

ANCIENT STATES OF WEST AFRICA.

THE EMPIRE OF GHANA.

ORIGIN:

- Ghana was one of the ancient states in West Africa.
- The empire of Ghana was founded around 500 AD.
- Ghana started as a small state which was occupied as a negroe group of people known as the Mande.
- The Mande founded the Mandingo dynasty which was the first dynasty to rule over Ghana.
- The Mandingo dynasty was later overthrown by the Soninke who came from the North.
- The Soninke founded the Soninke dynasty which became the ruling dynasty in the empire of Ghana.
- The original of Ghana was Wagadu.
- It was later changed to Ghana which was the title of the king.
- Ghana meant a war chief.
- The empire was located between R. Niger and R. Senegal.
- The empire of Ghana occupied the present day countries of Senegal, Mali and Mauritius.
- The empire of Ghana had its capital at Kumbi Saleh.
- It should be noted that the modern country of Ghana is not located in the area occupied by the ancient empire of Ghana.
- The country Ghana is located 500 miles away from the ancient empire of Ghana.
- The country Ghana was named in remembrance of the oldest empire of West Africa known as Ghana.

QN: 1. Describe the origin of Ghana.

2. How was the Soninke dynasty/empire of Ghana established?

FACTORS FOR THE RISE OF GHANA EMPIRE.

The empire expanded due to a number of factors which were political, social, economic as well as geographical.

- i. The empire was located in the fertile savanna belt which had cool temperatures suitable for the settlement of the people.
- ii. The fertile soils of the savanna belt favored the growing of crops which enabled the production of food to feed the population.

- iii. The empire was located between R.Niger and R. Senegal which gave a natural defensive barrier against external attacks from neighbours.
- iv. The spread of Islam in West Africa facilitated the growth of Ghana because Islam united the people to develop their empire.
- v. The empire had an efficient system of government for administration which was centralised with the king as the top most leader assisted by cabinet ministers. This made administration easy and contributed to the rise of the empire.
- vi. The empire had capable leaders from the Soninke dynasty who also contributed to the growth of the empire.
- vii. The empire had capable leaders from the Soninke dynasty who also contributed to the growth of the empire.
- viii. The empire had a strong army which was divided into two i.e. the infantry (foot soldiers) and the Calvary (horse men) which was equipped with strong weapons and this made it able to maintain peace and security in the empire, it was also used to expand the boundaries of the empire.
- ix. The empire had a clear system of succession which was matrilineal i.e. the heir to the throne was picked from the mothers line which minimized succession disputes.
- x. The empire was surrounded by weak neighbours who were easy to conquer and expand boundaries of Ghana.
- xi. The people of Ghana participated in the trans Saharan trade in which the Soninke acted as middle men and they acquired a lot of wealth which was used to develop
- xii. The Soninke were iron workers and they made a number of items e.g. weapons like spears and arrows which were equipped with the army in order to make it strong.
- xiii. The Soninke made agricultural tools out of iron which encouraged agriculture to ensure food security. Items such as hoes were used.
- xiv. The empire of Ghana had a strong economy with a number of economic activities e.g. trade, fishing and tributes from the conquered states.

QN: Explain the factors that led to the rise and expansion of Ghana.

ORGANISATION OF GHANA.

- ✓ Politically, the empire had a centralised system of administration with the king as the top most leader.
- ✓ The king had a tittle of the Tunkar and he was assisted by cabinet ministers and other officials who were literate Muslims.
- ✓ The empire was divided into two parts i.e. metropolitan Ghana and provincial Ghana.
- ✓ Metropolitan Ghana was also known as the original Ghana/Ghana proper which included the central government under the administration of the Tunkar/ king.
- ✓ Provincial Ghana consisted of the conquered states or vassal states and these were administered by their traditional leaders but they had to pay tributes to the central government.
- ✓ The king of Ghana was greatly respected and honored by the people and he was taken to be semi divine e.g. whenever his people approached him, they fell on their knees and sprinkle dust on their heads as a way of greeting.

- ✓ The administration of justice was a responsibility of the king who moved around his kingdom every day with a few servants to go and settle disputes.
- ✓ In case there was no evidence, the king applied the traditional method where the accused person was given a thin piece of wood which was sour to chew and if the person vomited, he was proved and if he did not he was declared guilty and punished accordingly.
- ✓ In order for vassal (conquered) states to show their loyalty to the king, they had to send a prince to the king's palace and whenever the vassal states disobeyed, their prince was killed.
- ✓ The empire had a very strong army with bows, spears, arrows and guns which were acquired from the trans-Saharan trade.
- ✓ The army consisted of 20,000 warriors with both infantry and Cavalry.
- ✓ However, the empire did not have a standing army but soldiers were mobilized within 24 hrs. to defend the kingdom in times of need.
- ✓ The army had a role of maintaining law and order and protecting the kingdom from internal and external attacks.
- ✓ The administration of the empire was based at two capitals i.e. Kumbi Saleh and El Ghaba.

Social Organization.

- ✓ The kings were buried in special places and sometimes with their servants and property.
- ✓ The people of Ghana worshipped many gods and the king was taken to be semi divine.
- ✓ There was freedom of worship i.e. people were allowed to worship in either A.T.R or Islam.
- ✓ The system of succession was matrilineal i.e. the heir to the throne was got from the mother's side and he was always the king's nephew.
- ✓ There was respect for elders and those who offended them were punished.

Economic organization.

- ✓ The people of Ghana carried out agriculture and they grew crops such as millet, sorghum and maize for food and the excess was sold in trade.
- ✓ They also carried out iron working where they weapons like hoes, arrows, pangas and agricultural tools.
- ✓ The people of Ghana carried out gold mining which gold was sold in trade to get revenue which was used to sustain the empire.
- ✓ All gold in the empire belonged to the king who distributed it to the people.
- ✓ The empire also collected taxes from the trade items and the traders who used the trade routes passing through Ghana.
- ✓ The Soninke participated in the Trans Saharan trade as middle men in the trade acted and supplied trade items from which they got a lot of revenue.
- ✓ The empire collected tributes from vassal states in order for them to show their loyalty to the king of Ghana.
- ✓ The people of Ghana carried out cloth weaving which was also exported to get revenue.

QTN: Explain the organization of the Soninke.

How was the empire of Ghana administered?

WHY THE EMPIRE OF GHANA DECLINED.

The empire of Ghana declined due to a number of factors which were both internal and external.

It declined due to political, social and economic reasons.

- ❖ The empire faced disunity because it was made up of many states of different backgrounds and these could not unite to defend the empire in times of need.
- ❖ The empire had grown too big to be effectively administered.
- ❖ The vassal started breaking away from the metropolitan leadership since they were left under the leadership of their traditional rulers.
- ❖ Ghana faced a period of corrupt leaders who used to sell gold for their personal benefit which led to decline in economy of Ghana.
- ❖ The empire did not have a standing army and therefore it was difficult to maintain security sometimes thus the decline.
- ❖ The empire faced a period of weak leaders in the later years who could not effectively monitor the administration of the empire.
- ❖ The empire's army also weakened due to the constant rebellions from conquered states and therefore it could not defend the empire.
- ❖ The divergence of the trade routes from Ghana to Mali made Ghana lose the taxes it was charging from Berbers and other traders hence decline of the traders.
- ❖ The empire declined due to the insecurity in the empire that put economic activities to a standstill.
- ❖ The influence of Islam in the region which divided people along religious lines and they could not unite to defend the empire.
- ❖ Ghana faced external attacks from Sumanguru Kante of the Sosso state who attacked the empire and weakened it.
- ❖ Ghana also faced external attacks from the Almoravid (Muslims from Morocco) who attacked the empire and weakened it in an attempt to spread Islam.
- ❖ The rise of other empires like Mali under the leadership of Sundiata Keita led to the final decline of Ghana because he attacked the remains of Ghana and added them to Kangaba to create Mali Empire.

THE EMPIRE OF MALI.

ORIGIN OF THE EMPIRE.

- The empire of Mali was one of the ancient states in West Africa.
- The origin of the empire is not clear for it is found in myths and legends.
- The empire started as a small state of Kangaba by the Mandingo people.
- The empire was located between river Sankaran and river Niger.
- The empire had its capital city in a small town known as Jeriba.

- Mali was a former vassal state of Ghana which broke away and became independent as Ghana was declining.
- After the breakaway of Kangaba from Ghana, Kangaba started expanding into a big kingdom by attacking then neighboring areas to increase its size.
- The expansion of Kangaba threatened the leaders of the Sosso state whose name was Sumanguru Kante.
- Sumanguru Kante attacked Kangaba and weakened it by killing two out of the 12 legitimate princes to the throne of Kangaba.
- He spared only Mali Djata who was crippled and Sumanguru thought he was not a threat to the kingdom.
- Mali Djata later gained use of his legs and become a very famous hunter who formed the hunters' association.
- The hunters' association united many people in Kangaba and was later transformed into an army making Mali Djata a famous soldier.
- The king of Sosso at the time became worried of Mali Djata's military strength and exiled him out of Kangaba.
- While in exile, Mali Djata organized the hunters' association into an army which he used to capture the throne of Kangaba.
- He became the leader of Kangaba and he attacked the various states in the region including Ghana and added them to Kangaba to form a big and united empire of Mali.
- Mali Djata later changed his name to Sundiata Keita and he is recognized as the founder of Mali which was named after it.

Qtn: how was the empire of Mali established?

Explain the origin of Mali Empire?

FACTORS FOR THE RISE OF MALI EMPIRE.

The empire of Mali expanded due to a number of factors which were political, social and economic.

The empire of Mali expanded due to internal and external factors.

- Mali was strategically located in the fertile savannah region which favored agriculture and ensured food security for the ever increasing population.
- Mali was also located around R.Niger and R. Sankaran which acted as natural defensive barriers against external attacks.
- The participation of Mali in the Trans Saharan trade from which they gained a lot of profit encouraged its expansion.
- The empire expanded because of the decline of Ghana which gave chance for Kangaba to break away and become an independent state.
- The empire had a strong army which was used to defend the empire from internal and external attacks.
- The army was also used to expand the boundaries of the empire in order to increase its size.
- The empire had a strong and capable leaders e.g. Sundiata Keita and Mansa Musa who played a great role in expanding the empire.
- The empire had an efficient system of administration which was centralised with the king as the top most leaders and he was assisted by governors which enabled him to monitor all the activities of the empire.

- The harsh rule of Sumanguru Kante made the Mandingo people to support Mali Djata to form a strong army in order to overthrow his region.
- Mali diverted all the trade routes of Ghana and took control of them and all the trade activities from which taxes from trade items were got to develop the empire.
- The Mandingo people practiced iron working from which they made weapons to equip the army and agricultural tools for agriculture.
- Islam played a big role in the expansion of Mali because it united the Mandingo people who worked together to develop the empire.
- Mali had a strong economy based on agriculture, gold trade, mining, taxes and tributes from which a lot of income was got to develop the empire.
- The empire had a good system of succession which was patrilineal and this minimized succession disputes.
- The empire of Mali was surrounded by weak neighbours who were easily conquered to expand the boundaries of Mali.

THE REIGN OF SUNDIATA KEITA.

- ✓ He was the founding father of the empire of Mali.
- ✓ Sundiata keita came to power after defeating Sumanguru Kante in 1235 at the battle of Kirina and he ruled up to 1255.
- ✓ Sundiata was a prince of Kangaba and he was the 12th son to the throne.
- ✓ He was taken as a captive in Sumanguru's palace after the death of his 2 brothers.
- ✓ He was a crippled man and that's why Sumanguru Kante did not kill him when he attacked Kangaba.
- ✓ He was a great soldier and hunter which earned him a lot of popularity.
- ✓ He organized a strong standing army which he used to fight and defeat Sumanguru Kante.
- ✓ He expanded the small states of Kangaba by conquering the neighboring areas.
- ✓ He used his army to establish peace and stability in the regions.
- ✓ He liberated the people of Kangaba from the oppressive rule of Sumanguru Kante.
- ✓ He organized the empire and he laid a foundation on which other rulers administered it.
- ✓ He promoted trade in western Sudan by providing security to the traders in the region.
- ✓ He promoted unity and harmony among the people of Kangaba which led to the rise and development of the empire.
- ✓ He created a centralised system of administration by dividing the empire into provinces and he appointed generals to rule on his behalf.
- ✓ He promoted and encouraged agriculture as he introduced cotton weaving.
- ✓ He conquered the gold producing areas of Wangara, Bambuk, Bure and Bundu which contributed a lot of revenue to the empire.
- ✓ He encouraged trade by organizing trade caravans from West Africa.
- ✓ He transferred the capital of Mali from Jeriba to Niani.
- ✓ He made peace with the conquered people and that's why they hailed him as their liberator or deliverer.

- ✓ He died in 1255 after effectively laying a foundation of the empire and providing it with a capital (Jeriba).

Qtn: describe the contributions of Sundiata keita in the building of Mali Empire.

THE REIGN OF MANSA MUNSA (1307-1337)

- ❖ Not much is known about Mansa Kankan Musa however, he was the most famous of all the rulers of Mali.
- ❖ He reigned between 1307 and 1337.
- ❖ He extended the boundaries of Mali North and eastwards using his strong army.
- ❖ He also established friendly relationships with other states e.g. Morocco and Egypt.
- ❖ He captured the famous commercial center of Walata which increased trade in Mali.
- ❖ His generals also captured Timbuktu which was a small commercial center in the North of Mali.
- ❖ He created a strong army with loyal generals which was used to keep law and order.
- ❖ He also created a centralised system of administration by dividing the empire into provinces and the most known was Niani.
- ❖ He employed governors to rule the provinces on his behalf.
- ❖ He instituted the national honor of trousers to individuals who had excelled in service.
- ❖ He employed Islamic judges and scribes in the civil service.
- ❖ He introduced a tax on crops, livestock, tolls and tributes from the vassal states which was used to develop the empire.
- ❖ He encouraged trade within Mali by attracting foreign traders.
- ❖ He encouraged gold mining in Mali which contributed a lot of revenue to the empire.
- ❖ He fostered law and order in Mali by using his army of about 100,000 men.
- ❖ He provided security to the traders in his empire which attracted more foreign traders.
- ❖ He encouraged Islamic learning and education in his empire by attracting Islamic scholars.
- ❖ He brought wealth to the people of Mali by controlling the gold trade.
- ❖ He also contributed to the spreading, purifying and strengthening of Islam since he was a devoted Muslim.
- ❖ He made a pilgrimage to Mecca and this made Mali to be known outside Africa.
- ❖ He promoted his name when he carried over 100 camels, 500 slaves carrying gold to Mecca.
- ❖ He sent Muslim students to morocco and these became new builders of commerce and became very influential in trade.
- ❖ He died in 1337 and was succeeded by Mansa Maghan.

WHY MALI DECLINED.

Mali was a powerful state during the reign of Mansa Musa but it later declined due to the political, social and economic reasons.

The decline of Mali was also due to internal and external factors.

The decline of Mali was gradual.

- The empire of Mali declined because it had become too big to be effectively administered.

- The death of Mansa Musa contributed to the decline of Mali because after his death, there was a political vacuum which was not easy to fill.
- Mali also declined due to the constant rebellions from the vassal states which weakened the army.
- The rise of weak leaders also contributed to the decline of Mali e.g. Mansa Maghan, Mansa Marjat who were very corrupt.
- Mali lost control of the trade routes which were diverted to Songhai and this led to a decline in the economy due to the loss of taxes in the trade.
- Mali faced external attacks from the Tuareges of the desert who exploited the internal conflicts and attacked the boundaries of the empire.
- There was also external aggression from the Mossi of the south who attacked the empire who attacked the empire and forced some chiefs into exile. This left many areas without leadership which weakened Mali.
- Mali also faced succession disputes which caused a number of wars thereby weakening the empire.
- The rise of Songhai Empire under Sunni Ali also led to the decline of Mali because many areas were captured including the important cities and routes hence weakening the empire.
- The contribution of Islam which turned out to be a factor of disunity because it was the state religion. Many people were divided along religious lines which sparked off conflicts between Muslims and non-Muslims.
- The breakaway of the vassal states of Mali reduced the size and strength of Mali leading to its decline.
- The decline of Mali was also as a result of the numerous wars which could not let the empire survive since agriculture, trade were disrupted.

Qtn: what led to the collapse of Mali?

THE EMPIRE OF SONGHAI.

ORIGIN:

- The empire of Songhai rose after the decline of Mali during the second half of the 15th century.
- It emerged from a small state of GAO which was originally a vassal state of Mali.
- The empire was located around R. Niger.
- It was an important trade city because of the involvement of the people in the Trans Saharan trade where a lot of revenue was obtained to develop it.
- Because of the importance of GAO in trade, it was conquered by Mansa Musa of Mali.
- The leaders of GAO i.e. Ali Kolen and Suleiman were held hostage at the court of Mali.
- However, after the death of Mansa Musa, many of the vassal states broke away and they became independent including GAO.
- It should however be noted that GAO was originally conquered by the Nomadic Berbers from the North known as Zagawa who formed the Za or Dia dynasty.
- It had its capital at Kukia under the leadership of Dia Kosi.
- Because of the influence of Islam in the region, many Islamic scholars flocked the empire and established mosques, schools where they introduced Islamic learning.

- After the decline of the Za/Dia dynasty, Sunni Ali declared himself the leader of Songhai and he introduced the title of Sunni rulers.
- Sunni Ali was therefore believed to be the founder of Songhai Empire.

Qtn: how was the empire of Songhai established?

FACTORS FOR THE RISE OF SONGHAI.

The factors for the rise and expansion of Songhai were political, social and economic as well as internal and external.

The rise and expansion of Songhai was gradual and it is said to have replaced Mali in the second half of the 15th century.

- The empire of Songhai had a strong army which defeated the societies around and defeated the empire against the Mossi.
- The empire had able leaders e.g. Sunni Ali and Askia Mohammed who were a basis for the creation of the empire.
- The empire participated in trade from which a lot of revenue was obtained to develop the empire's economy.
- The existence of a favorable political climate where the people of Songhai longed for a liberator.
- The extension of the trade routes into Hausa land during the 15th century gave Songhai a chance to become the center of all trade routes in the region.
- The location of the empire in a good geographical region with fertile soils which encouraged the production of enough food for the ever increasing population.
- The empire was also involved in the production of crops which acted as trade items and this boosted the empire's economy.
- The presence of R. Niger which enhanced fishing that added on food security and items of trade which improved the empire's economy.
- The division of the Songhai community into major professional groups e.g. Sorko who were fishermen, the Gow/Gabibi who were hunters and the Do who were agriculturalists and cattle keepers also contributed to Songhai's rise and expansion.
- The empire also developed because it had a natural defensive barrier (R.Niger) which
- The early acceptance of Islam by the leaders of Songhai benefited the empire from the developments brought by the Muslims e.g. Koranic schools and mosques.
- The strong economy based on trade and agriculture.
- The empire also expanded due to the decline of Mali since GAO got a chance to break away from Mali.

Qtn: explain the factors that led to the rise and expansion of Songhai Empire.

THE REIGN OF SUNNI ALI.

- Sunni Ali is believed to be the founder of Songhai Empire.
- Sunni Ali ruled Songhai for 28 years i.e. from 1464 to 1492.
- Sunni Ali built a very strong army which consisted of sections e.g. the infantry, cavalry and a fleet of ships controlled by the Sorko.
- He consolidated himself on the throne and greatly expanded the empire's boundaries.
- He captured many commercial centers e.g. Timbuktu, Jenne, Kata and Mali.
- He created a good and effective system of government where he divided the empire into provinces for easy administration.
- Sunni Ali appointed governors to areas which resisted his rule e.g. Hombori region.
- The areas that willingly admitted to his rule were administered under their traditional leaders.
- He encouraged all states under his rule to pay annual tributes and taxes which were used to develop the empire's economy.
- He is remembered for his religious tolerance i.e. though he was a Muslim, he allowed pagans to co-exist harmoniously.
- He was a tyrant, ruthless, cruel and ungodly i.e. he was hostile to Muslim scholars.
- He killed many Muslim scholars especially those of Sonkore University in Timbuktu.
- He was also indifferent to Islam i.e. he killed many Muslims that God only knows.
- His wars of conquest disrupted trade hence decline in trade during his reign.
- He converted the small kingdom of GAO into a huge empire of Songhai.
- He laid a firm foundation on which his successors built a strong empire.
- He died as a fighter in 1492 from a military expedition against the Fulani.

Qtn: Explain the career and achievement of Sunni Ali for Songhai.

THE REIGN OF ASKIA MOHAMMED THE GREAT (1493-1528).

- ❖ Askia Mohammed came into power after the death of Sunni Ali.
- ❖ After the fall of Sunni Ali, he was succeeded by his son Abu baker Dao who was overthrown by his father's general known as Mohammed Ibn Baker Toure.
- ❖ He came to power in 1493 and he was not a member of the royal family.
- ❖ He took over power by defeating Sunni Ali's son through war with assistance of a Muslim faction.

- ❖ He therefore decided to consolidate himself on the throne in order to win the popularity of the people of Songhai.
- ❖ He introduced a title of Askia for rulers in Songhai until the collapse of the empire.
- ❖ In order to strengthen his position in Songhai, he expelled and exiled all the children and members that served in the Sunni dynasty and he replaced them with his relatives, children and friends.
- ❖ He also brought about friendship and reconciliation to all those who were exiled by Sunni Ali in order to win popularity of the Songhai people.
- ❖ Askia Mohammed used an excellent system of government which was centralised and brought about peace in the empire.
- ❖ He introduced government departments e.g. the minister of finance, justice, home affairs and agriculture which improved administration in the empire.
- ❖ He divided the empire into four regions and each region was administered by a commissioner for easy administration of the empire.
- ❖ He also divided each region into provinces e.g. Dendi, Kola, Timbuktu, Jenne and each was administered by a governor but all these had to be loyal relatives.
- ❖ In the important cities e.g. Jenne and Timbuktu, he elected mayors who were in charge of all trade activities.
- ❖ In the vassal states, he maintained the traditional leaders but they had to pay tribute to the central government.
- ❖ He expanded the empire of Songhai by attracting the Fulani and Mandingo (pagans).
- ❖ He also created a strong army which was used to maintain law order as well as expanding the empire's boundaries.
- ❖ Socially, Askia Mohammed united the people Songhai by enforcing Islam as the state religion and appointing Islamic scholars as his advisors.
- ❖ He was greatly concerned with the purification of Islam and he emphasized the five pillars of Islam in order to strengthen the religion in Songhai.
- ❖ Justice was strictly enforced according to Sharia law and class of Muslim judges (Qadis/Kadis) were appointed to interpret the religion.
- ❖ He also encouraged Islamic education by attracting Islamic scholars from N. Africa who taught the people of Songhai different skills.
- ❖ The city of Timbuktu became a commercial center as well as an education Centre because many mosques and schools were built there.
- ❖ As a staunch/trade Muslim, Askia Mohammed made a pilgrimage to Mecca in 1497.
- ❖ Economically, he promoted trade from which a lot revenue was got to develop the empire.
- ❖ He encouraged agriculture by digging channels to irrigate the dry areas.
- ❖ He established royal estates to provide food to the people in times of need.
- ❖ He introduced a system of weights and measures which encouraged trade.
- ❖ He encouraged local industries e.g. black smithing, salt mining and cloth weaving.
- ❖ Askia Mohammed was against illegal taxes imposed on traders because it was against Sharia law of Islam.

Qtn: why is Askia Mohammed the great remembered in the history of West Africa?

WHY THE EMPIRE OF SONGHAI DECLINED.

The decline was gradual.

The empire of Songhai declined due to a number of factors which were political, economic, social, internal and external.

- ❖ The empire of Songhai declined due to the rise incompetent leaders who could not effectively control the empire.
- ❖ The overthrow of the old and blind Askia Mohammed by his sons after failing to effectively administer the empire.
- ❖ The empire lost some sources of valuable minerals e.g. gold, which led to a decline in trade and the economy.
- ❖ The empire declined due to the breakaway of the conquered states which reduced its size.
- ❖ There developed succession disputes which also weakened the political administration of Songhai.
- ❖ There was decline in trade when Songhai lost control of the salt and gold deposits hence losing out on revenue in trade.
- ❖ Songhai also declined due to insecurity which was brought about by the breakaway of the vassal states leading to a decline in agriculture.
- ❖ The empire experienced external attacks from the Fulani and the Tuareges who weakened the army and administration of the empire.
- ❖ Islam divided the people Songhai between Muslims and non-Muslims which caused disunity in the empire.
- ❖ By 1595, Songhai had been brought under the domination of the Moroccans and lost its independence.

Qtn: Why did the empire of Songhai decline/collapse?

THE EMPIRE OF KANEM-BORNU (SEFAWA DYNASTY).

ORIGIN.

- ✚ The origin of Kanem Bornu is not clear.
- ✚ Its origin is derived from myths and legends.
- ✚ The empire is believed to have been founded around 800AD and it survived up to the 20th century.
- ✚ The empire was founded by a son of an Arab trader known as Saif Ibn Yazzan.
- ✚ The inhabitants of Kanem Bornu were the Kanuri who were off springs of the intermarriages between the Berbers and the So people.
- ✚ The Kanuri founded Kanem Empire which was located in the East of L. Chad.
- ✚ Later, the Kanuri colonized Bornu which was located in the East of L. Chad.
- ✚ Later, the Kanuri colonized Bornu which was located on the west side of L.Chad thus the empire came to be known as Kanem-Bornu.
- ✚ The first capital of Kanem Bornu was known as Njimi.
- ✚ Mai Dunama I and Mai Dunama I and Mai Dunama II were the most powerful leaders who built a strong army which they used to expand the boundaries of the empire by capturing Fezzan, Adamawa and Walata.
- ✚ After the death of these two Mais or kings, the empire became unstable because the new leaders were weak.
- ✚ During the reign of Mai Umar (1394-1398), the capital was transferred to Bornu due to serious attacks from the Bulala people.
- ✚ During the reign of Mai Ghaju, Kanem Bornu regained its greatness and fame.
- ✚ Mai Ali Ghaju built a new capital at Bini-Ngozargamu.
- ✚ The Kanuri people embraced Islam and participated in the trans-Saharan trade which brought revenue and guns that led to the rise of Kanem-Bornu Empire.

FACTORS FOR THE RISE OF KANEM BORNU.

The empire of Kanem Bornu expanded due to a number of factors which include the following:

The empire expanded due to political, social and economic factors.

- The empire expanded because it had an efficient system of administration which was centralised with the king as the top most leader.
- The empire was located in the fertile savannah region which encouraged agriculture and food production for the ever increasing population.
- The empire expanded because it was located far away from other ancient states hence it was not easily attacked.

- The empire had capable leaders e.g. Mai Ghaju and Dunama I and II who greatly expanded the empire.
- The empire had a strong army which was used to expand the boundaries as well as protecting the empire from external attacks.
- The empire participated in the trans-Saharan trade from which a lot of revenue was obtained to develop the empire.
- The empire also expanded because of the unity that was brought about by the spread of Islam.
- The empire expanded because it had weak neighbours e.g. the Kanuri who were easily defeated and conquered to expand the empire.
- The empire was located near L.Chad which acted as a natural defensive barrier.
- The empire had a strong economy based on agriculture, trade and mining, this created good trade relations with the neighbours.
- The empire expanded because the people of Kanem Bornu had a common origin and spoke the same language which greatly improved unity among themselves.
- The empire had very few rivals who could not attack it hence expanding.

Qtn: Explain the factors that led to the rise and expansion of the Sefawa dynasty / Kanem-Bornu.

ORGANISATION OF THE KANEM – BORNU.

- The empire had a centralised system of administration with the king as the top most leader.
- The king had a title of Mai and he was greatly respected.
- The Mai had both political and religious powers and he was taken to be semi divine.
- Succession to the throne was patrilineal and the leader/king was from the descendants of the Sefawa dynasty.
- The Mai ruled with the assistance of a state council of 12 members.
- The members of the state council were chosen from the royal family and were nobles.
- The members of the state council were in charge of administration and collecting taxes in their respective territories.
- The nobles also held military titles e.g. the Commander, chief of the army.
- The empire was divided into two administrative units' i.e. metropolitan and provincial Kanem Bornu for easy administration.
- Metropolitan Kanem Bornu was the central government and was ruled by the Mai himself.
- Provincial Kanem Bornu comprised of the conquered states under their traditional leaders but they had to pay tributes to metropolitan Kanem Bornu.
- The empire was divided into provinces and each was administered by a governor. The provinces included North, South, East and West.
- The governors of the provinces were also members of the state council and were appointed for life.
- The Kanuri residential officials were posted in the provincial states to supervise the administration of the traditional leaders.
- Women played an important role in the empire e.g. the Queen mother was the leader of all women and she dealt with their issues.
- The elder sister of the king looked after the royal children.

- The senior wife of the king looked after the Mai's chambers or palace.
- The empire had a strong army which was for defense and expansion of the empire. The army had divisions and each governor of the province was in charge of the divisional army.
- The army comprised of both the infantry and cavalry.
- The empire had an efficient system of administration based on the Sharia law.
- The Mai appointed judges (Khadis) who administered justice.
- There was a high court at the capital of the empire Bin- Ngozargamu with 12 judges.
- The judges advised the Mai on legal and religious matters.
- Socially, Islam was the state religion in the empire.
- Traditional laws were replaced with Sharia law which influenced people's ways of life.
- There was also great respect for elders by the young ones.
- There was Islamic education because of the influence of Islamic scholars.
- Economically, the Kanuri carried out trade and exported agricultural and cattle products.
- The Kanuri carried out livestock farming where they reared sheep and goats.
- The Kanuri also carried out agriculture and grew crops such as rice, millet and beans.
- There was also local industries e.g. iron working industries and cloth weaving.
- The Kanuri also carried out mining of copper which was sold in trade.
- The Kanuri carried out fishing from L.Chad.
- The Kanuri charged taxes on traders who used the trade routes in their empire.
- The Kanuri collected tributes from conquered states as a symbol of loyalty.

Qtn; how was the empire of Kanem Bornu administered?

THE REIGN OF MAI DUNAMA II (1221-1259)

He came to power in 1221 and ruled up to 1259.

He brought the empire to its height during his reign in the following ways

- He greatly expanded the empire by conquering many areas e.g. Kano, Fezzan, Adamawa and Bornu.
- He established a state council comprising of 12 members who advised the Mai.
- He divided the empire into two administrative units for effective administration i.e. metropolitan and provincial Kanem Bornu.
- He divided the empire into four provinces which were ruled by governors and they reported to the Mai directly.
- He promoted Islam as a state religion for the Kanuri people.
- He encouraged Islamic learning and education through establishing schools and mosques.
- As a devoted Muslim, he made a pilgrimage to Mecca.
- He also established a Hostel in Cairo the Kanuri pilgrims.
- He promoted trade by the establishing control of the trade routes from which he charged taxes which were used to develop the empire.
- He promoted agriculture due to the fertile soil which ensured food security.
- His ruled ended in 1259 when he died but he remains one of the greatest rulers of Kanem Bornu due to his contributions.

Qtn: why is Mai Dunama the second remembered in the history of Kanem Bornu?

THE REIGN OF MAI IDRIS ALOOMA.

He was a son of Mai Ali and Queen Amsa.

Amsa was a daughter to one of the Bulala kings.

On Ali's death, Queen Amsa and Idris went to live in exile in old Kanem because the young prince's life was insecure.

This was during the reign of Mai Dala.

Even when Dala died, his sister Aisha/Aissa took over power therefore Idris could only ascend to power after a bitter seven year old civil war.

Idris turned out to be the greatest man because he made many contributions to the growth and expansion of Kanem Bornu.

These contributions were political, social and economic, military and religious.

- ❖ Mai Idris Aloomaa made Kanem Bornu reach its climax by conquering the empire's neighbours to increase its size and strength.
- ❖ He created a strong and efficient army which he divided into two i.e. infantry and Cavalry.
- ❖ He equipped his army with the most modern weapons of the time e.g. muskets.
- ❖ He used the army to defend the empire's boundaries from internal and external Arabs.
- ❖ He appointed an army commander who was in charge of the army.
- ❖ He defeated the empire's enemies e.g. the Bulala.
- ❖ He was the first ruler in the region to import fire arms from Tripoli.
- ❖ He conquered various parts of the region and added them onto Kanem Bornu e.g. he conquered up to Wadai and the troublesome Tetala people of L.Chad region.
- ❖ He established a strong administration guided by Sharia law.
- ❖ He divided the empire into four political entities for easy administration and each was under a governor.
- ❖ He established a strong judicial system based on the Sharia law.
- ❖ He also set up a high court with a chief judge who was assisted by 12 judges and these advised the Mai.
- ❖ He promoted Islam by constructing many mosques which brought about unity.
- ❖ As a devoted Muslim, he made a pilgrimage to Mecca.
- ❖ He promoted local industries e.g. mining industry and cloth making industry.
- ❖ He established diplomatic links with countries like Turkey and Egypt.

Qtn: Explain the contribution of Mai Idris Aloomaa to the growth of the second Kanem Bornu.

WHY THE EMPIRE LASTED FOR SO LONG.

The empire survived due to a number of factors which were political, social and economic.

- The empire had an efficient system of administration which was centralised hence its survival for a long period of time.
- The empire was located in a fertile savannah region which ensured food security.
- The empire had able leaders e.g. Mai Dunama and Mai Idris Alooma who enabled the empire to survive for so long.
- The empire participated in the Trans Saharan trade from which a lot of revenue was obtained to strengthen the empire's economy hence surviving for so long.
- Islam brought about unity in the empire hence its survival for so long.
- The empire had a good system of justice which was based on Sharia law and this brought stability in the empire hence its survival for so long.
- The empire had good relations with her neighbours therefore she could not be attacked hence its survival for so long.
- The empire had weak neighbours who could not easily attack the people of Kanem hence surviving for so long.
- The empire had a strong economy based on trade, agriculture, mining and tributes from vassal states hence surviving for so long.
- The Kanuri had a common origin and spoke one language which brought about unity hence the empire's survival for so long.
- The empire had a clear system of succession which was patrilineal and this reduced succession disputes enabling the empire to survive for so long. Strong army. Strong location.

Qtn: Why did the empire of Kanem Bornu / Sefawa dynasty last for long?

WHY THE EMPIRE DECLINE.

The decline of Kanem Bornu was gradual and it was due to a number of factors.

The decline of the empire was due to political, social, military, and external and internal factors.

- The decline of the empire started soon after Mai Idris Alooma's long peaceful reign which made the army become inactive and ill prepared for war.
- After the death of Mai Idris Alooma, there arose weak leaders who could not effectively administer the empire e.g. Mai Ali Ibn Omar.
- The empire was attacked by the Tuareges from the North, Kwararafa Jukun (south) and the Owadai invasion which weakened the empire hence its collapse.

- The empire experienced rebellions from the former vassal states (conquered states) e.g. Zinden's revolt cost Bornu the Kano-Tripoli trade route.
- The Tuareges attack led to loss of control of the important salt trade route to the North which reduced the empire's revenue.
- There were succession disputes in the empire e.g. the Sefawa and El-Kanemi's line left Kanem-Bornu divided leading to its collapse.
- The assassination of Mai Dunama II by El- Kanemi the proclamation of Dunama's son Ibrahim caused divisions in the empire.
- Rivalry broke out between Ibrahim and Shehu Umar and this led to the assassination of Ibrahim which ended the 1000 year old Sefawa dynasty.
- This state of unrest brought about a number of effects on Bornu because the central government became increasingly weak and unable.
- The empire declined because of the decline in trade due to the internal conflicts.
- Agriculture was also disrupted which led to famine hence decline of the empire.
- The empire faced external attacks e.g. by Rabel from Sennar.
- Bornu also fell victim of Uthman Dan Fordio's Jihads which caused insecurities hence its decline.
- The forces of European imperialism led to the final decline of the empire because the French annexed Bornu and declared it their colony.

Qtn: Why did the empire of Kanem Bornu/Sefawa dynasty decline?