



Seventh international conference



Call for Paper:

Trade and traders throughout history

"The Tunisian World Center for Studies, Research and Development" & "The Tunisian- Mediterranean Association for Historical , Social and Economic Studies" will hold on 11 , 12 and 13 December 2014 the seventh international conference on the theme: "Trade and traders throughout history. " There were several reasons for this choice, among which we can mention that the immense field of knowledge that integrates many disciplines and the importance of the subject requires a diversity of approaches to understanding the transformation of trade throughout history .

Linked to human societies through the ages, trade has taken many forms; it was associated with the appearance of man since barter between tribes and groups of people in the primitive era. This has been one of the pillars of political entities (kingdoms, principalities, Nations and Empires) during all historical periods; it was a factor in their appearance and economic dynamism, a source of political and financial resources due to significant revenue provided to the public treasury power . Trade was behind the emergence of several social phenomena and changes that have affected certain groups of society; it was and is a tool for traffic or movement of social actors, values, and ideas between communities. Currently, trade is of great importance for economic development in all countries ; it is a real challenge that has had an impact on the lives of people, their daily lives, and human and economic development.

In general , trade and traders have contributed to the enrichment of cultures and civilizations through cultural contact and mixing because in traversing overland trade routes (eg the Silk Road , desert trade routes ...) and sea routes (in the Mediterranean Sea, Atlantic Ocean, Baltic Sea , Caribbean Sea ...), caravans and merchant vessels have not only contributed to the transfer of raw materials and other products, but they have been the vehicles of religious, spiritual and artistic dimensions, to the different cultures and civilizations of the peoples of regions located on their paths. This whole process occurred in a context of renewed interaction in time and space, which has contributed to the establishment of friendly and diplomatic relations between different peoples and international powers. But this does not prevent the emergence of tensions in international relations for commercial reasons, resulting from conflicting economic interests between the powers. The desire of large countries or emerging powers to control markets and products has caused the emergence of tensions and regional conflicts, and even the outbreak of World Wars.

Local and international trade are undergoing major changes due to the current economic crisis, the challenges of globalization, and changing habits and traditions of consumers. In addition to traditional forms of trade already known, electronic commerce is a promising new phenomenon; it became the cornerstone of the digital economy, because it allows the marketing of goods and services with the most modern means of communication. We should add that trade and traders remain at the heart of complex situations and tensions in the world; terrorism the spread of drugs regional conflicts and crises of democratic transition are closely linked to smuggling and parallel or informal trade .

It seems that the emergence of e-commerce as one of the forms of trade and its increasing scale both quantitatively and qualitatively is the living embodiment of the consolidation of the strategic dimensions of business organizations and state. Meeting its challenges requires the investment of important potential financial, material and human resources to make the most of its advantages and to overcome its drawbacks and risks. Issues of e-commerce are also a challenge for business organizations and states; it must be considered as a positive phenomenon which is able to promote prosperity and progress for companies.

Thus, we can say that trade with its various components is not only a traditional activity that focuses on trade in goods and the increase of wealth; trade has also become one of the most important strategic choices in the organization of contemporary international relations and the formation of blocs and regional alliances. Trade has become the strongest of factors in the management of international conflicts such as the conflict between Iran and Western countries or the current Russian-Ukrainian conflict. This topic can be discussed with reference to the following main areas:

● **Axis 1 Historical and Business Sources:**

Historical records, official and unofficial letters, Genizah documents, records, documents Waqf (pious endowments), archives of churches and monasteries, literature, geography and travel books of Hisbah, biographies, Fatwas and men of religion, etc.

● **Axis 2. Structure of trade through its nature, its components, and the interaction of its actors :**

- Intersections and land and sea trade routes, factors that determine their changes in time and space.

- Places of business: centers, bazaars/markets and market towns appeared along routes and trade routes, their importance in trade relations, and their different roles in trade.

- Exchanges between different actors (Agricultural products, metals, industrial products imported foreign products, weapons, textiles, slaves ... etc.) , tonnage and value of trade, marketing arrangements, conditions and standards of trade products, weight and measures, currencies.

- Women and trade, especially in the South : Business and pioneer women (eg Bahrain, Oman, African countries) nurseries

● **Axis 3. Reports on trade with states and communities:**

- The role of trade and trade routes (esp. trade in gold and slaves, long-distance trade) in the emergence of kingdoms and states, especially in the Middle Ages; its contribution to the formation of the modern state in Western Europe after the crisis of feudalism and the rise of cities - states.

- Trade and economic dynamism ; providing significant revenue to the Treasury.

- Traders and their influence on the evolution of other social groups such as farmers and craftsmen.

- Parallel trade and hawkers: characteristics, mechanisms, and economic and social repercussions.

- Role of trade in changes in certain social groups; movement/migration of social, cultural values and ideas between communities.

- Traders and social and political transformations throughout history: individual or family journeys.

- Human groups, minorities, and trade: *Subregional* people (Morocco), *Sfaxians*, *Armenians*, *Mozabites*, *Greeks*, *Jews*, and other *Jerbans*.

● **Axis 4. Trade and International Relations:**

- Trade and World domination: struggles for control of certain products; disputes for controlling markets and commercial centers.

- World Trade during 1500-1800 and its impact on the Mediterranean and the Arab - Muslim world .
- The Role of the market and trade today for the of social, economic, political, and cultural development.
- The Contribution of trade and traders in the relationship between economic regions and communication between cultures and social formations.
- The Relationship between trade and the divine, or osmosis between trade and religion : Hajj and trade , evangelism and commerce.
- Trade and its impact on regional borders : Example of Ceuta and Melilla, the eastern border of Morocco-Algeria , the question of Gibraltar and the Spanish border
- Contraband (banned products, weapons, etc.) : General characteristics , mechanisms, and various implications.
- Fluctuations in the trade balance and their relationship to state sovereignty and international policies.

● **Axis 5. Trade Organization :**

- Trade and Muslim jurisprudence or Fiqh al-Aswag : questions that have been raised about internal and external trade; their applications in historical reality .
- A framework for trade: the role and the effect of each party supervisor (central authority or Makhzen, traders, local leaders such as the Zaouias Sheikhs and tribes, etc. on the structure and organization of trade.
- Mechanisms, techniques, and organization of trade: barter currencies, customs duties on markets and trade .
- The Role of Chambers of Commerce in the structuring of trade at the local or regional level (e.g., Mediterranean countries, Francophone African countries)

● **Axis 6. Electronic Commerce :**

- Definition of e-commerce
- Forms and types of e-commerce (E-commerce , E-government , E-management and others)
- Infrastructure of e-commerce and its determinants
- Some experiences of e-commerce
- Risks and benefits of e-commerce and its prospects.