

World Geography

The Bantu Migration

Name: _____

Section: _____

Score: ____/5

Directions: Read the following article about the Bantu Migration into Southern Africa and fill out the Cause and Effect chart located on the back of the page.

Brief History of the Bantu Migration into South Africa

The great southward Bantu migration in Africa took place in sub-Saharan Africa (south of the Sahara Desert), over some 2,000 years. With the development of the iron blade, reaping became easier for the Bantu people and agriculture took on a whole new meaning.

Populations grew faster than before and people were encroaching on each other's land.

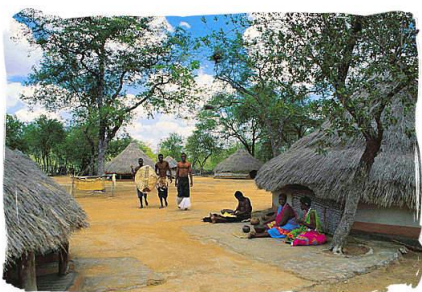
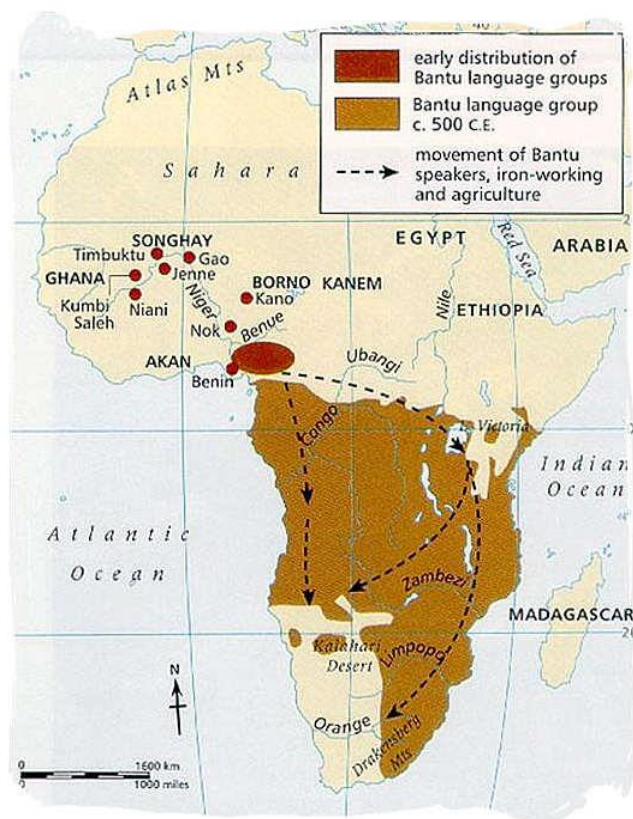
This necessitated an enlargement of territory, which led to the migration of African black tribes from the Great Lakes in central Africa, to the south of Africa.

This was one of the largest human migrations in history. A linguistically related group of about 60 million people originating in west and equatorial Africa, gradually migrating down the continent into southern Africa.

The cause of this movement is uncertain, but is believed to have been related to population increase, a result of the introduction of new crops, such as the banana (native to south Asia), allowing more efficient food production.

Societies typically depended on subsistence agriculture or, in the savannas, pastoral pursuits.

Political organization was normally local, although large kingdoms would later develop in western and central Africa.



Early in their history, they split into two major linguistic branches, the Eastern and Western language branches. The Eastern branch migrated through present-day Zimbabwe and Mozambique, down to South Africa. The Western branch moved into what is now Angola, Namibia, and north-western Botswana.

Today, among the different black language groups, the most widely spoken language is Arab-influenced Swahili, which is used as a lingua franca (a language used in common by different peoples to facilitate commerce and trade) by up

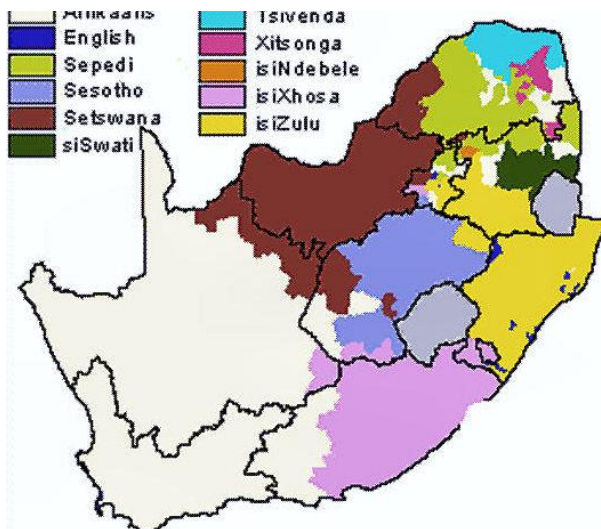
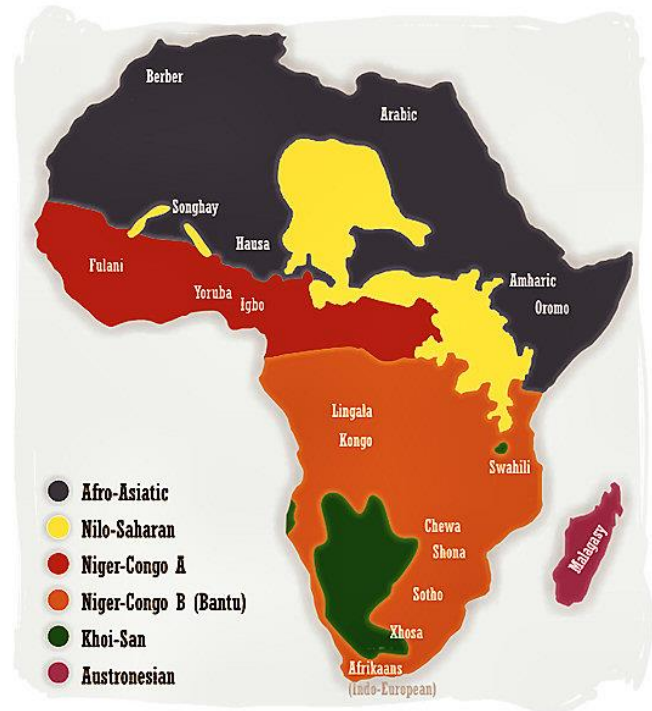
to 50 million speakers on the eastern coast of Africa.

Ethnic groups descended from the Black settlers include the Shona, the Xhosa, the Kikuyu, and the Zulu, of the Eastern Bantu language branch; and the Herero and Tonga peoples, of the Western language branch.

Some 2 000 years ago, when the first waves of black settlers began arriving in southern Africa, they brought with them the advantages of an Iron Age culture, farming skills and domesticated crops.

After they had settled in the eastern parts of South Africa, they eventually spread out across the Highveld some 1 000 years ago, because of their need for more land on which to practice their growing cattle culture. The first African settlements in South Africa were mainly in the Transvaal and Natal areas.

In the African culture, chiefdoms were based on control over cattle, which gave rise to social systems of protection (patronage) and hierarchies of authority within communities. The exchange of cattle formed the basis of polygamous marriage arrangements. This system operated on the basis of social power built through control over the labor of kin groups and dependants.



The development of metalworking skills promoted specialization of products and trade between regions followed. The different chiefdoms settled in different patterns; dispersed homesteads were found in the fertile coastal regions to the east, and concentrated in towns in the desert fringes to the west.

In the western half of the country, rainfall was low and desert conditions prevailed and the African farmers were not interested in settling there. These dry regions remained a safe haven of the Khoi and the San.

The African settlement patterns had the effect that, for the first century and a half of European settlement, the African farmers were hardly affected by the white presence at all. The black population of South Africa is divided into several ethnic groups, of which the Nguni forms a major part. Other main groups are the Sotho, the Venda and the Shangaan-Tsonga.

"The Amazing Bantu Migration and the Fascinating Bantu People." *The Amazing Bantu Migration and the Fascinating Bantu People*. South Africa Tourism, 2005. Web. 30 June 2014.

Case Study: Brief History of the Bantu Migration into South Africa

Cause and Effect Chart

<u>Causes of the Bantu Migration</u>	<u>Effects of the Bantu Migration on South Africa</u>