

Change and continuity of silk roads essay sample

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



From 200 B. C. E. to 1450 C. E., the Silk Roads was extremely important in connecting the empires of the east to the empires of the west. While goods were traded along these routes, the empires and people tied to the Silk Roads changed over time. The Silk Road's constant trading of goods allowed new technology and religions to be dispersed throughout the east and west during this time frame, and not only did the ideas that travelled the Silk Roads change but also the empires that controlled it.

Roughly 200 B. C. E., the Silk Roads began to become more commonly used. During this time, the Silk Roads linked the Roman Empire to the Han Dynasty. Both the empires dominated their respective regions and were very influential to history through their advancements and discoveries. Silk from China in the east was of high demand along the west as well as other exotic goods such as pottery, paper, and spices. The Silk Roads were in heavy use nearing the end of this time period especially during the Pax Romana and the Han Golden Age.

In 476 C. E. Western Rome fell and gave rise to Eastern Rome which then developed into the Byzantine Empire. The Byzantine Empire persisted for nearly a thousand years and picked up trade where the Roman Empire had left off, albeit on a considerably smaller scale when the Han Dynasty ceased. The pastoral nomads of Central Asia were essentially what held the Silk Roads together during this time by insuring the smooth operation of the trade routes, allowing not only goods to travel, but also ideas, customs, and religions such as Christianity and Buddhism. Christianity was spread along the trade route with the goods, but Buddhism seemed to have a greater impression on the Asian regions.

The Silk Roads were once again revived under the Islamic Umayyad and Abbasid empires, which added Islam to the trade routes, in the west and the Tang and Song dynasties in the east. The trade patterns were much the same as in previous years, and just as or perhaps more important than the goods traded were the cultural interactions and diffusion that took place during this time. For instance the spread of the popularity of horses along with the stirrup which allowed easy mount and dismount as well as more stability for warriors during battle. This was especially important when the majority of Asia came into the possession of the Mongols. Kublai Kahn expanded the trade network of the Silk Roads by trading heavily with the Delhi Sultanate and the IL khanate. The fragmentation of the Mongol Empire loosened the political, cultural, and economic unity of the Silk Roads and was soon after overshadowed by the Indian Ocean Maritime Network by the end of the fifteenth century C. E.

While there were many changes in the patterns of trade within the Silk Roads as time progressed, some things continued on such as the continuous interaction between the east and the west brought on by the Silk Roads. The spread of religion and technology was just as important as the trading of goods itself because of the influence that it had on the connected empires. Religions such as Christianity, Buddhism, and Islam were spread significantly through the Silk Roads. Ideas and technologies were spread with the luxury goods among the peoples that used this trading network. This is how ship building and navigation technologies found their way to Europe, beginning the Age of Exploration.