AMSCO Chapter 17

Africa in the Early Colonial Period

1. African Civilizations at the Beginning of the Era
2. Bananas from Southeast Asia had been introduced before 1450, spurring population growth
3. Islam, trade, and technology spread via merchants of Abbasid Empire
4. Songhay Empire
5. Main ethnic group around Niger River, but absorbed by Mali Empire. but Songhay regained independence in 1400s as Mali declined
6. 1464, Sunni Ali became ruler, expanding territory, including Timbuktu, repressing Muslim scholars there
7. At his death in 1492, his empire exceeded that of Mali, but Songhay empire lasted another 100 years until defeated by Moroccans
8. Europeans Arrive
9. Henry the Navigator of Portugal financed explorations along the Atlantic coast of Africa, and these explorers were the first Europeans to interact with African coastal communities
10. Trading post cities were established by Portuguese and eventually others
11. Some local African rulers traded slaves for European goods like gunpowder and canons, which helped them beat their neighboring villages; Dahomey tribe grew especially strong by trading slaves from other villages for European goods
12. On the west coast, Portuguese also explored into the interior, to Kongo and Benin kingdoms
13. 1498 Portuguese Vasco da Gama invaded Swahili city-states of East Africa, taking over trade in Kilwa, Mombasa and other city-states
14. Literature – Oral history became basis for later written works like poetry and novels
15. Africans and the Atlantic Slave Trade
16. Slaves had existed in Africa before Europeans arrived and Arabs had traded for slaves with Africans since the 600s , but Atlantic slave trade was first to weaken African societies
17. Why Africans?
18. Need for labor in Latin America as plantation farming and gold and silver mining, combined with death due to disease, resulted in need for more workers
19. Natives who survived were able to escape because they knew the land and had people to help them, so enslaving natives was very difficult
20. Labor for Plantations
21. North American plantation owners also needed labor, but the European indentured servants weren’t used to such difficult work, plus after about seven years they were free
22. Triangular Trade
23. West Africa became the source for African slaves, as part of complex global system called triangular or Atlantic trade; leg one from Europe to Africa carrying manufactured goods; leg two from Africa to new world carrying slaves; leg three back to Europe carrying cash crops, furs, silver and gold
24. With success of Portuguese in Brazil with sugar, English, Dutch and French quickly copied the model in Caribbean
25. Capture and Shipment of Slaves to the Americas
26. African leaders themselves captured members of neighboring tribes and also traded their own members of lower classes, including servants, criminals, and prisoners of war
27. This led to dangers of losing society’s elite and depopulation; kings no longer able to control all trade as local leaders also traded slaves for goods
28. Barracoons, slave castles, held slaves in pens for trade with Europeans in Ghana, the point of no return
29. Middle Passage was travel by ship across the ocean to new world crammed in to cargo holds of ships; slaves sometimes rebelled en route, but were unsuccessful; trip of about six weeks, and up to 50% of slaves would die; approximately 25% of the African population was relocated during slave trade
30. African Presence in the Americas
31. Languages – not transferred because ships carried hundreds speaking a great variety of languages, not just one group
32. Some blended languages developed, such as creole as a blend of African and French, or Gullah or Geechee in South Carolina and Georgia
33. Religions – combinations of Christianity with African practices resulted in religious syncretism in vodun, Santeria, candomble, as well as specifically African American Christian churches ; about 10% were Muslims when they arrived, and became the new world’s first Muslim population
34. Music – African music forms basis for gospel, blues, jazz, rock and roll, hip hop, reggae, samba and even country music; music was used both to maintain hope and to communicate when planning escapes; Negro spirituals and the banjo developed in the new world
35. Food – rice, okra came to new world, as well as methods of preparation
36. Effects of the Slave Trade on Africa
37. West Africa affected most, like Ghana and Benin, where most slaves were captured; up to 2/3 of the males were taken resulting in need for polygamy (more than one wife) as a necessity and women doing traditionally male jobs
38. Tribes that captured and sold slaves became much stronger economically, and they received guns and gun powder in exchange, making it easier to conquer nearby tribes; intergroup warfare became more common and more violent
39. Violence and economic dependence on Europeans weakened many African kingdoms, which were slow to produce their own advances because they relied on European purchases instead, setting stage for 19th century imperialism where Europeans easily conquered the rest of the continent
40. Triangular trade DID increase variety of food and eventually population through improved diet, with addition of maize, peanuts, manioc (yucca\_
41. End of Atlantic Slave Trade
42. Abolition forces developed in 19th century especially in Great Britain, based on Enlightenment writers like Rousseau’s ideas of equality and freedom for all humans
43. Slave revolts, particularly where slaves outnumbered Europeans, became more frequent and successful; Haiti was first country to establish independence from France, led by freed and former slaves, first in new world to abolish slavery
44. 1888, abolished throughout the Americas, through gradual process, except in Haiti and the US
45. Indian Ocean Slave Trade – slaves sold from the East coast of Africa by land or sea, ended up in northern Africa, the Middle East and India