

World History: Afro-Eurasian Trade & The Silk Road



Name: _____ Date: _____

Part A: Multiple Choice. Analyze the economic and cultural dynamics of medieval trans-Eurasian trade routes.

1. Beyond physical trade commodities like silk, porcelain, and spices, what was arguably the MOST consequential historical impact of the Silk Road networks?
- A. The complete elimination of regional linguistic dialects across Asia
- B. Cultural diffusion: the cross-continental transmission of ideas, scientific technologies (papermaking, compass), and world religions
- C. The creation of a single unified global monetary currency
- D. The total replacement of maritime ship travel with overland camel caravans
2. Why did merchants on the overland Silk Road typically travel in large caravans and trade through intermediary relay cities rather than one single merchant traveling all 4,000 miles?
- A. Laws forbade merchants from crossing more than one river during their lifetime
- B. Caravans provided armed mutual protection against bandits across harsh terrain like the Taklamakan Desert
- C. Camels could only walk a maximum of 50 miles before permanently losing strength
- D. Naval blockades made direct travel illegal under Mongol treaty terms
3. Which technological transfer originating in Han/Tang China revolutionized recordkeeping, governance, and scholarship when it reached the Islamic world and Europe via the Silk Road?
- A. Cellulose papermaking
- B. Steam combustion engines
- C. Electricity generators
- D. Radio telegraph communication

Part B: Trade Exchange Flow Chart. Categorize which commodities and innovations originated in the East (East Asia) vs West/South (Mediterranean & South Asia).

Sort these items: Mulberry silk textiles, fine porcelain pottery, and cast iron plows; Roman blown glassware, olive oil, wool tapestries, and gold coins; Woodblock printing and magnetic navigation compasses; Indian cotton textiles, black pepper, cinnamon, and frankincense resins; Cultivated tea leaves and dried medicinal rhubarb roots; Arabian war horses, alfalfa fodder, and mathematical algebra treatises

Originated in East Asia (China)	Originated in West / South Asia & Mediterranean