

Unit 2: Networks of Exchange 1200-1450

2.1: The Silk Roads 1200-1450 A

- Shaping of old cultures and beginnings of new cultures
- Stretched all the way from China to Europe and into North Africa
 - Existed before 1200 but worked best as a conduit of trade when large empires controlled all the land across which they stretched
 - 200 CE: **Roman Empire** and **Han China** had a robust trading relationship because they almost controlled all the land in the silk roads
 - Mongols: unified silk roads
- Trade moved goods all across afro-urasia during good times
 - Goods often packed in saddlebags of a camel **caravan**
 - Not a lot of space for lots of travel so most goods were luxury goods
 - **Chinese Silk**
 - Exclusive to china, demand spread across world as it became a status symbol
- Silk roads as a conduit for culture
 - Buddhism spread widely throughout central and east asia through merchants and changed as it spread
 - Buddhist monasteries began to use lavish products despite the buddhist ideal of rejecting material value
 - **Mahayana buddhism** developed and spread across trade routes
 - Buddha became a **deity**, emphasis on compassionate works and earning of merit
 - **Sogdian** city of **Samarkand**
 - Buddhists used **Zoroastrian fire rituals** into religion
 - **Syncretism** and change
- Silk roads as a conduit for disease
 - Different civilizations had different diseases but as they connected, those with low immunity were affected
 - **Black death/bubonic plague (1346-1351)**
 - Nearly half of european population died between 1346-1348
 - Similar results in China and Islamic World

2.2: The Mongol Empires and the Making of the Modern World 1200-1450 T

- **Mongols (1206-1368)** were pastoral people who emerged in 13th century who controlled largest land based empire in all of human history
 - However left a very small cultural footprint on history
- **Temujin (Genghis/Chinggis Khan)**
 - Born in 12th century into network of fractured mongolian tribes which warred against each other
 - Temujin and his family became social outcasts but his magnetic personality allowed him to create alliances between tribes uniting them and becoming chief
 - Reputation for ruthlessness with enemies, many military victories
- Mongol Tactics
 - Instead of destroying or enslaving enemies, **incorporated** them into military
- Mongol Expansion
 - First expanded to china
 - 1209 attack against chinese
 - Fierce attacks defeating armies and capturing cities
 - Those defeated could either join mongol army or die
- Organization of army led to success despite unfavorable odds
 - Organized in groups of 10, 100, etc. to easily command large groups of troops
 - Conquered people were scattered among groups to prevent rebellion
 - Army was fiercely loyal out of fear
 - If a member of a unit deserted, the whole unit was killed
- Tolerance
 - Allowed conquered people to keep religion
- Response to mongols
 - China: most difficult, 1209-1279
 - Began in northern china and at first wanted to take power but goal changed to incorporating chinese into society
 - Wanted landowners to keep land as long as they pledged loyalty
 - Unified china into **Yuan dynasty (1271-1368)**
 - Some chinese even thought mongols had mandate of heaven
 - Used existing systems of taxation and administration
 - Roads built, canals improved, scholars and artists patronized
 - Forced out by peasant rebellions and plague
 - **Persians**: more abrupt than china
 - Persian forces fell quickly to mongols

- Was hard for persians to understand that the infidel Mongols could have conquered them so easily
- Mongols were *brutal* in their conquest
 - **1258 sacking of Baghdad** killed 200,000 people
- After defeating persians, persians had more cultural influence than mongols did
 - Used persian administrative system, many mongols became muslim, allowed persian administrators to stay in power
- Mongols in persia slowly **assimilated** and disappeared over time

2.3: Exchange in the Indian Ocean 1200-1450 A

- **Indian Ocean** linked societies by sea
 - Largest sea based trade network before **Atlantic** in 1500s
 - Stretched from China all the way to East Africa
- Ships were larger so they could also trade bulk goods
 - Didn't have to prioritize selling luxury goods
 - **Porcelain** from china, **spices** from SEA, **cotton/spices** from india, **ivory/gold** from East Africa
 - **Bulk goods** were crops such as **wheat, sugar, rice**
- **Monsoon winds**
 - By this period they had figured out patterns of wind so used seasonal winds to power ships
- Maritime innovations
 - **Magnetic compass**
 - **Astrolabe** calculated latitude
 - **Chinese Junks**: Large flat bottom ships with square sails with trunks to carry goods
- Growth of Indian Ocean Trade Routes
 - Existed before 1200 but saw greatest growth in 1200-1450
 - During **Tang (618-907)** and **Song (960-1279)** dynasties
 - China saw great economic prosperity and export
 - Also grew due to **Islam**
 - Islam is positive to merchant activity
 - Large islamic empires led to large area of land being positive towards trade
- Indian Ocean Changing Culture
 - SEA was right in middle of Indian Ocean Trade Routes so controlling islands was very important
 - **Srivijaya Kingdom (c.600-c.1200)**

- **Buddhist** empire that controlled trade in Indonesia along key trade routes and cities
- **Swahili Civilization**
 - Civilization emerged in 8th century as a series of commercial city-states
 - Traded **gold, ivory, slaves**
 - **Merchant class** emerged, swahili commercial centers flourished
 - Each city state had its own king so it wasn't centralized
 - **Islam** became dominant religion in area from muslim merchants
 - Swahili language fusion of native **Bantu language** and **Arabic**

2.4: Trans-Saharan Trade Routes 1200-1450 T

- Linked **North Africa** and **Mediterranean** with **interior of Africa**
 - Both areas had different goods from different climates which incentivized trade
 - North africa mainly produced manufactured goods like **cloth, glasswork, books**
 - Southwest Africa were agricultural: **grain crops, yams, kola nuts**
- Introduction of **Arabian Camel** facilitated trade
 - Camels could easily cross the harsh deserts allowing easier travel across Sahara
- Cultural changes in **Trans-Saharan Trade Routes**
 - 500-1600, west african civilizations grew
 - **Kingdom of Mali (more info unit 1)** peaked in 14th century
 - Monopoly on trade of **horses** and **metals**
 - Generated revenue by taxing **salt** and **copper**
 - Social hierarchy:
 - Similar to other civilizations, **royalty**, then **elite classes**, then **merchants**, then **military/religion** then **peasants**, then **slaves**

2.5: Cultural Consequences of Connectivity 1200-1450

A

- More was carried along trade routes than goods and services
- Religion
 - When religions were introduced to new areas, one of two outcomes
 - 1. Unified the people and justified leaders
 - 2. the religion **syncretized** with others mixing to create something new
 - **Buddhism** met **Daoist** beliefs in China resulting in **Zen(Chan) Buddhism**
 - Some Confucian scholar gentry in Song Dynasty opposed mixing of religions
 - **Neo Confucianism**

- moral, ethical, and metaphysical Chinese philosophy influenced by **Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism**
 - Popular in Song and Ming Dynasty
 - Spread to **Korea and Japan**
- Muslim Merchants
 - Muslim merchants brought islam to **East African Coast** from **Indian Ocean**
 - Formed **Swahili** language
 - **Swahili** language fusion of native **Bantu language** and **Arabic**
 - Many Bantu people became Muslim
- Scientific and Technological consequences
 - Medical advances in Cairo led to improved care in hospitals
 - Physicians and pharmacists began to **standardize** their profession
 - Had to study for **medical examinations** and **licensing**
 - Triangular **lateen sail**
 - Allowed sailors to tack into wind for more flexibility in travel
 - **Stern post rudder** allowed for more precision in turning
 - **Magnetic compass, astrolabe** → navigation (more above)
- Growth of cities
 - **Hangzhou china**, increase in trade led to increasing urbanization
 - Became largest and most metropolitan cities in china with population over 1 million
 - Great art from Hangzhou because people didn't have to worry about food
 - **Poetry and literature** flourished
 - Poets **Lu Yu** and **Xin Qiji**
 - Hangzhou was a diverse city with thriving Arab community
 - Travelers
 - **Marco Polo**
 - Due to mongols could travel far and wide
 - Marco Polo left home in venice in late 1200s and arrived at court of Kublai Khan
 - Kublai Khan was so interested in Polo's stories that he made Polo ambassador to various parts of China
 - Jailed by enemies of Venetians and in jail he told stories of his travels which were written down and became very popular in Europe spreading interest for Asia and exploration.
 - **Ibn Battuta**
 - Muslim traveler who wanted to travel throughout **dar al-Islam**
 - Made **pilgrimage to Mecca**, moved through **Persia, East African Coast, India, Mali, Spain**, and elsewhere.

- Kept a journal and commented on lands and people he visited
- Publication of the journals had a similar effect on the Muslim population as Marco Polo's stories

2.6: Environmental Consequences of Connectivity

1200-1450 T

- Two major categories of things that spread through trade networks
 - Agriculture, disease
- Agriculture
 - Merchants traveled from place to place bringing new crops
 - **Champa rice** spread from Vietnam to China and was drought resistant with faster harvests
 - Led to great population growth
 - Environmental impact led to transformation of land
 - **terrace farming**: steps were cut in hillsides to plant rice
 - **Bananas** from SEA spread to Africa where **Bantu-speaking people** learned to plant and cultivate it
 - **Yams** were food staple for bantu, but could now move to areas where yams couldn't grow
 - Resulted in large scale migration which also happened in other areas when new crops were introduced
- Environmental effects
 - As population increases, more stresses on land
 - Overgrazing in **Great Zimbabwe (more in unit 1)** led to environmental degradation and it was abandoned in 1400s for that reason
 - Land in Europe was changed through deforestation and Little Ice Age in 1300s
 - Resulted in large erosion of soil
- Spread of disease
 - Spread through merchants, especially **black death** (see above)
 - Disease spread through fleas, and once someone got it death was unpreventable
 - "Breakfast with family, dinner with ancestors"
 - Also spread by mongols and rats in ships through trade routes
 - **Caravanserai**
 - Little cities along silk roads where merchants could rest
 - Spread disease because people rested in close proximity to animals and animals have fleas
 - Economic results of black death

- Changed relationship between workers and lords in Europe
 - Workers were scarce so had more value

2.7: Comparison of Economic Exchange 1200-1450 A

- Trade Networks Review
 - **Silk Road**
 - Land based routes across **Eurasia** and north africa for over 2,000 years
 - Exchanged mostly **luxury goods**
 - Significant in transporting **ideas, technologies, and religion**
 - Declined in influence with the rise of **sea-based trade routes** and the growth of **European colonialism**
 - **Indian Ocean Trade**
 - Maritime network connecting coastal regions of **Indian Ocean** and **SE Asia**
 - Diverse group of traders exchanging **luxury items** and **bulk produce (agriculture)**
 - Facilitated by **monsoon winds** and Muslim's trade supportive society
 - Declined in influence with the rise of **sea-based trade routes** and the growth of **European colonialism**
 - **Trans-Saharan Trade**
 - Land based routes across Sahara desert
 - Exchanged goods, ideas, and cultures between West Africa and the Mediterranean
 - Dominated by arab and Berber traders
 - Exchanged gold, salt, ivory, and other luxury items
 - Important source of exotic animals and plants
 - Facilitated by use of camels who could withstand desert conditions
 - Important for spread of Islam and other religions
 - Declined in influence with the rise of **sea-based trade routes** and the growth of **European colonialism**
- Similarities and differences amongst all trade networks
 - Similarities:
 - Trade networks exchanged goods and resources
 - Trade networks were important in the economic development of the regions they connected
 - Trade Networks facilitated the exchange of **ideas, cultures(religion), and technologies**
 - All trade networks exchanged **culture, technology, and biology (disease)**

- **Buddhism on Silk Roads, Hinduism on Indian Ocean, and Islam on trans-Saharan**
- Commercial improvement increased volume of trade
- Trade networks promoted new trading cities (**entrepôts**)
- Innovations in pre-existing transport and commercial technologies impacted the growth of trade
 - **Caravanserai, forms of credit, development of money economies**
- Differences:
 - Goods traded varied and produced items symbolic to their region
 - **Silk road: silk, spices, precious metals**, luxury goods
 - **Indian Ocean: spices, textiles, luxury goods**, common goods in bulk
 - **Trans-Saharan: Salt, gold, ivory, kola nuts**
 - Geographical regions differed
 - **Silk Road: Eurasia** and parts of **North Africa**
 - **Indian Ocean: Africa, Middle East, South Asia, SE Asia**
 - **Trans-Saharan: Mediterranean, West Africa**
 - Transport and communication changed
 - **Silk Road, Trans-Saharan: land-based transportation (camels)**
 - **Indian Ocean: Ships (lateen sail, dhows)**
 - Political and economic context was different
 - **Silk Road: controlled by powerful states or empires**
 - **Mongols**
 - **Indian Ocean: open trade network, more decentralized**
 - Changes in trade routes were a result of increasing productive capacity with changes in social structures, gender structures, and environmental changes
 - Need for luxury goods increased in Afro-Eurasia
 - **Chinese, Persian, and Indian** merchants expanded the supply of **textiles** and **porcelains** for export
 - Production of **iron** and **steel** expanded in China