

The Worlds of the 15th Century

AP World History Notes
Chapter 13

Paleolithic Persistence



- ∞ Paleolithic (old stone-age) peoples still existed in the 15th century
- ∞ Hunting and gathering societies
- ∞ Where? → Australia, much of Siberia, the arctic coastlands, and parts of Africa and the Americas

Agricultural Village Societies



- ❧ Small village-based communities organized by kinship relations
- ❧ Agricultural
- ❧ No incorporation into larger empires or civilizations
- ❧ Where? → much of North America, parts of the Amazon River basin, Southeast Asia, and Africa south of the equator



Agricultural Village Societies



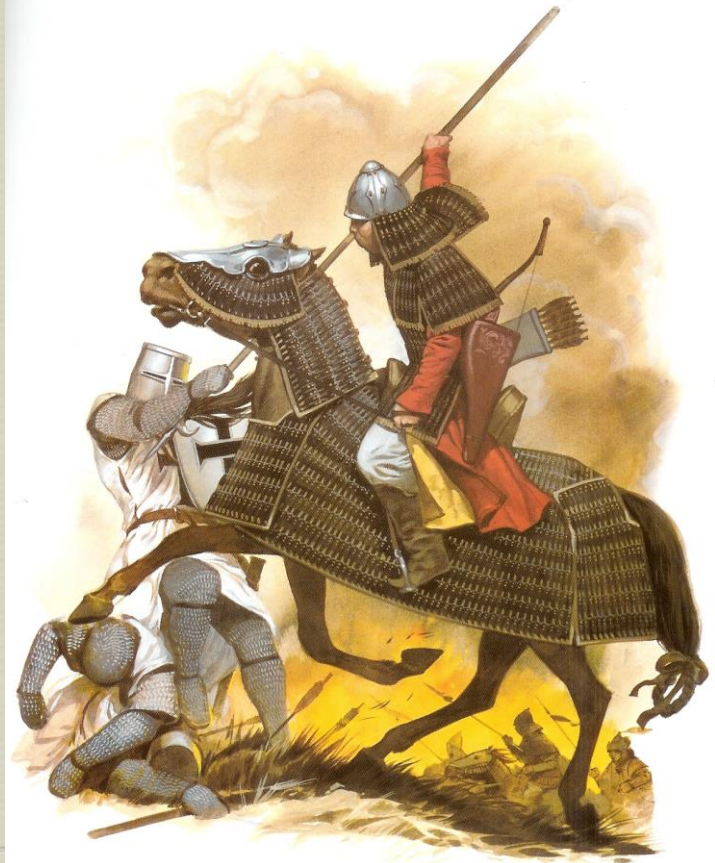
The Igbo peoples of West Africa

- ∞ No oppressive political authority
- ∞ No class inequalities
- ∞ No seclusion of women

Herding Peoples

- ❧ Nomadic pastoral peoples
- ❧ Had more direct and dramatic contact with larger civilizations than agricultural village societies or hunter-gatherers
- ❧ Where? → Central Asia/the steppe, parts of Africa
- ❧ Arguably the most significant = the Mongols

Mongol heavy cavalryman, Liegnitz, 1241





Timur

- ❧ Turkic warrior who tried to restore the Mongol Empire in the late 14th & early 15th centuries
- ❧ Devastation once again to Russia, Persia, and India
- ❧ Died (in 1405) while preparing an invasion of China
- ❧ Empire didn't last → conflict among his successors
- ❧ Last great military success of Central Asian nomads



Ming China (1368-1644)

- ☞ Rebuilt strong central government
- ☞ Reinstated civil service examinations and made them even harder
- ☞ Increase in food and trade production
- ☞ Increase in population



Ming China



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- ∞ Capital = Beijing
- ∞ Emperor Yongle built the Forbidden City = magnificent imperial residence
- ∞ Also built the Temple of Heaven = where rulers performed Confucian-based rituals to ensure the well-being of Chinese society

Ming China



Ming China

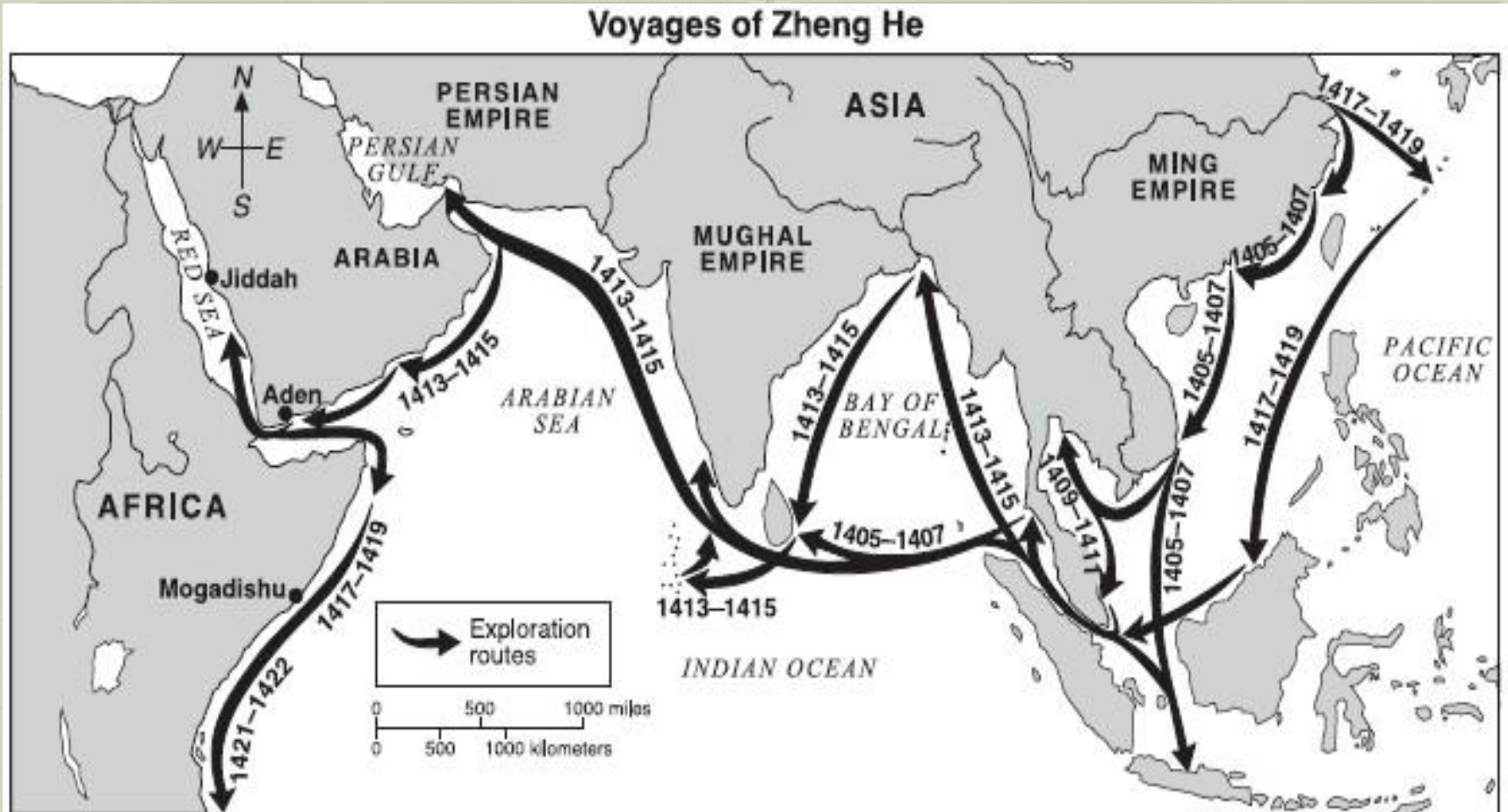
- ∞ Focus = repairing the damage caused by Mongol rule
- ∞ Restored millions of acres of cultivation
- ∞ Rebuilt: canals, reservoirs, and irrigation systems
- ∞ Planted millions of trees to reforest China

Chinese Exploration



- ❧ China undertook large and impressive maritime expeditions
- ❧ Largest = launched in 1405 and led by Zheng He
 - ❧ 300 ships; 27,000 crew members; variety of different people on board
- ❧ He made 7 voyages between 1405 and 1433

Voyages of Zheng He



Source: Elisabeth Ellis and Anthony Esler, *World History: Connections to Today*, Prentice Hall (adapted)

Chinese Exploration

- ❧ Goals of Chinese exploration:
 - ❧ Enroll distant peoples and states in the Chinese tribute system
 - ❧ Bring back exotic goods from foreign lands (ex: zebras, giraffes, etc.)
 - ❧ Establish Chinese power and prestige in the Indian Ocean
 - ❧ Exert Chinese control over foreign trade



Chinese Exploration

∞ Abrupt and deliberate end to Chinese exploration in 1433

∞ WHY?

∞ Death of Emperor Yongle = chief supporter

∞ Many officials saw expeditions as a waste of money and resources

∞ Believed focus should be on real threat = nomads to the north