

Arkansas expedition of de soto and de la salle



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The respective expeditions of René Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, or Robert de La Salle and Hernando de Soto have grown interests both from archeologists and historians. Their expeditions in Arkansas region have found significance in the history of the region and the people, and the possible influences and the impacts to the locals and their countries alike. The succeeding two paragraphs will deal with their expeditions.

Hernando de Soto, with the hope of finding gold, silver and other valuable treasures, led an expedition of 600 to 700 men, 24 priests, 9 ships and 220 horses. On May of 1539, the group landed on the western coast of Florida. The place was named Espiritu Santo that is now Bradenton, Florida. The exact route of the expedition is still under discussion. It was agreed by many that the expedition ran west-northwest crossing Mississippi, Arkansas and Oklahoma until Texas. Though others suggested a northern route crossing Kentucky and Indiana to the Great Lakes.

In spite the uncertainty, the most accepted study of the route of the de Soto expedition was from the year 1939 from an anthropologist John R. Swanton (Wikipedia). Swanton's theory "relied largely on the four surviving accounts of the expedition, on study of the terrain over which the army marched, and on the meager archeological information that was available at that time" (Mitchem 2000). As a précis, from Espiritu Santo the de Soto expedition progressed to Florida and Southern U. S. where they brutally ran sacked the villages.

Joined by the interpreters Juan Ortiz and Perico they reached Anhaica, capital of Apalachee, which presently located near downtown of Tallahassee, Florida, The expedition continued to the Eastern Appalachian Mountains and <https://assignbuster.com/arkansas-expedition-of-de-soto-and-de-la-salle/>

crossed what were now Georgia, South and North Carolina and Tennessee. In search for the famous treasure of the tribe Cofitachequi and accompanied by the rival tribe Ocute, they reached what is now Columbia, South Carolina. The said famous treasure of gold turned out to be copper. In dismay, they took everything and destroyed the village. They then crossed Carolinas, Georgia and Alabama.

In the city of Mauvila (or Mabila), the Choctaw tribe ambushed the group where they were wounded and lose some men and possessions. On May 8, 1541, they reached the Mississippi River and traveled westward to Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas. They fought with Tula tribe in Caddo River and lose everything. On May 21, 1542, de Soto died in Guachoya (near present McArthur, Arkansas). The expedition was then aborted (Wikipedia). Robert de La Salle's expedition was separated into two parts. First, when he led only 23 Frenchmen and 18 Native Americans on Mississippi River on 1682. He marked and claimed what is now Venice, Louisiana as a France territory.

De La Salle returned to France and prepared for a return expedition to establish a French colony. He led 300 colonists and 4 ships. On the way, they lost 2 ships and 1 ship ran aground. They reached Fort Saint Louis of Texas and headed eastward to locate the Mississippi. It was in 1687 that de La Salle was murdered near the site of now Navasota, Texas by uprising followers. His colony lasted only until 1687 when Indians took it over (Wikipedia). The de Soto and de La Salle expeditions were made with different purposes. Though both their expeditions failed, the events that took place that led to their failure differed significantly.

“ The records of the expedition contributed in large part to geographic, biological, and ethnologic knowledge in Europe. The de Soto expedition's descriptions of the North American natives are the earliest known source of knowledge on the societies in the southeastern North Americas” (Wikipedia). While “ The encroachment of La Salle and other representatives of French interests into the Spanish claimed territory of Texas, led Spain to establish a fort, Presidio La Bahia (Goliad, Texas), in 1721, at the site of the remains of Fort Saint Louis” (Wikipedia).