OYO & BENIN
Located in present-day Nigeria
POLITICAL ORGANIZATION: Independent city-states of the Yoruba people; grew up around 1000 CE
ECONOMIC SYSTEM: Slave trade with Europeans, exchanging slaves for guns
RESULT: Disintegrated in the 1700s as a result of civil wars and rulers’ greed over the slave trade

ASHANTI UNION
Located in what is today Ivory Coast & Ghana
POLITICAL ORGANIZATION: Union of Akan-speaking states with an elected chief who took his authority from the Golden Stool of Kumasi in 1695.
ECONOMIC SYSTEM: Gold trade (Gold Coast states), expanding south and became a major slave trader, exchanging slaves for guns; power declined as slave trade declined in 1800s
RESULT: Use of slave trade led to conflict with Europeans, heavy reliance on imports at expense of own economy; fell to the British in 1901 after a long war.

SONGHAY
Located in what is today Nigeria, Mali, Mauritania, Senegal, and Guinea
POLITICAL ORGANIZATION: An empire of conquered territories with governors appointed by the emperor and civil service; local rulers kept power, expansion began in 1464.
ECONOMIC SYSTEM: Controlled gold and salt trade, taxing revenues
RESULT: Supported Islam over local religions (ancestor worship, animism); invaded by Moroccans armed with guns, 1590s; revolts followed; empire gone by

KONGO
Located in what is today the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola
POLITICAL ORGANIZATION: Manikongo (king) married into important families of conquered people to legitimize rule; king as absolute and divine; expansion began before 1400.
ECONOMIC SYSTEM: Trade in pottery, cloth, iron goods; agriculture; maize introduced in 1600s from the Americas; Growth of trade in slaves with coming of the Portuguese in 1500s.
RESULT: Civil war over conversion of part of royal family to Christianity; Europeanization by King Afonso in early 1500s; Portuguese influence and interference; corrupting influence of the slave trade; division into small states by 1600s; merchants become more powerful than ruling fa-
mililies; kingdom gone by 1800