

UOreuo0 S739 PIV70cooperative institutions. In the words of historian Astley Goodwin, "the Crescent had access to gold. The Cross did not. Though Musa preferred to secure trade and cooperation through cultural inclusion, he was willing to make exceptions. His standing army was tasked with eradicating the bandits stalling trade in the Sahara, and desert trade expanded. Far greater quantities of Chinese silk, Persian fabrics, Indian spices, European metalwork, and Arabian horses travelled through Malian territory," all of which were subject to taxation and tribute. Mali regarded economic power as the control and authority over trade routes more so than controlling the sources of traded materials, such as gold mines or forests. Their allure had catalysed the development of the empire itself: Malian authority was established through the migration of the Malinke (also called the Mandinka), who moved west in search of salt and gold. Salt was vital to the Saharan traveller: not only was it vital for the preservation of food, but it was also used to replace bio-salts lost through sweat on long journeys through one of the most arid, hard-to-traverse regions on earth. Foreign traders would set down goods at a natural barrier—traditionally at a riverbank and retreat.