

NORTH AFRICAN KINGDOMS

OVERVIEW

KINGDOM OF NUMIDIA: 200 BC – 46 BC



The Kingdom of Numidia was established in 200 BC and located in modern-day Algeria and Libya. Numidia was in operation at the same time as Ancient Carthage and they were allies throughout the duration of the kingdoms. The two major tribes that controlled Numidia were Massylii who controlled the east and also Masaesyli who were in the west. The capital of Numidia was Cirta and was located in northern Africa in modern-day Algeria, however it was not a coastal city. The minting of silver and bronze coins increased over time and were used for trade throughout the kingdom of Numidia and in their cities of Cirta, Makthar and Zama. Earlier in 213 BC, the Numidian King of the Masaesyli who was named King Syphax had risen to power and at this time eastern Numidia was ruled by King Gala of the Massylii. The son of King Gala was the Numidian King Masinissa who ruled from 200 BC and began the unification of east and west Numidia into one single kingdom.

ALMORAVID DYNASTY: 1040 AD – 1147 AD



The Almoravids were an African Berber Dynasty from north and north-west of the African continent. The term 'Almoravid' which translates as 'one who is ready for battle at a fortress' was formed from the unification of African berber tribes into one clan which covered the region of modern-day Morocco, Western Sahara, Algeria, Northern Libya, Mauretania and eventually they conquered the entire region of southern Spain expanding the empire into Europe. The formation of the Almoravid movement and dynasty can be traced back to an African Berber leader named Yahya Ibn Ibrahim who travelled on a pilgrimage to Mecca in Arabia in accordance with Islamic teaching in 1036 AD. In 1061 AD the Almoravid's founded the city of Marrakech in Morocco. The Tensift River was located a few miles north to the city and served as a source of water. By 1082 the Christians of Spain had begun to launch numerous attacks against the African Muslims living inside Spain and many of them began to flee back into Africa. Upon request the Almoravids decided to intervene and raised an army in Africa and led an attack against Spain. The Spanish were led by King Castilian Alfonso VI and the two forces faced each other at The Battle of Zallaqa in 1086 AD. The Spanish army was defeated and half of its army was killed by the Almoravids. After the Spanish again fled the Almoravids established a court in the area named Seville in the south of Spain.

ANCIENT CARTHAGE: 814 BC – 146 BC



Ancient Carthage was an African Berber nation first established in 814 BC. The central city of Carthage was located in the one of the most northern parts of Africa in the area which is modern-day Tunisia. The central city was designed as a fortress and had very high walls which were a total of 23 miles in length which protected the temples and great buildings that had been constructed. The city had a huge burial ground, market places, temples decorated in gold and marble, restaurants, libraries, a theatre, and four residential areas. By 300 BC the population of the city of Carthage had grown to over 700,000 people. The trade in African goods across the Saharan trade routes increased the wealth of the city of Carthage and this was managed by the Berber population of the kingdom. The city of Carthage was managed by leaders known as Suffets which roughly translates 'judge or governor' or 'someone who passes judgement'. The Suffets were elected each year by a council of elders.