

# History of africa

[History](#)



By the end of the course/unit the learner should be able to: I) Explain why Africa is the cradle of humankind. II) Describe the origin and development of Agriculture, mining and manufacturing. III) Discuss rise and fall of early civilizations of Egypt, More and Exam. V) Describe the emergence and spread of Bantu, Clutches and Entities v) Explain the growth of local and regional trade. V') Discuss the economic contacts with the outside world vii) Discuss the coming and impact of Islam and Christianity in Africa viii) Discuss decentralized and centralized states in Africa. Content I) Early Man in Africa. ) The origin and development of Agriculture Where it originated from How it spread to Africa Theories of diffusion, evolution, innovation Importance of Agricultural Revolution In Africa " I) Orally and development of IronTechnologyThe theories and myths that surround origin and spread of Iron technology. Effects of Iron Technology on Africa v) The rise and fall of early civilizations of Egypt, More and Exam v) Emergence and spread of Bantu, Cushiest and Milestones VI) Growth of Local and regional trade vii) Economic contacts with the outside world Slave Trade in West Africa Abolitionist process

Consequences of Slave Trade The coming of Islam and Christianity In Africa x) Development of political systems: Decentralized and centralized states

Course Evaluation Course evaluation will be in two parts: continuous assessment and the final assignment constituting 30 marks. The final examination will account for 70% of the total marks. As part of the learning process, a lot of seriousness is attached to class attendance and contribution. REFERENCES Crystal D. (1981). The Ancient Egyptians. London: E. Arnold. Davidson Basil (1973).

The Growth of African Civilization: East and Central Africa in the Late 19th Century. London: Longing. Gaff Hoses (1985). A History of Africa. London: Zed Books. July Robert W. (1992). A History of the Ancient People. Nairobi: East Educational Publishers. Matthias A. Gut and Simon Kinkajou (1991). An Introduction to African African History. Nairobi: Nairobi University Press. General History of Africa II: Ancient Mozart G. (1990). Civilization of Africa. London: Heinlein Kenya. Got B. A. (deed. ). (1992). General History of Africa V: Africa from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century. Oxford: Henschman. Indies C. (1990). Themes in World History: Book 1. Nairobi: Longing Kenya. Potts M. J. (1971). Makers of Civilization: Book 1. London: Rodney W. (1972). How Europe Underdeveloped Africa. Dark-SE- Tanzania Publishing House. 1. 0 The Origin of Man in Africa Africa is the cradle of humankind salaam: The question of the origin of humans is pertinent not only in Africa but in the world all over. It is therefore important to answer this question before analyzing the history of Africa. Charles Darwin (1809-1882), an Englishman, made a scientific trip in 1831 to South America and the Pacific Islands.

In this expedition, he spent time to study rocks and other geographical features. Consequently, he published his theories on evolution in 1859 in a book entitled: The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection. Darning's theory states that all living things evolved over millions of years from simple living cells to complex plants and animals. Scientific evidence supports Darning's theory which states that man was originally a primate but gradually evolved over years from his ape-like ancestors. Archaeological evidence in particular, points to Africa as being the possible cradle of humankind.

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Many archaeological sites have been discovered in Africa. This confirms that early hominids were living in the area even before the earth movements that led to the formation of the Rift Valley. Dust and lava covered places where man lived. The location of these remains formed major archaeological sites in EAI. Some of the important archaeological sites in Africa include Rushing Island, Fort Tehran near Jericho, Ukrainians, Gambles Cave, Largesse, Harry Hills near Nassau, Negro River Caves and Kankakee. The oldest remains found in Kenya were those of thyrotrophic Africans.

These were discovered at Rushing Island in L. Victoria. The creature was named Proconsul and looked like a chimpanzee; had long teeth and had a smooth forehead. In 1961, the remains of Snappishness were discovered at Fort Tehran near Jericho by Dry. Louis Leaky and his wife Mary. The fossil remains were dated between 15-12 million years old. Other similar remains have since been found at Samba's Hills, Lake Barring and Lake Turban Basins. Snappishness is believed to have been closer to man in several aspects.

He had 32 teeth and his canines were smaller than earlier hominids. He had a brain size of ICC, massive Jaws, weighed between 18-keg and occasionally on two legs. Other important remains found in Africa are those of Astrophysicists / Conjurations [Southern Ape which lived between 1 - 7 million years ago. The remains were found at L. Turban in 1969 after having been discovered earlier tating in Botswana in 1924 and Latvia Gorge in 1959. Astrophysicists walked on two legs; was hairy, short and strong about 1. Meters, had low forehead and deep- set eyes, had brain capacity of 450-ICC, had sharp vision, had massive Jaws with large molars and smaller

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canines and made and used tools referred to as Oldoway tools. Recent findings near Jenny's Marionette River near Lake Turkana and Olduvai near Lake Magadi indicate that hominids such as Homo habilis (1.8 and .5 million years ago) and Homo erectus (1.8 million to 350 000 years ago) are possible direct ancestors of modern Homo sapiens, and lived in Kenya in the Pre- Neolithic epoch.

During excavations at Lake Turkana in 1984, paleontologist's Richard Leakey assisted by Kamala Kim discovered the Turkana boy, a 1.6-million- year-old fossil belonging to Homo erectus. Homo erectus means the upright man and was believed to have a bigger brain (775-cc) than Homo habilis (500-cc). They had a more advanced speech, about 5ft tall, had discovered and used fire, were omnivorous and made more advanced tools called Oldoway tools. Remains of Homo sapiens which mean thinking or intelligent man have been found near Lake Turkana, Lake Tanganyika and Lake Victoria.

He was about 5ft tall, brain capacity of 1000-cc, small teeth with a steep and well-rounded forehead, was a fisherman, religious and made refined tools called Oldoway tools. This overwhelming evidence goes a long way to prove that Africa was inhabited by early man. It should also be noted that more evidence concerning early man continues to be unearthed with time.

## 2.0 The origin and development of Agriculture and Agricultural Revolution

### 2.1 Introduction

Agriculture is the cultivation of crops and taming of animals.

Knowing how to cultivate food and tame animals seems to have been a long history of human cultural adaptation of probably trial and error which finally

made man to control his environment. Agricultural revolution on the other hand was the change from dependence on hunting and gathering of eatable fruits and roots as well as fishing to domestication of animals and cultivation of food. The development of Agriculture initiated one of the most important revolutions in human history. It led to major changes in man's relationship with his environment and in his social, economic and lattice organization and behavior. . 2 Theories of Origin and development of Agriculture For a long time, Resurrection scholars recounted the origins of Agriculture from a whose claim is that Africa had no single site where agriculture originated but Africans got the knowledge through interaction with the so called Hammiest of the Near East, in Mesopotamia to be precise. It was through such interaction that the knowledge came to Egypt through the Nile Valley, and then it spread to the rest of Africa. This Diffusion Theory seems to be true because some products seem not to have been domesticated in Africa.

For example, we are certain and sure of chicken. Also it is certain that cattle, south of the Sahara, came from outside; either from Libya, North Africa or Asia Minor. Archaeological evidence and their radio-carbon dates have also unequivocally established an early start of cereal farming in the Middle East. At the same time, the advantages of farming in supporting complex civilizations argued that the seemingly less efficient hunter-gatherer societies were quicker to take advantage of a more efficient food producing economy than more efficient hunter-gatherer societies.

It appeared; therefore that Agriculture had been invented during a short interval at a single point from which it spread quickly and widely across the world. Increasingly, this concept of rapid revolutionary change has come into <https://assignbuster.com/history-of-africa/>

question. To begin with, there were many crops and agricultural methods that clearly did not have a Middle-East origin. In Africa hoe and digging-stick cultivation has always predominated while the use of mounds and ridges remains characteristic of wetter regions. Many African crops have also been identified.

For example, the cereal Theft and the banana like Onset in Ethiopia or the West African millet known as Font. Conceivably, the methods of cultivation of sorghum and millet might have spread from the Middle East via Egypt, but this hardly takes into account the techniques for growing rice or yams, both indigenous of the regions below the Sahara, both raised by methods far removed from those of the Middle East. Due to inadequate evidence to support the above contention and new discoveries that some products were indigenous to Africa while others were not, watered down the Diffusion Theory.

Since the end of World War 2, much light has been thrown on the origin of Agriculture in various parts of the world including North and South America, South East Asia and also the African contributions in the history of Agriculture. Advocates of this new revelation are referred to as Evolutionist theorists or Independent Developed Theorists. According to Evolutionist or Independent Developed Theory, agriculture developed independently in different parts of the world particularly along river valleys. Independent developed theorists have suggested various centers which they belief were the cradle of Agriculture.

There are probably 4 centers of early plant and animal domestication. Such centers yielded different varieties of plants and animals. It is important to examine such areas and the factors that make such scholars to observe that they are original places for the origin of Agriculture. The Near East The area is hypothesized by a wide range of archaeologists and botanists as the centre of some domesticated animals and plants. These areas cover South West Iran, parts of Iraq, Turkey and around rivers Tigris and Euphrates. They are believed to be homeland of wheat, barley, sheep, pigs and cattle.

This centre is generally considered to be the oldest centre of agricultural development in the world; it occurred as early as 9000 SC. South East Asia argued that the area allowed for the invention of agriculture because it had favorable conditions such as plenty of water mass that allowed populations to do fishing which in turn allowed them time to invent domestication and cultivation. Domesticated animals such as pigs, fowls, geese and duck are argued to have been the first wild animals to be domesticated. The author also argues that this was the first area to domesticate yams and taro (a starchy root plant).

He further argues that yams found their way into Africa through East African coastal trade while crops like bananas came in from here and were taken to Began and later to the West African regions. The New World This centre lies between Mexico and Peru and here the American Indian population developed maize and potatoes. Africa The scholar who first proposed this region was a Russian agronomist, N. L. Pavlov. Various regions of Africa have been proposed in this argument. 1. West Africa The most important plant remains discovered here were those of yams and palm oil.

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In this region a different type of yam called Discover yam and which was widespread in the region had no counterpart in any other part of the world. Hence scholars have concluded that West African region is the cradle of Discover yam. Also here is West African millet known as font which is not found anywhere else in the world.

2. Mauritania In this centre, there was found a special type of millet which has never been found in any other part of the world like the Discover yam in West Africa. Scholars have also concluded that such a variety of millet was first domesticated in this area.

Ethiopia In this centre, there was found a cereal Theft and the banana like Onset in Ethiopia which were different from other types found in other areas. Also Voile carried out his research from 1952 to 1965 and concluded that Ethiopia seem to have been the anomaly of sorghum, wheat, barley and coffee. His conclusions have been challenged by scholars like Elizabeth Scheming and Philips D. W. Who have argued against Ethiopia being the cradle of these crops. They insist that the conditions in Ethiopia are not favorable for plants like Barley and wheat.

2. Spread of Agriculture in Africa

Most scholars maintain that there are three main phases of agricultural spread in Africa. In the First Phase they argue cereal agriculture was developed in the Lower Nile Valley and the FumyDepression. The diffusion from the Near East (about 5000 o BBC) of wheat and barley eventually resulted in Africans population explosion. Probably less than 20, 000 hunters and gatherers could have occupied the Lower Nile area before the introduction of Agriculture; but about BBC the labor force for pyramid building alone exceeded 100, 000.

Today Egypt is still one of the densely populated areas in the world.

Population growth was accompanied by widespread arbitration and the development of more elaborate forms of social, economic and political organization. Populations spread slowly through Africa, north and south of the Sahara and up to the Nile Valley as far south as modern Khartoum. It is generally understood that the Sahara was capable of supporting both Agriculture and pastoralist until approximately 5000 BC, the time that the desert conditions had become firmly established.

Some feel that interactions between Negroes populations innovations flowing in both directions. The Second Phase advocates that agriculture was developed in the Sahelian Belt (from the Atlantic Ocean to the Ethiopian Highlands). This important agricultural knowledge is generally felt to have come from Egypt, although the implementation of these ideas depended upon the domestication of suitable drought resistant cereals of the Savannah like sorghum, millet and rice. These developments resulted in a second but much slower build-up population in black Africa.

Much of this development was confined to the Sahelian Belt hemmed in on the north by the progressively drying Sahara and on the south by the equatorial forests where Savannah crops were unsuitable. The Nile swamps probably prevented direct spread to the East African grasslands but some crops began to appear after 1000 BC in various locations from present day Kenya south to Zambia and southern Angola. This was most likely the result of the spread of Ethiopian forms of millet and sorghum. These pockets of agricultural settlements were to play an important role in Bantu migrations.

The more humid regions of Africa (Congo Basin, Guiana Coast, Great Lakes Region and parts of the Zambia Valley) were to remain mainly hunting and gathering areas, with perhaps some form of cultivation based on yams and palm oil until the beginning of the Christian era. Compared to the other African Savannah, there has been generally lack of indigenous food plants in the African Rain Forests. The settlements of the rain forests over the past 2000 years had therefore depended to a greater extent on the introduction of food crops from outside.

The third phase was the Bantu migrations and spread of Agriculture to the humid areas of Africa. This was very significant because it led to the present spread of distribution of population in Africa. This spread of Agriculture to the more humid regions has been linked to a combination of three factors, namely: introduction of South East Asian crops in Africa, the growth of iron technology and the migration of the Bantu speaking peoples who occupy nearly all of Africa south of the Equator. 4 The Impact of Agricultural Revolution The revolution was one of the most significant steps in human history for it changed man's life tremendously. As some people became pastoralist, looking after sheep, goats, cattle and camels, the majority took up mixed farming with wide range of social, economic and political implications. To begin with, rearing animals and cultivation of crops freed man from reliance on the environment as adequate food was produced usually with surplus to be stored.

Secondly, scientific knowledge increased. As knowledge on domestication increased, hybrid plants and livestock ere developed. In many cases entirely new crops were developed from the wild species. Thirdly, methods of

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cultivation were improved. In the beginning, digging sticks were used but later ploughs were devised. Inadequate rainfall did not seriously affect production, especially in areas near permanent water courses since irrigation was practiced. Fourthly, high food supplies freed many people from farming to other activities.

There was division of labor as other members of society worked in pottery; basketry; black-smiths and other related crafts as well as other professions like medicine and administration. Fifthly, forests were destroyed as more land was brought under cultivation. Sixthly, trade developed as people exchanged life since cultivation required patience before planted crops were harvested. Since unnecessary migrations and movements were minimized and diets improved, it was now possible to localize the supply of food. Another social impact was population explosion.

The increase in population which was as a result of improved food security and health. This in turn led to population movements from their earlier settled areas. Furthermore, there was development of religion. Man perceived that there were there forces that determined the yields from the farm such as the sun and rain and started worshipping such phenomena. In the political sphere, government was developed as the population grew so as to have effective control of the increased population and avoid serious problems.

Laws were thus instituted and enacted and self appointed or acclaimed rulers enforced them. Eventually kingdoms and empires with defined spheres of influence were established. 2. 5 Conclusion It was the Agricultural

revolution and use of Iron technology that made the early settlers in Africa to master their environment and prompted successful migration to new and unknown lands. In any case, the history of agricultural revolution and Iron technology generally referred to as the Neolithic Revolution, show that Africa had its own development and was not isolated from the rest of the world.

Africa was not a dark continent. 3. 0 Origin and Development of Iron

Technology 3. 1 Introduction When dealing with the introduction of Iron technology and agriculture, we always come across the term 'Neolithic' which is used in two versions to fit our purposes. First, it means the technological advance whereby the experts try to reconstruct how pottery, stone and metals, especially iron were made. Secondly, its meaning turns out to be economic and here experts try to reconstruct the agricultural aspects of human life entailing rearing of animals and cultivation of crops.

In brief, 'Neolithic Revolution' deals with technological and agricultural developments which are two distinct aspects of human life. This topic focuses on the history of Iron technology in Africa. Although technology in Africa started with the science of making stone tools which went through various phases through space and time, our topic will harp on metallurgy and iron technology to be specific for the major fact that it was the one that considerably altered human life to a degree unknown before.

This Archaeological evidence abounds to suggest that Africans from about 1st C AD worked on various metals and also exploited various minerals to meet their needs. It is important to note that Africa is one of the richest continents in the world in terms of mineral resources. Of these minerals, the

ones mined in the earliest times are iron, copper, tin, gold and salt. In this topic we will examine the origin and development of Iron and other metals like copper. 3. 2 Iron Technology There once existed a widespread belief that iron technology diffused into Africa from outside Africa.

More specifically it was believed that the Turks of Anatolia were the first iron users as early as 2000 BC. The information available reveals that the making of iron tools was secret to the Turks and it remained their monopoly. For reasons unknown by historians, this knowledge of iron working leaked to the Hittites (Syria) of the Middle East, probably about 1500 BC. From this region it landed into Africa, through Egypt. The Hittites are said to have moved with the technology to Egypt down the Nile Valley up to More.

Another school of thought states the Cushites More got the knowledge from the Hittites after conquering them. Whichever the case, More became the most important transmission centre of iron technology first to Exam, then to other regions in East and Central Africa. More Kingdom thrived between BBC to BBC. Records have it that the people of More had made iron working their art and occupation. A. H. Sauce, the archaeologist who was associated with the discovery of More in 1911, said that More produced quantities of iron and that place came to be nicknamed 'The Birmingham of Africa. About BBC, this knowledge is claimed to have diffused to 'Nok in Central Nigeria. Out of that, other archaeologists have linked Bantu knowledge about iron technology with Nok. Another related argument on the spread of iron technology stated that West Africa may also have received its iron technology from Carthage through the Sahara or the Atlantic coastal region. Then it is argued that the Bantu speaking people migrated with the <https://assignbuster.com/history-of-africa/>

technology to Central and Southern Africa. Azalea (1993: 174), in *A Modern Economic History of Africa* Volvo. Dismisses the explanation of the diffusion trail since it was constructed on thin evidence and speculation. The diffusion explanation was guided by the racist notion that Africa or more precisely the part that Europeans call Black Africa was too primitive for independent technological innovation and development. Indeed as some research by archaeologists and historians has shown, iron technology was invented independently in Africa. Other scholars however still argue that iron technology and metallurgy in general were introduced in Africa from external sources.

Yet this latter group ignores the fact that technology is not an immutable idea to be conceived, bred and transmitted whole from the outside world to Africa without the Africans also injecting their own value to it. Certainly, technology is a continuous process of innovation and change spawned by complex interaction between iron production techniques and economic, cultural, social, political and environmental transformations. The belief that Egyptians were introduced to the use of iron by the Assyrian or the Greeks has been challenged.

More and Exam have been dethroned as centers of the diffusion to the rest of Africa. Available data for the beginning of smelting from several centers in West, Central and East Africa show that the knowledge of iron working was known in these centers between the contemporary with or even earlier than More. For example, in the West Africa region iron working sites have yielded earlier dates in several centers. Evidence for this has been obtained from

rock art painting, Arabic sources and from iron implements discovered from excavated sites.

Evidence from Joss plateau in Northern Nigeria, which has been categorized as the "Nookculture" has shown that iron was in regular use by at least the third century BC. Here various types of terracotta have been found. Other early evidence of iron working in West Africa region have been found at Trauma and Born in Nigeria, Do Dimmit in Niger, Dobra in Ghana and Assonance Valley in Senegal. In the East Africa region, the centers include Startup in Tanzania. There was also iron working evidence in the Congo basin and at Machine in Zambia areas of Central Africa.

South Africa evidence indicates that iron working was practiced around the 3rd to 4th century AD. In excavation at some of the working at Determination indicated regular iron operations. One of the vexing issues concerning the spread of iron technology in Africa has been its relation to the migration of the Bantu. The argument has been that the Bantu people have been responsible for the spread of this technology from their West Africa homeland to other regions of Eastern and southern Africa.

Their movement has been traced by archaeologists through a special type of pottery which is dimple based and (Urea ware) which is associated with the Bantu. However as Azalea (Ibid) argues, there was no direct correlation between the dispersal of Bantu languages and Iron Age technology. Azalea and indeed other historians, archaeologists and linguists have demonstrated that Iron Age culture in East Africa communities preceded those communities closer to the Bantu homeland. Linguistic studies have not



shown that stems relating to metallurgy in the various Bantu languages are not all derived from a common proto-

Bantu, nor are they different from those in non Bantu language. Probably, the expansion of the Bantu speakers from their homeland in south-eastern Nigeria started much earlier than once thought, some 2000-years B. C. Before the advent of iron working in West, Central or East Africa. Therefore the earliest Bantu speakers in these areas did not produce iron. Azalea's argument however does not water down the fact that the Bantu were responsible for the spread of Iron technology. Instead of arguing to water down this fact she evades it and start pointing out that there were pockets of iron smelting in different parts of Africa.

Just as there is a big difference in manufacturing a good and marketing it, there is also a very big difference between inventing technology and spreading it and that was what Azalea had forgotten in her argument. This loophole was filled by historians Oliver Roland and linguists like Malcolm Guthrie and Joseph Greenberg who suggested and showed iron technology led to the migration of the Bantu who spread southwards and were able to conquer the Czarina Forest and defeat the original inhabitants they passed through and settled.

Using the TTS-TTS-free corridors, iron workers and agriculturalists reached Zambia ND southwards towards Tanganyika from either north or north-west with their cattle Gradually, iron age communities pushed southwards in small groups reaching the Zambia by the early centuries of the Christian era, settling in Mishandled in the 4th C and crossing the Limp some time later.

However archaeologists say that Stone Age hunter-gatherers lived peacefully with the iron technology farmers until made many of the later to abandon their natural way of life and turn on food production.

By early 19th century most African peoples were able to produce their own iron or obtain it from neighboring communities through trade. Iron production was a complex, skill, lengthy and labor intensive process. It involved prospecting, mining, smelting and forging. Iron ore was available in virtually all part of the continent. Iron ore deposits were found by means of outcrops and were extracted through either alluvial or shallow mining. Smelting was done in furnaces using charcoal fuel, after which the iron was forged in workshops.

Many products were made including tools, utensils and Jewelry. The most important tools manufactured were hoes, sickles, razors, knives, daggers, rings, wire and weapons such as spear, assesses, arrow-heads and battle axes. The position of iron producers varied among many Africa societies. In some they were respected while in others they were despised. By early 19th C Africa was sufficient in iron needs. But toward the end of the century, imports had become dominant in some part of the continent. Three explanation account for this: 1 .

African iron industries declined because of competition from Europeans products. 2. There were ecological factors that hampered iron production. For example charcoal shortage caused by deforestation affected their production. 3. The role of labor organization and distribution affected the production. Whereas production was increasingly becoming more costly.

Europeans imports, though of low quality and often less relevant for local uses were much cheaper, substituting of local with imported therefore became the order of the day. 3. The Impact of Iron Technology on African Societies It led to the development of agriculture as a result of better iron tools. For instance agriculture was practiced in most areas of Sub-Sahara Africa especially after the introduction of iron tools and implements. It led to sedentary life. Iron tools and equipments which allowed the clearance of wooded areas of Africa made most societies to settle down. Therefore the phase of nomadic way of life was replaced with sedentary life characterized by villages and even larger social units.

Although it is difficult to ascertain the social structures involved, it is likely that over most of Africa, there existed relatively small villages consisting of one or more lineage groups with wider affinities based on clan relationship. Trade flourished. Regional and international trade developed as people exchanged metal items like iron tools with other items. Trade transformed most African economies from ones which were largely parasitic on the immediate environment to ones which were in control food reduction and exchange through trade.

It is also important to note that trade took another dimension with the advent of metals. Copper and gold were in demand by various communities in the South, North, East and West. There is evidence that suggest that trade was more expanded and various trading networks were developed. Arab evidence has alluded to the existence of trade in metals across the Sahara from the earliest times. Constructions and building works emerged. Metals were used to construct bridges and reinforcement of buildings like pyramids, <https://assignbuster.com/history-of-africa/>

temples and houses. With the advent of metallurgy, especially iron technology,