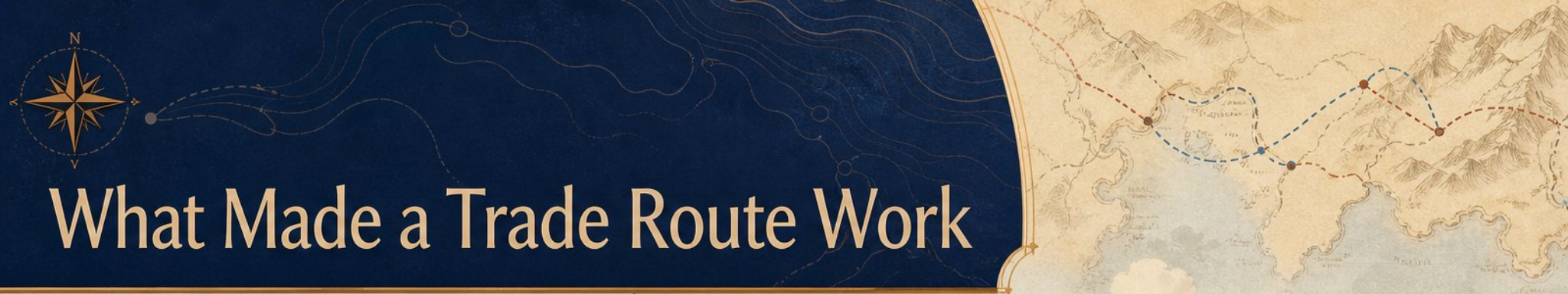


Trade Routes That Connected the Ancient World

- Long-distance networks linking civilizations through markets, ports, and oases
- Five systems: Silk Roads, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean, Trans-Saharan, Incense Route
- Goods, technologies, and ideas moved along shifting, interconnected paths
- Ancient routes were rarely single roads but complex webs of exchange





What Made a Trade Route Work

- Required: demand for high-value goods and transport technology
- Safe stopping points and intermediary merchants were essential
- Networks combined overland, river, and maritime routes
- Emporia, oases, ports, and caravanserais provided infrastructure
- Most merchants worked only a segment of a network





The Silk Roads:

Caravan Networks Across Afro-Eurasia



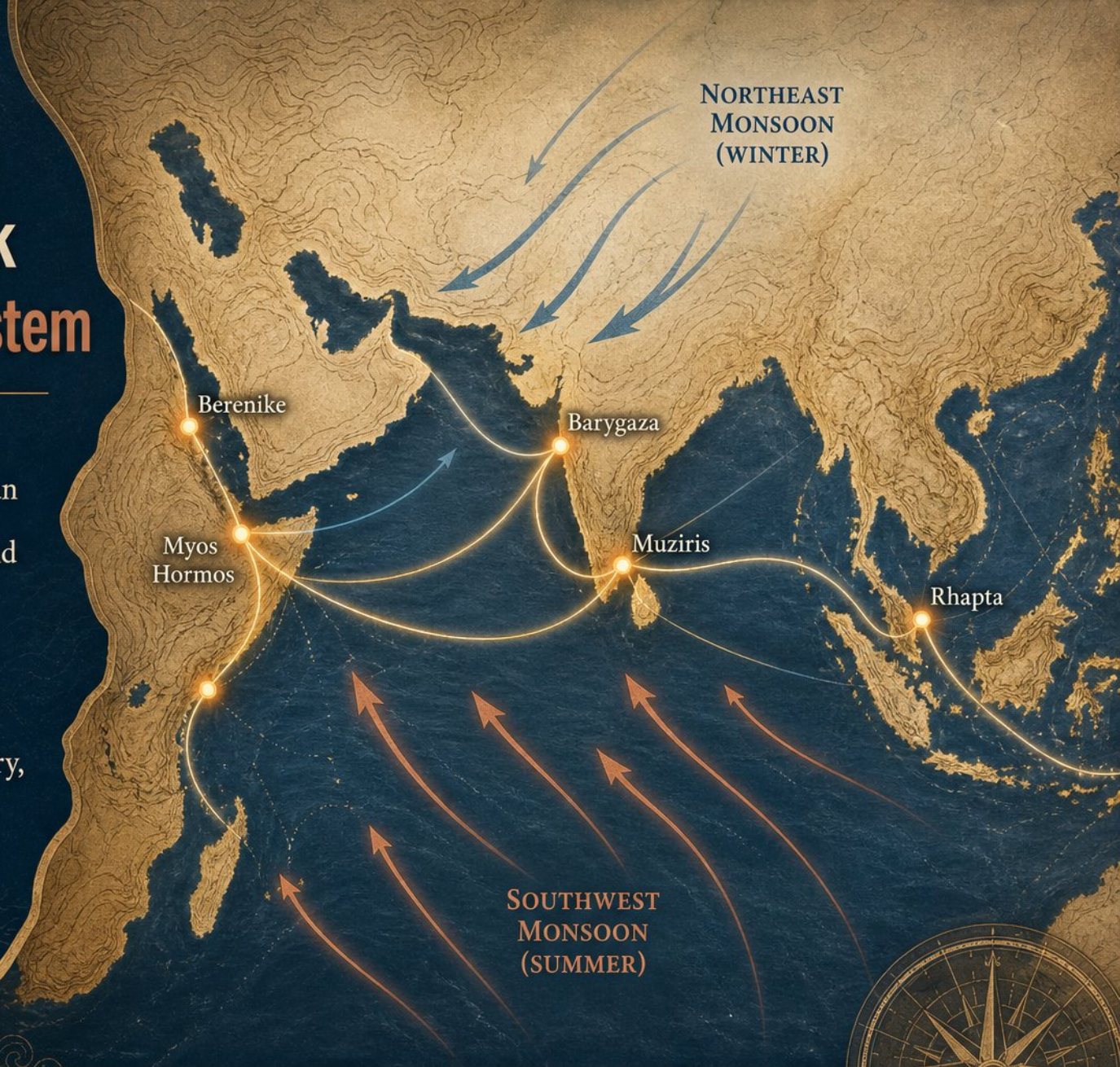
- Overland network linking China, Central Asia, Persia, and the Mediterranean
- Branches skirted the Taklamakan Desert, converging at Kashgar
- Mixed cargo: silk, paper, glass, metals, horses, and spices
- Oasis cities like Samarkand, Turfan, and Dunhuang served as hubs
- Palmyra profited as a middleman between Rome and Parthia





The Indian Ocean Maritime Network and the Monsoon System

- Seasonal monsoon winds enabled reliable sailing across the Indian Ocean
- Network reached from East Africa and Arabia to India and Southeast Asia
- Key ports: Berenike, Myos Hormos, Barygaza, Muziris, Rhapta
- Cargoes included pepper, textiles, ivory, tortoise shell, and precious stones
- Port cities hosted seasonally resident foreign trading communities



Rome, Egypt, and India:

The Periplus and the Red Sea Corridor

- Route ran from Roman Egypt through the Eastern Desert to Red Sea ports, then on to India
- The *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*: a first-century merchant guide to ports, goods, and sailing seasons
- The Muziris Papyrus records a maritime loan and cargo transport contract in practice
- Archaeological markers: Roman coins, amphorae, pepper at Berenike, and Indian graffiti
- Trade involved merchants from South Arabia, India, and East Africa, not just Roman shipping



Mediterranean Sea Routes: Phoenicians, Greeks, and Romans

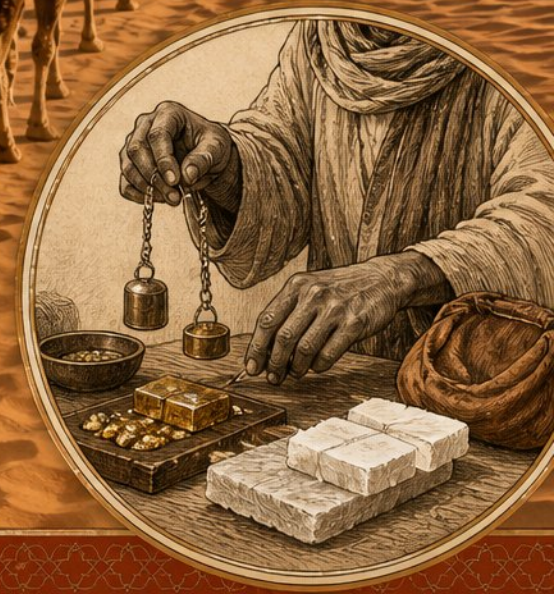
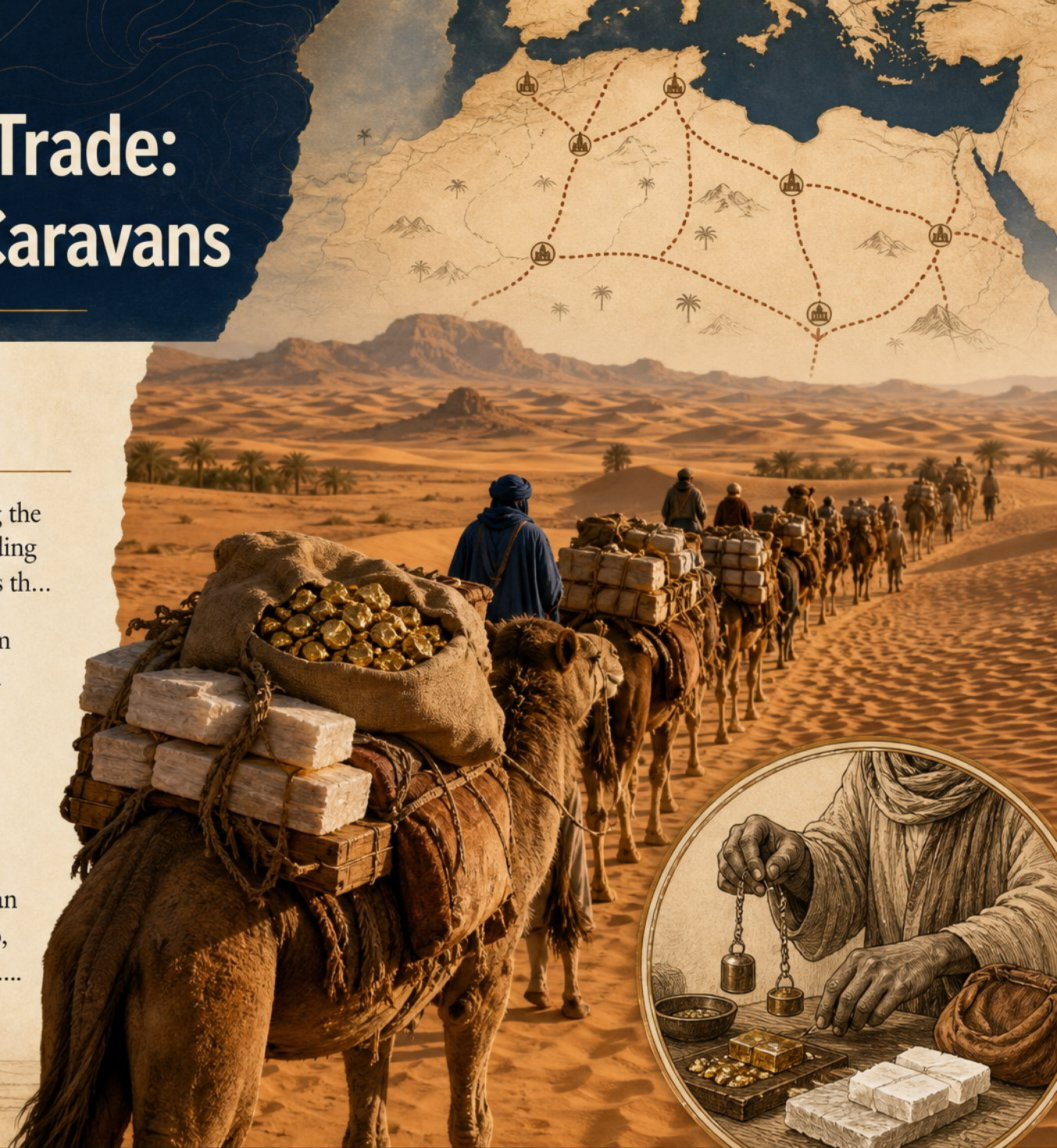
- Phoenician, Greek, and Roman ships created shifting maritime networks, not fixed roads
- Cargoes mixed staples and luxuries: grain, wine, olive oil, fish sauce, pottery, metals, timber, glass
- Harbors and concrete moles at Ostia, Carthage, and Portus enabled large-scale shipping
- Ports such as Puteoli hosted resident foreign trader communities
- Amphora cargoes from shipwrecks reveal routes, goods, and trading connections



Trans-Saharan Trade: Gold, Salt, and Caravans

This slide focuses on Trans-Saharan Trade: Gold, Salt, and Caravans.

- ◆ Key points: Trace caravan routes linking the Mediterranean coast, North African trading cities, and West African kingdoms across th...
- ◆ Explain the gold-salt dynamic: gold from West Africa was exchanged for salt from Saharan mines such as Taghaza.
- ◆ Show how camels, oasis geography, and caravan management made crossings possible and shaped the routes.
- ◆ Introduce Sijilmasa as a northern caravan and minting center, and Timbuktu, Gao, and Djenné as major southern trade and...



The Incense Route and the Arabian Trade Network

- Frankincense and myrrh from South Arabia to Mediterranean markets
- Overland caravans from Shabwah through Petra to Gaza
- Red Sea maritime routes linked Qanī, Muza, and Egyptian ports
- Petra and Gaza as key northern distribution and transshipment hubs
- Incense fueled ritual, medicine, perfume, and elite consumption



What Moved Along the Routes:

Goods, Technologies, and Ideas

- Luxury goods, everyday items, metals, and timber all circulated
- Shipbuilding, navigation, coinage, and paper spread through contact
- Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, and other faiths traveled the routes
- Berenike and the Belitung wreck show goods, people, and ideas moving together
- Merchant diasporas acted as cultural bridges between regions

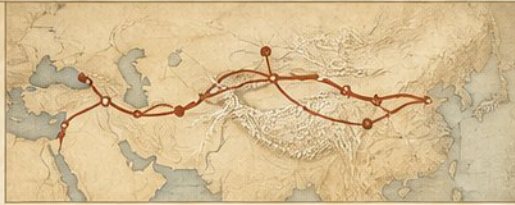




How We Know: Evidence and Methods in Ancient Trade Studies

- Ceramics, shipwrecks, coins, and inscriptions provide primary evidence
- Uluburun, Comacchio, and Belitung cargoes reveal trade snapshots
- Lead isotope and trace element analysis identify materials' origins
- Underwater contamination can alter chemical signatures (Kyrenia ceramics)
- Combine texts with material data to overcome survival biases

Comparing the Networks: Scale, Speed, and Geography



- **Silk Roads:** overland caravans; luxury, high-value, low-volume goods



- **Indian Ocean:** monsoon sailing; largest cargo volumes, fastest movement



- **Mediterranean and Trans-Saharan:** grain, gold, salt, and staples



- **Red Sea and Arabian routes** connected land and sea systems



- **Networks overlapped;** few merchants traveled end to end



Power, Wealth, and the Rise of Trading Cities

- States taxed key ports, oases, and markets.
- Palmyra, Petra, and Sijilmasa grew wealthy as trade hubs.
- Empires supported and competed over routes.
- Route shifts brought decline, showing fragile power.
- Trade wealth funded grand architecture and institutions.

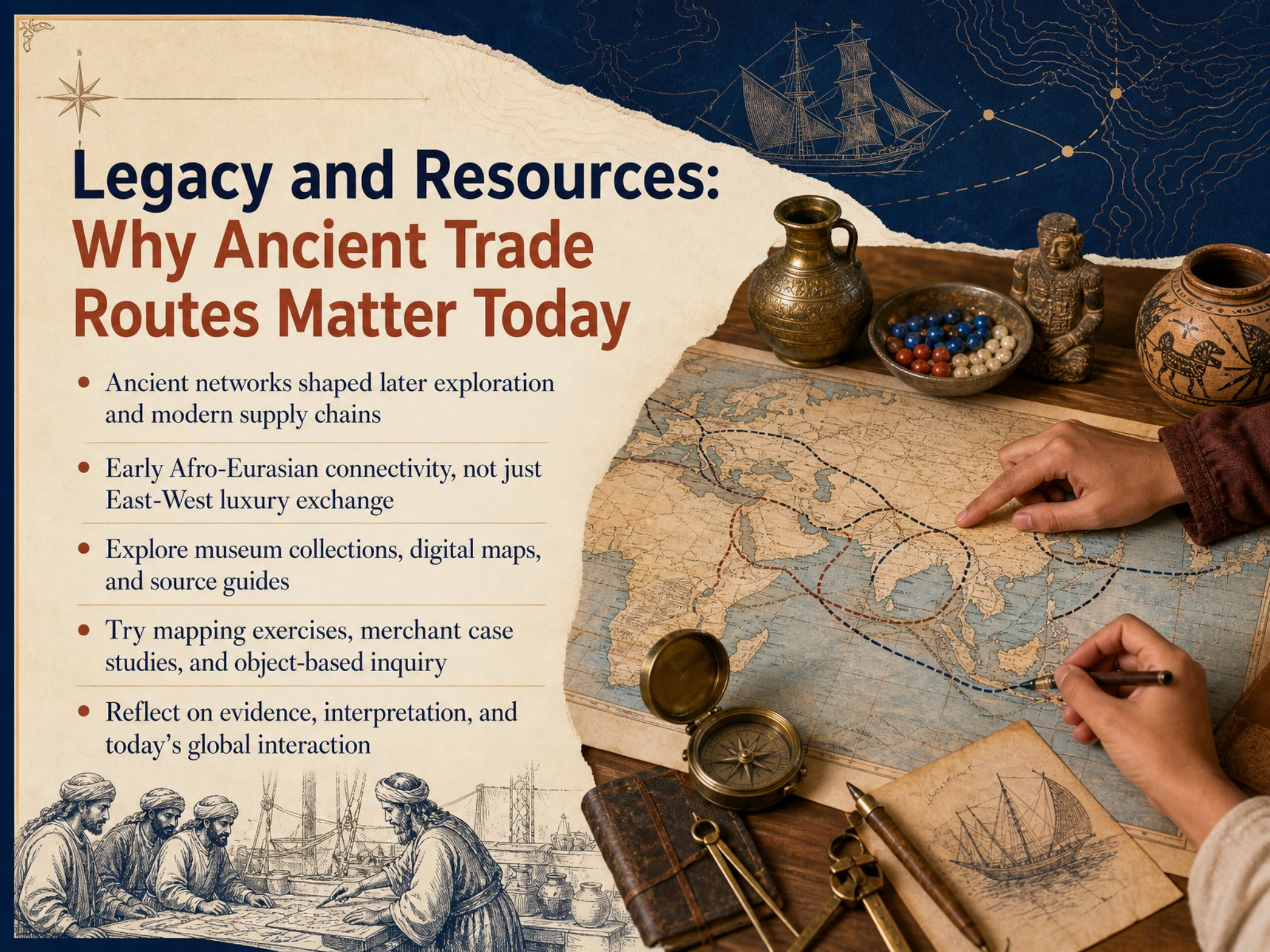


The Human Experience:

Merchants, Sailors, and Local Communities

- Trade depended on merchants, guides, sailors, porters, and local producers
- Indian traders resided seasonally in Egypt: Prakrit graffiti from Myos Hormos
- Monsoon winds, storms, and pirates made trust and social networks essential
- Shared language, religion, and diaspora communities reduced uncertainty
- Enslaved and forced labor also supported Saharan and maritime trade





Legacy and Resources: Why Ancient Trade Routes Matter Today

- Ancient networks shaped later exploration and modern supply chains
- Early Afro-Eurasian connectivity, not just East-West luxury exchange
- Explore museum collections, digital maps, and source guides
- Try mapping exercises, merchant case studies, and object-based inquiry
- Reflect on evidence, interpretation, and today's global interaction



PersonWise.

PersonWise • AI digital-human course platform



Scan the code or click anywhere to watch this course live, with voice Q&A

personwise.ai/t/c86da86b/public