history in countless ways. Many new sights, goods, and ways of doing things were exchanged when

this route was traveled. Some items traded were plants, seeds, animals, metals, humans and diseases. Humans being traded into coerced or forced labor is slavery. Is the slavery of the 1500's the start of today's human trafficking? In eighth grade, you will discover much more about the trading of humans and the economic and political impacts of this part of history.