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From 300 C.E. to 1450 C.E., trade relations between Africa and Eurasia showed consistency in the ^{basic} types of exports and imports (goods exchanged between the regions) as well as the importance of coastal cities, but also showed changes in the arrival of Islam, the extent and degree of trade, and the rise of new and powerful empires in Eurasia.

Thesis

Some of the constants that remained throughout this period of time includes the types of exchanged goods and the importance of coastal cities. The type of exports from Africa constantly consisted of large amounts of gold, as it was a popularly sought-after resource in Eurasia. Also, the slave trade existed throughout this period, albeit at a much smaller scale than what was to come in the next few centuries. African slavers traveled around the continent capturing slaves (mostly females) for trade with the Arabs. The Eurasians, in turn, traded weaponry and scientific/technological innovations and art products (rugs, spices, etc.). Also, the coastal cities of Africa remained important, particularly the northern states bordering the Mediterranean. This was the area of immediate contact through sea/land trade with the Eurasians, and various wealthy trading empires rose along these regions, such as the Mali, Benin, Carthage, ^{Egypt.} etc. in Africa as well as the Romans, Umayyads, Abbasids, Ottomans, etc. of Eurasia. These coastal cities remained important points of contact.

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However, this period of time was also greatly affected by the changes sweeping through the regions, including the rise of Islam, changes in the extent and degree of trade, and the rise ^{and fall} of different empires and peoples actually participating in the trade. The rise of Islam, perhaps, brought on the greatest changes in African-Eurasian trade. With the growth and spread of Islam from the 7th and 8th centuries CE, merchants from Eurasia brought, not only valuable goods, but their religion Islam as well. When it proved beneficial to convert to Islam, in terms of trade, much of North and West Africa became Islamic. This resulted in an explosion of trade between the Eurasian and African merchants, as they shared a common faith. Not only did the amount of trade increase, but the extent of trade also grew as the trans-Saharan trade routes developed. Northern & Western Islamic African merchants pushed south, opening up wider trading routes with Eurasia. Finally, the time period of 300 ~ 1450 CE saw the rise and fall of many extremely powerful empires in both Eurasia and Africa, such as the Romans in Europe (Mediterranean) and their fall (Western Rome in 476 CE and Eastern Rome, or the Byzantines, by 1453 CE), the Umayyads (rose after the death of Muhammad in 623 CE), the Abbasids (rose during the 740s after defeating the Umayyads), the Ottomans (rose during 1300s CE), and many more. As these various empires

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rise and fall, the amount of trade continued to increase and the actual people and empires involved in the trade changed.

In conclusion, the period between 300 and 1450 CE was characterized by continuities in the types of goods exchanged as well as the prominence of Eurasian and African coastal cities but changed with the rise of Islam and the huge increase in trade that followed. The rise and fall of the various Eurasian empires (that affected the amount of trade) was due to global trends of political instability caused by continuous nomadic pressures on the peripheral regions of empires (ex. the Huns in Eurasia, the Visigoths in Europe, etc.).

Analysis