



Unit 2: Networks of Exchange from c.1200-1450CE

Development of Communication
and Trade Networks





Introduction

- Growth of classical empires led to increased connections between people
- Connections occurred because of trade
- Some involved transfer of religions and technologies
 - Technology and faith piggy-backed on the goods carried over the trade routes
- Most included spread of deadly diseases

Impact of Geography

- Determined what, where and by whom it was exchanged
- Climate and topography (mountains, plains, deserts, rivers, seas)
 - Determine where valuable minerals are found
 - Types of plants
 - Where seaports, mountain passes & oases exist so that raw materials may be produced


Basic trade



- Trade happens because people want goods
- Salt – very important trade good, used to preserve food
- Merchants willing to take great risks in hopes of great profits

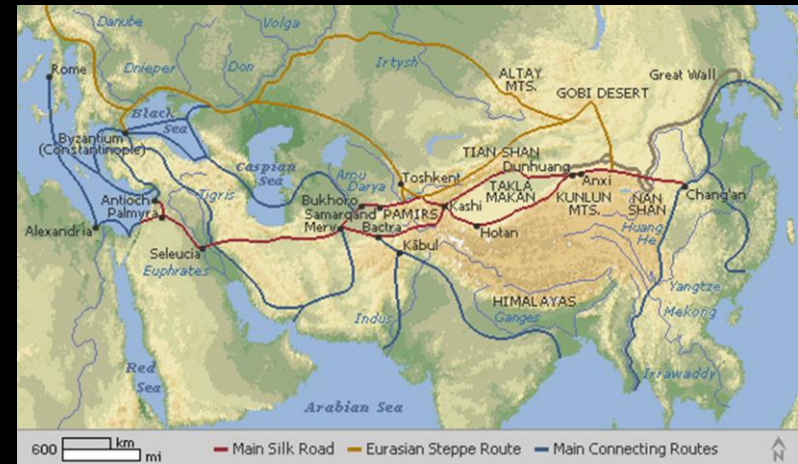


Basic trade

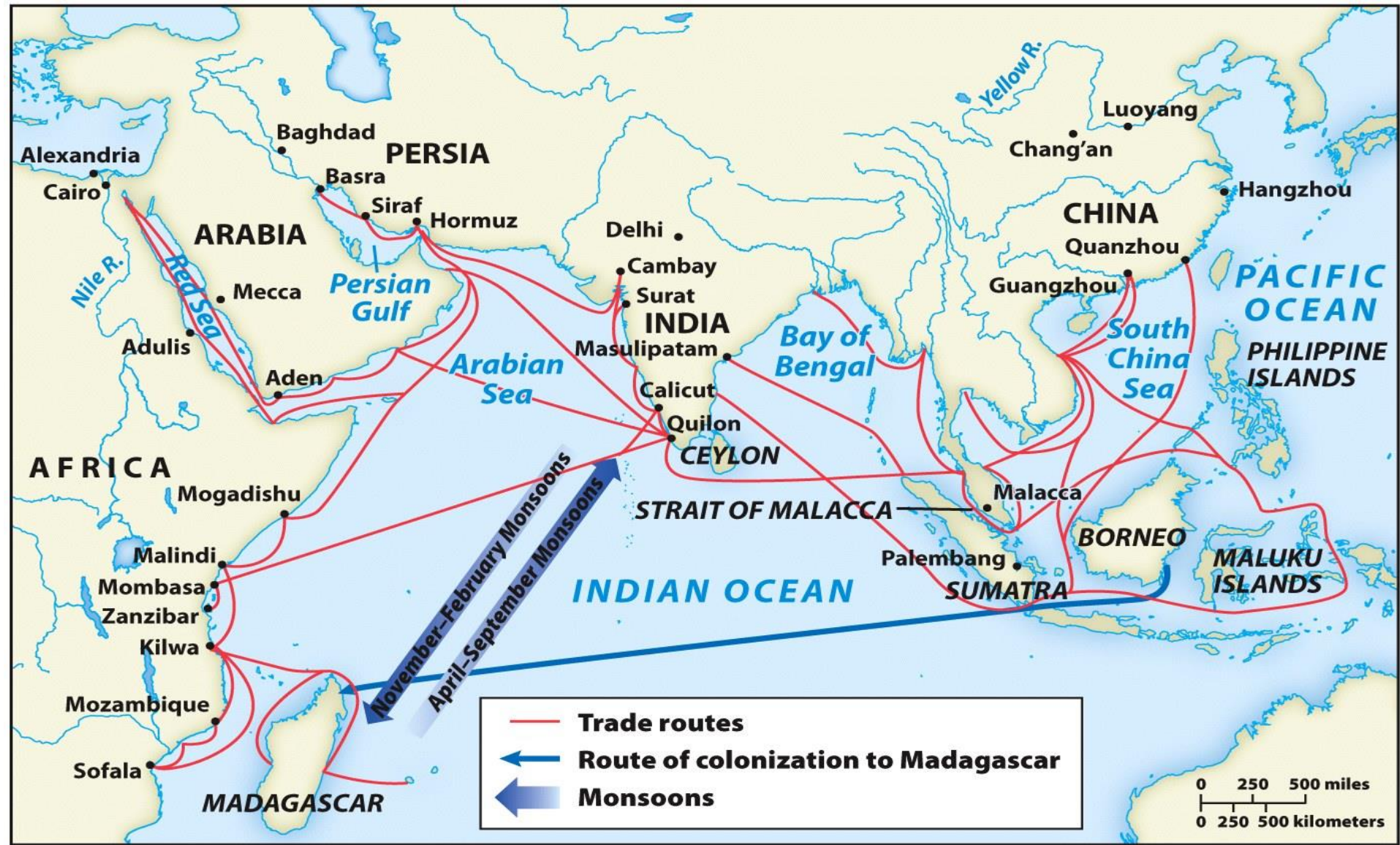
- Afro-Asian trading network as a web
 - Allowed Romans to buy silk from China
 - Merchants transported silk and other goods for a couple hundred miles and traded to next caravan, got \$ for their part and returned home for more
 - Goods were relayed from town to town
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3 Major Networks of Exchange

- Silk Road
- Indian Ocean
- Trans-Saharan Trade Network

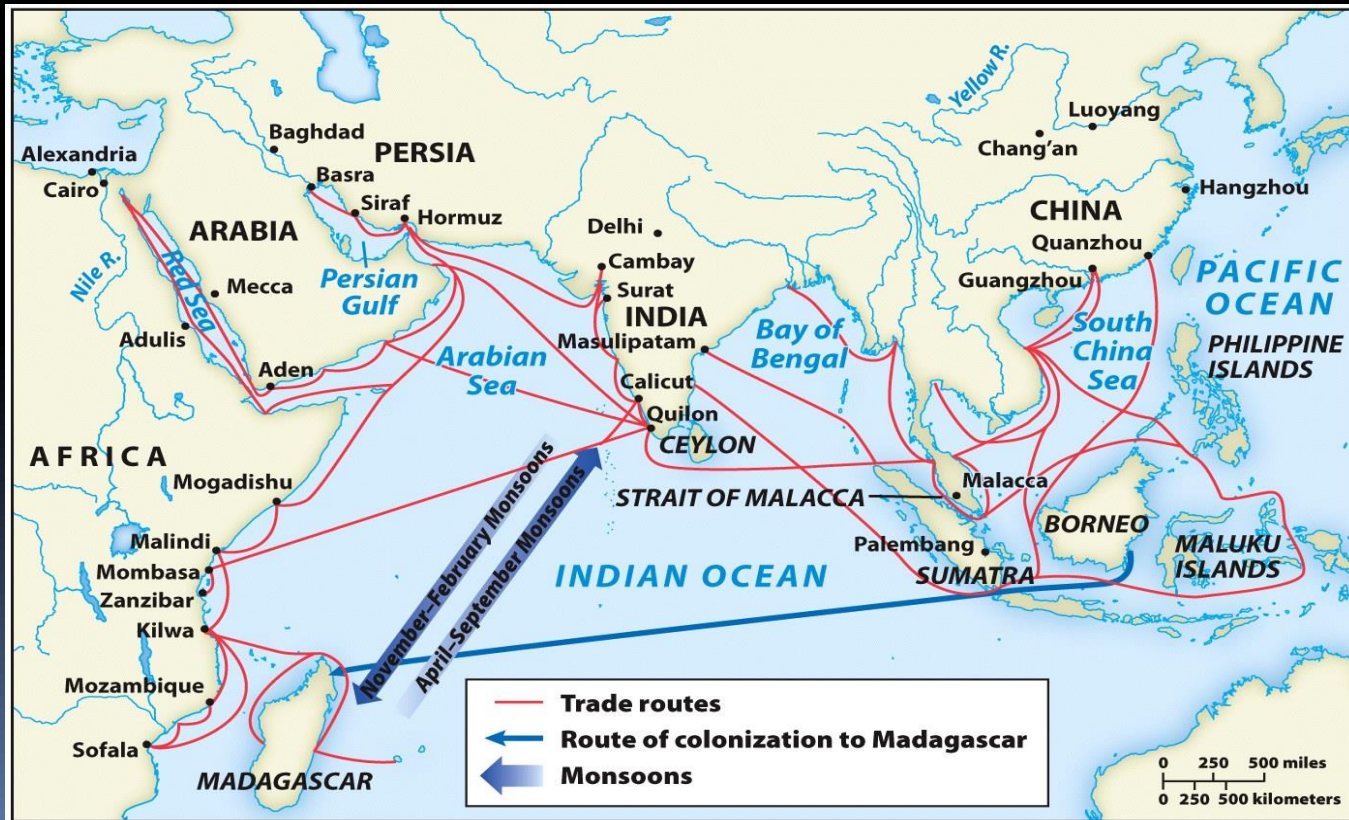


Indian Ocean Trade



Indian Ocean Trading Network

- Largest sea trading network in the world until the Trans-Atlantic in 1400s
- Connected SE Asia and China to Africa, the Middle East and S Asia

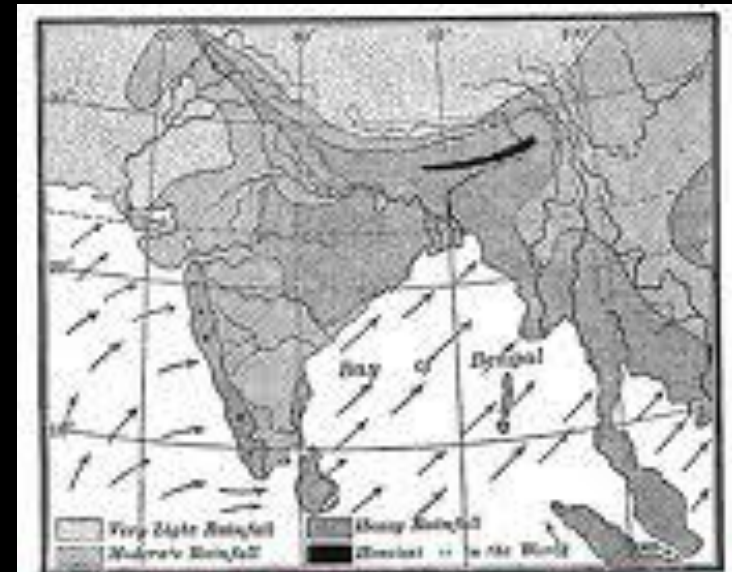


Indian Ocean Exchange

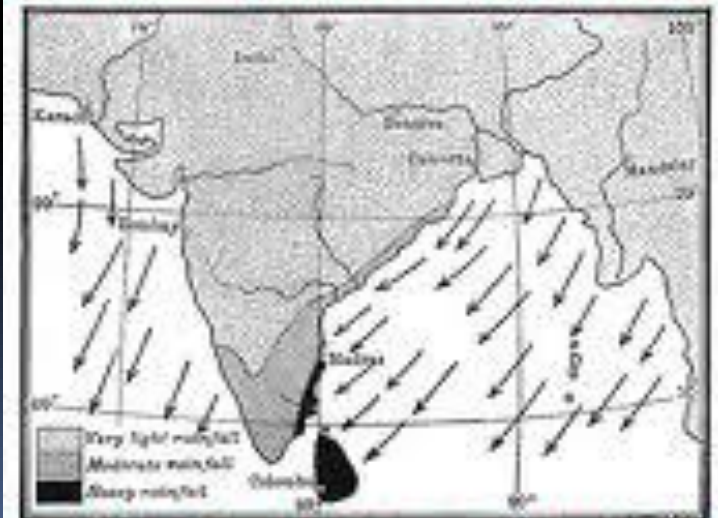
- Trade grew because of:
 - Environmental and cultural diversities in each region
 - Desire for goods not available at home
- Goods traded from each region include:
 - Silk, cotton, rice, and porcelain from Asia
 - Ivory and gold from the African coast
 - Horses, spices, and slaves from all regions
- Transportation costs much lower than land routes
 - Ships could carry much more at one time than camels
 - Sea Roads carried more bulk and staple goods → not just luxury items

Impact of Geography: Monsoons

- Made Indian Ocean exchange possible
 - Natural “clock” helped merchants time their trips
- Monsoons = alternating wind currents
 - Blow predictably eastward in summer months
 - Blow predictably westward in winter months



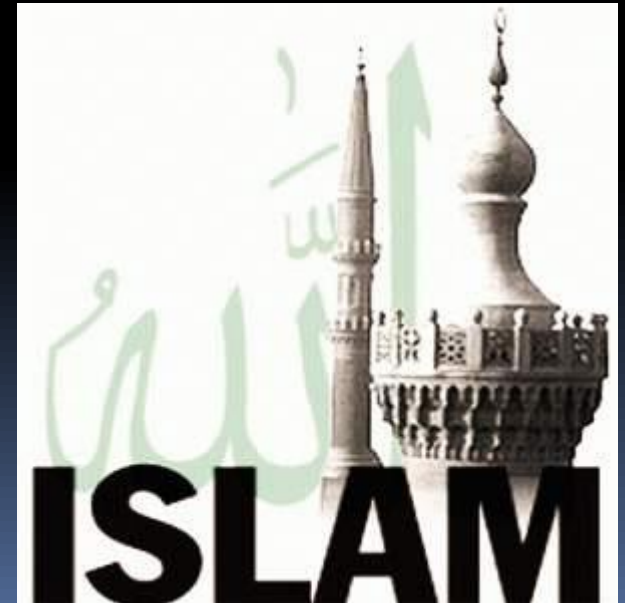
SUMMER MONSOON WINDS



WINTER MONSOON WINDS

Growth of Indian Ocean Trade

- 2 major transformations occurred between 500 and 1500 that led to major growth of the Indian Ocean trade network
 - 1) Economic and political revival of China
 - 2) Rise of Islam in the 7th century



Indian Ocean Trade: Technology



- Dhows – Arabic triangular-sailed ships
- Lateen Sails – triangular sails which harnessed the monsoon winds
- Junk – large ship developed in China; could hold 1000 tons of cargo





Indian Ocean Trade: Environmental Impacts

- Spread of animals, crops, and diseases
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Indian Ocean Trade: Cultural Impacts


- Exchange of technology
 - Ships and navigational tools
- Spread of Religion
 - Conveyor of Buddhism into E & SE Asia (pre-1200)
 - Spread of Islam
 - Literacy
 - Understanding of mathematics and science
 - Distinction between genders
- Cultural Syncretism
 - Bantu language: combination of Bantu and Arabic

The Silk Road






The Silk Road

- Most extensive land-based trade routes in world at the time
 - Connects Eurasia from East Asia to the Europe
 - Regions involved: East Asia, South Asia, Central Asia, SW Asia/Middle East, Europe, North Africa
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The Silk Road: Growth


- Desire for goods from other regions
 - Establishment of camel caravans for protection while travelling
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The Silk Roads: The Mongols

- Mongols gain control over the Silk Road region
 - Need for items to support conquests
- Pax Mongolica
 - Most of region is under control of 1 power
 - Offers protection for traders along routes
 - Merchants granted higher status in Empire
 - Aid, tax exemption, financial loans, etc.



The Silk Roads: The Mongols

- Stimulates exchange of goods, knowledge, technology, culture, and communication within Eurasia
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The Silk Road



- Other items traded on the Silk Road

- From East Asia to the west

- Horses, spices, furs, ivory, perfumes, lacquered boxes and furniture, rice, wool, tea, porcelain


- From South Asia to east and west

- Cotton, spices, sandalwood, rice






The Silk Road

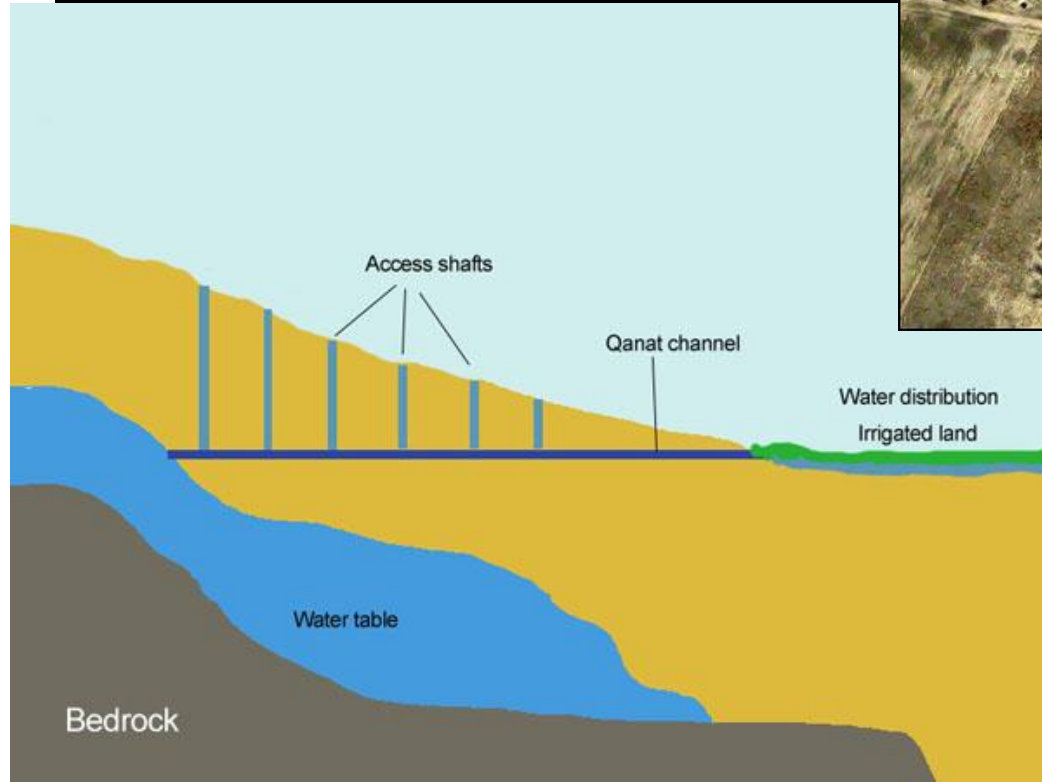
- From SW Asia to east, west and south
 - Dates, almonds, fruit, camels, horses
 - From West to east and south
 - Glass, gold, furs, amber, cattle, olive oil, perfumes
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The Silk Road: Environmental Impacts

- Exchange of farming techniques and crops
 - Grains and fabrics
 - *Qanat system* spread into other regions
 - a form of irrigation, transports water from below ground to the surface in arid regions
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Qanat system



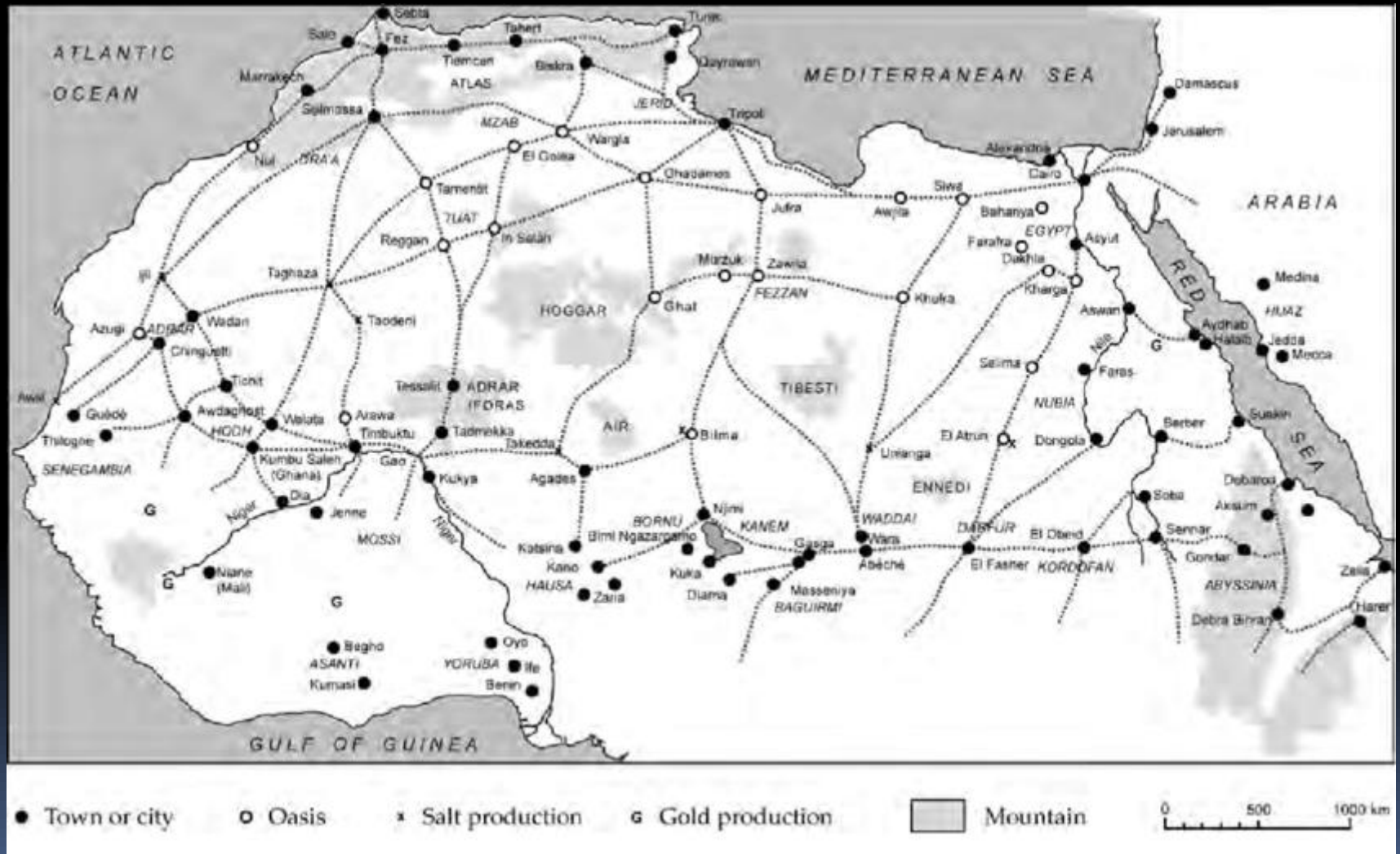
THE SILK ROAD: Environmental Impacts

- Disease
 - Pandemic diseases frequently crossed Afro-Eurasia along trade routes
 - EX: Bubonic Plague
 - Devastating effects of disease thought to be one of the reasons for the fall of empires/kingdoms

The Silk Road: Cultural Impacts

- *Spread of religion/cultural ideas*
 - Merchants and missionaries from South Asia introduced Buddhism along these trade routes
 - Spread of Islam to Central Asia
- *Spread of Technological Innovations*
 - *Compass, gunpowder, printing, etc. spread from East to West*
- *Architectural Techniques*

Trans-Saharan Trade



Sahara Caravan Routes

- Commerce across North Africa
- Links North Africa, the Mediterranean World, and West Africa
- Items traded:
 - North African coastal areas = cloth, glassware, weapons, books
 - Sahara region = copper and salt
 - Savanna grasslands = grain crops
 - Sub-Saharan forests = tree crops like yam and kola nuts

Sahara caravan routes

- Introduction of the camel around the turn of the millennium
 - Led to a major increase in amount of trade

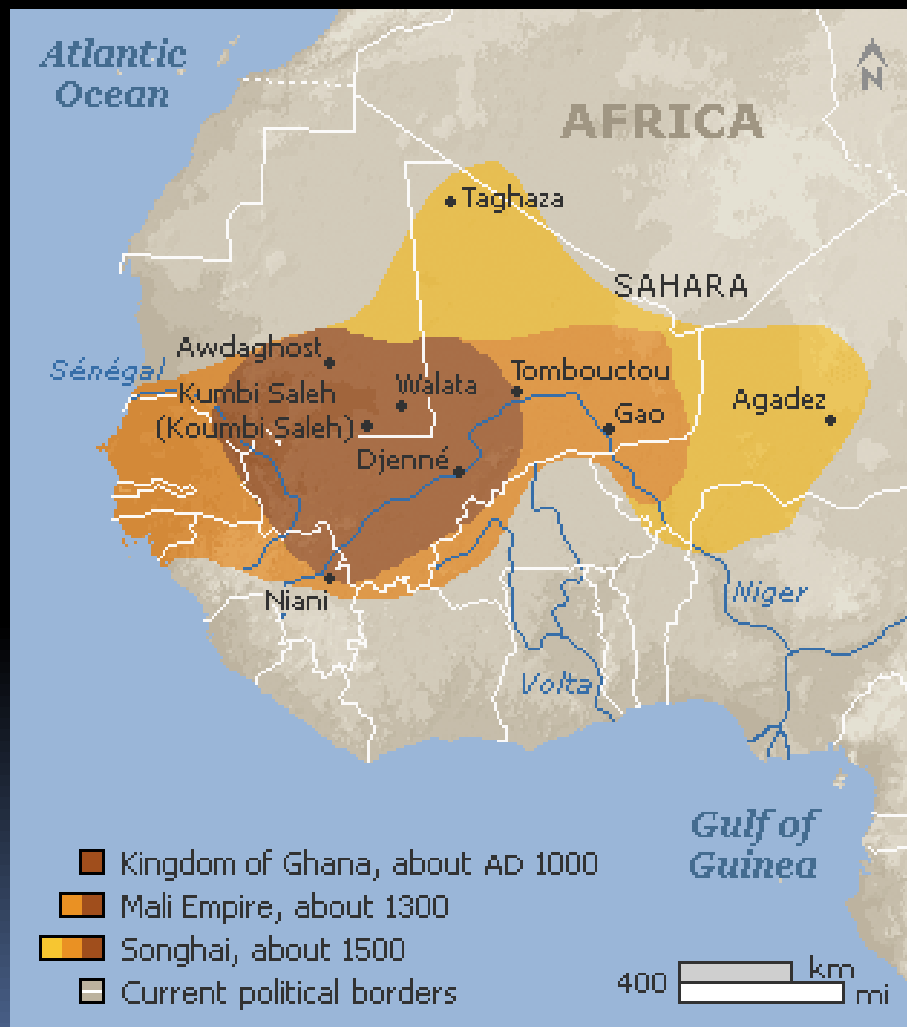


Trans-Saharan Trade: Construction of Empires



- New wealth and resources from trans-Saharan trade allowed some regions to construct large empires or city-states
- Between 300 and 1600 CE
- Major empires = Mali, Ghana, and Songhai


West African Empires - Ghana, Mali, Songhai




- Ghana (4th – 11th centuries)
- Mali (13th – 15th centuries)
- Songhai (15 – 16th centuries)




Trans-Saharan Trade: Environmental Impact

- Spread of resources (i.e. gold and salt), slaves, and exotic animals throughout Saharan Africa and to the Indian Ocean
 - Spread of disease
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Trans-Saharan Trade: Cultural Impact

- Spread of Islam to West Africa
 - Religious Syncretism
 - Establishment of centers of learning
 - Spread of technology
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Major Trade Routes of Afroeurasia c1300 CE

