

## Enrich: West Africa (6-4.2)

**Directions:** Read the article and complete the activity below.

Keys, David. "Kingdom of the Sands." *Archaeology Magazine*, Mar.-Apr. 2004.

### KINGDOM OF THE SANDS

David Mattingly of the University of Leicester, has revealed the **Garamantes** (*a remarkable, but forgotten desert civilization known to the Romans*) constructed almost a thousand miles of underground tunnels and shafts in a successful bid to mine long-buried **fossil** (*old*) water. The **Garamantes'** slaves dug shafts 30 feet apart and up to 130 feet deep to access water. They are descended from **Berbers** (*pre-Arab inhabitants of North Africa*) and were Saharan farmers and a tribal people in Libya.



The Garamantes had about eight major cities and controlled a large state. "The new archaeological evidence is showing that they were farmers, engineers, and merchants who produced a remarkable civilization," says Mattingly. The success of the **Garamantes** was based on their **subterranean** (*underground*) **water-extraction system** (*a network of tunnels known as foggaras in Berber that brought water out*). It not only allowed their part of the **Sahara** to bloom again—it also caused population growth, **urbanism** (*town grows*), and conquest. But in order to keep and make their area grow, they needed to maintain and expand the **water-extraction tunnel systems**—which meant they needed lots of slaves.

By around A.D. 150 the slave-based **Garamantian** kingdom covered 70,000 square miles in present-day southern Libya in North Africa. It was the first time in history that the **Sahara** had produced an **urban** society. The largest town, **Garama** (*in what is now called the Jarma Oasis*), had 4,000 people and about 6,000 more in the surrounding villages. They ate locally grown grapes, figs, **sorghum** (*cereal*), **pulses** (*dried seeds*), barley, and wheat, as well as **imported** (*brought in*) luxuries such as wine and olive oil. Without slaves, however, they would not have had a kingdom, let alone a good life.

### ACTIVITY

Use the visual images created from the reading and your prior knowledge on the geography of the Sahara to help you create a post card of the urban society that was created in the Sahara. What items might you see being used for trade? How would the people be traveling? What clothing might be worn? What would a feast look like in the Sahara? How would the farm land look different from the populated areas? How would water be brought into the urban area? Be creative and make your postcard as factual and colorful as possible.