

Indian Ocean – Where Empires Meet

3000 BCE: Sumer and Indus Valley societies traded across the North West Indian Ocean and through the Arabian Gulf.

326–324 BCE: Nearchus, Alexander the Great’s ‘admiral’, led a fleet from the Indus River to the Persian Gulf following the Indian campaign. Trade routes down the east coast of Arabia and Africa were known at this time.

Greek and Indian traders and envoys exchange goods and cultures.

323 to 30 BCE: Ptolemaic Egypt trades with India through the Red Sea.

100 BCE to 620CE:

Traders for the Roman and Chinese empires criss-crossed the Indian Ocean.

Goods were often traded through markets in Egypt,

Iraq, Iran, India, and Vietnam (using modern names). Some Roman trading families had sophisticated companies that directly shipped bullion and wine from Rome to India in exchange for pearls, incense and spices.

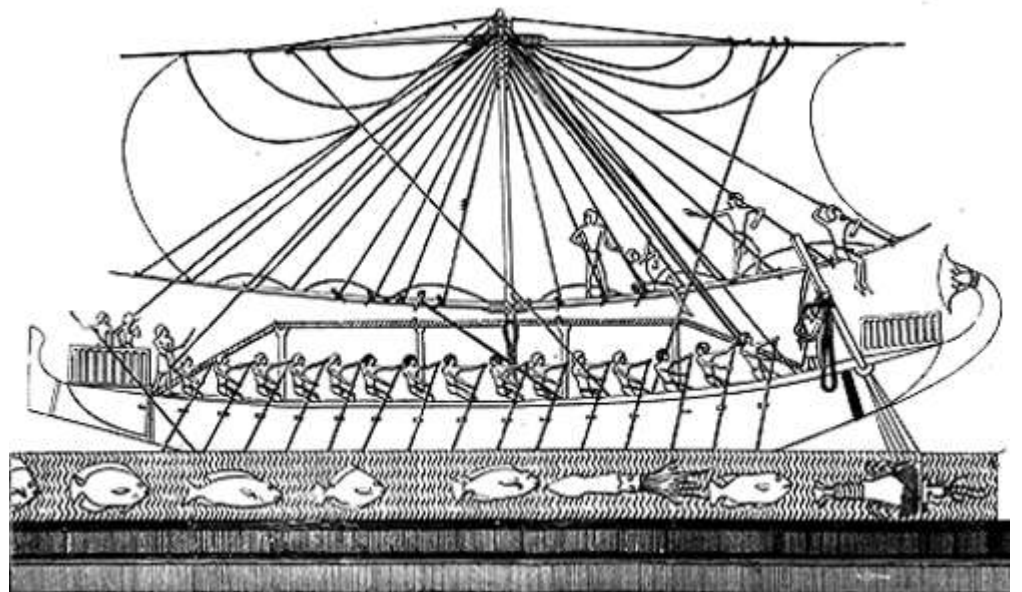


Figure 1 V&A Museum publication

East - west trade through the Indian Ocean was severely reduced but not extinguished after the collapse of the (Western) Roman Empire.

1405 to 1433: Ming dynasty naval and trade expeditions into the Indian Ocean.

The Portuguese got modern globalisation off the ground in the 16th century with outposts and trade routes between Europe, South America, Africa, India and Asia.

In the 17th to 19th Centuries European trading and colonial empires expanded into the Indian Ocean region.

It was the British and Dutch that emerged as leaders in trade and territorial forms of globalisation in the 1800s. By the late 20th century multinational corporate entities dominate much of the trade. But this includes some local companies including Tata Motors (owners of Jaguar and Land Rover), BHP Billiton and HCL Technologies.



Figure 2 Goreen Collection



*The Australian Association
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