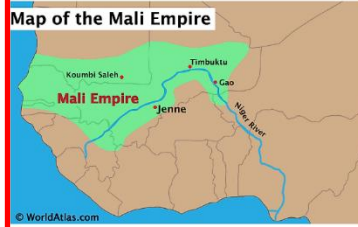


What were the major kingdoms of West Africa, and how did they rise to power?

In West Africa, powerful kingdoms grew rich and strong because of trade. The most important kingdoms were Ghana, Mali, and Songhai. These empires controlled important trade routes across the Sahara Desert. Traders travelled across the desert to exchange goods such as gold, salt, ivory, and other valuable items. The rulers of these kingdoms became wealthy by taxing traders who passed through their lands. Their wealth allowed them to build strong armies and powerful governments.



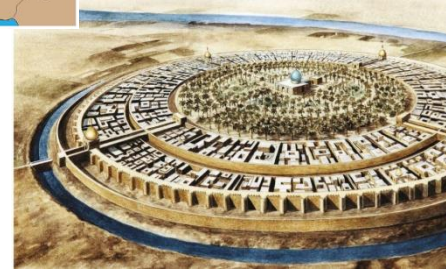
How did Mansa Musa and the Kingdom of Mali become legendary?

Mansa Musa was the famous ruler of the Mali Empire in the 14th century and is often remembered as one of the richest people in history. He ruled from 1312 to 1337 and controlled large gold resources. Mansa Musa became legendary because of his pilgrimage to Mecca in 1324. During his journey, he travelled with a huge group of people and gave away large amounts of gold to the poor. His wealth amazed people across the Islamic world and Europe, and his journey helped make Mali famous.



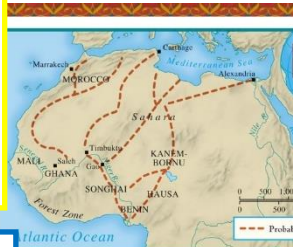
How did Islamic culture and inventions change the world?

During the Islamic Golden Age, many important inventions and ideas were developed that later influenced the rest of the world. Muslim scholars made major progress in mathematics, including the development of algebra and the use of the number system we still use today. Doctors wrote detailed medical books and improved hospitals and surgical tools. Scientists also improved maps and navigation tools, which helped travellers explore new places. Many of these ideas later spread to Europe and helped shape modern science, medicine, and technology.



Why was Baghdad the centre of the world in 900 AD?

Around 900 AD, Baghdad was one of the most important cities in the world. It was the capital of the Abbasid Islamic Empire and was located between Asia, Africa, and Europe. Because of its location, many trade routes passed through the city. Traders brought goods such as silk, spices, gold, and paper from different parts of the world. Baghdad became very rich and grew into a huge city. It also became a place where people from different cultures met, traded, and shared ideas.



Trans-Saharan Trade Routes

Figure 9.3 p226

What made Mali famous, and how did African art and culture flourish?

The Mali Empire became famous because of its wealth, education, and culture. One of its most important cities was Timbuktu, which became a centre of learning with universities, libraries, and schools. Scholars from across Africa and the Islamic world came to study there. At the same time, African art and culture flourished through beautiful architecture, storytelling traditions, music, and crafts. These cultural achievements showed the creativity and knowledge of West African societies.

What caused the end of the Islamic Golden Age, and what is its legacy today?

The Islamic Golden Age began to decline for several reasons, including political conflict, weakening leadership, and invasions. One of the most important events was the Mongol invasion of Baghdad in 1258. The city was badly destroyed, and many libraries and centres of learning were lost. Although the Golden Age ended, its ideas and discoveries continued to influence the world. Knowledge developed during this time helped shape modern mathematics, medicine, science, and education.

What made Baghdad the intellectual heart of the world?

Baghdad became the intellectual heart of the world because it was a centre of learning and education during the Islamic Golden Age. One of the most famous places in the city was the House of Wisdom, a large library and research centre. Scholars from many backgrounds came to study subjects such as medicine, mathematics, astronomy, and geography. They translated important books from Greek, Persian, and Indian languages into Arabic so that more people could learn from them. This helped preserve ancient knowledge and allowed new discoveries to be made.

