

The Trans-Saharan trade network

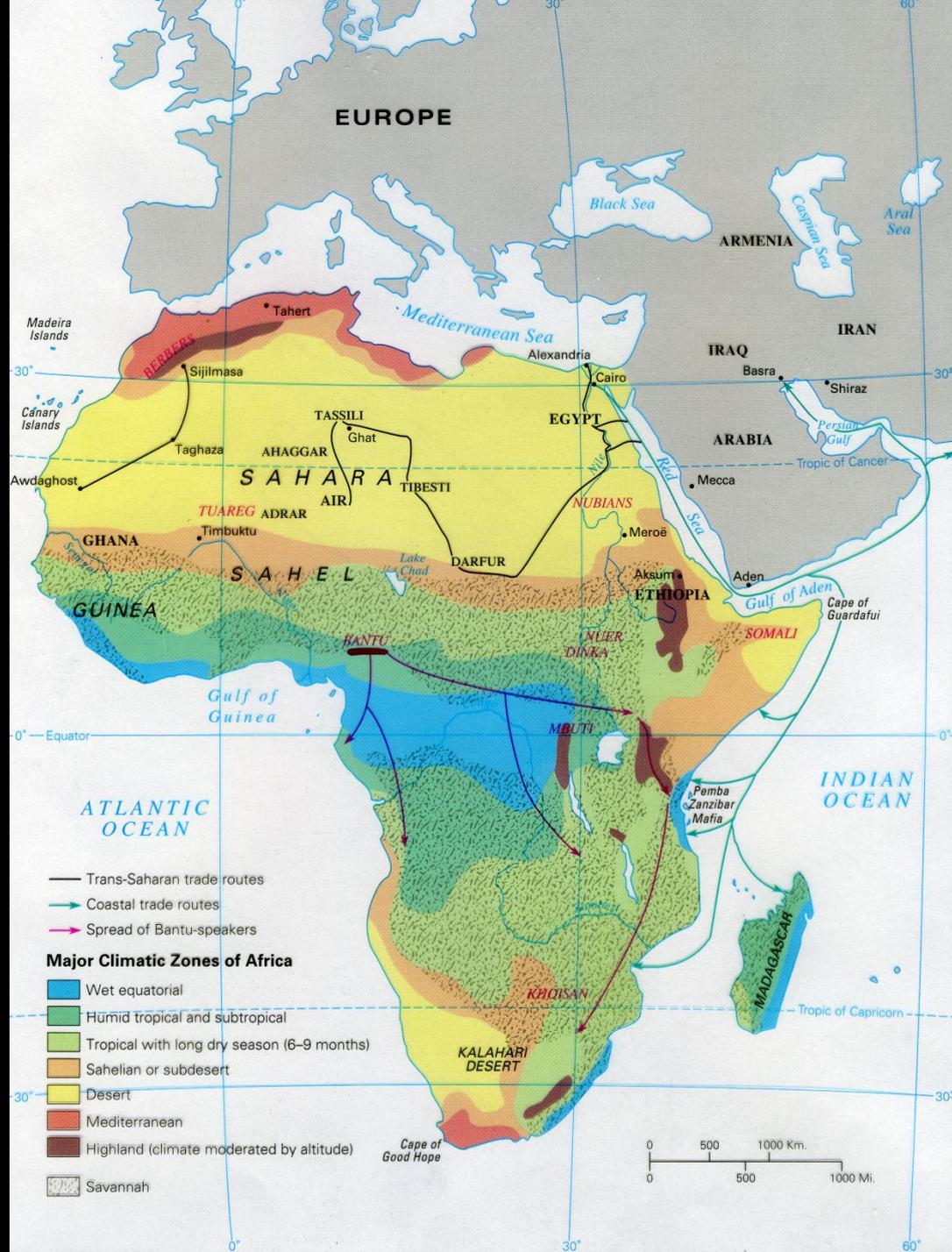
Introductory questions:

- What type of signs would we find that would show that a group of people migrated through an area?

Inquiry Questions

- 1. Identify key features of the geography of the Trans-Saharan trade networks including major geographic features, termini, and entrepots.
- 2. Compare the development of the Trans-Saharan trade routes with the development of the Indian Ocean trade network
- 3. Explain the role of technology in the Trans-Saharan trade routes.





EUROPE

Black Sea

ARMENIA

Caspian Sea

Aral Sea

Mediterranean Sea

IRAQ

IRAN

Madeira Islands

Canary Islands

Tahert

Alexandria

Cairo

Basra

Shiraz

30°

30°

TASSILI

Ghat

EGYPT

ARABIA

Awdaghost

Taghaza

AHAGGAR

AIR

TIBESTI

NUBIANS

Mecca

Persian Gulf

TUAREG

ADRAR

AIR

Meroë

GHANA

GUINEA

Timbuktu

Lake Chad

DARFUR

ETHIOPIA

Aden

Gulf of Aden

0°—Equator

0°

ATLANTIC OCEAN

INDIAN OCEAN

Gulf of Guinea

Cape of Guardafui

BANTU

AKSUM

SOMALI

NUER

DINKA

MBUTI

Pemba

Zanzibar

Mafia

MADAGASCAR

Tropic of Capricorn

KALAHARI DESERT

KHARISAN

Cape of Good Hope

30°

30°

30°

60°

Origins of Saharan Culture

- Since African cultures outside of Egypt and Before the spread of Islam were *oral cultures*, we don't have historical documents to work with until later eras
- African history was transmitted by specialists: poet-historians called Griots
- We have no legends, etc. from the earliest era (before the climatic shift), so we rely on archaeological finds

Saharan Rock Art

- Starts out complex and gets simpler as time goes on
- Show a progressive (?) change in animal species
- Cannot be carbon or potassium-argon dated

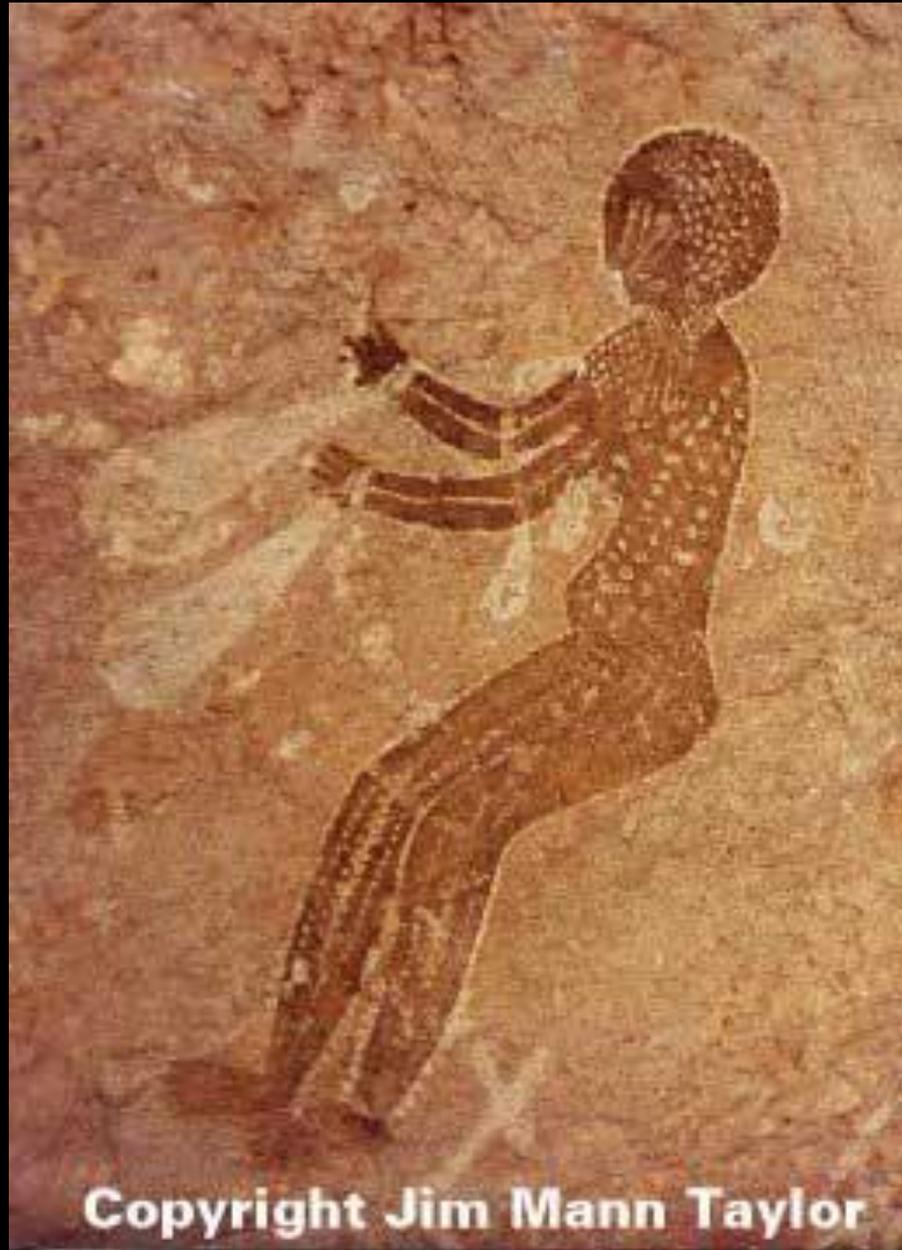
Saharan Environment after climatic changes



Mountainous regions on northern and southern borders



Bubolus Period: 6000-4000BCE



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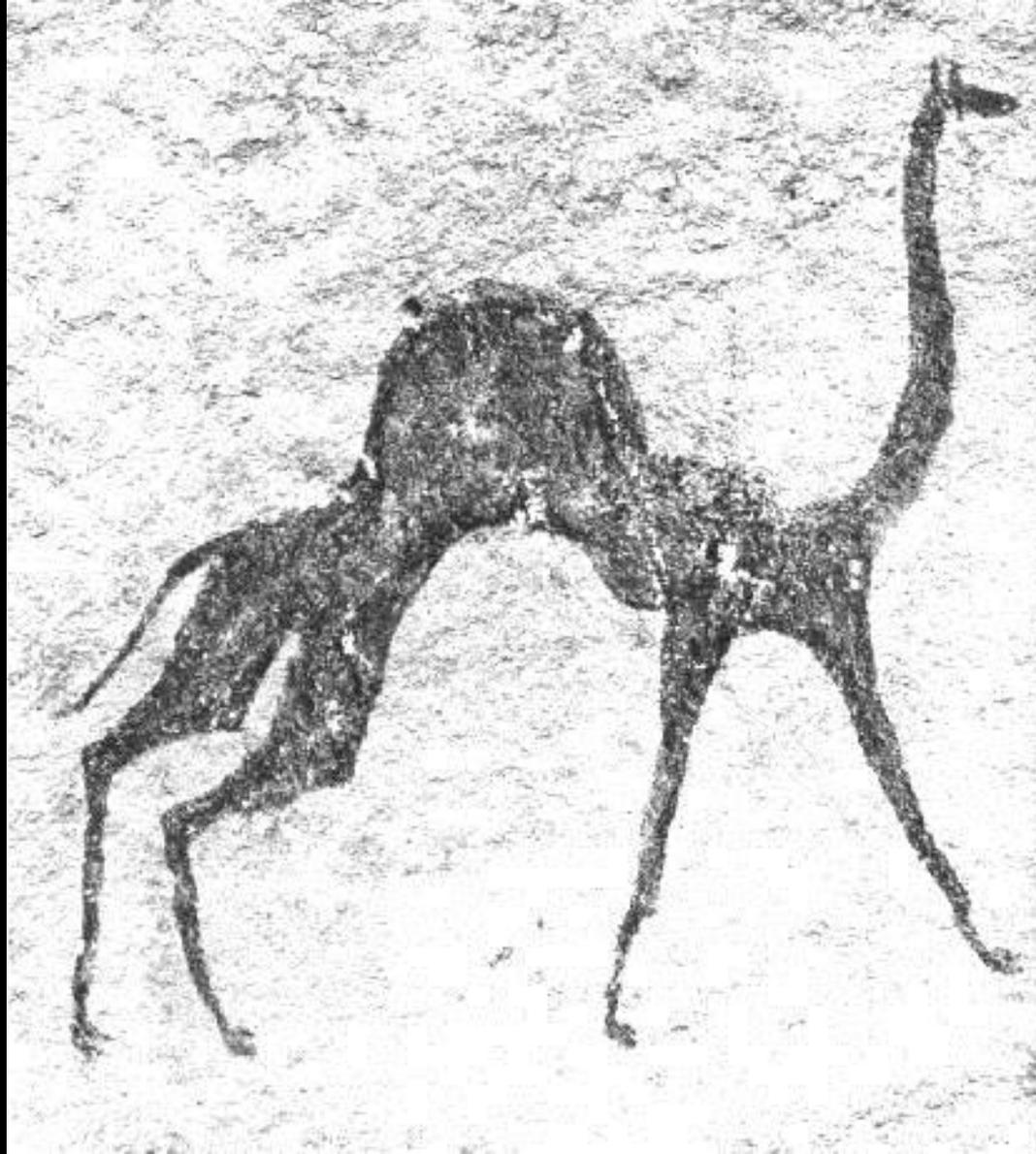
Cattle Period: 4000 -- 2000 BCE





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Horse Period/Camel Period: From 1200 BCE



Charioteer



Origins of chariots uncertain

- Not appropriate vehicles for the desert
- Fleeing Minoans?

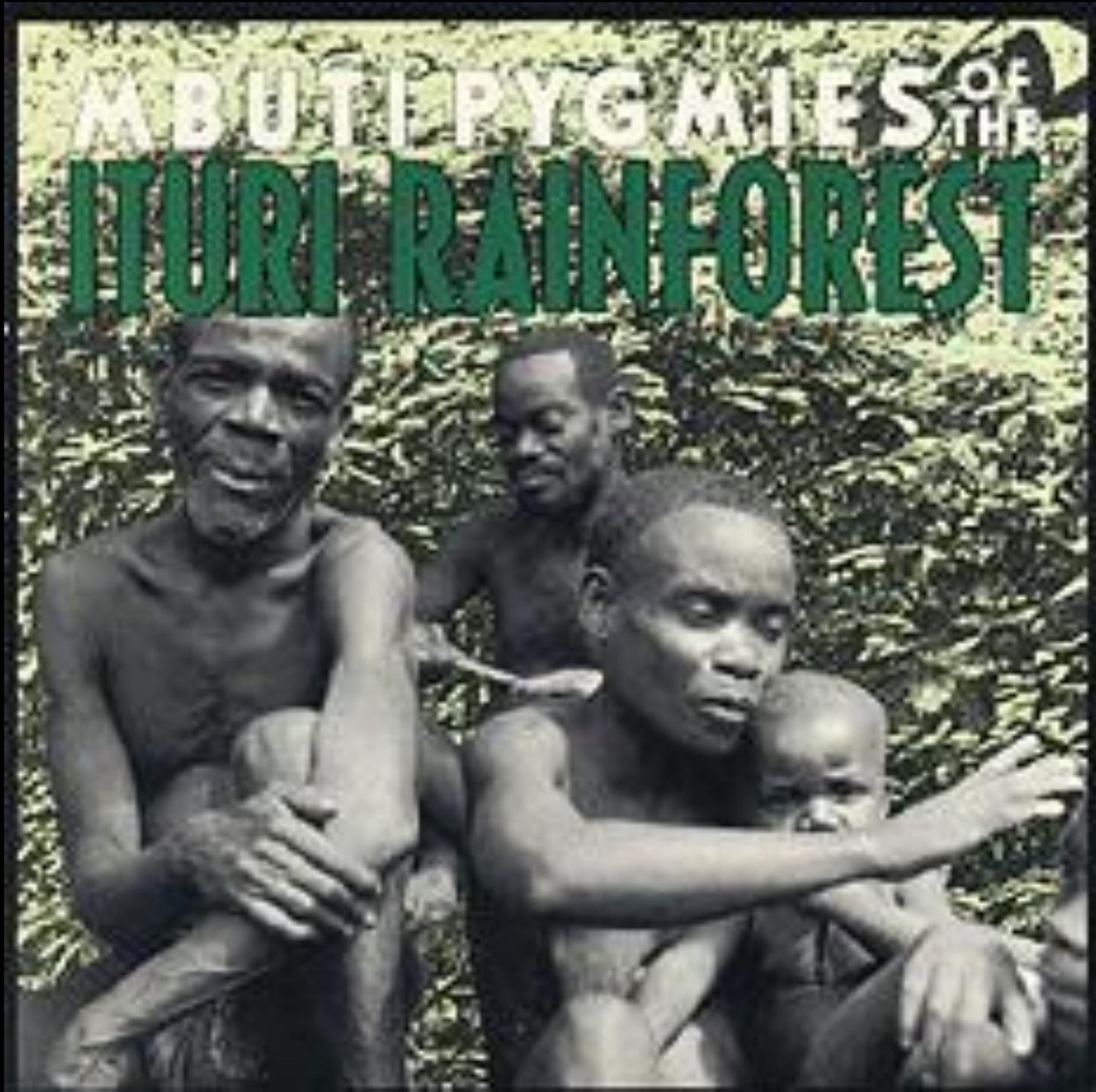
Sub-Saharan Africa is incredibly diverse

- Different ethnic groups
- Linguistic differences
- Different ways of life
- Coastal vs. In-land

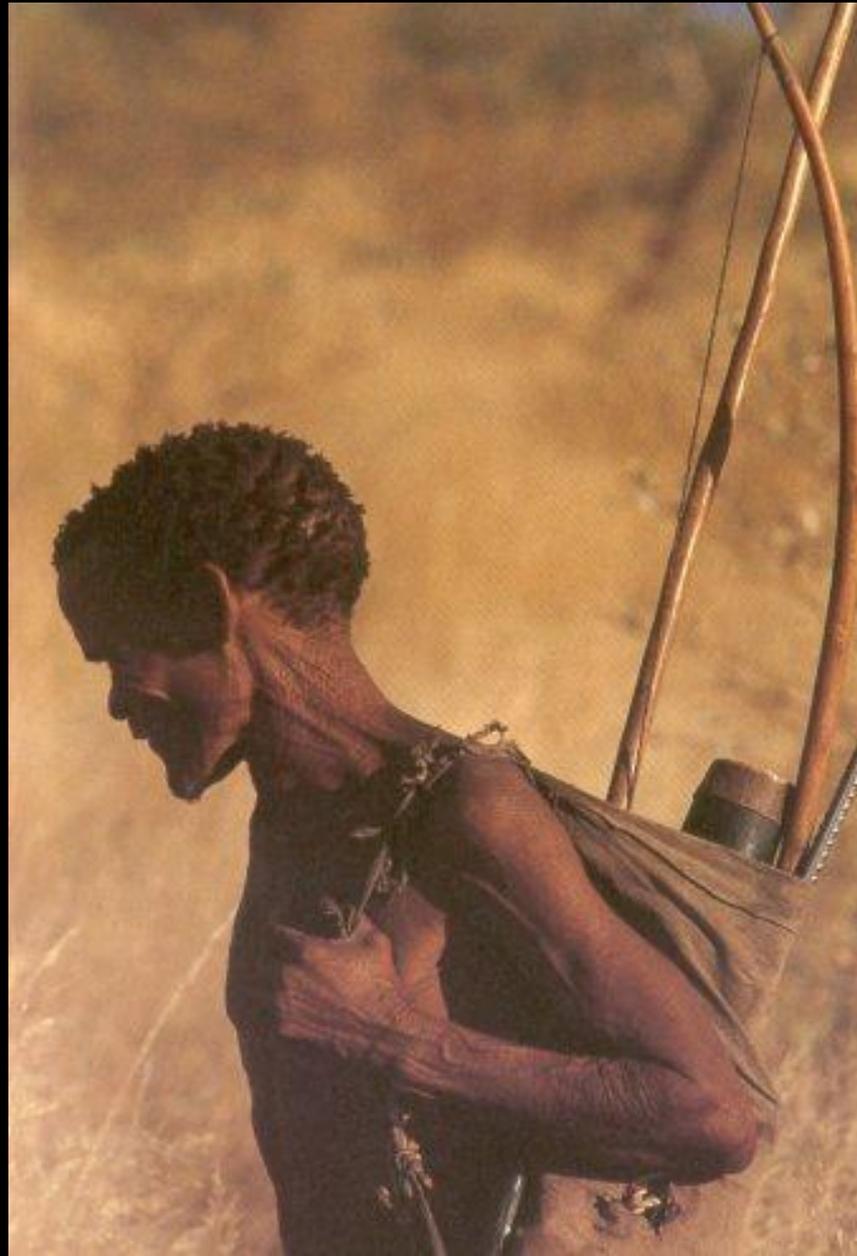
Hunter-Gatherers

- Tended to inhabit the Sahel and southern desert areas or deep forest
- Were driven out or incorporated by the Bantu
- Have a different physical appearance than Bantu
- Don't have metallurgy

Mbuti Pygmy



Khoisan



The Barabaig: present day cattle-herders of East Africa (Nilotic)



Nomadic Pastoralists





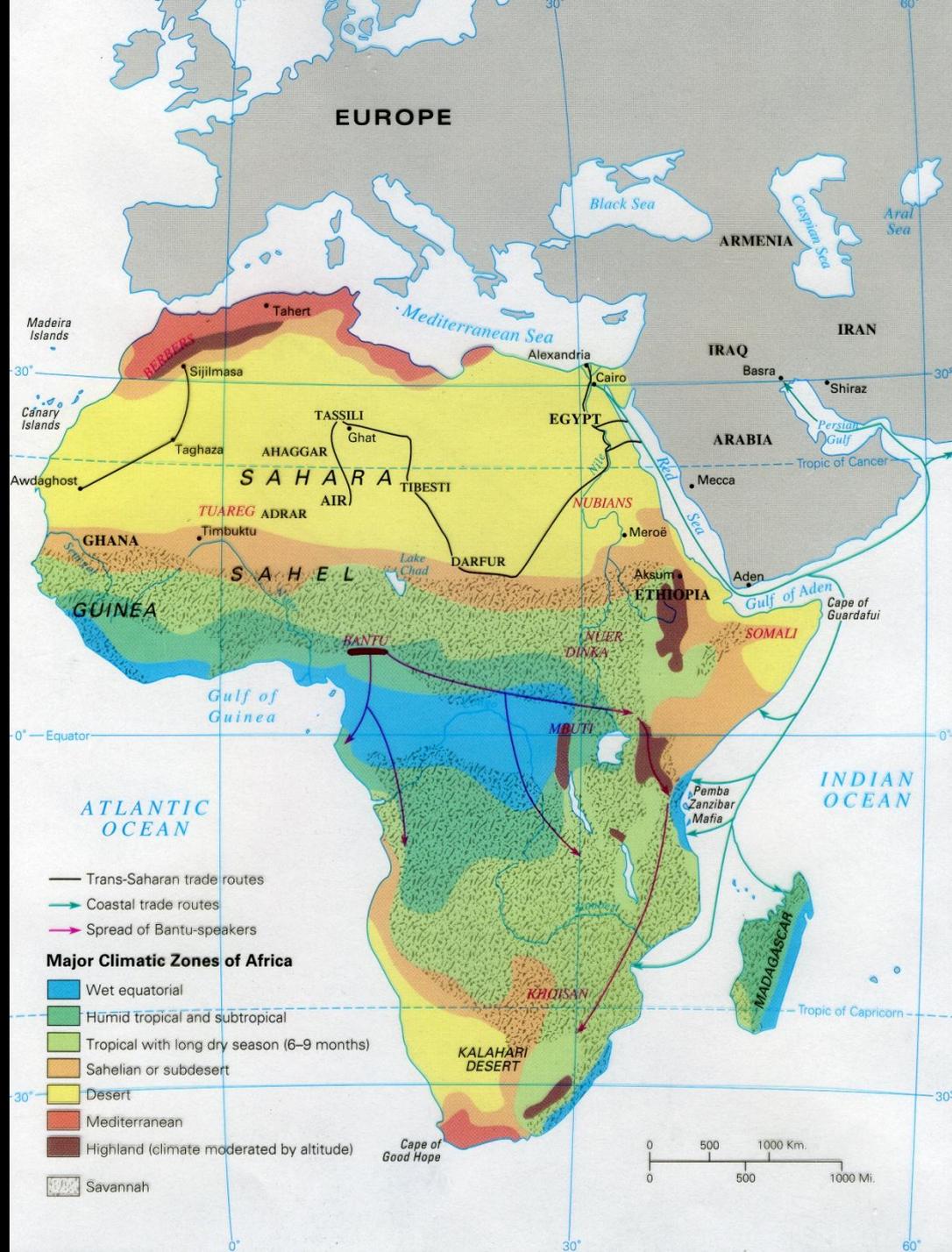
Agriculturalists

- Planted Manioc, Cassava
- Had iron metallurgy (independent invention probable)
- Spoke pro-Bantu
- Migrated out of the Saharan region into Sub-Saharan Africa
- One of the world's big MIGRATIONS

Bantu (Zulu Woman)







The Trans-Saharan trade network

- Linked up two existing networks: north and south
- Developed slowly
- Changed over time as outside powers rose and fell and new religions spread

Northern network

- Very active during the Roman Empire
- Exotic animals, slaves, and luxury goods were brought north into the Mediterranean system
- Roman style farming common – shifted to Latfundia manned by slaves toward end of 2nd century CE
- Decline of western Roman Empire brought change back to nomadic lifestyle, drop in trade

The coming of the Arabs

- With spread of Islam, Arab traders traveled across the Sahara on Camelback
- Focus of foreign trade shifted to the Middle East
- Christian Europe less appealing for trade – religious conflict

Conflict with the Berbers brings change

- Berbers interpreted Islam differently than Arabs
- Conflict lead Berbers to shift their trade south – where they discovered a “goldmine”
- Trade with south for GOLD! Salt for gold.
- Gold re-invigorated the Saharan trade network (cause-effect)
- Gold trade gave rise to kingdom of Ghana – syncretic Afro-Arabic kingdom