

Period 1 – Post-Classical Era – 1200 CE to 1450 CE

NOTE: Some of the topics precedes the year 1200, but all topics are both relevant and necessary to properly explain the topics and developments from 1200 CE to 1450 CE. **AT THE VERY BOTTOM** are all of the new topics added to the Period 1200-1450 for AP World. All content before the 'New Topics' section was on the prior AP World curriculum and remains (or remains relevant) on the 2019 AP World curriculum. I primarily added the New Topics section for experienced teachers and previous purchasers.

Governments

Some empires reconstituted combining traditional powers with innovations to suite local context

The Byzantine Empire was a continuation of the Eastern portion of the Roman Empire from 330 CE until its fall to the Ottoman Turks in 1453. It was the most powerful state in Europe through most of its over 1000-year existence. As the Roman Empire was reorganized around Constantinople (now Istanbul) by Constantine the I, and split into a Western and Eastern Empire, the Greek-led Byzantines continued to refer to themselves as Romans. It was later reorganized under Greek language and culture officially in the 600s CE, thus giving reason for the distinction of Byzantines.

The Byzantine Empire played a key role acting as a bulwark for Christianity in Europe, repelling or cooperating with potential invaders to Christian Europe. It also facilitated trade throughout Afro-Eurasia, most-notably through Antioch in the Eastern Mediterranean, greatly expanding the use of the Silk Roads and Mediterranean Sea ways. Militaristically, the Byzantines would expand and recede several times at the hands of rival factions such as their victory over the Sassanid Persians (still weakened despite victory), loss of territory then re-expansion against the Arabs, and progressive defeat at the hands of the Seljuk Turks.

Politically, the Byzantine Empire continued the Roman hierarchy as governed by an emperor and supported by elites, soldiers, plebeians, and slaves. They actively enforced the state religion, and contributed to the development of the Eastern Orthodox Church, after political and theological disagreements with the Pope in Rome in 1054 (the Great Schism or the East/West Schism). Originally, the Byzantines attempted to rule through a new form of theocracy known as 'caesaropapism,' but this political and religious authority proved to be too difficult to maintain as certain political and religious obligations ran counter to each other (i.e., it's hard to be forgiving and kind as an emperor when dealing with rebels or invaders, etc.). The Eastern Orthodox Church maintained the hierarchy set by Rome, with the Patriarch functioning similarly to a Pope. Like the Roman Catholic Church in the west, the Eastern Orthodox Church actively sent missionaries to pagan Europe, converting thousands and eventually millions of Slavic peoples, thanks to the efforts of Cyril and Methodius in the 9th century CE.

Socially, they retained a patriarchal, and employed a state religion based around Christianity. Elites were disproportionately rewarded for loyalty, and corvee labor was employed as peasants

paid state taxes in the form of labor and goods. Such policies frequently led to discontent and rebellion, such as the rebellion of Basil the Copper Hand in the 920s and 930s.

The Byzantines also continued and preserved Roman law, which, as compared to primitive and most non-Western forms of law, emphasizes common and civic law in terms of legal concepts, language, and legal constructs (corporations, contracts, etc.). While not solely responsible, this emphasis on a common law and attempts to create fair, legible legal systems became the basis of Western law, and its emphasis on abstract legal concepts such as civil, natural, and equal rights. Such efforts to create a common law with legal processes and constructs that stray from religious beliefs or experience, the Code of Justinian was preserved in the East, and rediscovered in the West in the 11th and 12th centuries.

China saw the continuation of its dynastic system following an interim period of disunity following the fall of the Han Dynasty in 220 CE. While the Sui Dynasty was short-lived (581-618 CE), they were significant in that they reunited China under Han Chinese rule, including the conquest of several nomadic peoples (Five Barbarians) in Western and Northern China. They are also known for their large-scale infrastructure projects, such as the still-used Grand Canal, continuation of the Great Wall, and complex bureaucracy.

Along with perhaps the following Song Dynasty, the Tang Dynasty (618-907 CE) was the apex of Chinese dynastic history, and is often considered the 'Golden Age of China,' experiencing early military success, population boom, regional dominance, and economic growth. The Tang expanded west, stopped only by the Arab caliphates, and exercised power and hegemony over East Asia—most notably over the cultures of Korea and Japan, such as the Chinese writing system, Neoconfucianism (started by Han Yu and reemphasized Confucian ideals, the Confucian examination system, and patriarchal social harmony), Buddhism, and wood block print. The Tang also indirectly ruled or influenced neighboring states as 'protectorates' which paid tributes to the Tang for protection, and to not be harassed or conquered by the Tang.

Buddhism would blossom and spread through China and East Asia under the Tang, however, fearing the influence of a non-societal-based foreign religion replacing the strict pro-state religion/philosophy of Confucianism, Buddhism faced state persecution following the Edicts on Buddhism by Emperor Wuzong in the 9th century CE. While certainly concerned about disrupting the social harmony, patriarchy, and law and order emphasized by Confucianism, the Tang were also motivated by the plundering of Mahayana Buddhist temples, rich with luxuries and precious medals that could be used to fund further military campaigns and infrastructure projects. Thousands of Buddhism temples were shut down, and hundreds of thousands of Buddhists were forced to re-join society. While Buddhism persisted in Korea and syncretized in Japan with their local Shinto beliefs, it was nearly eradicated in China following the 9th century.

Population soared under the Tang after the cultivation of Champa rice from Southeast Asia, which had half the cultivation time and was more resistant to drought; the capital of Chang'an became the most populated city in the world. Economically, the Tang also began to harness the useful innovation of paper money, as such policies and innovations would soon spread throughout Afro-Eurasia via the Silk Road and Indian Ocean Trade Network. The Tang, as well as the following Song, maintained a steady flow of taxes from traditional sources, most notably peasants leading to periods of instability, as with most large Post-Classical Empires.

The following Song Dynasty (920-1279) continued the prominence of Han Chinese dynastic rule until their fall to the Mongol-led Yuan Dynasty in 1279. The Song perhaps most notably established the first permanent state navy, and continued and expanded the Tribute System, in which they established protectorates on surrounding states, as well as required 'unequal' foreigners (i.e., non-Xiongnu and Mongolian peoples) to offer gifts in order to receive the 'blessing' of trade from China. The Chinese at the time saw themselves as the 'Middle Kingdom' of civilization—one that all others should look up to, and one that needed nothing from other civilizations. To be granted the right to trade with China was seen as a privilege bestowed to worthy, but still inferior, foreigners. The Chinese felt they had all the resources and luxuries they wanted, and condescendingly engaged in trade with 'respectful' foreigners.

The Song built upon and established the first fully-supported paper money system, as well as were influential in the development of true-north compasses, moveable block printing for paper, and gunpowder. These innovations would transform travel, education, and warfare in the following centuries, as they spread through later Mongol and Muslim empires and trade routes to Europe.

The Song reaffirmed the doctrine of Neoconfucianism started in the centuries of the Tang Dynasty, and even expanded their patriarchal policies by embracing the practice of *foot binding* for women. Seen as a sign of petite, feminine beauty, high-class women (starting as girls) were subject to the practice in order to be seen as worthy partners for high-status males. In other words, to have normal feet was a sign of low status, as it likely meant the female was in a family that required her to work. Regardless, it upheld the rigidly patriarchal Confucian and East Asian hierarchy.

New political entities emerged

Muslim states: caliphates and sultanates

Beginning with the conquests of Muhammad in the Arabian Peninsula, and continuing with the Rashidun Caliphate (Four Caliphs) from 632-661 CE, Muslim states began to expand against the Persians in the Middle East and modern-day Iran, and against the Byzantine Empire in North

Africa and the Levant. Conquest would continue into Spain, Central Asia, and modern-day Pakistan under the second caliphate: the Umayyad Caliphate from 661-750 CE.

The third caliphate, the Abbasid Caliphate was ruled by the Abbasids, a dynasty of Meccan origin which founded its capital of Baghdad in 762 which became a major scientific, cultural and art center, as did the territory as a whole during a period known as the Islamic Golden Age. From the 10th century, Abbasid rule became confined to an area around Baghdad. From 945 to 1157, the Abbasid Caliphate came under Seljuq Turk military control. In 1250, a non-Arab army created by the Abbasids called the Mamluks came to power in Egypt. In 1258, the Mongol Empire sacked Baghdad, ending the Abbasid Caliphate, and in 1261 the Mamluks in Egypt re-established the Abbasid Caliphate in Cairo. Though lacking in political power, the Abbasid dynasty continued to claim authority in religious matters until the Ottoman conquest of Mamluk Egypt in 1517.

These Muslim states established new forms of government known as *caliphates* and *sultanates*. Caliphates were primarily run by Arabs, and sultanates by non-Arabs. While both adhered to Islamic law politically, only the caliphs of a caliphate held any religious authority or rights to interpret religious doctrine, whereas the sultans of sultanates had the authority only to interpret or change political law. While the Abbasid Caliphate ruled for over 500 years, much of the Muslim world ruled itself relatively autonomously, declaring loyalty to the Abbasids, but functioning regionally under sultans.

Islam is a religion that was spread primarily by force in the previously-mentioned regions, with the notably exceptions of other 'people of the book,' such as the Christians (particularly in Egypt and the Levant), as well as Jews. Jews and Christians were tolerated and protected by the state, but were incentivized to convert to Islam through state policies. Such policies were status as *dhimmis*, which were a form of second-class status that prohibited military and political participation, as well as limited economic activity. In addition, dhimmis were subject to the *jizya* tax, and thus, some encouraged to at least outwardly convert to avoid such policies. Conversion to Islam became a primary feature of the initial Arab, and subsequent Turkish expansion, spreading Islam to North Africa, the Middle East, Spain, Central Asia, Persia, and the Indus region by conquest, and the later regions of West & East Africa, as well as Southeast Asia and Indonesia by trade (Muslim merchant diasporic communities).

Merchants, missionaries, and mosques were established along trade routes in the Indian Ocean, and conversion to Islam became an appealing feature in order to gain trading rights and privileges with the Arabs and Turks. This was particularly appealing due to the vast amount of wealth and goods traded and produced by the Muslim states, as they were centrally located in Afro-Eurasia, and controlled or were connected to all large-scale Afro-Eurasian trade routes. Muslim state benefited highly from exchange, gaining access to Greek, Indian, and Chinese ideas and sciences, and developed their own, such as the expansion and refinement of algebra, medical diagnoses, hospitals, and traveling clinics in an era referred to as the 'Golden Age of Islam.' They were also influential in establishing *caravansary*—which were inns or towns located along remote portions of trade routes to promote commercial activity and travel in Asia and

North Africa. Additionally, they connected the Trans-Saharan trade routes of Sub-Saharan Africa to North Africa with the domestication of camels and use of caravans to ensure safe travel with plenty of goods. They also established extensive slave trade with the peoples of West Africa around 1000 CE, 500 years before Europeans purchased their first slaves, and also began purchasing white slaves that were gathered from Europe by the Vikings around the same time.

Demographics also shifted, as Arabs settled during the Arab Migration (~700-1100) in North Africa and the Middle East, thus Arabizing the regions, and bringing Islam, Arabic language and culture to the regions. Arab and Islamic culture borrowed heavily from the Persians—most notably their administrative policies for the state (due to their extensive history of successful central government administration), as well as the tradition of veiling for females (originating in upper-class Persian families). Perhaps of equal importance was the spread of Islam by the Arabs to Central Asia, as the converted Turks would later invade and establish sultanates in the Indian Subcontinent (the Delhi Sultanate 1206-1526) and Anatolia (the Ottoman Empire 1453-1922) during the Turkic Migration (~1100 CE-1500 CE).

The two areas most influenced by Islam outside of the Arab and Turkic world were the Delhi Sultanate and West Africa. The Delhi Sultanate was a large empire established by invading Muslim Turks in the 13th century CE. While the empire lasted 3 centuries, it was marked by instability and violence, as the enforcement of Islam upon the large Hindu populations was met with resistance and upheaval (known as the *Muslim-Hindu Conflicts*). These conflicts destabilized and weakened the Delhi Sultanate over time, as their policies and approach became increasingly violent and iconoclastic. In order to extract funding to support campaigns against Hindu resistance and threatening Mongol and other Turkic invaders, the Delhi Sultanate employed a strict and heavy tax collection system. While they would later be weakened and fall to local Hindu kingdoms and the invading Mughals, the Delhi sultanate introduced Islam to the Indian subcontinent (and influenced Sikhism), enhanced economic productivity, and repelled the Mongols.

In West Africa, Islam was spread by trade rather than conquest, as it was in India. The West Africans of the empires of Ghana (700-1240 CE), and especially Mali (1230-1670), converted largely due to the presence and perks of trading with Arab merchants. Rulers and elites of the West African kingdoms benefited from the riches and goods of trading with the caliphates, as the Arabs received from West Africa gold, copper, and slaves. Converting mainly for economic regions, West Africa uniquely did not enforce Islam or Sharia Law on its subjects, leaving many non-elites to not convert or only loosely convert to Islam (i.e., many of the primitive religious and non-Islamic cultural practices remained intact). From the Arabs, West Africa Kingdoms also obtained administrative and technological knowledge and products, and trade cities such as Timbuktu flourished, expanding its wealth, power, population, and establishing many Quranic schools that educated and converted higher-class West Africans. One of the more notable West African rulers was Mansa Musa of Mali (1280-1337), who converted to Islam and recognized the Haj, traveling to Mecca, and spreading his gold and riches along the way.

Mongol Empire: khanates

After the union of Mongol tribes in the Central Asian steppes under *Genghis Khan* in 1206, Mongol forces began to conquer and incorporate other pastoral tribes, include those of Turkic descent. Genghis and his sons began to expand in all directions, and were particularly formattable as most of their military were mounted (as they were nomadic pastoralists), and extremely skilled in equestrian combat and archery. To the east, they conquered and controlled China, ending the Song Dynasty; to the south, they conquered and incorporated the peoples of Central Asia and Persia; to the West, they conquered and incorporated the Slavic peoples of Russia and Kiev, and even invaded and conquered into the Middle East, officially ending the Abbasid Caliphate in 1268 CE. When Genghis Khan died in 1227, his son *Ogedei* inherited the empire and continued expansion; after Ogedei, Genghis' grandsons would war and squabble over the massive Mongol Empire, disrupting expansion, and resulting in Civil War. While *Kublai Khan* would firmly establish Mongol of China through the Yuan Dynasty and the areas of Central and South Asia, there will little semblance of a united empire following Ogedei. Mongol conquests were stopped in the West by the Poles and Lithuanians; in the Middle East by the Byzantines and Mamluks; to the South by the Delhi Sultanate; and to the east by Japan.

Conquest by the Mongols was particularly brutal. Unlike the previous empires of the Classical Era, there was no organized central bureaucracy or rights of citizenship. Many of the skilled laborers were taken as slaves and used for further Mongolian expansion. For example, Chinese siege workers captured during the conquest of China were used to sack and destroy the castle and fortresses of Persia, Russia, and Central Asia. Enemy soldiers were either killed, or incorporated by being split into separate military groups. These group were kept loyal and from desertion by the punishment of death to ALL members of the platoon or group for deserters or betrayal (thus causing them to enforce loyalty themselves). Tributes were collected from conquered states, and any disobedience to Mongol rule was swiftly punished. Resistance was met with brutality, and the cities or armies that presented more of an obstacle often met a more gruesome or torturous end (starvation, torture, mass killing, exposure to disease, enslavement, etc.).

By 1294, the Mongol Empire had split into four separate khanates: the *Golden Horde*, *Chagatai*, *Il-khanate*, and the *Great Khanate*. These khanates, and the Mongol Empire before, brought and era of stability and prosperity to the regions known as *Pax Mongolica*—where trade and economic activity flourished. Slave routes, particularly the Silk Road, flourished under the Mongols, and many goods from China such as print technology, compasses, and gunpowder were able to spread to India, the Muslim states, and Europe. In addition to positive ideas and goods, disease was also spread more easily with increased trade, such as the Black Death of the 14th and 15th centuries, which spread through flea bites (carried on rats and other vermin) from China to Europe across the Mongol Empire. The *Black Death* carried with it a near 90% mortality rate, wiping out more than 1/3 of the peoples of the contaminated regions of China and Europe, with cities suffering much larger losses than rural communities (due to the density of people and poor sanitation).

While most of the khanates began to destabilize and crumble in the 14th century, the khantate of Chagatai continued until 1687. Additionally, being pastoralist and not having universal religious policies, the Mongols left little permanent markers in the cultures of its conquered peoples. While many convert to Islam, no religious writing or buildings were established, and the Mongol language was not enforced or encoded into conquered states.

Feudalism in Europe

Following the collapse of the Western Roman Empire in the 5th century CE, the Europeans of Western and Central Europe were left without the economic and political security of the Roman Empire. Invaders from the steppes (Huns), drove Germanic and Gothic tribes west, further encroaching on ex-Roman citizens, as well as the added threat of Vikings entering the scene in the 8th-century CE. To form a local state, the people of Europe loosely adopted the feudal system, which placed kings as the top of the hierarchy, followed by nobles (lord, dukes, etc.), knights, and peasants respectively. Each lower class swore oaths of fealty (loyalty) to those above them, in exchange for protection, law and order (laws, punishments, conflict resolutions, etc. not covered by the Catholic Church), as well as aid during times of crisis (famine, plague, etc.).

While Charlemagne attempted to re-conquer most of the former Western Roman Empire in modern-day France, Italy, and Germany in the 9th-century CE, and was even anointed 'Holy Roman Emperor,' the Carolingian Kingdom soon split, and the 'Holy Roman Empire' was formed in northern Italy and the German lands. While this kingdom would remain for almost 1000 years, it was hardly a centralized government. With Electors choosing the emperor from various German and Italian princes, little legitimacy was granted to the emperors (aside from the conquest and incorporation of the Spanish kingdoms in the late Middle Ages) as the emperors were not from a line of conquest, but rather elected (often corruptly), and inconsistently obeyed by the local German, Czech, and Italian princes.

While little emerged in the form of a large, powerful centralized state in Europe before 15th-century Spain, national identities began to take root in England and France as early as the 900s, noting their common language, culture, and identity (although the prevailing view remained that each of the local kingdoms were more-or-less sovereign).

Feudalism in Japan

Despite no contact, at the same time, on the other side of the globe, Japan developed a similar hierarchy based upon local kingdoms and loyalty to the local hierarchies. While the hierarchy would be shoguns at the top, with daimyo, samurai, and peasants following, the similarities are astonishing. Samurai held similar views of integrity, very similar to the chivalry of knights, and the daimyo functioned much like the ruling elite classes of noble Europe.

While Emperor Kotoku attempted to form a strong, centralized government in the 7th and 8th century during the Taika Reforms (an attempt of scholars and officials to log and duplicate the Chinese central system and culture), Japan's history of local authority and conflict made it ill-prepared to form a centralized government at the time. An attempt to form a unified capital at Kyoto to mirror Chang'an, as well as central administration and economic policy were made, Japan fell into feudal squabbles and control. The Japanese did, however, following the Taika Reforms, adopt and syncretize Buddhism with their local Shinto beliefs (thus creating a more animistic and spiritual form of Buddhism), as well as the Chinese writing style, architecture, and fundamental of Confucianism.

City-states

With the expansion of trade at the hands of empires such as the Byzantines, Persians, Muslim states, West Africa, and China, many cities became extremely wealthy and powerful due to their location along trade routes, or between large empires in the ranges of the 9th to 13th centuries.

Novgorod – located between the Baltic Sea and the Byzantine Empire/Central Asia, Novgorod benefited heavily from trade along the Silk Roads coming into Europe, as well as between the Byzantine Empire and Vikings (who brought many goods and slaves to be traded). This city-state would grow in power in the form of a powerful Slavic republic, and see the brunt of Mongol invasion during the 13th century. While they would later suffer defeat at the hands of Ivan the Great and Muscovy, they were a local and interregional powerhouse in trade.

Calicut – A major center for the spice trade, Calicut came to prominence in the 8th century CE via trade with the Arabs and later Europeans (following the 1490s). Additionally a landing point for the Monsoon Winds, Calicut was optimally placed for trade in the Western Indian Ocean, and play a major role in Indian Ocean trade, and the spread of spices, cotton, and other goods.

Swahili city-states – Beneficially positioned at the other end of the Monsoon Winds, the Swahili city-states (a Bantu/Arab language) functioned independently, and become rich and powerful due to their position along the ends of the Trans-Saharan and Indian Ocean trade networks. With access to Indian and Arab goods (cotton and spices), as well as the gold, copper, and salt of central and Western Africa, the Swahili city-states enjoyed wealth and prosperity until later conquest and colonization in the Modern Era (1750-1900).

Melaka – Located on the Straits of Melaka, Melaka (then apart of the trade-based maritime empire of Srivijava) was a city that benefited from a high volume of travelers and traders. The Straights were seen as the 'Gateway' to China, as passage to the West Pacific took ships through the Straights, and allowed the Srivijavan Empire to collect taxes and benefit from ships stopped to trade and re-supply.

Venice – Located on the Italian coast, the merchants and bankers of Venice benefited highly from exclusive contracts and trade with the Arabs during the height of Arab caliphates. The Italians grew wealthy acting as the ‘middle men’ of Europe, bring the goods of China, India, and the Muslim states to Europe. The Venetians developed their own military and navy to defend and expand their trade networks, becoming the dominant naval force in the Mediterranean.

Hangzhou – Hangzhou would come to prominence as a result of their location at the southern end of the Tang and Song Dynasties—notably the imperial height and power of China. Additionally, their position at the end of the Grand Canal built by the Sui Dynasty allowed them to move goods and trade from northern and central China, providing them to trade with India, Muslim, and later European merchants. They were the first big stop for traders in China, and the springboard from which more Chinese merchants operated.

Timbuktu - Like the other city states, the location of Timbuktu at the end/start of trade routes would result in wealth and power for the city. The optimal and first destination for Arab and East African traders, Timbuktu’s power and influence would rise and fall with connection to the trade of the Arab caliphates. Timbuktu flourished until the 14th century, when Arab trade declined substantially following conquest by Mongols and Seljuk Turks, so too did the power and wealth of Timbuktu. It was however influenced in fostering the spread of Islam in Mali, as over 150 Quranic schools were established in response to the trade benefits with the Arabs offered from conversion.

Southeast Asia

In Southeast Asia, the nascent empires of Khmer (kah-mye) and Champa formed from the rainforests and coasts in the 9th century CE. While these empires borrowed heavily from the cultures of neighboring India and China, they created their own cultural works, such as the Hindu-inspired Angkor Wat in Khmer and the multiple Buddha statues in Champa. The rulers of these empires were particularly keen to the spread of Hinduism, as they admired the deities, such as the Shiva, as well as the caste system’s justification of worldly rulers (i.e., they had ‘earned’ their spots in their present life due to the efforts and good karma of their past lives). They were also eager to borrow from the culture of India, which, unlike their newly-developed cultures and administration, was over 4000 years old.

Synthesized foreign traditions

Persian influence on Arabs: Arabs, and other Muslims, adopted the administrative tactics and system of the Persians who had successfully run large, centralized empires for over 1000 years. They also adopted the veils and practices of upper-class Persian women.

Chinese influence on Japan: see *Feudalism in Japan* (Taika Reforms)

State systems expanded in the Americas**Aztec**

The Aztec state was not so much a unified empire, but an alliance of powerful city states, most notably the Mexica in Tenochtitlan. The Aztec expanded through both trade and conquest, establishing tribute states. They did not administer political control in the conventional Classical or Post-Classical sense by establishing officials, but rather left in place rulers that sympathized or supported the Aztec Empire. Additionally, these tribute states would offer payments and slaves to be sacrificed, maintain the Mesoamerican ritual of human sacrifice. The Aztec would reign from the early 14th to the early 16th empire, succumbing to the disease and occupation of the Spanish under Cortez. While their reign was short, their stint in history was pronounced by their influence on Mesoamerican architecture, religious ritual, and forceful and brutal conquest of the region.

Incan

The Incans were based out of the Peruvian Andes region, with a central capitol in Cuzco. Beginning in the early 13th century, the Incans were highly advanced administratively, developing an advanced economic and state system unparalleled in the Americas. They added territory through trade, diplomacy, and conquest, and engaged in one of the most complex and accurate bureaucratic systems of their time. Such accurate records were kept of property, marriage, and death with state certificates, and conquered peoples and citizens were employed in the mit'a economic system, which was a state-run economy in which the government determined one's profession, pay, and determined the projects that were worked on. The only private enterprise that took place was within the private homes of citizens. The Incans expanded their empire along the entire western coast of South America, succumbing to internal conflicts and later disease & conquest by Pizarro and the Spanish occupiers in 1572.

Technological and cultural transfers

Tang: invention of print (later developed into the printing press once the technology reached Europe), gunpowder, and the compass which spread throughout Afro-Eurasia

Abbasids: sakks (checks), hospitals, traveling clinics, and a refined astrolabe spread throughout Afro-Eurasia

Mongols: facilitated the spread of Chinese innovations to Europe and the Mediterranean

Muslims and Christians during Crusades: return of the Greco-Roman ideals on logic, science, philosophy, math, etc., plus the refinements and contributions of Muslim thinkers to the previously-mentioned topics to Europe in the late Middle Ages through trade and Al-Andalus (Muslim-controlled states of Spain); additionally, trade between the Arabs and Europeans also brought print technology to Europe which was later developed into the printing press

Trade

Trade routes flourished and promoted the growth of powerful new trading cities

– see *City-States* section

Communication and exchange networks developed in the Americas

Mississippi River Valley – the city of Cahokia likely functioned as a trade center for the Mississippi Valley, as archaeological evidence shows the presence of goods from the surrounding areas of the modern-day region of Illinois (goods were found from the Rockies, Gulf, Atlantic, Great Lakes, and Plains, suggesting the presence of a trade network in the Mississippi River Valley)

Mesoamerica – Mesoamerican trade flourished under the Aztec and Mayan cultures, as the triple alliance expanded its territory and trade interactions via conquest and the placement of favorable rulers in conquered city-states. Goods from all over Central America and Mexico can be found within the city states of the Aztec Empire, as well as the prominence of common architecture, calendar use, and similar written language.

Andes – the Incan Empire connected vast swathes of land along the western South American coast, developing complex road systems and exchange networks that distributed goods among the massive empire, and facilitated by the mit'a system (see *Incans*)

Improvements in transportation and commercial technologies

Bills of exchange – Bills of Exchange functioned as a means of offering a later payment to a trusted patron at a specific time. It was essentially an IOU that facilitated the expansion of trade as people could buy and distribute more goods before they had the money to pay for it (i.e., paying back the Bill of Exchange after they had profited).

Credit – credit allowed trusted patrons and merchants to run credit tabs, and allow for quicker and more effective trade. Much like Bills of Exchange, the accounts were balanced at a later date, and allowed for merchants to buy or borrow goods to sell for profit, and balance the account after the goods had been sold. This loosened the financial restrictions for purchasing and re-selling goods and enhanced trade in the Mediterranean.

Banks – banks provided a safer storehouse for one's goods or money, as well as opportunities to take loans for more risky or expensive purchases that one does not have the money for at the time. This vastly increased the availability of money (at least compared to before), and resulted in an increase in purchases, investments, and economic growth (also laying the foundation for venture capitalism and exploration in the 15th century). These loans also resulted in the vast growth of wealth for banks and banking families, such as the Medici family of Italy and later Junkers of the German lands. One could also withdraw from their bank and/or transfer money to the accounts of others with *checks*, which was a concept developed in the Muslim states (*sakks*).

Paper money – invented by the Tang Dynasty and popularized by the Song, paper money would provide a much more convenient way to transport and/or store one's money safely. This also provided a standardized currency which made economic transactions far simpler and quicker,

thus resulting in increased domestic and interregional trade and economic growth. Paper money, along with minted coins, would spread throughout Afro-Eurasia in the Post-Classical Era due to the consolidation of the many flourishing trade networks.

Caravans and caravanserai – caravans of camels and merchants allowed Arabs and other nomadic peoples to travel across long, arid regions, such as the Sahara Desert. This allowed trade with the kingdoms of West Africa and Timbuktu. Additionally, pit-stop type towns and hotels were established throughout North Africa and West/Central Asia to facilitate the many trade routes, and encourage the already flourishing trade routes to continue and prosper.

Longboats – longboats were designed to navigate the sea and rivers, as their wide base allowed them to sail in shallow waters. The Vikings used these to their advantage in the Viking Age (800-1100 CE) to sail upriver and conquer unsuspecting Europeans and North Africans. This allowed Vikings to establish settlements and raid along the coast of Europe and the Mediterranean, as well as discovering and settling Iceland, Greenland, and in Newfoundland (temporarily). The Vikings were also influential in the slave trade, selling white slaves to the Muslim states, working as mercenaries for the Byzantine Empire, and allowing trade to flourish in the founding principalities of Russia such as Kiev and Novgorod.

Junks – Junks were simply larger ships that facilitated trade by allowing more merchants, goods, and supplies to be transported, and enabling longer and more profitably journeys in the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean Trade Network.

Astrolabe – While developed by the Hellenistic civilizations in the Classical Era, Muslim astrologists would refine the astrolabe and its angles to get a more accurate gauge for Mecca, and use the stars to orient oneself in the world. The astrolabe gave a rough idea of one's position in relation to the sky, allowing for a rough understanding of direction on clear skies and latitude. This allowed travelers and traders to navigate much more effectively, and enhanced trade during the Post-Classical Era.

Compass – The invention of the compass by the Tang Dynasty would provide a much more reliable sense of direction by orienting itself toward true north. This allowed travelers to maintain a constant direction regardless of the weather conditions or time of day, and like the astrolabe, spread along the trade routes and greatly enhanced navigation and trade in the Post-Classical Era.

Commercial growth facilitated by state practices

Incan roads – see *Incans* section

Hanseatic League – Forming the first trade organization in 1368, the northern European cities and guilds formed exclusive trade agreements and greatly enhanced their economic and political power. By forming agreements with each other for various levels of production, surrounding

competitors were forced to go out of business, or move to the cities in HANSA to continue their craft. Monopolizing regional trade, these cities grew rich, pouring their revenue into the guilds and hiring soldiers and navies to protect their trade and deter the rise of rivals. HANSA would continue for centuries and set the world precedent that organized trade was highly beneficial.

Grand Canal – see *Sui Dynasty* section

Expansion of large empires facilitated trade

Byzantines, Muslim states, Mongols, and Chinese dynasties, much like in the Classical Era, provided a series of large, centralized states that brought stability and prosperity to the region. When centralized states exist, law & order, stability, and protection from invasion often result in individuals, families, and local communities focusing more on economic production, since the stability and protection of large states provide them with peace-of-mind and safety (at least compared to local kingdoms surrounded by potential enemies). Additionally, protection can be provided to those along trade routes. This increased economic production and protection of trade routes resulted, again, in a substantial uptick in trade, and the trade networks of Afro-Eurasia continued to flourish and grow in the later half of the Post-Classical Era.

Diffusion of crops and pathogens

Bananas, coconuts, rice, cotton, sugar all were spread within the Indian Ocean. While the Indian Ocean Trade network spread Champa rice, cotton, and sugar throughout the region, the Polynesian Migrations of the latter half of the Post-Classical Era brought bananas and coconuts to Madagascar, Africa, and the Pacific Islands visited or settled by the Polynesians.

Diffusion of Languages

Bantu language was spread by the iron-wielding and agriculturally adept bantu peoples of West Africa to East and South Africa.

Turkic language was spread by the conquests and migration of Seljuk and other Turks from Central Asia to India, Persia, Anatolia, the Middle East, and Europe, and establishing the empires and khanates of the Chagatai, Il-khanate, Delhi Sultanate, and Ottoman Empire.

Arabic language and culture was spread by the conquests and migration of the Arabs from the Arabian peninsula to North Africa and the Middle East, as well as establishing the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphates from the 7th to 13th centuries.

Islam

Originating with Muhammad in the early 7th century, Islam was codified into the Quran, and rejected by the economically and political corrupt peoples of Mecca. Fleeing to Medina, Muhammed gathered support and pursued the spreading of Islam by force. Islam borrowed heavily from the monotheism, free will, good vs. evil, heaven and hell policies of Zoroastrianism, Judaism, and Christianity, as well as from the Haj or pilgrimage to the Kaaba in Mecca, borrowed

from Arabian traditions. The success of Muhammed continued as his forces continued to conquer the territories of the Arabian Peninsula, and also burst out to conquered the exhausted state of Persia and push the equally-exhausted Byzantine Empire from the Levant and North Africa under the Four Caliphs.

Conquest continued into modern-day under the Umayyad Caliphate in Pakistan, Spain, and Central Asia, as the peoples were forced to or encouraged to convert, save for the resident Christians and Jews (see *Muslim States* section on the *jizya* and *dhimmis*). Conquest would continue later in the 13th and 15th centuries into India and Europe respectively by the Turkish Delhi Sultanate (India) and Ottoman Empire (Anatolia and Europe), and Islam along with it. By trade, the Arab and later Turkic caliphates and sultanates used their control of trade routes to spread Islam further, adding peoples in the regions of Southeast Asia, Indonesia, East Africa, and West Africa. Such peoples were encouraged to trade due to the vast amount of wealth and goods held by the Muslim states, as converting to Islam aided their changes of beneficial trade and trade agreements with the Arabs and/or Turks.

Diasporic communities

Muslim merchants settled and spread along port cities in the Indian Ocean, and along the Trans-Saharan Trade Network, bringing Islam to East and West Africa, as well as Southeast Asia and Indonesia.

Chinese merchants established communities of Chinese traders in Singapore, several hundred miles from China in Southeast Asia.

Jewish settlers moved and settled further into Europe, and along the Silk Road following the dissolving of Rome and the invasion of Arabs and later Turks.

Sogdian (ancient Iranians and Persians) merchants setup merchant towns and trading posts at the height of the Silk Roads in Central Asia and western China.

Travelers (~14th century CE)

Ibn Battuta traversed the Muslim world (Dar-al-Islam) noting the advancements, accomplishments, and cultural differences between the Arabs and their West Africa, East Africa, Persian, Indian, and Turkish counterparts.

Marco Polo traveled the Silk Road from Venice to Hangzhou, reveling in the magnificence of the Chinese cities and cultures, but also noting the cultural differences between Europeans and East Asians (such as unclean foods, like vermin and other animals not eaten by Christians).

Both travelers admired the accomplishments of other civilizations, but held narrow cultural viewpoints and cast judgement on the differences of others.

Society and Environment

Increased agricultural production due to tech innovations

Chinampas – were island farms used by the peoples and city-states of Mesoamerica. Such farms were responsible for providing the bulk of the food to city-states such as Tenochitlan, and to outside observers, seemed almost like ‘floating gardens’ that one required a boat to reach.

Waru waru – was a technique developed and used in the Andes region to combat seasonal flooding in the spring and summer months of South America. The digging of trenches and raising of the soil for crop rows allowed flood water to run through fields without drowning or destroying the crops. These trenches also served as a means to capture the water, and use it for drinking, cleaning, and other purposes following the raining and floods.

Terracing – while already practiced in the Americas in the Classical Era, terracing would develop on its own in Asia, as the peoples of East and South Asia were able to carve step-like formations on their hills, thus allowing them to cultivate the land on hills. These flat surfaces allowed plants to take hold, and water not to slide down (as they would on an un-altered hill). In doing so, the peoples of East and South Asia were able to greatly increase the amount of land for cultivation, thus providing more food, and a growth in overall population.

Horse collar – enabled horses to pull greater loads and more easily pull plows for agriculture. By not relying on leather straps and ropes (which caused pain and pressure when pulling hard), the horse collar was a larger, wooden apparatus that fit around the collar bones and skeletal frame of the horse. This reduced the pressure (PSI) on the skin of the horse, spreading the force of the pull across a greater area and reducing the pain on horses (much like pushing on your arm with an open hand as opposed to pushing on your arm with a single a finger). This allowed increased transportation of goods, more effective plowing, and increased food production.

Demand for goods increased in Afro-Eurasia

Chinese, Indian--and to a lesser extent Persia--textiles, luxury goods (tea, spices, silk, porcelain), iron and steel making were unparalleled during the Post-Classical Era, spurred by the extensive and stable trade networks that were propped up by large, centralized states. China and India in particular would be the main manufacturers in the Post-Classical era, and could remained unchallenged until the Early Modern and Modern Eras by Western Europe and the United States.

Fate of cities determined by periods of decline and growth

Invasions disease contributed to urban decline – Decline of Classical cities such as Alexandria, Rome, Persepolis, Pataliputra, Athens, Carthage, etc., were largely due to invasions from Huns, Mongols, Germanic tribes, etc., and urban life would suffer for several centuries before renewal when the invasions began to come to a close, and centralized states took back over. While the Black Death would take a particularly large toll on urban life in China and Europe during the 14th century, cities like Baghdad, Constantinople, and the trade cities rose substantially due to

increased trade, stable empires/trade routes, and population boosts during the Medieval Warming Period (~800-1300 CE).

Settled agriculture continued

Peasant agriculture – was a practice in Europe ranging from the Classical Era through the Post-Classical, Early Modern, and Modern Eras. IT was centered around the family unit, as families would perform complementary tasks (men plow, women seed, children water, etc.) on the land of their lords or kings. They would keep what they needed to survive, and the rest would be paid as a tax to their lord or king as rent for living there and feeding off their land. This made land and agriculture the dominant forms of economic and political power throughout the Middle Ages, and largely into the Early Modern Era when commercialization, private property rights, and capitalism began to produce wealth and power far beyond that of land and peasant agriculture.

Guild organization – were commercial trusts or cartels that controlled industries in Europe (lumber, baking, blacksmithing, textiles, etc.). Structured as oligarchies (often based around families), these guilds controlled prices, quality, production, employment, and wages for their respective industries. They also worked closed with their local political institutions to maintain favorable taxes, benefits, and other treatment. Guilds would stymie progress, innovation, and growth as their fixed prices, control of employment, and control of the production techniques left no room for the free market factors that would later propel Europe into economic dominance. Guilds ran into the 17th and 18th centuries before being rooted out from England, the Netherlands, France, and other areas of Europe in favor of more laissez-faire approaches.

Coerced labor (serfdom/mit'a) – *slaves* were taken by the Aztecs, Mongols, West African Kingdoms and Vikings, and either used for military and infrastructure purposes or sold to other peoples (such as the Arabs). Additionally, peasants in Europe were bound by *serfdom*, which controlled peasant movement, forcing them to work for the lords and the land they were born for the rest of their lives with no chance of social mobility. The conditions were as close to slavery as one can be, and persisted in Europe until as late as the 1890s. Lastly, the Incans adopted the *mit'a system* (described in the *Incans* section)

Military obligations - Peasants in both Europe and East Asia were bound to military duty if called upon, and, as mentioned in the Mongol section, conquered peoples were thrust into the army. They were first separated into different units with unfamiliar people, and they and their entire unit would be killed if anyone attempted desertion. They also took skilled siege works and military officials from the conquered Chinese, Persian, and Russian territories, and used their expertise to siege the castles and fortresses their horses would not overcome.

Resistance to coerced labor and increase in demand for slaves

Basil the Copper Hand – The revolt of Basil the Copper Hand took place in the 920s and 930s CE. While he had been tried for treason before (and lost his hand as punishment), he quickly

rounded up the support of poor and destitute peoples of the Byzantine Empire. While they experienced some success in taking a stronghold in modern-day Bulgaria, the professional imperial army left the fronts against the Arabs and quickly put down the rebellion. This rebellion was seen as an example of peasant discontent as it was relatively easy for him to form a peasant army and support the uprising.

English Peasant Revolt of 1381 – Over-taxation was a common theme in feudal Europe, and often resulted in resistance and rebellion from the peasant classes, such as in the English Peasant Rebellion in 1381 CE. This rebellion was a result of the harsh taxes collected to fund the 100 Years War vs. France, as well as the lingering effects of the Black Death which decimated urban populations in London and other English cities.

Central Asia and the *Arabs* began extensive trade in slaves—particularly the Mongols taking slaves from conquered regions to continue their conquests, and the Arabs establishing the slave trade with black West African kingdoms and white European slaves from the Vikings.

New Topics (2019-2020)

The economy of Song China became increasingly commercialized while continuing to depend on free peasant and artisanal labor.

The Song Dynasty cultivated certain competitive industries, such as iron, to flourish in some regions while setting up its opposite of strict government-regulated and monopolized production and trade in others. In the beginning of the Song, the government supported competitive silk mills and brocade workshops in the eastern provinces and in the capital city-- a policy that greatly increased production and profit. However, at the same time the government established strict legal prohibition on the merchant trade of privately produced silk in other provinces.

The economy of Song China flourished as a result of increased productive capacity, expanding trade networks, and innovations in agriculture and manufacturing

The Song dynasty actively promoted overseas trade and engage with over 50 various states-- including Egypt, Japan, Korea, India, and others. To promote overseas trade and maximize government profits in control of imported goods, in 971 the government established a Maritime Trade Supervisorate. The roles of the Maritime Trade Supervisorate included the Taxation of imported goods, tax rate varied over the Song dynasty, from 10% to as high as 40%, and the government purchase and sale of imported goods. In 976, all imported goods from overseas merchants had to be sold only to the government, private sales was prohibited, penalty for violation depended on the quantity of goods involved, and the highest penalty was tattooing of the face and forced labor.

Accompanying the widespread printing of paper money was the beginnings of what one might term an early Chinese industrial revolution in the steel and iron industries. Iron and steel of this period were used to mass-produce ploughs, hammers, needles, pins, nails for ships, musical cymbals, chains for suspension bridges, Buddhist statues, and other routine items for an indigenous mass market. Iron was also a

necessary manufacturing component for the production processes of salt and copper. In the smelting process of using huge bellows driven by waterwheels, massive amounts of charcoal were used in the production process, leading to a wide range of deforestation in northern China. Many newly constructed canals linked the major iron and steel production centers to the capital city's main market.

Muslim states and empires encouraged significant intellectual innovations and transfers

- Advances in mathematics:

Nasir al-Din al-Tusi was a Persian mathematician often considered the creator of trigonometry as a mathematical discipline. He also stated the law of sines for spherical triangles, discovered the law of tangents for spherical triangles, and provided proofs for these laws.

- Advances in literature:

'A'ishah al-Ba'uniyyah was a Sufi master and poet who is almost the only medieval female Islamic mystic to have recorded her own views in writing, and she likely composed more works in Arabic than any other woman prior to the twentieth century.

- Transfers:

The **House of Wisdom** in Baghdad refers to either a major Abbasid public academy and intellectual center in Baghdad or to a large private library belonging to the Abbasid Caliphs during the Islamic Golden Age. The House was founded either as a library for the collections of the Caliph in the late 8th century and later turned into a public academy. The House also contained a private collection created in the eighth century to house rare books and collections of poetry in both Arabic and Persian; it was destroyed in 1258 during the siege of Baghdad.

As the Abbasid Caliphate fragmented, new Islamic political entities emerged, most of which were dominated by Turkic peoples. These states demonstrated continuity, innovation, and diversity.

In the 9th century, the Abbasids created an army loyal only to their caliphate, composed of non-Arab origin people, known as **Mamluks**. Early on, it provided the government with a stable force to address domestic and foreign problems. The Mamluks eventually came to power in Egypt. In 1261, following the devastation of Baghdad by the Mongols, the Mamluk rulers of Egypt re-established the Abbasid caliphate in Cairo. The Abbasid caliphs in Egypt continued to maintain the presence of authority, but it was confined to religious matters. The Abbasid caliphate of Cairo lasted until the 16th century when their caliph was taken away as a prisoner by the Ottoman Turks. This, combined with the presence of the earlier Seljuk Turks (Turks profoundly influenced by the Persians) in the 11th century, as well as the loss of many of the North African states to independent kingdoms, helped contribute to the downfall of the Abbasid caliphate militaristically and economically.

State formation and development demonstrated continuity, innovation, and diversity, including the new Hindu and Buddhist states that emerged in South and Southeast Asia.

Buddhist states - **Srivijaya Empire** (7th-14th century) to the south and the **Khmer Empire** (9th-15th century)

Hindu states – **Khmer** (Vishnu and Shiva most revered) and the **Champa Empire** (192-1471 CE)

(all three empires are detailed in the sections above)

Interregional contacts and conflicts between states and empires encouraged significant technological and cultural transfers, including during Chinese maritime activity led by Ming Admiral Zheng He.

Zheng He was a Chinese mariner, explorer, diplomat, fleet admiral, and court eunuch during China's early Ming dynasty. Zheng commanded expeditionary treasure voyages to Southeast Asia, South Asia, Western Asia, and East Africa from 1405 to 1433. His larger ships allegedly carried hundreds of sailors on four tiers of decks and may have stretched 120 meters or more in length, but these claims have been disputed. He is perhaps most well-known for connecting Ming China with the Islamic states.

The expansion and intensification of long-distance trade routes often depended on environmental knowledge, including advanced knowledge of the monsoon winds.

The monsoon winds allowed for a generally reliable wind pattern in 6-month turns, allowing merchant ships to sail relatively comfortably and safely from Persia and the Indian subcontinent to East Africa.

As exchange networks intensified, an increasing number of travelers within Afro-Eurasia wrote about their travels.

- **Margery Kempe** was an English Christian mystic, known for writing *The Book of Margery Kempe*, a work considered by some to be the first autobiography in the English language. Her book chronicles her domestic tribulations, her extensive pilgrimages to holy sites in Europe and the Holy Land, as well as her mystical conversations with God. She is honored in the Anglican Communion, but was never made a Catholic saint.

There was continued diffusion of crops and pathogens, with epidemic diseases, including the bubonic plague, along trade routes.

'**The Bubonic Plague** originated in China during the postclassical period, the disease reached opposite ends of the Eurasian land mass creating the most devastating effects the world had ever seen up until this point in history. Keeping in mind that the postclassical period in history was a time of prosperity for exchange and trade, this provided the perfect conditions for what became know as the "Black Death" to spread its way through this region of the world. When focusing more specifically on Western Europe and the Muslim World, it's undeniable that both societies associated the sickness with their religion, Christianity proved to be a set back for any medical advancements while the Muslims were able to learn and further prevent the spread of the plague. Culturally however, the societies shared a common blame towards Jews for the original causes of the plague.' – Excerpt from

<http://ahistoryoftheworldthroughdisease.weebly.com/postclassical-era.html>

In key places along important trade routes, merchants set up diasporic communities where they introduced their own cultural traditions into the indigenous cultures and, in turn, indigenous cultures influenced merchant cultures

- **Malay communities in the Indian Ocean basin** - Ancient India exerted a profound influence over Southeast Asia through trade, religious missions, wars and other forms of contact. Pre-colonial Malaysia was part of 'Indianised Kingdoms' such as Srivijaya, Kadaram and the Majapahit, which formed part of a cultural region known as Greater India. As such, many merchants from these regions-- most notably Malaysia-- settled around the Indian Ocean to to the cultural similarity trade networks established between the Indianized states. Today more than 2 million Malay peoples resided in Thailand and Singapore, as well as other areas in the Indian Ocean.

Trading cities

- **Kashgar** is an oasis city in the Western province of Xinjiang, People's Republic of China that arose and thrived due to its primary presence as a crossroad and pitstop on the Silk Road. At the convergence point of widely varying cultures and empires, Kashgar has served as a trading post and strategically important city on the Silk Road between China, the Middle East, and Europe for over 2,000 years. Kashgar has been under the rule of the Chinese, Turkic, Mongol, and Tibetan empires—especially important to the Silk Road under Chinese and Mongol rule. The city has also been the site of a number of battles between various groups of people on the steppes.
- **Samarkand** is a city in south-eastern Uzbekistan and one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in Central Asia. Though there is no direct evidence of when Samarkand was founded; some theories propose that it was founded between the 8th and 7th centuries B.C. Prospering from its location on the Silk Road between China and the Mediterranean, at times Samarkand was one of the greatest cities of Central Asia. By the time of the Achaemenid Empire of Persia, it was the capital of the Sogdian satrapy. The city was taken by Alexander the Great in 329 B.C., when it was known by its Greek name of Marakanda. The city was ruled by a succession of Iranian and Turkic rulers until the Mongols under Genghis Khan conquered Samarkand in 1220. The city is also noted for being an Islamic centre for scholarly study, as well as becoming the capital of the empire of Timur (a Turko-Mongol Persianate conqueror) in the 14th century.

State systems in Africa:

- **Great Zimbabwe** was a city in the south-eastern hills of Zimbabwe; it was the capital of the Kingdom of Zimbabwe during the country's Late Iron Age. Construction on the city began in the 11th century and continued until it was abandoned in the 15th century. Archaeological evidence suggests that Great Zimbabwe became a center for trading with copper coins found at there appear to be of the same pure ore found on the Swahili coast, and also with artefacts suggesting that the city formed part of a trade network extending as far as China. This international trade was mainly in gold and ivory. Causes for the decline and ultimate abandonment of the site around 1450 have been suggested as due to a decline in trade compared to sites further north, the exhaustion of the gold mines, political instability and famine and water shortages induced by climatic change.

- **Ethiopia** - The **Zagwe dynasty** ruled many parts of present-day Ethiopia and Eritrea between the early 12th and late 13th century. From 1270 AD until 1974, the **Solomonic dynasty** governed the Ethiopian Empire. The empires of Ethiopia were, and remain, largely Christian with a sizable Islamic minority. In the early 15th century, Ethiopia sought to make diplomatic contact with European kingdoms. This proved to be beneficial for the Christian monarchy as Portugal assisted the Ethiopian emperor (then known as the Emperor of Abyssinia) by sending weapons and four hundred men who helped defeat the neighboring Adal Sultanate and maintain a Christian kingdom.
- **The Hausa kingdoms** were a collection of states started by the Hausa people, situated between the Niger River and Lake Chad, also benefiting from trade routes connected to Ghana, Mali, and the Songhai Dynasty. Hausaland took shape as a political and cultural region during the first millennium CE as a result of the westward expansion of Hausa peoples. By the 14th century Kano had become the most powerful city-state. Kano had become the base for the trans-Saharan trade in salt, cloth, leather, and grain. Despite relatively constant growth from the 15th century to the 18th century, the states were vulnerable to constant war internally and externally and were conquered in the 19th century by a West African Sunni caliphate.

New Islamic political entities:

- **The Seljuk Empire** was a high medieval Turko-Persian Sunni Muslim empire. At its greatest extent, the Seljuk Empire controlled a vast area stretching from western Anatolia and the Levant to the Hindu Kush in the east, and from Central Asia to the Persian Gulf in the south. The Seljuk Empire was founded by) in 1037 from their homelands near the Aral Sea. The Seljuks advanced first into mainland Persia, before eventually conquering eastern Anatolia. Here the Seljuks won the battle of Manzikert in 1071 and conquered most of Anatolia from the Byzantine Empire, which became one of the reasons for the first crusade (1095-1099). From c. 1150-1250, the Seljuk empire declined, and was invaded by the Mongols around 1260. The Mongols divided Anatolia into emirates (regions ruled by Arab noblemen or military personnel). Eventually one of these, the Ottoman, would conquer the rest.
- **The Mamluk sultanate of Egypt** was a medieval realm spanning Egypt and the Levant. It lasted from the overthrow of the Abbassids in the mid-13th century until the Ottoman conquest of Egypt in 1517. The Mamlūk state reached its height under Turkic rule with Arabic culture and then fell into a prolonged phase of decline. The sultanate's ruling caste was composed of Mamluks, soldiers of predominantly Crimean, Caucasian (from Anatolia and modern-day Russia), Oghuz Turk and Georgian slave origin. While Mamluks were purchased, their status was above ordinary slaves, who were not allowed to carry weapons or perform certain tasks. Mamluks were considered to be "true lords" with social status above citizens of Egypt. At its height, the sultanate represented the zenith of medieval Egyptian and Levantine political, economic, and cultural glory in the Islamic Golden Age.