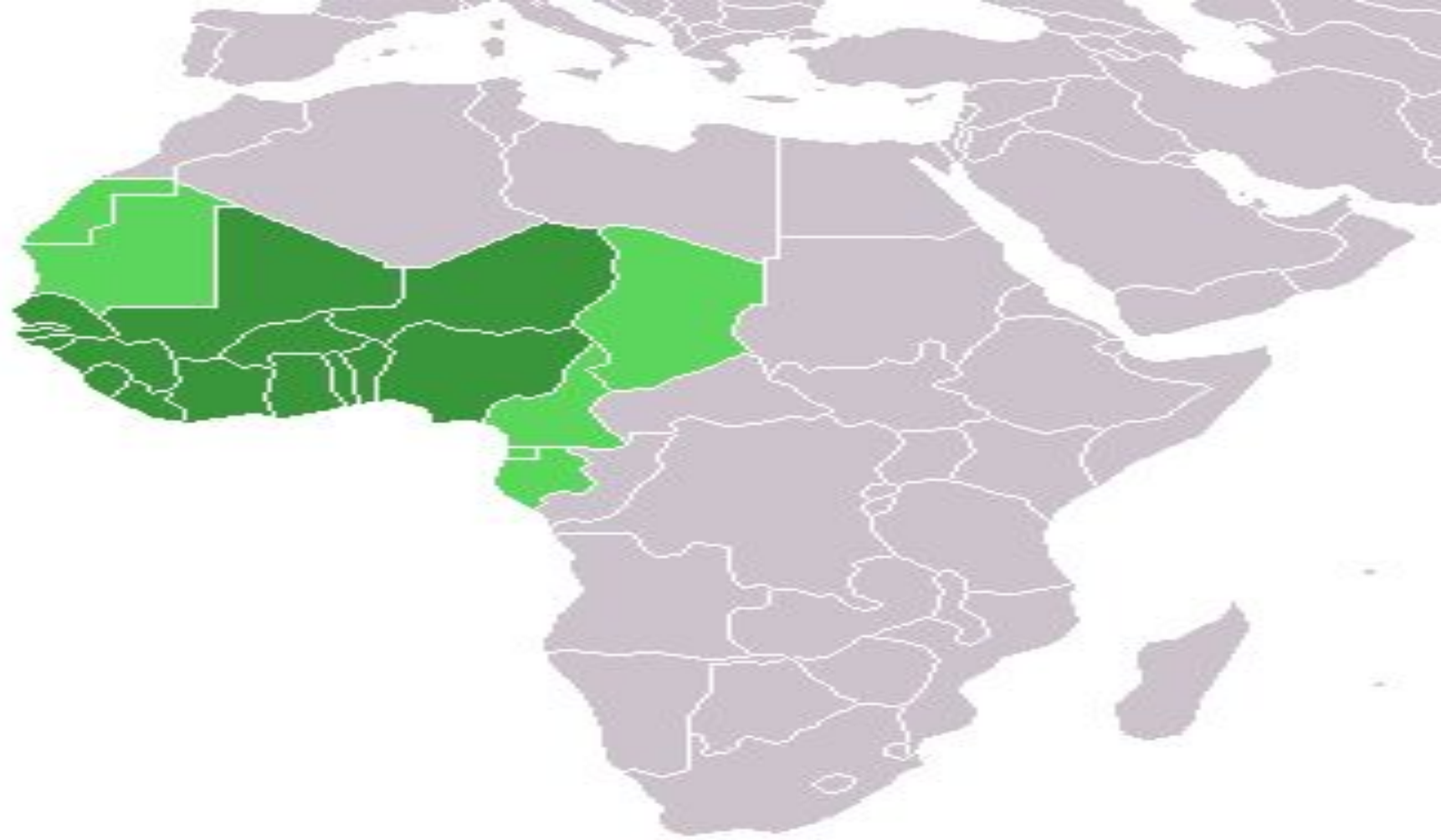




West African Region

By Rachel Bell





About West Africa

- Western Africa is the western region on the continent comprising the countries Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Mauritania, Senegal, Sierra Leone & Togo.
- West Africa is primarily a political and economic designation



Important Factors In The Development Of West Africa

- Geography and Trade geography
- They were a major factor in the development of West African societies
- Settled communities grew South of the Sahara Desert, where the land permitted farming.
- Geography also influenced trading patterns
- Communities traded with one another for items they could not produce locally



How Geography Influenced West Africa

- There were many different geographical features, so Africans were forced to trade for what they needed
- They charged fees for trading activity and used their money to expand
- More people came to live in the city, so they gave out more jobs



What was Important to the early history of West Africa ?

- The Mali Empire established in 1235 and it eventually created a centralised state including most of West Africa.
- Although the salt and gold trade continued to be important to the Mali Empire, agriculture and pastoralism was also critical
- The growing of sorghum, millet and rice were a vital function



How did West Africa Trade ?

- A profitable trade had developed by which West Africans exported gold, cotton cloth, metal ornaments, and leather goods north across the trans-saharan trade routes, in exchange for copper, horses, salt, textiles and beads.
- Later ivory, slaves and kola nuts were also traded.



Why Trade Was Important To The Development of West Africa

- Islamic traders entered the region and began to trade for gold and slaves from western Africa
- The trade routes remained an important part of the African economy throughout the middle ages until the 1500's



Key features of West African Society and Culture

- Some key features of West African society and culture is that they relied on four important key features such as trade, the help of camels, religion and slavery
- These four main features helped the kingdoms in the trans-Saharan trade but also helped them independently



How did Trade affect the rise and fall in West Africa

- West African trading empires rose then fell because people would start to be wealthy and then a drop in trading or a food loss would strike the kingdom
- Ghana was located between the sahara salt mines and gold mines near the west African coastal rainforests.
- Ghana became an important crossroads of trade.



Contemporary West African Economic Development

- West Africa is filled with many natural resources like oil, gas, wood, diamond, gold & Uranium.
- Nigeria, Mauritania, Niger, Chad, Sudan, Senegal, Conakry Guinea, Mali, Ghana and Bissau Guinea are some of the most solicited by industrial countries.
- Currently China has identified the African continent as a distinct economic and strategic partner.
- America and Europe consider Africa like a treasure ruled by opportunists who did not respect democratic rules.
- The rule of law and that free markets is being challenged by the escalating chinese influence in Africa and Nigeria in particular.



China's relation with West Africa

- China's contemporary engagement with Africa goes back to the founding of modern China in 1949.
- In the aftermath of the 1955 Bandung Conference, China began to strengthen both political and economic ties with Africa.
- As China's economy has become more integrated into global markets, its interest and involvement in international affairs particularly west Africa has risen accordingly, resulting in the need for China to develop an articulated and non-contradictory foreign policy to support and protect its growing domestic economy and its economic interest abroad



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