

Public Squares: Hinges of Commercial Circulations, between Oasis and Arabs/Moslim Cities

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Abstract: *Throughout history, the routes of Sahara were able to connect and arrange a direct transition, and a correlative relationship between sub-Saharan Africa and the Mediterranean. The network borrowed by channels of migration, convert the Sahara, from a marginal periphery at an intersection weaving relational mesh at an intercontinental level, based on the Exchange and trade. «trade creates the city, settlement, the garrison, and the State" (Olivier fold, 2001). Economic and demographic dynamism can be witness of the insertion of the cities, a trading system wide span, bypassing national territorial boundaries. He was relying on a relay device and intersections: that are market places, which conveyed the urban fabric of the Sahara. These public places which were stages of the migratory movement, were therefore places of home of transhumance from Africa in the direction of Europe, instead of Exchange, relay, social links and urbanity: in other words, the heart beating of oasis, and cities surroundings of the Mediterranean basin, and crucial points of the economic and social development. Today these areas have experienced disruptions. They wither the secular market logic, which would be at the origin of the source of life for these companies. Subsequently, they destroyed relations between cities. Hence the objective aimed by this study, aspires to understand space transit registration and its impacts on the one hand, and to identify on the other hand the ins and outs originally these mutations, and the decline of the past of thriving trade between civilizations.*

Keywords: Public Place, Trade Routes, Links between Civilizations, Oases/Arabs Cities

1. Introduction

When you In the course of history, the nomad was logical agent through the deployment of concepts simplistic, he handles in order to adapt a typical texture of life in relation to the natural environment "There is no doubt, said Edmond Perrier, as drought, moisture, more or less violence of the wind, heat, light, electricity can change temporarily or even permanently personal characteristics of living things ..." [1]

The impression that this man physically marked on this medium, if its territory is reflected through the trade routes of the activity assistant in it incorporates and leads the game: a form of traditional resources and extensive immemorial. Indeed, establishing trails for the purpose of any correspondence, we find ourselves inevitably forge the ancient routes[1], which were able to accommodate the imperative necessities of human mobility. The example of the "trails of caravans to Syria and Mesopotamia, for a moment abandoned after the construction of the Suez Canal, have been revived importance of the past when Europeans have developed railways and roads in these parts." [1] "There are" germs "geography of cities and states, which contribute positively to the destiny. The boundaries, roads, ports and the importance of markets - which is related to roads, - the fate of cities, the birth of the capital, are a function of history, that is to say, chance and of wills." [1]

In addition to the migration of commercial logic, some routes were moving apart from the military utility, to places of propagation of religious life, the example circuits borrowed caravan bound for Mecca or Tlemcen, Kairouan ... or even for religious celebrations. Indeed, apart from traders, these trips are exploitable by religious preachers and missionaries of the Kings in search of unusual and valuable

manuscripts from the Middle East [2]. More tour operators are sitting down acknowledgment of journeys approval.

It must therefore disentangle the outset, the son of the conduct of men in business to make migration inevitably point to a crucial question "in public places: places of excellence by correspondence, relays and barter", which reflect transmutations prevailing. Subsequently be needed exploration geo-strategic public places in the Sahara, following the same perception of the whole desert. And through the measurement of different levels of the Saharan region freight, and taking into account cultural values capable of proliferation of economic and social dynamics, and a territorial identity plural.

2. Trade in the Arab-Islamic

2.1. Overview of trade in "the golden age of Islam" between the eighth and eleventh centuries

The religion of Islam was carried and spread by North African merchants in the wake of the trade from North Africa in VIIe the seventh century [3]. In this period, interregional trade, which prohibits economic dislocation as prescribed by the borders and provided a good example of cultural integration and monetary growth was measured by a prosperous, catering to the mobility of goods and men through of land or water holes.

In exordium, he had organized the Muslim trade route for first home caravans through the Western Sahara, it was equipped with wells and palm groves between the souths of Morocco to the south of Mauritania, prepared in counters by these traders to trade with Ghana whose wealth came from gold deposits of Senegal and Niger. Then the Arab

principalities settled in Algeria and Morocco, and established the Indus to the Atlantic where a commercial trader circulated and traded their goods for a gold coin (dinar). A dialectic that encouraged the deployment of trans-Saharan trade to access the exploitation of gold mines of Upper Senegal-Niger. The latter came from the eighth century; the caravans were incidentally propagandists of religious values, social and cultural. The trans-Saharan trade allowed the development of an exchange economy. "Trans-Saharan trade combines the transport of goods by desert, and relationships and business practices between African territories separated by the Sahara".



Figure 1: The nineteenth century engraving depicting an Arab caravan crossing the Sahara with black slaves. Archive Photos source Encarta Encyclopedia 2007

2.2. Trade in the era of colonization

Colonization is blurring the caravan trade in favor of trade deals, the result of European trading following the colonial division, having said that a demonstration against the logical partitioning of the circuit caravan.

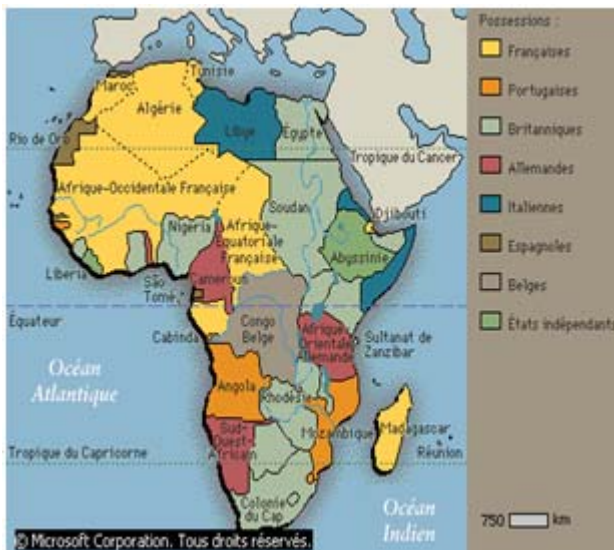


Figure 2: European colonies in Africa (1914)

Thus the goal of settlement is not to build viable economic structures; new routes connecting the south to north (designed exclusively for drainage products between Dakar-Niger, the Abidjan-Niger, Benin-Niger) refuted the ancient tracks. Wherever Europeans acceded, the commercial structure in situ was disrupted, subsequently the trans-Saharan trade and the great ancient empires faded, the economic system or transmuted. This new policy replaced

the free market in western Africa, procreating situation the decline of cities innate trans-Saharan trade.

Notwithstanding, companies using the processes, were working together, in the commercial secret, while borrowing the old caravan trails. This duality arose from the superposition of the structure underground to the formal structure has largely characterized the colonial period and has even strengthened after independence both from traditional retailers by migrant workers. During this retreat, informal trade through the traditional methods has provided the needs of tribes. [3]

2.3. Overview of the trans-Saharan trade

It was not until IXe the ninth century, the trans-Saharan trade, correlated with the Islamic religion (the Arabs had introduced the Sahara from the VII century, given the spread of Islam), is with a structure and a decent mode of operation to provide the oasis and nomadic.

The caravan trails borrowed insinuated trade routes par excellence, which fatally imposed relay points (oases) through the Sahara, additionally to the presence of water points. In general, the caravan trails have contributed largely to the fragmentation of the territories, and given the gradual scaling of the roads through the caravanserais. Obviously the exchanges that were taking place were doomed at the market places.



Figure 3: photo Kenadsa, an oasis on the trans-Saharan route, source Authors

At the end of XVe the fifteenth century the Europeans set up trading posts which almost overshadowed the trans-Saharan trade, which, however, persisted until XIXe the nineteenth century.

3. Nodes, Foundations of Transhumance Sub-Saharan Africa: Market Place

3.1. The transhumance: a service for trade

The Sahara has shown no obstruction between the southern and northern parts of Africa, contrary to the caravans that crisscrossed in all directions, carrying people, goods, cultures, ect ... The Sahara has been, is and will be a space journey, notwithstanding the rectilinear boundaries of hundreds of kilometers, inherited from colonialism. Boundaries that account for disparities between states are

still favorable to trade, and difficult to monitor. It is said that *"nomads know the borders and work out that this is the same as dotted enrich"* [4] The Sahara is continually appreciated as coherent area, despite its disparate networking and its porous borders, which is one of the propulsion mechanisms of barter between the northern and southern fringes.

Transhumance sub-Saharan Africa destined for the European Union under the leadership of the increased flow merchant [5], is grounded in copiously of market places, which now hold the reception of mass migration into the suitability of logic commercial.

The organization of mobility, barter, and facilities (places), which provide the vitality of these areas Saharan reports links material and immaterial on which the perpetuation of societies. Thus the hinge Saharan Sahel, actually the North African Sahara has long served as provider and through the sales momentum, which in Algerian oasis are the traditional place migration.

Moreover, countless iconic models of nodes that represent some of the wells, military garrisons, rural towns,... Were able to develop through trade practices and barter and garnish gradually: to be *"cities of position counter "* [5] the culmination of caravan trails border the limits, the example of Reggane (Algeria) and Dongola (Sudan), or rather city relay outside the borders, it is space on the device, channeling the nodes exchange and travel between the Sahel and North Africa, tel (Khartoum, Adrar). These trans-Saharan migration routes are in fact a form of commercial traffic on a space lattice, based on the stock market.

3.2. Case of INSTEAD OF CAMELS, one of the nodes on the route across the Sahara

Setting the Scene Study:

From the beginning of its history, the region of Bechar in southwest Algeria, has manifested itself as a center of communications and road links, the first interest is trade at between Sudan and the capital cities of the Maghreb. Is described as the South, the region of Bechar served as a link between the Great Desert, Morocco, Algeria and black Africa. It was with a gathering place, residence, barter, and replenishment of caravans in transit of food and water, referred to as "place of camels." (See photo and location on map).



Figure 4: situation of the town of Bechar



Figure 5: caravans to rest /The place of camels, source: Former photographer/Bechar

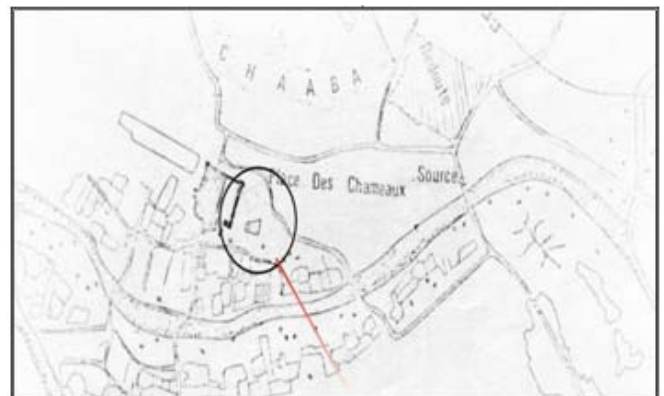


Figure 6: Location map of the place of camels in 1903, source: PUD Bechar Scale 1/10.000°

Instead notorious being originally a vast limitless space located at the gates of the Ksar, a hastily taken shape and gives a name other "place of arcades," before being used by the troops of the settlers nicknamed "Lutaud Place." It has surprisingly been reforms in terms formal and functional.



Figure 7: Photographs representative of the time trends of the place of camels from the colonial era

It spends a place of barter and exchange par excellence, an area virtually abandoned. Currently, the site recorded a spatial form rather related to the decor of the contemporary city, as devoted to use this space. Place gradually loses its role as a beating heart. She became, as elsewhere, the symbol of a nostalgic story claimed prestige. Reason, many architects who are trying to revive the traditional place [6], even post modern planners are able to describe the place as an invariant culture. [7] This fad of the hour for the historical model must be absolutely due to the desire to reconnect with the social role that meant the ancient city. **Faced with this situation has to wonder what are the ins and outs of these functional changes?**

Reconstruct the ancient past of the area concerned by the study is almost impossible from documents, in the absence of transcendent archives one time. Examine the history of the place, is therefore based on the codification of sound recordings in this product through the method of inquiry. This will expand to examine the ways and behavior at the present time, by process of selecting a portion of the population. This is to contemplate the "*component but not strictly representative of the population characteristics*"[8] such as significant in the region.

It emerged from this survey that the facility is not vernacular coincidence, since it reflects the society inherent in its customs, adjusted to the conditions of time and place. The model produces a specific organization that administers maintains complex causal relationships and a sense of organization dictated by the very hierarchical social structure in family units, where streets, alleys and neighborhoods segregated. But it also has a public space "*so called because it is open to all,*" [9] notwithstanding, it has its own logic and its own networks, which refer to a social convention, specific uses, and characteristics of formal and dimensional, deserve an explanation.

The public square that was summed up in a vast area, virtually without any limit, even without specific treatment, conveyed an intense social and economic life. This feat set itself by the convergence of caravans from all quarters, simply because the place was a camel which supplied step of the way, the caravan is routed to the era of prosperous commerce.

If this place did not give too much importance to the formal aspect is that it focuses mainly on the use and less on a particular morphology. His interest is that it acts as a market open to all, located at the crossroads. And if she chose voluntarily to be established on the outskirts of the Ksar, it is to prohibit laymen from entering their establishment. [10] The public space does not appear, then, as a place where discussing municipal affairs, the image of the square in Europe.

This is the city expands, it contrasts two competing conceptions, but contiguous, a traditional old fabric, and another just superimpose his Europeanized public sphere than ancestral. That said, the new production from what exists to ensure transformation, assigning responses to the requirements of the new society.

The desire to urban, with considerations of another kind were right to rationality in the construction of the public: introduction of traffic which are related to the city streets and composition of space in a form which reinterprets orders baroque creation of commercial buildings which constitute the envelope, ensuring a decent level of public space (ground floor), perhaps these businesses are extended by arcaded galleries (hence the designation place arcade). The shaping of the public therefore adopted a new vocabulary just to bond only with the city without bypass, and respects the new laws which lead to harmful consequences for the deployment of social and economic relations firms in a network that responsibility of different nations, and takes into

consideration no border. "*Inscribed in a long time, these forms quickly escape the conditions of their creation; they become products or causes constraint*". [11]

In fact the form that has cast the space, supported by the restrictions imposed by the settlers, for the use prelude, hinder the ease in commercial practice of always, and exchange, they make him acquire a meaning beyond the trends. First, the fades stay places that grant him more opportunities after the new spatial arrangement, then barter disappears in favor of monetary exchange trading via a more organized, and by promoting ways transfer.

Instead of camels as known, does more subsequent to the needs of society are inherent. It remains a constant, but has not been seen in the local cultural context. It refers to companies of different civilizations, and in this case serves as a support for different social practices. It is generally accepted that "*any activity or construction planning has economic implications and policy is hardly a novelty*." [11]

4. Conclusion

The trading activities of the Muslim civilization full of enthusiasm have long relied on a string of towns and oases, structured tracks piercing through the semi-arid or desert, and focused on the middle age market places. In this case, the squares are proving vital centers of economic development and social due to their geographical centrality and their membership in a prominent commercial network. Nevertheless, the redefinition of the role of these places has been well managed by political phenomena (colonialism), and the cultural epiphenomena of modernity.

Transmutation of preferred modes of transport accessibility, mobility and new practices: the form of social organization in the manner of formerly nomadic, now assimilated via a new form of migration based on new practices and approaches to space. Companies in the desert who was not confined to written laws, only the statements of values arranged the interrelations. So far our case study instead of camels, showed that the preponderance of use vested in the barter and / or trade priority over all values, and therefore confirmed the burning need to distinguish the cardinal virtue of use of the place, its qualification having no formal or legal consideration. Unlike the way to the European part first in a city, seeking to build: the balance of masses and volumes, balance of social function and the economic or cultural.

Being located at the crossroads of ancient roads, instead of camels has actually done in the past, the role of contact area between the establishment of the first Bechar and those overseas territories. The hub of caravan routes has long drained flows, and a milestone that sets an ideal break from the course, providing the ultimate barter. When the original function of barter has died, the place has changed over time, first cropped in a clean and precise conformation in the heart of the city, then embellished happen to a place of prestige. She has to undergo a transmutation of the formal and functional. It therefore forms an excellent brand more or less revolutionary time, witness the history of the town of Bechar, or the territory in which it encrusted. This is true of

countless places that once provided the function of livestock fair and market. They now appear oversized since this function was ex-urban; the example of the role of the City of Prague has become a place of art and prestigious residence.

Indeed, it is symptomatic that the historic symbol of sort of the umbilical cord that connects citizens to their city's history. Thus, as in most cases, instead of camels highlights a point of convergence of geographical and historical memory. She answered all sum functions plural through the chronology of the time, and it is the role or specialty of the city if we can call it, enhanced by its location on the trans-Saharan trade route that have determined the function of the square, and its subsequent conversion. She sees herself in this day and show a prototype of the meeting and urban concentration as claimed Jacques Dewitte, but with all the problems that are engendered. Moreover it is not new that the place is the first place we rebuilt or rehabilitated. The public was generally the first place one thinks back to the city, for example following the destruction caused scarcely (see the Potsdamer Platz, one of Brussels) or decay.

They also show that urban residents commonly agree but spontaneously instead of camels as a landmark of the city, able to shape their subjective identity. Indeed, since the benchmarks provide some confidence.

Instead of camels, besides the fact allows identifying in his city, to build a memory, and shape social identity. It is the repository of collective memory. It responds to the characteristics of the place set by Marc Augé: place of history, identity, relational, and loaded with symbolic meaning.

And even if this construction comes from the past, and remains bearer of symbolic meaning, as it is now the image of one of the quintessential European city. Because the type built by the Orientalists established by contrast, first by its peripheral location: outside the human settlement a formula interesting as what we enter the city without all enter the city. Then this space is better defined by usage, not even by a special legal status.

Let us remember that once the people have made without the use of logical technicians still alive who see the private area and the public "place." This reflects the succession of interventions over time that has shaped it. But even if invariants such as the place reflected in the cities, it is necessary to adjust the urban culture in situ.

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