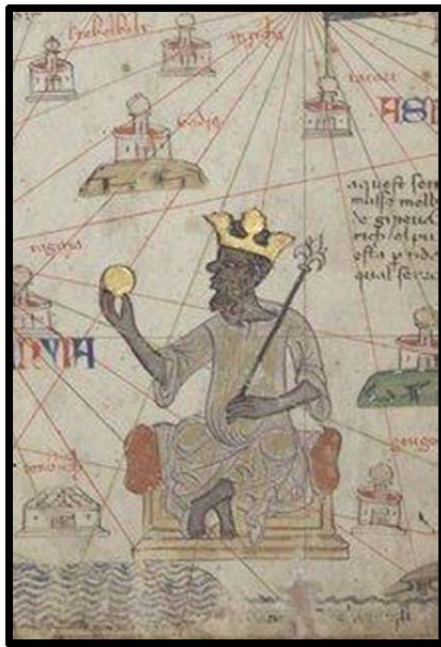


Sites of Encounter in the Medieval World Lesson #4: Mali

What were the effects of the exchanges at Mali?

Major Topics:

- Crossing the Sahara
- Gold-Salt Trade
- Spread of Muslim religion and culture in West Africa
- Writing Travel Narratives
- Individual Research Project



Abraham Cresques, *Atlas de cartes marine dit [Atlas Catalan]*, 1375, *Bibliothèque Nationale*
ark:/12148/b5v1b5500248r, screen 7,
gallica.bnf.fr.

individual research project, in which each student is assigned to research one of fifteen sites visited by Ibn Battuta, write a travel narrative from the point of view of a 14th-century traveler, and make a travel brochure.

In this lesson, students are introduced to Mali, one of three medieval West African empires (Ghana, Mali and Songhay) that grew wealthy from the extraction and sale of gold. Trade between West Africa and the northern coast of the continent began during the Roman Empire. Between 1000 and 1450, Arab and Berber merchants traveled across the Sahara to trade for gold, often with salt, a product that West Africans needed. With Arab merchants came Muslim religious teachers and travelers, such as Ibn Battuta, who spread the religion of Islam and Muslim culture throughout West Africa. The Malian dynasty was Muslim, and one of its rulers, Mansa Musa, made a famous pilgrimage to Mecca in 1324.

Students will read primary sources and analyze visual representations. This lesson also includes the unit's

Procedures

Step 1: Crossing the Sahara

Acquiring West African gold meant traveling across the Sahara Desert, a huge undertaking even for Ibn Battuta, the famous traveler we met in Quanzhou and Cairo. Distribute **SoE4.1 Mali and West Africa Map Activity** and have students label and color their maps, using the Sites of Encounter in the Medieval World Interactive Map and **SoE4.2 Medieval West Africa Map**. When they have finished, have them discuss the Questions for Discussion with a partner and then hold a brief whole-class discussion.

Next students will engage in a close-reading of **SoE4.3 Ibn Battuta's Journey across the Sahara**, which describes the perils of the desert crossing and practical strategies of caravan travel. After students complete the close-reading, show them a video clip of the Sahara, such as the National Geographic's *Ibn Battuta: Prince of Travelers* or the BBC's *Sahara with Michael Palin, Absolute Desert (episode) 3*. The first four minutes of the latter shows a camel caravan carrying slabs of salt, Timbuktu and documents from its medieval university.

Step 2: What made Mali a site of encounter?

Introduce students to the lesson historical investigation question: What were the effects of the exchanges at Mali? Explain to them that they will first look at why Mali was a site of encounter and what products, ideas and technologies were exchanged there, just as they have with the previous lessons. However, in this lesson, they will be taking their investigation one step further, to study what happened as a result of those exchanges. Talk with them about the meaning of "effect" and the importance of cause-and-effect reasoning in the study of history.

Assign students to groups and distribute **SoE4.4 Mali as a Site of Encounter: Heading and Highlighting**. This is a secondary background reading that gives them the content of the lesson. When they have finished, discuss the exchanges and the effects of those exchanges with the whole class.

Step 3: Sightseeing in Mali

In addition to Muslim merchants who traveled to West Africa to buy gold, travelers and religious scholars also visited the West African kingdoms. They brought with them the religion of Islam

and the culture of the Muslim world. While only some Africans converted to Islam, Muslim culture had a significant impact on West African architecture, education, and languages. **SoE4.5 Sightseeing in Mali** showcases artifacts from Mali and other medieval West African kingdoms.

Hang the visuals at stations along the walls and have student groups complete the **SoE4.6 Sightseeing in Mali Analysis Chart**. After students have completed this activity, review with them the effects of the exchanges at Mali that they have seen so far:

- Some West Africans converted to Islam and built mosques.
- The Mali army used horses which had to be imported from North Africa. Cavalry made the Malian army stronger and more able to defeat its enemies.
- The Mali kingdom had a lot of wealth from the gold trade. The mansa and other Malians used that wealth to buy products from the Muslim merchants.
- West African Muslims created a university, or madrasa, at Timbuktu. The teachers and students used the Arabic language for reading, writing, and possibly speaking. This university transmitted Islamic knowledge to West Africans and also transmitted knowledge back into the Islamic network of cities, religious scholars, and madrasas.

Have students copy these effects in their notes and/or record them on butcher paper and hang them on the wall. Add effects that the students identify as well. Discuss their observations to clarify the concept of an “effect” from the exchange itself.

Step 4: West African and North African/Arab Perspectives on Mali

Most of the written sources on Mali were written by North African Arab scholars, who were outsiders and often regarded their own culture as superior to that of the West Africans. From the North African/Arab sources, it appears as if the West African kingdoms were almost a creation of Muslim influence. There are no primary sources written by medieval West Africans, but the *Epic of Sundiata*, an oral history passed down by griots, records the foundation of the Malian dynasty. **SoE4.7 West African and North African/Arab Perspectives Instructions** guides the teacher through introducing perspective and helping students analyze primary sources about Mali and Ghana, through the eyes of Arab/North Africans, in **SoE4.8 Arab/North African Sources on Ghana and Mali**, and through the eyes of West Africans, in **SoE4.9 the Epic of Sundiata: A West African Source on Mali**. In pairs and then in whole-class discussion, students examine the perspectives of West Africans and North African/Arabs and the effects of the exchanges at Mali. Record the major effects on the chart begun in step 3.

Step 5: The Effects of Ghana and Mali on Afro-Eurasia

In this step, students examine the effects of exchanges with West Africans in other sites in Afro-Eurasia. Distribute **SoE4.10 Effects of Ghana and Mali on Other Sites in Afro-Eurasia**. Have students read the two written sources, analyze the visual source, and fill out the effects chart. Discuss the effects with students and add them to the chart. Point out that the cultural exchanges went in both directions.

Step 6: Individual Research Project

This step introduces students to the major project of this unit. This project has students practice Common Core skills of reading and writing, such as research, independent close reading, and integrating information from written, visual and multimedia sources and maps. **SoE4.11 Individual Research Project Instructions** is a student handout with instructions for researching and completing the research questions, traveler's account writing, and the travel brochure. **SoE4.12** is a series of 16 source handouts on individual sites visited by Ibn Battuta – Alexandria, Mecca, Baghdad, Basra, Khwarizm, Multan, Samarkand, Delhi, Kilwa, Zafari, Ladhiq, Al-Sara, the Mongol camp at al-Machar, Caffa, Constantinople, and Jerusalem. Each has a secondary background section and an excerpt from Ibn Battuta's Travels. Assign each student one of these sites. Give each student one SoE12 source handout and one copy each of the SoE4.11 Instructions and **SoE4.13 Research Questions**.

SoE4.1 Mali and West Africa Map Activity

Instructions for labeling the Mali and West Africa Map:

Geographic Features	Kingdoms	Cities	Trade Products
Label bodies of water in Blue Label mountains and islands in brown Label goldfields in gold or yellow	Label kingdoms in red Outline the borders	Draw a dot on the location of the city & write the name to the right of the dot in black	Label trade products in green
Nile River Lake Chad Niger River Atlantic Ocean Red Sea Mediterranean Sea Senegal River Atlas Mountains Canary Islands Bure goldfield Bambuk goldfield	Mali (outline borders in red) Ghana (outline borders in orange) Songhai (outline borders in purple) Bornu (outline borders in green) Benin (outline borders in blue)	Timbuktu Jenne Fez Walata Taghaza Sijilmasa Marrakech Awdoghost Gao Tunis Cairo Niani	Dried fruits Horses Salt Copper Cloth Slaves Gold Kola nuts Manufactured goods

- Draw in the trade routes in black.
- Use the Sites of Encounter in the Medieval World Physical Features Map to locate the edge between the Sahara Desert and the savanna grasslands (green) in North Africa. Draw a dashed line in brown on your map to mark the edge.
- What trade circle on the Sites of Encounter in the Medieval World Interactive Map included West Africa?

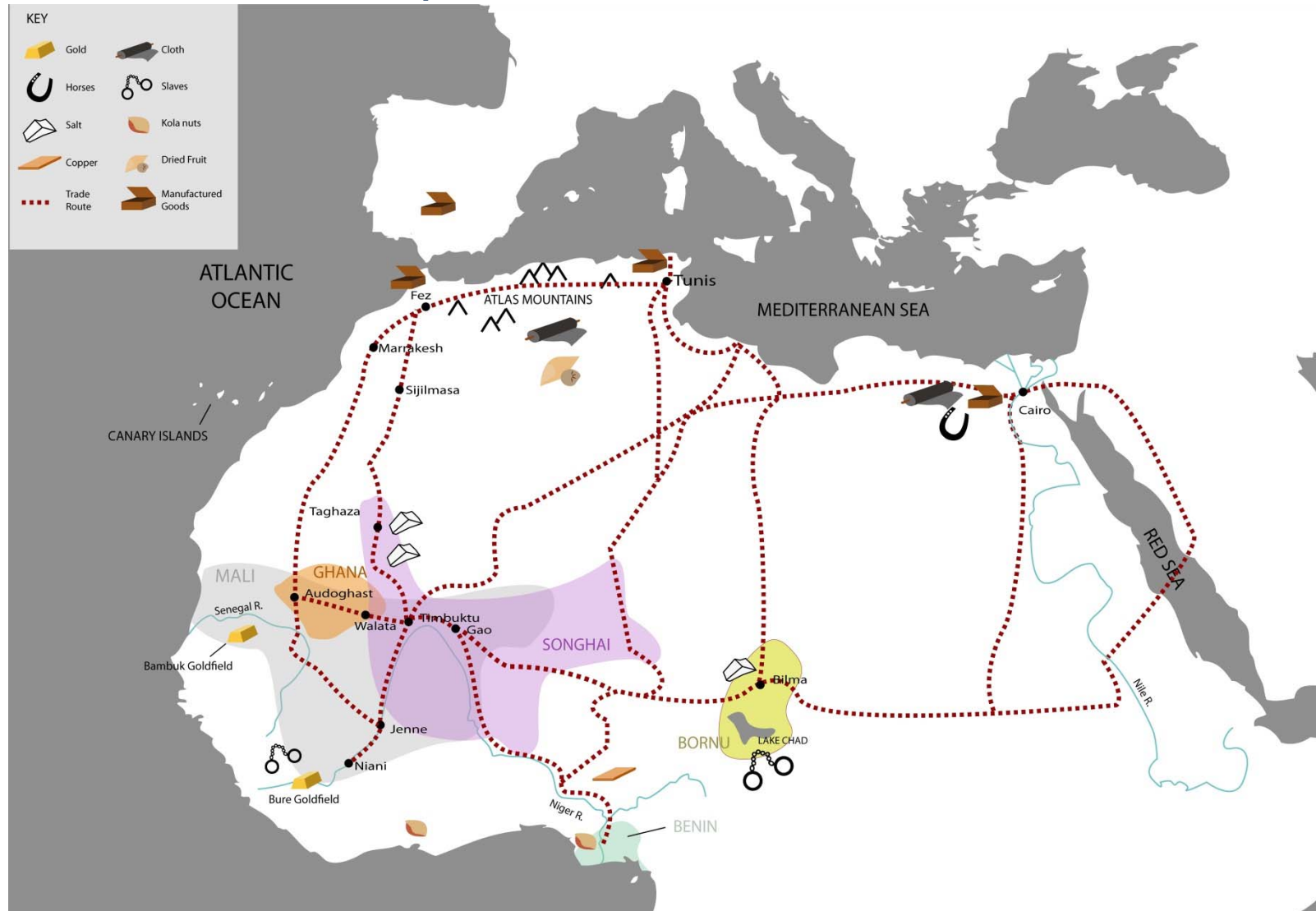
Questions for Discussion

- Of all the products that were traded across Africa, which do you believe had the greatest value?
- Why do you think there were so many trade routes crisscrossing the Sahara Desert?
- Would it be possible to travel from Mali to the Cairo site of encounter? Trace the routes that a traveler or trader might have taken to reach Cairo.
- What information does this map provide to support the claim that Mali was a site of encounter?

SoE4.1 Mali and West Africa Map Activity



SoE4.2 Medieval West Africa Map



SoE4.3 Ibn Battuta's Journey across the Sahara (page 1 of 3)

Introduction: Ibn Battuta's journey to Mali was the last major trip of his life. He had come home to Tangier after his visit to China in 1349 (after being away for 25 years.) He soon took off again to visit Mali. He took off from Fez to Sijilmasa, a "desert port" on the northern edge of the Sahara. At Sijilmasa he joined a caravan to travel across the desert.

. . . I travelled in a caravan whose leader was Abu Muhammad Yandakan al-Massufi, God be merciful to him. There were a number of merchants from Sijilmasa and other places in the caravan. After twenty-five days we reached Taghaza. . .



*Camel caravan carrying salt from Agadez to Bilma, 1985, photograph by Holger Reineccius, Wikipedia Commons,
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Billma-Salzkarawane1.jpg>.*

We spent three days there, under strain, for the water is brackish and it is the place with most flies. Here water is taken in for the journey into the desert which lies beyond. It is ten days' travel with no water, or only rarely. We, however, did find plentiful water in pools left by the rain. One day we found a pool between two hills of rock which was sweet; we quenched our thirst and washed our clothes. . . .

In those days we used to go in front of the caravan and when we found a suitable place we pastured the animals there. We went on doing this till a man called Ibn Ziri was lost in the desert. After that I did not go ahead or fall behind the caravan. . . . We met a caravan on the way. They told us that some men had become separated from them; they found one of them dead under one of the bushes that grow in the sand. . . .

We then came to Tasarahla, where there is underground water. Caravans stop there for three days. They rest, repair and fill their waterskins, and sew onto them coarse bags to protect them from the wind. The *takshif* is sent forward from here.

Takshif is the name given to any man of the Massufa whom the people of the caravan hire to go ahead of them to Walata with letters . . . [asking their friends to] come four days' journey to meet them with water. . . .

SoE4.3 Ibn Battuta's Journey across the Sahara (page 2 of 3)

Sometimes the *takshif* perishes in this desert and the people of Walata know nothing of the caravan, and its people or most of them perish too. There are many demons in that desert. If the *takshif* is alone they play tricks on him and delude him till he loses his way and perishes. There is no road to be seen in the desert and no track, only sand blown about by the wind. You see mountains of sand in one place, then you see they have moved to another.

A guide there is someone who had frequented it [the desert] repeatedly and has keen intelligence. A strange thing I saw is that our guide was blind in one eye and diseased in the other, but he knew the route better than anyone else. . . .

The desert is luminous, radiant, one's chest is dilated, one is in good spirits, and is safe from robbers. . . .

Source: Ibn Battuta, C. Defrémery, B.R. Sanguinetti, C.F. Beckingham, and H.A. R. Gibb, trans. and eds. The Travels of Ibn Battuta, A.D. 1325-1354 (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society at University Press, 1958-2000), 4:946-949.



Vocabulary

Brackish = salty

Takshif = a messenger who went alone ahead of the caravan to get people in Walata to bring water to the caravan

Massufa = a Berber tribe whose men guided caravans across the desert

Perishes = dies

Frequented = traveled in often

Luminous = filled with light, glowing

Dilated = made larger, expanded

Citation: Camel Caravan in the Hoggar [Caravane de chameaux dans la Hoggar], photograph by W. Robrecht, 2006, Wikipedia Commons, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Caravane_hoggar1.jpg. The Hoggar is a mountain range in the central Sahara desert.

SoE4.3 Ibn Battuta's Journey across the Sahara (page 3 of 3)

Close Reading 1: *Read the text. Discuss these questions with your partner.*

1. *How did Ibn Battuta travel across the Sahara?*
2. *What made the trip difficult?*

Close Reading 2: *To teacher: Divide students into 7 groups and assign each group one paragraph of the reading. Give each group one piece of butcher paper and assorted markers. When the groups have prepared, have each present their oral reports and posters to the class (in the order of the paragraphs.)*

Group Assignment:

Writer: Write a summary of the paragraph in your own words (one per group.)

Artist: On the butcher paper, show the main idea of your paragraph with simple drawings and symbols. You may use single words, but no sentences.

Speakers (two): Prepare an oral report on the main idea of your paragraph.

Close Reading 3: *Read the text again and answer these questions individually.*

1. *What are three problems faced by travelers in the desert?*
2. *Why did people travel in caravans?*
3. *What happened if the takshif lost his way and didn't reach Walata (the desert port on the south side of the Sahara)?*
4. *According to Ibn Battuta, what did demons in the desert do?*
5. *What were three things people did to protect themselves in the desert?*

SoE4.4 Mali as a Site of Encounter: Heading and Highlighting Chart (page 1 of 4)

Focus Question: What were the effects of the exchanges at Mali?

Instructions:

Step 1: Read the text section by section. At the end of each section, stop and discuss the main idea of that section with your group. Together, create a heading or title that represents the section well.

Step 2: Read the text again and highlight or underline the key details that support the headings. Do not highlight everything in the text!

Step 3: Discuss how the paragraph helps to answer the focus question and make notes in the right column.

Text	How does this information help answer the focus question?
<p>(heading) _____</p> <p>In contrast to Cairo and Quanzhou, Mali became a site of encounter because of one resource – gold. Desire for gold caused merchants to make the difficult journey from the Maghrib and the rest of North Africa across the Sahara Desert to the region of savannah and forest called West Africa. In this lesson, you will study not only the reason why Mali was a site of encounter and what products, ideas, and technologies were exchanged there, but also the effects of the exchanges at Mali. An effect is a result or consequence. Historians often use cause and effect reasoning, which means to analyze what factors led to an event and what happens as a result of an event. In this lesson, the event is the exchanges at Mali and the effects are what happened as a result of the exchanges at Mali. Each of the following paragraph describes a different effect of the exchanges at Mali</p>	

SoE4.4 Mali as a Site of Encounter: Heading and Highlighting Chart (page 2 of 4)

Text	How does this information help answer the focus question?
<p>(heading) _____</p> <p>One effect of the exchanges was that West Africa became connected to the Islamic trade networks and thus to all of Afro-Eurasia. Mali was one of three medieval kingdoms that ruled over West Africa. The first empire was Ghana, which was ruled by a king from the Soninke people. The Ghana empire was already in existence when the first Arab merchants traveled from the Maghrib across the Sahara in the 400s. Trade with the Arabs did not create the Ghana empire, but it certainly made the rulers and merchants of Ghana much richer. The Ghana empire was a confederation of smaller chiefdoms. The kings of Ghana taxed the gold-salt trade and kept an army to protect people from the desert nomads, but they probably did not actually rule over the people of the smaller chiefdoms in the confederation.</p>	
<p>(heading) _____</p> <p>From the 700s onward, Berber peoples (who lived as nomads in and along the edges of the Sahara) regularly crossed the Sahara carrying salt south and gold north. Arab North Africans wanted to buy gold to make coins, and the West African goldfields held one of the largest supplies of gold in the Afro-Eurasian world. The area of West Africa south of the Sahara did not produce enough salt for all the people living there. Since salt is necessary for human survival, the West Africans were eager to buy salt from the Berbers, who mined salt from deposits along the northern edge of the Sahara (around the town of Taghaza). Their trade of gold for salt was very profitable for everyone involved. For that reason, Arab merchants in the Maghrib would not let any merchant (such as Genoese or Venetian merchants) travel south of the Mediterranean ports. The rulers of Ghana and Mali would not let any Arab or Berber merchant travel to the goldfields, and kept the location of the goldfields secret. No one wanted competition that would reduce their profits.</p>	

SoE4.4 Mali as a Site of Encounter: Heading and Highlighting Chart (page 3 of 4)

Text	How does this information help answer the focus question?
<p>(heading) _____</p> <p>Along with the Arab merchants, Muslim travelers and scholars also visited West Africa. They converted the Berbers to Islam and began to convert other people in West Africa to Islam. In the 11th century, Awdaghost was the main trade city of Ghana, which Muslim scholars called the "Land of Gold." The geographer al-Bakri wrote that he saw gold-embroidered caps, golden saddles, and swords and dog collars decorated with gold at the Ghana court. However, soon after the Ghana kingdom began to decline in power and many small chiefdoms became independent.</p>	
<p>(heading) _____</p> <p>In the 1200s, a new empire, Mali, arose. The first Mansa, or king, was Sundiata Keita (c. 1217-c. 1255) who led his Mandinka people to defeat attacks by the Soso and then to unite the smaller chiefdoms in and around the goldfields into a strong empire. After the decline of the Ghana empire, the pastoralists, or herders, from the Sahel regions (on the edge of the desert), began to dominate the Malinke farming villages. Small kings or chiefs united the people of the farming villages against the pastoralists. The kings built walled towns and collected</p>	

SoE4.4 Mali as a Site of Encounter: Heading and Highlighting Chart (page 4 of 4)

Text	How does this information help us answer the focus question?
<p>(heading) _____</p> <p>Although much of the <i>Epic of Sundiata</i> story is legend, the griots, or oral storytellers, who recorded and recited it preserved historical evidence about Sundiata’s rule. Historians think that Sundiata himself was not completely Muslim because he may have combined Muslim ideas with the shamanistic religion of West Africa. He created a new society with a hereditary nobility who were warriors on horseback, and special groups of craftsmen (such as griots and blacksmiths). Sundiata mastered the dangerous symbols of hunters and blacksmiths using, among other things, a magic power bundle one of his men had brought back from Mecca. Sundiata was a powerful mansa who expanded the size of Mali – and its profits from the gold trade - for more than 25 years. Sundiata’s successors converted to Islam, but they did not require the people of West Africa to convert also. People following African religions and Islam lived together and the mansas followed both Muslim and African customs.</p>	
<p>(heading) _____</p> <p>Between 1312 and 1337, the mansa of Mali was Mansa Musa. He made a famous pilgrimage to Mecca in 1324 that you will read about later in this lesson. He was so wealthy and so famous that Abraham Cresques, the Jewish cartographer who drew the Catalan Atlas, drew a picture representing Mansa Musa (holding a lump of gold) on the location of West Africa. Mansas also used their wealth to build mosques and madrassas in the cities. One of the major trade cities of Mali was Timbuktu. Muslims there built a university that was well respected in the Islamic world, and students and teachers traveled to study and read its manuscripts. After Mansa Musa, the empire of Mali began to decline. In 1464, a new empire, Songhai, took over ruling the rich goldfields and cities of West Africa.</p>	

SoE4.5 Sightseeing in Mali Images (page 1 of 6)

Instructions: Imagine that you were a 14th-century traveler visiting Mali. These are places and objects you might see. Analyze each artifact on the SoE4.6 Sightseeing in Mali Analysis Chart.

Artifact 1: Statue of an Archer

Made of terracotta in Mali in the 13th or 14th century, this small statue may represent one of the soldiers in the Malian army. The statue is two feet tall. The tube on his back is a quiver, or a case, for his bow and arrows. The statue has been damaged and is missing part of an arm and a leg.



Citation: Archer figure, from the Inland Niger Delta region, Mali, 13th-15th century, made from terracotta, Smithsonian Institution no. 86-12-1, photograph by Frank Khoury, <http://afrika.si.edu/exhibits/resources/mali/works.htm>.

SoE4.5 Sightseeing in Mali Images (page 2 of 6)

Artifact 2: Sankore Mosque, once Sankore Madrassa, or the University at Timbuktu

Built in the early 15th century, this mosque was once the center of a large Muslim scholar community, often called the University of Timbuktu or the Sankore Madrassa. It was organized into separate colleges, each run by one teacher. Students studied with that one teacher to learn the Quran and Islamic religion, logic, astronomy or history. The university was known and respected throughout the Muslim world.

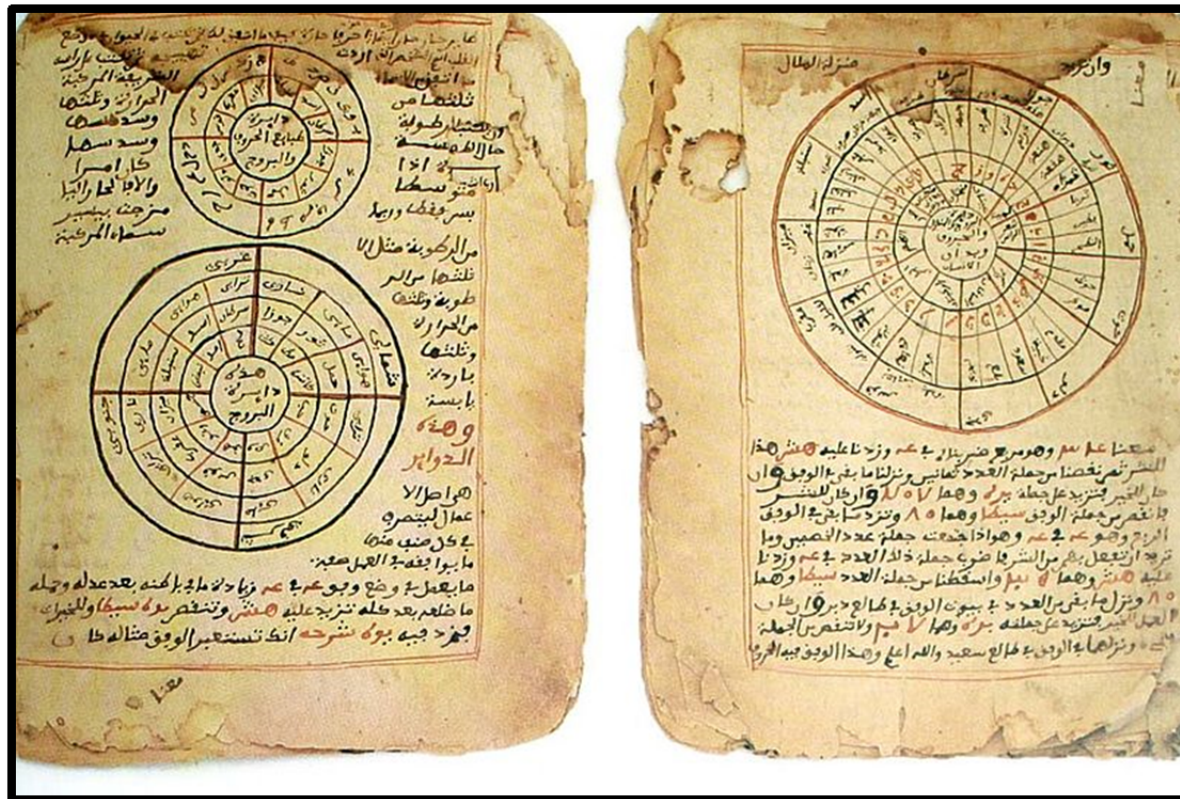


Citation: Sankore Mosque in Timbuktu, Mali, photograph by Senani P, 2006, Wikipedia Commons,
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Timbuktu_Mosque_Sankore.jpg

SoE4.5 Sightseeing in Mali Images (page 3 of 6)

Artifact #3: A Mathematics and Astronomy Book from Timbuktu

This photograph shows two pages from a book about math and astronomy surviving in Timbuktu. It is an example of as many as 700,000 manuscripts (hand-written books and documents) from the 12th through the 17th century collected by scholars in Timbuktu. The scribe wrote the book in Arabic.



Citation: *The Timbuktu Manuscripts II – Mathematics, Astronomy*, photograph by the EurAstro Association, Mission to Mali, led by Siaka Konaté and Jean-Luc Dighaye, 2007, www.eurastro.de/missions/mali07/mali07.html

SoE4.5 Sightseeing in Mali Images (page 4 of 6)

Artifact 4: Great Mosque of Djenne (Jenne)

This Great Mosque of Djenne is not the original mosque that stood on this site. It was built in 1907 to be a close copy of the original which was then in ruins. The original Great Mosque of Djenne was built in the 13th century by Koy Konboro, a chief or small king of Djenne who had converted to Islam. Like the original, this mosque is 4 stories high with minarets that are 60 feet high. It was built of blocks of rice husks, earth and water. The builders put ostrich eggs on top of the minaret spires as symbols of good luck and fertility. Every year thousands of people work at replastering cracks in the walls. If they stopped, the mosque would disintegrate quickly.



Citation: Great Mosque of Djenne, photograph by Andy Gilham, at www.andygilham.com, 2003, Wikipedia Commons, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Great_Mosque_of_Djenn%C3%A9_1.jpg

SoE4.5 Sightseeing in Mali Images (page 5 of 6)

Artifact 5: Statue of a Malian Soldier on Horseback

An unknown artist made this small statue in Mali in the 13th or 14th century. It is just over two feet tall and made from terracotta. Since horses were not native to West Africa, the Malian mansas, or kings, had to import horses from North Africa. It was much more difficult to take care of horses in the desert and tropical climates of West Africa. For that reason, the Malian army's cavalry, or soldiers mounted on horses, was one of the most impressive and expensive projects Mali paid for with its gold. The arms of the figure are missing.



Citation: Equestrian Figure, Inland Niger Delta region, Mali, 13th-15th century, photograph by Franko Khoury, terracotta, 27-3/4", Smithsonian Institution no. 86-12-2, <http://afrika.si.edu/exhibits/resources/mali/works.htm>

SoE4.5 Sightseeing in Mali Images (page 6 of 6)

Artifact 6: Doors of the Sidi Yehia Mosque, part of Sankore University or Madrassa in Timbuktu

These doors opened onto a courtyard, where many classes were held at the University of Timbuktu. A carpenter made the doors of wood and decorated them with ironwork symbols. Notice the crescent moons on the center door.



Citation: *Portées de la Mosquée de Sidi Yehia, Toumbouctu [Doors of the Sidi Yehia Mosque, Timbuktu], Sankore Madrassa*, photograph by KaTeznick, 2005, Wikipedia Commons, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Medersa_Sankore.jpg.

SoE4.6 Sightseeing in Mali Analysis Chart

Artifact	What is it? (Short description of the item)	What is its purpose? (How did this artifact factor into people's daily lives? Is it connected to religion or money or trade, etc.?)	What features of this artifact show the effects of exchanges at Mali? (Was it connected to Islam? Are the words in Arabic?)

SoE4.7 West African and Arab/North African Perspectives Instructions

(page 1 of 3)

Teacher's Instructions: This activity uses excerpts from the *Epic of Sundiata*, but does not give students much background on that story. There are many good activities available online for teaching the *Epic of Sundiata*, as well as a short children's book version and YouTube videos. Consider using one of these methods to introduce your students to the *Epic of Sundiata* if you have not already covered it.



Citation: Fondouk el-Nejjarine, Fez, Morocco, photography by Josep Renalias, 2008, Wikipedia Commons,

[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fes -
_Fondouk_el-Nejjarine.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fes_-_Fondouk_el-Nejjarine.jpg)

The section below introduces students to perspective, the sources available for medieval West African history, and the problems with each. You may have students read the next two paragraphs, or tell it to them in a short lecture, or powerpoint presentation. Make sure that they record in their notes a definition of perspective, the two types of sources, and the problems with each.

All of the written primary sources about medieval Mali were written by outsiders, mostly from the Islamic World. The West Africans had no written language, although some of them could read and write in Arabic. There are several problems with using Arab/North African travelers' accounts as primary sources for medieval West African history. First, the Arabs were outsiders. As we have seen in the Quanzhou lesson, outsiders do not view a culture in the same way that the local people do. The outsiders' perspective, or point of view, is different from a local person's perspective. If a historian relies on the evidence from Arab travelers about medieval West Africa, those sources have the effect of over-emphasizing the impact of Islam and the gold trade on West Africans. Reading only Arab accounts can make it seem like West African kingdoms did not even exist until Arab travelers "discovered" them. The second problem is that many Arab/North African writers thought that West

African culture was more primitive than Arab culture. They tended to praise West Africans who converted to Islam and followed Muslim customs, and to criticize traditional West African practices. Their perspective was biased towards Arab Muslim customs and biased against West African customs.

West Africans did preserve their own histories even though they did not write them down until the 20th century. Before then, griots, or storytellers, composed and memorized long histories about kings and important chiefs. Older griots taught the stories to younger griots. The most important story about Mali is the *Epic of Sundiata*, the history of Sundiata Keita, the founder of Mali. There are several problems with using griots' stories as

SoE4.7 West African and Arab/North African Perspectives Instructions

(page 2 of 3)

primary sources. First, the stories were not written down until the 20th century. Even though griots had incredible memories, over the centuries they changed details and added materials. The story a griot told in the 14th century was very different from the story told by a griot in the 21st century. The second problem is that the griots had a different purpose for composing the stories. Their purpose was to praise a specific lineage of kings, that is, male descendants of a famous king. A griot would naturally emphasize the deeds of that king and minimize the deeds of others. A final problem is the presence of magical events in the stories. Many of the griots, especially in the past, believed in magic, and it made sense to them that magical events occurred. But because most modern historians do not believe in magic, they have a lot of trouble accepting that stories full of magic could be “true.” This is another example of perspective. From the 15th-century griot’s perspective, magic was real. From a 21st-century historian’s perspective, magic is not real.

Even though there are problems, West African historians use the *Epic of Sundiata* and other griots’ histories as primary sources for medieval West African history. Historians try to pick out the details that seem logical and to figure out what might have happened without the magical explanation. They point out that the advantages of having a history from a West African perspective outweigh all the problems. As you read the excerpts from the *Epic of Sundiata*, look for the details that seem logical and also for the subjects that seem to be important to the griot.

Close Reading Activity One:

Divide students into pairs. Each pair should receive one of the five different SoE4.8 Arab/North African Sources and one of the three different SoE4.9 *Epic of Sundiata* excerpt. (It does not matter which sources are paired together.) Have them mark the texts by underlining the subjects of all the sentences and circling all the verbs. Have them write down five words that best describe the subject or subjects of the source, and write a one-sentence summary of the source. When they finish, make a T chart on the board for “Arab/North African Sources” and “West African Source” and have students share the subject words as you record them on the appropriate side of the T chart. Then have each pair share their summary sentences. Finally, ask students what impression the Arab/North African words give about Mali and West Africa. Record those impressions to the left of the T chart. Do the same for the West African source (the *Epic of Sundiata*) and record those impressions to the right of the T chart. Ask students to point out the differences in these impressions. Point out that perspective affects subject matter and word choices. Ask them why historians need sources from multiple perspectives.

SoE4.7 West African and Arab/North African Perspectives Instructions (page 3 of 3)

Close Reading Activity 2

Have students reread their sources, answer the questions below each source. Have them share the answers to the last two questions for the Arab/North African sources (on the exchanges and effects) and the last question on the Sundiata source (on the influence of Arab culture). Make a list of the most important effects and have students record these in their notes:

- Islam had a major influence on Ghana and Mali. Some, but not all, West Africans converted to Islam. The Pilgrimage, trade, traveling scholars and poets brought Muslim ideas and customs to West Africa and connected Ghana and especially Mali to the Islamic trade and pilgrimage network. However, the Arab/North African sources emphasized the importance of Islam much more than the *Epic of Sundiata* did.
- Gold was a very important product exported from Mali. Malians could buy silk, European and Egyptian clothes, horses, and other imported goods. Their markets were busy and the people seemed wealthy.
- The kings charged taxes on salt and gold and were very wealthy. They imported horses from North Africa which made their armies much more powerful.
- Slaves were not only exported from West Africa but also INTO West Africa from Europe (the Turks) and the slave markets of Cairo.
- Malians had a reputation for honesty. After they were cheated by the Egyptians, Malians reacted by distrusting and treating Egyptians poorly.

SoE4.8.1 Arab/North African Sources on Ghana and Mali (page 1 of 2)

Source 1: Al-Bakri, "The Book of Routes and Realms"

Introduction: Abu Ubayd al-Aziz al-Bakri lived in the eleventh century and died in 1094. He lived his entire life in al-Andalus and never visited Mali. He collected his information from other Arab historians and from Andalusian Arabs who had traveled to West Africa. In the time that he was writing, Mali did not yet exist as a kingdom. Instead the kingdom of Ghana ruled West Africa. The kings of Ghana were not Muslims. These excerpts come from al-Bakri's Book of Routes and Realms, written in 1068.

The city of Ghana consists of two towns. . . . One of these towns, which is inhabited by Muslims, is large and has twelve mosques, in one of which they assemble for the Friday prayer. There are salaried imams and muezzins, as well as jurists and scholars.

The king's town is six miles distant from this one and bears the name of Al-Ghaba. . . . The houses of the inhabitants are of stone and acacia wood. The king has a palace and a number of domed dwellings all surrounded with an enclosure like a city wall. In the king's town, and not far from his court of justice, is a mosque where the Muslims who arrive at his court pray. Around the king's town are domed buildings and groves and thickets where the sorcerers of these people, men in charge of the religious cult, live. In them too are their idols and the tombs of their kings. These woods are guarded and none may enter them and know what is there.

The king's interpreters, the official in charge of his treasury and the majority of his ministers are Muslims. When the people who follow the same religion as the king approach him they fall on their knees and sprinkle dust on their heads, for this is their way of greeting him. As for the Muslims, they greet him only by clapping their hands. . . .

On every donkey-load of salt when it is brought into the country their king levies one golden dinar, and two dinars when it is sent out. The nuggets [of gold] found in all the mines of his country are reserved for the king, and only this gold dust is left for the people.

Citation: Abu Ubayd al-Aziz al-Bakri, "The Book of Routes and Realms," in Corpus of early Arabic sources for West African history, trans. by J. F. P. Hopkins and edited by N. Levtzion and J. F. P. Hopkins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 79-81.

SoE4.8.1 Arab/North African Sources on Ghana and Mali (page 2 of 2)

Vocabulary

salaried = receiving a paycheck

imams, muezzins, jurists = Muslim religious scholars and officials

acacia = a tree

groves and thickets = areas with trees and bushes

sorcerers = Al-Bakri's word for the West African shamans. This word, which means magicians, is a negative loaded word to a Muslim, as is the word "idol."

interpreters = people who translate from Soninke (the language of Ghana) to Arabic for the king

treasury = the king's money and riches

ministers = important officials of the government

levies = charges as a tax

dinar = a gold coin

Questions

1. Describe the part of Ghana where the Muslims live.
2. Describe the part of Ghana where the king of Ghana lived.
3. What was the difference between how the Muslims greeted the king and how the non-Muslims greeted the king?
4. How did the king collect a tax on the salt that entered and left his kingdom?
5. What products, ideas, or technologies were exchanged at Ghana?
6. What were the effects of those exchanges?

SoE4.8.2 Arab/North African Sources on Ghana and Mali (page 1 of 2)

Source 2: Al-Umari, "Pathways of Vision," Part 1

Introduction: Ibn Fadl Allah al-Umari was a Syrian Arab Muslim who lived from 1301 to 1349. He worked for the Mamluk Sultanate, but he argued with the Sultan and was fired and put in prison for some time. He wrote a huge book, like an encyclopedia, about the history and geography of the world. He wrote the part about Mali in 1337 and 1338. Al-Umari probably did not travel to Mali himself, but he collected information from many informants who had lived in Mali for years.

The king of this realm sits in his palace on a big dais . . . on a big seat made with ebony like a throne and of a size for a very heavily-built sitter. Over the dais, on all sides, are elephant tusks one beside the other. He has with him his arms, which are all of gold – sword, javelin, quiver, bow, and arrows. He wears big trousers cut out of about twenty pieces which none but he wears. About 30 slaves stand behind him, Turks and others who are bought for him in Egypt. One of them carries in his hand a parasol of silk topped by a dome and a bird of gold in the shape of a falcon. His emirs sit around and below him in two ranks to right and left. . . .

They wear turbans with ends tied under the chin like the Arabs. Their cloth is white and made of cotton which they grow and weave in the most excellent fashion. . . . Their brave horsemen wear golden bracelets. Those whose knightly bravery is greater wear gold necklaces too. . . . Whenever a hero adds to the list of his exploits the king gives him a pair of wide trousers, and the greater the number of a knight's exploits the bigger the size of his trousers. . . . [The king's] trousers are of twenty pieces and nobody dares to wear the same.

The king of this country imports Arab horses and pays high prices for them. His army numbers about 100,000, of whom about 10,000 are cavalry mounted on horses and the remainder infantry without horses or other mounts. . . . The emirs and soldiers . . . [get from the king] 50,000 mithqals of gold every year, besides which he keeps them in horses and clothes. His whole ambition is to give them fine clothes and to make his towns into cities.

Citation: Ibn Fadl Allah al-Umari, excerpt of "Pathways of Vision in the Realms of the Metropolises," in Corpus of early Arabic sources for West African history, trans. by J. F. P. Hopkins and edited by N. Levtzion and J. F. P. Hopkins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 265-266.

SoE4.8.2 Arab/North African Sources on Ghana and Mali (page 2 of 2)

Vocabulary

king = the Mansa

realm = Mali

dais = raised platform

arms = in this case, weapons

emirs = army commanders

exploits = actions or deeds

cavalry = army groups of soldiers riding horses

infantry = army group of soldiers on foot

mithqal = a small gold coin

Questions

1. What symbols of power surrounded the king's (the Mansa of Mali) seat?
2. From what areas did the king get his slaves? How do you think the slaves got to Mali from those places?
3. From where do you think the king got the parasol of silk?
4. If a soldier wore bigger trousers, what did that mean?
5. Why did the king wear the biggest trousers?
6. From where did the king get his horses? How did he pay for them?
7. What products, ideas, or technologies were exchanged at Mali?
8. What were the effects of those exchanges?

SoE4.8.3 Arab/North African Sources on Ghana and Mali

Source 3: Al-Umari, "Pathways of Vision," Part 2

Introduction: Ibn Fadl Allah al-Umari was a Syrian Arab Muslim who lived from 1301 to 1349. He worked for the Mamluk Sultanate, but he argued with the Sultan and was fired and put in prison for some time. He wrote a huge book, like an encyclopedia, about the history and geography of the world. He wrote the part about Mali in 1337 and 1338. Al-Umari probably did not travel to Mali himself, but he collected information from many informants who had lived in Mali for years.

Merchants of . . . Cairo have told me of the profits which they made from the Africans, saying that one of them might buy a shirt or cloak or robe or other garment for five dinars when it was worth one. Such was their simplicity and trustfulness that it was possible to practice any deception on them. They greeted anything that was said to them with trusting acceptance. But later they formed the very poorest opinion of the Egyptians because of the obvious falseness of everything they said to them and their outrageous behavior in fixing the prices of the provisions and other goods which were sold to them, so much so that if they met today the most learned doctor of religious science and he said that he was Egyptian, they would be rude to him and treat him poorly because of the poor treatment which they had experienced [from the Cairo merchants]."

Citation: Ibn Fadl Allah al-Umari, excerpt of "Pathways of Vision in the Realms of the Metropolises," in Corpus of early Arabic sources for West African history, trans. by J. F. P. Hopkins and edited by N. Levtzion and J. F. P. Hopkins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 271.

Vocabulary

dinar = a gold coin

deception = trick or lie

outrageous = really bad

fixing the prices of provisions = charging too much for food

Questions

1. How were the Egyptian merchants able to make such great profits in their trade with the Africans?
2. How were the Africans described according to this source?
3. How did the African opinion of Egyptians change over time?
4. Does this source reflect bias?
5. What products, ideas, or technologies were exchanged between the Malians and Egyptians?
6. What were the effects of those exchanges?

SoE4.8.4 Arab/North African Sources on Ghana and Mali (page 1 of 2)

Source #4: Ibn Khaldun, Introduction

Introduction: Abu Zayd Abd al-Rahman Ibn Khaldun was an important Arab historian who spent most of his life serving different rulers of North African Muslim states. He was born in 1332 and died in 1406. He wrote the Introduction as part of a longer history. Ibn Khaldun was a very careful historian who recorded oral histories from Malian scholars as well as collecting information from Arab who had been to Mali. For this reason, he is more reliable than other Arab/North African historians.

The neighbors of Ghana on the east . . . were another people known as Sosso, and beyond them another people known as Mali Later the authority of the people of Ghana decreased Later the people of Mali . . . dominated the whole region. They defeated the Sosso and got all their land, both their ancient kingdom and that of Ghana as far as the Ocean on the west. They were Muslims. . . .

[One of their kings,] Mansa Musa was an upright man and a great king, and tales of his justice are still told. He made the Pilgrimage in 1324 and met during the ceremonies the Andalusian poet . . . al-Tuwayjin. [He] accompanied Mansa Musa to his country and there enjoyed an esteem and consideration which his descendants have inherited after him and keep to this day. They are settled in Walatan on the western frontier of their country. . . .

According to *al-hajj* Yunus, the interpreter for this nation at Cairo, this man Mansa Musa came from his country with 80 loads of gold dust, each load weighing three *qintars*. In their own country they use only slave women and men for transport but for distant journeys such as the Pilgrimage they have mounts [T]he reign of this Mansa Musa lasted for 25 years.

The capital of the people of Mali is the town of BNY, an extensive place with cultivated land fed by running water, very populous with busy markets. At present it is a station for trading caravans from the Maghrib, Ifriqiya, and Egypt, and goods are imported from all parts. . . .

Citation: Ibn Khaldun, "Muqaddima [Introduction]," in Corpus of early Arabic sources for West African history, trans. by J. F. P. Hopkins and edited by N. Levtzion and J. F. P. Hopkins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 333-336.

SoE4.8.4 Arab/North African Sources on Ghana and Mali (page 2 of 2)

Vocabulary

Sosso = a kingdom defeated by Sundiata Keita

dominated = ruled over

frontier = border

Pilgrimage = the Hajj to Mecca that every Muslim is supposed to make once in his or her life

ceremonies = special religious events during the Hajj

al-hajj = this title meant that Yunus had gone on the Hajj

Andalusian = from al-Andalus, Muslim Iberia

interpreter for this nation at Cairo = Yunus translated for people from Mali when they came to the city of Cairo

qintars = a measurement of weight

mounts = camels

BNY = historians are not sure where this city was

cultivated = farmed

populous = having lots of people

Ifriqiya = the central part of North Africa

upright = honest, good, moral

Questions

1. After the power of Ghana decreased, how did Mali gain power?
2. What was the religion of the mansas of Mali?
3. Whom did Mansa Musa meet while he was on the Pilgrimage? When this poet came to Mali, what ideas might he have shared with people in Mali?
4. What did the Malians use to carry goods in Mali?
5. What could be found in the Malian capital city?
6. What products, ideas, or technologies were exchanged at Mali?
7. What were the effects of those exchanges?

SoE4.8.5 Arab/North African Sources on Ghana and Mali (page 1 of 2)

Source 5: Ibn Battuta, Travels of Ibn Battuta

Introduction: This piece was written by the same Ibn Battuta as the traveler you learned about in lessons 2 and 3 and earlier in this lesson.

On some days [Mansa Sulayman] sits in the audience hall. There is a bench under a tree, which has three steps . . . It is covered with soil and cushions are placed on it. A parasol, that is to say, something like a silken cupola, is raised over it. On top of it is a gold bird the size of a falcon. The Sultan comes out of a door in a corner of the palace with his bow in his hand, his quiver between his shoulders, a gold skull-cap on his head held in place by a gold headband He is mostly dressed in a hairy, red tunic of the European cloth. . . .

The Blacks are the most respectful of people to their king and abase themselves most before him [The subject] comes forward humbly and lowly, and strikes the ground hard with his elbows. . . . [H]e takes his robe off his back and throws dust on his head and back I was astonished that they did not blind themselves. . . . That is good manners among them.

Among their good practices are their avoidance of injustice; there is no people more averse to it, and their Sultan does not allow anyone to practice it; . . . the universal security in their country, for neither the traveler nor the resident has to fear thieves or bandits. They do not interfere with the property of white men who die in their country, even if it amounts to vast sums; they just leave it in the hands of a trustworthy white man until whoever is entitled to it takes possession of it. [Another good practice is] their punctiliousness in praying . . . and in compelling their children to do so; if a man does not come early to the mosque he will not find a place to pray because of the dense crowd They pay great attention to memorizing the Holy Quran. If their children appear to be backward in learning, they put shackles on them and do not remove them till they learn it. . . .

Citation: Ibn Battuta, C. Defrémery, B.R. Sanguinetti, C.F. Beckingham, and H.A. R. Gibb, trans. and eds. The Travels of Ibn Battuta, A.D. 1325-1354 (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society at University Press, 1958-2000), 4:958-966.

SoE4.8.5 Arab/North African Sources on Ghana and Mali (page 2 of 2)

Vocabulary

audience hall = the place where people can ask the king for favors or justice

cupola = a domed covering

abase = bow down, keep low

averse = against

entitled to it = whoever should have it (that is, the heirs of the dead man)

punctiliousness = careful attention to detail

compelling = forcing

shackles = chains, such as a slave wears

Questions

1. What do you think Ibn Battuta meant by "the Blacks"?
2. What do you think he meant by the "quarter of the white people"?
3. What cultural customs did he observe that reflect respect for others?
4. What cultural customs did he observe that reflect a devotion to Islam?
5. Does this source reflect bias?
6. What products, ideas, or technologies were exchanged at Mali?
7. What were the effects of those exchanges?

SoE4.9.1 The *Epic of Sundiata*: A West African Source on Mali

Part 1

Introduction: The Epic of Sundiata was passed down from griot to griot from the 14th to the 20th century. In the 1950s, historian D. T. Niane wrote down this version of the Sundiata epic as it was told to him by a griot, Djeli Mamoudou Kouyaté.

Listen then, sons of Mali, children of the black people, listen to my word, for I am going to tell you of Sundiata, the father of the Bright Country, of the savanna land, the ancestor of those who draw the bow, the master of a hundred vanquished kings. . . . (p. 2)

The country of Ghana is a dry region where water is short. Formerly the [kings] of Ghana were the most powerful . . . At the time of Sundiata [they] . . . were paying tribute to the king of Sosso. After several days of traveling the caravan arrived outside Wagadou. The merchants showed Sogolon and her children the great forest of Wagadou, where the great serpent-god used to live. The town was surrounded with enormous walls, very badly maintained. The travelers noticed that there were a lot of white traders at Wagadou and many camps were around the town. Tethered camels were everywhere. . . . [The Soninke] are great traders. Their donkey caravans came heavily laden to Niani every dry season. They would set themselves up behind the town and the inhabitants would come out to barter. (p. 32-33)

Citation: D. T. Niane, *Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali*, translated by G. D. Pickett, revised ed. (Harlow, Essex: Pearson, 1986, 2006), 2, 32-33.

Vocabulary

Bright Country = name for the savannah of West Africa, where the sun shines very brightly

vanquished = defeated

tribute = goods, crops and other wealth that a weaker state has to give to a stronger state

white people = Arabs/North Africans

tethered = tied up around their ankles so they won't run away

Soninke = the people who ruled Ghana

Niani = Sundiata's home town

Questions

1. The first sentence is the opening of the story told by the griot. To whom was the griot telling the story?
2. When Sundiata was living, what had happened to the kingdom of Ghana?
3. Who was the most powerful king?
4. Wagadou was a trade city of Ghana in the Sahel, the southern edge of the Sahara Desert. The caravans from North Africa would stop there. What do Sogolon (Sundiata's mother) and her children notice there?
5. Who carried the goods from North Africa south to Niani?
6. In the griot's perspective, how important are the Arab/North African traders? Do they seem like the central part of the story?

SoE4.9.2 The *Epic of Sundiata*: A West African Source on Mali (page 1 of 2)

Part 2

Introduction: The Epic of Sundiata was passed down from griot to griot from the 14th to the 20th century. In the 1950s, historian D. T. Niane wrote down this version of the Sundiata epic as it was told to him by a griot, Djeli Mamoudou Kouyaté.

Soumaoro was descended from the line of smiths called Diarisso who first harnessed fire and taught men how to work iron, but for a long time Sosso had remained a little village of no significance. The powerful king of Ghana was the master of the country. Little by little the kingdom of Sosso had grown at the expense of Ghana and now the Kantes dominated their old masters. Like all masters of fire, Soumaoro Kante was a great sorcerer. His fetishes had a terrible power and it was because of them that all kings trembled before him, for he could deal a swift death to whoever he pleased. He had fortified Sosso with a triple curtain wall and in the middle of the town loomed his palace, towering over the thatched huts of the villages. He had had a huge seven-story tower built for himself and he lived on the seventh floor in the midst of his fetishes. This is why he was called "The Untouchable King."

Djata was strong enough now to face his enemies. At the age of eighteen he had the stateliness of the lion and the strength of the buffalo. His voice carried authority, his eyes were live coals, his arm was iron, he was the husband of power. Moussa Tounkara, king of Mema, gave Sundiata half of his army. The bravest men came forward of their own free will to follow Sundiata in the great adventure. The cavalry of Mema, which he had trained himself, formed his iron squadron. Sundiata, dressed in the Muslim fashion of Mema, left the town at the head of his small but redoubtable army.

Citation: D. T. Niane, *Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali*, translated by G. D. Pickett, revised ed. (Harlow, Essex: Pearson, 1986, 2006), 38, 47-48.

SoE4.9.2 The *Epic of Sundiata*: A West African Source on Mali (page 2 of 2)

Vocabulary

Soumaoro = the wicked and magically powerful *king of Sosso*. He was Sundiata's enemy.

descended = his ancestors were smiths

harnessed = learned how to use fire to make iron tools

Kantes = Soumaoro's family

sorcerer = shaman, religious leader

fetish = magical object, part of West African shamanistic religion

fortified = built defenses for the town

curtain wall = wall around the town

thatched = roofs made out of plant material

Djata = Sundiata

stateliness = authority

Mema = a kingdom along the Niger river

cavalry = a group of soldiers mounted on horses

squadron = a unit of soldiers

redoubtable = strong

Questions

1. Who was Soumaoro? What made him powerful?
2. What religion do the people follow?
3. What was the importance of iron to this society?
4. Notice that there were lots of kings in West Africa. Leaders like Soumaoro and Sundiata gained power by getting other kings to follow them. Why did kings follow Soumaoro?
5. What did the king of Mema do for Sundiata?
6. What made Sundiata's army so powerful?
7. From the griot's perspective, how influential and important were Arabs/North Africans and Islam in West Africa?

SoE4.9.3 The *Epic of Sundiata*: A West African Source on Mali (page 1 of 2)

Part 3

Introduction: The Epic of Sundiata was passed down from griot to griot from the 14th to the 20th century. In the 1950s, historian D. T. Niane wrote down this version of the Sundiata epic as it was told to him by a griot, Djeli Mamoudou Kouyaté.

. . . [O]n all sides villages opened their gates to Sundiata. In all these villages Sundiata recruited soldiers. In the same way as light precedes the sun, so the glory of Sundiata, overleaping the mountains, shed itself on all the Niger plain. All the rebellious kings of the savannah country had gathered Raising his hand Maghan Sundiata spoke thus: "I salute you all, sons of Mali. . . . I have come back, and as long as I breathe Mali will never be in slavery - rather death than slavery. We will live free because our ancestors lived free. I am going to avenge the indignity that Mali has undergone." (pp. 54-56)

The arms of Sundiata had subdued all the countries of the savanna. From Ghana in the north to Mali in the south and from Mema in the east to the Fouta in the west, all the lands had recognized Sundiata's authority. Then [Sundiata] climbed up to sit in his place. Thereafter, one by one, the twelve kings of the bright savanna country got up and proclaimed Sundiata "Mansa" in their turn. . . . One by one all the kings received their kingdoms from the very hands of Sundiata, and each one bowed before him as one bows before a Mansa. Sundiata pronounced all the prohibitions which still apply in relations between the tribes. To each he assigned its land, he established the rights of each people and ratified their friendship.

Citation: D. T. Niane, *Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali*, translated by G. D. Pickett, revised ed. (Harlow, Essex: Pearson, 1986, 2006), 54-56, 72, 75-78.

SoE4.9.3 The *Epic of Sundiata*: A West African Source on Mali (page 2 of 2)

Vocabulary

recruited = gathered men for his army

precedes = comes before

Maghan = a title

indignity = wrong. Sundiata is referring to the evil rule of Soumaoro, king of Sosso.

subdued = defeated

Mansa = highest king, king over other kings

pronounced = ordered

prohibitions = rules

ratified = approved, consented to

Questions

1. The first paragraph describes how Sundiata gathered his army to fight Soumaoro, the king of Sosso. Why do you think people wanted to follow Sundiata?
2. The second paragraph comes after Sundiata had defeated Soumaoro, the king of Sosso, by killing him with a powerful magical object. What kingdoms did Sundiata unite under his control?
3. Notice that there were lots of kings in West Africa. Leaders like Soumaoro and Sundiata gained power by getting other kings to follow them. Why did kings follow Sundiata?
4. What title did the kings give to Sundiata?
5. What actions did Sundiata take to govern the kingdom of Mali?
6. From the griot's perspective, how influential and important were Arabs/North Africans and Islam in West Africa?

SoE4.10 Effects of Ghana and Mali on Other Sites in Afro-Eurasia (page 1 of 2)

Instructions: These primary sources give evidence about the effects that encounters with people from Ghana and Mali had on Arabs, North Africans and Europeans. All of these sources describe events that took place outside of West Africa. Read the sources and fill out the effects chart.

Source 1: Ibn Khaldun, "Introduction"

Introduction: Abu Zayd Abd al-Rahman Ibn Khaldun was an important Arab historian who spent most of his life serving different rulers of North African Muslim states. He was born in 1332 and died in 1406. He wrote the "Introduction" as part of a longer history. Ibn Khaldun was a very careful historian who recorded oral histories from Malian scholars as well as collecting information from Arab who had been to Mali. For this reason, he is more reliable than other Arab/North African historians.

When Sultan Abul Hasan [of the Hafsids Caliphate] sent to the king of the Sudan, Mansa Sulayman son of Mansa Musa, the gift Mansa Sulayman worked to collect a comparable gift. For this purpose he collected wonderful and strange objects of his country . . . [and] added to it a giraffe, a strangely-shaped and large-framed creature resembling various other animals. The deputation departed from their country and reached Fez in Safar (December 1360-January 1361). The day of their arrival was a memorable one. The sultan sat to receive them in the Golden Tower as he would for a review and criers summoned the people to go out to the open space outside the city. They came out . . . and they climbed over each other in the crowd around the giraffe in amazement at its form.

The deputation presented themselves before the sultan and delivered their messages affirming the affection and sincere friendship [of their king]. . . . [T]hey were twanging their bowstrings in approval according to their approved custom. They greeted the sultan by scattering dust on their heads following the custom of non-Arab kings.

Vocabulary

Sudan = Mali, in this case

the gift = expensive presents made in North Africa and imported goods

Safar = a month

deputation = messengers sent by the mansa

review = parade

Citation: Ibn Khaldun, "Muqaddima [Introduction]," in Corpus of early Arabic sources for West African history, trans. by J. F. P. Hopkins and edited by N. Levtzion and J. F. P. Hopkins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 341-342.

Source 2: Al-Umari, "Pathways of Vision"

Introduction: In 1324 Mansa Musa made a pilgrimage to Mecca. It was perhaps the most famous pilgrimage in history, because Mansa Musa brought much gold with him and passed it out freely along his journey. He passed out so much gold in Cairo that the value of gold coins dropped for the entire economy of Cairo. Notice in the second paragraph that Mansa Musa did not want to bow down to the Mamluk Sultan, because that would make it

SoE4.10 Effects of Ghana and Mali on Other Sites in Afro-Eurasia (page 2 of 2)

seem like Mansa Musa was less powerful than the sultan. Mansa Musa found a polite solution by saying that he was bowing before God. The author of this account was Ibn Fadl Allah al-Umari, a Syrian Arab Muslim who lived from 1301 to 1349, and worked for the Mamluk Sultanate. He wrote a huge book, like an encyclopedia, about the history and geography of the world. He was not in Cairo during Mansa Musa's visit, but he interviewed people who had witnessed it.

This sultan Musa, during his stay in Egypt both before and after his journey to the Noble Hijaz, maintained a uniform attitude of worship and turning towards God. . . . He and all those with him behaved in the same manner and were well-dressed, grave, and dignified. He was noble and generous and performed many acts of charity and kindness. He had left his country with 100 loads of gold which he spent during his Pilgrimage on the tribes who lay along his route from his country to Egypt, while he was in Egypt, and again from Egypt to the Noble Hijaz and back."

[A Mamluk official told this to al-Umari]: "When I went out to meet him...on behalf of the mighty sultan al-Malik al-Nasir [of the Mamluk Sultanate], he did me extreme honor and treated me with the greatest courtesy. . . . [He sent] to the royal treasury many loads of unworked native gold and other valuables. I tried to persuade him to go up to the Citadel to meet the sultan, but he refused. . . . I realized that the audience was hateful to him because he would have to kiss the ground and the sultan's hand. . . . I kept on at him till he agreed. When we came in the sultan's presence, we said to him: "Kiss the ground!" but he refused outright saying: "How may this be?" Then an intelligent man who was with him whispered something we could not understand, and he said: "I make obeisance to God who created me!" then he prostrated himself and went forward to the sultan. The sultan half rose to greet him and sat him by his side. They talked for a long time, then Sultan Musa went out."

When the time to leave for the Pilgrimage came round, the sultan sent to him [Mansa Musa] a large sum of money with ordinary and thoroughbred camels complete with saddles and equipment to serve as mounts for him. . . . He arranged for deposits of fodder to be placed along the road and ordered the caravan commanders to treat him with honour and respect.

Vocabulary

Noble Hijaz = the area in Arabia around Mecca

royal treasury = the building that holds the money belonging to the Mamluk Sultanate

audience = formal meeting with the sultan in his great hall

make obeisance = bow down

prostrated = bowed down to the floor

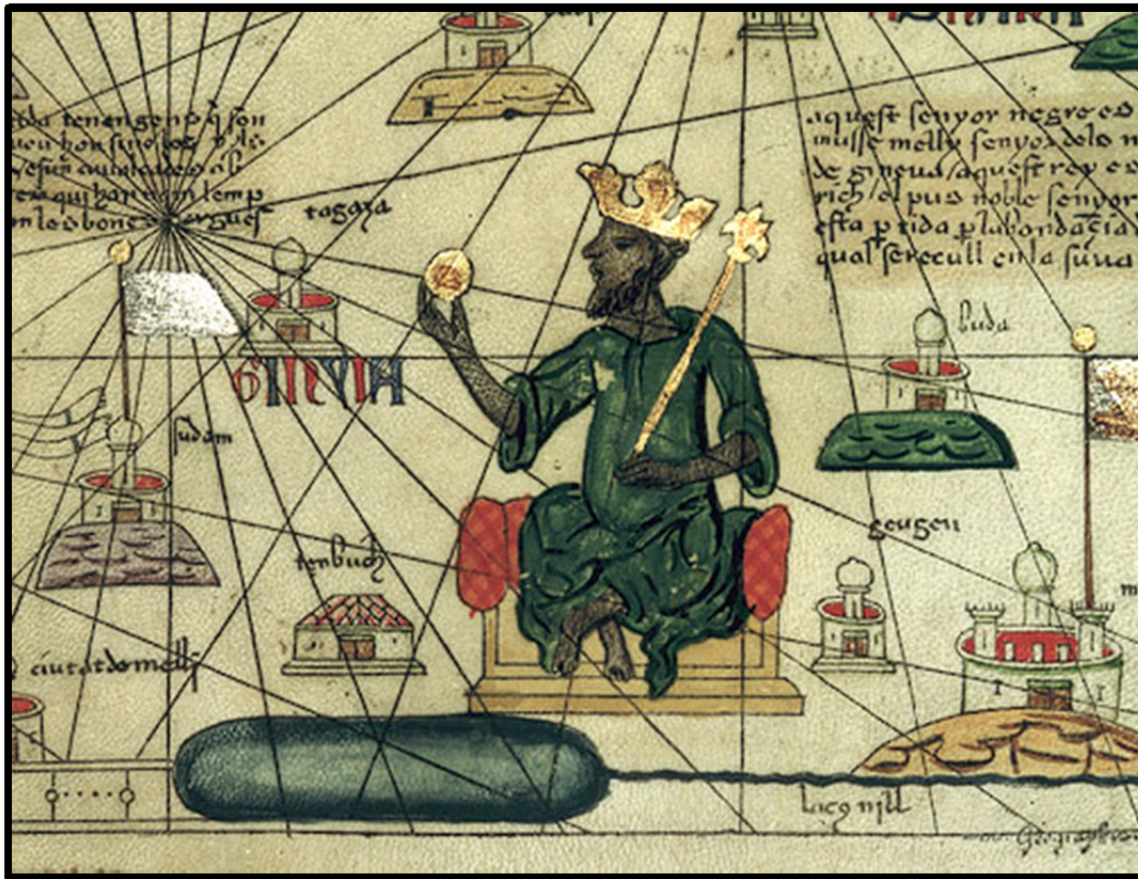
fodder = grain and hay for the camels to eat

Citation: Ibn Fadl Allah al-Umari, excerpt of "Pathways of Vision in the Realms of the Metropolises," in Corpus of early Arabic sources for West African history, trans. by J. F. P. Hopkins and edited by N. Levtzion and J. F. P. Hopkins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 269-270.

SoE4.10 Effects of Ghana and Mali on Other Sites in Afro-Eurasia

Source 3: Section of the Catalan Atlas

Introduction: This is a modern drawing of a section of the Catalan Atlas, created in Majorca around 1375 by Abraham Cresques, a Majorcan Jewish mapmaker, for the Latin Christian King of Aragon, who gave it as a present to the King of France. This section shows part of West Africa.



The image in the center represents Mansa Musa. The writing on the map is in the Catalan language. The words to the right of Mansa Musa read: "This black lord is named Mussa Melly, lord of the blacks of Guinea [another name for West Africa]. This king is the richest and most noble lord of all of this region due to the abundance of gold which is collected in his land."

The map also has the location of Taghaza (by the white salt), Timbuktu (Tenbuch) and other towns. Even though Abraham Cresques and through him, other Europeans, had the wrong name for Mansa Musa, notice that they knew quite a lot about West Africa, which they probably learned from Arab/North African writers and travelers.

Citation: Depiction of Mansa Musa from the Catalan Atlas, 1375. The Catalan Atlas was drawn by Abraham Cresques, and the original is preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. This photograph was uploaded by Magnus Manske in 2008, Wikipedia Commons, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Mansa_Musa.jpg. The translations are courtesy of Dr. Jeremy Ledger, University of Michigan.

SoE4.10 Effects of Ghana and Mali on Other Sites in Afro-Eurasia

Effects Chart: What were the effects of exchanges between people of Ghana and Mali and people in other sites of encounter in Afro-Eurasia?

Source: What is the title, author or artist and date of this source? Where was it created?	Description: What was happening in this source?	Exchanges: What products, ideas, or technologies did people from Ghana or Mali bring?	Effects: What change did the exchanges make for the people in other sites of encounter?	Evidence: What specific quotations or details show these exchanges and effects?

SoE4.11 Individual Research Project (page 1 of 2)

Instructions:

Your assigned site of encounter is _____.

1. Read the **SoE4.12 Source Handout** for your assigned site of encounter.
2. Do research to find the answers to **SoE4.13 Research Questions** handout and visuals for your Travel Brochure.
3. Fill out the **SoE4.13 Research Questions** handout.
4. Write a *Travel Account* about your site of encounter. Imagine that you are a 14th-century traveler from another culture visiting this site of encounter. At the site of encounter everything is strange – the language, the customs, the sights, the products. Use Ibn Battuta’s description (on the source handout) but be sure not to copy exactly what he wrote. Rewrite it in your own words. You should add your own comments, but try to comment as a person from the 14th century might, rather than as a person from the 21st century would.

Your travel narrative should be at least 250 words long. It should include:

- the name and location of the site of encounter.
- the name of the state and the majority religion
- important tourist sights
- information about how people of different cultures get along there

SoE4.11 Individual Research Project (page 2 of 2)

5. Make a *Travel Brochure*

Make a travel brochure on paper or on the computer. It should be 8" x 11" with three folds. Text and visuals should appear on both sides. Visuals can be drawn or located on the internet. Try to find visuals that existed in the 14th century (that is, not modern buildings).

Title
Visual
Invitation

How to get there
What you might see there
List of important sites

Facts about government, religion, climate, people, customs

The front side of the brochure

Information about the products that a merchant could find there (exports)
Visual

Information about the products that a merchant could sell there (imports)
Visual

Reasons why a traveler would find this site exciting and fun!
Visual

The back side of the brochure

SoE4.13 Research Questions (page 1 of 2)

Instructions: Use the Sites of Encounter in the Medieval World Interactive Map, your SoE4.12 Source Handout, and encyclopedias and the Internet to find the answers to these questions.

Use the Sites of Encounter in the Medieval World Interactive Map to answer these questions:

1. What is the closest body of water to your site of encounter? (look on the Sites of Encounter map)
2. Is your site closest to Sicily, Quanzhou, Cairo, Mali, Majorca, or Calicut?
3. In what trade circle was it?
4. Write down two important points about this trade circle from the description.
5. What were the major trade cities of this circle? Was your site one of them?
6. What products were imported?
7. What products were exported?
8. Who were the major shippers?
9. From what cultures did the merchants come?
10. What cultures of people lived at this site?
11. What were the physical features of the land around this site?
12. What was the major religion? Was it an area of dense Jewish settlement?
13. Did trade routes pass through this site? If so, in what directions did they go? What were the next cities on the trade routes? (For example, for Quanzhou, the trade routes went north and south and the next cities were Guangzhou and Hangzhou.)
14. In what state was this site in 1491?

SoE4.13 Research Questions (page 2 of 2)

15. Is there evidence of a major outbreak of the Black Death at this site? If so, in what year?

16. Did Marco Polo visit this site?

Use the SoE4.12 Source Handout to answer these questions:

17. What did Ibn Battuta see in the city? What buildings did he mention?

18. What was his opinion of the site? Did he criticize it, or praise it, or both? Give one piece of evidence to support your answer.

19. What evidence does the source have about trade and exchange of products?

20. What evidence does the source have about relations between people of different cultures?

21. What rules and policies did the government have to control relations between different cultural groups?

Use the internet to answer these questions:

22. In what modern nation is this site?

23. When was the city first built? Who built it?

24. What are the ethnic groups of the people who live there today?

25. What language or languages are spoken there today?

26. Record three interesting facts about this site.

SoE4.12.1 Alexandria Source Handout (page 1 of 2)



Photograph of Alexandria taken by an astronaut at the Space Station on July 27, 2003. Courtesy of NASA's Earth Observatory. <http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/IOTD/view.php?id=4529>

Background (secondary source):

Alexandria is a city in Egypt on the Mediterranean coast. Because of the strategic location of its port, Alexandria has been an important trading city for a long time. Throughout the Middle Ages Alexandria was often attacked by Crusaders (usually headed for Jerusalem) and pirates. Alexandria was under the control of the Mamluk Dynasty, whose sultans ruled from the nearby city of Cairo. Alexandria's port, which had two separate harbors, one for Christian and one for Muslim

ships, was a trading post between Europe, the Middle East and Asia. Eastern spices and Egyptian textiles (silk, cotton and linen) were among its most important goods. The Mamluk Sultanate did not allow any Europeans to go further east and south from Alexandria and Cairo (in order to protect their control of the trade from the Indian Ocean.)

Primary Source: Ibn Battuta, *Travels*:

...[W]e arrived at the city of al-Iskandariya [Alexandria], may God protect her! She is a well-guarded frontier citadel and a friendly and hospitable region, remarkable in appearance and solid of construction, furnished with all that one could wish for and . . . memorable buildings both secular and religious. ... She is a unique pearl ... through her middle position between the East and the West....The city of Alexandria has ... the magnificent port, and among all the ports in the world I have seen none to equal it, except . . . Calicut in India and Zaitun [Quanzhou] in China. . . . I went to see the lighthouse [the famous Pharos lighthouse] on this journey and found one of its faces in ruins. One would describe it as a square building soaring into the air. Its door is high above the level of the ground, and opposite its door and of the same height is another building;

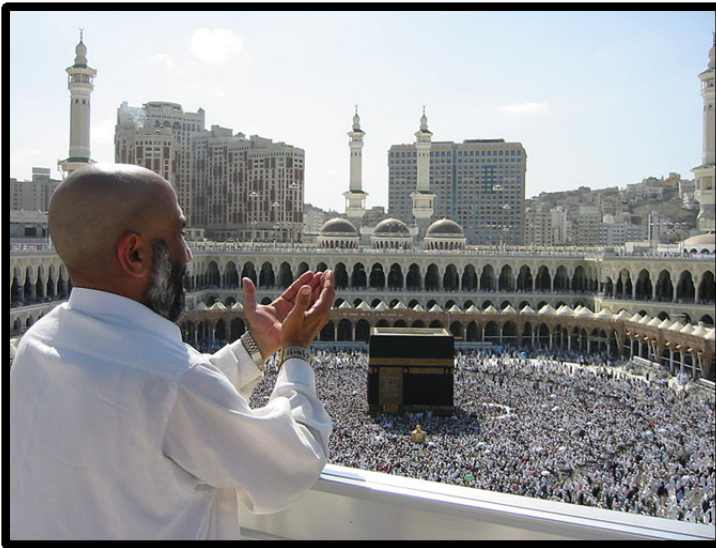
SoE4.12.1 Alexandria Source Handout (page 2 of 2)

wooden planks are laid from one to the other, and on these one crosses to the doorway. When they are removed there is no way to approach it. . . .

The following incident occurred in the city of Alexandria in the year 27 [1327]... A quarrel broke out between the Muslims and the Christian traders. The chief of police in Alexandria . . . adopted the policy of protecting the Europeans. He gave orders to the Muslims to assemble . . . and he shut them out of the city as a penalty for their action. The population disapproved of this and thought it monstrous; they broke down the gate and made a riotous assault on the governor's house. He protected himself against them and fought with them. . . . Subsequently the two amirs put to death thirty-six of the men of the city, and had each man cut in two and the bodies placed on crosses in two rows. . . . [T]he population were greatly distressed and their sorrows increased.

Citation: Ibn Battuta, C. Defrémery, B.R. Sanguinetti, C.F. Beckingham, and H.A. R. Gibb, trans. and eds., *The Travels of Ibn Battuta, A.D. 1325-1354* (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society at University Press, 1958), 1:18-28.

SoE4.12.2 Mecca Source Handout



Photograph of a Supplicating Pilgrim at Masjid Al Haram, taken by Ali Mansuri in 2003 during the Hajj. The pilgrim is looking down on the Ka'ba and the mass of pilgrims in the square around it. Courtesy of Ali Mansuri, Wikipedia Creative Commons, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Supplicating_Pilgrim_at_Masjid_Al_Haram_Mecca,_Saudi_Arabia.jpg

Background (secondary source):

Mecca, located in present-day Saudi Arabia, is regarded by Muslims as the holiest of cities. It is the birthplace of Muhammad and also the place where the Quran was revealed to him by God. Muslims are required to undertake a pilgrimage, known as the Hajj, to Mecca once in their lifetimes. As a result, throughout the Middle Ages (as still occurs today) Muslim pilgrims of different sects from throughout Islamic lands gathered during the holy month of Ramadan in Mecca to pray. In Mecca attention focused on the Ka'ba, a great stone cube at the center of its great mosque. Although located in the barren desert, every year, during the season of the Hajj, Mecca became for a few months a thriving commercial city.

Primary Source: from Ibn Battuta, *Travels* :

We presented ourselves immediately at the Sanctuary of God Most High within her [Mecca], the ... scene of mission of His Chosen One, Muhammad (God bless and give him peace). We entered the illustrious Holy House, wherein "he who enters is secure", by the gate of the Banu Shaiba and saw before our eyes the illustrious Ka'ba (God increase it in veneration)... surrounded by the companies which had come to pay homage to the God of Mercy... We made around it the [seven-fold] circuit of arrival and kissed the holy Stone... Praise be to God, Who hath honoured us by visitation to this holy House...

The citizens of Mecca often do good, have excellent generosity and good disposition, and are liberal to the poor and to those who have renounced the world, and kindly towards strangers. ... When anyone has his bread baked and takes it away to his house, the poor follow him and he gives each one of them whatever he assigns to him, sending none away disappointed. Even if he has but a single loaf, he gives away a third or a half of it, conceding it cheerfully and without grudgingness...

The inhabitants of the districts neighbouring on Mecca, such as the tribes of Bajila, Zahran and Ghamid ... bring to the city quantities of grain, melted butter, honey, raisins, oil and almonds, with the result that the prices are lowered in Mecca, its citizens enjoy a comfortable life and luxuries are within the reach of all. Were it not for the people of these districts, the lot of the Meccans would be hard indeed.

Citation: Ibn Battuta, C. Defrémery, B.R. Sanguinetti, C.F. Beckingham, and H.A. R. Gibb, trans. and eds., *The Travels of Ibn Battuta, A.D. 1325-1354* (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society at University Press, 1958), vol. 1, pp. 188-257.

SoE4.12.3 Baghdad Source Handout



Photograph of Baghdad, Iraq, taken by an astronaut from the International Space Station on August 24, 2002. Courtesy of NASA, Astronaut Photography of Earth,
<http://eol.jsc.nasa.gov/scripts/sseop/photo.pl?mission=ISS005&roll=E&frame=11029>

Background (secondary source):

Baghdad is located near the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. In the 8th century the caliph al-Mansur founded the city as his new capital. Baghdad remained the capital of the Abbasid dynasty until it was sacked in 1258 by the Mongols, who murdered the last Abbasid caliph. During the Abbasid period Baghdad flourished as a center of learning and international commerce, famed for its architectural beauty. At the time of Ibn Battuta's visit, Arab and Persian officials ruled over the city. The city was run-down and neglected, and there were often riots and violent crime. However, trade still passed through the city, and there were many colleges for higher studies.

Primary Source: from Ibn Battuta, *Travels* :

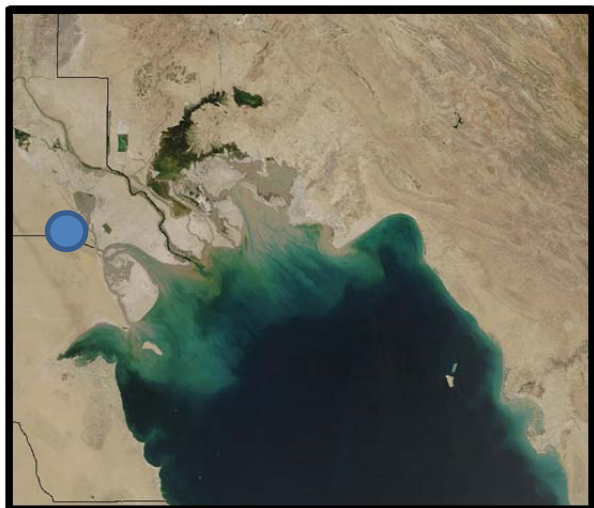
The City of Baghdād, city of the Abode of Peace and capital of al-Islām, of illustrious rank and supreme preeminence, abode of the Caliphs and residence of scholars...

Many persons have composed verses in her praise and have celebrated her charms at length...

There are two bridges at Baghdād...The population are continually crossing them, night and day, men and women; indeed they find in this unending pleasure. Of mosques in Baghdād ... they are very numerous, and so too are the colleges, although these have fallen into ruin. The bath-houses in Baghdād [also] are numerous; they are among the most sumptuous of baths...In each of these bath-houses there are a large number of cubicles,...Inside each cubicle is a marble basin fitted with two pipes, one flowing hot water and the other with cold water. ...The western side of the city was the one first built, but is now for the most part in ruins. In spite of that, there still remain of it thirteen quarters, each quarter like a city in itself, with two or three bath-houses, and eight of them there are cathedral mosques...[The] eastern part of Baghdād has magnificent bazaars and is splendidly laid out. The largest of its bazaars is the one called Tuesday bazaar, in which each craft [occupies a section] by itself...In the centre of this bazaar is the wonderful Nizāīya College...All four schools are included in it, each school having a [separate] *īwān*, with its own mosque and lecture room. The teacher takes his place under a small wooden canopy, on a chair covered with rugs; he sits [on this] in a grave and quiet attitude, wearing robes of black and his [black] turban, and with two assistants on his right and left, who repeat everything that he dictates.

Citation: Ibn Battuta, C. Defrémery, B.R. Sanguinetti, C.F. Beckingham, and H.A. R. Gibb, trans. and eds., *The Travels of Ibn Battuta, A.D. 1325-1354* (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society at University Press, 1958-2000), vol. 2, pp. 326

SoE4.12.4 Basra Source Handout



This MODIS image from May 30, 2002, shows desert sands into the Persian Gulf. The blue circle marks the city of Basra. The photo was taken by Jacques Descloitres, MODIS Land Rapid Response Team, NASA/GSFC, Courtesy of NASA Visible Earth, <http://eoimages.gsfc.nasa.gov/images/imagerecords/59000/595>

Background (secondary source):

Basra, in present-day southern Iraq, was one of early Islam's great cities. In the 8th and early 9th centuries Basra reached its height as a center of learning. Many prominent Muslim intellectuals worked and taught in the city and it was also an important commercial center, linked to Africa and India. Basra continued to thrive economically until the mid-13th century, when Mongol invasions damaged the city and its economy. When Ibn Battuta visited Basra it had become a shadow of its former self. However, its tombs of prominent Muslim theologians and other intellectuals still give it some prestige.

Primary Source: from Ibn Battuta, *Travels* :

As I approached the city I had remarked at a distance of some two miles from it a lofty building as tall as a castle. I asked what it was and was told that it was the mosque of 'Alī ibn Abī

Tālib...

The city of al-Basra is one of the metropolitan cities of the al-'Irāq, renowned throughout the whole world, spacious in area and elegant in its choice fruits... No place on earth exceeds it in quantity of palm-groves... There is manufactured there from dates a honey called *sailān*, which is sweet ...

Al-Basra is composed of three quarters...The third quarter is the quarter of the Persians...

The people of al-Basra are generous, hospitable to the stranger and readily doing their duty by him, so that no stranger feels lonely amongst them...

The mosque has seven minarets, one of them is the minaret which shakes, or so they say, when the name of 'Alī ibn Abī Tālib (God be pleased with him) is mentioned. I climbed up to this minaret from the top of the roof of the mosque accompanied by one of the inhabitants of al-Basra, and I found in one angle of it a wooden hand-grip nailed into it, resembling the handle of a builder's trowel. The man who was with me placed his hand on that hand-grip and said, "By right of the head of the Commander of the Faithful 'Alī (God be pleased with him), shake," and he shook the hand-grip, whereupon the whole minaret quivered.

Al-Basra is on the banks of the Euphrates and Tigris, and there is a high tide and low tide there... The channel of salt water which comes up from the Sea of Fārs [the Persian Gulf] is at a distance of ten miles from the town, and at high tide the sweet water overpowers the salt but at low tide the salt water overpowers the sweet. The inhabitants of al-Basra draw this water for use in their houses and for this reason the saying goes that their water is brackish.

Citation: Ibn Battuta, C. Defrémery, B.R. Sanguinetti, C.F. Beckingham, and H.A. R. Gibb, trans. and eds., *The Travels of Ibn Battuta, A.D. 1325-1354* (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society at University Press, 1958-2000), vol. 2, pp. 275-280.

SoE4.12.5 Khwarizm Source Handout



[The mausoleum \(tomb\) of Sultan Tekesh, in Urgench, built in the 13th century.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:KonyeUrgenchMausoleum.jpg) This photograph was taken by Doron, 2000, Wikipedia Commons GNU Free Documentation License, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:KonyeUrgenchMausoleum.jpg>.

Background (secondary source):

The city Ibn Battuta called Khwarizm is now named Urgench or Urganj. The province [region] is also called Khwarizm. Khwarizm is located in western Central Asia at the intersection of the present-day Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. This region was an oasis bordering the Aral Sea and surrounded by barren deserts. Local farms in Khwarizm province supported some towns, and many travelers and merchants on the Silk Road passed through the city. Over the centuries the region had been influenced and invaded by numerous civilizations, including Islamic civilization and the Mongols. When Ibn Battuta visited the city it was flourishing and had become a cultural center attracting intellectuals from across the Islamic world.

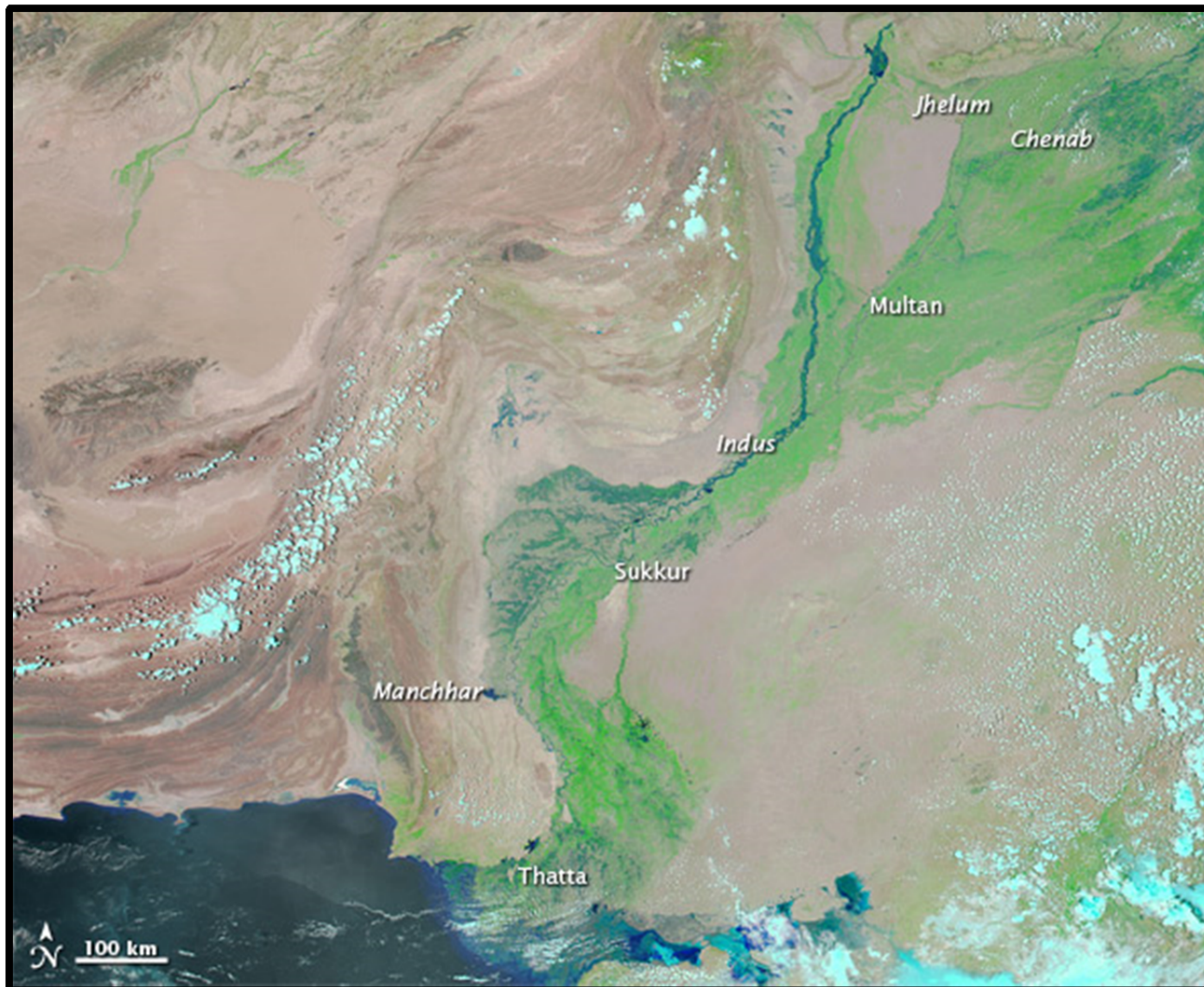
Primary Source: from Ibn Battuta, *Travels*:

. . . [W]e went on for thirty days by forced marches, halting only for two hours each day, one in the morning and the other at sunset... The water in this desert is at certain known waterpoints, separated by two or three days' march, and is rainwater [in surface pools] and shallow wells under the sand. After journeying through this desert and crossing it as we have described we arrived at Khwarizm, which is the largest, greatest, most beautiful and most important city of the Turks. It has fine bazaars and broad streets, a great number of buildings and abundance of commodities; it shakes under the weight of its population, by reason of their multitude ...Never have I seen in all the lands of the world men more excellent in conduct than the Khwarizmaians, and more generous in soul, or more friendly to strangers...Any person who absents himself from the communal prayers is beaten by the imam [who leads the prayers] in the presence of the congregation, and in every mosque there is a whip hung up for this purpose. ...Outside Khwarizm is a hospice built over the tomb of the Shaikh Najm al-Din al-Kubra, who was one of the great saints. Food is supplied in it to all wayfarers...

The melons of Khwarizm have no equal in any country of the world, East or West...Their rind is green, and the flesh is red, of extreme sweetness and firm texture. A remarkable thing is that they are cut into strips, dried in the sun, and packed in reed baskets, as is done in our country with dried figs and Malaga figs. They are exported from Khwarizm to the remotest parts of India and China, and there are no dried fruits anywhere which are more sweet...

Citation: Ibn Battuta, C. Defrémery, B.R. Sanguinetti, C.F. Beckingham, and H.A. R. Gibb, trans. and eds., *The Travels of Ibn Battuta, A.D. 1325-1354* (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society at University Press, 1958-2000), vol. 3, pp. 539-548. Modernized by Shennan Hutton.

SoE4.8.6 Multan Source Handout (page 1 of 2)



The Indus River Valley, with the location of Multan, taken by MODIS on NASA's Aqua Satellite, on July 16, 2010. The colors have been enhanced to show contrasts. Courtesy of Earth Observatory, NASA, <http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/NaturalHazards/view.php?id=45885>

Background (secondary source):

Multan, located in present-day Pakistan, near the Ravi River (a tributary of the Indus River) was a military capital of the region. The city was conquered by Arab invaders in the early 8th century and thereafter remained one of the key Muslim centers in Western India. It was also a key city for the Suhrawardiya, an important Sufi sect in India. Its location continued to make it a prominent trading center, and the city was also supported by the agricultural fertility of the region. When Ibn Battuta visited the city it was under the control of the Delhi Sultanate, a kingdom of Muslim Turks ruling over northern India.

SoE4.8.6 Multan Source Handout (page 2 of 2)

Primary Source: from Ibn Battuta, *Travels*

... I travelled to the city of Multan, the capital of the land of Sind and residence of its ruling amir [a governor of the Delhi Sultanate]. On the road to Multan, and ten miles distant from it is the river called Khusru Abad (the Ravi River), a large river that cannot be crossed except by boat. At this point the goods of all who pass are subjected to a rigorous examination and their baggage searched. Their [The rulers of the Delhi Sultanate's] practice at the time of our arrival was to take a quarter of everything brought in by the merchants, and to charge a tax of seven dinars for every horse. Two years after our arrival in India, the Sultan abolished these taxes and ordered that nothing should be taken from people except the alms tax (*zakat*) and the tenth...

When we set about the crossing of this river and the baggage was examined, the idea of having my baggage searched was very disagreeable to me, for though there was nothing much in it, it seemed like a great deal in the eyes of the people, and I did not like having it looked into. By the grace of God Most High there arrived on the scene one of the principal officers on behalf of Qutb al-Mulk, the governor of Multan, who gave orders that I should not be subjected to examination or search...

We spent that night on the bank of the river and next morning were visited by the postmaster, a man named Dihqan, originally from Samarqand, who is the person who writes to the Sultan to inform him of affairs in that city and district and of all that happens in it and all who come to it...I presented him [the governor of Multan] with a white slave, a horse, and some raisins and almonds. These are among the greatest gifts that can be made to them, since they do not grow in their land but are imported from Khurasan (in Central Asia).

Citation: Ibn Battuta, C. Defrémery, B.R. Sanguinetti, C.F. Beckingham, and H.A. R. Gibb, trans. and eds., *The Travels of Ibn Battuta, A.D. 1325-1354* (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society at University Press, 1958-2000), vol. 3, pp. 604-6.

SoE4.12.7 Samarkand Source Handout



The courtyard of the Ulugh Beg Madrasa in Samarkand, taken by Alaexis in 2006. The madrasa was built between 1407 and 1420, shortly after Ibn Battuta's visit. Students' rooms open off of the courtyard. Wikipedia Creative Commons, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ulugh-beg_Madrassa_courtyard.JPG.

Background (secondary source):

Samarkand (also spelled Samarqand) is in present-day Uzbekistan. It is located at the intersection of trade routes that lead to India, to Persia and eastward to China. The city has benefited from the agricultural fertility of the region and was also known for its varied products, in particular slaves and paper. In the 10th century Samarkand was the administrative capital of the region and its most populous city. It was an elaborately built city with running water; the city also flourished as a center of Islamic scholarship. Later it was repeatedly conquered (by the Turks in the late 10th century and the Mongols in the early 13th century). When Ibn Battuta visited the city, much of its former

splendor was in ruins.

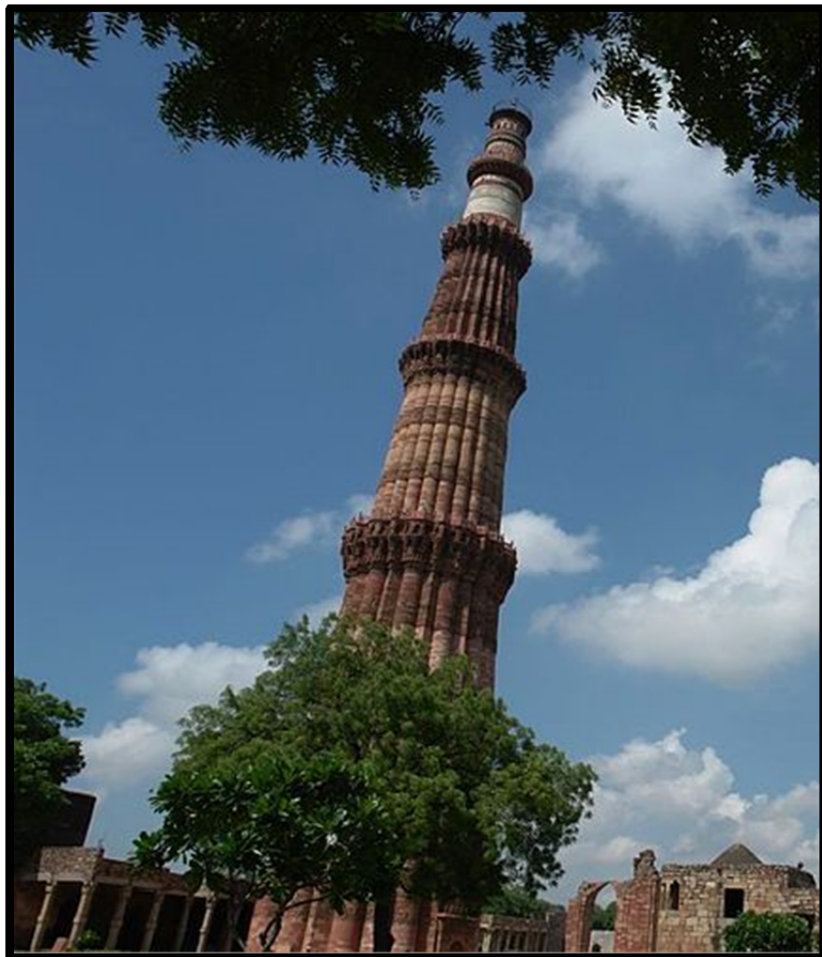
Primary Source: from Ibn Battuta, *Travels*:

"...I journeyed to the city of Samarkand, which is one of the greatest and finest of cities, and most perfect of them in beauty. It is built on the bank of the river called Wadi'l-Qassar (the Zarrafshan River), along which there are norias [a machine that lifts water into an aqueduct] to supply water to the orchards. The population of the town gather there . . . Benches and seats are provided for them to sit on alongside the river, and there are booths in which fruit and other edibles are sold. There were formerly great palaces on its bank, and constructions which bear witness to the lofty aspirations of the townsfolk, but most of this is obliterated, and most of the city itself has also fallen into ruin. It has no city wall, and no gates, and there are gardens inside it. The inhabitants of Samarkand possess generous qualities; they are affectionate towards the stranger and are better than the people of Bukhara (another nearby trade city).

In the outskirts of Samarqand is the tomb of Qutham, son of Al-'Abbas ...who met a martyr's death at the time of its conquest. The people of Samarkand go out to visit it on the eve of every Tuesday and Friday, and the Tartars too come to visit it, and make large votive offerings to it, bringing to it cattle, sheep, dirhams and dinars, [all of] which is devoted to costs for the maintenance of travelers and the servants of the hospice and the blessed tomb...Outside it is a large canal, which crosses the hospice at that place, and has on both banks trees, grape-vines, and jasmine. In the hospice there are chambers for the lodging of travelers.

Citation: Ibn Battuta, C. Defrémery, B.R. Sanguinetti, C.F. Beckingham, and H.A. R. Gibb, trans. and eds., *The Travels of Ibn Battuta, A.D. 1325-1354* (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society at University Press, 1958-2000), vol. 3, pp. 567-8.

SoE4.12.8 Delhi Source Handout (page 1 of 2)



The Qutb Minar (or Qutub Minar, Qutub Tower) in Delhi was built beginning in 1192. It is the tallest minaret in India. Photograph by Thovie 33 and 444pixels, 2008, Wikipedia Commons, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Qutab.jpg>

Background (secondary source):

Delhi (or Dihli), in India, was conquered by Muslim armies in the late 12th century and became the capital of the Delhi Sultanate in the 14th century. Most of the population were Hindus, and their rulers were a small minority of Muslims (although Hindus could and did convert, the Muslim authorities allowed them to follow their own religion granted they, like other non-Muslims, paid special taxes). The Sultan had a large bureaucracy in Delhi, and Ibn Battuta worked for him for many years. Delhi was a thriving imperial capital with many immigrants (such as Turks, Afghans, Persian, and Arabs).

Primary Source: from Ibn Battuta, *Travels*:

The city of Dehli is of vast extent and population, and made up now of four . . . towns. One of them is the city called by this name, Dehli; it is the old city built by the infidels and captured in the year 584 (A.D. 1188)...The fourth is called Jahan Panah, and

is set apart for the residence of the Sultan, Muhammad Shah, the reigning king of India, to whose court we had come. . . .

The Cathedral Mosque occupies a vast area; its walls, roof, and paving are all constructed of white stones, admirably squared and firmly cemented with lead. There is no wood in it at all. It has thirteen domes of stone... This site was formerly occupied by a *budkana*, that is idol temple, and was converted into a mosque on the conquest of the city...In the northern court of the mosque is the minaret, which has no parallel in the lands of Islam...The passage [in the minaret] is so wide that elephants can go up by it...

SoE4.12.8 Delhi Source Handout (page 2 of 2)

Now it is their custom in that country that when a Hindu wishes to become a Muslim, he is introduced before the Sultan, who clothes him with a fine robe and gives him a necklace and bracelets of gold in proportion to his rank...

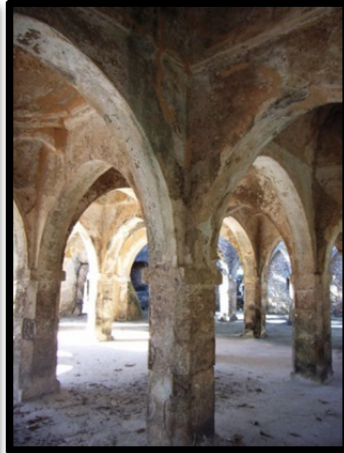
For they [the Indians] do not permit their slaughter [oxen] and punish anyone who kills an ox by having him sewn up in its skin and burned. They venerate oxen and drink their urine to obtain blessing and for a cure when they fall sick, and they [the Indians] daub their houses and walls with their [the oxen's] dung...

Description of public audience with the Sultan

[When I had a public audience with the Sultan, I observed:] Fifty elephants are brought in; these are adorned with silken and gold cloths, and have tusks shod with iron for service in killing criminals. . . . Each elephant has on its back a sort of large box capable of holding twenty warriors or more or less, according to its bulk and the size of its body...These elephants are trained to bend their heads to the Sultan ...

Citation: Ibn Battuta, C. Defrémery, B.R. Sanguinetti, C.F. Beckingham, and H.A. R. Gibb, trans. and eds., *The Travels of Ibn Battuta, A.D. 1325-1354* (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society at University Press, 1958-2000), vol. 3, pp. 619-628, 657-662, 735-738, and 765-767. Modernized by Shennan Hutton.

SoE4.12.9 Kilwa Source Handout



Right: The Swahili Coast, composed by Runehelmet, Wikipedia Creative Commons, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Swahili_coast.png. The trading zone of the Swahili Coast is in green. Kilwa is marked by the blue circle. Left: Ruins of the Great Mosque at Kilwa Kisiwani, taken by Claude McNab in 2005, Wikipedia Commons,

Background (secondary source):

Kilwa (or Kulwa as Ibn Battuta called it) is located on an island (Kilwa Kisiwani) off the coast of East Africa (the Swahili Coast) in present-day Tanzania. When Ibn Battuta visited the city it was quickly developing from a rural fishing village into one of the most prominent centers of trade in East Africa. In the late 13th century a new Islamic dynasty, the Mahdali, had taken over the island. By conquering nearby ports they almost had a monopoly over the gold trade. Gold mined in Zimbabwe (as well as ivory and slaves) passed through Kilwa on its way

to the trading routes that extended toward the Indian Ocean. As a result the Mahdali and other ruling elites of Kilwa lived a luxurious life with indoor plumbing and Chinese porcelain.

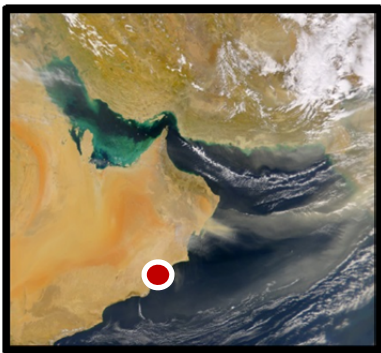
Primary Source: from Ibn Battuta, *Travels*:

We . . . sailed on to the city of Kulwa, a large city on the seacoast, most of whose inhabitants are Zinj, jet-black in color. They have tattoo marks on their faces. . . . I was told by a merchant that the city of Sufala lies a distance of half a month's journey from the city of Kulwa, and that between Sufala and Yufi, in the country of the Limis, is a month's journey; from Yufi gold dust is brought to Sufala. The city of Kulwa is one of the finest and most substantially built towns; all the buildings are of wood, and the houses are roofed with *dīs* reeds. The rains there are frequent. Its people engage in *jihād*, because they are on a common mainland with the heathen Zinj people and next to them, and they are for the most part religious and upright. . . .

Its sultan at the period of my entry into it was Abu'l-Muzaffar Hasan, who was called also by the appellation of Abu'l-Mawahib, on account of the multitude of his gifts and acts of generosity. He used to engage frequently in expeditions to the land of the Zinj people, raiding them and taking plunder, and he would set aside the fifth part of it to devote to the objects prescribed for it [different types of charity] in the Book of God Most High [the Quran]. He used to deposit the portion for the relatives [of the Prophet] in a separate treasury; whenever he was visited by sharifs he would pay it out to them, and the sharifs used to come to visit him from al'Iraq and al-Hijaz [on the Arabian Peninsula] and other countries...The sultan is a man of great humility; he sits with poor brethren, and eats with them, and greatly respects men of religion and noble descent...he [the sultan] ordered that the *faqir* [Muslim holy man] to be given ten heads of slaves and two loads of ivory, for most of their gifts consist of ivory and it is seldom that they give gold.

Citation: Ibn Battuta, C. Defrémery, B.R. Sanguinetti, C.F. Beckingham, and H.A. R. Gibb, trans. and eds., *The Travels of Ibn Battuta, A.D. 1325-1354* (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society at University Press, 1958-2000), vol. 2, pp. 379-382.

SoE4.8.10 Zafari Source Handout



Right: "Dust Storm over Gulf of Oman," 2003, NASA Earth Observatory SeaWiFS Project, NASA/Goddard Space Flight Center, and ORBIMAGE, <http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/NaturalHazards/view.php?id=10917>. Zafari (now called Dhofar) is marked by the red circle. Left: Mountains near Salalah in Dhofar (Zafari), Oman, photo by Marypaulose, Wikipedia Commons, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Salalah_Oman.jpg. During the monsoon rains, the mountains in Zafari (Dhofar) are foggy and lush with greenery.

Background (secondary source):

Zafari (or Zafar) was one of the most important ports of South Arabia. Today it is in Oman. It was a stopping point on the trading route between India and Africa, and on account of the monsoon wind patterns, travelers would often spend the summer months there. Zafari also exported frankincense and horses (which were shipped to India). Although the region around Zafari was very hot and dry, monsoon rains made Zafari a lush city where bananas and coconuts grew. When

Ibn Battuta visited Zafari, it was ruled by an independent prince of the Rasulids, a Muslim dynasty.

Primary Source: from Ibn Battuta, *Travels*:

The city of Zafari lies in an isolated desert region. . . The bazaar [market] is outside the city in a suburb called al-Harja, and it is one of the dirtiest, most stinking and fly-ridden of bazaars, because of the quantity of fruit and fish sold in it...Most of the sellers [in the bazaar] are female slaves, who are dressed in black.

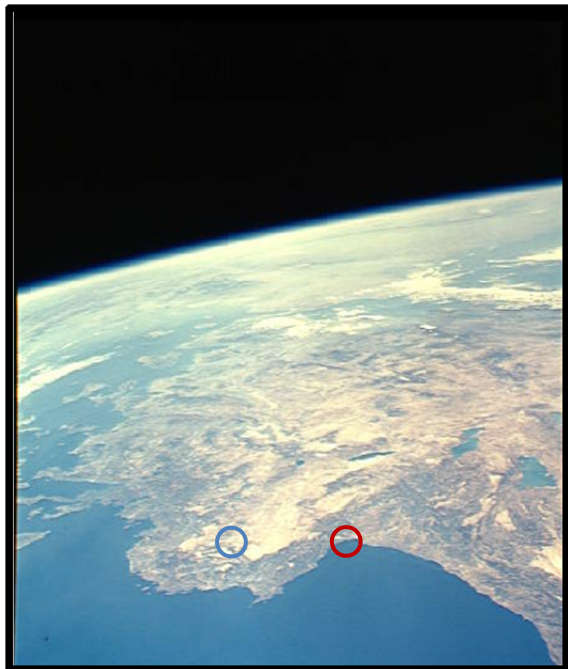
The grain grown by its inhabitants is millet, which they irrigate from very deep wells...They have also a wheat-grain, which they call 'alas, but it is in reality a kind of barley. Rice is brought to them from India, and forms their principal food. The dirhams of this city are made of brass and tin, and are not accepted as currency anywhere else.

The population of Zafari are engaged in trading, and have no livelihood except from this. It is their custom that when a vessel arrives from India or elsewhere, the sultan's slaves go down to the shore, and come out to the ship in a *sumbuq* [small boat]...Three horses are brought for them, on which they mount [and proceed] with drums and trumpets playing before them from the seashore to the sultan's residence. . . . Hospitality is supplied to all who are in the vessel for three nights, and when the three nights are up they eat in the sultan's residence. These people do this in order to gain the goodwill of the shipowners, and they are men of humility, good dispositions, virtue, and affection for strangers. Their clothes are made of cotton, which is brought to them from India...In it is manufactured fabrics of silk, cotton and linen, of very good quality...

This city has groves in which grow large numbers of bananas of great size; one of them was weighed in my presence and its weight was twelve ounces. They are pleasant to the taste and very sweet. There too are betel and coconut (known as 'Indian nut'), which are to be found only in the land of India and in this city of Zafari, because of its similarity and proximity to India.

Citation: Ibn Battuta, C. Defrémery, B.R. Sanguinetti, C.F. Beckingham, and H.A. R. Gibb, trans. and eds., *The Travels of Ibn Battuta, A.D. 1325-1354* (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society at University Press, 1958-2000), vol. 2, pp. 382-387.

SoE4.12.11 Antalya and Ladhiq Source Handout



Southwestern Coastline of Turkey, Image Science and Analysis Laboratory, NASA-Johnson Space Center, "The Gateway to Astronaut Photography of Earth," <http://eol.jsc.nasa.gov/scripts/sseop/QuickView.pl?directory=ISD&ID=STS034-86-106>. The blue circle marks the site of Ladhiq and the red circle marks Antalya.

Background (secondary source):

Antalya is a large port city in southern Anatolia and Ladhiq (now known as Denizli) is located in southwestern Anatolia (present-day Turkey). Both were important trading cities, where different trade routes crossed. Until the end of the 11th century, the cities were ruled by the Byzantine Empire. From 1100 through 1250, rule passed back and forth between the Turks and Byzantines. Even after the Turks took total control after 1250, different Turkish rulers fought over the cities. When Ibn Battuta visited the city, Denizli was part of the independent emirate (a Muslim kingdom) of Denizli. On account of its Byzantine past, much of the population of the city and the region were still Christian. The area's main products were cotton fabrics, and agricultural crops.

Primary Source: from Ibn Battuta, *Travels*:

I went on to the city of Antalya ...It is one of the finest of cities, enormous in extent and bulk, [among] the most handsome of cities . . . Each section of its inhabitants live by themselves, separated from each other's section. Thus the Christian merchants reside in a part of it called al-Mina and are encircled by a wall, the gates of which are shut upon them [from outside]

at night and during the Friday prayer-service; the Rum [Greek Christians], who were its inhabitants in former times, live by themselves in another part, also encircled by a wall; the Jews in another part, with a wall round them; while the king and his officers and mamluks live in a [separate] township, which also is surrounded by a wall that encircles it and separates it from the sections that we have mentioned. The rest of the population, the Muslims, live in the main city, which has a congregational mosque, a college, many bathhouses, and vast bazaars most admirably organized. Around it is a great wall which encircles both it and all the quarters. . . .

[W]e arrived at the city of Ladhiq. . . . Its bazaars are very fine, and in them are manufactured cotton fabrics edged with gold embroidery, unequalled in their kind, and long-lived on account of the excellence of their cotton and strength of their spun thread...Most of the artisans there are Greek women, for in it there are many Greeks who are subject to the Muslims and who pay dues to the sultan... The Feast of Fast-breaking [at the end of Ramadan] overtook us in this city, so we went out to the *musalla* [parade grounds]; the sultan also came out with his troops...The members of the trade carried flags, trumpets, drums and fifes, all aiming to rival and outdo one another in magnificence and in perfection of their weapons. Every group of these artisans would come out with cattle, sheep, and loads of bread, and after slaughtering the animals in the cemetery give them away in alms, along with the bread...

Citation: Ibn Battuta, C. Defrémery, B.R. Sanguinetti, C.F. Beckingham, and H.A. R. Gibb, trans. and eds., *The Travels of Ibn Battuta, A.D. 1325-1354* (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society at University Press, 1958-2000), vol. 2, pp. 417-27.

SoE4.12.12 al-Sara Source Handout (page 1 of 2)



The lands of the Golden Horde in the year 1389. The rivers are shown in blue, the 2006 international borders in light brown, and important cities of 1389 with a black circle. The capital of the Golden Horde, New Sarai, is shown with a gold star. Map from William Shepherd, Historical Atlas (Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1911), Wikipedia Commons, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Golden_Horde_1389.svg.

Background (secondary source):

Al-Sara or New Saray, located along the lower Volga River, was the capital of the Kipchak state, later known as the Golden Horde. This was a part of the Mongol Empire that stretched across the plains (steppe) of Inner Asia. This was a vast and barren area where farming was difficult. Most of the population still followed a pastoral way of life herding animals on the grasslands and deserts of the region. In the early 14th century, shortly before Ibn Battuta arrived, the Khan (ruler) Ozbeq had converted to Islam and invited Muslim scholars to al-Sara. But al-Sara's inhabitants were still very diverse; both in terms of their religions (e.g. Christians) and ethnic origins (i.e. Greeks, Russians, etc.). This internationalism was fostered by the foreign policy of the Khan who was in contact and intervened in distant kingdoms (such as with the Christian princes of Russia, or the Mamluk Sultanate in Cairo, most of whose slaves came from the steppe regions).

SoE4.12.12 al-Sara Source Handout (page 2 of 2)

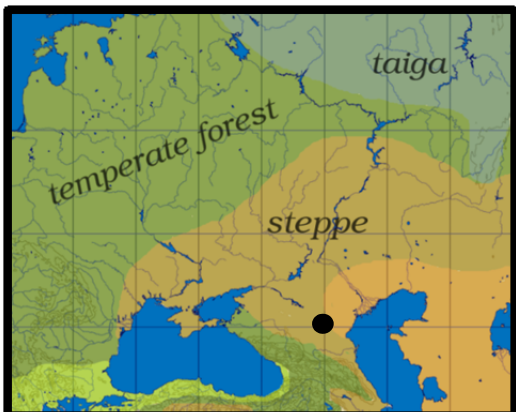
Primary Source: from Ibn Battuta, *Travels*:

We set out in company [from Constantinople]....[and] rode in the wagons and entered the desert...This was in the depth of winter, and I used to put on three fur coats and two pairs of trousers, one of them quilted, and on my feet I had woolen boots, with a pair of boots quilted with linen cloth on top of them, and on top of these again a pair of boots [made of] . . . horse-skin lined with bear-skin. ...I was unable to mount a horse because of the quantity of clothes I had on, so that my associates had to help me into the saddle....

The city of al-Sara is one of the finest of cities, of boundless size, situated in a plain, filled with the crowds of its inhabitants, and possessing good bazaars and broad streets. We rode out one day with one of its principal men, intending to make a circuit of the city and find out its extent. Our lodging place was at one end of it and we set out from it in the early morning, and it was after midday when we reached the other end. We then prayed the noon prayer and ate some food, and did not get back to our lodging until the hour of the sunset prayer. . . .The city has thirteen mosques for the holding of Friday prayers There are various groups of people among its inhabitants; these include the Mughals [Mongols], who are the dwellers in this country and its sultans, and some who are Muslims, then the As, who are Muslims, the Qifjaq, the Jarkas, the Rus, and the Rum—[all of] these are Christians. Each group lives in a separate quarter with its own bazaars. Merchants and strangers from the two Iraqs, Egypt, Syria and elsewhere, live in a quarter which is surrounded by a wall for the protection of the merchants...

Citation: Ibn Battuta, C. Defrémery, B.R. Sanguinetti, C.F. Beckingham, and H.A. R. Gibb, trans. and eds., *The Travels of Ibn Battuta, A.D. 1325-1354* (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society at University Press, 1958-2000), vol. 2, pp. 514-516.

SoE4.12.13 Mongol Camp at al-Machar Source Handout



"Vegetational Zones in the Pontic Caspian Region,"
 Wikipedia Creative Commons,
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Pontic_Caspian_climate.png. The steppe is grasslands or prairies and the taiga is conifer forests. When Ibn Battuta visited the Kipchak Mongol khan's camp, it was located at al-Machar, in present-day Russia. It is marked by the black dot.

Background (secondary source):

Mongol khans (rulers) and their armies did not stay in one city, but moved around from camp to camp across the steppe. Ibn Battuta caught up with Khan Ozbek of the Kipchak state (later known as the Golden Horde) at a camp near al-Machar. The Kipchak state was part of the Mongol Empire that stretched across Asia. On the steppe, farming was difficult and most of the population were nomadic animal herders, or pastoralists. In the early 14th century, shortly before Ibn Battuta arrived, Ozbek had converted to Islam. There were many Christians and Buddhists in the Mongol empire and many different ethnic groups. Because the Mongols tolerated all religions and cultures (as long as people were peaceful and obedient), and protected merchants, many more products, people, and ideas crossed Asia in the period of their rule.

Primary Source: from Ibn Battuta, *Travels*:

I witnessed in this country a remarkable thing, namely the respect in which women are held by them [the Mongols and Turks], indeed they are higher in dignity than the men. . . . I have seen them, when one of them would be in a wagon, being drawn by horses, and in attendance on her three or four girls to carry her train, wearing on her head a *bughtaq*, which is a conical headdress decorated with precious stones and surmounted by peacock feathers. The windows of the tent would be open and her face would be visible, for the womenfolk of the Turks do not veil themselves....

[W]e saw a vast city on the move with its inhabitants, with mosques and bazaars in it, the smoke of the kitchens rising in the air (for they cook while on the march), and horse-drawn wagons transporting the people. On reaching the camping place they took down the tents from the wagons and set them on the ground, for they are light to carry, and so likewise they did with the mosques and shops....

[Khan Ozbek] observes, in his public settings, his journeys, and his affairs in general, a marvelous and magnificent ceremonial. It is his custom to sit every Friday, after the prayers, in a pavilion [huge tent], magnificently decorated, called the Golden Pavilion. It is constructed of wooden rods covered with plaques of gold. . . . [T]he sultan sits on the throne, with [his four wives around him]. . . .

I paid my respects to the other three khatuns [wives], among them Bayalun, daughter of the king of Constantinople the Great, the Sultan Takfur [Emperor Andronicus III of the Byzantine Empire, a Christian kingdom]. When we visited this khatun, she was sitting on an inlaid couch with silver legs; before her were about a hundred slave girls, Greek, Turkish and Nubian. . . .

Citation: Ibn Battuta, C. Defrémery, B.R. Sanguinetti, C.F. Beckingham, and H.A. R. Gibb, trans. and eds., *The Travels of Ibn Battuta, A.D. 1325-1354* (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society at University Press, 1958-2000), vol. 2, pp. 480-488.

SoE4.12.14 Kaffa Source Handout



Top: Genoese Fortress in Theodosia (Feodosiya, Kaffa), photograph by Qypchak, 2009, Wikipedia Commons, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:THEODOSIA_01.jpg.

Bottom: The Black Sea, NASA Earth Observatory, 2003, courtesy of SEAWiFS, NASA/Goddard Space Flight Center and ORBIMAGE, <http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/IOTD/view.php?id=3530>.

Background (secondary source):

Kaffa [of Caffa, now called Feodosiya] is a port on the Crimean peninsula along the Black Sea Coast. It was strategically located on the Black Sea, with access to the Mediterranean and to the Silk Road. Genoese merchants dominated the trade between the city, western Christendom and Egypt. When Ibn Battuta visited the city it was ruled by the Mongols, but the Genoese had received their permission to live and trade in the city. Its population was diverse; in addition to the many Genoese Christians, there were many Muslims, as well as Greeks and Armenians. It was an active port through which many goods passed; especially slaves. Muslim and Christian slave traders sold slaves from the Caucasus region to the Mamluks in Cairo.

Primary Source: from Ibn Battuta, *Travels*:

[After my ship landed at a village near Kaffa], I saw a church so we made towards it. In it I found a monk, and on one of the walls of the church I saw the figure of an Arab man wearing a turban, girt with a sword, and carrying a spear in his hand, and in front of him a lamp, which was lit. I said to the monk, "What is this figure?" and when he replied, "This is the figure of the prophet Ali" [Elijah], I was filled with astonishment [that a Christian church would have a picture of a prophet.] We spent the night in that church. . . We

rode in this [hired wagon drawn by horses], and came to the city of al-Kafa, which is a great city along the sea coast inhabited by Christians, most of them Genoese, who have a governor called al-Damdir. We lodged there in the mosque of the Muslims.

When we alighted at this mosque and stayed in it for an hour or so, we heard the sounds of clappers [church bells] on every side, and never having heard them before I was alarmed at this and urged my companions ascend the minaret and chant the Quran and praises to God and recite the call to prayer. They did so, when suddenly a man came in wearing a breastplate and weapons and saluted us. We asked him what was his business, and he told us that he was the qadi [judge or chief] of the Muslims there, and said, "When I heard the chanting and the call to prayer, I feared for your safety and came as you see." Then he went away, but no evil happened to us.

We made a circuit of the city and found it provided with fine bazaars, but all the inhabitants are infidels. We went down to its port, where we saw a wonderful harbor with about two hundred vessels in it, both ships of war and trading vessels, small and large, for it is one of the world's celebrated ports.

Citation: Ibn Battuta, C. Defrémery, B.R. Sanguinetti, C.F. Beckingham, and H.A. R. Gibb, trans. and eds., *The Travels of Ibn Battuta, A.D. 1325-1354* (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society at University Press, 1958-2000), vol. 2, pp. 469-71.

SoE4.12.15 Constantinople Source Handout (page 1 of 2)



Map of Constantinople, by Cristoforo Buondelmonte, 1422, photographed from *Liber Insularum Archipelagi* (1824), Wikipedia Commons, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Map_of_Constantinople_%281422%29_by_Florentine_cartographer_Cristoforo_Buondelmonte.jpg.

Background (secondary source):

Constantinople, present-day Istanbul, was the capital of the Byzantine Empire, a Greek Christian state which was once the eastern Roman Empire. By the 14th century, however, the Byzantine Empire had shrunk down to a small state, as Turkish armies conquered most of its territory. Because Latin Christian crusaders did not consider the Byzantines to be “real” Christians, a group of Latin Christian crusaders looted the city in 1204 and took over the empire for a short period. Despite these setbacks, Constantinople remained a grand and cosmopolitan city and an important center of culture. The city was filled with architectural monuments, such as the famous domed Hagia Sophia (The Holy Wisdom Church). As one of the ends of the Silk Road, Constantinople was a major trading city for Greeks and Italians, and also Turkish and Arab merchants. Ibn Battuta visited Constantinople as he traveled with Princess Bayalun, daughter of the Byzantine Emperor

Andronicus II and one of the wives (*khatuns*) of the Mongol ruler Ozbek Khan.

Primary Source: from Ibn Battuta, *Travels*:

When we reached the first of the gates of the king’s palace we found it guarded by about a hundred men . . . and I heard them saying *Sarakinu, Sarakinu*, which means ‘Muslims’. They would not let us enter. . . [but the Khatun Bayalun] told [her father, the emperor] about us, whereupon he gave orders to admit us . . . He wrote

SoE4.12.15 Constantinople Source Handout (page 2 of 2)

also on our behalf an order that we should not be molested wherever we might go in the city, and this order was proclaimed in the bazaars...

[When I had a meeting with the Byzantine Emperor,] I approached and saluted him, and he signed to me to sit down, but I did not do so. He questioned me about Jerusalem, the Sacred Rock, [the Church called] al-Qumana, the cradle of Jesus, and Bethlehem...I answered him on all his questions, the Jew interpreting between us. He was pleased with my replies...

Its bazaars and streets are spacious and paved with flagstones, and the members of each craft have a separate place, no others sharing it with them. Each bazaar has gates which are closed upon it at night, and the majority of the artisans and sellers in it are women...On top of the hill is a small citadel and the sultan's palace. This hill is surrounded by the city wall, which is formidable one and cannot be taken by assault on the side of the sea...

As for the other section of it, it is called al-Ghalata, and lies on the western bank of the river...This section is reserved for the Christians of the Franks dwelling there. They are of different kinds, including Genoese, Venetians, men of Rome and people of France, ...They are required to pay a tax every year to the king of Constantinople, but they often rebel against his authority and then he makes war on them until the Pope restores peace between them. They are all men of commerce, and their port is one of the greatest of ports...

Most of the inhabitants of this city are monks, devotees, and priests, and its churches are numerous beyond computation...

Citation: Ibn Battuta, C. Defrémery, B.R. Sanguinetti, C.F. Beckingham, and H.A. R. Gibb, trans. and eds., *The Travels of Ibn Battuta, A.D. 1325-1354* (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society at University Press, 1958-2000), vol. 2, pp. 504-512.

SoE4.12.16 Jerusalem Source Handout (page 1 of 2)



Temple Mount in Jerusalem, photograph by ၇၀၈.၂ at [he.wikipedia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Temple_mount.JPG), 2007, Wikipedia Commons, GNU Free Documentation License, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Temple_mount.JPG

Background (secondary source):

Jerusalem is a sacred city for the three great monotheistic faiths of the Mediterranean World: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. For this reason it has long been a site of encounter and contest between different peoples. The city housed the Western Wall of the temple once built by the Biblical King Solomon; the Church of the Holy Sepulchre which Christians venerate as the site of Christ's crucifixion; and Haram al-Sharif (the Noble Sanctuary) where Muslims commemorate Muhammad's night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem, and from there up through the seven heavens. In the early Middle Ages Jerusalem was under Muslim rule. In the 11th century it was conquered by Western Christian crusader armies. In the 12th century it was conquered by the Muslim forces of Saladin, ruler of Egypt. When Ibn Battuta visited the city it was under the control of the Mamluk dynasty of Egypt. Although it was not located along any major trading route and had only a small population, pilgrims continued to visit the city and supported shopkeepers, guides and religious scholars.

SoE4.12.16 Jerusalem Source Handout (page 2 of 2)

Primary Source: from Ibn Battuta, *Travels*:

We then arrived at [Jerusalem] – God ennoble it – third in excellence after the two sacred mosques of Mecca and al-Madinah {Medina}, and the place of ascension of the Apostle of God – God bless him and give him peace – whence he was caught up into heaven. The town is large and imposing, and built of squared stones. [The sacred mosque at Jerusalem] is one of those surpassingly beautiful mosques which excite wonder and admiration. It is said that there is not upon the face of the earth a mosque larger than it. . . . The entire mosque is an open court, unroofed except for the mosque al-Aqsa; this has a roof of the utmost perfection of architecture and skill in execution, and is embellished with gold and brilliant colors. There are other places as well in the mosque that are roofed over. [The Dome of the Rock] is one of the most marvelous of buildings, of the most perfect in architecture and strangest in shape. . . [There is] a building which is said to mark the place whence Jesus (on him be peace) ascended to heaven. In the hollow of the valley already mentioned is a church [the Church of the Holy Sepulchre] venerated by the Christians, who say that it contains the grave of Mary (peace be upon her). This is the church about which they lie and are persuaded that it contains the grave of Jesus (on him be peace). All who come on pilgrimage to it are liable to a stipulated tax to the Muslims and various humiliations, which they suffer very unwillingly. There too is the place of the cradle of Jesus (on him be peace), which is visited in order to obtain blessing.

Citation: Ibn Battuta, C. Defrémery, B.R. Sanguinetti, C.F. Beckingham, and H.A. R. Gibb, trans. and eds., *The Travels of Ibn Battuta, A.D. 1325-1354* (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society at University Press, 1958-2000), vol. 1, pp. 77-80.