

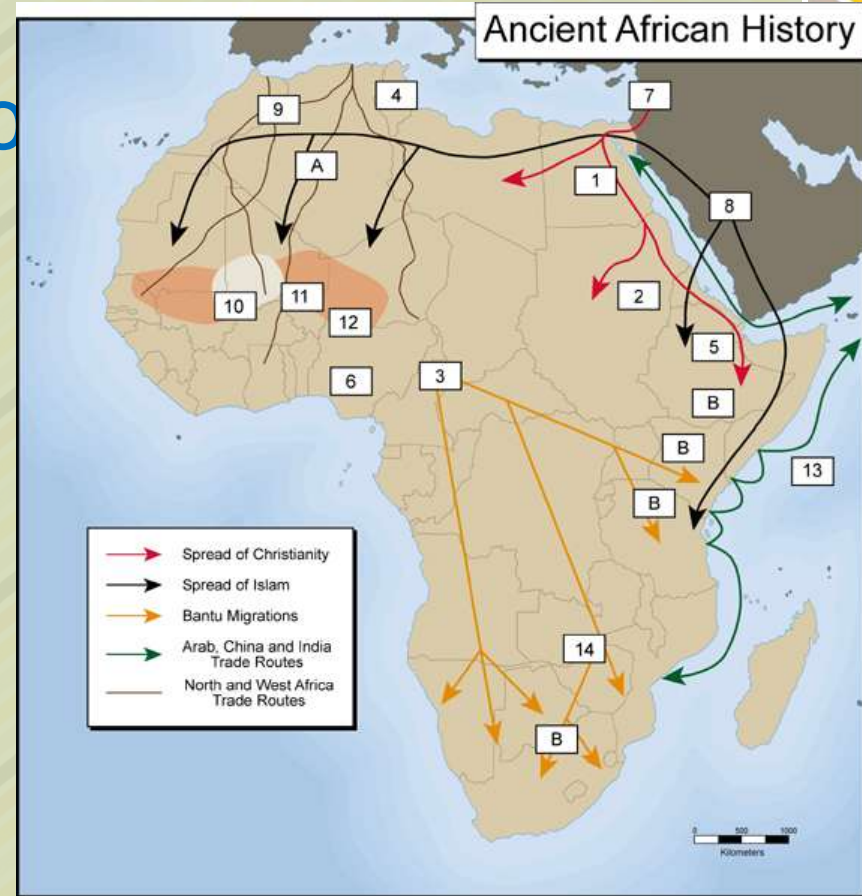
African Cultures

Arab, Ashanti, Bantu, & Swahili

SS7G4: Students will describe the diverse cultures of the people who live in Africa.

SS7G4A: Explain the difference between an ethnic group and a religious group

SS7G4B: Explain the diversity of religions within the Arab, Ashanti, Bantu and Swahili Ethnic Groups



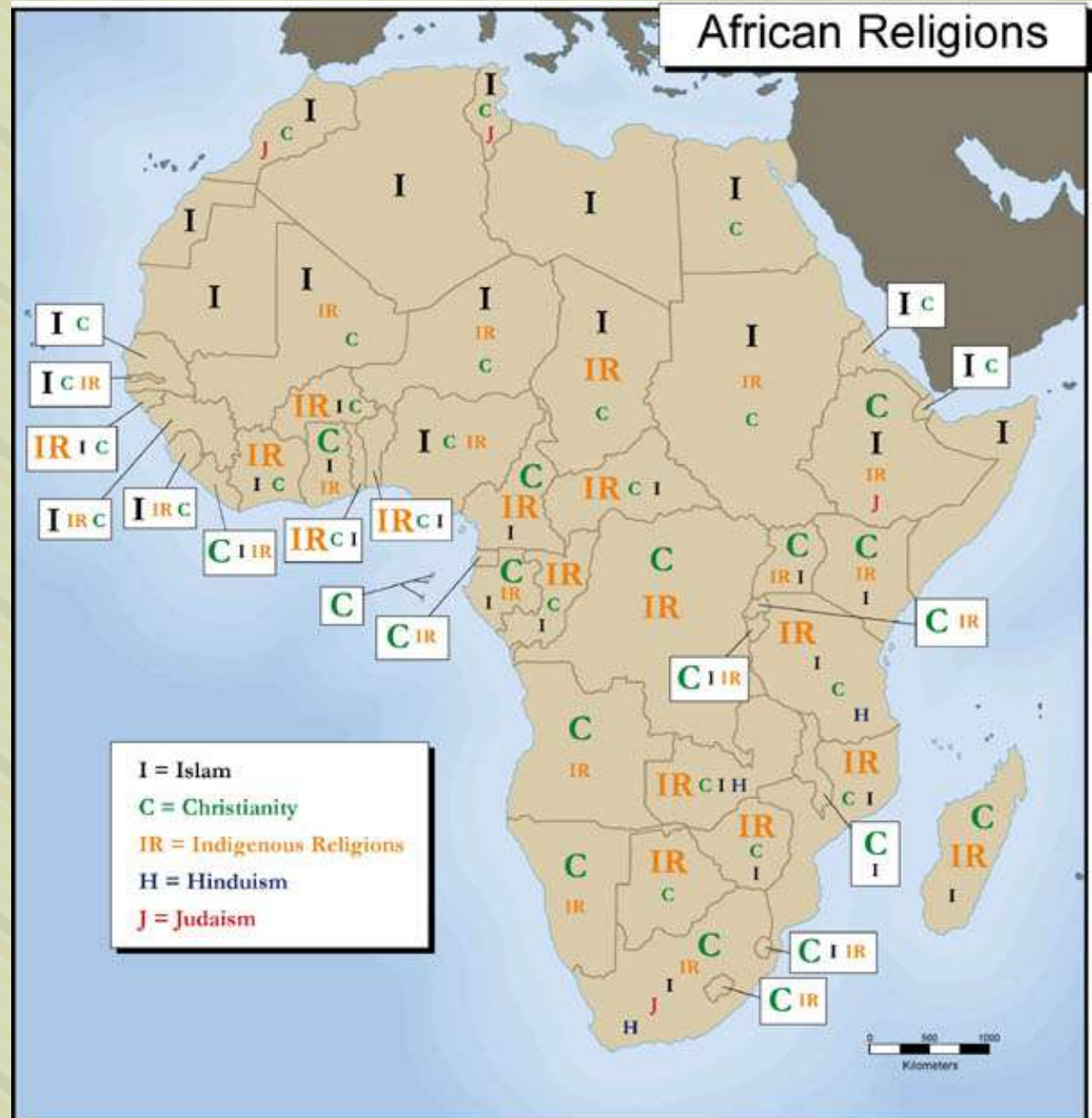
Ethnic Group

- This is a group of people who share a common culture.
 - These characteristics have been part of their community for generations.
- Ethnic groups can have many things in common:
 - Shared history, common ancestry, language, religion, traditions, beliefs, holidays, food, etc.
- All of these things make up a common

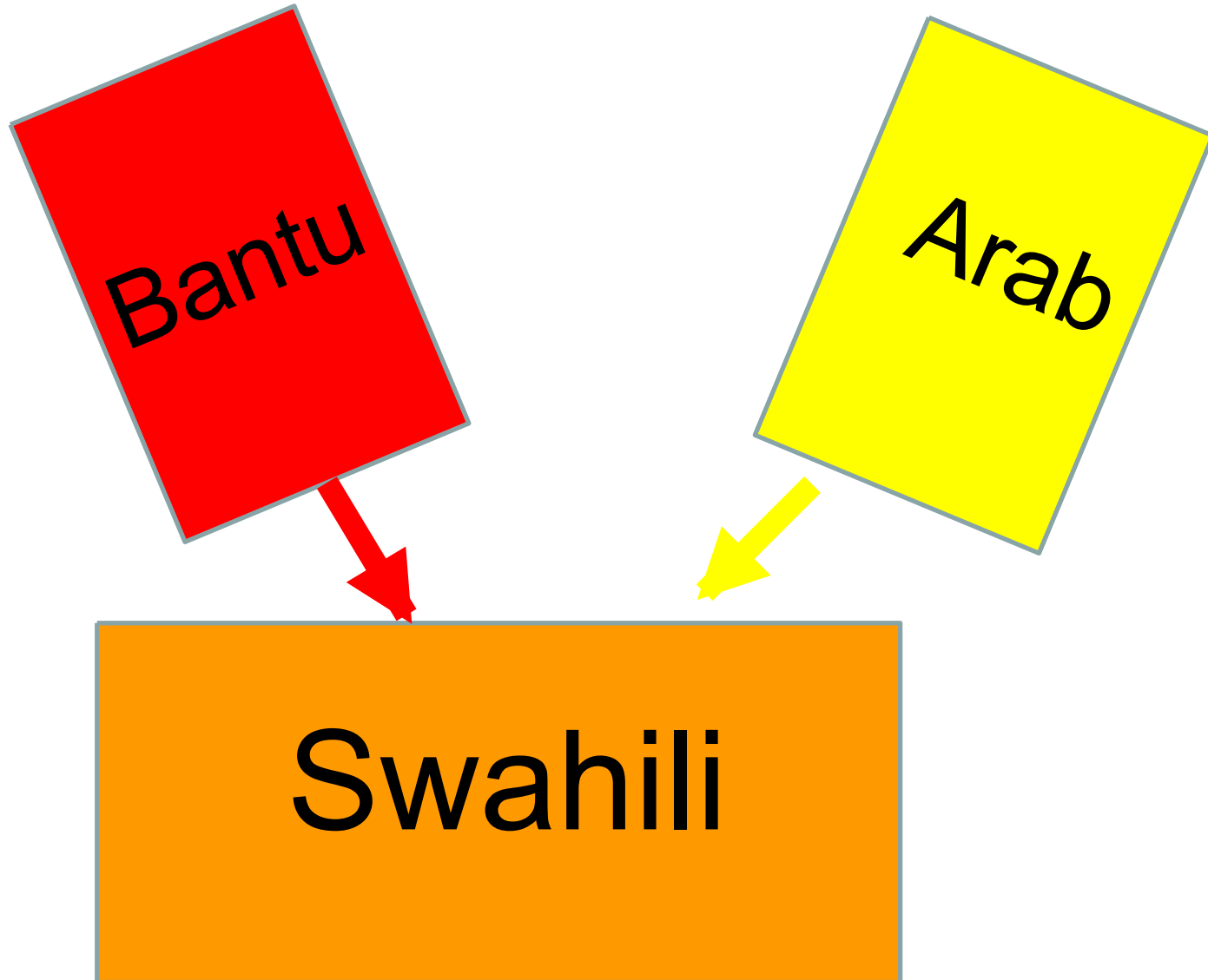
Religious Group

- This is a group of people who share a belief system. They believe in the same god (or gods) and have common sacred text with a specific set of rules about how to live.
- Religious groups have many things in common:
 - God(s), prophets, prayers, history, sacred text, religious laws, holy days, etc.
- People from different ethnic groups may share the same religion; however, they may

Indigenous religions can be the worship of anything or include any religious customs. One such religion is animism, or the worship of animals as gods.



Cultural Diffusion



Arab



Ashanti



Bantu



Swahili





Arabs

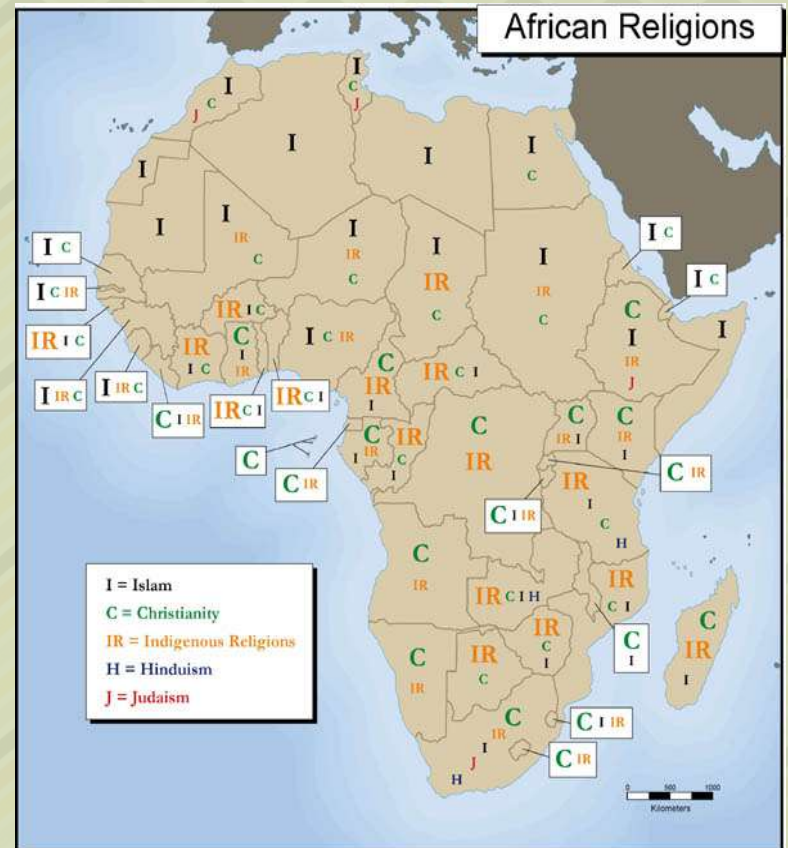


- Any member of the Arabic-speaking peoples native to the Middle East and North Africa. Speak Arabic.
- Before the spread of Islam in the 630s, the term referred to the nomads of the Arabian Peninsula.
- Most of Africa's Arab population is found in the countries of Northern Africa.

Arab armies, traders, and scholars soon spread across northern Africa all the way to Morocco. Wherever the Arabs went, they took Islam and the Arabic language with them.

Arabic was necessary to be able to read the Quran, Islam's holy book.

The Arabic language, the religion of Islam, and many other aspects of Muslim culture became part of



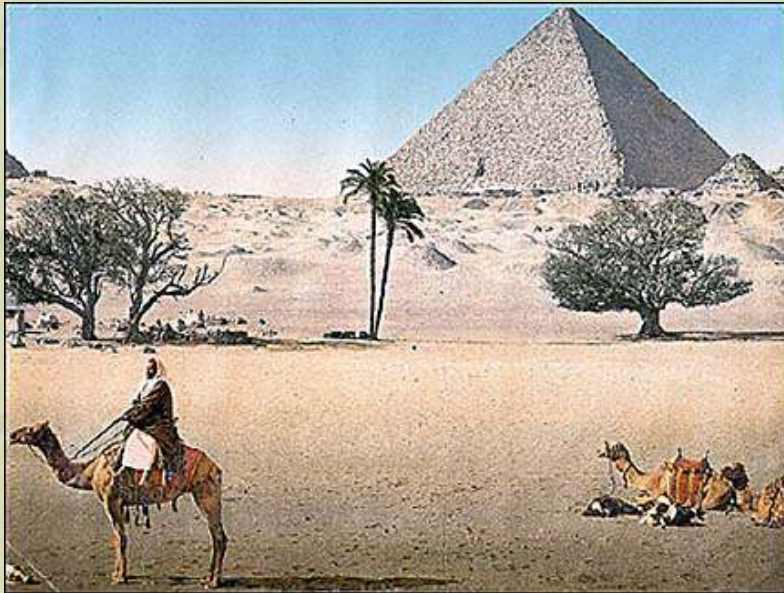
Arabs: Bedouins

Ethnically, the Bedouins are identical to other Arabs. Bedouins traditionally have made their living through livestock and herding, and social rank among them is determined by the animals that they herd: camel nomads enjoy the greatest status, followed by sheep and goat herders and, finally, cattle nomads.



Bedouins

- Traditionally, Bedouin would migrate into the desert during the rainy season and return to cultivated areas during the dry season, but since World War II (1939–45) the governments of many countries have nationalized their range lands, and conflicts over land use have arisen.

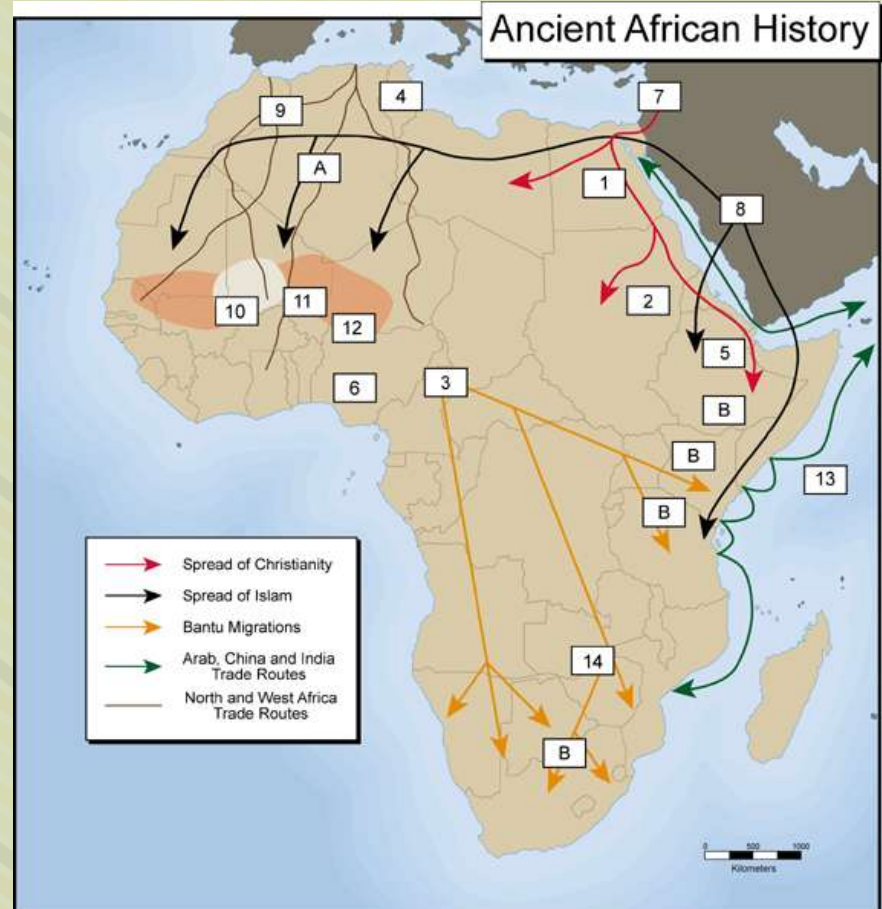


Many Bedouins have since adopted sedentary ways of life; most, however, retain pride in their nomadic heritage.

Trade Networks: Due to Scarcity

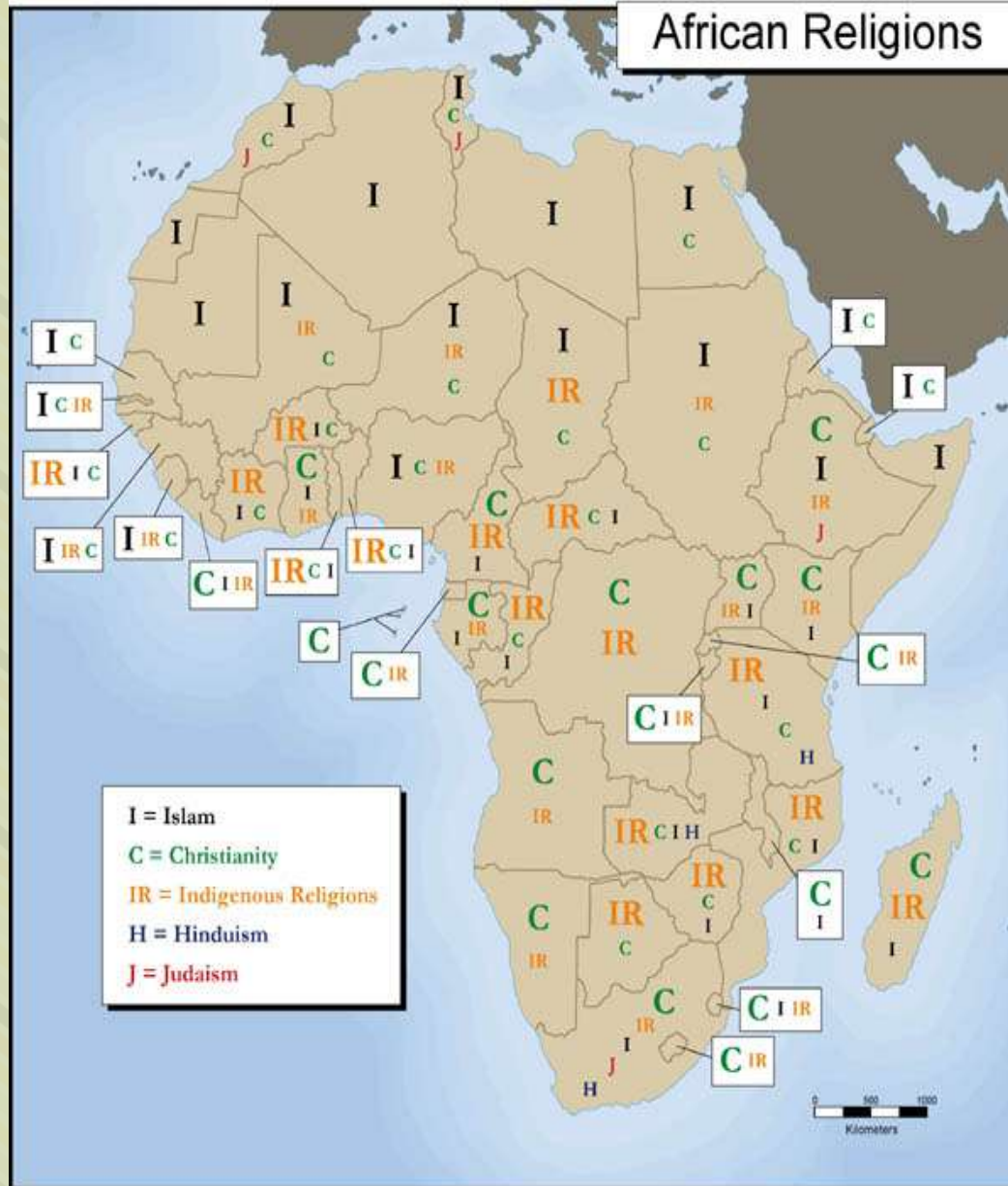
- Salt Trade: Precious as gold. Uses: preserve food. Most of Africa: salt scarce. Closest was Sahara desert/ salt mine. Trade developed between salt mines and tropical areas.

Salt was traded for gold, slaves, ivory, cola nuts, other food items.



- Caravans were created to travel in large numbers for protection.

African Religions



While the majority of Arabs are in North Africa, the gold and salt trade spread the Arab culture beyond the Sahara into the Sahel region and beyond.

Traders also spread Islam. Islam becomes the predominate religion among all Arabs.

- These Arabs did not culturally diffuse with other religions, thus they believe in Allah and the Quran (Koran) is their holy book.
- The fathers are the heads of household, thus in charge of teaching the religion.



The role of women is usually household duties and raising children.





Ashanti

- Prior to European colonization, the Ashanti people developed a large and influential empire in West Africa.

Today, they live predominately in southern Ghana, Togo and Côte d'Ivoire.

- The total Ashanti population is over 7 million.

Location



Ashanti Culture

- The nation, Ghana, was once known as the Gold Coast and was a British colony until 1957. It's now separated into 4 political parts.

Though some **Asante** now live and work in urban centers, most live in villages and engage in agriculture.



Ashanti as an Ethnic Group

- The family and the mother's clan are most important and family lives with the extended family in various homes and huts.
- The leader of the family is the eldest brother.
- Each tribal council has a member of each family.



Religion

- Ashanti believe in a supreme god, Nayme, who takes on various names depending upon the region of worship.
- The Ashanti believe lower gods, like spirits, are on earth to assist humans.
- Spirits receive their power from the supreme god and are most often connected to the natural world.
- Ashanti priests serve the spirits and act as mediators between the supreme god and humans.



Priests often dress up as the animal they are worshipping

Ashanti as a Religion

- This is called animism – the belief that natural physical entities, including animals, plants, and features of the earth, have a spiritual essence or soul.

Mixture of spiritual and supernatural powers.

They believe that plants, animals, and trees have souls.

They believe in fairies, witches, and forest monsters.

Ancestor worship!



The symbol of Asante unity is the Golden Stool.
It's a religious symbol!

- The Golden Stool is sacred to the Ashanti, as it is believed that the kingdom will last as long as it remains in the hands of the Ashanti king.



The stool represents the worship of ancestors, well-being, and the Ashanti nation.

- The Golden Stool is an Ashanti legend and has only been seen by the tribe's royalty -- only the king and trusted advisers

Ashanti

The golden stool is very carefully protected. No one has ever sat on it since it's arrival and it's never touched the ground. It is held to be so sacred that not even kings were allowed to sit on it.

Each tribal chief has a replica that has gold on it.



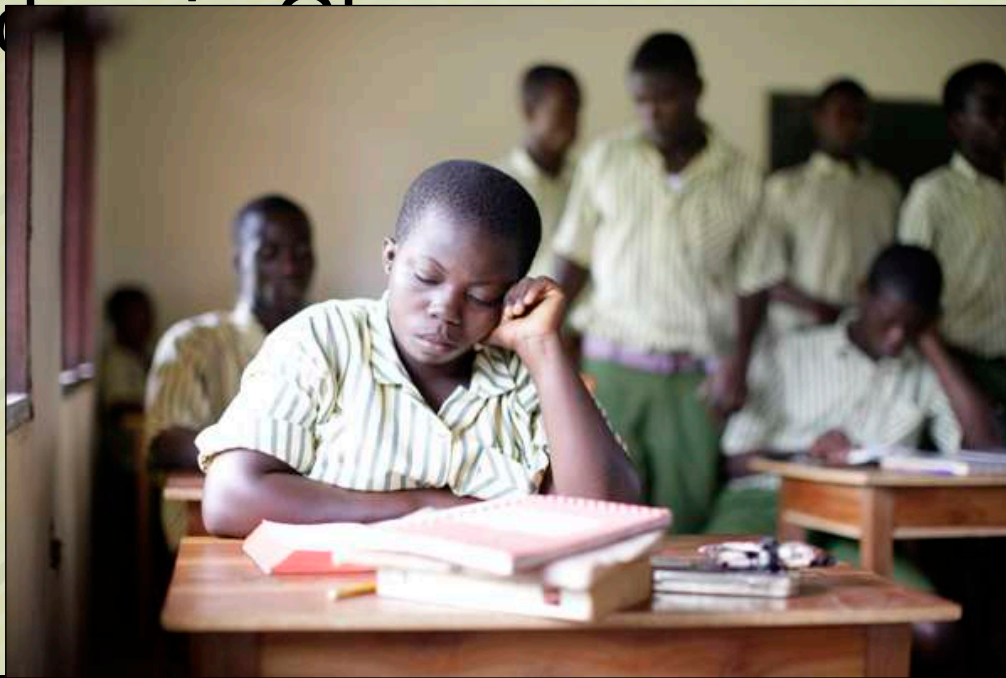
Ashanti



An Asante chief wearing silk cloth and gold jewelry. Gold is seen as a decoration and was worn as bracelets, necklaces, etc. More gold worn the higher ranked.

Language

- The major dialect of the Ashanti language is called 'Asante', or 'Twi'.
- It is spoken in and around Kumasi, the capital of the former Ashanti empire, and within the current sub-national Asante Kingdom in Ghana.



Give out
Ashanti
worksheet for
Homework



Bant
u

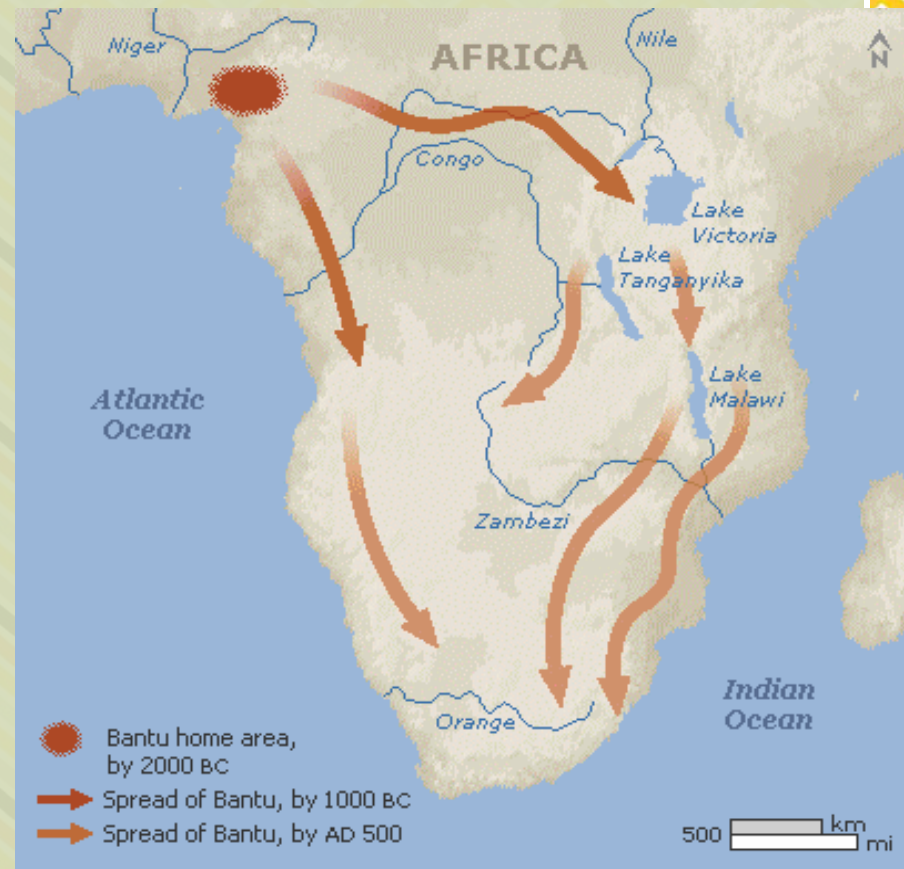
- Bantu generally refers to nearly 600 ethnic groups in Africa who speak Bantu languages.
- The Bantu people are distributed throughout central and southern parts of the continent.
- Bantu make up about two-thirds of Africa's population and cover the southern half of the continent.
- The word "bantu" means "the people".



► The Bantu were part of the greatest migration in human history over 2500 years ago. The Bantu migrated mostly to east, central, and southern Africa from modern day Nigeria.

► Much of the ancestry of West Africans can be traced through their lineage and clans from the early Bantu tribe.

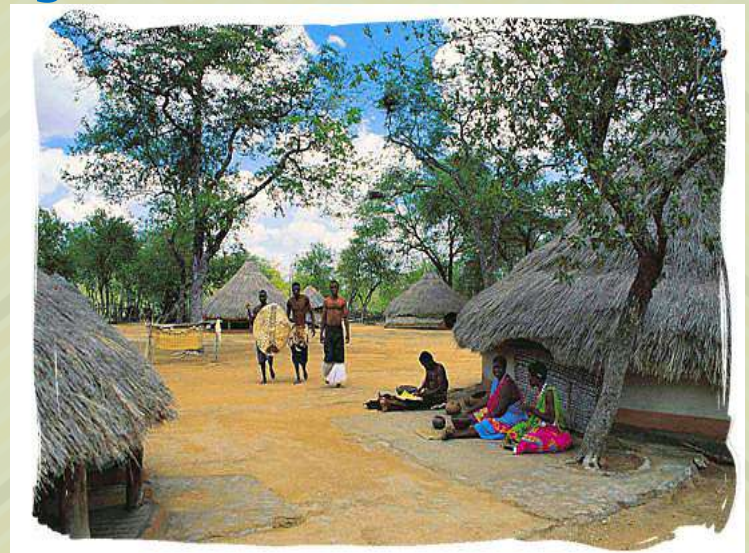
(Pg 502)
c. 1000 B.C.



Cultural Diffusion!!!

Bantu Culture

- ▶ Wherever the Bantu went, they met many new people, learned new skills, and shared their customs and beliefs as well as took their culture with them. They intermarried with the people, accepting new traditions and blending them with Bantu culture.
- ▶ They spread skills such as pottery making, mining, and iron working.
- ▶ They spread their language, religious beliefs, family values and home life to other groups living in Africa.
- ▶ Their migration east led them to interaction with many Arab speaking people through trade. This is another example of what?
 - ▶ **Cultural Diffusion!**



Language

▶ Today, the Bantu are known more as a language group than as a distinct ethnic group.

▶ The Bantu migrations spread language all across Africa.

▶ Today, there are many ethnic groups and more than 10 million peoples across Africa speak hundreds of forms of "Bantu Language".

▶ Over time, the language of Swahili developed from a mixture of Bantu and Arab languages and cultures.



Bantu Languages

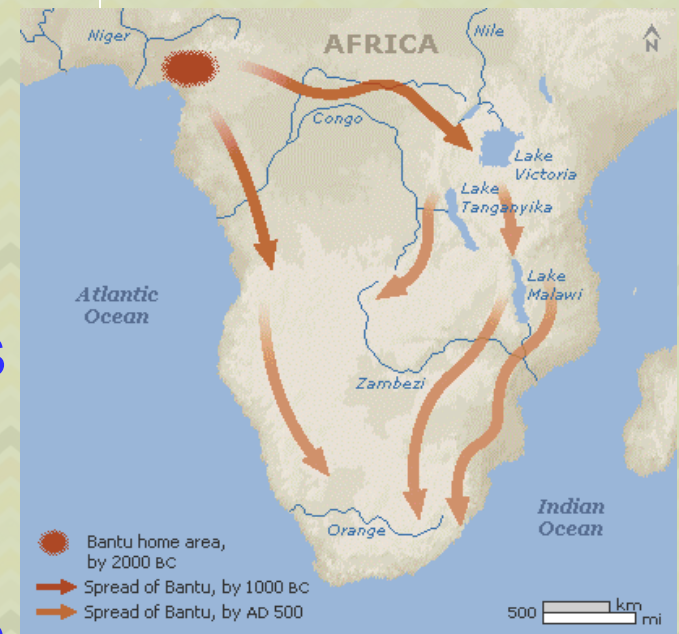
Bantu is the name of a large category of African languages.

It also is used as a general label for over 650 different ethnic groups

These peoples share a common language family, (the Bantu Languages).

There are more Bantu languages than there are European languages.

Close to 70 million people across the southern half of Africa speak a bantu language



Bantu languages are spoken east and south of the present day Nigeria; in the regions known as central Africa, east Africa, and southern Africa

Location of Bantu People



Religious Beliefs

- Most Bantu peoples practice a traditional African religion.
- They believe in one supreme creator and a spirit world.
- The Bantu religions place a lot of importance in the power of ancestors in everyday life.
- They pray to ancestors.
- Many Bantu believe that an ancestor might even be reborn in a child.

Bantu Religion

- Some Bantu practice traditional religions combined with Christianity Judaism or Islam.



Bantu Daily Life

- The Bantu spread many other ideas across Africa.
- Extended Families: Families made up of several generations often live together in compounds or walled group of homes.
- Many Bantu people are matrilineal and trace their family descent through mothers rather than fathers.
- Children are considered very important and are often raised by the whole community.

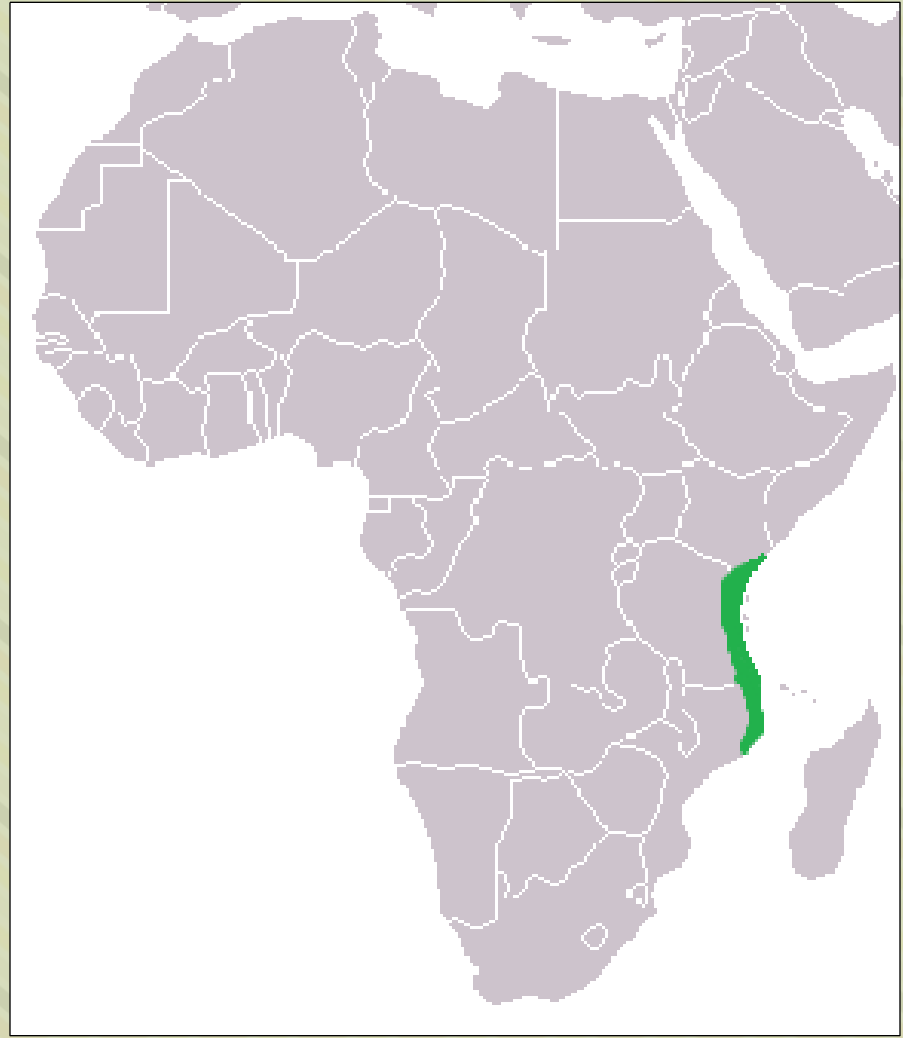


- Give out worksheet on Bantu (Homework)



Swahili

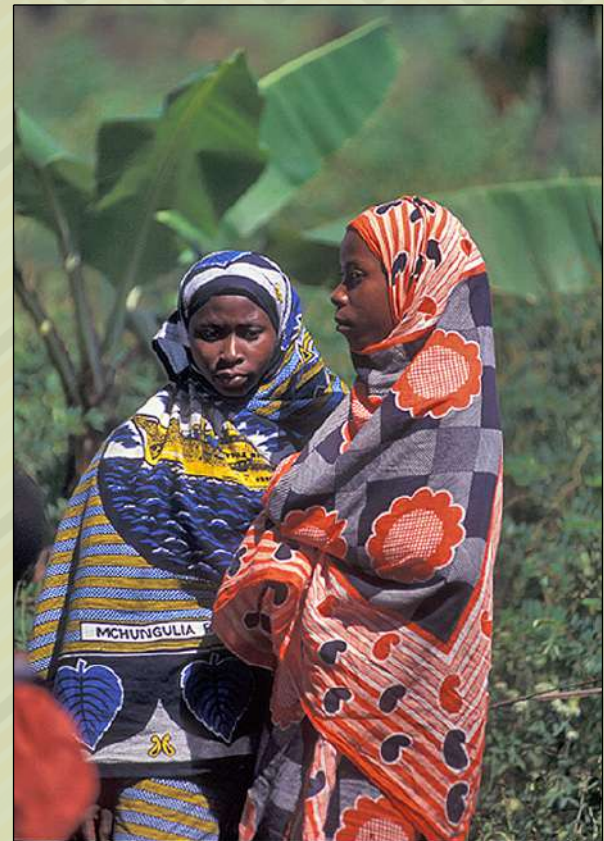
- The Swahili community developed along the coast of East Africa when Arab Muslim traders began to settle there and intermarry with the local Bantu-speaking population.
- The groups' name comes from the Arabic word "Swahili," which means "one who lives on the coast"





Swahili women
and girls

- Due to Arabic and Bantu being two different language families, Swahili was created to help with communication during trade.



- Due to Arabic and Bantu being two different language families, Swahili was created to help with communication during trade.
- Religion also was culturally diffused. The Swahili religion is a blending of Islam and traditional African Beliefs.
- Many among the Swahili also follow local religious beliefs that have been part of the culture of eastern Africa since before Muslim traders arrived.





Arab portion of Swahili:

- Believes in Allah
- Uses Koran/Quran

Traditional African Belief called Mila (Bantu) portion of Swahili religion:

- Spirits can possess a person to communicate to the people
- Believes in herbal medicine plus spiritual beliefs can cure illnesses.





Common
Ground

African Music

■ All sub-Saharan traditions emphasize singing, because song is used as an avenue of communication.

■ With urbanization and the impact of Western culture, traditional music and dance, although still practiced, have decreased. New types have emerged, however, that combine African and Western elements; they include West African highlife (showing certain Caribbean traits), Congolese popular music (reflecting Latin American influence), and in southern Africa, sabasaba and kwela (both akin to U.S. swing and jive music).

■ Traditional music and dance face serious threat of decline. Because of their political and cultural importance, however, their preservation is given special attention in many countries.

African Music



Kusun Ensemble July 27, 2004 By Guler Ugur



Soulfege March 5, 2004 by Guler Ugur

Drums and string instruments
play an important role in
African music, culture, and
daily life.

A link between music and history

- Griots, or jalis, preserve West African traditions and history through the spoken word. They pass on these oral traditions from one generation to the next.



Traditionally, griots had many responsibilities. They were responsible for the maintenance of traditions and history through speech and song. They chronicled events and mentally recorded the deeds of every person. Traditionally, the status and occupation was inherited and griots could only marry other griots.

- Ancient West African kings had their own personal griot to account for and pass on the feats of his reign.

African Art and Festivals



Composite masks represent supernatural creatures with fantastic abilities.

In a general sense, the word "mask" refers to a physical object that conceals the identity of the wearer. In Africa, masks represent spirits, ancestors, and historical and mythological characters.

- In parts of Africa where masking traditions exist, masks appear or dance in a masquerade. A masquerade is a community event that is composed of musicians, dancers and an audience that interacts with the mask through dance, and call and response.
- Other celebrations include rites of passage and annual festivals celebrating events such as a harvest. (pg 534)
- In the United States, **Kwanzaa** is an African American holiday celebrated from December 26 through January 1 and patterned after African harvest festivals.
- Animal wood carvings are another form of popular African art.

Information and photos courtesy of:

- http://www.transitionsabroad.com/publications/magazine/0103/drumming_in_west_africa.shtml
- <http://www.satalla.com/images/satalla-gallery/pages/West%20Africa-%20Kusun%20Ensemble.htm>
- <http://www.britannica.com/ebc/article-9355647?query=Arabs&ct=>
- <http://www.bfcollection.net/cities/egypt/cairo/cairo01.html>
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- <http://www.remnantsofritual.com/gallery/049.html>
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