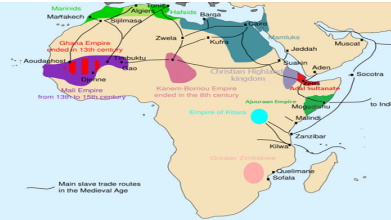


# Unit 6



## AFRICA AND THE OUTSIDE WORLD 1500- 1880s

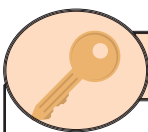
### Unit Introduction

This unit presents Africa's (Origin, Phases and Contact with the outside world, Effects). Lastly, it explores the mainly contacts along the "Legitimate" trade, White Western and Central Settlement in South African coasts with European Africa and European Explorers and powers. It also discusses Slavery and Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Missionaries.

### Unit learning outcomes

At the end of this unit, learners will be able to:

- evaluate the nature of the relationship between African and European during the period.
- analyse the political, social and economic impacts of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade.
- examine the living conditions of African people during the Trans- Atlantic and the Trans- Saharan slave trade.
- compare and contrast the consequences of Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade on Africa
- explain the motives of white settlers in southern Africa during the period.



### Key Terms

- Voyages
- Exploration
- Legitimate commerce
- Commodities

## 6.1 Contact with the Outside World

### Lesson learning outcomes

At the end of this lesson, learners will be able to:

- outline the nature of African and European relations.

### Brainstorming

- What do you think about African relations with the rest of the world?

Portugal was the European country that established early contacts with the coastal regions of West Africa. When the Portuguese first sailed out on their voyages of exploration along the West African coast, reaching India was their distant objective.

Their immediate goal was to bypass Muslim North Africa and gain direct access to the gold producing region of West Africa. This endowed the Portuguese with the major source of national wealth. Once this is achieved, the wealth would provide them with further exploration and discoveries.



**Map 6.1** European Relations (Portuguese and Spaniards) with Africa in the coastal regions, (source: slideplayer.com)

Henry the Navigator, the Portuguese prince, sponsored Portuguese exploration of Africa mainly driven by two desires: spreading Christianity and establishing Africa as a mainstay of Christianity against the Ottoman Empire. Portugal also had an objective to create commercial links with Africa.

In addition, the conquest of territory in Africa also meant that the Portuguese could use African gold to finance travel along this new trade route. Getting safe passage through Africa could also open the entire Indian Ocean to direct Portuguese trade.

**Ceuta-** was the first step forward in Portuguese expansion across the Atlantic coast in 1415. King João, I (John I) and his sons organised an expedition to conquer Ceuta that lay across the Straits of Gibraltar on the coast of North Africa, specifically in today's Morocco. The Portuguese stayed in this part of Morocco from 1415 to 1769, a long period of constant war, since the Portuguese presence was not accepted.

Finally, in 1432, the Portuguese reached Cape Bajador, further southwest of Ceuta in Morocco, on the shores of the Atlantic Coast. Similarly, a Portuguese explorer named Nuno Trisatao reached Cape Blanc, further south along the Atlantic coast, in 1441.

**Senegambia** - Portuguese arrived on the shores of Sierra Leon in 1460 and stayed there until their gradual decline as leaders in world exploration in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. In West Africa, Senegambia was one of the earliest regions affected by European trade. Senegambia state also provided enslaved people for European purchase for roughly a century; perhaps a third of all enslaved Africans exported during the sixteenth Century came from Senegambia.

**Gold Coast:** In the course of exploration of the west coast of Africa, the Portuguese encountered various African kingdoms. One of such kingdoms was Ghana (Gold Coast). Some controlled substantial deposits of gold in the soil, salt, enslaved people, and others. In 1482, the Portuguese built their first permanent trading post known as the Castle of Elmina on the western coast of present-day Ghana.

This fortress was constructed to protect Portuguese trade from European competitors, and hostile Africans still stand. However, the intensive contact of the Gold Coast with Europeans also led to the importation. In addition, it spread American crops, notably maize and cassava.

The success of these crops in West and Central Africa is believed to have contributed to population growth in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, other European powers soon followed in its footsteps; adventurers such as Dutch, English, and the French joined the competition

for overseas trade. However, the principal early struggle was between the Dutch and the Portuguese. With the loss of Elmina in 1642 to the Dutch, the Portuguese left the Gold Coast permanently.

### Activity 6.1



1. Why did Henry bother to give financial and material support to the Portuguese voyagers?

## 6.2 Slavery

### Lesson learning outcomes

At the end of this lesson, learners will be able to:

- explain the factors that led to the development and decline of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade.
- describe the economic activities of Africans during the Trans-Atlantic and slave trade period.
- explain how the slave trade affected the African economy.
- analyse the living conditions of African people during the Trans- Atlantic and the Trans- Saharan slave trade.
- sketch a map to indicate the Trans- Atlantic and the Trans- Saharan trade routes.
- explain the political and economic influences of other continents on Africa during the period.
- criticise the crime against humanity committed during the slave trade.

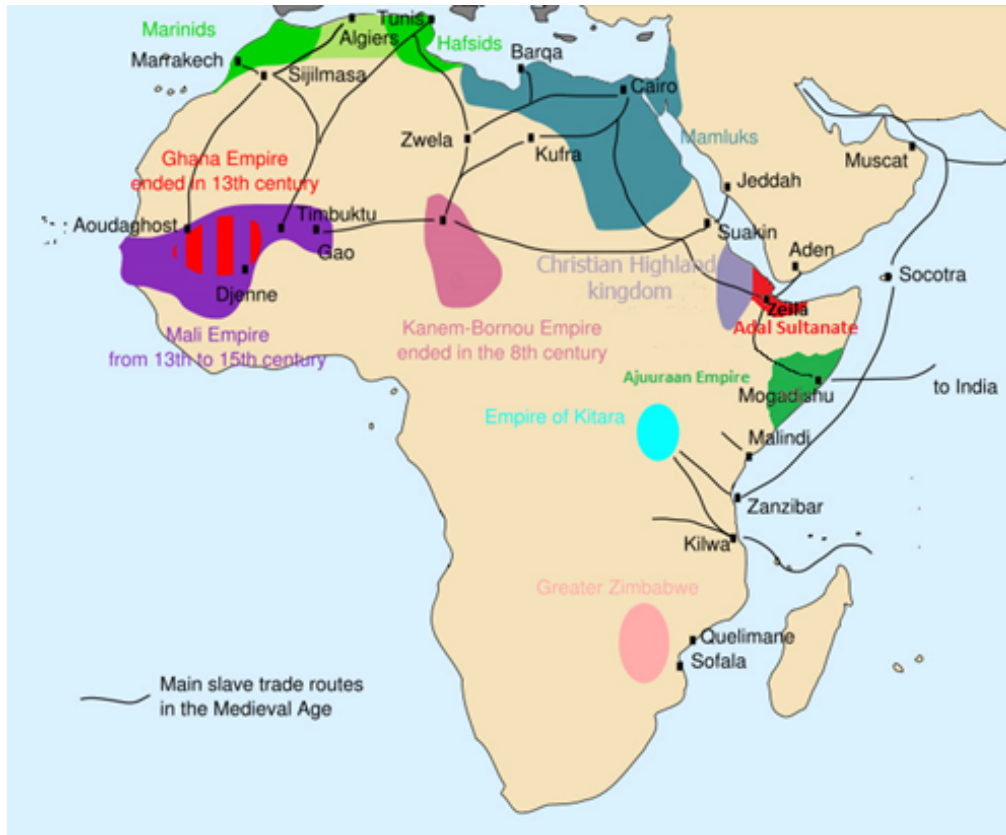
### Brainstorming

- What is slavery and slave trade?

Traffic in slaves was not new. It has a long history in Africa, Europe and Asia. In the fifteenth century, it continued at a fairly steady level. The primary market for enslaved Africans was Southwest Asia, where most enslaved people were used as domestic servants. Captives from Nubia were transported down the Nile to Egypt in ancient Pharaonic times. Some were also transported across the Sahara to North Africa in Roman times. In contrast, others were sent out of northeast Africa to labour in the Persian Gulf and Indian states. All of these numbers seem small when compared with the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade.

Most often, slavery is manifested in the lives of those categorised as servants, serfs, apprentices, or slaves. For example, in the ancient civilisations of Europe, Asia and Africa, persons defined as slaves were distinct social groups whose lives were routinely controlled by others. The expansion of long-distance trade and many of the early kings of Mali and Songhai and other states promoted the use of slave labour in agriculture.

In Benin's West- African state, for example, large numbers of slaves were used in agriculture. These slaves, who were the private property of their owners, were symbolized wealth and prosperity.



**Map 6.2** Trans Saharan Slave Trade, (source: en.wikipedia.org)

Therefore, the expansion of the slave market in the century before the transatlantic trade took off was as much a function of local politics as it was of economics. It is important to note that long before the transatlantic slave trade, enslaved Africans were being sold across the Sahara and transported to the Mediterranean by land and sea routes to Asia Minor.



## Activity 6.2



### 1. Why did Africans engage in slave trade?

#### • Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade

The discovery of America in 1492 laid the background for the beginning of the Atlantic slave trade. Europeans established in America large plantations and minefields. Then they needed labourers to work on the plantations and gold mines.



**Figure 6.1** Slaves at work on sugar plantation in the West Indies, (adopted from Kevin Shillington, 1995:179)

These Europeans enslaved the Native American Indians, whom they called Red Indians. Nevertheless, most American Indians died of diseases imported from Europeans and harsh treatment. So, the Portuguese and the Spaniards began transporting white slaves from Europe. However, the white enslaved people were unable to resist the hardships of

the tropical climate. Thus, the Europeans began transporting the black people from West Africa as slaves from the fifteenth century to the opening of the 19<sup>th</sup> century AD.



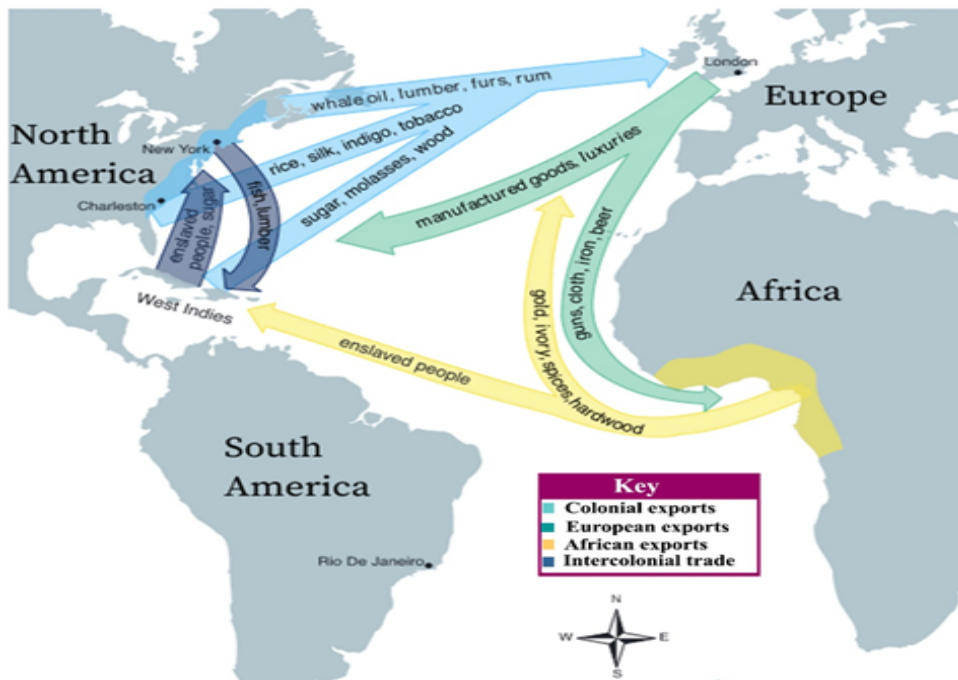
**Figure 6.2** Captives waiting for transportation, (adopted from Kevin Shillington, 1995:176)

The transatlantic slave trade is also called triangular trade, for it connected three continents: Africa, America and Europe. Africa is the source of human labour. Slaves were taken to America and the Caribbean regions. With the African slave labour, they produced sugarcane, tobacco, coffee and the like. The raw materials produced on American plantations were exported to Europe, where they were manufactured as finished products for sale. Such goods as cotton, alcoholic drinks, firearms and metal wares were taken from Western Europe to Africa. These goods were exchanged for slaves. So, the whole process formed the triangular shape.

Then, the enslaved Africans were taken across the Atlantic to the Americas. There, they were sold to the plantation owners in exchange for sugar, tobacco and other products. Finally, these goods were taken back to Europe and sold at high prices.

The transatlantic slave trade began in West Africa within three important circumstances.

- The first was the fragmentation of large, indigenous political states (Ghana, Mali and Songhai).
- The second was the region's growing importance as a source of slaves.
- The third was the endemic conflict between the small coastal states in the region and their willingness to cooperate with European traders in exchanging slaves for arms.



**Map 6.3** Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, (source: Khan Academy)

The Atlantic slave trade passed through three different phases. The first phase was known as the Piratic slave trade. It began in the fifteenth century and continued up to the 1580s. In this phase, the traders were individual merchants, adventurers, navigators or common sea robbers. The second phase was known as the monopolistic slave trade. It began in the 1580s. In this phase, the trade was conducted by monopolistic slave-trading companies. These companies were officially supported by their governments. Armed forces also supported them. At this stage, the slave-hunting ground was widened, the volume of trade increased, and the companies collected huge profits. The second phase was the Triangular Trade because the trade connected three continents. The third phase was known as free trade. It began in the 1690s. In this phase, several individual traders joined the slave trade. There was fierce competition between the individual traders and the former companies.

The transatlantic slave trade impacted Africa in many ways: Economically, it under-



mined African craft technology and agriculture. In addition, the slave trade reallocated labour away from agriculture and industrial work. As a result, the African working force (youngsters) was exported to America and the Caribbean regions. In contrast, the Triangular trade helped the west European nations to accumulate a huge amount of wealth. The accumulated wealth led to the industrialization of Western Europe in the nineteenth century.

Politically, it threw black Africa into confusion and insecurity. It also discouraged political development and encouraged violence. Constant wars, in turn, destroyed African states. Socially, the slave trade undermined the morality and dignity of Africans. The Triangular trade caused great human suffering and horrors on Africans. Enslaved people were never treated as human beings but as properties. The Triangular trade also depopulated Africa of its productive young men and women. It also had tragic effects on the lives of individual victims and their families. Historical records indicate that more than 12 million native Africans were enslaved and deported out of the African continent.

### Activity 6.3



1. Which part of Africa was the greatest source of slaves? Why?

## 6.3 The “Legitimate” Trade

### Lesson learning outcomes

At the end of this lesson, learners will be able to:

- explain the political and economic influences of other continents on Africa during the period.

### Brainstorming

- What are legitimacy and legitimate trade?

For two or three centuries, the slave trade dominated trade along the West African coast. It disrupted and distorted African developments. Local agricultural production was often disrupted by violence and warfare. Thus, as Europeans gradually outlawed the slave trade, they found West Africa the fertile field for “legitimate commerce”. The term “legitimate trade” refers to the trade-in commodities between Africans and the European merchants. It was a trade where African raw materials, especially cash crops, were exchanged for European goods.

During the first half of the 19th century, a range of West African commodities supplanted the export of captives. Such commodities included palm produce, rubber, cotton, skin, cocoa and others.

For example, exports included gum Arabic from Senegal, groundnuts from Guinea and palm oil from most coastal forest zones. These products were in high demand in Europe due to the industrial revolution.

Thus, the development of West Africa's export trade in raw materials did not provide African states with any real opportunities to develop their economic strength and Independence.

Generally, legitimate trade was the trade conducted after the abolition of the slave trade in Africa. People now started the free trading system in which Africans had to produce for their own. However, the people from abroad came and traded the crops and other resources of Africa. The following were the effect of legitimate trade in Africa:

- It led to the intensive exploitation of African natural resources such as minerals crops.
- It stimulated the colonialism of the African continent.
- The spread of Christianity religion led to an unequal trading system.

### Activity 6.4



1. What were the consequences of "legitimate" commerce on Africa?

## 6.4 The White Settlement in South Africa

### Lesson learning outcomes

At the end of this lesson, learners will be able to:

- explain the motives of white settlers in south Africa during the period.

### Brainstorming

- What do you know about white settlers in Southern Africa?

## The Boers settlement in South Africa

In 1652, the Dutch trading company established a tiny permanent settlement on the southern shores of South Africa to regulate the trade with the Khoisan. In 1657, Van Riebeck, the company commander, released some of the soldiers from their contracts and allowed them to set up their own business as Boers (farmers). The Boers were provided with enslaved West Africans. The Boers' settlement on Khoisan grazing land directly led to the first Khoi-Dutch war in 1659. In this violent armed conflict, the Khoisan managed to unite and drove the Boers back to their former position at the coast. In the Second Khoi-Dutch war of 1673-77, the natives could not win over the Dutch.

The Khoisan also withdrew into the interior, beyond the boundaries of the Boers colony. Several groups of Khoisan were able to achieve some degree of independence by moving extreme north and south of the Orange River. Losing their economic and political independence to the Boers, the Khoisan agreed to collaborate and work for the Boers as herdsmen and hunters. They, therefore, retained some access to land. Orphaned Khoisan children were an additional source of labour for the Boers.

As a result of the Dutch success, the Khoisan lost their material resources, political rights, language, and other aspects of their cultural identity. As a result, they began to adopt the Dutch language and culture. They even served as Boer commanders against their people and the Xhosa in some cases.

Through contacts and minor conflicts in the first decade of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the actual violence between the Xhosa and the trek Boers began as the settlers moved into the fertile grazing land of Zuurveld in the 1770s. The Xhosa had more population than the Khoisan and a closely-knit social organisation. They were, therefore, a formidable opposition to the colonists. The violent conflicts between the Trek Boers and the Xhosa began in 1779 and continued for a century. It is estimated that nine frontier wars took place during this time. Nevertheless, coming from a strong warrior tradition, the Xhosa held onto most of Zuurveld until the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

In 1795, the British government seized the Cape Colony from the Dutch settlers for strategic purposes. While the Dutch occupied the Cape with establishing a fresh station for their crew members, the British occupied it to prevent its falling to the hands of the French.

The occupation of the Cape by the British caused resulted in the 1830s and 1840s great movement of the Dutch-speaking colonists and Boers northwards.



**Map 6.4** White Settlers in South Africa, (adopted from Facing History)

From 1818-19, the British also cleared the Xhosa from the Zuurveld area and pushed them further back beyond the Keiskama River. The strength of the white settlers in the newly conquered area of the Xhosa grew in 1829 with the settlement of 500 British immigrants. In the sixth war (1834-35), the British pushed the Xhosa west of the Kei River. However, to the disgust of the Boers, the British handed back the territory between Keiskama and Kei Rivers to the Xhosa and abolished slavery in its cape colony. The Boers, who used slave labour, were irritated by the British policy, which favoured the natives.

The Boers left the cape area in 1835 and moved to the north in what is known as the Great trek for the following reasons:

- as a reaction to the law that gave native Africans and the coloured freedom
- as a sign of opposition to the new ideas of equality between blacks and whites.

In the late 1830s, several thousand Boer families and their servants trekked northwards from the Eastern Cape.

## Activity 6.5



1. What were the motives of the white settlers in South Africa?

## 6.5 European Explorers and Missionaries

### Lesson learning outcomes

At the end of this lesson, learners will be able to:

- describe the political and economic influences of other continents on Africa during the period.

### Brainstorming

- Explain what you remember from your lower grades about European explorers and missionaries in Africa.

Despite centuries of coastal trading contacts, Europeans were still incredibly ignorant of

- Africa,
- its peoples,
- and history.

The movement for the abolition of the slave trade provided the stimulus for a revival of European interest in Africa. Between the 1780s and 1870s, many European explorers travelled to the heart of Africa in an attempt to rectify their ignorance of the continent.

European explorers to Africa, before the 1850s, were usually portrayed by historians as motivated by a spirit of pure, unbiased and scientific enquiry. Many of them might have seen themselves in that light. Others were attracted by the sense of adventure, desire for fame or both. However, the motive of those who financed the journeys praised their discoveries and devotedly read their books were the chance of more significant trading profit in the future. Of course, much of Africa remained to be mapped, but European explorers were generally direct agents of colonial expansion.

Roman Catholic Christian missionaries from Portugal closely followed the early Portuguese coastal penetration of tropical Africa. In the late 15<sup>th</sup> and early 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, Catholic missionaries were sent to Africa to convert several African rulers. These rulers, it was hoped, would become valuable allies of the Portuguese. Nevertheless, when African rulers realized the strong political motivation behind their presence, the



missionaries' initiative was doomed to fail. Portuguese missionaries were expelled or even killed in one African state after another. This was mainly because they and their handful of converts offered a direct challenge to the established political and religious order.

African rulers were interested in contact with Europeans, but they wanted new trading openings, technical assistance and firearms. They did not want fresh ideas that threatened the traditional religious basis of their authority. As a result, Portuguese missionaries made little headway in Benin. Their attempt to convert the Oba (ruler of Edo People of Benin) was abandoned in the early 16th century. Greater success was achieved in Kongo, where a Christian convert became king in 1506.

In Ethiopia, missionaries of the newly founded Jesuit order followed hot on the heels of Portuguese military assistance to Galadewos in the early 1540s. However, they had little success in converting Ethiopian Orthodox Christian to the Roman Catholic version of the faith. Then, in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century, they were expelled for political interference.

Looking back from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, it was clear that European Christianity, as a vehicle for religious and cultural change, had virtually no impact on the peoples of Sub-Saharan Africa. Nevertheless, during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, many European Christian societies sent their missionaries to Africa. Among them, the most important were the British based Anglican Church Missionary Society. It was prominent in Sierra Leone; the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society and the London Missionary Society. It had bases and schools along the West African coastal region; the London Missionary Society initially worked mainly in South Africa. Protestant missions also came from France, Germany, Holland and the United States. French Catholic mission followed later in the century.

### Activity 6.6

1. What were the motives of the European Explorers in Africa?



## Unit Summary



Portugal was the European country that established early contacts with the coastal regions of West Africa. When the Portuguese first sailed out on their voyages of exploration along the West African coast, reaching India was their distant objective.

Their immediate goal was to bypass Muslim North Africa and gain direct access to the gold producing region of West Africa. The transatlantic slave trade began within three important circumstances in West Africa.

- The first was the fragmentation of large, indigenous political states, particularly those with large armies such as Ghana, Mali and Songhai.
- The second was the region's growing importance as a source of enslaved people for the caravan traffic across the Sahara into the Mediterranean and Levant.
- The third was the conflict between the small coastal states in the region and their willingness to cooperate with European traders in exchanging slaves for arms.

Finally, however, Europeans gradually outlawed the slave trade; they found West Africa the fertile field for "legitimate commerce".

In 1652, the Dutch trading company established a tiny permanent settlement on the southern shores of South Africa.

The purpose was to regulate the trade with the Khoisan and have fresh fruit and vegetables for their ships. They also wanted to provide a hospital for sick sailors; later, this paved the way for white settlement in South Africa.

Roman Catholic Christian missionaries from Portugal closely followed the early Portuguese coastal penetration of tropical Africa. In the late 15<sup>th</sup> and early 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, Catholic missionaries were sent to Africa to convert many African rulers. In several cases, Christian missionaries played a significant role in promoting and shaping the advent of European colonialism.

## Unit Review Questionns



### Part I: Choose the correct answer from the given alternatives.

1. What was the Triangular Trade?
  - A. The journey made by slave ships
  - B. A slave ships
  - C. The importing of goods from Africa to Britain
  - D. A slave trade connecting three continents
2. What did slave ships carry to Africa?
  - A. African slaves
  - B. Cloth and guns
  - C. British slave
  - D. Raw materials
3. What goods did slave ships carry on their way from America to Britain?
  - A. Weapons
  - B. Cloth
  - C. Sugar
  - D. Slave
4. How were slaves captured in Africa?
  - A. White slavers raided inland to capture new slaves
  - B. White Europeans fought wars against African Kingdoms
  - C. Most slaves were sold by other Africans
  - D. All of the above
5. What happened to slaves when they arrived in the Caribbean?
  - A. They were put up for auction
  - B. They were immediately sent to work
  - C. They were sent to a slave factory
  - D. They were sent back to their countries
6. Where was the Slave Coast?
  - A. North Africa
  - B. West Africa
  - C. East Africa
  - D. The Caribbean

### Part II: Short Answer

1. Discuss briefly the consequences of the Trans- Atlantic Slave Trade.
2. What is “legitimate” commerce? Discuss briefly.