

Mansa Musa Travels to Mecca

History

Lesson 3 of an enquiry of 4 lessons

Enquiry: What does the life of Mansa Musa reveal about medieval Mali?



Mansa Musa in Mecca

While Mansa Musa was in Mecca he would have focused on being pure and holy. He would have worn white, committed no sins and spent a lot of time in prayer.

While he was there he met **scholars** such as al-Sahili who was originally from Granada in Spain.

According to one account, Mansa Musa was so delighted by the poetry and story-telling of al-Sahili that he invited him to return to Mali with him.



Mansa Musa returns from Mecca

Mansa Musa travelled back to Mali with many different types of people. According to one account, he had thousands of slave girls in fine fabrics. Scholars and merchants also travelled with him. There were Ethiopians, Arabs, Andalusians (Southern Spainars) and Turks.

Mansa Musa's return journey went via Cairo, but at Ghadames, they changed course and headed south. Mansa Musa travelled to Gao, which was a very important trading centre and he took control of it. According to later accounts, his conquest was peaceful.



Mansa Musa returns from Mecca

From Gao he went to Timbuktu. Timbuktu was wealthy from the trade in salt, gold, ivory, and slaves. The scholar al- Sahili settled in the growing intellectual and commercial center of Timbuktu, where he built a place for Mansa Musa to receive guests, demonstrating his talent as a skilled craftsman.

Mansa Musa was so impressed at what al- Sahili had built, that he asked him to build him a palace and a great mosque.



Questions

1. What did Mansa Musa do in Mecca?
2. Who did Mansa Musa bring back to Mali with him?
3. Which important cities did Mansa Musa add to his empire on his return journey?
4. Why were these cities important?
5. Mansa Musa built mosques in Gao and Timbuktu, what could that reveal about medieval Mali?



What does Mansa Musa’s return from Mecca reveal about medieval Mali?

Use the sentence starters below to write a paragraph answering this question.

Sentence starters	Key words
While in Mecca, Mansa Musa...	Al- Sahili
He returned with...	wealthy
On his return journey he...	Muslim
This could reveal that medieval Mali was...	ambitious



Glossary

Scholars - academics, people who are known for learning

Mosque - Muslim place of learning (and worship)

