

Review of Ancient Indian Merchants in Silk Road Trade and Transcontinental Commerce

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Abstract: Ancient Indian merchants played a significant role in the development of transcontinental commerce by connecting the Indian subcontinent with Central Asia, China, Persia, the Mediterranean world, and the Indian Ocean region. Although the Silk Road is commonly associated with the movement of Chinese silk toward western markets, it consisted of interconnected overland and maritime routes through which commodities, people, ideas, religions, and technologies circulated. Indian commercial networks contributed to these exchanges through the export of textiles, spices, precious stones, ivory, medicinal products, and other valuable commodities. Important trading centres, including Taxila, Mathura, Bharuch (Barygaza), and ports along the western and southern Indian coasts, connected regional production with international markets. Merchant guilds, caravan networks, monetary systems, political patronage, and religious institutions helped facilitate long-distance commerce.

Keywords: Ancient Indian Merchants, Silk Road, Transcontinental Commerce, Central Asia, Indian Ocean Trade, Merchant Guilds.