Roots of the American People: Trade Networks of Asia & Africa

Ch. 1, Sec. 3
(Prehistory-1500)
Lesson Objectives

1. *Students will* learn about the role played by Muslims in world trade.
2. *Students will* discover how great trading states rose in East Africa and West Africa.
3. *Students will* find out how China dominated an important trade route across Asia.
Outline

• The Muslim Link in Trade
  ◦ Rise of Islam
  ◦ Advances in Learning

• The African Link in Trade
  ◦ East African Trade Centers
  ◦ West African Trade Centers

• The East Asian Link in Trade
  ◦ World Traders
  ◦ Spice Trade and the Silk Road
Key Terms

- **Muhammad** – Lead teacher of the religion of Islam
- **Mansa Musa** – Muslim ruler, controlled *Mali*
- **Navigation** – the science of locating the position and plotting the course of ships
- **Zheng He** – famous Chinese explorer who traveled to *East Asia*
Previously, we have learned how important trade was to Native Americans. We are now going to learn how trade helped link together the people of Asia, Africa, and Europe.
The Muslim Link in Trade

• From earliest times, trade linked groups who lived at great distances from one another.
• As trade further developed, merchants developed regular trade routes.
• These merchants brought aspects of their cultures with them as they traveled.
• By the 1500’s a very complex network linked Europe, Africa, and Asia.
• Much trade passed through the Arabian Peninsula, in the Middle East
The Arabian Peninsula
The Muslim Link in Trade

- Ships from China and India brought their cargoes of spices, silks, and gems to ports on the Red Sea.
- The precious cargoes were then taken overland to markets throughout the Middle East.
Rise of Islam

• The growth in trade was also linked to the rise of Islam
• Islam emerged on the Arabian Peninsula in the 600’s
• It’s founder was the prophet, Muhammad
• Muhammad taught there is one true God
• Followers of Islam, called Muslims, believed that the Quran, the sacred book of Islam, contained the exact word of God, as it was revealed to Muhammad
Rise of Islam

- Islam was transmitted rapidly through conquest and trade
- Arab armies swept across North Africa and into Spain
- Muslim merchants also spread their religion far into Africa, and from Persia to India.
- Millions of people across three continents became Muslims
Advances in Learning

- Arab scholars made remarkable contributions to mathematics, medicine, and astronomy
- They helped develop algebra and later passed it on to the Europeans
- Arab astronomers measured the size of the earth and supported the idea that it was in fact, round.
- They built large ships with triangular sails that allowed captains to use the wind even if it changed direction.
Checkpoint Question

How did Islam spread?

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Checkpoint Question

How did Islam spread?

Through conquest and trade
The African Link in Trade

- Africa has a very long history of trade, going back as far as 3100 B.C., when the great civilization of Egypt arose.
- Egyptian traders sailed throughout the eastern Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea to bring home logs, silver, and horses.
- Following routes south from Egypt, they traded for ivory, spices, copper and cattle.
East African Trade Centers

- About A.D. 1000, trade centers began to appear in eastern Africa.
- The most powerful was Zimbabwe, which became the center of a flourishing empire in the 1400’s.
- Zimbabwe lay directly on the trade route between the east coast and the interior of Africa.
- Traders passing through there had to pay taxes on their goods.
Zimbabwe
East African Trade Centers

- Trade brought prosperity to a number of cities along the east coast of Africa
- Kilwa, the chief trading center, attracted merchant ships from as far away as China
- They exchanged cloth, pottery, and manufactured goods, as well as gold, ivory, and furs.
- An active slave trade also developed between East Africa and Asia across the Indian Ocean
Slave Trade

Main Muslim slave trading routes in Africa
Western African Trade Centers

- Trade networks also linked the Middle East and West Africa
- Desert nomads guided caravans, or groups of camels and their cargo, across the vast Sahara (the largest desert in the world!)
- Ghana was the first major center of trade in West Africa
- It was located between the sources of salt and the southern gold
Ghana
West African Trade Centers

- By A.D. 1000, demand for gold in the Middle East had grown; while the demand for salt increased due to the hot climates in West Africa.
- Rulers of Ghana quickly became rich as the gold/salt trade increased.
- Shifting trade routes would eventually cause Ghana to weaken.
- In the 1200’s it was absorbed into the Mali empire.
West African Trade Centers

- *Mali* reached its height under Muslim ruler, *Mansa Musa*
- *Timbuktu* was the center of the empire and became a great place for learning
- Merchants throughout the region traded for nuts, food, and of course, gold.
- In the 1400’s, *Mali* had a number of weak rulers, eventually losing Timbuktu in 1433, to the Songhai
West African Trade Centers

- The rulers of the Songhai captured Timbuktu in 1468.
- They restored the city as a center of Islamic learning.
- Trade across the Sahara had expanded, bringing the rulers of the Songhai great wealth.
- Their trade focused on salt, gold, and captives, for sale as slaves.
What trading kingdoms arose in West Africa?
Checkpoint Question

What trading kingdoms arose in West Africa?

Ghana, Mali and Songhai
The East Asian Link in Trade

- As early as 221 B.C., a strong ruler had unified China into a single empire.
- Later rulers continued to add to the empire until it covered a large part of the continent of Asia.
- China was linked together by a highways, canals, and a postal system.
- As the empire expanded; so did trade.
- China had trade links with India, Korea, Japan, the Middle East, and Africa.
- Trade centers began to grow into cities.
- By the 1200’s, Hangzhou was one of the world’s largest cities.
World Traders

- China had the highest level of technology of all civilizations of the time
- Around 1050, the Chinese invented printing. (About 400 yrs. Before Europe)
- They also made great advances in Navigation.
  - They invented the magnetic compass, which allowed ships to sail out of sight of land
- By the 1300’s, the Chinese were sailing routes from Japan to East Africa
Magnetic Compass
World Traders

• The great explorer, Zheng He, made several voyages with a fleet of over 300 gigantic ships.

• The fleet visited over 30 nations throughout Asia and Africa, trading silks and pottery for spices, gems, medicinal herbs, and ivory.
Spice Trade and the Silk Road

- Chinese silks, bronze goods, pottery and spices flowed from West China along a route known as the Silk Road.
- This was one of the greatest trade routes of Ancient times.
- It was a series of routes that stretched from Xi’an, China all the way to Persia.
- It did not decline in importance until alternate sea routes were discovered.
The Silk Road
Review

1) What role did the Muslim world play in trade?
2) Why is the Arabian Peninsula ideal as a trading center?
3) Why were gold and salt important in West African trade?
4) How did trade in East Africa differ from trade in West Africa?