

# AP World History

## Chapter Primer

Part III: *An Age of Accelerating Connection*, 500 to 1500

Chapter 7: *Commerce and Culture*, 500 to 1500

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### Learning Targets

- To consider the significance of trade in human history
- To explore the interconnections created by long-distance trade in the period of third-wave civilizations
- To examine the full range of what was carried along trade routes (goods, culture, disease)
- To explore the differences between the commerce of the Eastern Hemisphere and that of the Western Hemisphere and the reasons behind those differences

### Big Picture Questions

1. “What motivated and sustained the long distance commerce of the Silk Roads, Sea Roads, and Sand Roads?”
2. Why did the peoples of the Eastern Hemisphere develop long-distance trade more extensively than did those of the Western Hemisphere?
3. “Cultural change derived often from commercial exchange in the third-wave era.” What evidence from this chapter supports this observation?
4. In what ways was Afro-Eurasia a single interacting zone, and in what respects was it a vast region of separate cultures and civilizations?
5. In what ways did long-distance commerce act as a motor of change in premodern world history?

### Margin Review Questions

1. What lay behind the emergence of Silk Road commerce, and what kept it going for so many centuries?
2. What made silk such a highly desired commodity across Eurasia?
3. What were the major economic, social, and cultural consequences of Silk Road commerce?
4. What accounted for the spread of Buddhism along the Silk Roads?
5. What was the impact of disease along the Silk Roads?
6. What lay behind the flourishing of Indian Ocean commerce in the postclassical millennium?
7. In what ways did Indian influence register in Southeast Asia?
8. What was the role of Swahili civilization in the world of Indian Ocean commerce?
9. What changes did trans-Saharan trade bring to West Africa?
10. In what ways did networks of interaction in the Western Hemisphere differ from those in the Eastern Hemisphere?

### Key Terms

**American web:** A term used to describe the network of trade that linked parts of the pre-Columbian cultural systems. Americas; although less intense and complete than the Afro-Eurasian trade networks, this web nonetheless provided a means of exchange for luxury goods and ideas over large areas.

**Angkor Wat:** The largest religious structure in the premodern world, construction began on this temple located in modern Cambodia in the early 1100s C.E. It was built to express a Hindu understanding of the cosmos, centered on a mythical Mt Meru, the home of the gods in Hindu tradition.

**Black Death:** The name given to the massive epidemic that swept Eurasia in the fourteenth century C.E.; it may have been bubonic plague, anthrax, or a collection of epidemic diseases.

**Borobudur:** The largest Buddhist monument ever built, Borobudur is a mountainous ten-level monument with an elaborate carving program, probably built in the ninth century C.E. by the Sailendras rulers of central Java; it is an outstanding example of cultural exchange and syncretism. (pron. BORE-ahboo-DOOR)

**Ghana, Mali, Songhay:** A series of important states that developed in western and central Sudan in the period 500–1600 C.E. in response to the economic opportunities of trans-Saharan trade (especially control of gold production). (pron. GAH-nah, MAHlee, song-GAH-ee)

**Great Zimbabwe:** A powerful state in the African interior that apparently emerged from the growing trade in gold to the East African coast; flourished between 1250 and 1350 C.E.

**Indian Ocean trading network:** The world's largest sea-based system of communication and exchange before 1500 C.E., Indian Ocean commerce stretched from southern China to eastern Africa and included not only the exchange of luxury and bulk goods but also the exchange of ideas and crops.

**Thorfinn Karlsfeni:** A well-born, wealthy merchant and seaman of Norwegian Viking background, Karlsfeni led an unsuccessful expedition to establish a colony on the coast of what is now Newfoundland, Canada, in the early eleventh century C.E.

**pochteca:** Professional merchants among the Aztecs.

**Sand Roads:** A term used to describe the routes of the trans-Saharan trade in Africa.

**Silk Roads:** Land-based trade routes that linked Eurasia.

**Srivijaya:** A Malay kingdom that dominated the Straits of Malacca between 670 and 1025 C.E.; noted for its creation of a native/Indian hybrid culture. (pron. sree-vih-JUH-yah)

**Swahili civilization:** An East African civilization that emerged in the eighth century C.E. from a blending of Bantu, Islamic, and other Indian Ocean trade elements. (pron. swah-HEE-lee)

**trans-Saharan slave trade:** A fairly small-scale trade that developed in the twelfth century C.E., exporting West African slaves captured in raids across the Sahara for sale mostly as household servants.