

Disciplina: FSL0644
Sociologia do Desenvolvimento –
“A invenção do Terceiro Mundo”.

Graduação em Relações Internacionais – USP
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[20 e 21/set] 6. Monopólios coloniais: acumulação por extração.

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África na economia mundial

Let us start out with Africa's place in the evolution of the world economy.

Much writing on wealth and poverty tries to explain Europe's riches by virtue of its supposedly inherent characteristics: the scientific spirit, the Protestant ethic, openness to commerce, or a bent toward incremental technological innovation. Africa has served as a foil for such arguments: cultural predispositions that run against economic rationality, too strong kinship ties, weak notions of personal property, and — with twentieth and twenty-first century variations — a tendency toward personal, tyrannical, anti-entrepreneurial governance. (Cooper, p. 11)

It would be misleading to assert that there is a normal pattern of economic growth — from which Africa deviates — or to invert the arguments of the African bashers by considering Africa a mere victim. Africa's economic history is not that of continual backwardness, shared poverty, choking overpopulation, or unremitting subservience. Its history is also one of adaptation to difficult ecosystems, of trading systems that linked different producers across long distances. African entrepreneurs adapted —whether for better or for worse —to external demands for their products.

Capitalismo e Imperialismo

As of the early eighteenth century, Indian cotton textiles were more desired in world markets than anything Britain could produce, but Britain was able to use its **central point in imperial networks** to become a **relay station** between Indian producers and markets. A key link here was, once again, the **slave trade**: **Indian** textiles, via **Britain**, went to **Africa** to pay for slaves who ended up in the **Caribbean** helping to grow sugar, enhancing the buying capacity of Euro-Americans, who bought more cloth. British manufacturers were under pressure to innovate to counter Indian dominance of production, and they were aided by **a government willing to impose tariffs and other barriers to protect a developing industry**. The **imperial State** — with its **navy** and its effort to concentrate economic power — was able to enforce the tariffs and commercial regulations (the Navigation Acts) **that kept Dutch and other trading competitors at a disadvantage**. (...) India went from industrial exporter to exporter of primary products. (Cooper, pp. 12-13)

Africa's human geography — relatively low population, varied landscapes — provided many places to hide and few in which to build regimes of exploitation. (...) It was difficult for an elite to entrench itself by monopolizing control of land; doing so would have risked an **exodus** of would-be **subjects and followers**, whose service in many capacities — fighting, raising children, working — was **the most valued resource**. Land was hardly there for the taking, but access to it was in general mediated through **kinship and village-level structures**.

For a would-be king or dominant class, enrichment via escalated exploitation of local people was a dangerous endeavor. Bringing in outsiders — slaves for example — was a more attractive option and a major factor in both Sahelian Africa and the coastal kingdoms of West Africa. Even in this regard, elites had to be careful. **Studies of African slavery show how wary slaveowners were of locally born slaves, who had the connections and knowledge to organize collective flight or resistance.** In most contexts, African slaveowners preferred to reproduce a slave labor force **by integrating older or second-generation slaves and raiding for or buying new ones.**

Trade in slaves was part of what made these networks work. The strength of the economic system was (...) in the connections across space that elites could manage, networks forged out of trust reinforced by Islam as well as by interest. Toby Green argues that the experience of people in the Senegambia-Guinea region with such forms of commercial interaction in the Sahel and across the Sahara enabled them to adapt quickly and profitably to the arrival of Portuguese traders.

The early European presence in West Africa was far from potent; traders stuck to their enclaves — or offshore vessels — and made their deals. Green argues that **cosmopolitan communities with many mixed-race and more culturally mixed people carrying on business developed around such enclaves.** (...) By the seventeenth century, many of the most important traders in the West African ports — trading in a variety of commodities as well as slaves — were “**Luso-African,**” **most often the product of Portuguese-African sexual liaisons,** although some Africans also acquired the linguistic and cultural skills to become part of such communities. (Cooper, p. 16)

Together, we see a range of adaptations to the demand for slaves: from centralized kingdoms with the top-down authority that were strengthened by slave trading(...) to kingdoms of West Central Africa where connections and alliances with Portuguese enveloped the region in conflict and produced large numbers of slaves. The latter case, especially in Angola, entailed the most direct involvement of Europeans in slave catching, but they had to work through alliances with African leaders, who were themselves in the process of constructing rival polities.

In this context, it means little to say that Africans were enslaving other Africans. African elites were not acting as Africans —for such a designation only came to have meaning in the context of the Atlantic world itself —but as would-be kings, emperors, or chiefs trying to extend their authority in conditions where individuals and collectivities had alternatives to pursue. To some kings and merchants in the slave trade era, participating in the slave trade made sense because both the obtaining and the disciplining of slave labor occurred externally to their power base. (...) They obtained commodities that elites could distribute to followers, like cloth, iron bars that could be used to make tools and contribute to agricultural and other activities that took place alongside slave trading, and guns that gave temporary advantage to the political elites that had them until their neighbors caught up — leaving a more militarized politics in place.

The difficulties of African rulers in systematically exploiting their populations *in situ* coincided with one of the ugliest and most central dimensions of Euro-American history from the sixteenth century onward — the voracious appetite for labor in places, notably the Caribbean sugar islands, where indigenous populations had been killed off and where people with choice in the matter did not want to go. (...) Once someone in the region got into the slave-trading business, its capacity to make war and stage raids was increased; the availability of weapons and trade goods — necessary to acquire followers — changed the nature of political competition.

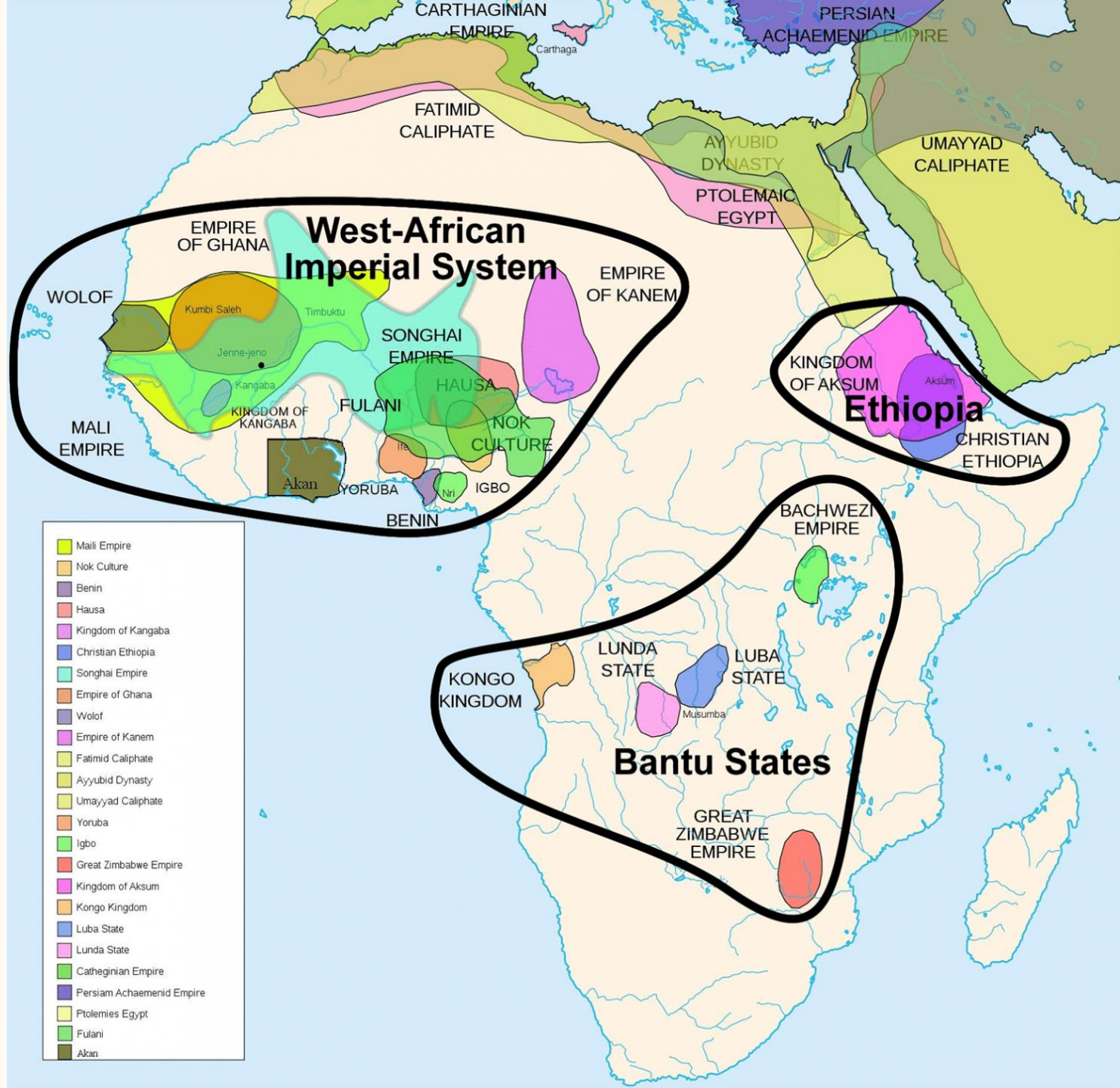
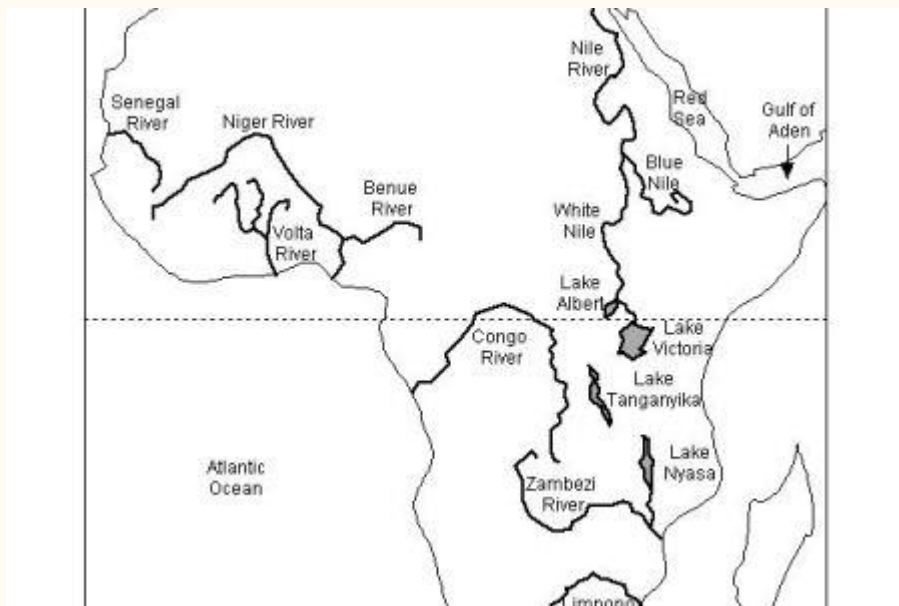
From the 1850s, European travelers to Africa used images of backwardness and violence to describe **a continent crying out for European intervention**. The slave trade, which European money had done so much to stimulate, became a central image of Africa. David Livingstone's voyages gave publicity to a view of the African — once the Enslaved Victim — as the Enslaving Tyrant. **Colonization was now advocated as the only way to save Africans from their own violence and tyranny** and to “open” (...) the continent to the beneficial effects of legitimate commerce. (...) **Colonization could be normalized because the colonized could be represented as outside the boundaries of normality.**

**Rail Networks of
Africa, Europe, and
the Middle East**



0 500 1000 miles

Fonte: <http://blackdemographics.com/>

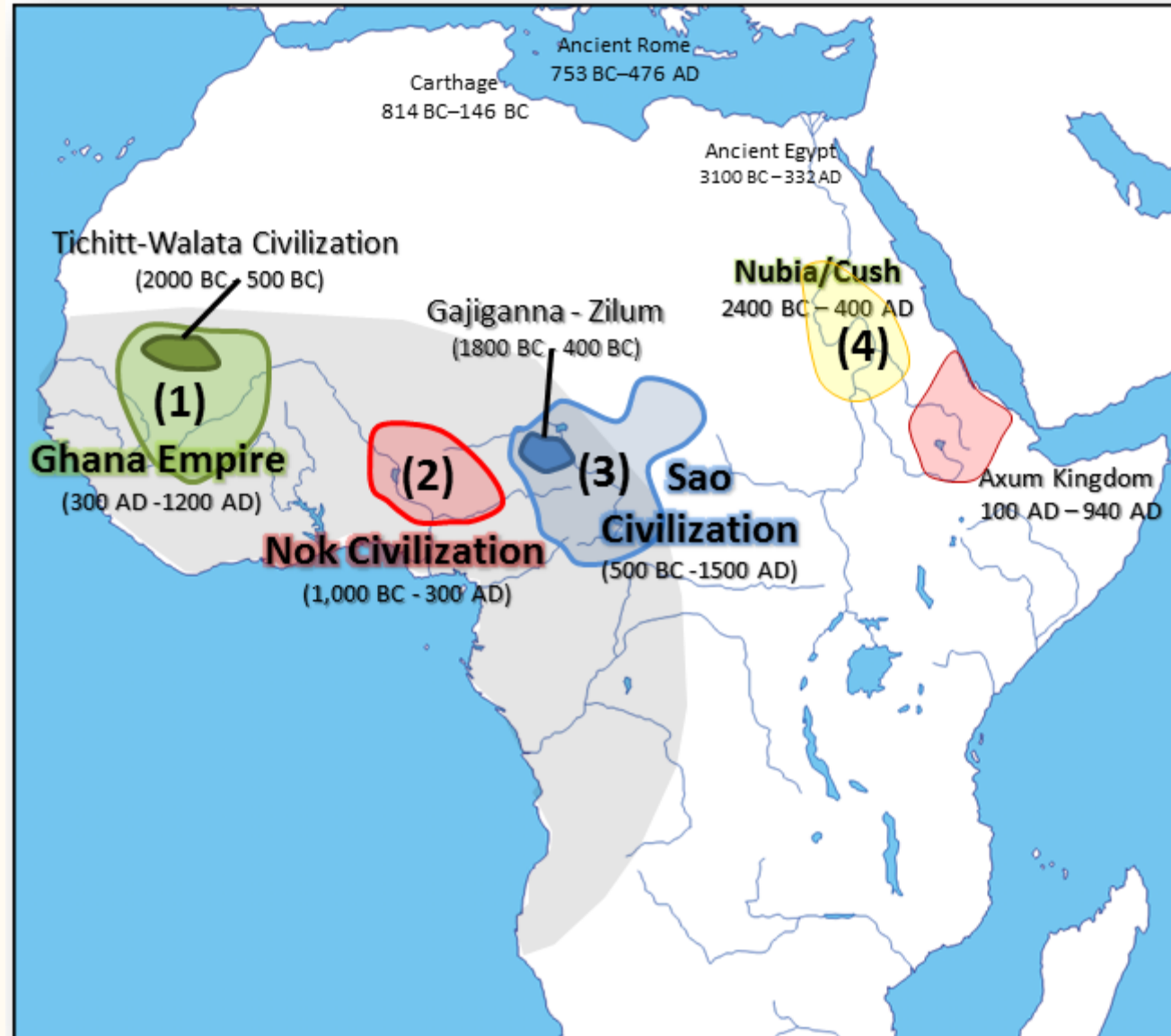


2000 BC – 500 AD

Ancient Africa

PART 1

4,000 Years of African
American History



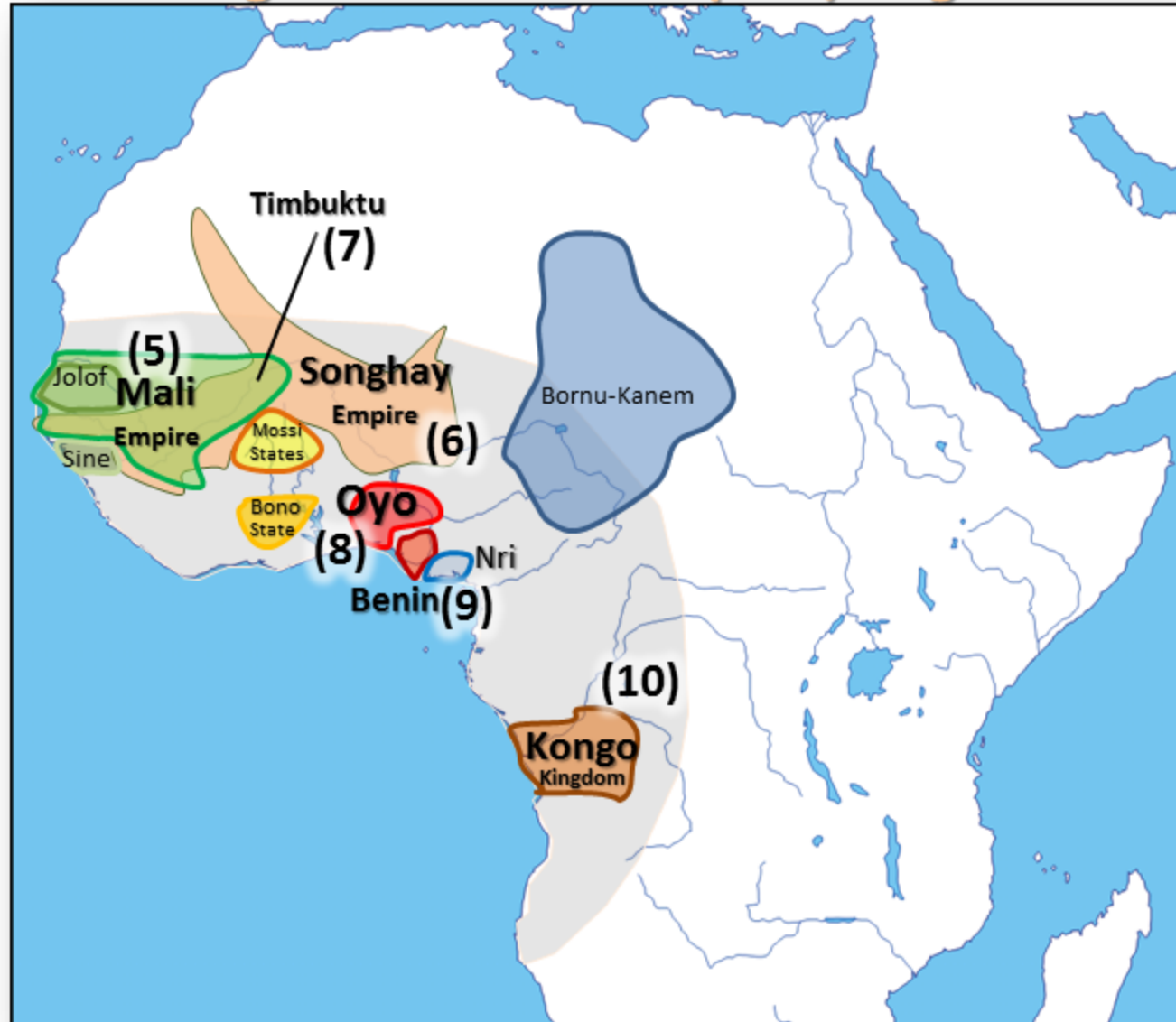
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500 AD– 1500 AD

PART 2

4,000 Years of African American History

Golden Age West African Empires/Kingdoms

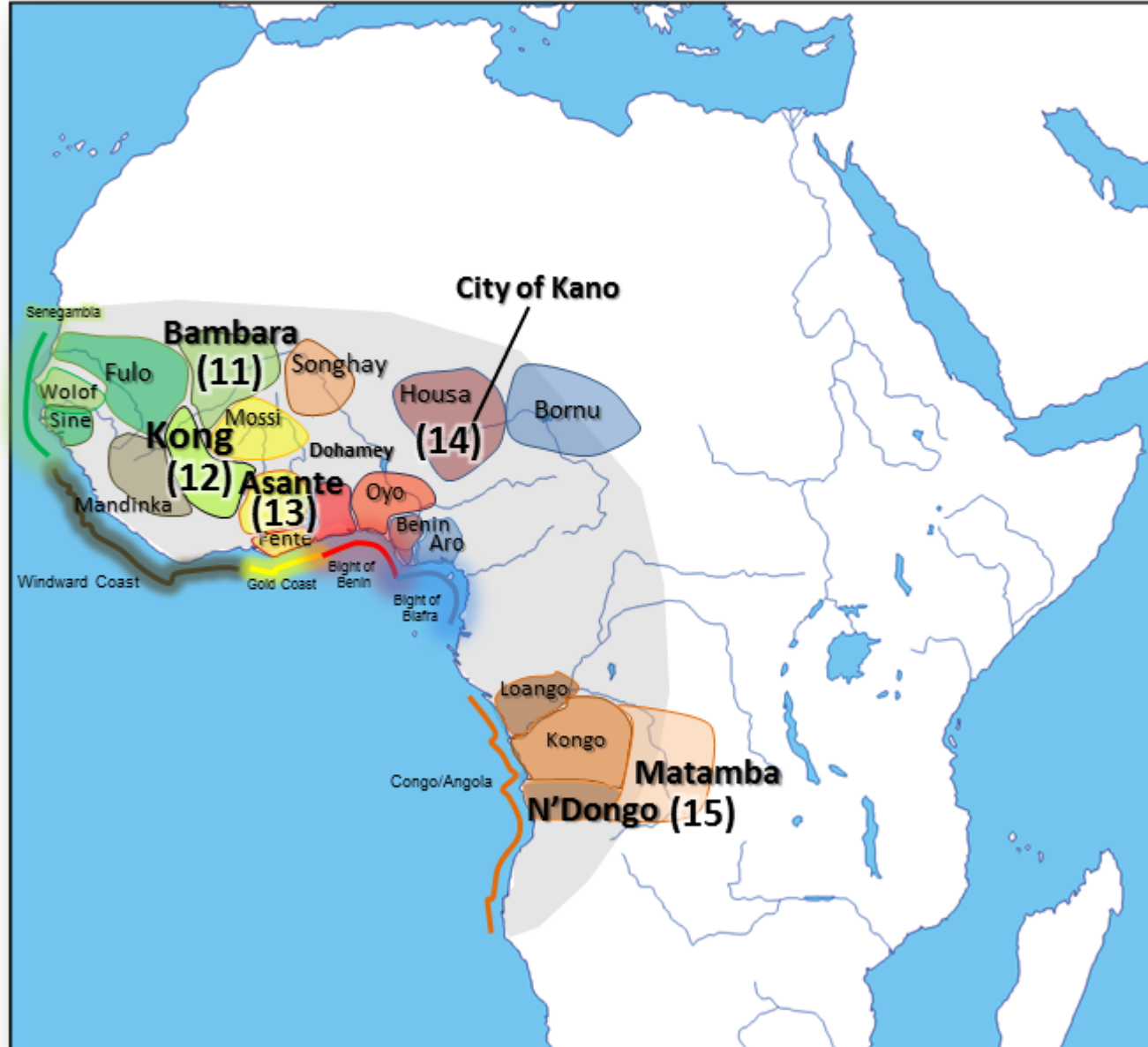


1500 AD– 1820 AD

PART 3

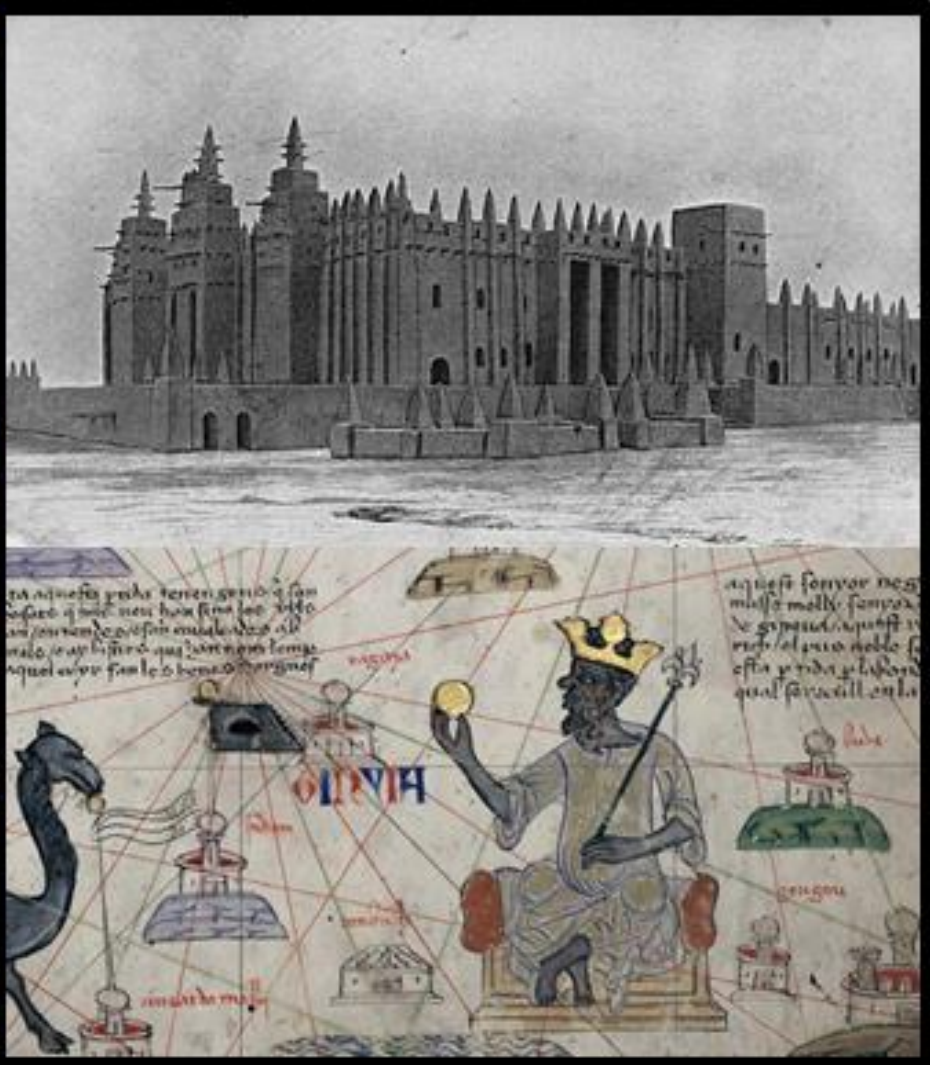
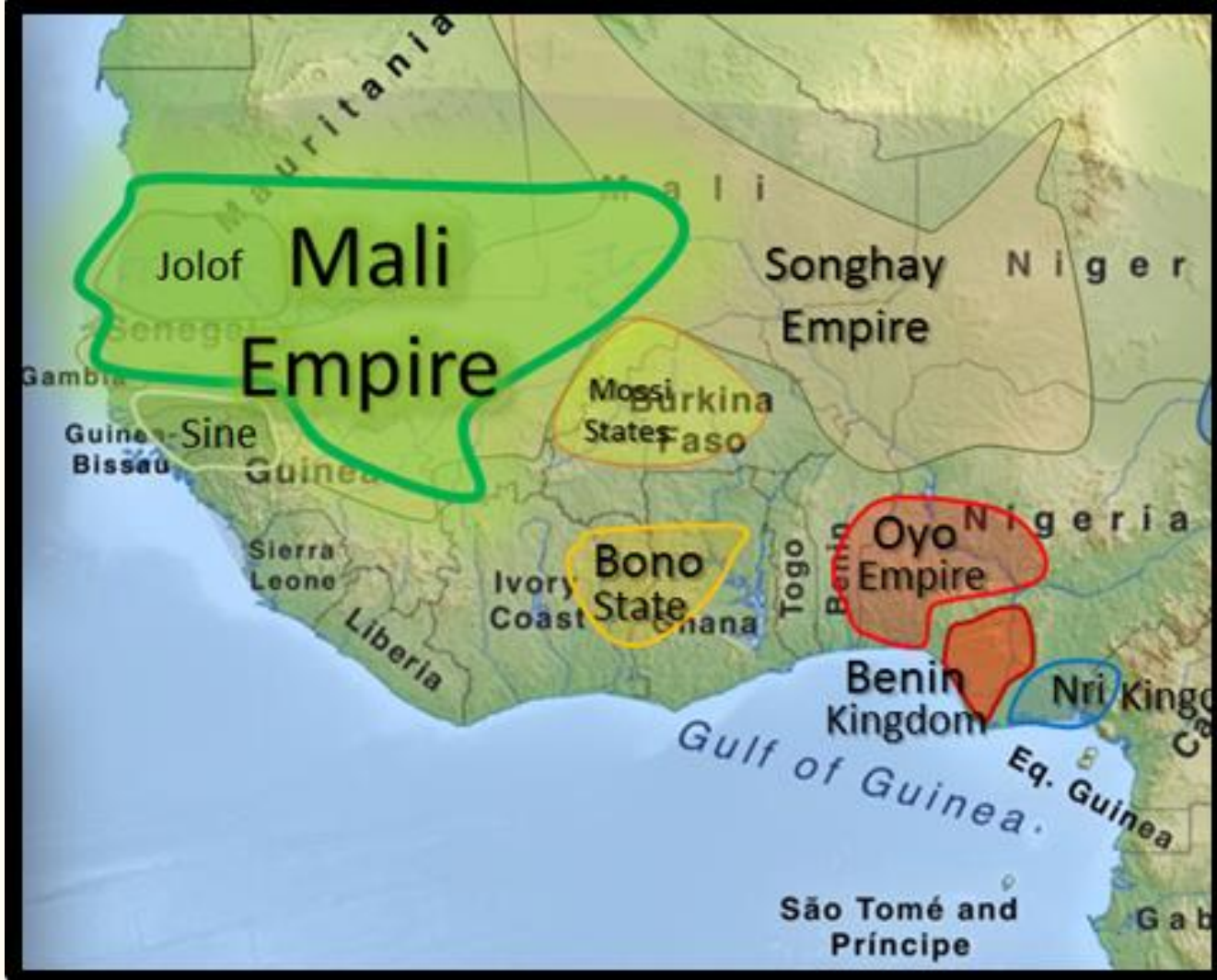
African Kingdoms before colonialism

4,000 Years of African
American History



Fonte:

<http://blackdemographics.com/>



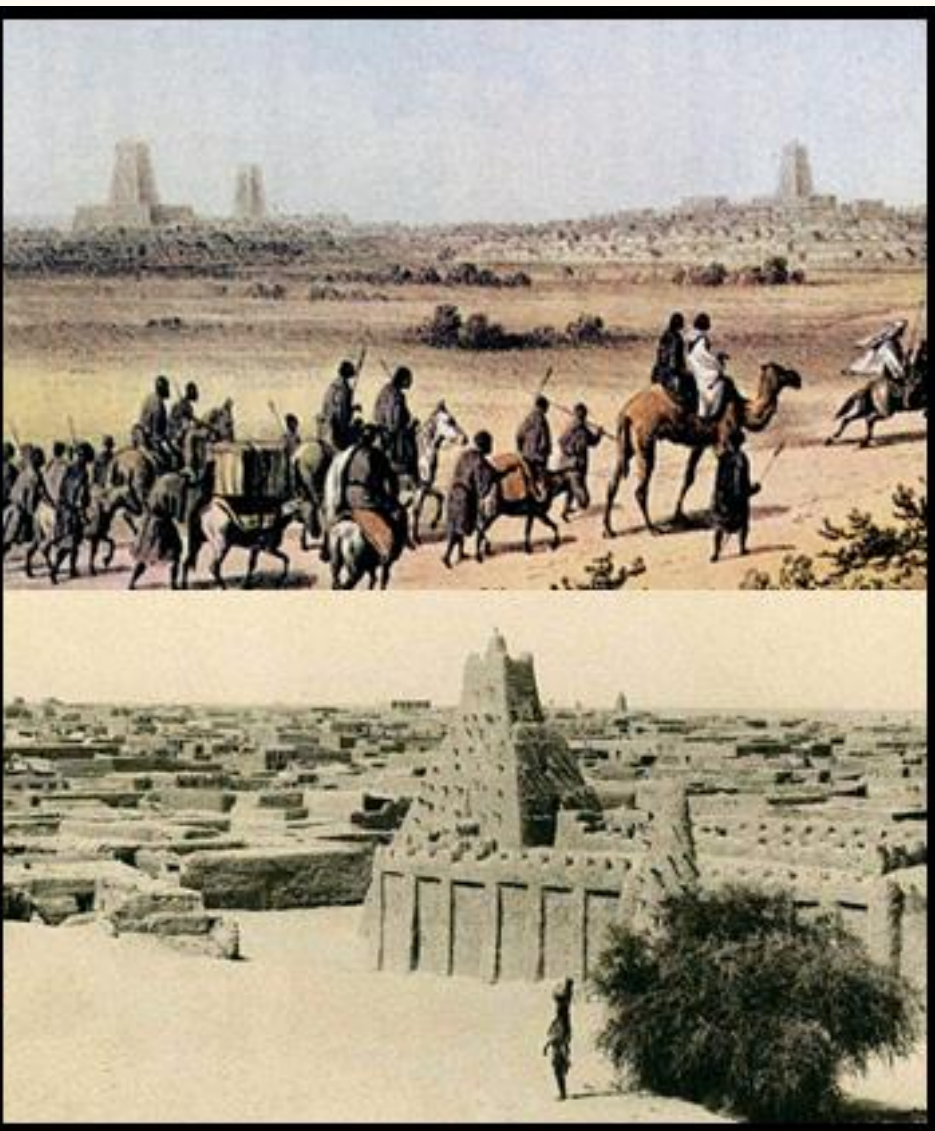
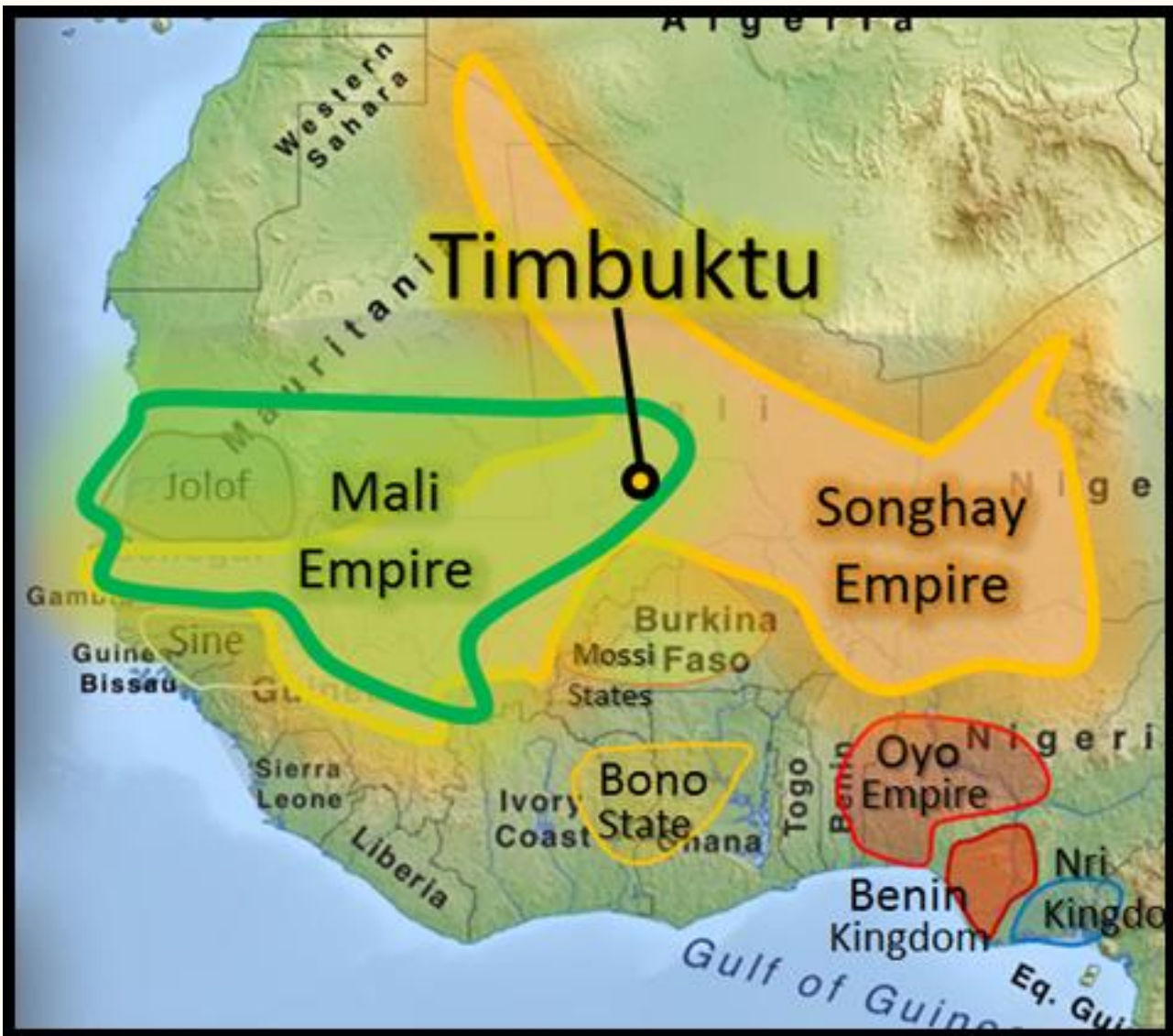
Fonte:
<http://blackdemographics.com/>

Mansa Musa was the 10th king of the **Mali Empire (1200-1670)** and has been named the richest person ever in the world by Time Magazine (July 30, 2015). He was mostly remembered for his wealth in gold made famous by his pilgrimage to Mecca. While travelling through Egypt on the way to Mecca his caravan spent so much gold it deflated gold prices in Egypt for the next 10 years.

Mansa Musa appears on a Spanish map (above) made in the year 1325 holding a large gold nugget. This is believed to be why European interest in the rich African continent grew. It would be another 100 years before European ships arrived on the West African coast. The Mali empire consisted of the former Ghana Empire and westward including present day Senegal and Gambia.



Sunni Ali Ber was the first King of the **Songhay Empire (1375 – 1591 AD)** as he seized control of former Mali strongholds using his powerful military. Songhay eventually became the largest empire in pre-colonial West Africa encompassing most of the former Ghana and Mali Empires and eastward including present day western Niger.



Fonte:
<http://blackdemographics.com/>

The city of **Timbuktu** was an important center of commerce and education during the **Mali and Songhay Empires**. Timbuktu was the location of the **University of Sankore** founded in 988 AD (pictured above) which was famous throughout the Muslim world. National Geographic estimates that 700,000 manuscripts which are hundreds of years old have survived in present day private libraries in Timbuktu calling them “significant repositories of scholarly production in West Africa and the Sahara”.

The **Oyo Empire (1400 – 1895 AD)** was formed by the ethnic **Yoruba** population in current day southwestern Nigeria. Oyo was one of the more urbanized Empires in Western Africa. Many residents lived in cities and towns that had between 10,000 and 60,000 residents. The king's palace (pictured above) was in the city of **Oyo-Ife** in the center of the empire and like other cities in Oyo was completely surrounded with a tall earthen wall with 17 gates.



Fonte:
<http://blackdemographics.com/>

The **Asante** State was one of the states of the **Akan** ethnic group that rose to prominence by conquering nearby Akan states creating the **Asante Empire (1701 – 1894)** in present day Ghana. This empire was run by a strict adherence to a hierarchical structure and grew rich by controlling the gold trade and improving mining techniques at its secret gold fields. The Asante divided its empire into districts run from its palace (pictured above) in the capital city of Kumasi. They fought many wars against the Kong Empire, and other Akan states (Fente, Bono, and Akym).

