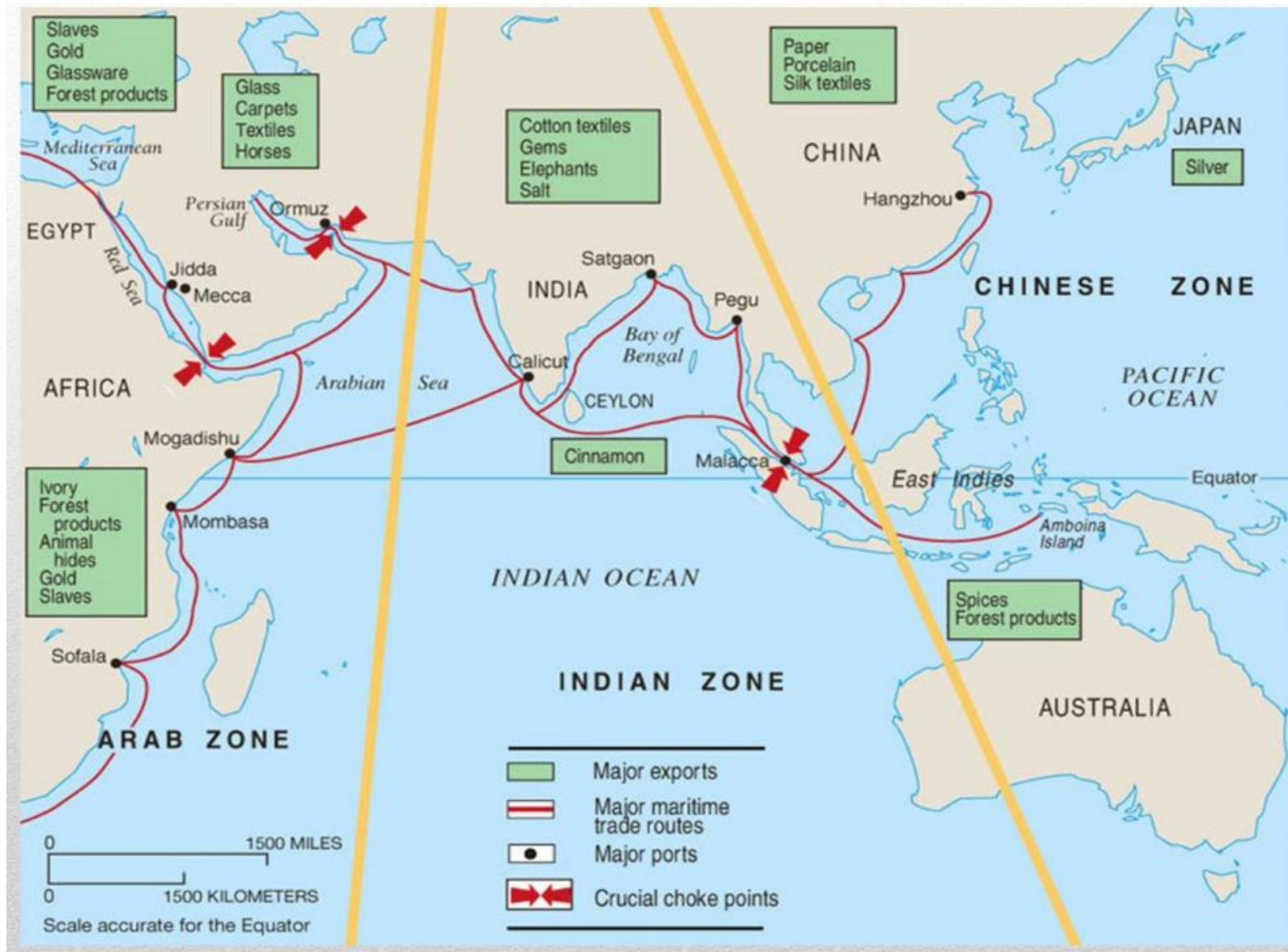


MAP #1: Routes and Major Products Exchanged in the Asian Trading Network, c. 1500

By the early modern era the ancient trading network that encompassed the Indian Ocean and neighboring seas from the Mediterranean to the North China Sea had expanded greatly in the volume of shopping and goods from the Middle East to China as well as in the number of port cities engaged in local and intercontinental commerce.



MAP #2: The Pattern of Early European Expansion in Asia

The differing routes and choice of fortified outposts adopted by successive European nations as they sought to tap directly into the Indian Ocean trading network reflect the greater information regarding centers of production that late comers, such as the Dutch and English possessed, relative to the pioneering Portuguese.

