



# THE SILK ROAD

# The Silk road

- The "Silk Road" was an ancient network of trade routes that extended across Europe and Asia, linking powerful civilizations such as China and Rome.
- The Silk Road flourished from about 1500 B.C. to A.D. 1500 and extended from China through Central Asia to the Caspian and Black Seas.



# Traded goods



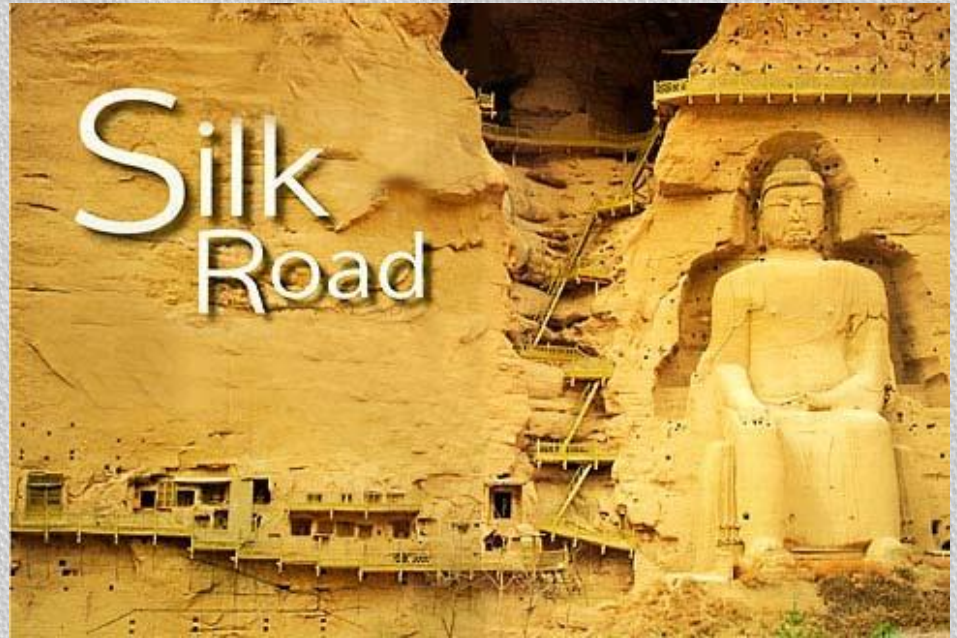
- Silk actually composed a relatively small portion of the trade along the Silk Road.
- Eastbound caravans brought gold, precious metals and stones, textiles, ivory, and coral
- Westbound caravans transported furs, ceramics, cinnamon bark, rhubarb, and bronze weapons

# Quiz Questions

- The Silk Road ran from which city to what other city?
- What two cardinal directions did the Silk Road run?

# Benefits of the Silk Road

- The effects on art, architecture, farming, and industry were immediate. There were direct imports of new products from the west including alfalfa, pomegranates, grape vines, and fine horses, but the real benefits to both cultures is less tangible. It fires the imagination to find that thoughts can be different from one's own.



# Oasis Towns

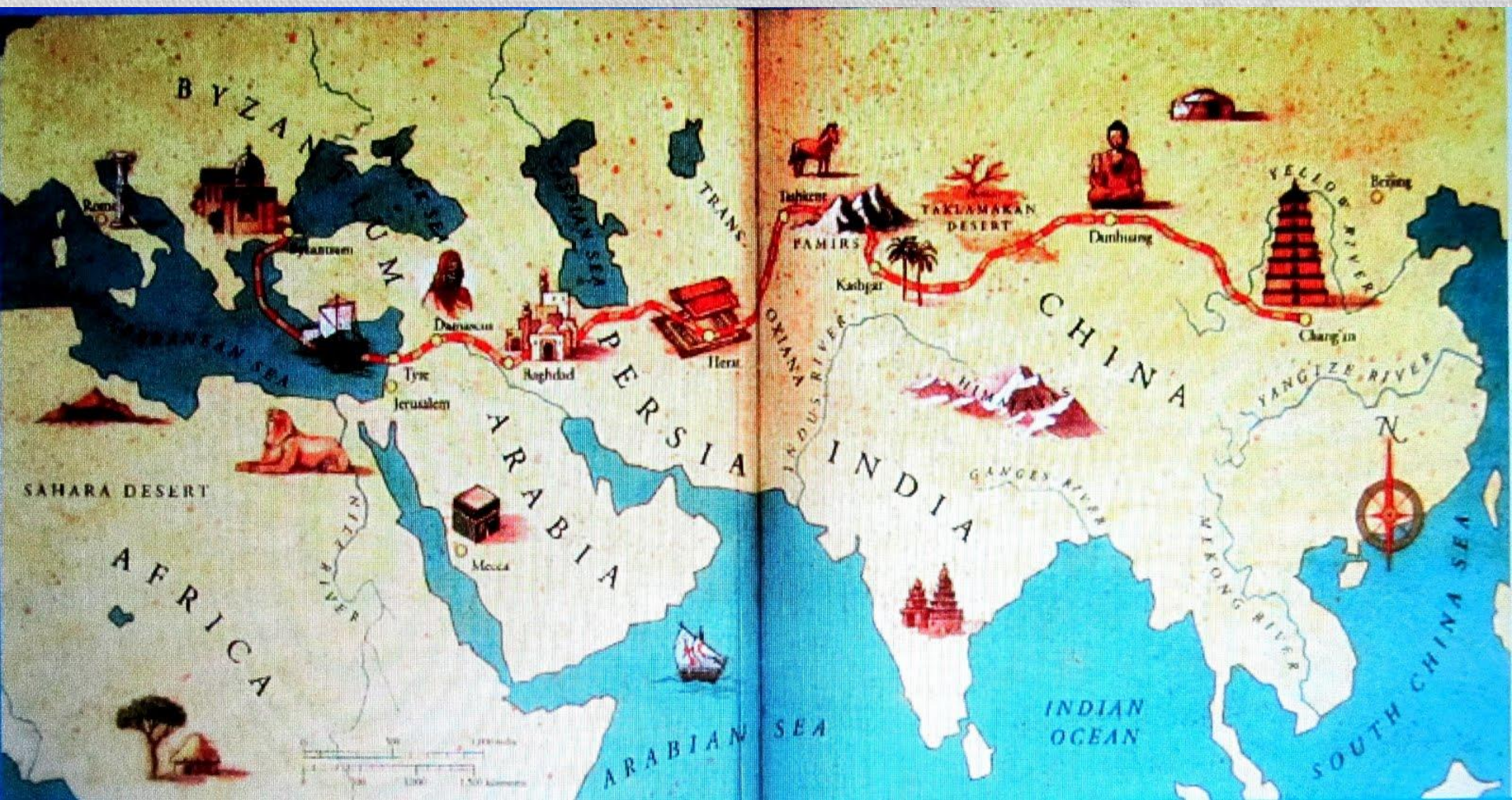


- The oasis towns that made the overland journey possible became important trading posts—commercial centers where caravans would take on fresh animals, goods, and merchants.
- These cities prospered considerably, with merchants and traders making large profits on the goods that were bought and sold.

# Quiz Questions!!

- What were some of the new products from the west?
- What are oasis towns?





BYZANTIUM

AFRICA

ARABIA

ARABIAN SEA

PERSIA

INDIA

INDIAN OCEAN

CHINA

SOUTH CHINA SEA

TRANSOXIANA

Tashkent

TAKLAMAKAN DESERT

Dunhuang

YECIOW RIVER

Beijing

Chang'an

OXIANA RIVER

FAMIRS

Kashgar

HIMALAYAS

GANGES RIVER

YANGTZE RIVER

MEIKONG RIVER

Rome

Damascus

Koghribad

Hera

Tyre

Jerusalem

Mecca





# Caravans and Middlemen

- Very few caravans, including the people, animals, and goods they transported, would complete the entire route. Instead, goods were passed along through an intricate network of middlemen.
- These businessmen had to contend not only with the usual concerns of supply and demand but also sandstorms, ice storms, thieves, and feudal warlords.



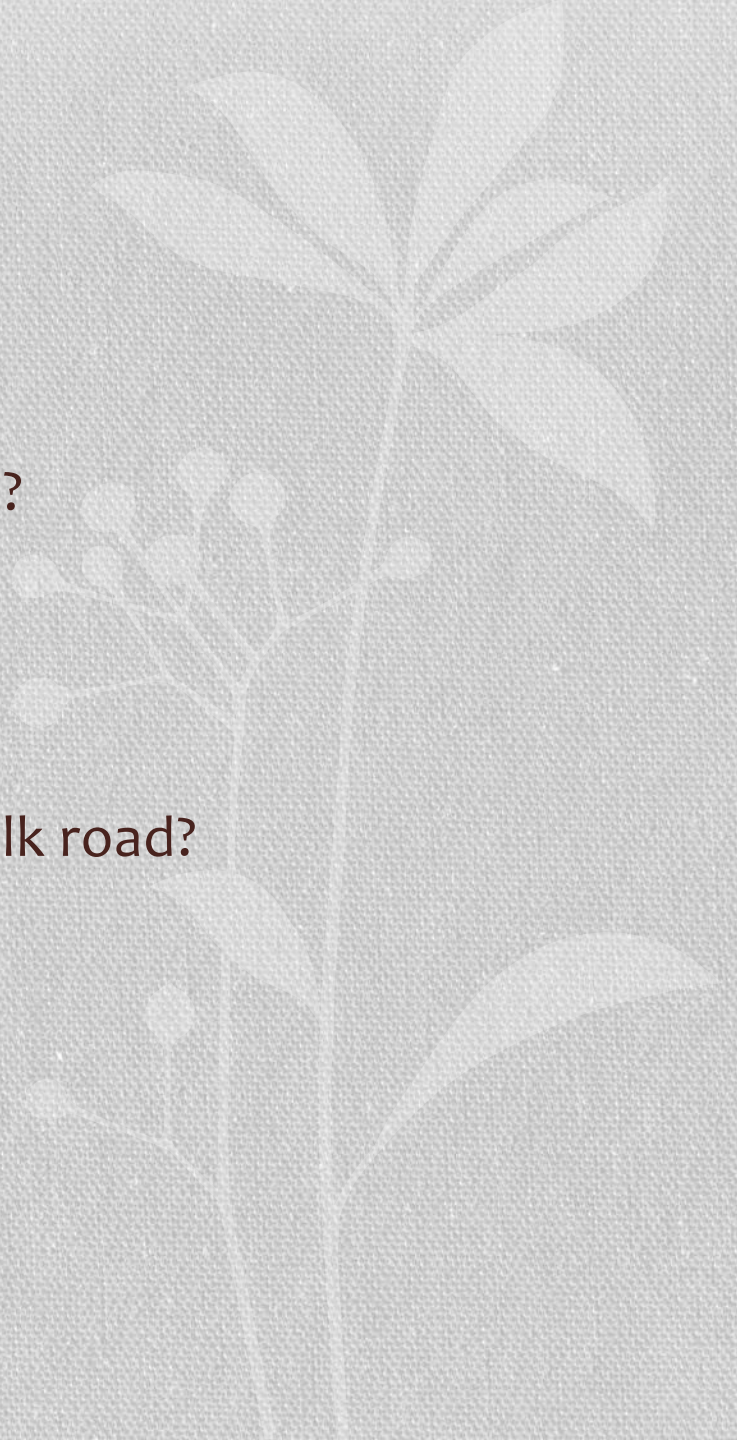
# Dangers



- Travel along the Silk Road was very difficult and extremely dangerous. Dry deserts with no water for miles and mountain passes with avalanches, heavy snow, and spring flooding made the road perilous at all times of year.

# Quiz Questions!!

- What is a caravan and why are they useful?
- What were some of the dangers of the silk road?



# Other Dangers

- Bandits lay in wait to rob travelers. To protect themselves, traders often traveled in large groups. Traders often used camels to travel the Silk Road and carry their goods from one place to another, because camels could travel a long distance without water.
- But camels could not carry extremely heavy goods over the mountains and across the deserts. As a result, the Silk Road was not used to carry raw materials, such as lumber.
- Instead, it was used primarily to transport small, luxury goods such as silk and porcelain.



# The Down Side



- The Black Death originated in or near China and spread by way of the Silk Road or by ship. It may have reduced world population from an estimated 450 million to between 350 and 375 million in 1400. The disease travelled along the Silk Road and reached the Crimea by 1346. From there it was probably carried by Oriental rat fleas living on the black rats that were regular passengers on merchant ships, it spread throughout the Mediterranean and Europe. The Great Pestilence also helped to erode the Mongol Empire and stall the Silk Road trade.

# Quiz Questions!!

- Why did the merchants use camels to travel?
- What is the black death? What does it have to do with the Silk Road?

# Things Traded

- Silk
- Porcelain
- Tea
- Wine
- Weapons
- Metal work
- Jewelry
- Horses
- Woven goods
- Spices
- Cloth
- Glass
- Crystals
- Wood
- Gold
- Silver
- Amber
- Camels
- Mirrors
- Cotton
- Kashmir
- Buddhist manuscripts
- Sculptures
- Chilies
- Salt
- Mint
- Almonds
- Saffron
- Dates
- Textiles
- Lapdogs
- Ivory
- Dyes
- Furs
- Incense
- Jade
- Nuts
- Oil
- Fruit
- Peacock feathers
- Sugar
- MUCH MUCH MORE!!