**Cultural Diffusion Along the Silk Road**

**Religions - Spread Along the Trade Routes in All Directions**

1. Buddhism (arose in India and spread in both directions as far east as Japan and as far west as modern day Turkmenistan.
2. Islam (founded in the 7th century, it spread in all directions and now attracts a worldwide following of more than one billion devotees)
3. Christianity (arose in the Eastern Mediterranean and spread throughout the Roman world. Nestorian Christianity spread eastwards after the expulsion of Nestorius, patriarch of Constantinople, during the 5th century. It reached China by 635)
4. Manichaeism (developed in the Middle East during the 3rd century and reached China by the 7th or 8th century)
5. Zoroastrianism (the state religion of Persia until the arrival of Islam in the 7th century, it had spread eastwards to China and India by the 7th or 8th century.

**Technology and Innovations - Acquired by China from the lands to the west**

1. Harnesses, saddles and stirrups (from the Central Asiasteppe nomads)
2. Construction-methods for bridges and mountain roads
3. Knowledge of medicinal plants and poisons
4. Cultivation of cotton
5. Seafaring techniques (navigation, different types of sails)

**Technology and Innovations - Acquired by the West from Asia**

1. Chinese inventions (compass, paper, silk, gunpowder)
2. Medical techniques (especially from Arab scholars such as Ibn Sina)
3. Science and mathematics (algebra, astronomy, and the Arab numerals that we use in the West today; the zero came from India)
4. The use of passports (a Mongol innovation)
5. Military techniques and strategies
6. Architectural styles and devices (the Persian invention of the squinch allowed the addition of a dome and led to the construction of many of the world’s great buildings).
7. Use of paper money (previously, only coins were used).