MIGRATIONS AND SETTLEMENT IN EAST AFRICA (1000 – 1880 A.D)

From 1000A.D, East Africa received many groups of people coming from different directions. The new invaders included:

i) Cushites and the plain/highland nilotes from Ethiopia
ii) Bantu from Niger / Congo Basin
iii) Luo (River-lake-Nilotics) from southern Sudan (Bahr-el Ghazel) iv) Ngoni from South Africa

THE BANTU MIGRATION ORIGINS

- Bantu is a linguistic word describing a group of people who speak a similar language.
- They have a root word/suffix ‘Ntu/Ndu’ meaning a person.
- They belong to the Negroid family.
- Their origins and migrations are still unclear among historians.
- Some historians believe that the Bantu came from West Africa around the Cameroon highlands.
- However, most historians believe that they came from the Katanga region in South Eastern Congo.
- Their migration was gradual and seasonal i.e. spread over a long time.
- Believed to have entered East Africa by the first millennium i.e. 1000 A.D.
- They entered East Africa under different groups and clans.
- They entered East Africa through the Western part using different routes
- The Bantu form the largest group of people in E.Africa.
- They include tribes like, Banyankole, Baganda, Bakiga, Bagishu, Chagga, Nyamwezi, Kikuyu, Luyia, and Pokomo.
- The major reason for the migration was search for fertile soils that could support Agriculture.

Causes of Bantu migrations

- Population pressure; The Bantu were forced to migrate from their cradle land to E.A because the population had increased and they were searching for settlement in new areas.
- Search for fertile lands; since the Bantu were farmers they ended up migrating to E.Africa in search of new areas with fertile soils for Agriculture.
- Internal conflicts; The Bantu migrated to E.Africa due to misunderstandings with in their communities e.g. witchcraft and cannibalism.
- Misfortunes; it is also assumed that the Bantu cradle land witnessed misfortunes that claimed many people and their animals thus the fortune tellers directed the Bantu to move to safer areas.
- Land-pressure .Due to population explosion, the pressure increased on land resulting into land conflicts and the defeated groups ended up migrating into E.Africa in search of new lands for settlement.
- Natural calamities for example famine, drought, earthquakes, floods and diseases. These forced the Bantu to search for new areas for settlement and ended up in E.Africa.
- Adventurism /Love for adventure .The youth may have wanted to explore and adventure into new lands where they could practice their skill of iron working.
Unsuitable geographical climate. The climate of the Congo forest was inhabitable and this necessitated moving of Bantu into E. Africa.

External pressure. The Bantu were constantly attacked by their neighbors and this forced them to look for new areas which were free from civil wars.

Poor leadership. Some of the Bantu migrants experienced poor leadership in their cradle land which forced them to migrate to E. Africa so as to exercise their leadership skills.

The need to export their iron working culture some people maintained that the Bantu migrate wanted to export their Iron working culture and search for market for their Iron products.

Search for water and pasture since the Bantu were animal keepers they migrated to E. A in search of new grass land and water for their animals.

The band wagon influence some of the Bantu simply moved to E. A because they saw their friends plus relatives migrating.

Course/organisation of the Bantu migrations
The Bantu entered E. A in different groups each using its own route.

The first group was the western Bantu (Interlacustrine Bantu).
- This was the first group of the Bantu to migrate into East Africa.
- They formed the largest group of the Bantu to migrate to East Africa.
- They entered East Africa through the West from the Niger-Congo basin.
- They used the route between Lake Albert and Lake Edward.
- They settled around the North West shores of Lake Victoria.
- They are believed to have migrated between (1000—1300 A.D).
- The Bantu in this group gave rise to such as Baganda, Banyoro, Batoro, and Bakiga.
- The other Bantu moved to the Eastern and Western Kenya giving birth to Bagishu and Luyia.

The central and Northern Tanzania Bantu;
- They formed the second group of the Bantu to enter E. A.
- They also entered East Africa through the West from the Niger-Congo basin.
- They used the route between L. Edward and Tanganyika.
- They formed some tribes like the Sukuma Nyamwezi, Zinza, and Gogo.
- Their migration took place between 1000—1300 A.D.

The coastal and highland Bantu.
- They are also known as the Eastern Bantu.
- They settled along the coast and highland hence the name coastal and highland Bantu.
- They are a continuation of the Central and Northern Tanzania Bantu.
- They crossed the dry Tanganyika plateau between 1000 – 1300 A.D.
- These comprise of that group of Bantu that continued with their migration and crossed the Taita hills and Mt. Kilimanjaro.
- The Chagga, Taita, Pare decided to settle around these hills permanently and came to be known as the highland Bantu.
- The Pokomo, Giryama, Nyika and Segeju moved north wards along the coast to Shungwaya.
• At Shungwaya, there was dispersal due to pressure from the Galla and Somali community.
• Due to pressure, the Nyika moved southwards along the coast.
• These came to be known as the **coastal Bantu**.
• Another group of the Eastern Bantu was forced away from Shungwaya to the Kenyan highland.
• This group included the Chuka/Kikuyu, Kamba and Embu.

**The southern Tanzania Bantu.**
• These formed the fourth group of the Bantu migration into E.A.
• Their migration took place between 1000—1300A.D.
• They entered East Africa through the West from the Niger-Congo basin.
• They used the route between Lake Malawi and Lake Tanganyika.
• They settled in Southern Tanganyika in areas such as Ruvuma, Songea and Mbeya.
• They included Hehe, Yao, Pogoro, Zaramo, Makonde, Bena, Ngindo, Gogo and Rufigi.

**The Ngoni:** Around 1840, another Bantu group moved into East Africa and these were the Nguni who came from South Africa and formed the last wave of the Bantu migration into E. Africa.

**Effects of the Bantu migrations**
• They introduced iron working and use of iron tools like hoes, pangas, and axes.
• The Bantu introduced the growing of crops on a large scale with the help of iron tools.
• Population increased in the area where the Bantu settled this also meant that there was increased food production.
• The Bantu also introduced new food crops in E.A e.g. Bananas, Beans, Yams e.t.c today many tribes still depend on these food crops.
• They introduced new farming methods e.g. mulching, shifting cultivation, irrigation.
• They introduced new languages in E.A for example Luganda, Lusoga, and Runyankole.
• The Bantu absorbed most of the tribes they met in E.A especially the Bushmen and Cushites. Some who refused to be absorbed migrated to other areas.
• The Bantu in some cases abandoned their cultures and copied those of the people they met, e.g. circumcision among the Bagishu, age set system, pastoralism.
• The Bantu displaced some people in E.A. especially those in fertile areas e.g. Ngoni displaced the Yao in their fertile lands in southern Tanzania.
• They introduced a new system of building permanent houses e.g. they built round grass thatched houses.
• There were intermarriages between the Bantu who settled along the coast with the coastal Arabs giving birth to the Swahili people.
• The Bantu introduced a new system of centralized administration in E.A which led to the formation of kingdoms e.g. Buganda, Ankole, Bunyoro, Nyamwezi e.t.c.
• The Bantu led to clashes over land with the communities that they met in E.A.

**THE LUO MIGRATION**

**Origins**
• The Luo are also referred to as the **River-lake nilotes**.
• They originated from Bahr el- Ghazel in southern Sudan.
• They are known as River – Lake Nilotes because they settled along Rivers and lakes.
• Their migration took place between 1350 - 1500 A.D.
• They entered East Africa through the Northern part of Uganda following the Albert Nile.
• They included tribes like Alur, Langi, Acholi, Japadhola and Ja-luo of Western Kenya.

Causes of the Luo migration
- Search for water and pasture, the Luo migrated from their cradle land because they lacked enough water sources and pasture for their animals.
- Population pressure: Their cradle land was over crowded and due to over grazing of their animals in Bahrel-Ghazel.
- Internal conflicts: Some Luo migrated to E.A because they were constantly included in civil wars over land and animals.
- External conflicts: There was a lot of pressure from their neighbors especially the Galla from Ethiopia which forced the Luo to migrate into E. Africa.
- The hostile climate of the southern Sudan also led to the Luo migration into E. Africa. i.e. prolonged drought.
- The Luo also had the desire to export their political culture and organization. E.g. some of them wanted to exercise their political rights.
- Band Wagon effect: i.e. some of the Luo migrants simply migrated as a result of seeing their relatives moving.
- Love for adventure: Some Luo migrants especially the youth were interested in knowing what was happening in other areas.
- Natural calamities: e.g. drought and famine also led to Luo migration into E. Africa.
- The southward movement of the Sahara desert also led to the Luo migration into E. Africa.
- Some historians attribute the Luo migration to over flooding since they lived along the banks of R Nile.
- Misfortunes and epidemics e.g. sleeping sickness and Nagana led to the Luo migration into E. Africa.
- The Luo also migrated to look for fertile areas that could support agriculture since some of them were farmers.
- The Natural aggressive tendencies of the Luo also led to their migration into E.A so as to conquer the weak people.
- The need to settle around water bodies and rivers since they did some fishing also forced them to move.

Course/organisation of the Luo migration
• The Luo left Bahr-el-Ghazel around the 15th century.
• They then moved southwards following the River Nile under their leader Olum.
• Around the 16th century, the Luo settled at Pubungu (present day Pakwach).
• Therefore Pubungu became their area of dispersal/separation.
• From Pubungu the Luo split into two groups.
• Each group was under its own ruler and moved into a different direction.
• One group led by Gipir moved westwards, crossed the Nile and settled in the Northern parts of Lake Albert.
• They intermarried with the Lendu, Okebo and Madi to form the Alur presently found in Nebbi district.
• Another group under Labongo moved southwards and settled at Pawir (Chope) in Northern Bunyoro kingdom.
• One group still under Labongo that remained at Chope, moved southwards to come into contact with the Bachwezi to form the Luo-Babito Dynasty.
• Labongo left Chope and moved Eastwards to form Acholi people presently found in Gulu and Lira.
• Another group of the Luo moved eastwards from the Pubungu through Acholi land, Lango, Teso land up to Eastern Uganda in the Budama area.
• They gave birth to the present Japadhola found in Tororo District.
• However some of the Luo continued into Western Kenya e.g. the Joka—Jok moved directly from Pubungu and settled in the Lamogi hills of the Nyanza province.
• The Jok—Omollo migrated through Busoga, Samia and Bukedi and finally settled in the Nyanza region to form the Samia of Western Kenya.
• The Jok-Owiny moved from Pubungu and settled temporarily in Budama before finally settling in Singoma Alego in the Nyanza province of Western Kenya.
• The Abasuba were the last group of the Luo to move into Kenya.
• These were refugees from Buganda, Busoga and Ssese Islands and they settled in the southern Nyanza province.

Effects of the Luo migration

- There were inter-marriages between the Luo and the local people leading to the formation of new tribes i.e. Alur, Langi Japadhola.
- The coming of the Luo led to the formation of new kingdoms which were all using centralized system of administration e.g. Buganda, Bunyoro and Ankole.
- The Luo introduced chiefdoms in Northern Uganda and western Kenya e.g. Rwothitship in Northern Uganda was a Luo creation.
- The coming of the Luo led to the final collapse of Bunyoro-Kitara Empire / Chwezi Empire and led to the formation of the Luo-Bito Dynasty.
- The Luo introduced pet names (Empaako) erg Akiiki Abwoli, Amooti, Apuuli, Atwooki etc especially in Bunyoro and Toro.
- The Luo introduced new crops in E.A e.g. millet, sorghum, groundnuts which are staple food for many tribes in Western, Northern and Eastern Uganda.
- The Luo introduced new economic activities in E.A e.g. nomadic pastoralism and also introduced the short horned cattle.
- *The population of E.A increased as a result of the Luo influx and this created conflicts over land.
- The Luo put to use what would have been idle land due to population increase.
- The Luo also developed trade within E.A because they introduced new commodities e.g. spears and arrows.
- The Luo introduced royal burial grounds for the kings e.g. in Bunyoro the jaw bones of the Omukama have to be removed before burial and buried separately.
- The Luo led to the civil wars increasing in E.A as a result of their contacts with the local people of E. Africa.
- Many people were displaced from E.A to other regions as a result of the Luo migration into Tanzania to form Karagwe kingdom.
- In Bunyoro, they introduced new items of the royal regalia e.g. royal crown, royal fire, and royal drums e.t.c
NGONI MIGRATION (1820—1860)

**Origins**
- THE Ngoni were close relatives of the Zulu and Ndwandwe people from South Africa.
- They were Bantu who belonged to the negroid race.
- They originally lived in Natal province in the south East of the Drakensburg Mountains.
- The Ngoni were Nguni speaking people.
- They are believed to have left South Africa around 1820.
- They left South Africa because of Shaka Zulu’s expansionist wars.
- This was during the Mfecane period where there was a lot of war and suffering in South Africa.
- The Ngoni were forced to flee and moved northwards.
- They left South Africa under different leaders e.g. Zwangendaba, Maputo and Zulugama.
- They moved through central Africa and finally settled in East Africa (southern Tanganyika).

**Causes of Ngoni migrations**
- Shaka created a period of wars (Mfecane) that forced many people to migrate including the Ngoni.
- Population pressure in their cradle land also led to the Ngoni migration into East Africa.
- Internal conflicts e.g. land and clan conflicts also led to the Ngoni migration.
- The Ngoni were farmers and therefore migrated in search of new lands that were fertile to support agriculture for example Ufipa plateau.
- The influence of good leaders e.g. Zulugama, Zwangendaba, Maputo etc also led to the migration of the Ngoni into East Africa.
- Love for adventure also forced the Ngoni to migrate especially the youth who wanted to explore new areas North of River Limpopo.
- Misfortunes and natural calamities e.g. diseases, floods, e.t.c also led to the Ngoni Migration.
- The ruthless army training of Shaka Zulu also forced some of the Ngoni fighters to escape to East Africa.
- The Boer invasion of South Eastern Africa from the cape made the Ngoni lose their land which forced them to move to East Africa.
- The need to export their culture also led to Ngoni migration into East Africa especially by the youth.
- Band Wagon effect i.e. some of the Ngoni Migrants moved into East Africa after seeing their relatives and friends moving.
- Search for water and pasture since the Ngoni kept animals they migrated into East Africa in search of fresh pastures and water for their animals.

**Course of the Ngoni migrations**
- The Ngoni left South Africa in two (2) distinct groups.
- They left around 1820 and each group took a different direction.
- The first and biggest group was led by chief Zwangendaba.
- They moved through central Africa crossed R. Zambezi, traveled through Malawi and finally settled around Ufipa were they destroyed the small settlements.
- The second and smaller group was led by chief Maputo.
- It moved through Mozambique, Eastern Malawi and finally settled around Songea among the Yao.
- This group was known as the Maseko Ngoni.
• Around 1848, Zwangendaba died and his group split into 5 small groups.
• Three of these groups went back to central Africa settling in present day Malawi and Zambia.
• The two remaining groups settled permanently in Tanganyika and these were the Tuta and Gwangara Ngoni.
• The Tuta Ngoni moved northwards to the lands of the Holoholo where they were defeated.
• They continued up to Nyamwezi land in 1850 where they captured a young Mirambo.
• The Gwangara Ngoni led by Zulugama moved East wards destroying the Hehe.
• By 1860, they had reached Songea where they clashed with the Maseko Ngoni whom they defeated and forced them to flee.
• The defeated Maseko Ngoni split into two groups.
• One group under chief Maputo moved southwards crossed river Ruvuma and finally settled in Mozambique.
• The other group fled northwards to Morogoro and these came to be known as the Mbuga Ngoni.
• During their movements the Ngoni always captured people.
• The boys were absorbed into their army and girls were married off and this swelled their number.

**Reasons why the Ngoni were successful against the people of E.Africa**

- They had a strong army e.g. they always recruited captured boys into their army which strengthened their army.
- The Ngoni had superior military organization which they had copied from Shaka.
- Their army was divided into battalions or regiments called Impis for effectiveness in battle.
- The Ngoni always used Guerilla tactics and this would scare other societies which easily gave up.
- The Ngoni had superior weapons e.g. the short stabbing spear (Assegai) and they had shields.
- They had superior tactics of fighting e.g. they surrounded the enemy using the cow-horn method.
- Ngoni fighters were professionals who had received a lot of military training and were always free from duties at home.
- The Ngoni were determined to remain in East Africa because they feared to go back to South Africa in case of defeat.
- The Ngoni invaders were fully united under their leaders and this helped them to defeat the East African societies with a lot of ease.
- The Ngoni fighters had a lot of experience in warfare because they had participated in large scale wars during their stay in South Africa.
- The Ngoni always used surprise attacks e.g. at night and on market days hence always caught their enemies unaware.
- The East African societies were disunited and couldn’t offer any support to their neighbours against the Ngoni.
- E.African societies had already been weakened by slave trade which had claimed all the strong men.
- East Africa had also been weakened by attacks from Segeju and Zimba man eaters who also reduced on the population.
Ngoni fighters were never affected by famine because they always looted for food wherever they passed.
Ngoni also used the scorched Earth policy on those that tried to resist them e.g. Burning villages, food stores, and huts and scared others who simply gave in without a fight.
Most of the Ngoni enemies were weak and small societies that were disorganized and therefore could not challenge the Ngoni military might.
The East African societies had poor economies that could not sustain the fights against the Ngoni. The East Africans had inferior weapons that could not compete with those of the Ngoni.

Effects of the Ngoni Migration
- Their migration created a period of wars in areas that were previously peaceful e.g. the Ufipa communities were destroyed and devastated.
- The Ngoni migration resulted into the spread of epidemic diseases in the southern and central Tanganyika e.g. smallpox and Malaria.
- Their migration created a new generation of war lords and leaders e.g. Nyungu ya mawe and Mirambo.
- There was increase in slave trade because of the Ngoni confusion, Chaos and disorganizations.
- The Ngoni spread their culture e.g. most people who were captured and absorbed by the Ngoni copied their Nguni language.
- The Ngoni invasion also disrupted the long distance trade caravans especially along the Southern route which was dominated by the Yao.
- The Ngoni invasion led to the formation of warrior groups e.g. The Maviti and Ruga Ruga. These were bandits who terrorized southern and central Tanganyika.
- The Ngoni invasion led to the people of southern Tanganyika losing their land to the Ngoni.
- There was population increase in Southern Tanganyika were they settled e.g. among the Yao.
- Famine broke out in many societies since no farming and harvesting could take place because of the Ngoni raids.
- Many people copied the Military tactics i.e. cow horn method and adopted their weapons e.g. Assegai (short stabbing spear) for defense.
- Their migration led to the decline of some states e.g. Bena and Sangu because they never had the capacity to resist the Ngoni aggression.
- The Ngoni raids led to heavy loss of lives especially those that tried to resist their movement e.g. the Yao.
- There was deculturalisation and detribalisation e.g. the Ngoni displaced people from their original homelands making them lose their culture.

Revision questions
1. a) Who were the Bantu? OR Describe the origins of the Bantu speaking people?
   b) What were the causes of the Bantu migrations into East Africa?

2. a) Describe the course of their migration in East Africa before 1800 A.D.
   b) What were the effects of their migration and settlement in East Africa?
3. a) Describe the movement and settlement of the Eastern Bantu into East Africa. OR Describe the movement and settlement of the Western Bantu into East Africa. 
   b) What were the effects of their invasion on the people of East Africa?

4. a) Describe the organization of the migration of the Bantu speaking people into East Africa. 
   b) How were the people of East Africa affected by their coming?

5. a) Who were the River-Lake Nilots? OR Describe the origins of the Luo speaking people. 
   b) Why did they leave their cradle land? OR What were the reasons for their migrations into East Africa?

6. a) Describe the course of the migrations of the Luo (River - Lake Nilotics) into East Africa. 
   b) What were the effects of their migration and settlement on the peoples of East Africa?

7. a) Who were the Ngoni? OR Describe the origins of the Nguni speaking people. 
   b) Why did they leave their cradle land for East Africa in the mid 19th century?

8. a) Describe the migration and distribution of the Ngoni peoples into East Africa in the mid 19th century. 
   b) What were the consequences of this invasion on Tanganyika by 1860?

9. a) Why was the Ngoni invasion of East Africa in the mid 19th century successful? 
   b) What were the results/impacts/outcomes of their migration into East Africa by 1860?

10. a) Why did East African resistance against the Ngoni fail in the mid 19th century? 
    b) How did this migration affect mainland Tanganyika by 1860?

11. a) Who were the Plain/Highland Nilotes? OR Describe the origins of the Plain/Highland Nilotes. 
    b) Why did they migrate from their cradle land?

12. a) Describe the course of the migration and settlement of the Plain/Highland Nilotes. 
    b) What impacts did their migration have on the people among whom they settled?