

Mali in Depth: A Peace Corps Publication



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Mali in Depth: A Peace Corps Publication

By Peace Corps

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independence. Their leader, a young man named Sundiata Keita, fielded an impressive army to meet the intruding Tekrur forces. The decisive battle was fought on a plain just north of present-day Bamako, and Sundiata emerged victorious.

Building on this success, Sundiata established the Mali Empire, one of the great empires of that era. After his death, his successors continued the expansion of the empire in both wealth and territory. The zenith of Mali's power and prestige occurred during the reign of Mansa Kankan Musa from 1307 to 1332.

Covering more than 3 million square kilometers, the empire centered around the great bend of the Niger River and dominated the profitable trade between North and sub-Saharan Africa. The rulers of Mali and their followers were converts to Islam, and Mansa Musa became one of the legendary leaders of that faith. Timbuktu, the empire's capital, became a center of Muslim scholarship, with a university containing libraries unequaled anywhere in Africa or...



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