THE CARAVANS OF GOLD

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Introduction

Africa is considered by most paleoanthropologists to be the oldest inhabited territory on Earth, with the human species originating from the continent. The movie Caravans of Gold by written by Basil Davidson. Mr. Davidson tells us much about how Africa’s past, present, the future is viewed as a whole, especially by the Europeans. It depicts and presents information about how the Europeans looked at Africans as different but equal. He also tells the story of the love of gold started in Mali “the place where gold derived from” to Cairo where the Europeans eventually would join the need and love of the caravans of gold.

Mali borders Algeria on the north, Niger on the east, Burkina Faso and the Côte d'Ivoire on the south, Guinea on the south-west, and Senegal and Mauritania on the west. Mali is the heart of trading. Its city is the commercial center of West Africa. It was said that Mali’s economy is based entirely on gold. It was known for farming and military strength, but gold remain the main source income. With roots in the gold in West, it made the empire one of the largest trading systems. There were goldsmiths that created jewelry in different styles and shapes; that reflected regional or superior distinction.

In the Niger River gold was found which gave a new wealth to the forest people of the Ashanti Empire. It was said that the King of Ghana was the wealthiest of all kings on Earth and Ancient stability and peace is still exhibited in the area by the Niger River. Fishing in the Niger River has also brought an abundance of sustenance. The women there did the work of smoking dry fish and selling a proportion to get a profit.

The city of Timbuktu was converted from a trading city by the Muslim emperor Kunkun Musa to a center of learning and religion. Kunkun Musa introduced trade books that brought more profits in than any other business. It also developed a city of national literacy. The children
were required to memorize the Kuran in Arabic. Camels were used to carry the gold across the desert. Upon arrival, the camels were greeted with singing and dancing. It took about 60 days to cross the Sahara, with Cairo being the final destination. The Burbons controlled the trade routes in North Africa. Without their power and leadership, the trade routes may not have progressed so far.

At the end was the city of Cairo; Cairo is the capital of Egypt and the largest city in the Arab world and Africa, and its metropolitan area is the 16th largest in the world. Cairo has long been a center of the region’s political and cultural life. Cairo has an Islamic center rich and renowned as the "metropolis of the universe." Founded by the Fatimid dynasty in the 10th century AD, but the land composing the present-day city was the site of national capitals whose remnants remain visible in parts of Old Cairo. The Europeans begin minted coins to be used as currency. There were Swahili villages all along the coast with their distinctive history, culture, and architecture. These lead to the essential trading post of Kilwar. Inopportune, treasure seeking Europeans attacked these kingdoms once they were exposed. The Europeans saw the massive kingdom and already traditional intercontinental trading networks, but rejected to give credit to the Africans for forming it. And once the Portuguese sailed around the Cape into the Indian Ocean, the Europeans took over the trade routes, triggering the destruction of all of the African cities which were encouraged by the trade.

Conclusion

Although Mali is today one of the poorest countries in the world, it has a long and illustrious past as an integral part of great African empires. The majority of Mali's people are Muslim, and the official language is French. Bambara, however, is the country's true lingua franca. Mali still is and remains the nation of unusual interest, charm, and the caravans of gold.
Works Cited

Davidson, B. (Director). 1984 Caravans of Gold [Motion picture]