

KS3 History enquiry: What travelled along the Silk Roads?

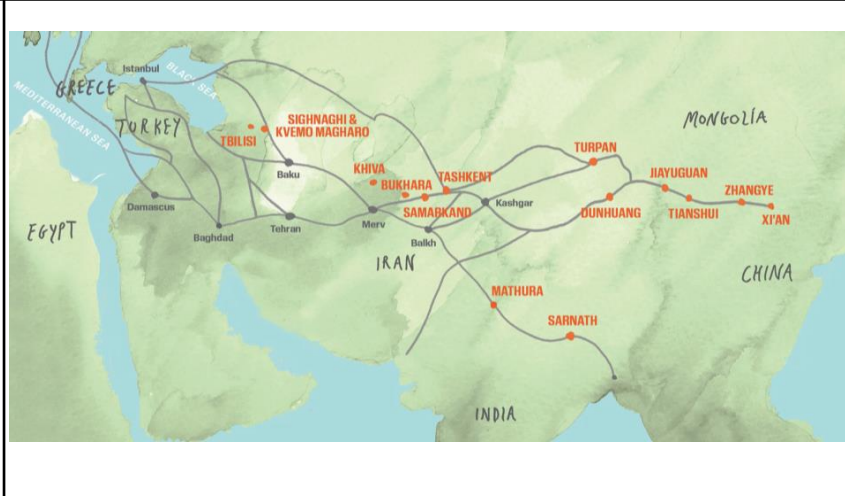


What were the Silk Roads?

- Complicated to call it a silk road- suggests there's just one motorway through the spine of Asia, there isn't. There's multiple roads in lots of different directions.
- Trade route that changed the world, a route that was 5000 miles long.
- Ran from China to central Asia, Samarkand, Tehran and to Istanbul. From Alexander the Great to Genghis Khan, Leaders thought to control the silk road.
- Bought and bartered goods but also ideas.
- Trade is always about more than the exchange of Chinese money. Not just carrying the objects

Key Words

- **Trade**- the action of buying and selling goods.
- **Empire**- a group of countries or territories under the control of a single entity.
- **Expansion**- when something becomes bigger
- **Nomad**- a member of a tribe that moves from place to place
- **Dynasty**- a series of leaders in the same family
- **Slavery**- forcing someone to work hard without pay
- **Misconception** - a mistaken belief, a wrong idea



Road to Wealth:

- **Spices** like pepper, cinnamon, alum, varnish, nutmeg, cloves, sugar, incenses, cardamom and ivory were sold. These goods completely changed our taste and demand for the products. Big fortunes could be made from using the trade routes.
- **Gunpowder** was used in china as early as 600s. This helped to develop warfare: bombs, rockets, land mines were used all over Europe.
- **Paper** was invented in China during the 3rd century B.C., and its use spread via the Silk Road, It made sharing knowledge quicker. Paper arriving in Europe led to dramatic change as more ideas could be spread.
- **Animal pelts** were the most commonly traded good across the Silk Roads, coming from Northern Europe and Central Asia down into southern markets.
- Humans were also sold into **slavery** by Viking traders who travelled from Northern Europe to sell their captives in slave markets in cities such as Baghdad.
- Nomads (people who moved around a lot), relied heavily on **horses**. They were important for protection, farming and travel. Horses and silk were first to travel along silk roads

Road to Wisdom:

- Uzbekistan helped develop science. In Bukara, a huge library was built. Bukhara bloomed into an intellectual power-house.
- Texts of Greek philosophers in west had been lost. The House of Wisdom in Baghdad had translated and preserved Aristotle's work.
- Amazing scientists like Avi Cina (he invented Algebra and Algorithms) and Al-Biruni (150 books on science) helped Science develop.
- The east led to the 12th century Renaissance (a renewal of Roman/ Greek ideas) without it the proper 15th century Renaissance wouldn't have happened.

Road to faith

Buddhism

- 500 BC in India
- They believed Finding a route to happiness- Nirvana by following the simple teachings of the Buddha.
- Their religion developed due to Greek invasion led to developments- more statues and shrines.

Christianity

- 0AD years ago in modern day Israel
- They believed that Jesus was the Messiah. If you worked hard you were rewarded.
- Their religion pushed forward by the Romans. Emperor Constantine protected Christians against Persian threats.

Islam

- 600AD years in Mecca (Saudi Arabia today) They believed Allah would reward followers with food, water and wealth.
- Their religion developed due to lots of wars meant people wanted a change, so they looked toward a new religion.

a. Quiz Questions:

1. What were the Silk Roads?
2. What goods were traded along the Silk Roads?
3. Name 3 cities along the trading routes.
4. What was the House of Wisdom and where could you find it?
5. What 4 religions spread across the Silk Roads?
6. Which northern European group traded in slaves along the Silk Roads?
7. Which empires could be found along the Silk Roads?
8. Who was the Mongol Leader who conquered much of the land around the Silk Roads?
9. What was so important about how the Mongol Empire ruled its people?
10. How many miles approximately did the Silk Roads stretch?

c. Timeline

Put the following events in order:

1. The start of Christianity
2. The start of Islam
3. The Start of Buddhism
4. The Mongol Invasion of Central Asia
5. The loss of the House of Wisdom in Baghdad

b. Topic Focus: What travelled on the Silk Roads?



1. What were some challenges for Central Asian cities along the Silk Roads?
2. Why was Baghdad such an important city?
3. According to Peter Frankopan, Central Asia is the centre of the world before 1600. Why does he make that argument?

d. Individual practice:

Our understanding of history is always changing based on what historians write and publish: before Peter Frankopan wrote his book on the Silk Roads, previous historians had written different opinions on the trading routes. How are these two views of Genghis Khan different and which one do you think is more convincing based on what you know about the Mongols? Explain your answer using as much knowledge about Genghis Khan as you can.

Interpretation A:

One contemporary described the Mongols as 'living like animals, guided neither by faith nor by law, simply wandering from one place to another, like wild animals grazing'.

Interpretation B:

'Although the Mongols seemed to chaotic, bloodthirsty, unreliable, their rise was result of ruthless planning, streamlined organization and a clear set of objectives in order to establish the largest land empire in history.'