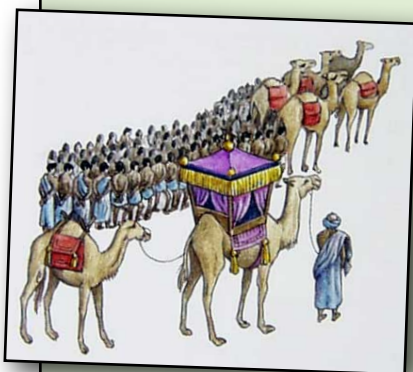


"The Many Effects of Mr. Musa"

Mansa Musa is mostly remembered for his extravagant *hajj*, or pilgrimage, to Mecca. On this trip, Musa brought with him 100 camel-loads of gold, each weighing 300 pounds, 500 slaves, each carrying a 4 pound gold staff, and thousands of his citizens.

With his lavish spending and generosity in Cairo and Mecca, he ran out of money and had to borrow enough for his return trip. Wherever he went he gave gold to the needy as is required by a pillar of Islam. Mansa Musa and his followers gave out so much gold that they depressed its value in Egypt and caused its value to fall. Gold in Egypt wouldn't rise in value for over 12 years!



However, attention should be focused on the effects of the *hajj*, rather than the pilgrimage itself. The pilgrimage planted Mali in the minds of all who encountered Mansa Musa. Its riches fired up the imagination that Mali was a "city of Gold". Because of Musa's adventure, Mali appeared on a "Map of the World" for the first time in 1339. In 1367, another map of the world showed a road leading from North Africa through the Sahara Desert, a clue that trade had been established between Arabia and Africa.

Mansa Musa brought back with him an Arabic library and several religious scholars. This alone shows how Musa advanced education within the empire. Muslim architects also returned with Musa to Mali, many who built the great mosques at Gao and Timbuktu. These architects were also talented in city planning, poetry, and music, all of which added to the richness of Islamic culture in the Mali kingdom.

Mansa Musa strengthened Islam and promoted education, trade, and commerce in Mali, specifically in Timbuktu. The foundation was laid for Timbuktu to become the cultural and commercial center of Western Africa. Here, Islam prospered. Arabic dictionaries were printed by the thousands and scholars educated many Africans on mathematics, the natural sciences, and the Islamic religion. Eventually, **diplomatic** relations were established with neighboring areas - friendly visitors were exchanged between Mali and Morocco, and students from Mali were sent to study in Morocco.

Mansa Musa ruled for 25 years, bringing prosperity and stability to Mali and expanding the empire he inherited. Mali achieved the apex of its territorial expansion under Mansa Musa. The Mali Empire extended from the Atlantic coast in the west to Songhai. Mali stretched from the salt mines of in the north to the legendary gold mines of the south.

Mansa Musa died in 1337. He had brought stability and good government to Mali. Musa spread Mali's fame abroad, making it truly remarkable both for its size and its wealth.

