Rise and Fall of Sub Sahara estate

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In sub-Saharan Africa 1, there were several centers for political and cultural development. Several peripheral societies attracted each of these centers. The countries of Western and Central Sudan, as well as Ethiopia, achieved great development. In Western Sudan during the IV-XVII centuries. It has succeeded each other as a hegemon in the political and cultural life of the state of Ghana, Mali and Songhai. In the spaces of Central Sudan, there were Haus and Fulbe states, Kanem and Born. In Egypt, in the name of the country of repetition, the Berbers of Millet, the Hausa of Pohangara, the Arabs of Melil, and the Fulani of Mali. Hence the outside world knew this name. The Islamic State of Mali is one of the strongest and richest African countries that emerged in West Africa at the time. It distinguishes it from the great role it played to unite African tribes within states, units or kingdoms. As well as its prominent role in spreading Islam in West Africa (Quigley, 2002).

The rulers of Ghana relying on an army of up to 200 thousand people, extended their power to a vast territory, including the western and central regions of the modern Republic of Mali as well as the west and southwest of modern Senegal and Mauritania. The ethnic base of the state was Soninka, one of the peoples of Mandingo.

The capital of Ghana the city of Kumbi-Sale (on the territory of Mauritania) - was a major center for the caravan trade in salt, gold and slaves with the Muslim countries of North Africa. If before the XI century. Various local religious beliefs prevailed in the country, then Islam spread. This was mainly due to the invasion of the “empire” of warlike Berber tribes.

In 1076, their leader Abu Bekr captured the capital Kumbi and imposed a tribute on the vanquished. The head of state and the nobility of Ghana converted to Islam in the hope of preserving their privileged position. Under the pressure of the Islamized ruling elite, Islam began to spread rapidly among the tribe’s subject to the state - Tuku Ler and Songhai, Sarakole and Diula. Despite certain pockets of resistance to the influence of Islam, Islam spread rapidly, and many peoples of West Sudan were Islamized. The most persistent resistance was mine, which did not accept this faith, remained adherents of their own beliefs. The period of civil strife has come. In 1240, Sundyat Keita - the head of one of the provinces of Ghana, the leader of the Malinka people - seized power and founded a new state, which became the second great power of the Sudanese belt - Mali. (Quigley, 2002).

**Mali ( XIII - XVII centuries)**

In the second quarter of the XIII century. The rulers of the people of Mandingo, taking advantage of the weakening of Ghana, recreated the state of Mali, which reached its peak by the first half of the fourteenth century. During the reign of Musa I (1312–1337) and his brother Suleiman (1341–1360). The power of Mansa (ruler) spread from the areas adjacent to the Atlantic Ocean to the city of Gao. During this period, the empire of Mali noted the stability of the central government, as well as an abundance of food and developed weaving.

The bulk of the population of Mali lived in large family communities. This organization, using prisoners planted on the ground, has become the main form of folding early feudal relations in the state. Closed professional castes occupied a special place in the social structure of society. Each rank was engaged in a particular craft, the art of which was inherited. The artisan castes were not equal: blacksmiths were in the first place, followed by carpenters and woodcarvers, then weavers, etc. Professional singers and storytellers-groats occupied the last step in the hierarchy. In turn, the entire class of artisans was in a lower position than communal farmers. The tsarist guard, created from slaves, acquired an ever-increasing role in society. Its commanders became an influential part of the culture. (Darwin, 2007)

The basis of the economy of the state of Mali was agriculture and animal husbandry. An important place was occupied by caravan trade with the countries of North Africa and Egypt. The main items of business were gold and slaves, which were exchanged for salt and handicrafts made in North Africa. Mali has gained fame as a gold supplier from Western Sudan to the entire Mediterranean. On the map of Africa of the XIV century. the ruler of Mali was designated as "lord of gold." Large trading cities - Jenna, Tombouctou and Gao - at the same time playing the role of cultural centers. They formed Muslim colonies, which had a significant impact on the development of Mali. A lively trade and cultural exchange with Muslim countries in northern Africa contributed to the further spread of Islam in the state. The pilgrimages of the rulers of Mali to Mecca turned into the most important political actions, demonstrating the power and wealth of the empire of Mali.

 In 1321, Mansa Musa I performed hajj to Mecca. The king's entourage was composed of numerous courtiers and slaves. The king rode a horse, preceded by five hundred slaves, each holding a golden rod in his hands. The caravan accompanying the king carried a hundred bales of gold. The Arab historian al-Omari, who visited Cairo twelve years after the Mansa journey, reports that long after this hajj there they continued to talk about the ruler of Sudan. According to him, the fabulous generosity with which Mansa Musa distributed gold to the people caused a drop-in price for this Precious Metal. In the XVII century. The territory of the former empire was limited to a small area. It was controlled by members of the imperial clan Keith, who retained power in their domain until the second half of the 19th century.

**Songai State ( XVI - mid XVII century)**

The Principality of Songhai at the time of its formation and before the establishment of its hegemony in the region was located in the Niger River Valley and was in vassal dependence on the Malian "empire". Back in the 7th century the first dynasty of the rulers of Songhai, bearing the title "di", and from the end of the XIII century. - The title "shea" or "sonny". At the end of the XI century. Under the "day", the Oblique state religion in Songai becomes Islam. (Quigley, 2002).

The gradual rise of Songai coincides with the heyday of Mali. The dependence on Mali lasted almost two centuries, until the accession to the throne of one of the prominent figures of Songhai, Sonny Ali. The basis of the economy of the Songhai principality was agriculture. Cattle breeding and fishing were quite developed. A significant role in economic life was played by hunting. Most of the income of the rulers of Songhai until the end of the XVI century. Came from trans-Saharan trade, mainly from the exchange of salt for gold from southern Sudan. Gradually, a system of feudal relations was formed, intertwined with elements of the slave system and the primitive communal system.

After the accession to the throne, Sonny Ali Bera, or Great Ali (1464–1492), Songhai expands his borders Principality and turns into power. Al captured significant trade centers between North and West Africa. Having inflicted a heavy defeat on the ruler of my people (1438), Ali Ber established the hegemony of Songai in Western Sudan for more than a century. After the death of Ali, his son and successor Sonny Bubakar Dao was almost immediately removed from power (1493) by the former military commander of his father, Mohammed Toure, who assumed the title of "Askiya" (king). During the reign of Askia al-Hajj Muhammad I (1493-1529), the Songhai Power was located on a vast territory - from the headwaters of the Senegal and Gambia rivers in the west to the Tener desert in the east, from the salt mines of Tegazza in northern Sahara to the Haus countries in the south-east. (Le Vine, 1997).

In the second half of the XVI century, as a result of the consolidation of land slaves-prisoners of war in the grain regions of the state and the gradual enslavement of free sleep-gays, a class of feudally dependent peasantry was formed. At the other extreme, a single ruling class was formed, consisting of two types - the military-administrative and the spiritual merchant aristocracy. Both estates disposed of large land property. The primary source of income for the ruling elite of the Songhai society was the state-developed system of exploitation of the dependent part-time population. Ordinary warriors were also equated with dependent.

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