

# Chapter:5

## Europe

Industrial Revolution took place first in Europe. As factory based production became predominant in the countries of Western Europe, they also tried to establish control over other countries and continents. In this lesson, we will try to find out about how the people of Europe have been using their distinct natural environment and resources.

### Location of Europe

In order to find out the location of Europe and to see how far it is from India you will need an atlas or a globe. To begin with, look at Map 1 in which Europe has been shaded. Identify the boundaries of Europe. There is an ocean to its north. Identify its name on the map. This ocean is frozen for most of the year.

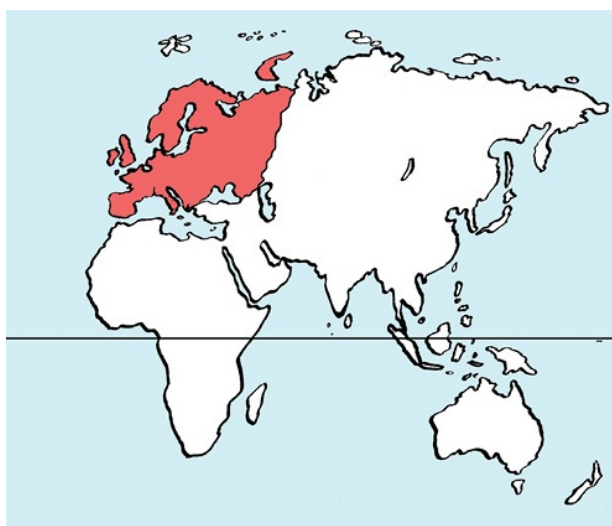
- Name the ocean to the west of Europe.

This ocean separates the two continents Europe and North America. About 500 years ago, the people of Europe discovered the sea route to America and millions of Europeans migrated to the continent of America and settled down there.

- Look in the atlas and find the name of the sea just south of Europe.

This sea separates Europe in the north from Africa in the south. The name of this sea means 'middle of the world'. Do you know why it is called by this name? In ancient times the people of Europe did not know about other continents like America or Australia. They only knew about Europe, western parts of Asia and northern parts of Africa. You can see that all these regions are situated around the Mediterranean Sea. That is why Europeans thought that this sea was in the centre of the world and named it so. It has been known by this name ever since.

- Name the mountains to the east of Europe.



**Map 1: Location of Europe**

Atlantic Ocean

Africa

Arctic Ocean

Equator

Ural Mountains

Indian Ocean

Asia

Australia

Pacific Ocean

These mountains are not very high and they form the eastern boundary of Europe. To the east of these mountains is Asia while Europe is to their west. In fact, Asia and Europe are one continuous landmass. This landmass is therefore called Eurasia.

- Now you are familiar with the location of Europe. You can look at the countries of Europe. Look at Map 2 to find out their names. Have you heard of some of these countries before?
- Map 3 has been left blank for your use. Write the names of the countries of Europe on this map and colour them. See that no two neighbouring countries have the same colour.

### Mountains, Plains and Rivers

Let us learn more about the mountains, plains and rivers of Europe with the help of Map 4. Europe has several high snow-covered mountains.

Look for the Alps and the Pyrenees in the map. The Alps, the most important mountain ranges of Europe, are covered with snow all the year round.

- The Alps stretch across several countries. Find out the names of these countries by comparing Maps 2 and 4.
- Write the names of two rivers starting from the Alps.
- Name the countries across whose borders the Pyrenees stretch.
- Name the mountains stretching the Eastern Europe.
- Identify the other mountains in Europe and prepare a table.



**Fig 5.1 Budapest, capital of Hungary by the river Danube in Eastern**

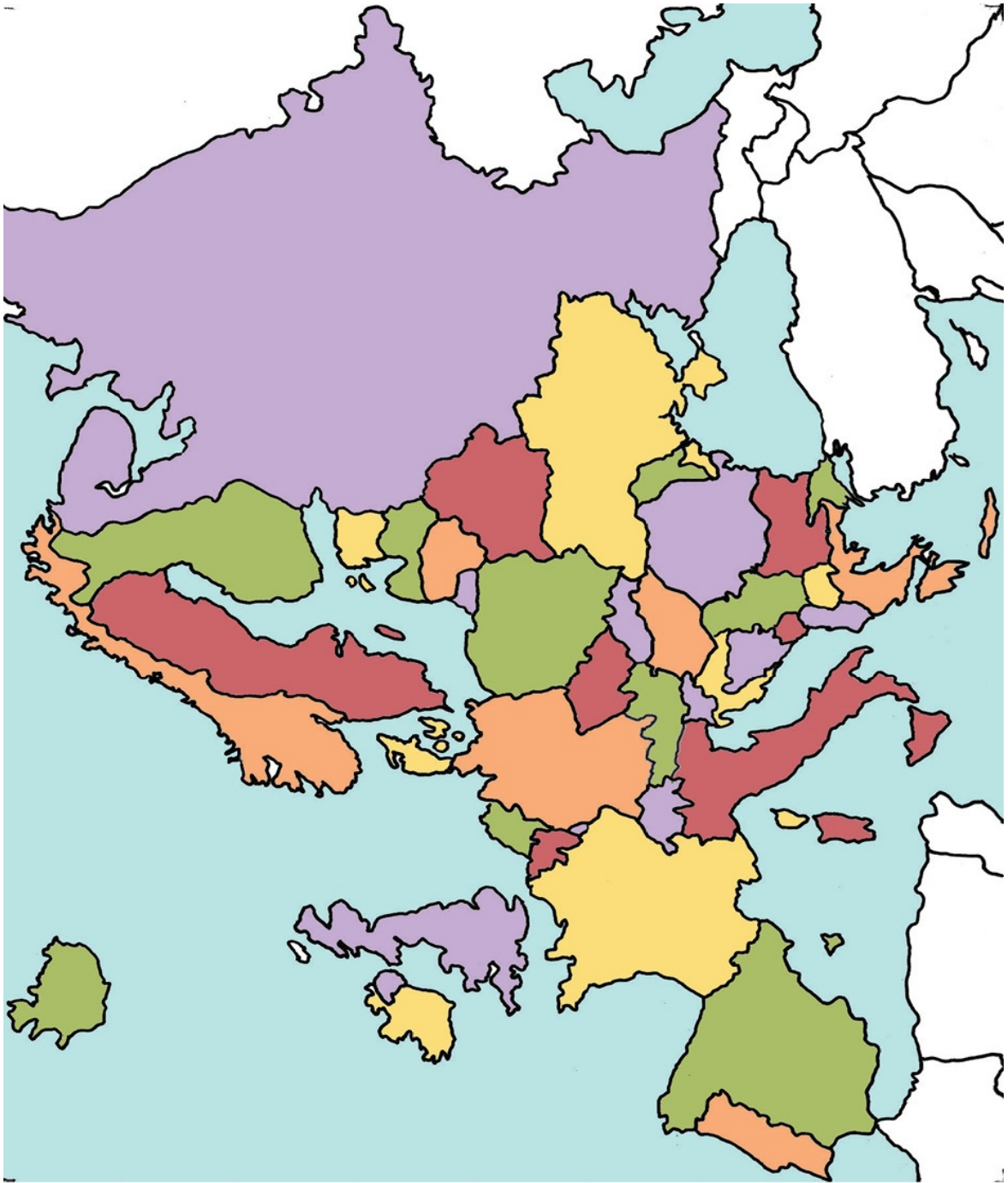
### **Europe**

The Caucasian Mountains, which lie between the Caspian Sea and the Black Sea, form the southern boundary of Europe. They, too, are very high and covered with snow all the year round.

There are no large plateaus in Europe. There are only some small plateaus in France, Germany and Spain. There are vast plains in Europe. The Eastern Europe is a vast plain, which stretches across several countries like Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Bylorussia, etc. These plains experience heavy snowfall and bitter cold in winters. When the snow melts in summer, small streams start flowing. These join to form mighty rivers. It is from these plains that rivers like the Dnieper and the Volga(the longest river in Europe) originate.

European rivers are used not only for irrigating the fields but also as major waterways; ships and barges ply on these rivers and transport people and goods from place to place. Since these rivers flow across several countries, they also facilitate international trade and transport. In this respect, the Rhine is one of the most important rivers as it flows through several countries and empties itself into the North Sea.

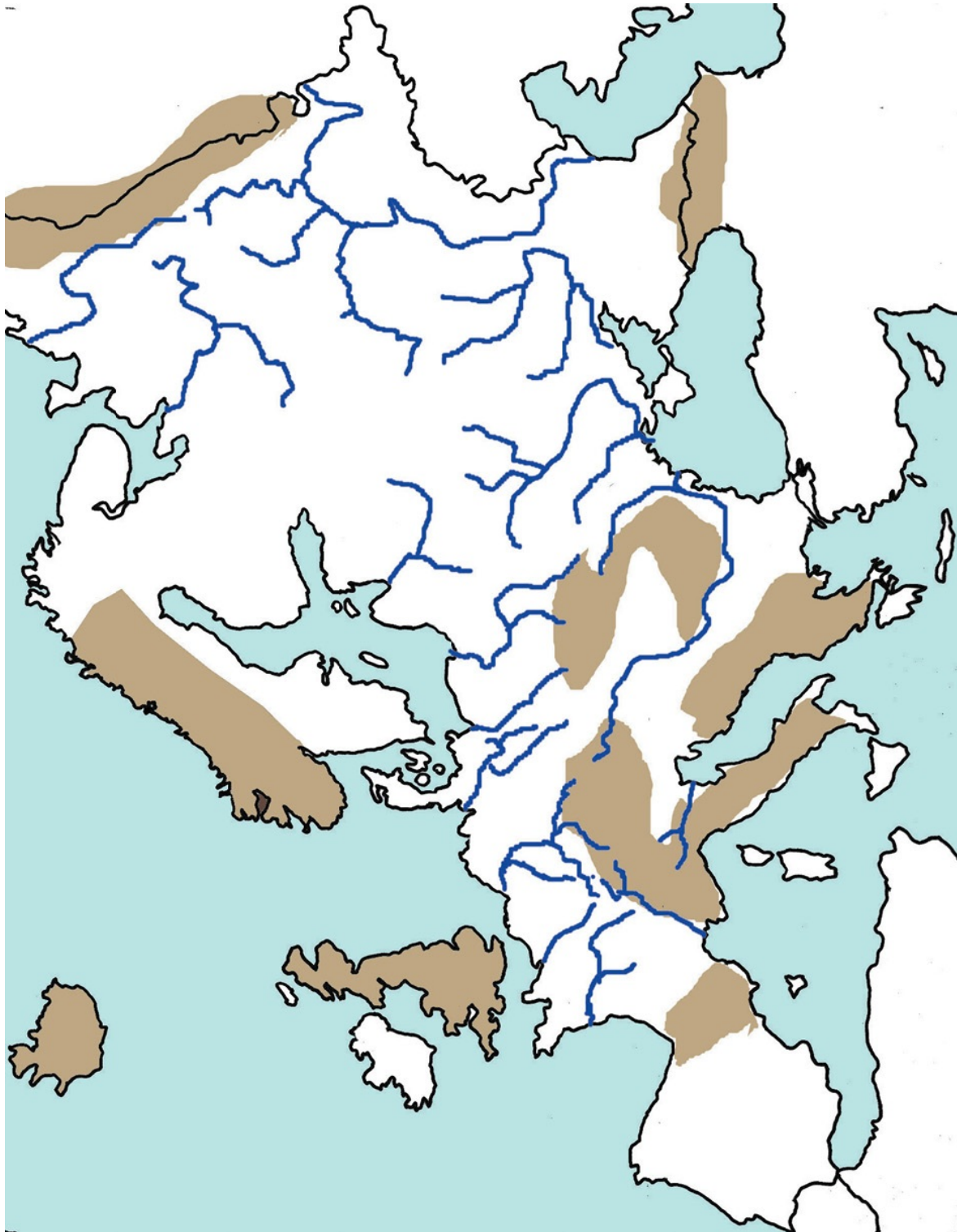
### **Map 2: Europe Political**



Map 3: EUROPE Practice Map



Map 4: Europe Physical



There are several major industrial and mining cities on the open sea and thus linked to intercontinental trade. Unlike the Rhine, the Volga drains into the Caspian Sea, which is a vast lake. Transport to the open sea through this river-way is not possible. Thus, the cities on the Volga are not linked to transcontinental trade through waterways.

- Study Maps 2 and 4 to answer the following questions:
- Names of countries through which the Rhine flows: 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
- Names of countries through which the Danube flows: 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
- Names of two mountain ranges on the border of the Hungarian plains.  
1..... 2.....
- Names of countries which ring the Black Sea. 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
- Names of oceans or seas into which the following rivers empty themselves:

| River    | Ocean/Sea |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. Seine |           |



2. Rhine
3. Oder
4. Po
5. Danube
6. Vistula
7. Volga
8. Dnieper
9. Don
10. Dvina

### Peninsulas, Islands and Bays

The sea coast of Europe is very jagged. In several places, it appears that the sea has cut deep into the land as in the case of the Baltic Sea. Elsewhere, it would appear that a part of the land has stretched far into the sea as in the case of Italy.

Italy is surrounded on three sides by the sea. Land masses that are surrounded by the sea on three sides and connected to the mainland on the fourth side are called '*peninsulas*'. Norway and Sweden are also part of a peninsula. You can check this out in the map. This peninsula is called the Scandinavian Peninsula.

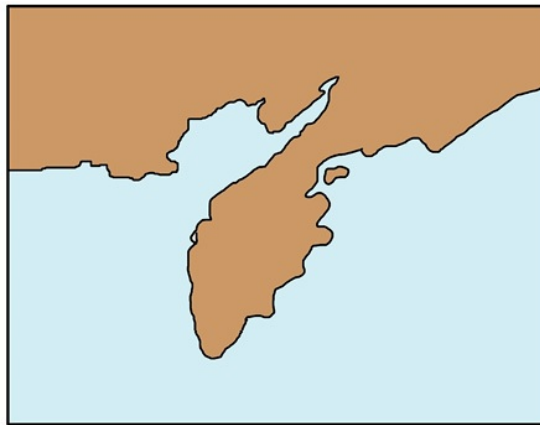


Fig 5.2 Peninsula and Bay

- Which is a peninsula Greece or France?
- Are Spain and Portugal peninsulas too?
- Name the mountain range in the Scandinavian Peninsula.

The sea surrounds some of the European countries, not just on three sides but on all four sides! These are island countries. Great Britain is one such island country.

- Find out the names of some other island countries of Europe.

Since ancient times, the seas have played an important role in the lives of the people of these islands and peninsulas. Central and southern Europe is largely mountainous and travel and transport over them is both difficult and expensive. In comparison, sea transport is easy and less expensive. This is the reason why Europeans have been extensively using sea routes since ancient times.

The presence of a large number of bays and gulfs has also facilitated the use of sea routes. *Bays* and *gulfs* are parts of the sea enclosed by land on three sides. In a bay, the land curves inwards and the mouth of the bay is usually wide as in the Bay of Bengal. A gulf is a narrow inlet of the sea and has a narrow mouth. The entire Baltic Sea as you can see in the map is a large gulf. Since the bays and gulfs are protected from the storms, of the high seas, they are very useful for building harbours where ships can be safely anchored and cargo loaded or unloaded. Deep gulfs or bays are preferred for building harbours as large ships can be anchored in them. Ships need deep waters so that their bottoms do not touch the sea floor.

- Find out from Map 4 the names of the countries on the three sides of the Baltic Sea.

### Climate

Europe has a cooler climate than ours. Most of its countries experience snowfall in winter. Their summers, too, are not as warm as ours are.

- Why is the climate of Europe so different from ours? Discuss in the class.

### Distance from the Equator

The regions near the Equator remain warm all round the year. As we move northwards or southwards away from the Equator, it gets cooler and cooler. Indeed the Polar Regions are covered with ice all round the year.

- Look at a globe to see how far is north Europe from the Equator.
- Is Europe farther north than India?
- Will Norway be warmer than Italy? Why?

### The Atlantic Ocean

The climate of Europe is influenced by another factor – the Atlantic Ocean and the winds blowing from it. This impact is felt more by the regions along the Atlantic Ocean than the ones which are far inland.

- Locate the regions of Europe along with Atlantic Ocean and state whether they are on eastern side or western side?

In the winters, it is quite cold in Western Europe but it is even colder in Eastern Europe. Thus, countries like Poland and Russia have severe winters while France and Great Britain are comparatively warmer. Russian winters are so cold that the rivers and even the nearby seas freeze. However, this does not happen in the countries of Western Europe along the sea coast.

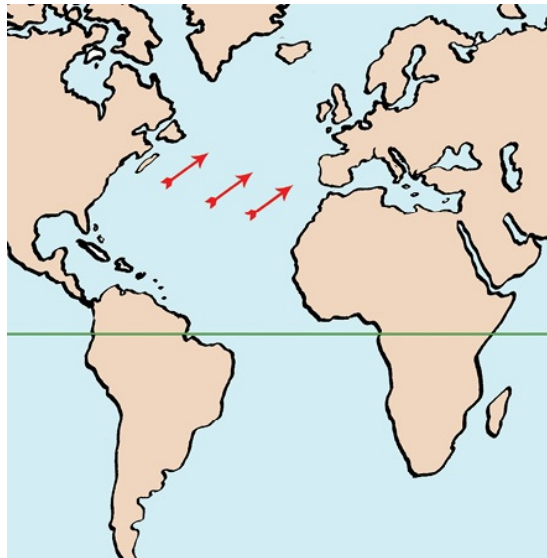
- Look at the map and tell which country is warmer, Spain or Slovakia?

You would have guessed that this difference must be because of the nearness of Western Europe to the Atlantic Ocean. Let us see exactly how this ocean affects the climate of Europe.

### **Westerlies**

Winds blow all the year round from the Atlantic Ocean towards Europe. Since they blow from the west, these winds are called '*Westerlies*' (Actually these blow from the southwest towards the northeast). These winds are warmer than the land temperature and are moist too. The climate of Western Europe is affected by these warm and moist winds all the year round as they blow throughout the year.

- Can you guess the impact of Westerlies on Europe ?



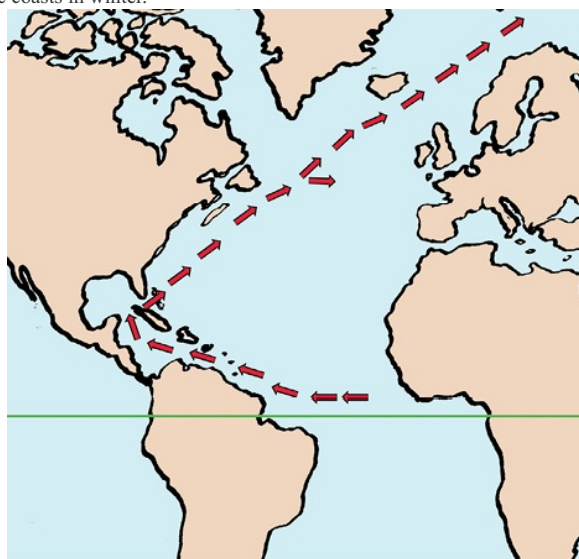
**Map 5: The Westerlies**

### **Warm Ocean Currents**

The waters in the oceans are not static. They keep flowing from one place to another along the continents. These are the ocean currents, which flow for thousands of kilometers in the ocean just as rivers flow on land.

One such ocean current is to be found in the Atlantic Ocean. This current originates near the Equator where the waters are warm throughout the year. This current flows westward to North America. It flows north along the eastern coast of America under the impact of the Westerlies and then advances towards Europe. Moving northeast, it hits the western coast of Europe. This current is called '*Gulf Stream*' in America, while in Europe it is called '*North Atlantic Drift*'.

The coastal waters of the east coast of North America and the west coast of Europe do not freeze in winters, thanks to the Gulf Stream. Thus, it is possible for ships to visit the ports on these coasts in winter.



**Map 6: Gulf Stream**

- Why do you think the climate of Eastern Europe is not so strongly affected by the warm currents?

Fill in the blanks:

- The waters near the Equator are..... (warm / cool / icy cold)
- Starting near the Equator, the Gulf Stream reaches the ..... coast of America. (eastern / western / northern)
- The Gulf Stream flows in the ..... (Atlantic Ocean / Mediterranean Sea / Black Sea)
- The waters of the Gulf Stream which hit the European coast are ..... (cold / warm / icy cold)
- The Westerlies blow from the Atlantic Ocean towards Europe ..... (in winter / in summer / all round the year)
- These winds are ..... (dry / moist / icy)

#### **Western Europe: Showers all the Year Round**

The Westerlies, which blow throughout the year, also bring ample moisture to northern and Western Europe. Since these winds blow from the sea, they carry a lot of moisture and regularly cause rainfall. Therefore, it rains throughout the year in northern and Western Europe. While it rains only for a few months in our country, there are light showers all round the year in Western Europe. The sky is usually clouded. While we, in India, eagerly await cool showers, the people of Western Europe await bright sunny days.

- What differences did you notice between the climates of India and West Europe?

Western Europe also benefits in other ways from the Gulf Stream. The warm currents are very good for fish breeding as they contain ample food materials for the fishes. As a result, the fishery industry is very well developed in the North Sea near Britain. This part of the North Sea is called '*Dogger Bank*'. Fish is an important part of the food of the Europeans and fishing is a very important industry in Europe.

- Name the countries which would benefit from the Dogger Bank.

#### **Mediterranean Climate in Southern Europe**

Look at the countries of Southern Europe. They have the Mediterranean Sea to their south, so they are called 'Mediterranean Countries'. The lands along the Mediterranean Sea have a distinct climate called the '*Mediterranean climate*'.

- Look at Map 2 and name four Mediterranean countries.

The Mediterranean countries are the southernmost countries of Europe. As a result, the winters here are not too cold and summers are warm. It does not rain all through the year as in Western Europe. The Westerlies blow here during the winter months only. These winds bring rain to the Mediterranean countries. In other words, it rains here only in winter. Such rainy winters and dry summers are termed as '*Mediterranean climate*'. Several regions in other continents too have a Mediterranean climate. This climate is very good for growing juicy fruits. Thus, regions with Mediterranean climate are famous for their fruits. Fruits like olives, figs, grapes, oranges, etc. are grown extensively in southern Europe.

- Compare Mediterranean and Andhra Pradesh climates on the following aspects:

Seasons

Rainfall

- When does it rain most in your state, in summer months or in winter months?
- Find out if your region gets light winter showers and the name given to it in the regional language.
- Fishing industry is importance in .....
- whereas fruit growing is important in .....

#### **The Four Seasons and Agriculture**

In our country, we have three seasons, winter, summer and the rains. However, most European countries including France have four main seasons. They are winter, spring, summer and autumn. The look of the land changes according to the season and the agricultural routine changes, too. The transformation of a place over these seasons can be seen in the pictures given in the next page.

**Winter:** As November approaches, it begins to get chilly. December onwards, it gets very cold and snow begins to fall once in a while. It snows heavily on the mountains and less on the plains. The sun shines once in a while. The sun rises very late in the day, at about nine or ten O'clock and sets by four O'clock in the afternoon. The overcast sky makes it even darker. France has broad-leaved trees, which shed their leaves in winter and stand entirely leafless.

**Spring:** The landscape begins to change as March comes. The days get longer and the nights shorter. The snow begins to melt and new shoots appear on trees. Fresh green leaves appear and colourful flowers bloom everywhere. Lush green grass begins to grow on the pastures.

The fields are ploughed in spring and sowing is done during this season. Wheat, rye, barley, corn, sugar beet and oats are the principal crops.

**Summer:** It is summer in Europe from June to August. It does not rain so much and there is more sunshine. The days are longer - longer than even in our country. The sun rises as early as four O'clock in the morning and sets after eight O'clock in the evening. Infact, in the northern countries like Swedan, the sun does not set at all. These countries are called lands of Midnight Sun. Nevertheless, it does not get very hot. This is because the sun does not rise high on the sky and remains close to the horizon - where the earth and sky seem to meet.

Summer is the season of agriculture in Europe. Crops mature in this season. There is no need for irrigation as the occasional showers are sufficient for the crops. At the end of summer, the crops are ready to be harvested.

*Winter*

*Spring*





*Summer*



*Autumn*



In our country, we have two agricultural seasons Rabi and Kharif (winter and monsoon). Does it is possible to grow crops nearly 8 to 10 months in a year. On the other hand in European countries cultivation is possible only for 6 to 7 months.

◦ In which regions of Andhra Pradesh are grapes grown?

In our country, we have two agricultural seasons: *Rabi and Kharif* (winter and monsoon). Thus, it is possible to grow crops for nearly eight to ten months in a year. On the other hand, in France and other European countries, cultivation is possible only for six to seven months.

**Autumn:** The climate changes once again in September and October. Tree leaves turn red and yellow and begin to fall. Agricultural operations are wound up. Hay is cut and dried for feeding farm animals in winter. Grapes and other fruits are plucked and used for making wine, jams and juices of various kinds and preserved in other ways.

### **Land and Agriculture**

European plains and river valleys are very fertile. It rains here all through the year and the rivers, too, do not dry up in any season. As a result, the plains are very suitable for agriculture. However, a very large part of Europe is mountainous and not suitable for agriculture. Some countries have very little agricultural land. For example, only 3% of the land of Norway is available for cultivation. 30% of England is cultivable while in Germany it is about 40%. This is very different from our country. In India, as much as 55% of the land is cultivable.

There is an acute shortage of land in Holland. The people of Holland (the Dutch) have reclaimed small portions of land from the sea by building embankments called dykes to push back the sea. The land that is reclaimed is called '*polder*'.



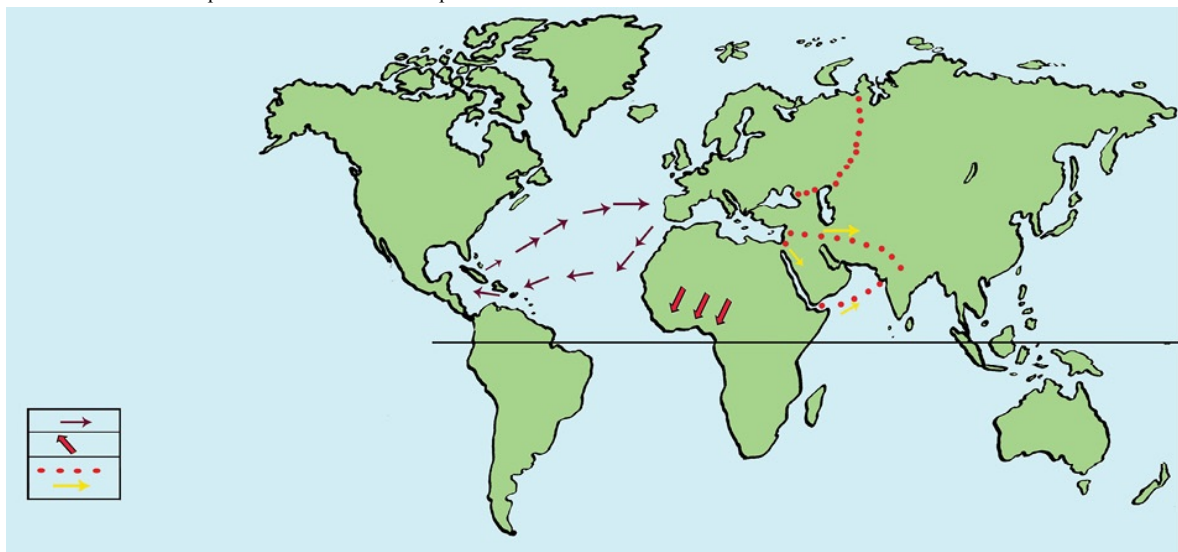
**Fig 5.3 Hay bales after the harvest which will be stored as fodder for**

**winter.**

In eastern and northern Europe, it is not possible to cultivate the land in winter as snow covers it for almost six months. The snow begins to melt only in spring leaving very little time for crops to ripen. It is in spring that sowing takes place and crops ripen in the summer months and are ready for harvest in autumn. As a result, it is possible to raise only one crop in a year in these parts. However, in southern Europe it is possible to raise two crops a year.

- Why is it possible to raise two crops in the Mediterranean countries?

Wheat is the main crop of European plains. It is grown extensively in France, Germany, Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Italy, Greece, etc. We have seen that fruit cultivation is prominent in southern Europe.



**Map 7 : Trade routes**

Fruits like grapes are used for making wine. The Mediterranean countries like Portugal, Spain, Italy and southern France are famous for their wines.

Barley, oats, rye, sugar-beet, potato, etc. are also important crops of Europe. Sugar is manufactured from beet in Russia, Ukraine and Germany.

### **Discovery of Sea Routes**

No part of western Europe is too far from the ocean. In contrast, many countries of Asia are thousands of kilometers from the sea.

- Look at the wall map or atlas to identify the names of at least six cities of Europe which are situated on the sea coast.

There are thousands of such seaside settlements where seafaring people have been living for hundreds of years. With centuries of experience of sea travel, the European sailors were famed for their skill and courage on the seas. They were also skilled in building boats and ships. Initially ships were built and used for fishing in deep seas. Later on, they are used for international trade too.

From the very ancient times, the people of Europe have been trading with India and other countries of Asia like Indonesia and China. From these countries, Europe obtained many things like cotton and silk cloth, gems, ivory and spices such as cloves, pepper, and cinnamon – that were not available in Europe. The Europeans got these in exchange for gold and silver, which they brought from Europe. Do you know what

route they took from Europe to India? Look at map 7 in which two major routes are given. Both the routes crossed the Mediterranean Sea; while one of them took a land route via the Middle East, Iran, and Afghanistan, the other route took a sea route via the Red Sea and the Arabian Sea.

About five hundred years ago, the West European sailors and traders began to search for new routes to India. This was because both the routes mentioned above passed through countries ruled by the Arabs who were often at war with the Europeans. Further, most of the trade in the Mediterranean Sea was controlled by Italian merchants who did not let traders of other countries in easily. That is why the sailors of the other countries began to look for routes to India, which did not have to pass through the Mediterranean Sea or the Arab ruled countries.

- Looking at the map can you tell what the new route could be?

Of course, these maps did not exist in those days and people had just begun to figure out that the earth must be round and not flat. An Italian sailor named Christopher Columbus thought: 'If the earth is round then it should be possible to reach India from the west too. If we were to travel westward across the Atlantic Ocean we would reach China and India sooner or later.'

- Look at a globe to check whether Columbus's thinking was correct.

Columbus set out with three ships in 1492 to cross the Atlantic Ocean. After three months of sailing he saw land ahead. Columbus thought that he had reached India. Actually, he was still far from India; he had reached the country which we now call the West Indies. These are a group of islands near America. In fact, Europeans did not know of America before Columbus. In a way, he 'stumbled' onto America. Soon Europeans realized that Columbus had not reached India but a new unknown continent. After that, several Europeans went to America to trade, conquer and settle.

The ships of those times had sails to harness wind-power. They sailed with ease with the winds blowing westwards towards America. Were they the Westerlies? No, they were not the Westerlies, which blew towards Europe. These were different winds, which blew from the south of Europe towards the south-west direction. They blew throughout the year and took ships from south-west Europe to the east coast of America. They are called 'Trade Winds' (Map 7).

The Westerlies blow from the south- west to the north-east to the south-west. In other words, the two winds blow in opposite directions all through the year (both these winds are shown on Map 7). This helped Europeans to travel to and from America easily. They could go to America using the Trade Winds.

Look at Map 7 and answer the following questions :

- Which winds would help the sailors to return to Europe from America?
- Could the sail driven ships use the Trade Winds to return to Europe? Give reasons.

After Columbus, the Europeans discovered several sea routes. They could now sail not only to America but also to different parts of Africa, India and Australia. They traded with these countries and amassed immense wealth, which was used to develop industries in Europe.

## Industrial Revolution in Europe

The industrial revolution as you know started in England around 1750 and soon factory production spread to France, Holland, Germany, Spain, Russia, etc. Countries like England and Germany, which had large reserves of coal and other minerals, took lead in developing new industries.

However, as times changed, European countries began to use less and less of their own mineral resources and relied on imports from other countries. The old mining towns and old factories were closed down and new factories grew in new areas. Industrialisation also enabled the European countries to import agricultural goods from other countries. Thus, they relied less on the agriculture of their countries for their food and raw material requirements. Hence, Europe became dependent upon trade with other countries. Initially this trade was with their colonies in Asia, Africa and America. However as the colonies became independent, they had to develop new ways of trading with them.

### Key words :

1. Peninsula 2. Island 3. Bay 4. Currents 5. Gulf 6. Climate

## Improve your learning

1. The Atlantic Ocean has a deep impact on the climate of Europe as well as on the life and livelihood of the people of Europe. Collect relevant information and write an essay on the theme. AS<sub>1</sub>
2. Answer these questions with the help of the maps given in the lesson: AS<sub>5</sub>
  - Which of the following is not a landlocked (surrounded by land) country – (Hungary / Romania / Poland / Switzerland)?
  - Which mountains lie between the Caspian Sea and the Black Sea – (Alps / Caucasus Mountains)?
  - Which countries are on the shores of the Arctic Ocean – (Russia / Germany / Sweden / Norway)?
  - Can a ship sail from the Black Sea to the Atlantic Ocean? If yes, trace the route it will have to take.
3. Why are harbours built in deep gulfs or bays? AS<sub>1</sub>
4. Why are the winters less severe in Western Europe than in Eastern Europe? AS<sub>1</sub>
5. Name four countries on the coast of the Black Sea. AS<sub>1</sub>
6. How do the Westerlies benefit the people of Western Europe? AS<sub>1</sub>
7. How do the Westerlies benefit the people of Western Europe? AS<sub>1</sub>

What are the characteristics of the Mediterranean climate? Name the countries which have a Mediterranean climate.
8. What are the factors that limit European agriculture? AS<sub>1</sub>
9. Name the important crops of southern Europe. AS<sub>1</sub>
10. How can you say that the trade and cultural relations have been developed among the countries due to the discovery of new sea routes by European sailors? AS<sub>6</sub>
11. Read the last para of this lesson and comment on it. AS<sub>2</sub>
12. How is agriculture similar or different in Europe from that of our country? AS<sub>1</sub>



## Chapter: 6

### Africa

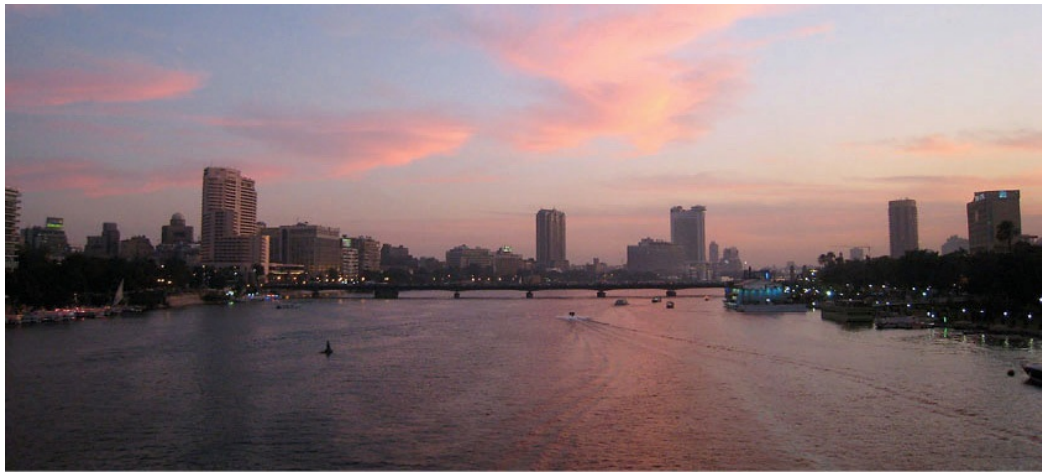
To the west of India lies a large continent. On this continent, there are extensive deserts, dense forests, long and broad rivers, numerous large lakes and grasslands stretching over thousands of miles. There are certain wild animals, which we do not find in our country. The world's largest gold and diamond mines are located here. The name of this continent is Africa. Perhaps, you will be surprised to know that Africa is the cradle of the humankind. Human beings first evolved in Africa and then moved to other continents.



**Fig 6.1 Equatorial forest in Uganda**



**Fig 6.2 Savanna in Kenya**



**Fig 6.3 The city of Cairo by the River Nile**

- Look for Africa on the world map, name the oceans that surround it. Which are its neighbouring continents?

### Africa - A vast Plateau

Look at the physical map of Africa. Do you see any large plains in the interior of the continent? Only on the coast do we find a narrow plain. The rest of the continent is a vast plateau of varying height. Look for the valleys of the Nile and the Congo. There are also several mountains on this plateau. The highest peak in Africa is Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania.

Look at Map 1 and answer the following questions:

- What is the average height of the narrow coastal plain?
- What is the height of a major portion of the plateau?
- The height of the high plateaus in the south and east of Africa is .....

- In the north are the ..... Mountains.

**Map 1: Relief map of Africa**



**Plain 0 -200 Mts**  
**Plateau 200-1000 Mts**  
**Hills 1000 Mts and above**

There are long and narrow valleys in the high plateau. There are several large lakes in these valleys.

- Identify two other lakes in Africa, other than Lake Victoria and write down their names.
- Locate the following rivers on a map of Africa. Use map 6 to locate the countries of Africa. Which countries do the following rivers flow through, and which oceans do they empty themselves into?

There is a region in the north where no rivers are to be seen. This is the Sahara Desert, which receives very scanty rainfall. There is only one river, which crosses the Sahara Desert.

Look for some of the large lakes on the plateau. Lake Victoria is the largest lake in Africa. This is one of the largest fresh water lakes in the world. The Nile originates from this lake.

The region where this river has its source receives such heavy rainfall that there is enough water to flow across the desert into the Mediterranean Sea. The Nile also flows through Egypt. Most of Egypt is a desert.

The Nile has helped a civilization to develop in this desert. Egyptian civilization is several thousand years old. The waters of the Nile have helped to irrigate the fields of Egypt for thousands of years (look at Map 3).

**Map 2: Africa - Out line**





## **Climate**

If you look at Africa on the globe you will find that the Equator passes through its middle. Thus Africa is divided into northern and southern parts.

- Try to recognise the Tropic of Cancer on the wall map of Africa and label Map 2. To the south of the Equator is the Tropic of Capricorn. Locate it and write its name in the correct place on the map.
- Does the Equator pass through the middle of any other continent?

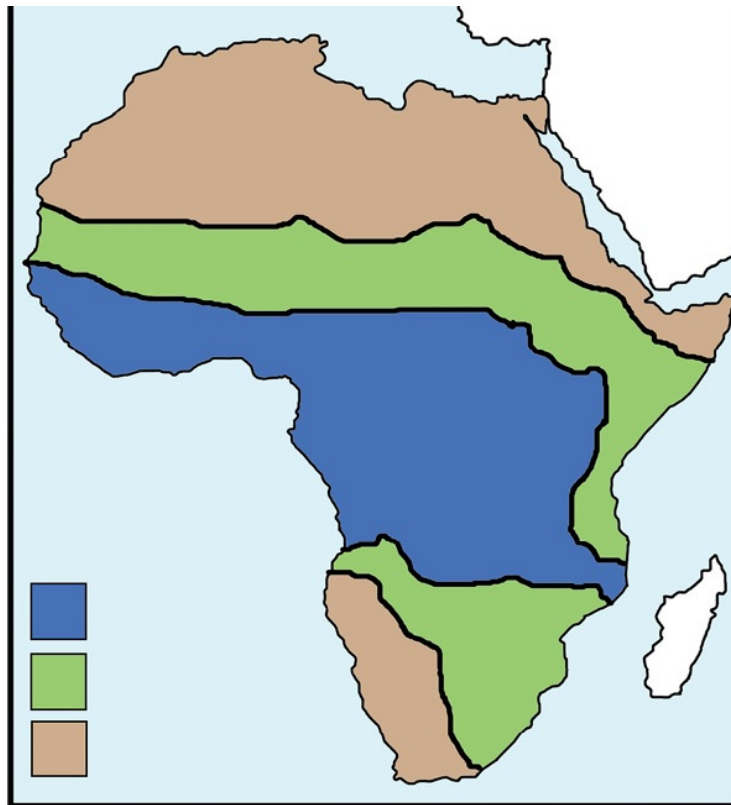
The zone between the Tropic of Cancer and Tropic of Capricorn is the hottest region of the world. There is hardly any winter here. This is also known as the Tropic region.

- Locate this zone on the map of Africa, colour it and label it as the 'Tropical Region'. Colour the zone north of the Tropic of Cancer and south of the Tropic of Capricorn in different colours.

These zones south and north of the tropics experience summer as well as winter. They are called '*Temperate Regions*'.

So far we have been talking only about summer and winter. However, regions that are hot but receive heavy rainfall have a different climate from hot regions that get scanty rainfall.

### **Map 3: Distribution of Rainfall in Africa**

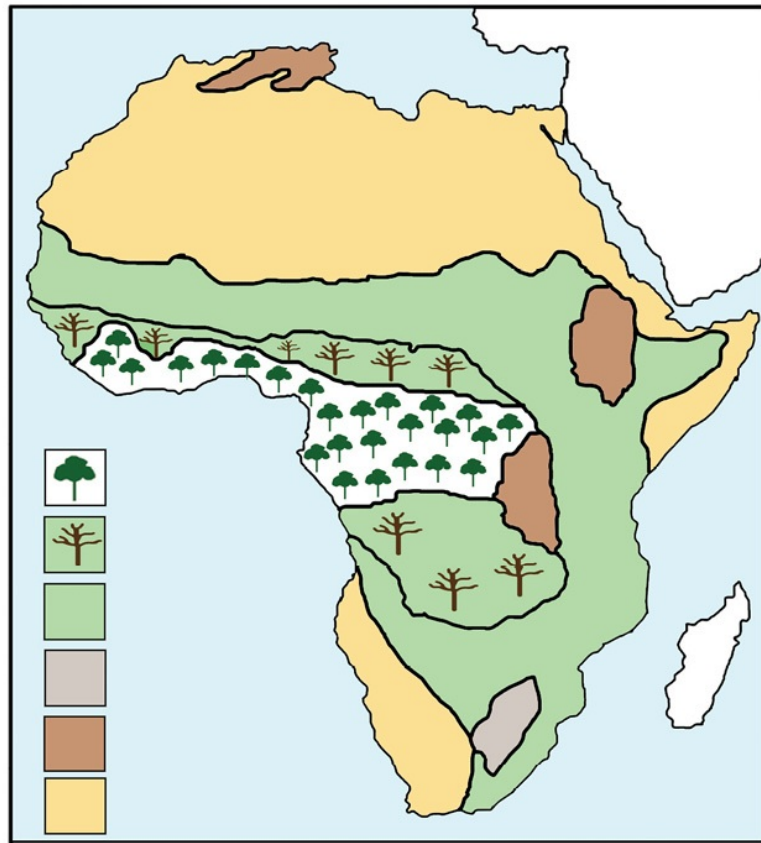


High rainfall

Medium rainfall

Low rainfall

Map 4: Natural Vegetation in Africa



Equatorial forests

Broad leaved trees and grass

Savanna

Soft grass of high plateau

Mountainous vegetation

Desert vegetation

## Regions with Heavy Rainfall

A large part of Africa, on both sides of the Equator, receives heavy rainfall. Look at the regions with heavy rainfall on Map 3. They are in Central and Western Africa. They have dense forests due to heavy rainfall and warm climate.

## Regions with Moderate and Scanty Rainfall

Look for regions with moderate rainfall in Map 3. It surrounds the zone of heavy rainfall. In the region of moderate rainfall, it rains only in the summer, whereas it rains throughout the year in the equatorial regions.

As in our country, dry and wet seasons are distinct in the zones of moderate rainfall in Africa. Due to moderate rainfall, tall grasses grow in this region. In some places, these grasses are so tall that even elephants can hide in them! Some trees also grow between the grasses. This region is known as the 'Savanna'. Look at this region in Map 4. Different kinds of wild animals inhabit this region. You will read about them later.

A very large part of Africa is extremely arid (dry), where the rainfall is scanty or there is no rainfall at all for several years.

- Locate these arid zones in Map 3.

Almost half of the northern part of Africa is an arid region and is called the Sahara desert. Thorny bushes and short grasses grow in some parts of this desert. In other parts, there are large stretches of sand, bare hills and rocks, stones and pebbles. In the south there is another arid region called the Kalahari Desert.

Study Map 2 and 4 and answer:

- Zones of heavy rainfall have ..... vegetation.
- Zones of moderate rainfall have ..... vegetation.
- Zones of scanty rainfall have ..... vegetation.

Pictures of different areas of Africa have been shown in the beginning of the chapter. Somewhere there is dense forest, in another area trees and grass grow together, elsewhere there is grass and shrubs, and in still other areas there is no vegetation at all.

## The People of Africa

People with different languages, lifestyles and habits live in different regions of Africa. Since ancient times, people have lived in small tribes,

carrying out hunting gathering, animal husbandry and agriculture. Hunters have inhabited the equatorial regions and the deserts. Pastoralists inhabited the high plateaus and Savanna, grazing their animals on the extensive grasslands. Agriculture has long been carried out on river banks as well as on the margins of forests. There are several cities on the coasts where traders from distant countries come to trade.



**Fig 6.4 Baobab tree**

### **Africa, Europe and Asia**

For a long time, people from other continents were largely ignorant about Africa. Europeans were familiar only with the northern coastal regions of Africa while the Indian and Arab traders knew about the eastern coast.

- • Look at the map and guess how Europeans would have reached the northern coastal areas. How to reach Africa from Europe? Which sea has to be crossed?

Apart from these coastal areas, neither the Europeans nor the Indian or Arab traders had much knowledge about the interior parts of Africa.

About 500 years ago, Europeans began their attempts to reach India by the sea route by going around Africa. Traversing the Atlantic Ocean, they would stop over on the islands of St. Madiera and Azores. They were apprehensive about going south of these islands. They thought it would be so hot further south that the sea would be boiling. Then in 1498, a Portugese sailor named Vasco da Gama went around the southern tip of Africa and reached India.



**Fig 6.5 Cape of Good Hope in South Africa**

Look at the map to answer these questions:

- How to reach India from Africa? Which ocean has to be crossed?
- Are Asia and Africa connected by land?

### **The African Coast**

While studying Europe, you must have noticed its broken coastline. You must have read about the gulfs and bays of Europe. Try to recall how these helped the Europeans in their ocean travel.

- Now look at the African coast. Do you see a broken coast or a smooth coastline?
- Do you find many bays and gulfs here, as in Europe? Name a bay and a gulf near Africa from Map 6.

Initially when Europeans tried to go inland, many African tribes came in direct conflict with them. Europeans indulged in unfair trade, tried to enslave the African people, and sold them abroad. They wanted to establish their rule over Africa and exploit the resources. Hence, the African people resisted the efforts of foreigners to establish themselves in their land.

### **Slave Trade**

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century many Europeans began migrating to America and started cultivation there. There was plenty of land in America, but not enough people to work on the fields. To fill the gap, the slave trade from Africa began.

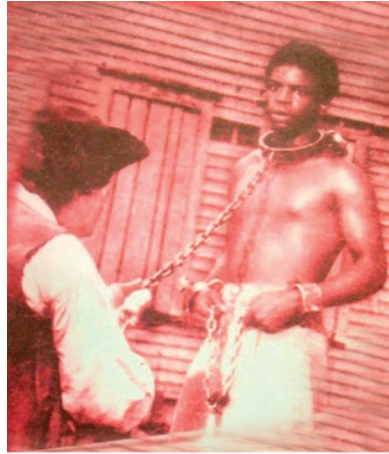


Fig 6.6 Slave

Africans were captured and enslaved mainly from the coastal areas of Guinea as well as eastern Africa. The captured people were brought to the coast and sold to the Europeans. In exchange for the slaves, the African tribal leaders accepted guns, iron objects, liquor and clothes.

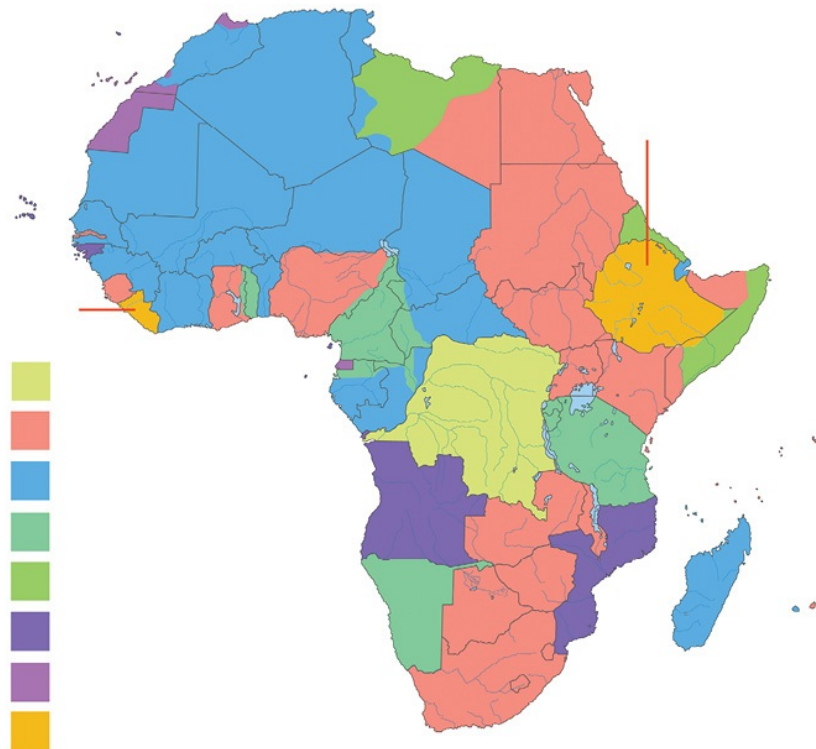
The slaves were greatly oppressed. Many of them died by the time they reached the ports. The ships were stuffed with slaves. There were no proper arrangements for food or medicine. In those days, it took several days to reach America. Many slaves did not survive the journey due to illness and malnutrition.

Even in America, inhuman treatment was meted out to them. Despite working hard, they were not given proper food or living quarters. In this manner, millions of Africans were enslaved and taken to North and South America and the nearby islands. Lakhs of people died after they were made slaves. In the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century, numerous companies were engaged in the slave trade. Eventually, the slave trade ended in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the slaves were declared free citizens in America in 1860.

### European Colonies

Earlier, you have read that Europeans had reached India by going around Africa. Subsequently, these Europeans started halting at African ports. Slowly the Portuguese, Dutch, English, French and Germans gained a foothold in the interior and colonized these areas. The political map of Africa at the close of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is given in Map 5. The regions colonized by the European colonies have been indicated on this map.

Map 5: European colonies in Africa in 1913



Belgium  
Britain



France  
Germany  
Italy  
Portugal  
Spain  
Independent

- Can you locate the countries that colonised Africa on a map of Europe?
- Which European countries colonized Sudan and Zaire?
- Can you point out any area of Africa which was not colonised?

Along with attempting to build their colonies in Africa, the Europeans continued to explore the interior of the continent. They travelled to the source of the Nile in the north. In the west, they explored the entire valley of the Niger and in the south, they moved northwards from Cape Town. There they explored the region around the river Zambezi.

The Europeans exported African timber, minerals etc. on a very large scale to Europe. In fact, the gold and diamond mines in southern Africa are still under the control of European companies. Zambia and Zimbabwe have priceless mines of copper. This mineral has long been an important export item.

The Europeans did not stop with exporting the resources of Africa. They established plantations to grow tea, coffee, rubber, tobacco, etc. These products were also exported to Europe.

### **Crops and Plantations of Nigeria**

You may be fond of eating chocolates. They are made of cocoa, which grows in Nigeria. In Southern Nigeria, apart from cocoa, there are also rubber plantations. Oil-bearing palm trees are also found there. Oil is extracted from its fruit. People reach these forests crossing the Niger by boat to collect palm fruit. Earlier all these trees were found in wild forests. When the demand for them increased, patches of forest were cleared and these trees were planted there. Cocoa, rubber, palm and palm oil are being exported and this enables Nigeria to earn foreign exchange.

- In Map 4, identify the region of Nigeria where these crops are grown.

Plantations were started by the British who were not satisfied with the quantity of wild products collected from the forests. They wanted to produce more and export them.

Plantations made many things easy for them. First of all, it was no longer difficult to go into the forest and locate the trees. It was easy to look after the trees since they were all in one place. Harvesting the produce became much easier. Therefore, the production increased.

Nigerian people started working in these plantations, while the British were their managers.

In this way, commercial agriculture of palm, cocoa and rubber began in Nigeria.

Not only this, a number of processing units were also set up near plantations, such as units to separate seed from the cocoa fruit, to dry it, extract oil from palm fruit, extract milk from rubber plants and so on.

Most of the profit from trade of palm, cocoa and rubber went to the British. The Nigerian people worked there only as agricultural labourers. Even in India during the British times, plantations of tea and coffee were started for trade purposes. Nigeria was under the British rule until 1960, when it won independence. After that, the plantations and trade in plantation products have gradually come under the control of the Nigerians and they are able to benefit from these.

### **Independent Africa**

During the last century, African countries gained independence from the control of European powers. New nations came up with their own governments. Of course, many Europeans are still settled in African countries. But slowly, the African people are acquiring control over their land, forests, mines, and agricultural production and benefiting from them.

### **Minerals of Africa**

The continent is very rich in minerals like coal, copper, tin etc., besides, it is perhaps the largest producer in the world of precious minerals like gold and diamonds. One of the main aims of Europeans in Africa was to exploit these resources by using servile labour of the Africans. Many of these countries and their companies control most of mineral resources of even the independent African countries till date.

For example, mineral oil or petroleum is the most important natural resource of Nigeria. The Dutch companies established control over the oil mining and refining in Nigeria. Since 1958, mineral oil has been exported from Nigeria. Oil refineries have been set up at Harcourt and Warriport.

This industry is mostly in the hands of foreign companies to this day. The Nigerian government has only a small share in the industry. This is the same with many other minerals mined from Africa.

The foreign companies do bring in new technologies and investments into the mining and processing industries, thus creating employment for the local people. However, they use cheap labour to make huge profits which are taken away from the African people most of these companies are also careless about environmental protection and have caused immense damage to the natural environment. This has affected the quality of land and life of the people adversely.

### **Key words :**

- |             |                     |
|-------------|---------------------|
| 1. Colonies | 4. Tropic region    |
| 2. Slave    | 5. Temperate region |
| 3. Plateau  | 6. Tropics          |

- Familiarise yourself with the countries of Africa by colouring and labeling Map 7.



**Map 6: Countries of Africa**

WESTERN SAHARA  
 THE GAMBIA  
 MAURITANIA  
**SENEGAL**  
 GUINEA BISSAU  
 GUINEA  
 SIERRA LEONE  
 The Atlantic Ocean

LIBERIA  
 COAST IVOIRE

MOROCCO  
 MALI  
 BURKINA FASO

GHANA  
 ALGERIA  
 EQUATORIAL GUINEA  
 TOGO  
 BENIN  
 GABON  
 NIGERIA  
 REP. OF CONGO  
 NIGER  
 TUNISIA  
 CAMEROON  
 LIBIYA

CENTRAL AFRICAN REP

ANGOLA  
 NAMIBIA  
 CHAD  
 DEMOCRATIC REP CONGO  
 SOUTH AFRICA  
 BOTSWANA  
 ZAMBIA  
 EGYPT  
 SUDAN  
 SOUTH SUDAN  
 ZIMBABWE  
 UGANDA  
 TANZANIA  
 LESOTHO  
 KENYA  
 MOZAMBIQUE  
 SWAZILAND  
 ETHIOPIA  
 ERITHRIA  
 SOMALIA

MALAWI  
BURUNDI  
DJIBOUTH  
RAWANDA  
MADAGASCAR

### The Indian Ocean

First, label this map with the help of Map 6. Then colour all the countries with different colours. Take care not to colour two neighbouring countries with the same colour.

**Map 7: Countries of Africa**



### Improve your learning

1. From Europe, which sea does one have to cross to reach northern Africa? AS<sub>5</sub>
2. State three difficulties that the Europeans faced in reaching the interior parts of Africa. AS<sub>1</sub>
3. Name the two large deserts of Africa. AS<sub>1</sub>
4. a. The Zone between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn is the Zone of .....  
climate. AS<sub>1</sub>
- b. The main vegetation of Savanna lands is .....
- c. The two main rivers emptying themselves into the Atlantic ocean are ..... and .....
- d. The regions in Africa to the north of the Tropic of Cancer and to the south of the Tropic of Capricorn are of ..... climate.
5. Two political maps of Africa have been given in the chapter. Compare the two to find out which European country controlled the present day countries of Nigeria and Zimbabwe. AS<sub>5</sub>
6. Name two countries of Africa where equatorial forests are found. AS<sub>5</sub>
7. What goods did Europeans trade with Africa? What kind of agricultural produce did they promote for trade purpose? AS<sub>1</sub>
8. Who benefited from the slave trade? Why did America need slaves? AS<sub>1</sub>
9. How can you say that the slave trade is highly heinous? AS<sub>6</sub>
10. Read the last para of this lesson and comment on it. AS<sub>2</sub>