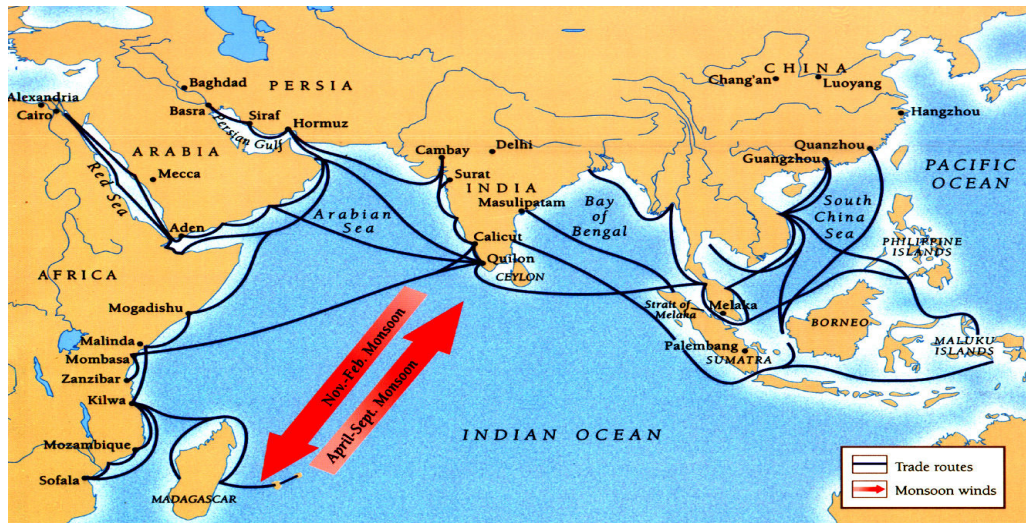


Indian Ocean Trade

The Indian Ocean Trade was an important combination of trade routes ranging from East Africa through most of Asia, which lasted from 600 A.D. to 1450 A.D. The trade mostly revolved around Asian luxuries such as silk and porcelain. The economic benefits from the trade helped create new kingdoms and strengthen old kingdoms in East Africa. The trade also changed many social aspects of the kingdoms involved, including the creation of diasporic communities and the specialization of labor. Culturally, many foreign ideas were spread by merchants, both religious and scientific. Finally, the Indian Ocean Trade marked a new understanding of maritime travel.



Map of Indian Ocean Trade Routes

Political

Causes: Increased economic wealth from trade. Many East African kingdoms like **Great Zimbabwe** and the **Swahili City-States** traded their abundance of precious metals and other raw materials for Asian luxuries.

Effects: East African kingdoms gained political power and became heavily dependent on the Indian Ocean Trade, as signified by the rise of the Swahili City-States such as Mombasa, Kilwa, and Sofala. Several kingdoms were created in resource rich areas as demand for those resources increased due to trade. Most prominently, the kingdom of Great Zimbabwe was able to be created because of their abundance of gold and other natural resources.

As economic power and wealth rose due to the Indian Ocean Trade, multiple kingdoms, mainly in East Africa, rose in political power because they became economically stable.



Swahili City States Major Port Cities

Cultural

Causes: Merchants spread their cultures to the foreign lands they visited as they traded.

Effects: Religion was spread throughout numerous areas. **Islam** became the dominant religion in Indonesia and was prominent in East Africa. **Buddhism** spread to South East Asia creating a great Buddhist center in **Srivijaya**. **Hinduism** also spread to South East Asia, leading to the mixing of Buddhism and Hinduism in the South East Asian region. Science was also spread in the form of Hindi numerals to the Arabian Peninsula, which later became known as Arabic numerals. The Bantu language was spread to Eastern Africa, enabling a united Swahili States.

Merchants started moving along the Indian Ocean trade routes in order to make a profit through trade and spread their culture's beliefs and knowledge to the places they visited. As a result religion and science was spread.



Borobudur

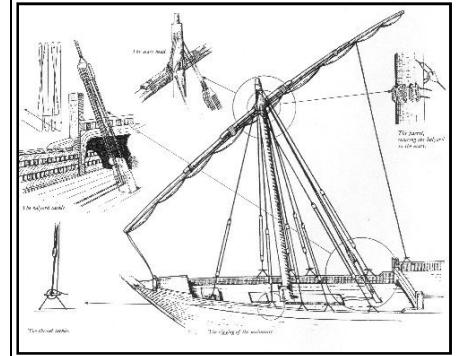
Buddhist Temple in Srivijaya

Environmental

Causes: A desire to have access to foreign ports. Spread of local crops to foreign areas. For example, spread of **Champa rice** from South East Asia to China.

Effects: The invention of the compass and the astrolabe, as well as new ship designs such as the **Lateen Sail**, **Arab dhow**, and the **Chinese junk**. People also obtained a greater understanding of the Indian Ocean, namely the monsoons. For example, the Malay sailors learned how to use the monsoon winds to their advantage when sailing. The introduction of new crops enabled population growth. Champa rice greatly increased the food supply of China enabling a larger population as well as shifting the balance of power from North China to South China.

The need for overseas trade facilitated the inventions of numerous sailing technologies and practices. The spread of crops greatly benefited the populations of the areas, and added new economic opportunities to participants in the Indian Ocean Trade.



Arab Dhow Diagram

Social

Causes: An increase in the value of trade. The Indian Ocean Trade became a vital way to obtain wealth. The movement of merchants and slaves throughout the Indian Ocean. Merchants went to where they could obtain profits while slaves were forced to move from East Africa to the various areas that required them.

Effects: Merchants rose in social status as they became more rich and essential to the economy. For example, Chinese merchants who were once shunned, became more accepted during the Tang dynasty. Multiple **diasporic communities** were created as merchants settled down. For example, Muslim merchant communities appeared in India and East Africa. People who once lived by being self-sufficient became more dependent on trade and turned to **specialized labor**. For example, Chinese farmers began creating silkworm farms to produce large quantities of silk to trade and many Indians turned to creating cotton textiles instead of farming.

Trade fostered an increase in movement and a dependency on trade, leading to the spread of people, the rise of the merchant class, as well as the creation of specialized labor.

Economic

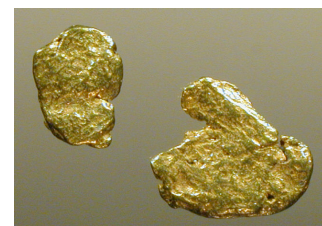
Causes: Kingdoms in the Western part of the Indian Ocean Trade desired Asian luxuries while the Asian kingdoms desired raw materials, creating the Indian Ocean Trade. For example, China produced silk, porcelain, and tea while East Africa contributed ivory, gold, and slaves.

Effects: Merchants adopted new economic practices such as banking, using credit, using bills of exchange, and using checks. Chinese merchants were one of the first to use these practices. The states themselves started minting coins and printing paper money. China first experimented with paper money in 910 A.D. Many port cities became prominent trade centers. The Indian city of **Calicut**, the Chinese city of **Quanzhou**, and the South East Asian city of **Melaka** are good examples. Several European cities created the **Hanseatic League** to counter Italian dominance of sea trade.

Trade became much more important in the economy of the kingdoms and cities participating in the Indian Ocean Trade as well as changing many economic practices because of strong desires for foreign goods and gain in wealth.



Chinese Silk



African Gold