

# UNIT 4 Empires and Cultures of Asia

395 to 1641

622 Islam begins to spread.

B.C. (B.C.E.) < > A.D. (C.E.)

500

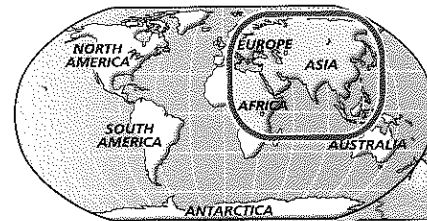
395  
Byzantine Empire separates from Western Roman Empire.

By 620  
Hindu-Arabic numbers used in India.

## Ideas Travel the Silk Road

Between A.D. 400 and 1500, cultures of Asia, Africa, and Europe came into closer contact with one another.

- The Silk Road and other trade routes helped link distant areas. Trade and travel increased.
- Traders and armies brought ideas and inventions from one region to another.
- Religions such as Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism linked large regions.



War and unrest often stop overland trade.

**Silk Road and Other Trade Routes 400-1500**

Tundra or ice	Forest	Grass	Shrub or desert

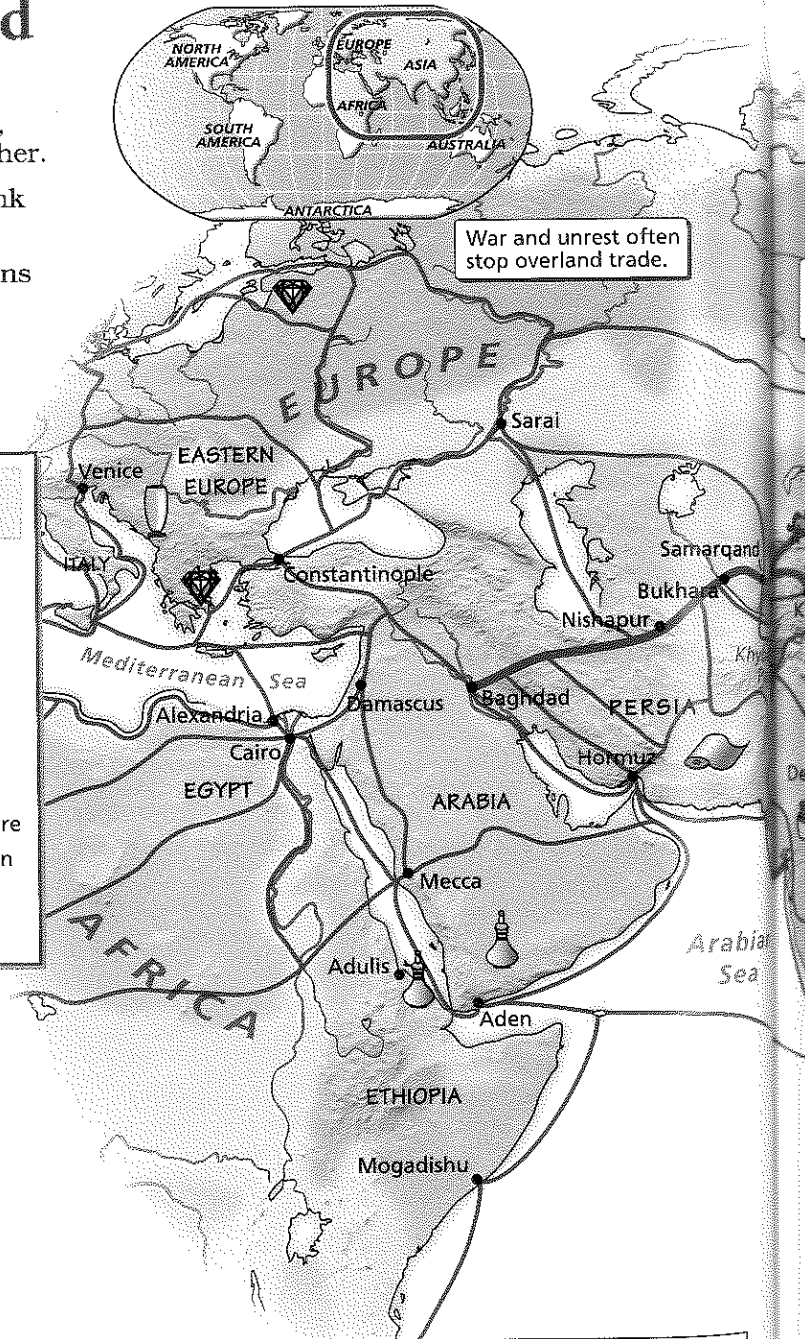
Silk Road    Other trade route  
 PERSIA Culture region

**Sources of Trade Goods**

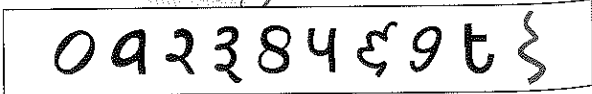
Frankincense	Cotton	Horses
Gems	Silk	Glassware
Spices	Wool	Porcelain

0 500 1000 miles  
 0 500 1000 kilometers

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**A** From the 700s to the 1400s, the Arab world was the center of scientific discovery. Many advances were made in science and medicine, as shown by this text on the human eye.



**B** The digits 0-9 that are used by people all over the world today are called Hindu-Arabic numerals. This system was developed in India over hundreds of years and then spread westward.