

LEVELED Book • P

World Traveler Ibn Battuta



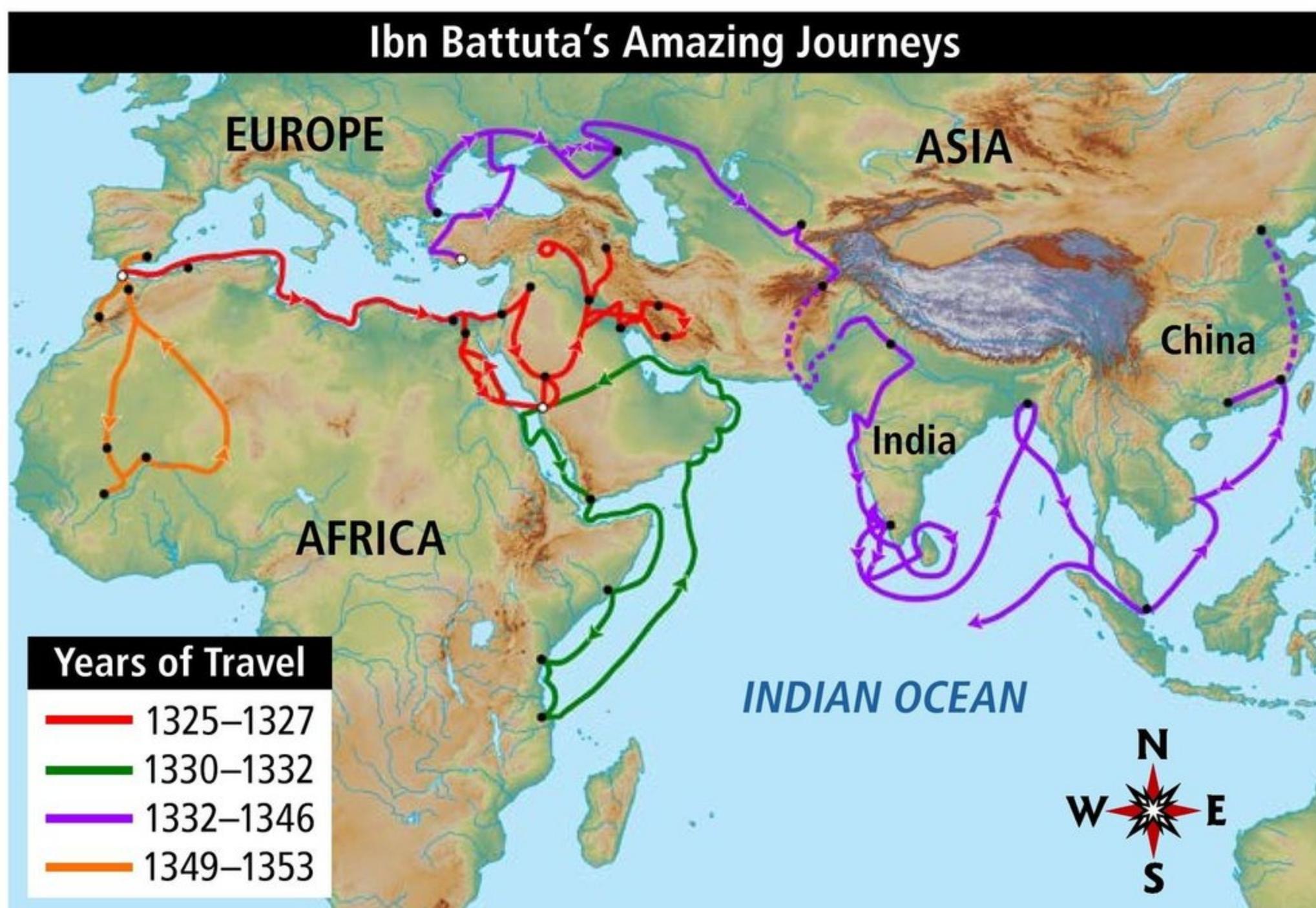
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World Traveler

Ibn Battuta



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Focus Question

Who was Ibn Battuta, and why was he important?

Words to Know

cruel

empire

explorer

invaders

Muslims

rebels

silk

travelers

treason

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Correlation

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To Mecca and Beyond



A Traveler Like None Before

Do you like to travel and see new places? Can you imagine traveling for more than twenty years? That's what one of the greatest **travelers** in history did.

Abu Ibn Battuta was born in 1304 in the country of Morocco in northern Africa. He studied law when he was a young man.

The Journeys Begin

In 1325, at the age of twenty-one, Ibn Battuta set out on a long journey. He was going to the city of Mecca in what is now the country of Saudi Arabia. Mecca is a holy place for **Muslims**—people who practice the religion of Islam. Many Muslims try to visit Mecca at least once. Ibn Battuta and his parents were very sad when he left.





After traveling for sixteen months, Ibn Battuta finally reached Mecca. After seeing Mecca, he decided to keep on going. He wanted to visit new places.

Many Muslims gave money and gifts to travelers during that time. Ibn Battuta received many gifts to help him on his trips.

Ibn Battuta traveled mostly by camel with large groups to stay safe from bandits. The groups often traveled in the cool of the night using torches to light the way.

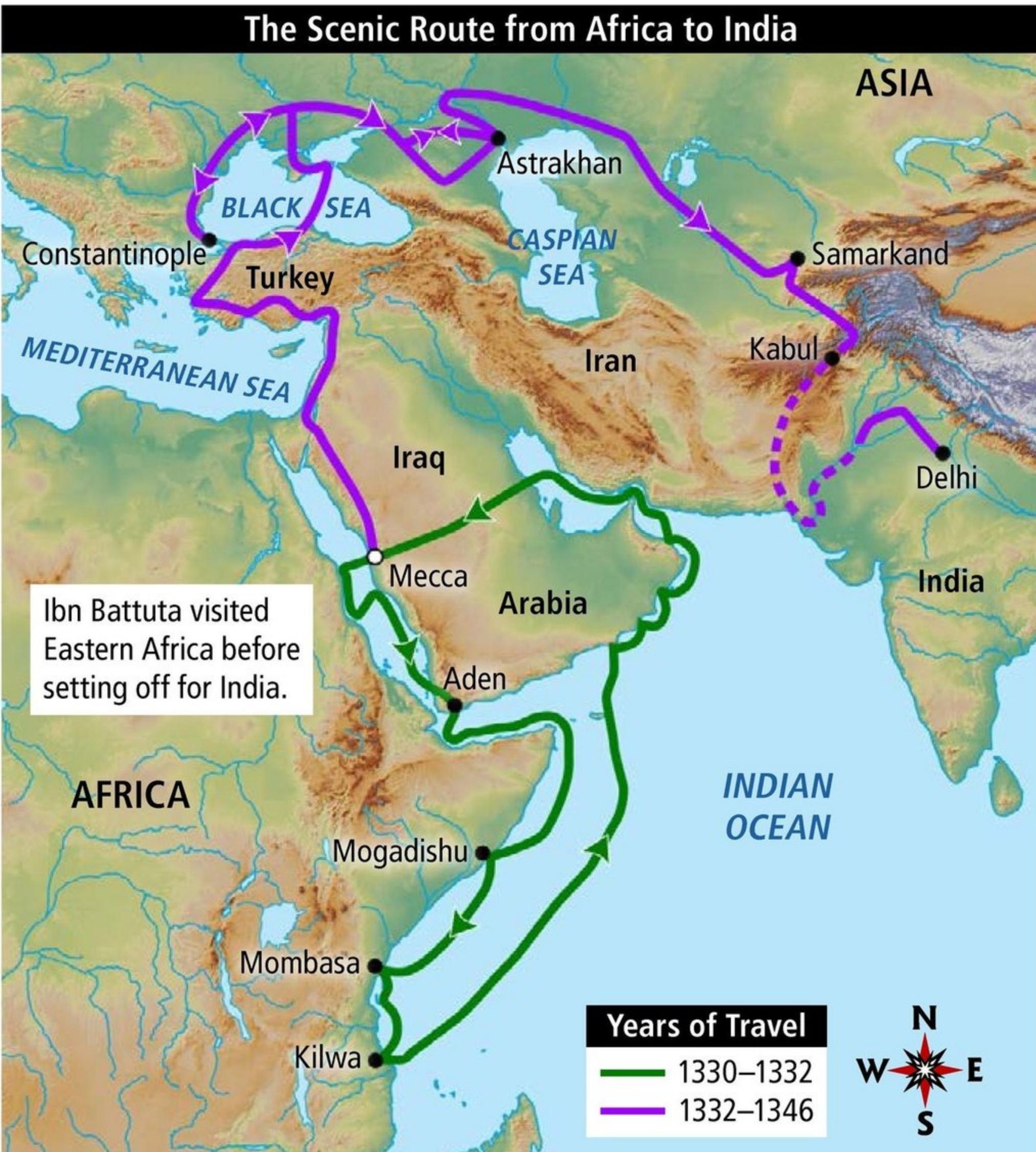


This university, built in AD 1227, was there when Ibn Battuta visited Baghdad, in what is now Iraq.

Beyond Mecca

Ibn Battuta went to what is now Iraq and Iran. These countries had once been rich and beautiful but were recovering from attacks by **invaders** when he visited them.

On a trip to Africa, Ibn Battuta heard tales about the ruler of India. The ruler was famous for giving gifts to visitors, but he could also be **cruel**. Ibn Battuta decided to set off for India.



His path took him through present-day Turkey and the Russian grasslands. He visited the Christian city of Constantinople, the capital of an old empire. Ibn Battuta met the emperor during his stay. Then he continued his journey to India.

In Trouble in India

In 1334, Ibn Battuta arrived in India. The ruler welcomed him with gifts and made him a judge. Later, though, the Indian ruler suspected Ibn Battuta of **treason** and placed him under guard. Ibn Battuta feared for his life. Eventually, the ruler forgave Ibn Battuta.

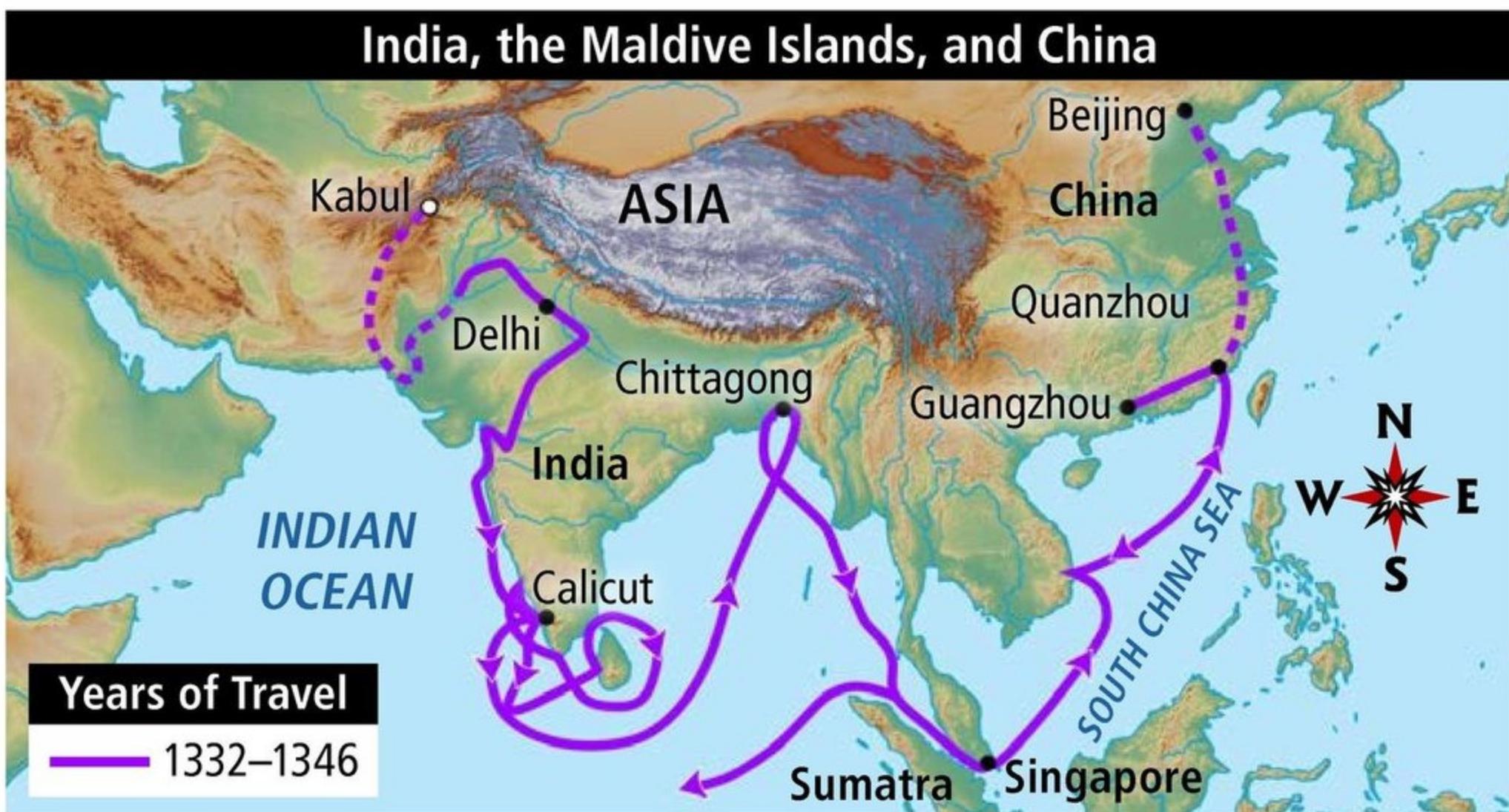
Around 1342, the Indian ruler asked Ibn Battuta to carry gifts and messages to the ruler of China. By this time, Ibn Battuta had been in India for eight years. He was glad to leave before his luck took another turn for the worse.



Attacks, a Shipwreck, and—Finally—China

Unfortunately, Ibn Battuta's troubles were far from over. On the way to China, Ibn Battuta's group was attacked by **rebels** and had to split up. Later, the ships they were supposed to travel in were destroyed by a big storm. All the treasure aboard the ships was lost.





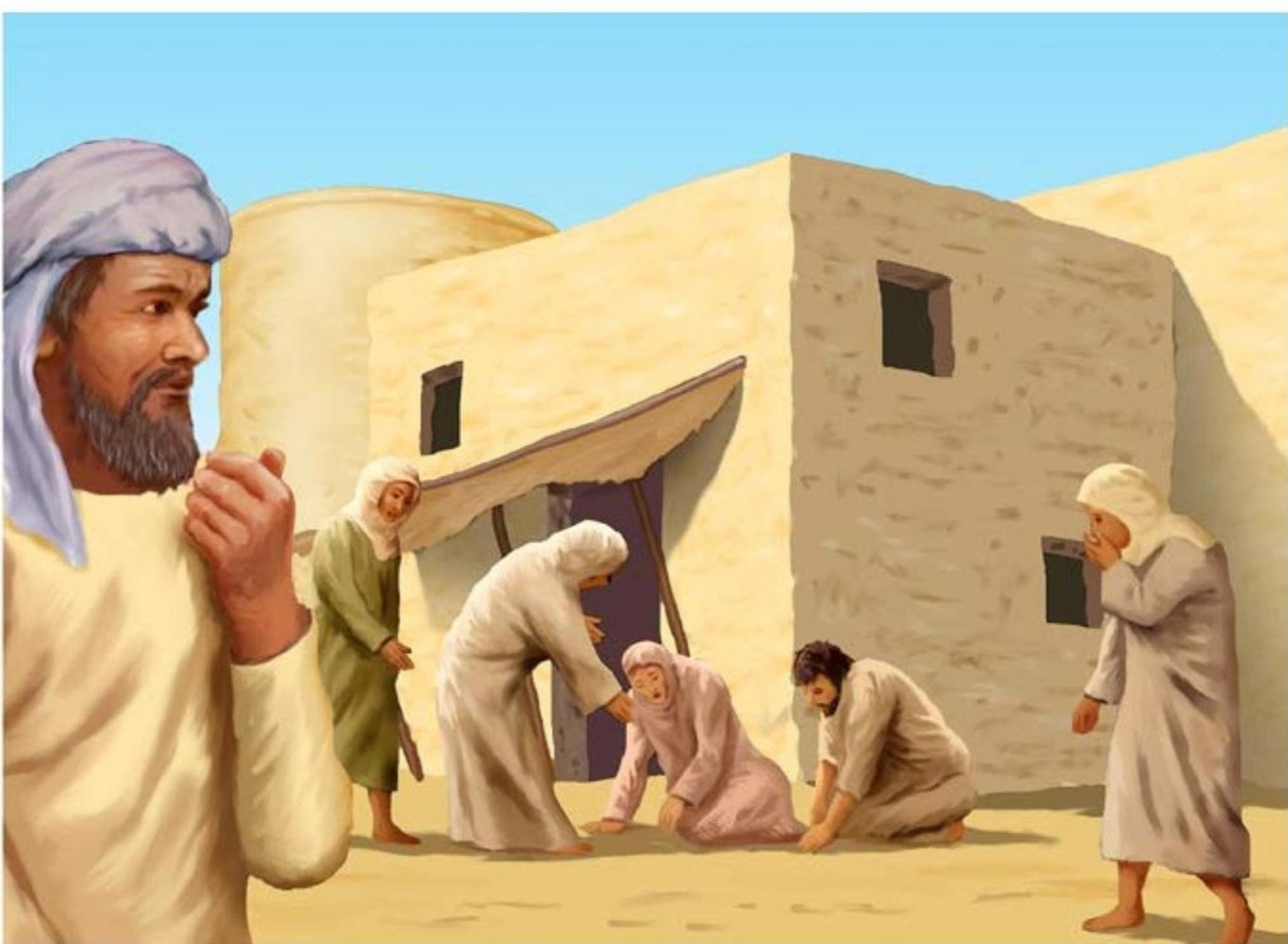
Ibn Battuta was afraid to tell the Indian ruler that he had failed to deliver the gifts to China. He stayed for nearly two years in islands south of India. Later he went to the island of Sumatra, in what is now the nation of Indonesia. He got his chance to visit China when the Muslim ruler of Sumatra gave him a ship.

Ibn Battuta reached China in 1346. He was impressed with what he saw in China. He was surprised that even poor monks and beggars in China had clothing made of silk. Silk was a very expensive fabric in most parts of the world.

The Journey Home

After less than a year, Ibn Battuta was ready to move on—this time back home to Morocco. On the way home, he saw many cities where people were dying from a terrible disease.

In 1349, Ibn Battuta finally arrived back home in Morocco. He had been gone for twenty-four years and was now forty-five years old. Both of his parents had died while he was gone.





Final Trips

Ibn Battuta made two more big trips. He traveled first to Granada, a part of Spain still under Muslim control. Then he went to the Empire of Mali in West Africa.

Ibn Battuta spent eight months in Mali as the guest of its ruler. He was impressed by the richness of the country.

Ibn Battuta returned to Morocco in 1354—this time for good. He was now fifty years old.

Telling the Story

In Morocco, Ibn Battuta hired a young writer to write the story of his travels. The writer put Ibn Battuta's stories into a book called the *Rihlah (Journey)*.

In his final years, Ibn Battuta is thought to have served as a judge. Little is known of his later life, though. He died in Morocco in either 1368 or 1369.





Conclusion

Ibn Battuta journeyed 75,000 miles (120,000 km) during his lifetime. That's like going all the way around the world three times! He visited and lived in dozens of countries. He was not an **explorer**. He visited no unknown lands. Nevertheless, he remains one of the greatest travelers in history.

Glossary

cruel (<i>adj.</i>)	mean or unkind; causing suffering or pain (p. 7)
empire (<i>n.</i>)	a collection of nations or people ruled by one person or government (p. 8)
explorer (<i>n.</i>)	a person who visits and learns about new places (p. 15)
invaders (<i>n.</i>)	people who enter a place to attack its people (p. 7)
Muslims (<i>n.</i>)	people who follow the religion of Islam (p. 5)
rebels (<i>n.</i>)	people who speak or act out against authority (p. 10)
silk (<i>n.</i>)	a type of fabric made from the threads of a silkworm (p. 11)
travelers (<i>n.</i>)	people who journey from one place to another (p. 4)
treason (<i>n.</i>)	a crime of betrayal or disloyalty against one's government or ruler (p. 9)

World Traveler Ibn Battuta

A Reading A-Z Level P Leveled Book

Word Count: 788

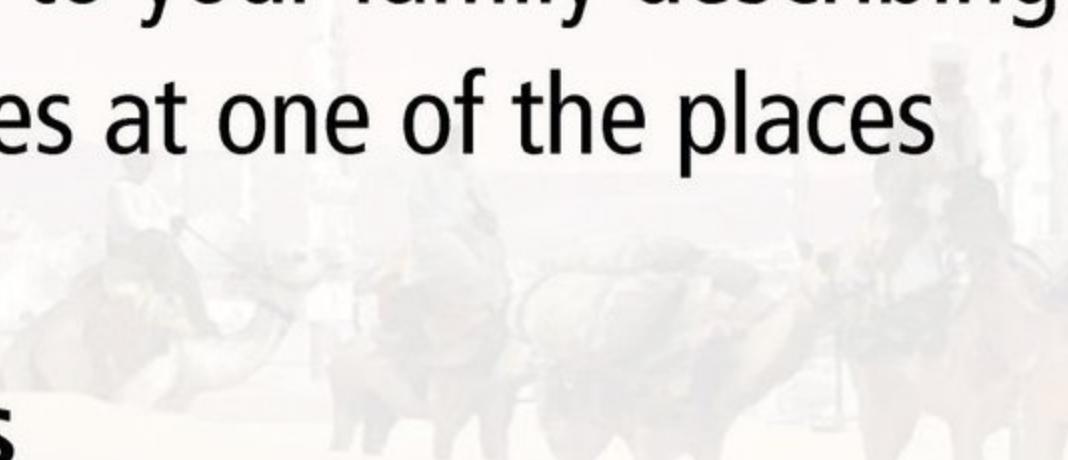
Connections

Writing and Art

Pretend you are Ibn Battuta. Write a postcard home to your family describing your experiences at one of the places you visited.

Social Studies

Make a timeline of Ibn Battuta's travels, including at least five events and their locations. Compare your timeline with a partner's.



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