

Silk roads essay



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The goods being traded would often travel further than the merchant who was trading them. Goods would often times be relayed from merchant to merchant as they reached closer to their destination. As trade goes, each merchant would often times increase the original prices of the goods he was selling, as they needed to make profit.

Although the Silk Road did not begin trade, it did in fact expand the means of what trading was all about. The single most important aspect of exchange on the Silk Road, was in fact what started it all... GOODS!

Throughout this essay, three popular goods that were exchanged along the Silk Road will be discussed and how the trading of those goods eloped change the lives of people for the better. Goods such as silk, paper, and Jade.

Good : Silk As the name of the trade route implies, Silk was one of, if not the most important good that was traded along the Silk Road. First and foremost, Silk is spun from the cocoons of mulberry tree eating worms. Back in the days before Christ, Silk was only produced by China as they kept the silk making process and the techniques for raising the worms a closely guarded secret.

The reason behind this being a closely guarded secret was because at this time, the majority of China's wealth came from silk production. According to author XENIX Lulu, The Silk Road started seeing bartering action once Chinese Silks were traded to the west. The trade of Silk, if you will, started it all.

If it were not for the luxury of Silk, it could be said that the Silk Roads would have never come to existence, which in turn would have changed the world we live in today tremendously. According to Oliver Wiled, Silk did not just pertain to the rich as it was a price textile.

Poor Chinese peoples also relied on silk, as they were the ones who produced it. As they began to see the increase in demand of this textile, more and more people began to produce it. Additionally, Lulu states, “ By the first century CE, Chinese silk had reached the markets of the Shangk Empire in Central and South Asia, the Parthian Empire of Persia, and the Roman Empire.

” As we can see, Silk was in high demand, and the routes along the Silk Roads were being used quite extensively in order to trade it.

Good #2: Paper As we have discovered, the Mulberry tree played a very important role in starting off the bartering on the silk roads. Additionally, the Mulberry tree assisted the Chinese in inventing paper. It is now safe to say that the Mulberry tree was the key to China's success in trading goods along the Silk roads.

Before paper was invented, the Silk Road Foundation, states that the Chinese would use silk and bamboo to write on. Silk being too expensive to use as a writing template, and bamboo being too heavy, the Chinese had to find an alternative.

They then found that the bark of the Mulberry tree combined with old rag hems and fishnets mixed in a pulp made a great introduction to merchants

of other continents via the silk roads where it was bartered for and even taught how to make. Good #3: Jade Like silk, Jade was another major good being traded alongside the silk road. However, jade was not being traded by the Chinese, they were in fact the ones purchasing it as they found a benevolence in its quality. According to Frances Wood, author of *The Silk Road: Two Thousand Years in the Heart of Asia*, Jade was traded by Cotton to China alongside the southern route of the Silk Road.

Furthermore, Wood implies that the Silk Roads could just have easily been named the “Jade roads”, “had it not been for the fact that silk, unlike Jade, had been traded over a far greater distance.” The trading of these goods pointed out in this paper brought pleasure to the recreants, of course, as they were bartering for precious stones, newly invented paper, or soft/smooth luxurious silk, amongst others. But in doing so, they had to barter with people of different cultures and backgrounds, forcing them to communicate.

If it had not been for the Silk Roads, people from different cultures would have never met, meaning silk wouldn't have made it to the west, and paper wouldn't have been seen by anyone other than the Chinese! Secondly, in trading for these goods, merchants of different cultures also adapted newly found ideas, such as the making of paper or the idea of another religion such as Buddhism. The fact of the matter is, according to Lie, Buddhism was adapted by Central Asia and China from India via the Silk Roads!

Additionally, merchants taking part in bartering along these routes were often times away from their homes for many months, sometimes even years,

forcing them to adapt to the new cultures in which they were bartering with. For example, Wood states, “ the travelers who went to foreign lands, either for warfare or for trade, brought with them their own languages, knowledge, technologies, religions, and customs.

” As these merchants were to return back to heir hometowns, they were also bringing back with them these new found customs which they held onto.

This in turn led to the development of the civilizations we know and learn about today. The Silk Roads have played a vital role in the shaping of the civilizations that we know today. If it had now been for the trading of goods along the trade routes of the Silk Road, none of the above cultural adaptations would have happened. Paper wouldn't have been introduced to us as early as it was and the Chinese may have never adapted to Buddhism. It is for these reasons that the trading of goods was the ingle most important aspect of exchange along the Silk Roads.