The Simple AP® World History Unit 2 Cheat Sheet

2.1 The Silk Roads

What Moved & Why

Silk Roads: land routes across Central Asia linking China ↔ Persia ↔ Mediterranean.
Luxury goods (silk, porcelain, spices) b/c camels carry little → high value per pound.
Relay trade: goods pass thru many middlemen; few go end to end (Sogdians, Persians).
Demand → production: ↑ Chinese & Persian textiles, Chinese iron & steel for export.

Innovations

Innovation	Effect
Caravanserai	Inns ~1 day apart
Flying cash (China)	Paper credit
Bills of exchange	Pay far away
Banking houses	Loans, credit
Paper money (Song)	Easier trade

Flying cash: deposit coin in one city, cash voucher in another → no coin to rob (Tang–Song).

Cities & Effects

Kashgar & **Samarkand** (Central Asian oasis cities, w/ caravanserais) grow as trade hubs.
Also spread: Buddhism, Islam, paper, gunpowder, disease along the routes, not just goods.
Silk Roads peak under Mongols (2.2) b/c one empire guards routes (c. 1250–1350).

⚠ Silk Roads ≠ one road. It's a NETWORK of shifting land routes and oasis hubs.

✓ MCQ: caravanserai & credit → answer = infrastructure made long trade possible.

2.2 Mongol Empire: Rise & Rule

Rise

Chinggis (Genghis) Khan (Temujin) unites steppe nomads, 1206; elite mounted archers.
Why they won: speed, discipline, terror, siege experts from China & Persia (engineers).
Largest land empire ever (China to E. Europe) → splits into 4 khanates after Chinggis dies.

The Four Khanates

Khanate	Region
Yuan (Kublai)	China, 1271–1368
Golden Horde	Rus (Russia)
Ilkhanate	Persia
Chagatai	Central Asia

Yuan: ends Song 1279; suspends civil service exams (to 1315), uses Muslim/foreign officials.
Ilkhanate: sacks **Baghdad** 1258 → Abbasids end; later converts to Islam (Ghazan, 1295).
Golden Horde: Moscow collects tribute for Mongols → Moscow grows (indirect rule).

How They Ruled

Adapt: keep local officials; **religious tolerance** (no forced conversion); adopt Uyghur script.
Limits: lose at **Ain Jalut** (1260); typhoons stop Japan invasions (1274, 1281). Yuan → **Ming** 1368.
Decline: plague, rival heirs, revolts.

⚠ Mongols ADAPTED to local ways (Il-Khans → Islam), not just destroyed them.

⚠ Give both sides: conquest AND exchange.

2.2 Mongols: Exchange & Legacy

Pax Mongolica

Pax Mongolica ("Mongol Peace"): 1 power rules land routes → safer, cheaper trade.
Yam: relay stations w/ fresh horses → fast messages for messengers and officials.
Paiza: metal passport → safe passage for traders.
Merchants favored: low tolls → trade ↑.

Knowledge Transfer

What	From → To
Medicine	Islam → Europe
Arabic numerals	India → Europe
Gunpowder	China → west
Astronomy	Persia ↔ China
Paper, printing	China → west

Mongols as brokers: move artisans & scholars → ideas mix (Persian astronomers → China).
Maragha observatory (Persia, 1259): Muslim & Chinese astronomers share data.

Downside: Disease

Black Death (bubonic plague): spreads along Mongol routes → Europe 1340s.
Caffa (1346): plague → Black Sea → Europe.
Impact: ~1/3 of Europe dies → labor shortage; khanates weaken (also Middle East, China).

✓ Pax Mongolica → more trade → spread of goods, ideas AND disease (2.6 link).

⚠ Mongols CARRIED knowledge; they didn't invent it (gunpowder came from China).

2.3 Indian Ocean: How It Worked

Monsoon Winds

Monsoons (seasonal winds) reverse: winter Asia → Africa; summer Africa → Asia.
Effect: predictable trips; traders wait in port for winds → cultures mix (→ diasporas).
Bulk goods by sea (cheaper per ton): cotton, grain, timber, plus spices, porcelain, horses.
Route: E. Africa ↔ Arabia ↔ India ↔ SE Asia ↔ China (most ships sail 1 segment).

Maritime Technology

Tech	Use
Lateen sail (Arab)	Sail into wind
Dhow (Arab ship)	Small trade ship
Junk (Chinese ship)	Big, watertight
Compass (China)	Find direction
Astrolabe	Find latitude

Who Traded

No single power rules the ocean → mostly peaceful, open trade (before Portuguese).
Players: Arab, Persian, Gujarati, Malay, Chinese, Swahili merchants (diverse diasporas).
Islam spreads w/ merchants → shared law & trust in ports (e.g., Malacca, Kilwa, Calicut).
Junks: many masts, watertight sections → carry big cargoes safely (+ sternpost rudder).

⚠ Monsoons = seasonal wind PATTERNS, not storms; they reverse each season.

✓ Sail + compass + astrolabe → Indian Ocean trade grows (lower risk, more trips).

2.3 Indian Ocean: Ports, States, Diasporas

Port Cities & States

Place	Power From
Swahili cities (E. Afr.)	Gold, ivory
Gujarat (W. India)	Cotton cloth
Malacca (Malaysia)	Controls strait
Vijayanagara (India)	Trade + farming

Swahili city-states (Kilwa, Mombasa, Mogadishu): Bantu + Arab culture; elites → Islam.
Swahili language = Bantu + Arabic words.
Malacca: taxes ships in Strait of Malacca → rich; sultan converts to Islam (early 1400s).
Gujarat (W. India): cotton cloth sold all across the ocean via Cambay, from E. Africa to SE Asia.

Diasporic Communities

Diaspora: merchants settle abroad, mix own & local culture (e.g., Arabs in Kilwa).
Examples: Arabs & Persians in E. Africa; Chinese in SE Asia (+ Gujaratis in Malacca).
Effect: intermarriage, middlemen, new mixed cultures (Swahili), Islam spreads to ports.

Zheng He (Ming China)

Zheng He: Muslim admiral; 7 treasure-fleet voyages 1405–1433 → Arabia & E. Africa.
Goal: show Ming power & collect tribute. Ends b/c costly + Confucian distrust of trade.

⚠ Zheng He ≠ European explorers: no conquest or colonies (contrast Portugal, Unit 4).

✓ State support: Malacca taxes ships; Ming backs Zheng He (state-backed trade).

2.4 Trans-Saharan Trade Routes

Tech & Goods

Camel (dromedary): goes ~10 days w/o water, carries ~400 lb → desert crossing possible.
Camel saddle (N. Arabian style): better control & loads → big caravans possible.
Caravans: hundreds of camels travel together for safety; oases = rest stops (resupply).

North → South	South → North
Salt	Gold
Horses, cloth	Enslaved people
Books, Islam	Ivory

Salt-gold trade: W. Africa has gold, needs salt for diet; Sahara has salt (Taghaza mines).

Mali Empire

Sundiata founds Mali c. 1235 after Ghana declines.
Power: taxes trade; rulers convert to Islam → ties to N. African Muslim traders and scholars.
Mansa Musa: **hajj** 1324; spends so much gold in Cairo that its value drops; returns w/ scholars.
Timbuktu: trade hub & Islamic learning center (Sankore mosque, libraries, manuscripts).

Religion

Islam spreads via merchants to rulers & cities; rural people keep old faiths for centuries.
Syncretism: local spirits & customs kept w/ Islam.

⚠ Mali got rich by TAXING trade, not mining all the gold (gold fields + trade cities).

✓ Mansa Musa's hajj = proof of Mali's wealth & Islamic ties (1324, Cairo gold crash).

2.5–2.6 Cultural & Environmental Effects

2.5 Spread of Beliefs

Buddhism → China, Korea, Japan, SE Asia; adapts to local cultures (Chan/Zen in Japan).
Islam → sub-Saharan Africa & SE Asia via merchants & Sufis (Mali, Malacca).
Syncretism (blending cultures): e.g. Swahili culture; Mali's mix of Islam and local rites.
Hinduism & Buddhism shape SE Asia (Angkor Wat, Srivijaya) via traders, not conquest.

2.5 Travelers

Traveler	Shows
Ibn Battuta (Morocco)	Islamic world unity
Marco Polo (Venice)	Yuan China
Margery Kempe (Eng.)	Christian pilgrim

Tech diffusion: paper, printing, gunpowder, compass move west via Dar al-Islam.
Cities grow: Hangzhou, Samarkand, Cairo.

2.6 Environmental Effects

Champa rice (Vietnam → China): fast-ripening, 2 harvests a year → more food, pop. ↑.
Bananas (SE Asia → Africa); **citrus, sugar, cotton** spread in Dar al-Islam (via Muslim trade).
Bubonic plague rides trade routes → pop. crash (1340s) (~1/3 of Europe, many in China).

⚠ Columbian Exchange = Unit 4. These crop moves are earlier (starts after 1492).

✓ Trade effects = CULTURE + ENVIRONMENT. Give one of each (e.g., Islam; plague).

2.7 Comparison & Exam Moves

Compare the Networks

Feature	Silk	Ind. O.	Sahara
Transport	Camel	Ship	Camel
Goods	Luxury	Bulk	Gold, salt
Religion	Buddh.	Islam	Islam
State	Mongols	Malacca	Mali

Similar: all spread Islam, grow cities, enrich states that tax trade (Timbuktu, Malacca, Samarkand).
Different: sea moves cheap bulk goods; land moves luxuries (silk, gems, gold).

Merchant Groups

Hanseatic League: N. European trade cities protect merchants (Lübeck, 1300s).
Venice & Genoa: Italian city-states link Europe to Asian goods via Mediterranean ports.
Grand Canal (China) moves goods N ↔ S.

Exam Moves (2027)

SAQ (3 required, each w/ a source): **ACE** = Answer, Cite evidence, Explain the link.
DBQ: 7 docs; group by theme; **HIPP** on 2+ docs.
LEQ: 1 required prompt; thesis w/ line of reasoning + 2 specific pieces of evidence.
Key skills: **comparison** (similar AND different) & **causation** (trade → spread) (top skills).

⚠ Be specific: name the group, place & what spread ("Arab traders in Kilwa").

✓ Compare: Mali & Malacca both tax trade, but Mali taxes caravans, Malacca taxes ships.