

Asian Transitions in an Age of Global Change



Main Themes

- Another example of new contact and its implications
- Characterizes European expansion into the Asian sea trading network (consisting of Arab, Indian and Chinese zones)
- Examines the reactions of China and Japan to increased contact w/the west



Patterns

- Important patterns that we have seen throughout the pre-modern period
 - New levels of contact
 - Movement (trade & goods rather than ideas)
 - Highly varied responses to increased contact with Europe, though few Asian cultures see much of an impact...yet
 - A hint of what is to come (rise of the West)



Introduction

- Implications of being “last to the table” in Asian trade zones
 - European realization that Muslim traders are firmly entrenched in Asian trade zones and have been for hundreds of years (will block Christian missionary work)
 - Decision to use force deemed necessary in order to dominate trade networks (Europeans can take advantage of Arab political division)



Asian trading & Coming of the Europeans

- Profit motive combined with some missionary thrust
- Asian sea trading network stretches thousands of miles from Africa & the Middle East to East Asia
- Characterized by:
 - Lack of central control (Europeans can take advantage)
 - Absence of military force from commercial exchanges (European advantage)



Asian Sea Trading Network

```
graph TD; A[Asian Sea Trading Network] --> B[Arab Zone]; A --> C[Indian Zone]; A --> D[Chinese Zone]; B --> B1[• Glass]; B --> B2[• Carpet]; B --> B3[• Tapestries]; B --> B4[• slaves]; C --> C1[• Textiles]; C --> C2[• Gems]; C --> C3[• spice]; D --> D1[• Paper]; D --> D2[• Porcelain]; D --> D3[• Silk]; D --> D4[• spice];
```

Arab Zone

- Glass
- Carpet
- Tapestries
- slaves

Indian Zone

- Textiles
- Gems
- spice

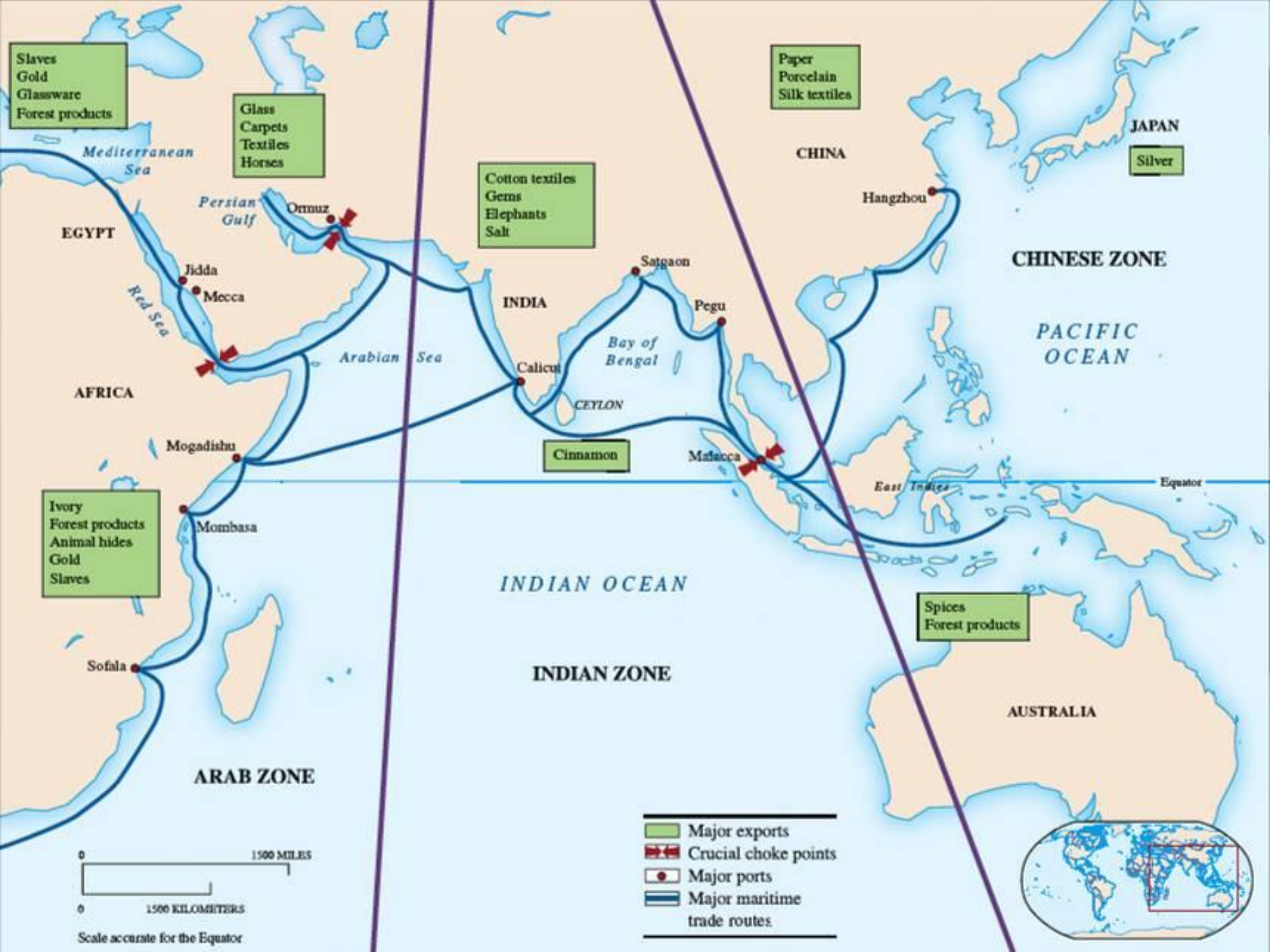
Chinese Zone

- Paper
- Porcelain
- Silk
- spice

Asian Sea Trading Network

- A variety of goods traded but spice dominates b/c of its high prices
- Monsoon winds dictate trade seasons and encourage coastal trade
 - Creates a convergence of trade at certain important areas (ex.—Straits of Malacca)





Trading Empire: Portuguese Response

- Learned quickly that their goods were not wanted
- Mercantilist philosophy taught that power dependent on wealth from trade
- Effective use of force with the goal to dominate trade networks (technology outweighs small size)
- Establish forts for protection
 - Goa, Ormuz and Malacca



Portuguese Vulnerability/Rise of Dutch & English

- 17th c.—Dutch & English successfully battle for control
- Portuguese—lack men, quality ships, \$\$, capable rulers
- English—India
- Dutch—capture Malacca, establish fort in Java
 - Dutch trading empire—forts, factories & warships



European Tribute Systems

- European military advantage moves away once on land
 - Restricted to coast; need permission to trade inland
 - Resistance to Europe—Mindanao
- Tribute systems set up in places where Europeans fight for ground inland
 - Luzon



Spreading the Faith

- Dream of Christian Asia held by Spain & Port., not G.B. and Holland
 - Presence of Islam/Hinduism swiftly ends the dream
- Jesuits make inroads in Asia
 - “Trickle-down conversion”: Believed in adopting modes of the native upper classes in order to convert them. Others would then follow



Ming China

- Ming dynasty (1368-1644)
 - Founded by Zhu Yuanzhang
 - Helps expel Mongols
 - Takes name Hongwu, 1368
 - Mongols forced north of Great Wall





Chinese Revival

- Revival relies on the return of the scholar gentry
 - Revival of bureaucracy
 - return of exam system
- Hongwu limits the influence of scholar-gentry
 - Abolishes positions like chief minister
 - Public beatings for bureaucrats
 - Rules to cut down on factionalism/power plays at court



Scholar-Gentry Dominance

- Efforts to make peasants lives better offset by power of rural landlord families
- Women continue in their traditional subordinate roles
- Neo-Confucian social order/philosophy still applies
 - Please note the story of the student who was beheaded for questioning his teacher!



An Age of Growth

- Contact = commercial boom
- American crops = pop. growth
- \$\$ used to patronize the arts
- Market
 - Silk, ceramics in high demand
 - Silver floods market
 - Europeans in Macao and Canton
- Agriculture
 - Corn, sweet potatoes, peanuts supplement staple crops
 - Pop. doubles between 14th and 16th c.



An Age of Expansion

- 1405-1423 = Zheng He expeditions
- Motives: desire to explore, bring honor to the Ming
- Well-funded, huge fleets



Chinese Retreat

- Purposeful isolation occurs as Europeans move into region
 - Jesuits infiltrate coastal areas
 - Jesuits use knowledge of science and technology to gain entry
 - Hope to convert the emperor first



Ming Decline

- Begins in the late 16th c.
- Reasons: (dynastic cycle)
 - Corrupt, incapable rulers
 - Failure to maintain dams, bridges etc.
 - Drought, famine
 - Local landlords gain too much power



Japan: Reunification/ First Challenge

- 3 leaders end the civil wars between the many daimyo of feudal Japan
 - Odo Nobunaga—deposes Ashikaga w/ firearms
 - Toyotomi Hideyoshi—Nobunaga's general who leads a failed invasion of Korea
 - Tokugawa Ieyasu—shogun whose family rules for 250 years



Explain what is meant by the following quote:

■ "Nobunaga piled the rice, Hideyoshi kneaded the dough, and Tokugawa ate the cake."



Dealing w/the Europeans

- European presence = traders/missionaries in Japan since 1543
- Japanese especially interested in firearms
- Jesuits initially protected (to counter Buddhist influence) but are viewed with suspicion after Buddhist power is crushed



Self-Imposed Isolation

- Result of growing doubts regarding European intentions
- Restrictions begin in 1580s
- Persecution of Christians begins in 1590s—reduced to an underground faith
- Complete isolation by Tokugawa by mid-17th c.
 - 1616, merchants restricted
 - By 1630, Japanese ships forbidden to sail overseas
 - By 1640s Dutch, Chinese visit only at Deshima Island



Global Connections

- Most of Asia is little impacted by European presence
- Level of exchange remains low but important (new foods, silver)
- Self-imposed isolation will have disastrous effects for much of Asia in the next century

