

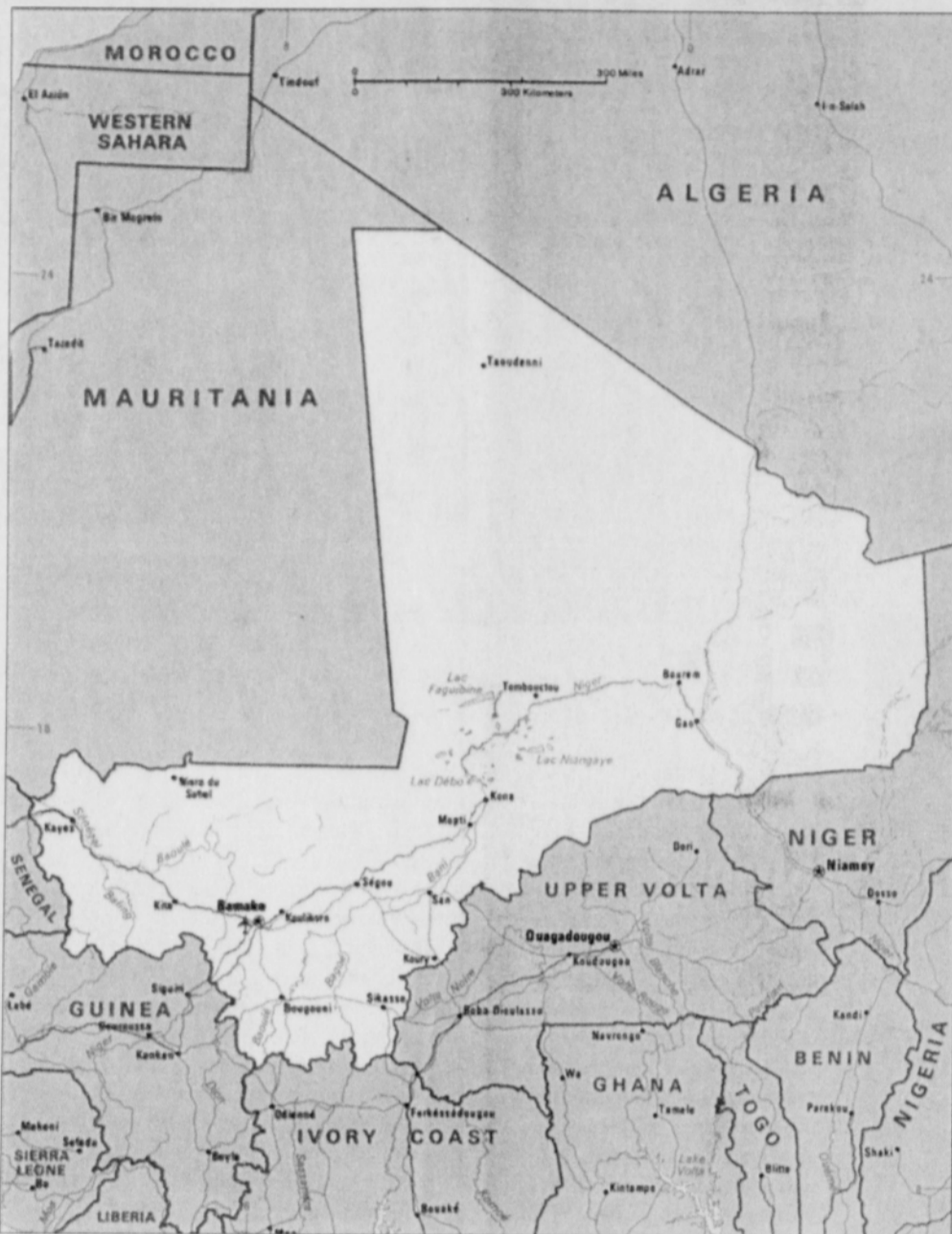
# Countries of Africa

# Mali: Land of Ancient Kingdoms and Empires

BY RON WEBER  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

This large Western African country is surrounded by nine other African nations, leaving it with no ocean access. With its massive resources in gold, Mali once could have been the richest of African countries. However, greedy Europeans from France forced its inhabitants to survive by farming. While French nobles entertained themselves with fortunes from the gold and slave market, Mali's inhabitants starved through droughts and harsh growing seasons. Although this country is rich in natural history and once was rich in natural resources, today it is one of the poorest areas of the world. Due to serious problems with internal political battles, ongoing poverty, and mounting health issues such as AIDS, hope for the younger generations appear grim. Today, the United States, as well as other countries around the world send aid in money, food, clothing, and medicine for inhabitants of Mali.

Centuries before the days of Christ, hunters roamed the lush and green northern regions of this nation. By the eleventh century, however, Muslim raiders from northern regions had overcome the early pagan Africans, converting indigenous peoples to Islam. For hundreds more years, ruthless leaders fought to control over this desired North African region with all its natural resources. Along with the mining of gold, and farming in the fertile countryside, the desert country held rich salt mines. During the early 1800s, European countries, eager to expand began to take notice of all that Africa had to offer. Native inhabitants of both continents would soon succumb to well-equipped European armies. In 1855 the French would build a site on the famed Senegal River at the west end of Mali. It was not long before France ruled the country and



began depleting Mali's natural resources while kidnapping hundreds of thousands of Africans to be sold into slavery. Those left in the country became either French subjects, forced to pay heavy taxes or slaves under the lash, working for nothing. The first half of the twentieth century saw many attempted revolts. Although they were unsuccessful, the cost to defend their colony that was so far away began becoming a terrible financial burden on France. Mali's plights began to draw international attention during the early second half of the twentieth century and France began to feel the pressure from both inside their colony and from around the world to give Mali its independence. Finally on Sept. 22, 1962 the country gained its freedom. However, massive droughts from 1968-1974 nearly caused a total financial collapse of the country. Fortunately, Eastern and Western nation stepped in to help.

Today, Mali is primarily a French-speaking nation of over ten million people. Its natural resources today include fish, gold, salt, limestone, uranium, iron ore, manganese, tin, and copper deposits. Farming consists of cotton, millet, rice, corn, vegetables, peanuts, cattle, sheep and goats. Cotton, gold, and livestock are the primary exports. As much of Africa is still drenched in poverty, inter-country wars, and health crises, European and Western nations continue to help with peace summits, money, food, and health care. While the possibilities for successful democracies throughout Africa and the Middle East are small, world leaders are hopeful that the financial and political conditions in Mali and other African nations will gradually improve. The goal of international economists is that Africa will one day stand on its own again.

## School Supplies Assistance

*Sending kids back to school with confidence*

Throughout the month of August, the Salvation Army will be collecting school supplies to distribute to low-income families. The Project Back to School program has provided school supplies, backpacks, haircuts, and immunizations for more than 10,000 needy children in the past 10 years. Low-income families

seeking assistance must qualify and pre-register at their local office.

Your tax-deductible donation of \$26 will provide a child with a new backpack filled with grade-level school supplies. Cash donations may be mailed to The Salvation Army at 1785 N.E. Sandy Blvd., Portland, OR, 97232.

Please make checks payable to "The Salvation Army" and designate "Project: Back to School" on the notes line.

To organize a donation drive, or to volunteer with The Salvation Army Project: Back to School program, please contact your local Salvation Army office.



**African American Health Coalition, Inc.**

Presents for your health,

### Wellness Within REACH Activity Calendar

**Aerobics**  
Mallory Ave. Christian Church  
Mon, Wed, Fri, 6-7am, Pierce • 5:30-6:20pm,  
Granville • 6:30-7:30pm, Nickerson

**Low Impact Aerobics**  
Daniel's Memorial Church  
Tue, 7:15-8:15pm, Granville

**Water Aerobics** (Contact AAHC)  
Columbia Pool, Matt Dishman

**African Dance**  
Matt Dishman  
Sat, 10-11am, Addo

**Body Conditioning**  
Wild Oats Market  
Sat, 9:30-10:30am, Nickerson

**Chicago Step**  
Matt Dishman  
Fri, 6:30pm, Kendrick

**Kickboxing**  
Mallory Ave. Christian Church  
Tue, Thu, 6-7pm, Keller

**Pilates** (Contact AAHC)  
Matt Dishman  
Tue, 8-9pm

**Stretching/Body Sculpting**  
(Class courtesy of Matt Dishman)  
Matt Dishman  
Tue, Thu, 7-8am, Lois

**Tai Chi** (Contact AAHC)  
St. John's Community Center  
Tue, 6:30-7:30pm

**Walking Group**  
Peninsula Park  
Sat, 12:30pm, Woods  
Lloyd Ctr, 1st Fl. in front of Sears  
Tue, Thu, 6:30pm, Woods

**Weight Mgmt./Conditioning**  
Whitaker Track  
Tue, Thu, 9-10am, Hasan

**Yoga**  
Wild Oats Market  
Tue, Thu, 7:30-8:30pm, O'Rourke

Columbia Pool, 7701 N Chautauq  
Daniel's Memorial Church, 1234 NE Killingsworth  
Mallory Ave Christian Church (Gym), 126 NE Alberta  
Matt Dishman, 77 NE Knott

Peninsula Park, 700 N Portland  
St. John's Community Center, 8427 N. Central  
Whitaker Track, NE 42nd & Killingsworth  
Wild Oats Market, 3535 NE 15th

\*\*Must be 18 or older to participate. Please contact AAHC before showing up to the first class and for more information at 503-413-1850 or [kdempsey@aahc-portland.org](mailto:kdempsey@aahc-portland.org). Please receive approval from your doctor before beginning exercise class.

**REACH** Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health  
A Program of the African American Health Coalition, Inc.  
Sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Contact AAHC at 503-413-1850 or visit our web site at [www.aahc-portland.org](http://www.aahc-portland.org)



Dr. Billy R. Flowers

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### Part 9. Low Back Surgery: The unkindest and most unnecessary cut of all.

**Q:** Should I try chiropractic for my low back pain or have surgery and get it "fixed right?"

**A:** We hear this question quite often and considering many physicians' pro-surgery preoccupation, it's no wonder people ask such questions. That is, until they examine the facts. The truth is that in about 90% of low back pain, the problem is mechanical. Chiropractic has had and continues to have the best technique for treating spinal mechanical problems through gentle, exact adjustment with highly skilled hands. And Chiropractic requires no drugs, surgery, recuperation or expen-

sive hospital bills. With Chiropractic, the only side effects are the disappearance of symptoms and the recurrence of vitality.

**Q:** Which technique has better results for low back problems, Chiropractic or surgery?

**A:** According to a recent issue of Computer Medicine, low back surgery is one of the least effective procedures. In fact, 75 to 99% are unsuccessful. Before you

make any decision, heed the advice of the "father" of low back surgery: "exhaust all methods of conservative care before considering surgery to the lumbar (low back) spine." To find out how Chiropractic can help you avoid back surgery, or for answers to any questions you might have about your health, please call us at the phone number displayed below.

### Flowers' Chiropractic Office

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## FATHER, KARATE EXPERT, ACCOUNTANT, FBI SPECIAL AGENT.



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