



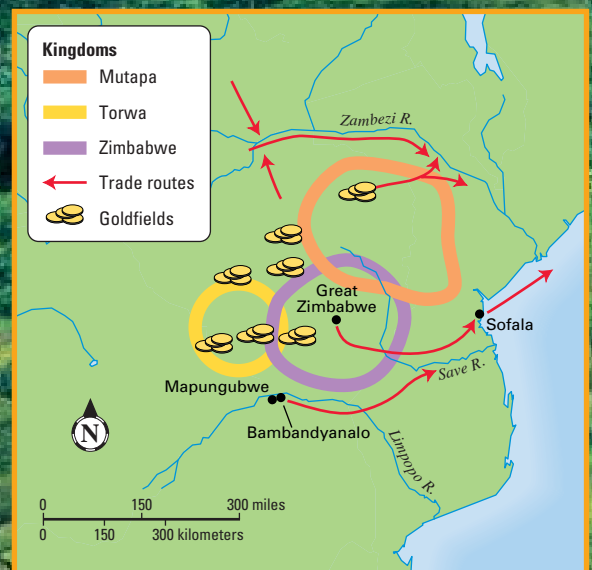
Technology: 1100

House of Stone

Scattered throughout the interior of southeastern Africa are hundreds of stone ruins archaeologists believe date to A.D. 1100–1500. The most spectacular, Great Zimbabwe, covers almost 1,800 acres. The word *zimbabwe* means “house of stone.”

For centuries Europeans wondered about the origins of this city. In the early 1900s, archaeologists proved that its builders were ancestors of the present-day Shona people. Artifacts from India, China, and Asia have been found at the site. They show that the area was a trade center for gold, ivory, cloth, beads, and ceramics. Trade in Great Zimbabwe was controlled by a few wealthy people.

Trade routes of Great Zimbabwe



Builders used 900,000 granite slabs to create stone walls. The slabs were laid together without any type of mortar.

Natural weathering causes slabs of granite to break off hills in this area. Builders of Great Zimbabwe cut these slabs into smaller pieces and used them to create the stone walls.



Even though Great Zimbabwe has high walls and towers, archaeologists do not believe it was used as a fortress. Some archaeologists believe it was a religious center for the ancestors of the Shona.

THINKING



1. Drawing Conclusions

The stone walls and towers of Great Zimbabwe were not built to protect the city. Why did its builders construct the walls and towers?

2. Making Inferences

How do trading networks of today differ from those of Great Zimbabwe?