

Who was Mansa Musa and what was his impact on his kingdom and the world?



This research question was of interest to me because whenever I go on the Internet and search up “who was the richest person to ever walk the earth” the only name that has come up from when I first searched this up when I was 9 to recently when I searched this up again to see if it has changed, was Mansa Musa the king of the Mali empire in Africa around 1312 C.E to 1337 C.E he is often called “The King of kings.” He had an estimated net worth of 400 billion dollars and is also known as the richest king in the world. This topic really interests me and makes me want to talk more about it or bring more attention to it because Africa is seen as a continent that lacks a lot and is very poor but it was one of the only continents with so many riches and natural resources and the richest king and person to ever walk the earth was African. What I expect to find in my research is more of Mansa Musa’s Rise to power, how he was able to become the richest person to ever live and his impact on his kingdom and the world. what I will do if I find information that goes completely against what I had expected to find is that I will still write about it anyway because it is important to see different perspectives and point of views even if it is different from what I expected



john kuroski. "How Mansa Musa Became The Richest Person In History". All That's Interesting. Published September/19/2021.
<https://allthatsinteresting.com/mansa-musa>

Summary: "How Mansa Musa Became The Richest Person In History" by John Kuroski is an article that talks about Mansa Musa's Lasting Impact on his kingdom and all the things he did that set his empire up for success years after his death. Mansa Musa was not a greedy person that Kept all that wealth to himself, instead he was a very generous emperor that would often give out so much Gold that the value of Gold would decrease. Aside from handing out gold to people that needed or simply just giving away gold because he had so much, he used his wealth to do much more. The Article goes into detail on how Mansa Musa used his wealth to help his empire and help raise his empire as a whole. Mansa Musa was a strong advocate for education and islamic education. During his reign he built a great number of mosques and universities in Mali. This later lead to Timbuktu Mali becoming one of the most "Prominent cities in the Islamic world"(Kuroski).

Key Quotes:

"Ultimately, he used most of it to build a great number of mosques (legend says he built one every Friday during his reign), the most famous of which is the Djinguereber Mosque. He also commissioned several universities throughout the kingdom."

"While Mansa Musa was alive, his investment in Islamic education in Mali drew scores of Muslim scholars, poets, and artisans to his empire. They congregated in Timbuktu, which quickly became known as one of the most prominent cities in the Islamic world."

"In addition, Musa quite literally put himself, and his empire, on the map. His caravan during his Mecca pilgrimage had attracted so much attention that Europeans — who were thousands of miles away — heard about the trip."

Rhetorical analysis:

The author of this Article is John Kuroski, the article was published by the "All things interesting digital publisher". The article was written on september of 2021. The reason why the author chose to write this acticle was because he wanted to educated more people about the life and legacy of Mansa Musa. This article is more directed to the muslim population because it talks about Mansa Musa's impact on the islamic religion in his empire and this later impacting other countries. The news of the mosques and universities he built spread to the far corners of the earth and this caused a wave of "Muslim scholars, poets, and artisans to his empire" causing Timbuktu Mali to become very well know for its abundance in culture and religion. The choice in tone and pictures the author used really helped draw in more attention from the audience. This is because the author had a very welcoming yet assertive tone that draws in the reader and makes want to keep reading. The author also used a lot of Cartoon images to depict the different topics he was discussing and this really helps the audeince have a type of visual representation of what is going on, keeping them more engaged in the reading.

In "How Mansa Musa Became The Richest Person In History" John Kuroski writes,"Ultimately, he used most of it to build a great number of mosques (legend says he built one every Friday during his reign), the most famous of which is the Djinguereber Mosque. He also commissioned several universities throughout the kingdom." In short John Kuroski emphases the idea that Mansa Musa was a strong believer in islamic education and saw the importance of having a place where people could come together and learn more about the islamic religion and to also gain new found knowledge. Mansa Musa Felt so strongly about this that he built so many Mosques all around his empire during his reign. This further proves to me how great of an emperor Mansa Musa was. Not only was he generous and would had out Gold to anyone who needed, but he also brought people together through religion. He was a strong believer in education and religious education because he himself was a devout muslim. He could have been selfish and kept all his wealth to himself and did as he pleased but instead he used his wealth to not only help people but to also help his empire as a whole by providing them easier access to education and religious education.

Richard Austin. "The Golden caravan". Published October 19th 2022 <https://richardaustinwriter.com/2020/10/19/the-golden-caravan-a-poem/>

Summary : "The Golden Caravan" by Richard Austin is a poem that dives into Mansa Musa's journey to Mecca. Mecca is the birthplace of prophet Muhammad, it is considered the spiritual center of Islam. All Muslims make the journey to Mecca a pilgrimage known as (Hajj) at least once in their lifetime. The poem goes into depth on Mansa Musa's pilgrimage, it talks about the thousands of camels he had by his side, his sixty thousand men marching by his side dressed in the finest clothing. Mansa Musa was a powerful king and he wanted that to be known all over the world. He did not ever hesitate to show his true wealth, to the extent that on his journey to Mecca each and every single camel he had would carry "Over 130kg of Gold"(Austin).

Key Quotes:

"Gold by the ton through foreign lands.
As Mansa Musa makes his way,
To holy Mecca day after day,
Sixty thousand men they march,
Hunger aches and lips they parch."

"Gold he sprinkles on every town,
Enough to bring them crashing down,
Leaving chaos in his wake,
Generous but destructive mistake."

"Eyes look on around the globe,
Fixed on this man in his golden robe,
Mansa Musa; King of kings,
Whose reign will pass as do all things."



Rhetorical Analysis:

The Author of this poem is Richard Austin. The Author's attitude towards the subject is very neutral not really positive or negative. I say this because while some of the stuff he said did portray Mansa Musa in a good light there were also certain stuff he said in the poem that didn't. In the poem he talked about Mansa Musa being generous and giving out a lot of gold in the countries and towns he passed, while this shows Mansa Musa in a good light, Richard also goes on to say that due to Mansa Musa giving out so much gold it was "enough to bring them crashing down"(Austin). This is because when he gave out so much gold the value of gold decreased and it ruined economies. This poem is for the general audience and anyone who wants learn more about Mansa Musa's Journey to hajj. This poem is a really good way for people who know nothing about Mansa Musa or his Journey to be able to gain some new insight on him. The occasion and purpose of this article was to educate people more on Mansa Musa's trip to Mecca. The genre of this poem is Historical because it talks about a Historical figure from the past. The tone of this poem is very direct and non biased because the author was not leaning to one side and either trying to portray Mansa Musa in a bad or good way, but simply to educate us about the actual events that took place.

In "The Golden Caravan" Richard Austin writes "Gold he sprinkles on every town, enough to bring them crashing down, leaving chaos in his wake, generous but destructive mistake." What Austin references in this quote is one of the most talked about things Mansa Musa was known for. This quote talks about Mansa Musa making a "generous but destructive mistake". What Austin meant by this was while what he did came from a place of good intentions and good will, it ended up causing damage. While Mansa Musa did not intend for his good deed to become such a huge problem I still believe that he did a Good thing. He was a generous emperor and he was helping people by giving out gold. He changed so many lives for the better because he chose to share his wealth instead of being greedy and keeping it all to himself. He gave out so much Gold in Cairo Egypt during his pilgrimage to Mecca that it almost ruined Egypt's economy. He didn't mean for that to happen and it wasn't his intention for that to happen. He was Just a rich king who wanted to share his wealth with the rest of the world.



Jessica Smith. "Mansa Musa, one of the wealthiest people to ever live."

Published: May 18th 2015.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=O3YJMaL55TM&t=1s

Summary: "Mansa Musa, one of the wealthiest people to ever live" narrated by Jessica Smith, is a TED talk video that talks about the impact Mansa Musa's Journey to Hajj had on his kingdom and Africa as a whole. Mansa Musa lived a lavish life, he was wealthy and never hesitated to remind people of his wealth. The video goes into depth on how all the things such as the thousands of camels and horses all carrying gold, thousands of soldiers, civilians and slaves all also carrying Gold and dressed in the finest clothes, made his journey heard all around the world. An encounter with Mansa Musa during his journey to Hajj would have been one nobody could ever forget or be able to keep quiet about. So the news of Mansa Musa began to spread to the far corners of the world. Soon everyone knew about Mansa Musa the African king of Mali with enormous wealth who almost destroyed Egypt's economy by giving away so much gold the price of gold became almost worthless. The video also talks about the "1375 Catalan Atlas" which was an important world map of medieval Europe that depicted Mansa Musa. He had become world known.

Key Quotes:

"He brought a caravan stretching as far as the eye can see... Chroniclers describe an entourage of tens of thousands of soldiers, civilians and slaves bearing Gold staffs and dressed in fine silks and many camels and horses bearing an abundance of gold bars."

"This journey reportedly took over a year, and by the time Mansa Musa returned tales of his amazing wealth had spread to the ports of the Mediterranean."

"Mali and its king were elevated to near legendary status, Cemented by their inclusion on the 1375 Catalan Atlas; one of the most important world maps of medieval Europe, it depicted the king holding a scepter and a gleaming golden nugget. Mansa Musa Had literally put his empire and himself on the map."

Rhetorical Analysis:

The narrator/ author of this video is Jessica Smith. The organization in which this video was created is TEDtalk. The audience of this video are mostly young kids because the video is depicted as a cartoon and teaches about Mansa Musa's journey to Hajj using cartoon drawings and images, so this mostly captures the attention of young teens and students because they are able to learn about Mansa Musa in a fun and exciting way. The choice in images and tone the author/ editors made was that they made this video very welcoming and entertaining to watch. Just from the cover of the video it already draws your attention to it because it is so colorful and detailed and makes you want to know more on what this video will be about. These choices in images and tone will really help further draw in a wide audience and keep them engaged. The purpose of creating this video was that the author/ narrator wanted to bring light to how Mansa Musa put his empire on the map and made it known all around the world. The genre of this video is Historical because it talks about a historical figure.

Conclusion

When I heard the name Mansa Musa what immediately would often come to mind was “Oh Mansa Musa he was the richest person to ever live” but he was so much more than his wealth and he also did so many great things with his wealth. Aside from being extremely wealthy, Mansa Musa was a devout Muslim. He wasn't always muslim he converted to Islam in the early years of his reign. What surprised me the most during my research was Mansa Musa's impact on his empire and the events that took place during his journey to hajj. Mansa Musa was a huge activist for education and islamic education, he wanted his people to be able to freely and openly learn about and practice the islamic religion. So during his reign he built some of the oldest mosque's(still standing today) and universities all over his empire. This was surprising to me because I did not expect someone of his status and wealth to really be interested in religion like he was or even interested in the welfare and accessibility his people had to religious education because most of the other wealthy kings around this same time never did half of the things Mansa Musa did for his kingdom, they were greedy and selfish kings who wanted to keep all their wealth to themselves so I assumed Mansa Musa would be the same but I was proven wrong.

Mansa Musa's journey to hajj can truly go down in history as one of the most iconic pilgrimages ever. On his pilgrimage, Mansa Musa brought with him Sixty thousand men all dressed in the finest silk, Horses and camels all carrying approximately 130 kg of gold and so much more. His 3 month stay in Cairo is most talked about when anyone mentions “Mansa Musa's pilgrimage”. This is because during his 3 month stay he handed out so much Gold in Cairo that the value of Gold had tremendously decreased causing Egypt's economy to severally plummet for the next 12-15 years. What I have learned is important because it has thought me not judge historical figures without getting the full story, because before this research project I had assumed that because Mansa Musa was immensely wealthy he would be greedy. The only reason I thought this way was because I noticed a pattern with a lot of kings an leaders in history being greedy and hungry for more power and wealth. But Mansa Musa was different he actually cared about his kingdom and his people, making sure they would be ok years after he was gone. It would be beneficial for young Muslim girls and boys to know about this information. It is important that they are educated on Mansa Musa's impact of the Islamic religion in Africa being that he was one of the first emperors in Africa to build mosques and really care about islamic education, because he wanted future generations to have a place where they can come together, to learn and embrace the islamic religion.

