



Unit 6 Overview: The First Global Age 1200 to 1750 CE

As global interconnections increased during the Columbian Exchange, people blended traditional teachings with new ideas to transform the world.





<p>0:04</p> <p><i>Montage of photos of food, representing different cuisines from across the world and a video of a family celebrating Christmas and Hanukkah. Photos of Dona Beatriz Kimpa Vita, crosses, maps, and the Kingdom of Kongo.</i></p>	<p>Do you and your family do anything that brings together two parts of the world? Do you like Hawaiian pizza? What about Korean tacos? Do you use Spanish words when speaking in English? Or hope for gifts on both Christmas and Hanukkah? Sometimes the combination is something much more serious. Like when Dona Beatriz Kimpa Vita combined Christianity and a Central African tradition of healing in an attempt to save her home from Civil War and foreign invaders.</p> <p>Dona Beatriz was a teenager in the Kingdom of Congo on the Atlantic coast of Africa and she used a mix of Prophecy and religion to try and unite her people and save them from the chains of Portuguese slavers.</p>
<p>0:50</p> <p><i>Videos of overlapping maps.</i></p>	<p>Both Dona Beatriz's use of cultural blending and the problems she was trying to solve were part of the transformations that took place during the first Global Age. From 1200 to 1750 CE, people from many different regions were being pulled closer together launching a period of exchange that created vast wealth for some and great suffering for others.</p>
<p>1:20</p> <p><i>Collection of photos depicting people traveling via camels and horses. Multiple maps showing the complex networks during the Global Age.</i></p>	<p>In 1200 CE, the world was divided into many regional webs, with several large world regions that were mostly separate from each other. The largest connected region centered on the Islamic world and linked societies across Europe, Asia, and North Africa, as well as coastal regions of East and West Africa. Other networks stretched across the Americas linking societies from North America to the Andes. And in the vast Pacific Ocean, Polynesian Mariners forged long distance connections between distant islands.</p>
<p>1:55</p> <p><i>Series of images of a spiritual leader and healer in Kingdom of the Kongo, Bantu artifacts, and maps.</i></p>	<p>Beatriz was born in centra Africa and she was raised as an <i>nganga</i>, a person who used faith and prophecy to heal—not only individuals—but whole communities. This religious practice was shared across many Bantu societies going back centuries in this region. Many Bantu societies were linked by culture and language, across a regional web stretching thousands of miles from Central to Southern Africa.</p>
<p>2:22</p> <p><i>Paintings of different areas of the world part of the regional web. Image of Beatriz alongside Bantu and Christian artifacts.</i></p>	<p>By the time Beatriz was born in 1684, the many different regional webs of the world had begun to connect in a single global web, the first global age. Beatriz's life reflects many of the changes of the first global age. Her methods were rooted in elements of Bantu culture that had been practiced in her region for centuries, but her message of healing also drew on Christianity, a religion that was new to this region and had its roots in Europe, Asia, and North Africa. Distant regions once disconnected from her home. So, how did Christianity get to Congo?</p>
<p>3:11</p> <p><i>Video of a ship sailing across the ocean. Series of photos of maps detailing coastal routes, ships, the Columbian Exchange, and Christian priests.</i></p>	<p>By the late 15th century, the many different regions of the world were growing more interconnected. Western Europeans like the Spanish and Portuguese, were launching long distance sea voyages in search of better routes to Asia. Portuguese sailors traveled south along the coast of Africa, eventually reaching the Indian Ocean.</p> <p>In 1492, Christopher Columbus led a Spanish voyage west across the Atlantic, unexpectedly reaching the Americas. This voyage and those that followed linked Afro-Eurasia to the Americas in sustained connections for the first time. Around the same time that Columbus arrived in the Americas, Portuguese voyagers arrived in Central African kingdoms like, Congo.</p>



	These transoceanic voyages moved food, plants, animals, pests, diseases, goods, people, and ideas to new places. As a result, cultures began to move and to mix. Collectively we call this process the Colombian Exchange. Soon, Christianity was on the move. Thanks to all those Spanish and Portuguese travelers.
4:24 <i>Montage of photos of Portuguese priests preaching to Congolese people. Images of Congolese Kings, ambassadors, and emissaries who converted to Christianity</i>	In the case of Congo, Portuguese priests introduced the religion around 1500. Congolese rulers, like King Alfonso the First, adopted Christianity. And so did Congolese people who traveled to Europe as ambassadors and merchants. As other people in other places traveled across oceans to share their religions, cultures, and goods, similar scenes played out across the globe.
4:57 <i>Images of conquest, disease, and enslavement that arose from the Colombian exchange. Photos showing the wealth and power of the Congolese people followed by images of their civil war.</i>	Unfortunately, the Colombian Exchange had a dark side as well. This was also an age of conquest, disease, and enslavement. In the 16th century, Congo was a wealthy and powerful state. But by the time Beatriz was born in 1684, Congo had fractured into civil war, thanks to the violence of the transatlantic slave trade, in which Europeans enslaved Africans to labor in plantations and mines in the Americas.
5:27 <i>Series of photos of Beatriz, the Congolese people, and Christian and Bantu artifacts, including a statue of St. Anthony.</i>	As an <i>nganga</i> Beatriz sought to heal her society and unite the kingdom during this period of conflict. She preached that the Congolese were better Christians than the Portuguese. She claimed to be a reincarnation of the Catholic St. Anthony. She warned of the danger posed by Portuguese slavers. She taught that if the people united God would turn Congo into a paradise—a New Jerusalem. By uniquely interpreting Christian ideas and mixing them with the Congolese tradition of healing, Beatriz was one of many during this period who sought to solve the problems of these new connections by combining new and old ideas.
6:18 <i>Memorial statue of Beatriz followed by maps detailing the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Painting of Congolese people revolting against their enslavers, including the successful Haitian Revolution.</i>	In 1706, Beatriz was captured by her enemies. Under advice from a Catholic priest, the Congolese king had her burned at the stake as a heretic. She died at the age of 20. Many of her followers were enslaved and sent to the Americas. But her rebellious spirit and hope for a better world did not die with her. Many of her followers ended up on plantations across the Americas. During the 18th century Congolese warriors played important roles in some of the many revolts by enslaved people, from the Carolinas to the Caribbean. Over 80 years after her death, Beatriz's memory and the dream of a united Congo helped inspire many of the Congolese, who led the Haitian revolution. Like her, the revolutionaries used a mix of Christian and African religious traditions to inspire the largest and most successful slave uprising of all time.



OER Project aims to empower teachers by offering free and fully supported history courses for middle- and high-school students. Your account is the key to accessing our standards-aligned courses that are designed with built-in supports like leveled readings, audio recordings of texts, video transcripts, and more. Offerings include a variety of materials, from full-year, standards-based courses to shorter course extensions, all of which build upon foundational historical thinking skills in preparation for AP, college, and beyond.

To learn more about The OER Project, visit www.oerproject.com