

# African Civilizations,

## 1500 B.C.–A.D. 700

### Previewing Main Ideas

**INTERACTION WITH ENVIRONMENT** The varied climates and natural resources of Africa offered opportunities for developing different lifestyles. By 500 B.C., the Nok people of West Africa had pioneered iron-making technology.

**Geography** Look at the location of ironworking sites on the map. What might explain why ironworking took place at these sites?

**CULTURAL INTERACTION** Massive migrations of Bantu-speaking people changed the culture of eastern and southern Africa. The migrating people brought new skills and ideas about society to people in the south and east.

**Geography** Study the time line and the map. Where did ironworking spread from Nok, and which group probably brought the skills?

**POWER AND AUTHORITY** The kingdom of Aksum became a major trading center for Indian Ocean and Arabian trade. It also became the center of Christianity in East Africa.

**Geography** Why was Aksum better suited for trade than Nok or Djenné-Djeno?

#### INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY

##### eEdition

- Interactive Maps
- Interactive Visuals
- Interactive Primary Sources



##### INTERNET RESOURCES

Go to [classzone.com](http://classzone.com) for:

- Research Links
- Internet Activities
- Primary Sources
- Chapter Quiz
- Maps
- Test Practice
- Current Events

## AFRICA

**1500s B.C.**

Africans south of the Sahara live in scattered farming communities, as pastoralists or hunter-gatherers.

**751 B.C.**

Kushite king, Pianki, conquers Memphis in Egypt.

**1500 B.C.**

**1000 B.C.**

## WORLD



**1200 B.C.**

◀ Olmec culture rises in southern Mexico. (stone Olmec head)



**461 B.C.**

◀ Age of Pericles in Greece.





# Spread of Ironworking, 500 B.C. – A.D. 700



- Nok homeland
- Cities
- Early Iron Age sites
- Spread of ironworking



**500 B.C.**  
Nok people make iron tools. (Nok sculpture) ▶



**250 B.C.**  
Djenné-Djeno established in West Africa.

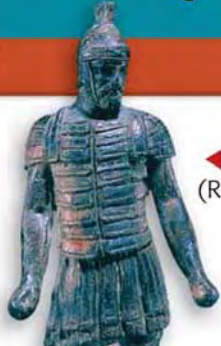
**A.D. 100s**  
Bantu migrations under way.

**A.D. 320**  
King Ezana rules Aksum. (crown from Aksum) ▶



**500 B.C.**

**500 A.D.**



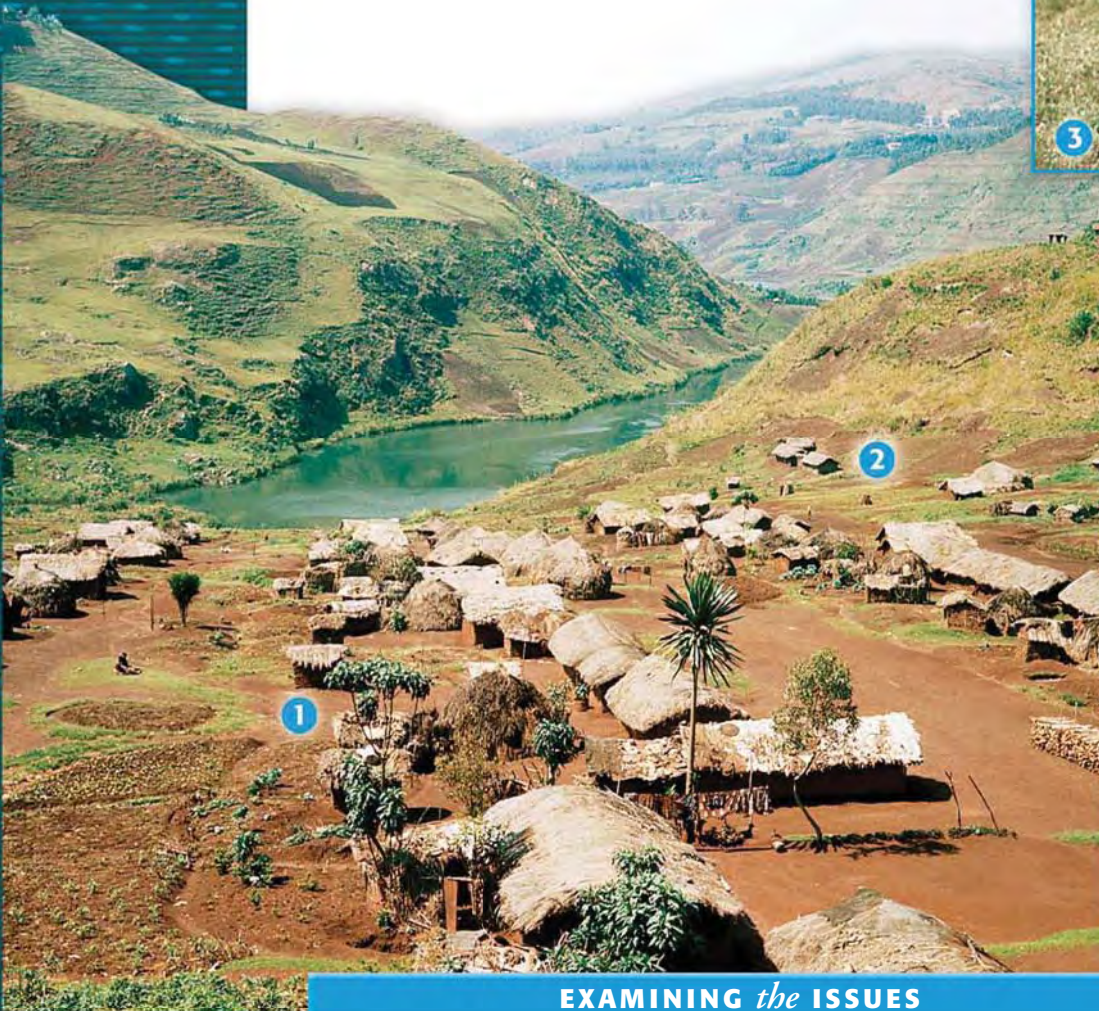
**27 B.C.**  
◀ Pax Romana begins. (Roman soldier statue)

**105 A.D.**  
Chinese invent paper.



## *How can newcomers change a community?*

The year is 100 B.C., and you've spent most of the day gathering berries. The hunters have brought back some small game to add to the simmering pot. Just then you see something out of the ordinary. A stranger is approaching. He is carrying a spear and leading cows—a type of animal that none of you has ever seen. Your first reaction is fear. But you are also curious. Who is he? What does he want? Where has he come from? The communal elders have similar concerns, yet they cautiously go forward to greet him.



- 1** The hunter-gatherer community is small and tightly knit. There is, however, room to accommodate newcomers.
- 2** Having traveled long distances, this stranger might have valuable survival skills to share.
- 3** His spears could indicate that he is a good hunter or that his group may be hostile invaders—or both.

### EXAMINING *the* ISSUES

- **How might both native people and newcomers benefit from their interaction?**
- **How would such interaction change everyone involved?**

Discuss these questions as a class. In your discussion, remember what you've learned about other peoples who dealt with foreigners, such as the Indo-European invaders of Asia and India. As you read about the early African civilizations in this chapter, notice how African peoples interacted with each other.





1

# Diverse Societies in Africa

## MAIN IDEA

**INTERACTION WITH ENVIRONMENT** African peoples developed diverse societies as they adapted to varied environments.

## WHY IT MATTERS NOW

Differences among modern societies are also based on people’s interactions with their environments.

## TERMS & NAMES

- Sahara
- Sahel
- savanna
- animism
- griot
- Nok
- Djenné-Djeno

**SETTING THE STAGE** Africa spreads across the equator. It includes a broad range of Earth’s environments—from steamy coastal plains to snow-capped mountain peaks. Some parts of Africa suffer from constant drought, while others receive over 200 inches of rain a year. Vegetation varies from sand dunes and rocky wastes to dense green rain forests. Interaction with the African environment has created unique cultures and societies. Each group found ways to adapt to the land and the resources it offers.

## A Land of Geographic Contrasts

Africa is the second largest continent in the world. It stretches 4,600 miles from east to west and 5,000 miles from north to south. With a total of 11.7 million square miles, it occupies about one-fifth of Earth’s land surface. Narrow coastlines (50 to 100 miles) lie on either side of a central plateau. Waterfalls and rapids often form as rivers drop down to the coast from the plateau, making navigation impossible to or from the coast. Africa’s coastline has few harbors, ports, or inlets. Because of this, the coastline is actually shorter than that of Europe, a land one-third Africa’s size.

**Challenging Environments** Each African environment offers its own challenges. The deserts are largely unsuitable for human life and also hamper people’s movement to more welcoming climates. The largest deserts are the **Sahara** in the north and the Kalahari (kahl•uh•HAHR•ee) in the south.

Stretching from the Atlantic Ocean to the Red Sea, the Sahara covers an area roughly the size of the United States. Only a small part of the Sahara consists of sand dunes. The rest is mostly a flat, gray wasteland of scattered rocks and gravel. Each year the desert takes over more and more of the land at the southern edge of the Sahara Desert, the **Sahel** (suh•HAYL).

Another very different—but also partly uninhabitable—African environment is the rain forest. Sometimes called “nature’s greenhouse,” it produces mahogany and teak trees up to 150 feet tall. Their leaves and branches form a dense canopy that keeps sunlight from reaching the forest floor. The tsetse (TSET•see) fly is found in the rain forest. Its presence prevented Africans from using cattle, donkeys, and horses to farm near the rain forests. This deadly insect also prevented invaders—especially Europeans—from colonizing fly-infested territories.

## TAKING NOTES

**Outlining** Organize ideas and details about Africa.

### Africa

#### I. A Land of Geographic Contrasts

- A.
- B.

#### II. Early Humans Adapt to Their Environments



## Vegetation Regions of Africa

**1** The deadliest creature lurking in rain forests is a small fly called the tsetse fly. Tsetse flies carry a disease that is deadly to livestock and can cause fatal sleeping sickness in humans.



**2** Sahel means “coastline” in Arabic. African people may have named it this because the Sahara seemed like a vast ocean of sand.



**4** The dense trees and lack of edible vegetation in the humid rain forest make it an unwelcoming environment for most people.



**3** The savannas are home to herds of animals such as giraffes, wildebeest, and antelope. They also support grain crops of millet, wheat, and maize (corn).



- Rain forest
- Savanna
- Desert
- Mediterranean



### GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Maps

- 1. Place** About what percent of Africa is desert? savanna?
- 2. Region** If you were to fold a map of Africa in half along the equator, what do you notice about the similar vegetation zones above and below the fold?



**Welcoming Lands** The northern coast and the southern tip of Africa have welcoming Mediterranean-type climates and fertile soil. Because these coastal areas are so fertile, they are densely populated with farmers and herders.

Most people in Africa live on the **savannas**, or grassy plains. Africa's savannas are not just endless plains. They include mountainous highlands and swampy tropical stretches. Covered with tall grasses and dotted with trees, the savannas cover over 40 percent of the continent. Dry seasons alternate with rainy seasons—often, two of each a year. Unfortunately, the topsoil throughout Africa is thin, and heavy rains strip away minerals. In most years, however, the savannas support abundant agricultural production.

## Early Humans Adapt to Their Environments

The first humans appeared in the Great Rift Valley, a deep gash in Earth's crust that runs through the floor of the Red Sea and across eastern Africa. As you learned earlier, people moved outward from this area in the world's first migration. They developed technologies that helped them survive in—and then alter—their surroundings.

**Nomadic Lifestyle** Africa's earliest peoples were nomadic hunter-gatherers. Today, some of the San of the Kalahari Desert and the BaMbuti (bah•uhm•BOO•tee) of the rain forests of Congo are still hunter-gatherers. The San, for example, travel in small bands of a few related families. The men hunt with spears and bows and arrows, and the women and children gather roots and berries.

Other early Africans eventually learned to domesticate and raise a variety of animals for food. Called herders, or pastoralists, these people kept cattle, goats, or sheep. They were nomads who drove their animals to find water and good pastures for grazing during the dry season. Millions of modern Africans are pastoral herders as well. The Masai (mah•SEYE) of Tanzania and southern Kenya, for example, still measure their wealth by the size of their herds. **A**

**Transition to a Settled Lifestyle** Experts believe that agriculture in Africa probably began by 6000 B.C. Between 8000 and 6000 B.C., the Sahara received increased rainfall and turned into a savanna. But about 6000 B.C., the Sahara began to dry up again. To survive, many early farmers moved east into the Nile Valley and south into West Africa. Some settled on the savannas, which had the best agricultural land. Grain grew well in the savannas. In addition to growing grain, Africans began to raise cattle. In areas where the tsetse fly was found, it was not possible to keep cattle. However, south and east of the rain forests, cattle raising became an important part of agricultural life. Other Africans learned to farm in the rain forest, where they planted root crops, such as yams, that needed little sun.

Agriculture drastically changed the way Africans lived. Growing their own food enabled them to build permanent shelters in one location. Settlements expanded because reliable food supplies led to longer, healthier lives and an increased birthrate. The increased food supply also freed

### MAIN IDEA

#### Making Inferences

**A** Why might Africans continue living in a nomadic lifestyle?



## Social History

### Collecting Water

Finding and collecting water traditionally has been the job of women, whether they have a settled lifestyle or a nomadic one.

Each day they set out to find clean water for their families. Drought in Africa, which has lasted for many years, has increased the difficulty of finding clean water. In the past, it was estimated that women spent about nine minutes a day collecting water. In 2003, that time increased to 21 minutes, and women had to walk as far as six miles (about 10 kilometers) to find the water.

Obtaining clean water will continue to be a challenging daily task, even for people who have made the transition to a settled lifestyle on small plots of land.

### INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY

**INTERNET ACTIVITY** Create a photographic report outlining African clean water problems and solutions. Go to [classzone.com](http://classzone.com) for your research.



▲ This rock painting in northwestern Africa shows a line of calves tied to a rope in a pastoralist camp.

some members of the community to practice activities such as working metal, making pottery, and crafting jewelry.

These increasingly complex settlements of people required more organization than smaller communities. Various types of governing bodies developed to fill this need. Some governments consisted of a village chief and a council of the leaders of individual family groups. As strong groups moved to extend their land and conquered weaker settlements, they centralized their power and their governments. Some of these societies eventually developed into great kingdoms.

## Early Societies in Africa

The societies south of the Sahara—like all human cultures—shared common elements. One of these elements was the importance of the basic social unit, the family. Besides parents and children, this primary group often included grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins in an extended family. Families that shared common ancestors sometimes formed groups known as clans.

**Local Religions** African peoples organized themselves into family groups. They also developed belief systems that helped them understand and organize information about their world. Nearly all of these local religions involved a belief in one creator, or god. They generally also included elements of **animism**, a religion in which spirits play an important role in regulating daily life. Animists believe that spirits are present in animals, plants, and other natural forces, and also take the form of the souls of their ancestors.

**Keeping a History** Few African societies had written languages. Instead, storytellers shared orally the history and literature of a culture. In West Africa, for example, these storytellers, or **griots** (gree•OHZ), kept this history alive, passing it from parent to child:

### PRIMARY SOURCE **B**

I am a griot . . . master in the art of eloquence. . . . We are vessels of speech, we are the repositories [storehouses] which harbor secrets many centuries old. . . . Without us the names of kings would vanish. . . . We are the memory of mankind; by the spoken word we bring to life the deeds . . . of kings for younger generations. . . . For the world is old, but the future springs from the past.

DJELI MAMOUDOU KOUYATE, from *Sundiata, an Epic of Old Mali*

### MAIN IDEA

#### Analyzing Primary Sources

**B** Why were griots important to African societies?



**Vocabulary**

*desertification*: the steady process of drying of the soil

Recent discoveries in West Africa have proved how old and extensive the history of this part of Africa is. Archaeologists believe that early peoples from the north moved into West Africa as desertification forced them south to find better farmland. Discoveries in the areas of modern Mali and Nigeria reveal that West Africans developed advanced societies and cities long before outsiders came to the continent.

## West African Iron Age

Archaeologists' main source of information about early West African cultures has been from artifacts such as pottery, charcoal, and slag—a waste product of iron smelting. By dating these artifacts, scientists can piece together a picture of life in West Africa as early as 500 B.C.

Unlike cultures to the north, the peoples of Africa south of the Sahara seem to have skipped the Copper and Bronze Ages and moved directly into the Iron Age. Evidence of iron production dating to around 500 B.C. has been found in the area just north of the Niger and Benue rivers. The ability to smelt iron was a major technological achievement of the ancient Nok of sub-Saharan Africa.

**The Nok Culture** West Africa's earliest known culture was that of the **Nok** (nahk) people. They lived in what is now Nigeria between 500 B.C. and A.D. 200. Their name came from the village where the first artifacts from their culture were discovered. Nok artifacts have been found in an area stretching for 300 miles between the Niger and Benue rivers. They were the first West African people known to smelt iron. The iron was fashioned into tools for farming and weapons for hunting. Some of the tools and weapons made their way into overland trade routes.

### > Analyzing Art

#### Nok Sculpture

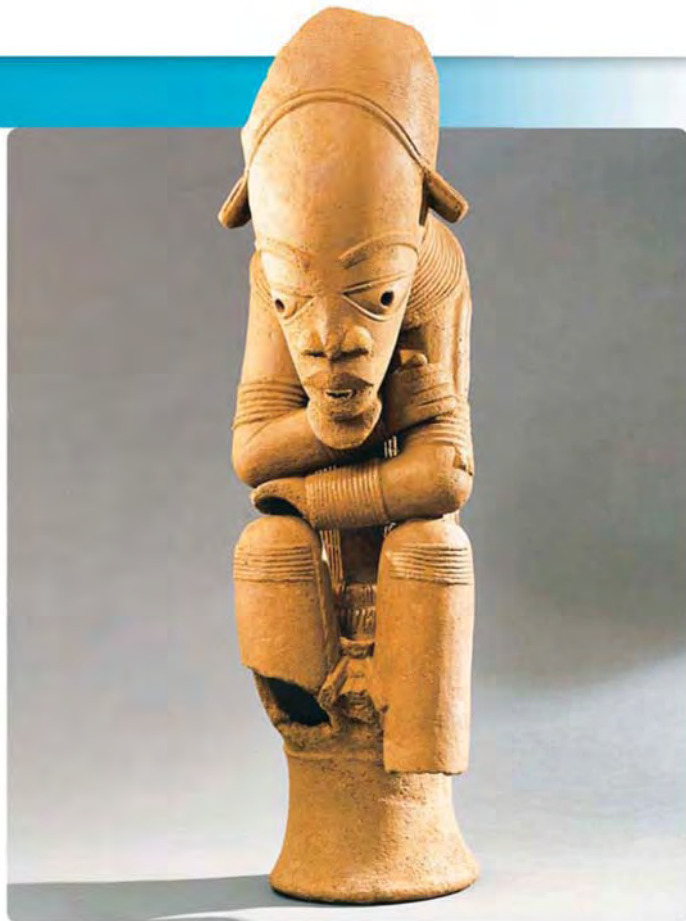
Nok artifacts show evidence of a sophisticated culture. Their sculptures are made of terra cotta, a reddish-brown baked clay. Sculptures include animals as well as people. This Nok figure features a classical look called “elongated” style.

Most Nok figurines have these characteristics:

- distinctive features such as bulging eyes, flaring nostrils, and protruding lips
- an elongated style, especially used for the head
- the hand or chin on the knee in some figures
- hairstyle still common in Nigeria

#### **SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Visual Sources**

**Formulating Historical Questions** *What questions would you ask if you could speak with the creator of this sculpture?*





## African Ironworking

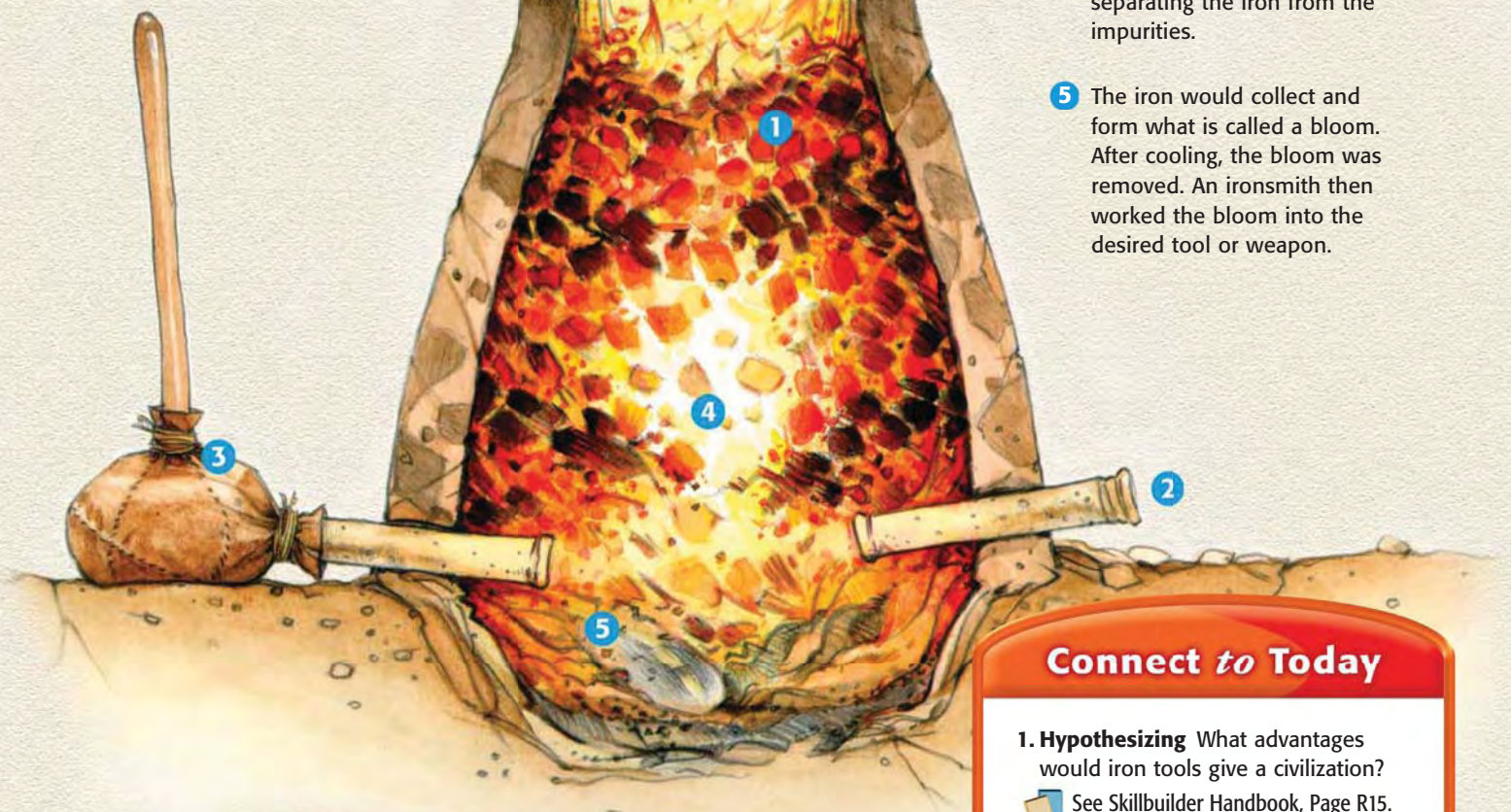
Refining metal was an important technological advance in every civilization. Africa was no exception. Iron tools were stronger than copper or bronze tools, so iron tools and the technology to produce them were very valuable.

Producing iron began by mining the iron ore. The iron itself was bound up with other minerals in rocks. The trick was separating the iron from the unwanted minerals. That was the function of the furnace shown below. This process is known as smelting.


### INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY

**RESEARCH LINKS** For more information on ironworking, go to [classzone.com](http://classzone.com)

- 1 Layers of iron ore were alternated with layers of charcoal fuel inside the furnace. Temperatures inside the furnace would reach about 2000° F.
- 2 A tuyère (twee-YAIR) was a clay pipe that allowed air to flow through the furnace.
- 3 The bellows—usually made out of an animal skin with a wooden plunger attached—increased air flow in the furnace, thus raising the temperature.
- 4 The intense heat would cause a chemical reaction, separating the iron from the impurities.
- 5 The iron would collect and form what is called a bloom. After cooling, the bloom was removed. An ironsmith then worked the bloom into the desired tool or weapon.



### Connect to Today


1. **Hypothesizing** What advantages would iron tools give a civilization?  
 See Skillbuilder Handbook, Page R15.
2. **Comparing and Contrasting** Use the Internet to research the history of modern ironworking techniques. What improvements have been made, and how do they benefit our life today?



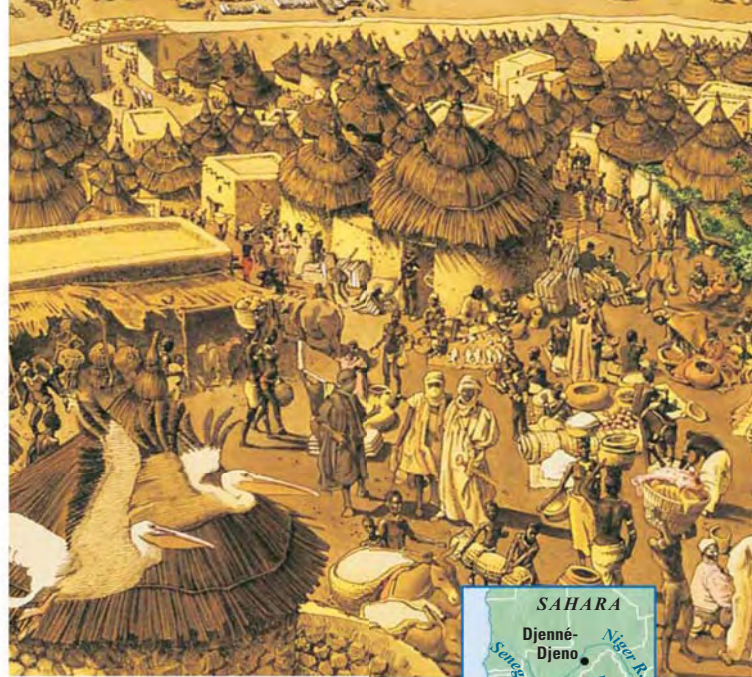
**Djenné-Djeno** In the region south of the Sahel, most Africans lived in small villages. However, cities began to develop sometime between 600 B.C. and 200 B.C. Usually they were in areas along rivers or at an oasis. One of these cities was Djenné-Djeno.

**Djenné-Djeno** (jeh•NAY jeh•NOH), or ancient Djenné, was uncovered by archaeologists in 1977. Djenné-Djeno is located on a tributary of the Niger River in West Africa. There, scientists discovered hundreds of thousands of artifacts. These objects included pottery, copper hair ornaments, clay toys, glass beads, stone bracelets, and iron knives.

The oldest objects found there dated from 250 B.C., making Djenné-Djeno the oldest known city in Africa south of the Sahara. The city was abandoned sometime after A.D. 1400.

At its height, Djenné-Djeno had some 50,000 residents. They lived in round reed huts plastered with mud. Later, they built enclosed houses made of mud bricks. They fished in the Niger River, herded cattle, and raised rice on the river's fertile floodplains. By the third century B.C., they had learned how to smelt iron. They exchanged their rice, fish, and pottery for copper, gold, and salt from other peoples who lived along the river. Djenné-Djeno became a bustling trading center linked to other towns not only by the Niger, but also by overland camel routes. 

The early inhabitants of West Africa were developing cities, cultures, and technologies that would make their mark on history. Meanwhile, other groups in West Africa were beginning to make an historic move out of West Africa. The Bantu-speaking people would take their culture and ironworking techniques with them to parts of eastern and southern Africa.



▲ A modern artist, Charles Santore, has pictured life in Djenné-Djeno around A.D. 1000.

**MAIN IDEA**

**Comparing**

**C** In what ways were the cultures of Djenné-Djeno and the Nok alike?

**SECTION 1 ASSESSMENT**

**TERMS & NAMES** 1. For each term or name, write a sentence explaining its significance.

- Sahara
- Sahel
- savanna
- animism
- griot
- Nok
- Djenné-Djeno

**USING YOUR NOTES**

2. How were history and culture preserved in African societies?

*Africa*

1. *A Land of Geographic Contrasts*
  - A.
  - B.
11. *Early Humans Adapt to Their Environments*

**MAIN IDEAS**

3. What are four general vegetation types found in Africa?
4. What is the main source of information about early African cultures?
5. How is the African Iron Age different from that in other regions?

**CRITICAL THINKING & WRITING**

6. **ANALYZING CAUSES** Why did diverse cultures develop in Africa?
7. **RECOGNIZING EFFECTS** How did agriculture change the way Africans lived?
8. **DRAWING CONCLUSIONS** What evidence shows that Djenné-Djeno was a major trading city in West Africa?
9. **WRITING ACTIVITY** **INTERACTION WITH ENVIRONMENT**  
Choose one of the climate or vegetation zones of Africa. Write a **poem** from the perspective of a person living in the zone and interacting with the environment.

**CONNECT TO TODAY** **CREATING A MAP**

Create a three-dimensional **map** of Africa that illustrates both vegetation zones and geographic features. Use your map to demonstrate the geographic challenges to people living on the continent.



# Migration

## CASE STUDY: Bantu-Speaking Peoples

### MAIN IDEA

#### CULTURAL INTERACTION

Relocation of large numbers of Bantu-speaking people brings cultural diffusion and change to southern Africa.

### WHY IT MATTERS NOW

Migration continues to shape the modern world.

### TERMS & NAMES

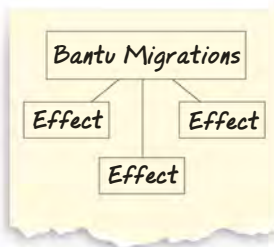
- migration
- push-pull factors
- Bantu-speaking peoples

**SETTING THE STAGE** Human history is a constantly recurring set of movement, collision, settlement, and more movement. Throughout history, people have chosen to uproot themselves and move to explore their world. Sometimes they migrate in search of new opportunities. Other times, migration is a desperate attempt to find a place to survive or to live in peace.

### TAKING NOTES

#### Analyzing Causes and Recognizing Effects

Identify causes and effects of specific events related to Bantu migration.



## People on the Move

As an important pattern in human culture, migrations have influenced world history from its outset. **Migration** is a permanent move from one country or region to another.

**Causes of Migration** Aside from the general human desire for change, the causes of migrations fall into three categories: environmental, economic, and political. In the early history of human life, environmental factors were most likely the strongest. Later, economic and political causes played a greater role. For example, in the 15th century, the Ottomans' drive for power pushed them to move all over the ancient world to create a massive empire. As the world became more industrialized, more people moved to cities where work in factories was available. Elsewhere, religious or ethnic persecution supported by governments often drove groups of people to flee in order to survive. Seventeenth-century European settlers were pulled to America by the hope of religious tolerance, land for farming, or better economic conditions.

When looking at migration, historians and geographers speak of **push-pull factors**. These factors can either push people out of an area or pull them into an area. An example of an environmental pull factor might be abundant land that attracts people. On the other hand, the depletion of natural resources forces people away from a location—a push factor. Employment or the lack of it is an economic push or pull factor. Political conditions such as freedom or persecution can encourage people to move or to stay where they are. Urbanization also causes migration because job opportunities and other

▼ A mask of the Kuba, a Bantu-speaking people, from Congo and Zaire





Migration: Push-Pull Factors		
Push Examples	Migration Factors	Pull Examples
Climate changes, exhausted resources, earthquakes, volcanoes, drought/famine	Environmental	Abundant land, new resources, good climate
Unemployment, slavery	Economic	Employment opportunities
Religious, ethnic, or political persecution, war	Political	Political and/or religious freedom

**SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Charts**

- 1. Developing Historical Perspective** Are environmental factors still a cause of migration in the modern world? Explain.
- 2. Analyzing Causes** Which cause do you think is most important in modern migrations? Why?

benefits attract people. The chart above shows how causes of migration are related to push-pull factors.

**Effects of Migration** Life in a newly populated area changes because of the influx of new people. The results of migration may be positive or negative.

- Redistribution of the population may change population density.
- Cultural blending of languages or ways of life may occur.
- Ideas and technologies may be shared.
- People's quality of life may be improved as a result of moving.
- Clashes between groups may create unrest, persecution, or even war.
- Environmental conditions may change, causing famine or depleted natural resources.
- Employment opportunities may dry up, creating unemployment and poverty.

Migration changes the lives of those who migrate and also of the people in communities where they settle. Both groups may need to make adjustments in the way they live. Some adjustments may be relatively easy to make. For example, more advanced technology may improve living conditions. Other adjustments may be more difficult and may occur over a longer period of time. One of these adjustments may include language. **A**

**Tracing Migration Through Language** One way experts can trace the patterns of movement of people over time is by studying the spread of languages. People bring their languages with them when they move to new places. And languages, like the people who speak them, are living things that evolve and change in predictable ways. If two languages have similar words for a particular object or idea, for example, it is likely that the people who spoke those languages probably had close contact at one time.

Experts have studied languages in Africa. One group of African languages, the Niger-Congo, includes over 900 individual languages. A family of languages in this group developed from a single parent tongue, Proto-Bantu. Many anthropologists believe that the language spread across Africa as a result of migration. Today in Africa, Bantu speakers live in a region from south of the Sahara to the tip of Africa. A Bantu language is the first language of nearly one-third of all Africans.

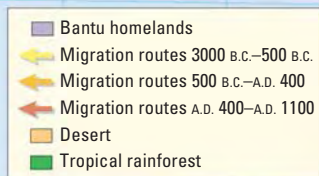
**MAIN IDEA**

**Forming Opinions**

**A** Which of the effects of migration do you think are most negative? Explain.



## Bantu Migrations, 3000 B.C.–A.D. 1100



### GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Maps

- 1. Human-Environment Interaction** What geographic features did the Bantu speakers encounter in the course of their migrations?
- 2. Movement** Why didn't the Bantu speakers migrate northward?

### CASE STUDY: Bantu-speaking Peoples

## Massive Migrations

Early Africans made some of the greatest migrations in history. When the migrations were over they or their descendants populated the southern third of the continent. Starting in the first few centuries A.D. and continuing over 1,500 years, small groups moved southward throughout Africa, spreading their language and culture. Historians refer to these people as the **Bantu-speaking peoples**. (The word Bantu itself means “the people.”) The Bantu-speaking peoples originally lived in the savanna south of the Sahara, in the area that is now southeastern Nigeria.

**Migration Begins** Bantu speakers were not one people, but rather a group of people who shared certain cultural characteristics. They were farmers and nomadic herders who developed and passed along the skill of ironworking. Many experts believe they were related to the Nok peoples.

Beginning at least 2,000 years ago or earlier, small groups of Bantu speakers began moving to the south and east. The farming techniques used by these people forced them to move every few years. The technique is called slash and burn. A patch of the forest is cut down and burned. The ashes are mixed into the soil creating a fertile garden area. However, the land loses its fertility quickly and is abandoned for another plot in a new location. When they moved, the Bantu speakers shared their skills with the people they met, adapted their methods to suit each new environment, and learned new customs. They followed the Congo River through the rain forests. There they farmed the riverbanks—the only place that received enough sunlight to support agriculture.

As they moved eastward into the savannas, they adapted their techniques for herding goats and sheep to raising cattle. Passing through what is now Kenya and



Tanzania, they learned to cultivate new crops. One such crop was the banana, which came from Southeast Asia via Indonesian travelers.

**Causes of Migration** Although it is impossible to know exactly what caused the Bantu-speaking peoples to migrate, anthropologists have proposed a logical explanation. These experts suggest that once these peoples developed agriculture, they were able to produce more food than they could obtain by hunting and gathering. As a result, the population of West Africa increased. Because this enlarged population required more food, the earliest Bantu speakers planted more land. Soon there wasn't enough land to go around. They couldn't go north in search of land, because the area was densely populated. The areas that once had been savanna were becoming more desertlike. The Sahara was slowly advancing toward them. So the people moved southward.

The Bantu people probably brought with them the technology of iron smelting. As they moved southward, they were searching for locations with iron ore resources and hardwood forests. They needed the hardwood to make charcoal to fuel the smelting furnaces. (See the Science & Technology feature on page 218.)

As you can see from the map, the migrations split into eastern and western streams. Eventually, the Bantu speakers worked their way around the geographical barriers of the Kalahari and Namib deserts. Within 1,500 years or so—a short time in the span of history—they reached the southern tip of Africa. The Bantu speakers now populated much of the southern half of Africa. **B**

**Effects of the Migration** When the Bantu speakers settled into an area, changes occurred. The lands they occupied were not always unpopulated. Some areas into

**MAIN IDEA**

**Clarifying**

**B** How did the Bantu deal with the problems they encountered in their migrations?

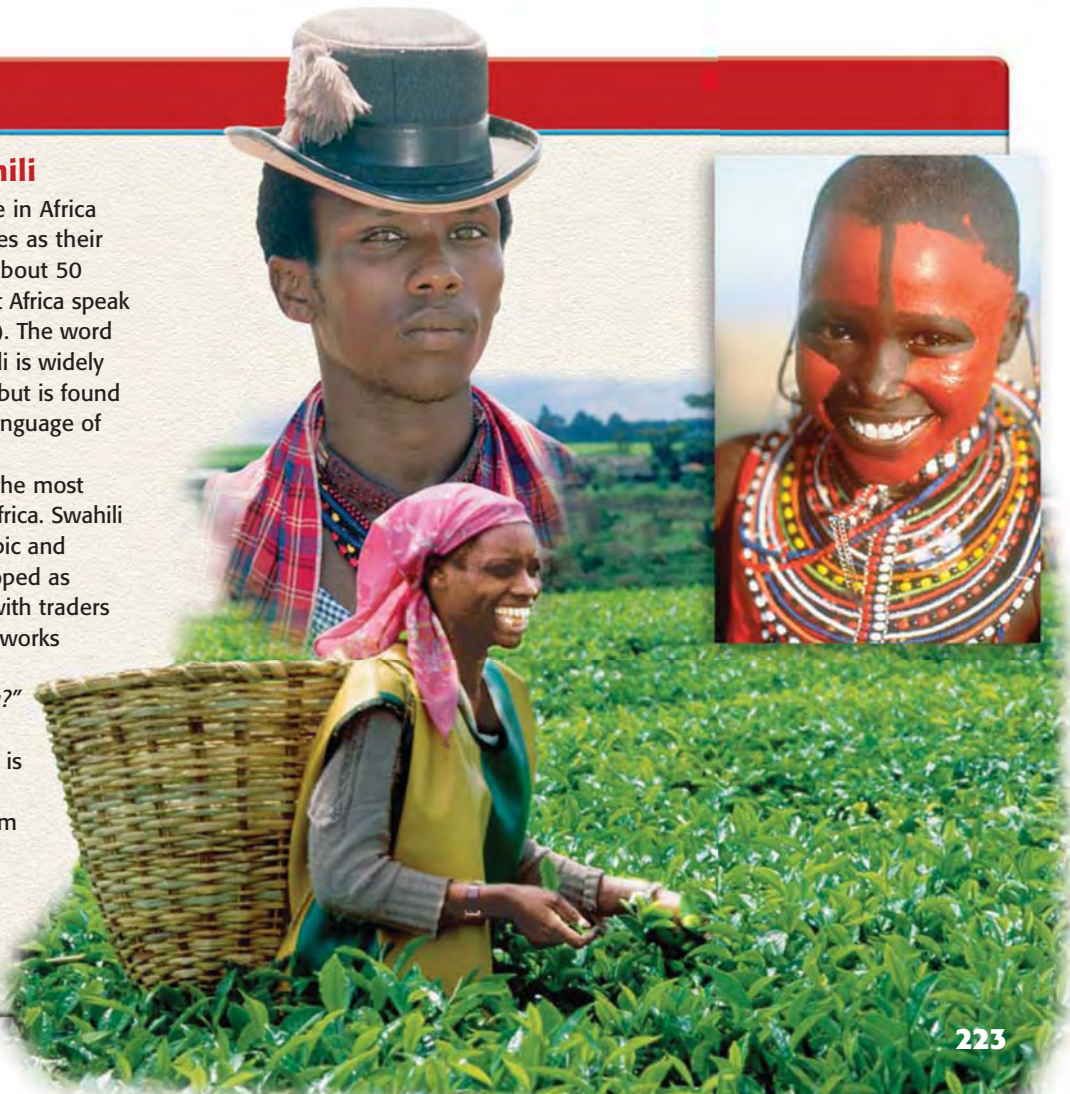
**Connect to Today**

**Bantu Languages: Swahili**

An estimated 240 million people in Africa speak one of the Bantu languages as their first language. Of that number, about 50 million people in central and east Africa speak Swahili (also known as Kiswahili). The word swahili means “the coast.” Swahili is widely used on the east coast of Africa, but is found elsewhere, too. It is the official language of Kenya and Tanzania.

In fact, after Arabic, Swahili is the most commonly spoken language in Africa. Swahili uses Bantu basics along with Arabic and Persian words. It probably developed as people of East Africa interacted with traders from the Indian Ocean trade networks and with Arabic traders.

The greeting “*Jambo. U mzima?*” (Hello. How are you?) and the answer “*U hali gani?*” (The health is good.) can be understood by modern-day Swahili speakers from East Africa.







▲ This Kuba mask represents the sister of the founding ancestor of the Kuba culture group, a Bantu-speaking people.

which the Bantu moved were sparsely populated with peoples like the BaMbuti and the San. These Africans were not Bantu speakers. They were not engaged in agriculture but were instead hunter-gatherers. They had to find ways to get along with the Bantu, get out of their way, or defend their lands and way of life.

As the Bantu speakers spread south into hunter-gatherers' lands, territorial wars often broke out. Fighting with iron-tipped spears, the newcomers easily drove off the BaMbuti and the San, who were armed only with stone weapons. Today, the BaMbuti are confined to a corner of the Congo Basin. The San live only around the Kalahari Desert in northwestern South Africa, Namibia, and Botswana. Both groups live a very simple life. They do not speak a Bantu language, and their culture does not reflect the influence of the Bantu-speaking peoples.

The Bantu speakers exchanged ideas and intermarried with the people they joined. This intermingling created new cultures with unique customs and traditions. The Bantu speakers brought new techniques of agriculture to the lands they occupied. They passed on the technology of ironworking to forge tools and weapons from copper, bronze, and iron.

They also shared ideas about social and political organization. Some of these ideas still influence the political scene in eastern and southern Africa. Although the Bantu migrations produced a great diversity of cultures, language had a unifying influence on the continent. 🗣️

In the next section, you will see how cultures on the east coast of Africa experienced growth and change. These changes came about as a result of human migrations from Arabia and cultural interaction with traders from North Africa and the Indian Ocean trade routes.

**MAIN IDEA**

**Analyzing Effects**

🗣️ How did the Bantu migrations change the history of Africa?

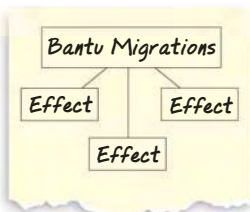
**SECTION 2 ASSESSMENT**

**TERMS & NAMES** 1. For each term or name, write a sentence explaining its significance.

- migration
- push-pull factors
- Bantu-speaking peoples

**USING YOUR NOTES**

2. Which effects of the Bantu-speaking migrations do you think had the most long-term impact? Explain.



**MAIN IDEAS**

3. What are push-pull factors in migration?
4. What are three effects of migration?
5. Into which regions of Africa did the Bantu-speaking migration move?

**CRITICAL THINKING & WRITING**

6. **MAKING INFERENCES** How can the effects of one migration become a cause of another migration?
7. **RECOGNIZING EFFECTS** How does migration shape the modern world?
8. **HYPOTHESIZING** How might the population of Africa be different today if the Bantu-speaking migrations had not taken place?
9. **WRITING ACTIVITY** **CULTURAL INTERACTION** Write a **compare-and-contrast essay** addressing how migrating Bantu speakers and the peoples they encountered may have reacted to each other.

**CONNECT TO TODAY** **CREATING A DATABASE**

Use online or library resources to find information on Bantu languages and the countries in which they are spoken. Build a **database** using the information.

# The Kingdom of Aksum

## MAIN IDEA

**POWER AND AUTHORITY** The kingdom of Aksum became an international trading power and adopted Christianity.

## WHY IT MATTERS NOW

Ancient Aksum, which is now Ethiopia, is still a center of the Ethiopian Orthodox Christian Church.

## TERMS & NAMES

- Aksum
- Ezana
- Adulis
- terraces

**SETTING THE STAGE** While migrations were taking place in the southern half of Africa, they were also taking place along the east coast. Arab peoples crossed the Red Sea into Africa perhaps as early as 1000 B.C. There they intermarried with Kushite herders and farmers and passed along their written language, Ge'ez (GEE•ehz). The Arabs also shared their skills of working stone and building dams and aqueducts. This blended group of Africans and Arabs would form the basis of a new and powerful trading kingdom.

## The Rise of the Kingdom of Aksum

You learned in Chapter 4 that the East African kingdom of Kush became powerful enough to push north and conquer Egypt. During the next century, fierce Assyrians swept into Egypt and drove the Kushite pharaohs south. However, Kush remained a powerful kingdom for over 1,000 years. Finally, a more powerful kingdom arose and conquered Kush. That kingdom was **Aksum** (AHK•soom). It was located south of Kush on a rugged plateau on the Red Sea, in what are now the countries of Eritrea and Ethiopia. (See map on page 226.)

In this area of Africa, sometimes called the Horn of Africa, Arab traders from across the Red Sea established trading settlements. These traders were seeking ivory to trade in Persia and farther east in the Indian Ocean trade. They brought silks, textiles, and spices from eastern trade routes. Eventually, the trading settlements became colonies of farmers and traders. Trade with Mediterranean countries also flowed into seaports located here.

**The Origins of Aksum** A legend traces the founding of the kingdom of Aksum and the Ethiopian royal dynasty to the son of King Solomon (of ancient Israel) and of the Queen of Sheba, (a country in southern Arabia). That dynasty lasted into the 20th century, until the last ruler, Haile Selassie, died in 1975.

The first mention of Aksum was in a Greek guidebook written around A.D. 100, *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*. It describes Zoskales (ZAHS•kuh•leez), thought to be the first king of Aksum. He was “a stickler about his possessions and always [greedy] for getting more, but in other respects a fine person and well versed in reading and writing Greek.” Under Zoskales and other rulers, Aksum seized areas along the Red Sea and the Blue Nile in Africa. The rulers also

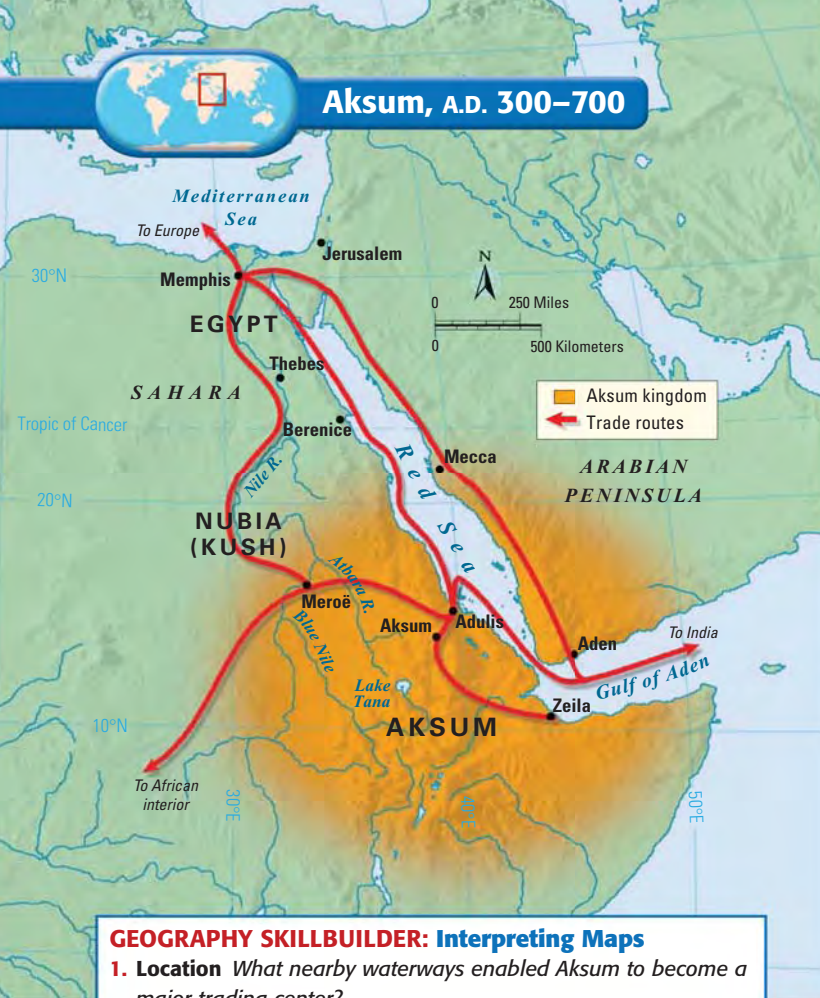
## TAKING NOTES

**Summarizing** List the achievements of Aksum.





## Aksum, A.D. 300–700



### GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Maps

- 1. Location** What nearby waterways enabled Aksum to become a major trading center?
- 2. Movement** To which continents or countries did Aksum's trade routes give it access?

crossed the Red Sea and took control of lands on the southwestern Arabian Peninsula.

**Aksum Controls International Trade** Aksum's location and expansion made it a hub for caravan routes to Egypt and Meroë. Access to sea trade on the Mediterranean Sea and Indian Ocean helped Aksum become an international trading power. Traders from Egypt, Arabia, Persia, India, and the Roman Empire crowded Aksum's chief seaport, **Adulis** (AHD•uh•luhs), near present-day Massawa. **A**

Aksumite merchants traded necessities such as salt and luxuries such as rhinoceros horns, tortoise shells, ivory, emeralds, and gold. In return, they chose from items such as imported cloth, glass, olive oil, wine, brass, iron, and copper. Around A.D. 550, an Egyptian merchant named Cosmas described how Aksumite agents bargained for gold from the people in southern Ethiopia:

### MAIN IDEA

#### Recognizing Effects

**A** How did Aksum's location and interactions with other regions affect its development?

### PRIMARY SOURCE **B**

They take along with them to the mining district oxen, lumps of salt, and iron, and when they reach its neighborhood they . . . halt . . . and form an encampment, which they fence round with a great hedge of thorns. Within this they live, and having slaughtered the oxen, cut them in pieces and lay the pieces on top of the thorns along with the lumps of salt and the iron. Then come the natives bringing gold in nuggets like peas . . . and lay one or two or more of these upon what pleases them. . . . Then the owner of the meat approaches, and if he is satisfied he takes the gold away, and upon seeing this its owner comes and takes the flesh or the salt or the iron.

**COSMAS** quoted in *Travellers in Ethiopia*

**A Strong Ruler Expands the Kingdom** The kingdom of Aksum reached its height between A.D. 325 and 360, when an exceptionally strong ruler, **Ezana** (AY•zah•nah), occupied the throne. Determined to establish and expand his authority, Ezana first conquered the part of the Arabian peninsula that is now Yemen. Then, in 330, Ezana turned his attention to Kush, which already had begun to decline. In 350, he conquered the Kushites and burned Meroë to the ground:

### PRIMARY SOURCE

I carried war against [them] when they had rebelled. . . . I burnt their towns of stone and their towns of straw. At the same time, my men plundered [stole] their grain, their bronze, their iron and their copper, destroyed the idols in their homes, their stocks of corn and of cotton; and they threw themselves into the river.

**KING EZANA OF AKSUM**, quoted in *Africa: Past and Present*

### MAIN IDEA

#### Analyzing Primary Sources

**B** Why don't the traders speak to each other instead of laying down goods or gold?



## An International Culture Develops

From the beginning, Aksumites had a diverse cultural heritage. This blend included traditions of the Arab peoples who crossed the Red Sea into Africa and those of the Kushite peoples they settled among. As the kingdom expanded and became a powerful trading center, it attracted people from all over the ancient world.

The port city of Adulis was particularly cosmopolitan. It included people from Aksum's widespread trading partners, such as Egypt, Arabia, Greece, Rome, Persia, India, and even Byzantium. In the babble of tongues heard in Aksum, Greek stood out as the international language of the time, much as English does in the world today.

**Aksumite Religion** The Aksumites, like other ancient Africans, traditionally believed in one god. They called their god Mahrem and believed that their king was directly descended from him. They were also animists, however, and worshiped the spirits of nature and honored their dead ancestors. They offered sacrifices—often as many as a dozen oxen at a time—to those spirits, to Mahrem, and often to the Greek god of war, Ares.

Merchants exchanged more than raw materials and finished goods in Aksum. They shared ideas as well. One of these ideas was a new religion, Christianity, which you learned about in Chapter 6. Based on the teachings of Jesus and a belief in one God—monotheism—Christianity began in Palestine about A.D. 30. It spread throughout the Roman Empire and then to Africa, and eventually to Aksum.

**Aksum Becomes Christian** Ezana succeeded to the throne as an infant after the death of his father. While his mother ruled the kingdom, a young Christian man from Syria who had been captured and taken into the court educated him.

## Global Impact

### A Road Paved with Gold: Aksum to Rome


The kingdom of Aksum had a tremendous impact on the ancient Mediterranean world. It particularly influenced one of the most important powers of the time, the Roman Empire. Roman ships came to Adulis weekly to trade with the Aksumites. Many Roman merchants lived in Adulis and in the capital city, Aksum.

One of the chief commodities that linked the two powers was gold. The Aksumites had access to it from inland gold mines, and the Romans needed it to support the monetary system of their growing empire. Rome and Aksum were linked not only by gold, however. They also shared a spiritual link in their commitment to Christianity.

▼ This mural depicting Bible stories is located on the wall of one of the oldest Christian churches in Aksum.






When Ezana finally became ruler of Aksum, he converted to Christianity and established it as the kingdom's official religion. He vowed, "I will rule the people with righteousness and justice and will not oppress them, and may they preserve this Throne which I have set up for the Lord of Heaven." King Ezana's conversion and his devout practice of Christianity strengthened its hold in Aksum. The establishment of Christianity was the longest lasting achievement of the Aksumites. Today, the land of Ethiopia, where Aksum was located, is home to millions of Christians. 

**Aksumite Innovations** The inscription on Ezana's stele is written in Ge'ez, the language brought to Aksum by its early Arab inhabitants. Aside from Egypt and Meroë, Aksum was the only ancient African kingdom known to have developed a written language. It was also the first state south of the Sahara to mint its own coins. Made of bronze, silver, and gold, these coins were imprinted with the saying, "May the country be satisfied." Ezana apparently hoped that this inscription would make him popular with the people. Every time they used a coin, it would remind them that he had their interests at heart.

In addition to these cultural achievements, the Aksumites adapted creatively to their rugged, hilly environment. They created a new method of agriculture, terrace farming. This enabled them to greatly increase the productivity of their land. **Terraces**, or steplike ridges constructed on mountain slopes, helped the soil retain water and prevented its being washed downhill in heavy rains. The Aksumites dug canals to channel water from mountain streams into the fields. They also built dams and cisterns, or holding tanks, to store water.

**MAIN IDEA**

**Analyzing Causes**

 What conditions led to Aksum's becoming Christian?

**> Analyzing Architecture**



**Pillars of Aksum**

Aksumites developed a unique architecture. They put no mortar on the stones used to construct vast royal palaces and public buildings. Instead, they carved stones to fit together tightly. Huge stone pillars were erected as monuments or tomb markers. The carvings on the pillars are representations of the architecture of the time.

To the left, the towering stone pillar, or stele, was built to celebrate Aksum's achievements. Still standing today, its size and elaborate inscriptions make it an achievement in its own right. It has many unique features:

- False doors, windows, and timber beams are carved into the stone.
- Typically, the top of the pillar is a rounded peak.
- The tallest stele was about 100 feet high. Of those steles left standing, one is 60 feet tall and is among the largest structures in the ancient world.
- The stone for the pillar was quarried and carved two to three miles away and then brought to the site.
- Ezana dedicated one soaring stone pillar to the Christian God, "the Lord of heaven, who in heaven and upon earth is mightier than everything that exists."

**SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Visual Sources**

**Comparing** How would constructing these pillars be similar to constructing the pyramids in Egypt?



## The Fall of Aksum

Aksum's cultural and technological achievements enabled it to last for 800 years. The kingdom finally declined, however, under invaders who practiced the religion called Islam (ihsh•LAHM). Its founder was the prophet Muhammad; by his death in 632, his followers had conquered all of Arabia. In Chapter 10, you will learn more about Islam and Muhammad. This territory included Aksum's lands on the Arabian coast of the Red Sea.

**Islamic Invaders** Between 632 and 750 Islamic invaders conquered vast territories in the Mediterranean world, spreading their religion as they went. (See the map on page 261.) Aksum protected Muhammad's family and followers during their rise to power. As a result, initially they did not invade Aksum's territories on the African coast of the Red Sea. Retaining control of that coastline enabled Aksum to remain a trading power.

Before long, though, the invaders seized footholds on the African coast as well. In 710 they destroyed Adulis. This conquest cut Aksum off from the major ports along both the Red Sea and the Mediterranean. As a result, the kingdom declined as an international trading power. But it was not only Aksum's political power that weakened. Its spiritual identity and environment were also endangered.

**Aksum Isolated** As the invaders spread Islam to the lands they conquered, Aksum became isolated from other Christian settlements. To escape the advancing wave of Islam, Aksum's rulers moved their capital over the mountains into what is now northern Ethiopia. Aksum's new geographic isolation—along with depletion of the forests and soil erosion—led to its decline as a world power. **D**

Although the kingdom of Aksum reached tremendous heights and left a lasting legacy in its religion, architecture, and agriculture, it never expanded outside a fairly small area. This is a pattern found in other cultures, both in Africa and around the world. In the next chapter, you will study the pattern as it played out among the native peoples of North and South America.

### MAIN IDEA

#### Recognizing Effects

**D** How did the Muslim conquest of Africa affect the kingdom of Aksum?

### SECTION

## 3

### ASSESSMENT

**TERMS & NAMES** 1. For each term or name, write a sentence explaining its significance.

- Aksum
- Adulis
- Ezana
- terraces

#### USING YOUR NOTES

2. Which of Aksum's achievements has continued into modern times?



#### MAIN IDEAS

3. How did Aksum's location help make it a trade city?
4. Why did the people of Aksum become Christians?
5. Why did Aksum's leaders move their capital?

#### CRITICAL THINKING & WRITING

6. **DRAWING CONCLUSIONS** How did Aksum's location and interaction with other regions affect its development?
7. **ANALYZING CAUSES** Why did the kingdom of Aksum decline?
8. **EVALUATING DECISIONS** What impact did Ezana's decision to become a Christian have on the kingdom of Aksum?
9. **WRITING ACTIVITY** **POWER AND AUTHORITY** Write an **opinion paper** on the following statement: The kingdom of Aksum would have reached the same heights even if Ezana had not become king.

#### INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY INTERNET ACTIVITY

Use the Internet to trace the beginnings of the Ethiopian dynasties to the Aksum kings. Then create an Ethiopian dynasty **family tree** showing the dynasty in power until late in the 20th century.

#### INTERNET KEYWORD

*Ethiopian dynasty*

## VISUAL SUMMARY

### African Civilizations

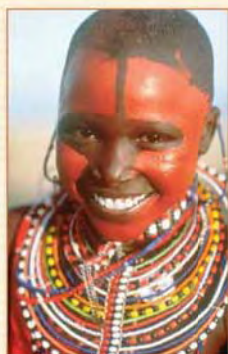
#### 1. Diverse Societies in Africa



- Savanna and Mediterranean areas are most hospitable.
- Nomadic lifestyles are replaced with settled life.
- Djenné-Djeno becomes a major trade center.
- Nok people develop ironworking.

#### 2. Migration

- Environmental, economic, or political reasons cause migration.
- Push-pull factors influence migration.
- Bantu-speaker migrations influence most of Africa south of the Sahara.



#### 3. The Kingdom of Aksum



- Aksum is a major trade center on the Indian Ocean trade routes.
- King Ezana converts to Christianity.
- Islamic invaders isolate Aksum.

## TERMS & NAMES

Briefly explain the importance of each of the following to African civilizations in the period from 1500 B.C. to A.D. 700.

1. Sahara
2. animism
3. griot
4. Nok
5. Djenné-Djeno
6. push-pull factors
7. Bantu-speaking peoples
8. Aksum

## MAIN IDEAS

### Diverse Societies in Africa Section 1 (pages 213–219)

9. How did geographic features affect the settlement of Africa?
10. What technology did the Nok introduce to West Africa?
11. What circumstances enabled Djenné-Djeno to become a bustling trade center?

### Case Study: Migration Section 2 (pages 220–224)

12. What are three general causes of migration?
13. How are push-pull factors related to migration?
14. What caused the Bantu-speaking peoples to migrate?
15. Why were the migrations of Bantu speakers so extensive and successful?

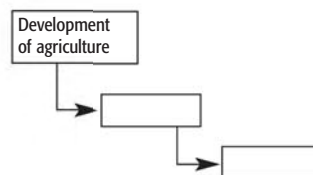
### The Kingdom of Aksum Section 3 (pages 225–229)

16. Why was Aksum able to control international trade?
17. In what ways did Ezana contribute to the rise of his kingdom?
18. Why did Aksum fall?

## CRITICAL THINKING

### 1. USING YOUR NOTES

**INTERACTION WITH ENVIRONMENT** Use a flow chart to trace the main events that followed the development of agriculture on the African savannas.



### 2. MAKING INFERENCES

How are the spread of ironmaking technology to east and south Africa and the Bantu migrations related?

### 3. EVALUATING DECISIONS

**POWER AND AUTHORITY** What were some of Ezana's most crucial leadership decisions?

### 4. FORMING OPINIONS

**CULTURAL INTERACTION** Do you think cultural characteristics or personal qualities determine how individuals act toward migrating people who settle among them? Explain.

### 5. COMPARING AND CONTRASTING

What are some positive and negative effects of migration?



## STANDARDS-BASED ASSESSMENT

Use the quotation about trade goods coming to Aksum and your knowledge of world history to answer questions 1 and 2.

Additional Test Practice pp. S1–S3

### PRIMARY SOURCE

Small axes are imported, and adzes and swords; copper drinking-cups, round and large; a little coin for those coming to the market; wine of Laodicea [on the Syrian coast] and Italy, not much; olive oil, not much; . . . there are imported Indian cloth called monaché [fine quality cotton] and that called sagmotogene [probably tree cotton].

Adapted from *Travellers in Ethiopia* edited by  
RICHARD PANKHURST

1. According to this passage, trade goods came to Aksum from which continents?
  - A. Africa, Asia, and South America
  - B. Asia and Europe
  - C. Europe and Africa
  - D. Africa, Asia, and Europe
2. What reason might be cited for the importing of cotton cloth?
  - A. Cotton cloth was cheap and plentiful.
  - B. Cotton cloth was popular with Aksumites.
  - C. There was little or no cotton production in the country of Aksum.
  - D. It is not possible to determine a reason from the passage.

Use the diagram and your knowledge of world history to answer question 3.



3. Based on the diagram above, what conclusions can you draw about the land area of the continent of Africa?
  - A. It is the largest continent on Earth.
  - B. It is smaller than India.
  - C. It is smaller than Europe.
  - D. The Sahara is larger than the United States.

### INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY

TEST PRACTICE Go to [classzone.com](http://classzone.com)

- Diagnostic tests
- Strategies
- Tutorials
- Additional practice

## ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT

### 1. Interact *with* History

On page 212, you considered the effects newcomers would have on a community. Now that you've read the chapter and learned about people's interactions with their environments and with other cultures, how would you modify your answer? Discuss your ideas with a small group.

### 2. WRITING ABOUT HISTORY

Look at the causes for migration shown in the chart on page 221. Think about which of the causes might have an impact on you personally. Write a **paragraph** describing a cause that would force you to migrate to another part of the country or the world. Be sure to identify either the push or pull factor that might influence your decision. Consider the following:

- environmental conditions in the area in which you live
- economic or political factors that might have a direct effect on your life

### INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY

#### Creating a Documentary Film Script

Create a documentary film script on a current African ethnic group or country struggling to survive in its environment. Consider the following:

- current locations of drought, desertification, or overuse of land
- how the people are trying to deal with the problem
- what actions are needed to prevent a recurrence of the problem
- images, sounds, and interviews to tell the story