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African Societies

- 1) Africa is not united. Africa is so vast and societies are so diverse that it is almost impossible to generalize about them.
- 2) There was no universal religion, neither universal states nor universal religions characterized Africa. Yet universal religions such as Christianity and Islam did find adherents in Africa.
- 3) Some African societies had rulers who exercised through a hierarchy of officials in what can be called states. Others were stateless societies organized around kinship or other forms of obligation lacking political authority.
- 4) Even though Africa varied diversely, they did find similarities in language, thought, and religion provided some underlying unities.
- 5) Between 640 CE - 700 CE the followers of Muhammad swept across NA from Suez to Morocco's Atlantic shore. The Muslims conquered and converted for the Abbasid Empire.
- 6) Christian converts had been made in Egypt and Ethiopia. Christianity converted the most in Egypt and Nubia and was the first universal religion in Africa and had a rich tradition in contact with Byzantium, translating to gospels and other religious literature.

Swahili East Coast

- 1) The map
- 2) Arab traders were being traded with.
- 3) They make money through fishers, farmers, exports, access to gold, and trade with Arabs.
- 4) Trading with the Arabians began with immigrants from Arabia arriving from the parts in East Africa.
- 5) The Swahili language was essentially a Bantu language containing a large number of Arabic words which although weren't incorporated until the 16th century.
- 6) Some societies had rulers who ruled by a hierarchy based system while others were stateless lacking political authority.
- 7) Islam promoted long distance commerce influencing towns.
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African Jigsaw

1. Generalization

- A - Economy - based on varied agriculture, sometimes combined with herding, and most societies used iron tools and weapons
- B - Government - single government and ruling subject people
- C - Culture - arts, building, and statecraft

2. Yoruba / Ile-Ife

- a - location - forest of central Nigeria
- b - culture - Artistic skills, Nok sculptures / terra-cotta, and bronze portrait heads of past rulers

- lifelike quality place them among the greatest achievements of African art.

- Ile-Ife ~~was~~ ~~also~~ also worked on wood and Ivory

- C - Economy - Agricultural society, divine kingship

- d - government - supported by peasantry

- dominated by ruling government family
- Aristocracy

~~It was~~

- organized into city-states, controlling radius of perhaps 50 miles

- highly urbanized -

Although many of the town inhabitants farmed in the surrounding countryside

- city-states developed under the strong authority of regional kings

- king controlled subject people through princes drawn from local lineages who were allowed to exercise traditional rule

E. Role of Islam

- Through expansion of Islam they developed Greek and Roman ways of art and building structures

3 Benin

a - location - Extended from Niger to coast to modern Lagos

b - government - city-states, monarchy

c - artistic output in ivory and cast bronze

that became characteristics of Benin

through artisans in bronze casting

4. Central African Kingdoms

1a - location south of rain forest that stretched across Africa almost to Lake Victoria

- lay a broad expanse of savanna

a - Bantu peoples had spread into the southern savannas and eventually to the east coast. By the 5th century CE, Bantu farmers and fishers had reached beyond Zambezi, and by the 13th century they were approaching the southern end of the continent

b - rule based on the control of territory and the parallel development of rituals that reinforced the ruler's power, modified the older system of village headman to a form of divine kinship

- sort of bureaucracy grew to administer the state, hereditary

5. Kongo

A - lower Congo river

b - firm agricultural base

c - men took responsibility for clearing the forest and scrub producing palm oil and palm wine

women - took charge of cultivation in all its aspects, the care of domestic animals and household duties

d - ^{the} kingship of Kongo ^{was} hereditary but local chieftainships were not, and this gave the central authority power to control subordinates.

- in a way confederation of similar states brought under the control of manikongo or king

6. Zimbabwe

A. between the Zambezi and Limpopo rivers

b. centralized state

- under rule of king (Mwene Mutapa)

c. 

d. Evidence of trade through glass beads and porcelain

e.

1. Ghana

a. West Africa

b. taxing salt, gold exchange

c. mining gold, distribution, taxing trade, exchanged within borders

d. Islam turned Ghana into a royal cult, reinforced kingship

2. Subanic Kingdoms

a. had a patriarch or council of elders of a particular family or group of lineages as leaders

b. drew on the taxes, tribute, and military support of the subordinate areas, lineages, and villages

c. reinforcing idea of kingship

3. Mali and "City Dwellers and Villages"

a. location

b. monarchy

c. mosques were built, rulers supported

d. agriculture

e. traded gold

f. traded in groups

g. rice, wheat, fruit, vegetables

- 4. Songhay
 - a. Independent kingdom, dynasty system
 - b. extended boundaries Islam leaders
 - c. salt, grain, cloth were traded

- 5. Hausa
 - a. active trade in salt, grains, cloth
 - b. Merchants became missionaries

6. Generalizations of Political and Social Life of Sudanic States

- a. Caliph
 - b. aided government officials
 - i. existing tradition and beliefs
- c. occupations, domestic servants, laborers