

# Year 8 Unit 2: West African Empires

## Why has African history been neglected?

- Racism: Europeans believed that African History was 'inferior' to European history
- Many sources are oral and not written down

## Key words

Griots	Storytellers from Mali
Mansa	Leader of Mali
Colony	A country ruled by another country
Benin Bronzes	Bronze and brass sculptures
Oba	Leader of Kingdom of Benin
Matrilineal	Power passed through female line
Asantehene	King of Asante
Asantheama	Queen Mother (Asante)

## The Empire of Mali



Very wealthy Kingdom  
**Mansa Musa** went on pilgrimage to Mecca. Bankrupted Egypt by the amount of Gold given out. The capital, **Timbuktu**, was a centre of learning across the Islamic world. As the Mali Empire collapsed, the kingdom of Songhay grew.

## The Kingdom of Songhay



Songhay was a wealthy and well governed kingdom. In the 1440s some Portuguese arrived and started to enslave Africans. **Leo Africanus** wrote accounts from Songhay, challenging the ideas that Africa was poor and 'uncivilised'

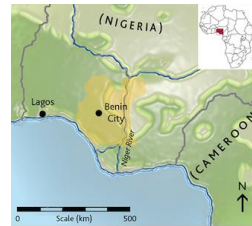
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## The British Empire: 'The Scramble for Africa'



In the 1870s, it was discovered that Africa was rich in natural resources. In the 1870s, the USA, The Ottoman Empire (Turkey) and 12 European countries divided up Africa between them.

## The Kingdom of Benin



Benin was a wealthy kingdom. Benin is famous for its bronze and sculptures. In 1897, the British attacked Benin and stole thousands of treasures including the Benin Bronzes. In recent years there has been a debate about whether these should be returned.

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## The Kingdom of Asante

A wealthy slave trading country. They believe that the spirits of their ancestors are held in a Golden Stool. In 1900 the British attempted to take this item. Yaa Asantewaa led to Asante army against the British.

