

African and Maya History Study Guide 1

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Class: 1D

January 29/30th 2018

❖ Civilization

- ❖ “One man’s civilization can be another’s Barbarism”. Meaning that things that one can view as part of being civilized can have be considered as barbarism to another person. You might be civilized because you eat with a fork, and then look at someone from another culture and say they are not civilized because they eat with their fingers. In the end, is any of them actually more civilized than the other because of their differences?
- ❖ First, there were hunter/gatherers (Nomads).
- ❖ They began to settle down and form communities that lead to villages being developed.
- ❖ Plants and animals were domesticated and there was water source available due to rivers like the Niger and Nile in Africa.
- ❖ Different characteristics can assist to define civilization:
 - Population
 - Centralized Religious/Political power
 - Surplus in resources
 - Society was stratified
 - Systems of Writing
 - Progress in Science

❖ Kingdoms of Ancient Africa

- ❖ Sahara Dessert, which was of major importance for trade.
- ❖ There was the Trans-Saharan trade, which took place between North and West Africa.
- ❖ Goods traded included gold, salt, kola nuts, and ivory.
- ❖ Kingdoms of Ghana, Mali and Songhai.
- ❖ They three empires went through their rise and fall with different rulers as well as achievements.
- ❖ Mali was one of the famous kingdom with its ruler being Mansu Musa who was somewhat addicted to gold.
- ❖ He was able to create Timbuktu, which was the center of trade in the Trans-Saharan trade.

- ❖ **Timbuktu also host famous libraries and universities marking great achievements for Africa from its earliest history.**
- ❖ **Proves that Africans were well educated and were able to reach major developments unlike the Eurocentric view of Africa as just being a poor and “Dark continent”.**