

# Kush and Other African Kingdoms

## Before You Read: Knowledge Rating

Recognizing what you already know about each of these terms can help you understand the chapter:

Kush	Meroë	Aksum
Ezana	griot	Bantu

In your notebook, rate how well you know each term:

- 3 = I know what this word means.
- 2 = I've seen this word, but I don't know what it means.
- 1 = I've never seen this word before.

Define each term in your notebook as you read.

## Big Ideas About the Kush Civilization

**Culture** Ways of living change as humans interact with each other.

Kush civilization was influenced by Egyptian culture. Kush was under the rule of Egypt for hundreds of years. Kush adopted Egyptian customs, religion, hieroglyphs, and architecture. Later, Kush conquered Egypt. The two cultures influenced each other.



### Integrated Technology

#### eEdition

- Interactive Maps
- Interactive Visuals
- Starting with a Story



#### INTERNET RESOURCES

Go to [ClassZone.com](http://ClassZone.com) for

- WebQuest
- Homework Helper
- Research Links
- Internet Activities
- Quizzes
- Maps
- Test Practice
- Current Events



AFRICA

WORLD

800 B.C.

751 B.C.

Piankhi, a Kushite king, conquers Memphis in Egypt.

650 B.C.

500 B.C.

Nok people make iron tools.  
(Nok head) ▶

500 B.C.

461 B.C.

Age of Pericles begins in Greece.  
◀ (marble bust of Pericles)



# Vegetation Regions of Africa

INTERACTIVE



Desert



Rain forest



Savannah



200 B.C.

**146 B.C.**  
African city of Carthage destroyed by Rome.

50 B.C.

**27 B.C.**  
Pax Romana begins.

A.D. 100

**A.D. 100**  
Bantu migrations under way.

A.D. 250

**A.D. 105**  
Chinese invent paper.  
(illuminated manuscript, Tang Dynasty) ▶

A.D. 400

**A.D. 325**  
King Ezana rules Aksum.

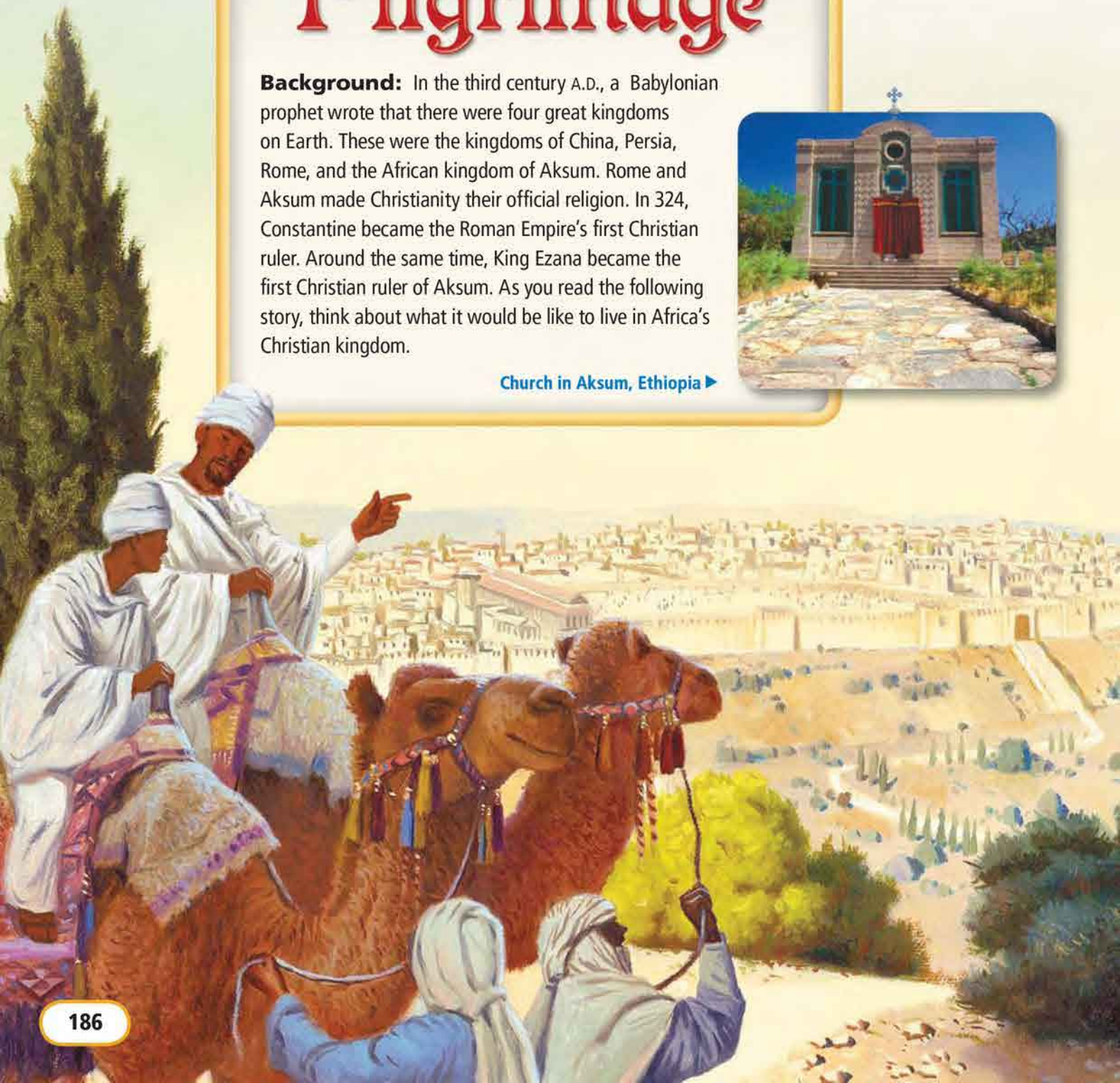
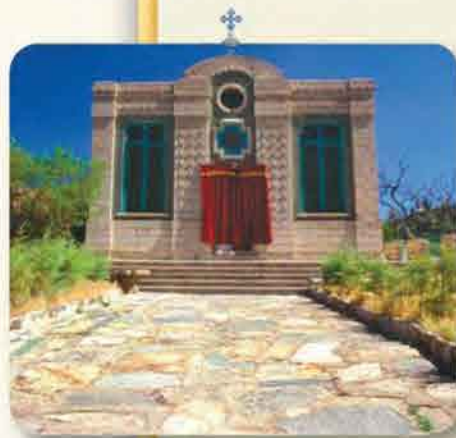




# An African's Pilgrimage

**Background:** In the third century A.D., a Babylonian prophet wrote that there were four great kingdoms on Earth. These were the kingdoms of China, Persia, Rome, and the African kingdom of Aksum. Rome and Aksum made Christianity their official religion. In 324, Constantine became the Roman Empire's first Christian ruler. Around the same time, King Ezana became the first Christian ruler of Aksum. As you read the following story, think about what it would be like to live in Africa's Christian kingdom.

Church in Aksum, Ethiopia ►





**T**here was a young boy in Aksum. His father was an important official in the court of King Ezana. The father was a devoted servant of the king, and he adopted Christianity after the king made it Aksum's official religion. After his conversion, the father worked hard to raise his son as a Christian. He spent many hours helping him to read the Bible, and the boy grew to love the sacred book's stories and lessons. Even so, it was not until his father took him on a pilgrimage to the Christian holy places that he became truly dedicated to the new faith.

The boy still recalled with great pleasure the day they sailed from the port city of Adulis. King Ezana and Bishop Frumentius had provided resources and guides to take them to Jerusalem. With such preparation, they departed with few cares. On the way to the holy city, the guides ordered stops at many sites familiar from the Bible. One of the most meaningful was Sinai, the mountain where God gave Moses the Ten Commandments. The boy would never forget standing on Sinai's sacred summit and gazing over the surrounding scene. On the way to Jerusalem, they also stopped in Bethlehem, the birthplace of Jesus.

Jerusalem, however, was the spiritual peak of the journey. The boy walked with pilgrims from all over the Christian world as they visited the most important sites. The boy took careful notes because he was expected to report to the king about what he had seen. He met another boy his age and the boy's father, who had traveled to Jerusalem from Constantinople. The young Aksumite traveler was able to speak some Greek and make himself understood to the travelers from Constantinople. He acquired a rich supply of experiences and information to report to his king.

**What experiences might the boy take back to Aksum from his pilgrimage?**

## Reading & Writing

1. **READING: Main Ideas** The main idea sums up the most important point of a paragraph or selection. With a partner, list one or two main ideas from the above passage.
2. **WRITING: Comparison and Contrast** Write a two-paragraph essay in which you compare what the boy's ideas about Jerusalem might have been before his trip with what he might have learned on the journey.



## Lesson

# 1

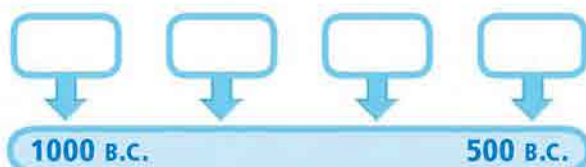
### MAIN IDEAS


- 1 **Geography** The region of Nubia had connections with Egypt.
- 2 **Government** A powerful king of Kush conquered Egypt and ruled as pharaoh.
- 3 **Economics** Meroë was an important economic center linking Egypt and the interior of Africa.

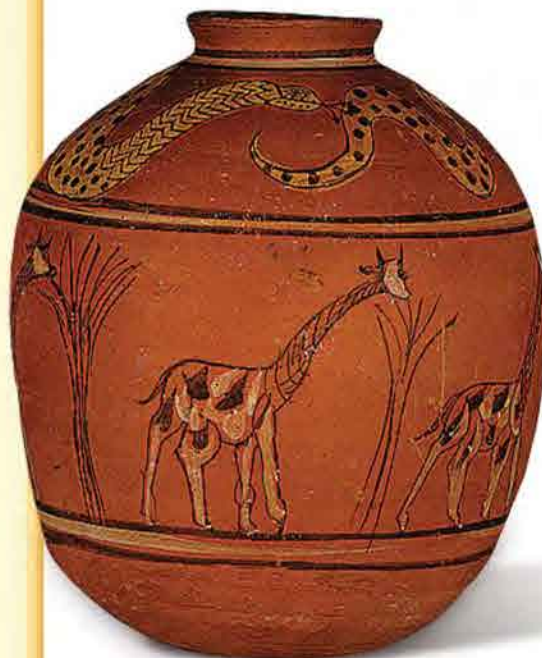
### TAKING NOTES

#### Reading Skill: Explaining Sequence

To sequence events means to put them in order based on the time they happened. As you read Lesson 1, make a note of things that happened in the Kushite kingdoms. Create a time line like the one below to put events in order.



 Skillbuilder Handbook, page R15



▲ **Nubian Pottery** This Nubian pottery vessel decorated with giraffes is an example of the goods traded in Kush.

### Words to Know

Understanding the following words will help you read this lesson:

**boundary** a border or line where something comes to an end (page 189)

*At midday, the caravan crossed the **boundary** of Nubia into Egypt.*

**official** a person who holds a position of authority (page 190)

*Even though he was Nubia's top **official**, he was still responsible to Egypt.*

**navigate** to guide the course of a ship or aircraft (page 191)

*To **navigate** the Nile River, traders had to know the locations of waterfalls.*

**mine** to gather rocks or minerals from an underground hole (page 192)

*They **mined** in order to find minerals they could use to make tools and weapons.*

# Nubia and the Land of Kush

## TERMS & NAMES

Nubia

Kush

Piankhi

Meroë

smelting

**Build on What You Know** Have you ever traveled on a river or visited a river town? The Egyptians lived downstream on the lower, or northern, end of the Nile River. Now you will learn about another culture that developed to the south that interacted with Egypt and other parts of Africa.

## The Region of Nubia

- 1 ESSENTIAL QUESTION** In what ways were Nubia and Egypt connected?

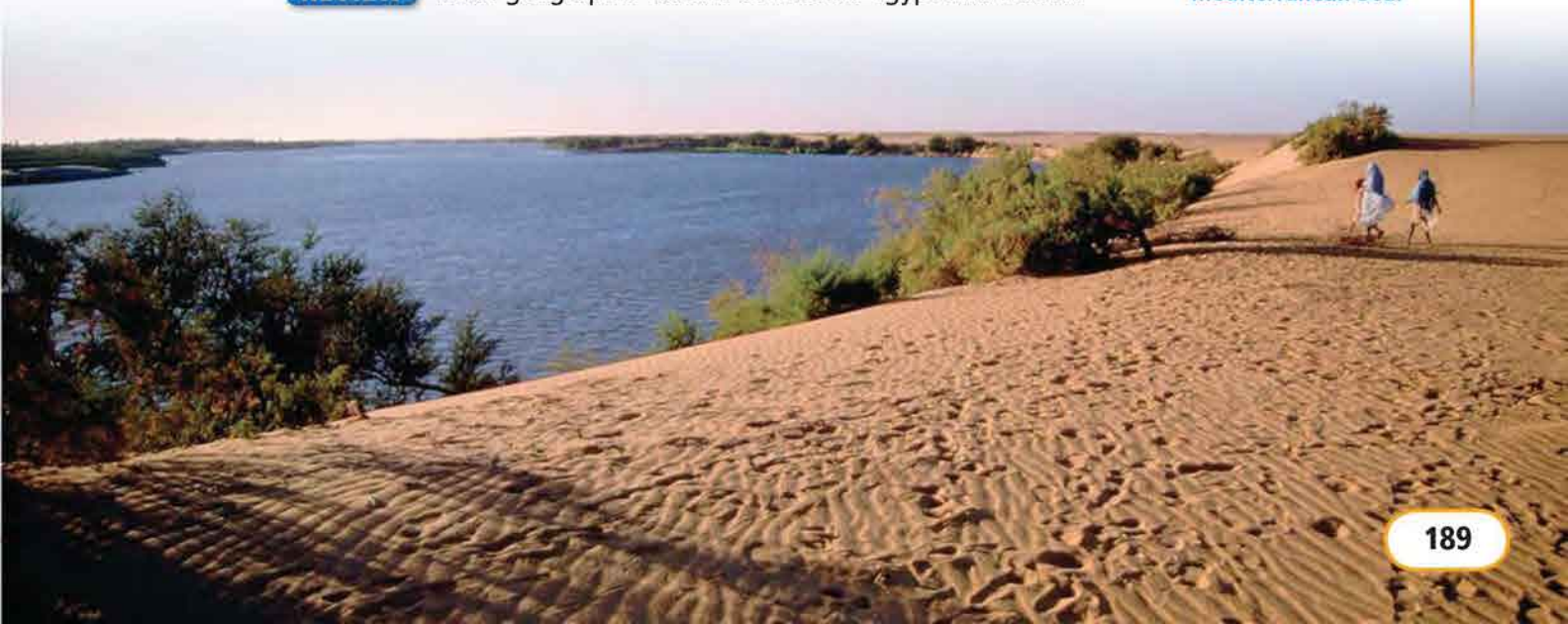
**Nubia** (NOO•bee•uh) is the name for a geographic region of Africa. (See the map at the top of the next page.) Nubia extended from the southern boundary of Egypt southward to include present-day Sudan. Its southern boundary was south of the Nile River's sixth cataract.

**Upper and Lower Nubia** Like Egypt, Nubia was divided into upper (southern, upstream) and lower (northern, downstream) areas. Like the Egyptians, the people of Nubia lived along the Nile. However, in southern Nubia, unlike in Egypt, a climate that provided greater moisture meant farming was not limited to the Nile valley.

**REVIEW** What geographic feature connected Egypt and Nubia?

## Connect to Today

▼ **The Upper Nile** The Nile River begins in Burundi and then travels north through Uganda, Sudan (shown below), and Egypt before it empties into the Mediterranean Sea.





## The Kush Civilization

**2 ESSENTIAL QUESTION** What were some of the achievements of Piankhi?

Egypt controlled parts of Nubia between 2000 and 1000 B.C. During these centuries, Nubia was a source of goods for Egypt. But as Egypt declined, a Nubian kingdom called **Kush** became a power in the region.

### Cultural Relations Between Egypt and Kush

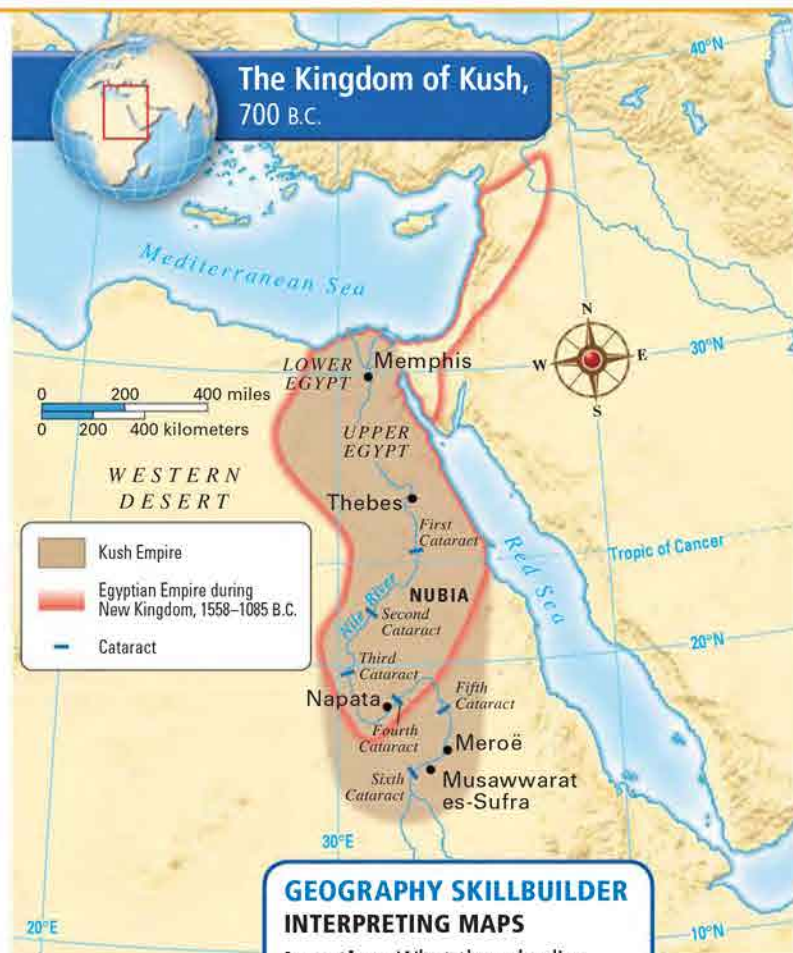
In ancient times, Nubia had a strong influence on Egypt. For example, some scholars believe Nubia's monarchy was the earliest in human history. Later, this monarchy was developed in the person of the Egyptian pharaoh.

Then, when Egypt ruled Nubia, the Egyptian pharaoh appointed an official to govern the region. Contact with Egypt resulted in cultural exchanges. Egypt influenced the art and architecture of the Nubian region, including the emerging kingdom of Kush. Nubians also worshiped some of the gods sacred to Egyptians.

Young Kushite nobles went to Egypt where they learned the Egyptian language. They also adopted the customs and clothing styles of the Egyptians. They brought back royal rituals and a hieroglyphic writing system to Kush. Egyptian pyramids were also adapted by builders in Kush.

**Kush Rises to Power** In the 700s B.C., the Nubian kingdom of Kush conquered all of upper and lower Egypt. In 751 B.C., **Piankhi** (PYANG•kee)—a Kushite king—attacked the Egyptian city of Memphis. By about 36 years later, Piankhi had gained control of Egypt.

From this point on, two periods make up the history of Kush. Each period is based on the location of the capital and king's tomb. The city of Napata was the capital during this first period. Meroë (MEHR•oh•EE) was the capital during the second.



### GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER INTERPRETING MAPS

**Location** What three bodies of water were important to the kingdom of Kush?

### Vocabulary Strategy

Use context clues to figure out the meaning of *sacred*. The rest of the sentence tells you that the word sometimes means "worthy of religious respect or reverence."



**Political and Commercial Relations with Egypt** Piankhi united Egypt and Kush. Nubia established its own dynasty, or line of royal rulers, on the throne of Egypt. Piankhi was declared Egypt's pharaoh. His reign marked the beginning of Egypt's 25th Dynasty. Although he was the pharaoh, Piankhi did not live in Egypt. Instead, he chose to live in Napata, the capital of Kush.

Napata was located at the head of a road used to move goods around the Nile River's cataracts. Traders used the road when boats loaded with goods were unable to navigate the rough water on certain sections of the river. Nubia was rich in goods that were scarce in Egypt: ivory, animal skins, timber, and minerals. This led to a lively trade along the Nile. Napata was the center for the spread of Egyptian goods and culture to Kush's other trading partners in Africa and beyond.

**The Decline of Kush** Taharqa (tuh•HAHR•kuh) was a later Kushite ruler of Egypt. Taharqa spent much of his reign fighting the Assyrians, who had invaded and conquered Egypt in 671 B.C.

The Assyrians carried iron weapons that were more powerful than the bronze weapons of the Kushites. A large part of the Assyrian army was made up of foot soldiers, who were armed with bows and arrows.

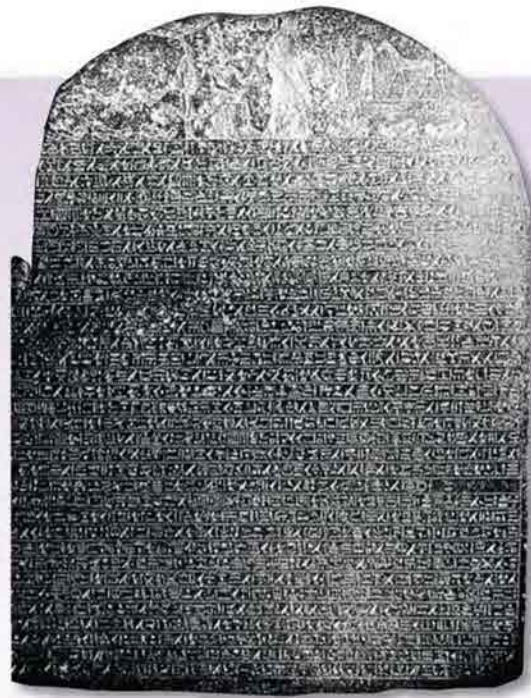
**P** Primary Source Handbook  
See the excerpt from Piankhi's Monument, page R40.

## History Makers

### Piankhi (ruled during the 700s B.C.)

Piankhi was a Kushite king who knew when to fight and when to make peace. When a Libyan chief threatened Upper Egypt, Piankhi decided to fight. He defeated the Libyans' land army and their river fleet as well. At the time, Egypt had many weak princes who ruled small areas. They welcomed Piankhi's protection. The Egyptian priests also were eager to have Piankhi come to their defense.

Around 750 B.C., Piankhi united Egypt and became the pharaoh. This marked the beginning of the 25th Dynasty. Having accomplished what he set out to do, Piankhi went home to Napata. There he had a stone slab built that celebrated his deeds. The slab lasted longer than his dynasty, which ended after about 100 years.



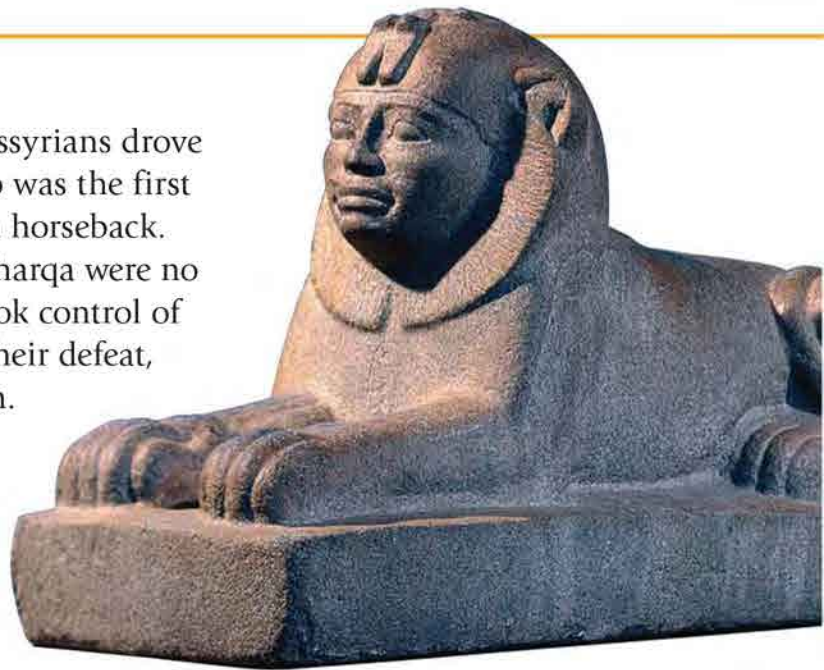
▲ Monument This black granite monument, which is six feet high, was discovered in Napata. The image of Piankhi is at the center, upper right.



**Horses and Chariots** Some Assyrians drove chariots. The Assyrian army also was the first army to have a cavalry—men on horseback.

The Kushite armies under Taharqa were no match for the Assyrians, who took control of Egypt and parts of Kush. After their defeat, the Kushite kings retreated south.

**REVIEW** How did Piankhi become the Egyptian pharaoh?



## The Kushite Capital of Meroë

- 3 ESSENTIAL QUESTION** Why was the Kushite city of Meroë an important economic center?

The Kushite kings eventually chose a new capital, **Meroë**, in about 590 B.C. Meroë was located on the Nile and on trade routes leading from the Red Sea to the interior of Africa. It had access to gold and iron.

▲ **Sphinx** This granite sphinx of King Taharqa comes from the Amon Temple at Kawa and dates from about 690 to 664 B.C.

**An Economy of Ironworking and Trade** The defeat of Kush by the Assyrians taught the Kushites that they needed iron weapons. The people of Kush learned to smelt iron. **Smelting** is the heating of material from Earth's crust to separate the elements it contains. The Kushites mined rock containing iron ore. Then they heated the rock in small earthen furnaces. The heat caused the iron to separate from other minerals.

Meroë was an ideal location for producing iron. The city was close to iron ore deposits. The Kushites set up smelting furnaces to process the deposits. Meroë traded its iron in central and east Africa, and in Arabia.

Ivory, gold, and products made from them were traded at Meroë. These items were in demand in many other parts of the world. Trade was especially active with Egypt, which was under Greek rule beginning in the fourth century B.C.

**A Rich Culture Develops** Some of the gods worshiped by the Kushites in Napata and Meroë were similar to those of Egypt. This similarity was especially true of the sun god Amon-Re and Isis, goddess of the moon. Other gods were Nubian in origin.





In Nubia, women played an important role. Amanirenas and Amanishakheto were important Nubian queens. Queen Amanitore and her husband ruled beginning around 12 B.C.

The people of Kush developed a written language. They appear to have at first used hieroglyphics similar to those used by the Egyptians. Later, their language changed to an alphabet of 23 symbols. The language has not yet been translated.

Royal tombs in Kush were built of stone. They were pyramid-shaped with steep sides. These tombs included a chapel attached to the side. Kushite kings were often mummified to preserve their bodies. These traditions continued in Nubia even after they had died out in Egypt.

**REVIEW** In what ways was Meroë economically important?

### Lesson Summary

- Nubia and Egypt interacted with each other.
- The Kushite king Piankhi conquered Egypt.
- The Kushite capital of Meroë was a trade center.



▲ **Armlet** This armlet dates from Meroë in the late first century B.C. It is made of gold with fused-glass inlays. On the hinge is the figure of a goddess.

### Why It Matters Now . . .

By studying the history of Nubia, we learn of the important role played by Africans in ancient history.

## 1 Lesson Review

### Terms & Names

1. Explain the importance of

Nubia	Piankhi	smelting
Kush	Meroë	

### Using Your Notes

**Explaining Sequence** Use your completed time line to answer the following question:

2. What event marked the end of the Kushite kingdom based in Napata?



### Main Ideas

3. How was the Nile important to the relationship between Nubia and Egypt?
4. What was the most significant achievement of Piankhi's rule?
5. Why did the people of Meroë learn to smelt iron?

### Critical Thinking

6. **Comparing** How did Piankhi's reign differ from that of Taharqa in the control of Egypt?
7. **Drawing Conclusions** What factors made the Kushites move their capital to Meroë?

### Activity

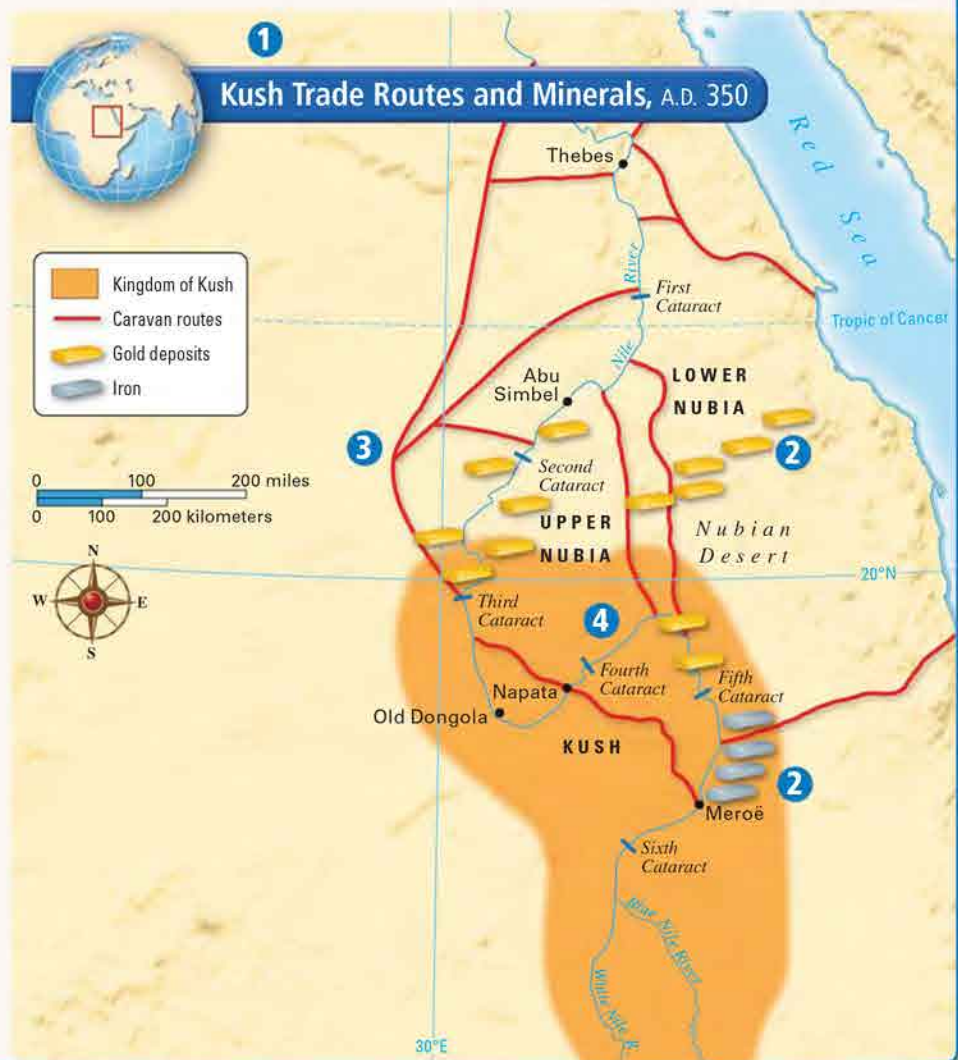
**Making a Map** Pull out the world outline map you began in the activity for Chapter 2, Lesson 1. Place the Nubian kingdom of Kush on the map, along with its two capitals of Napata and Meroë.





## Trade Map

The Kush Empire was a center of trade. As the mineral wealth of the Nile valley flowed out of Kush to Egypt (among other places), luxury goods from India and Arabia flowed in. Trade routes developed both over land and by sea to carry goods in and out of Kush.



## Apply the Skill

Look at the maps on the distribution of hunters and gatherers in Chapter 2, Lesson 1, page 52. Make notes on the geographic patterns that you see developing across the time span of the three maps on that page.