

Foreword

The essays published in this section originate from the participation of the authors in the AISPE - SISE International Conference *“Centri, periferie, reti. Persone, beni e idee in movimento nella storia dell’economia”* (Palermo, October 19th-21st 2023).

The authors proposed a collaborative exploration of the motives, means and consequences of the integration between distant communities and territories within the Euro-Mediterranean space, where the circulation of ideas, people and goods – not at all hindered, but rather stimulated by the struggle between powers for hegemony – was supported by substantial movements of cash and scriptural money. Policymakers, civil servants, military officers, merchants and financiers could and had to adapt their strategies and conduct to the global horizons opened by ever more frequent transactions and ever more capillary communications. Such new horizons, along with unquestionable opportunities – such as the possibility of procuring strategic raw materials, finished goods, money, and financial services – also entailed risks, such as the rapid spread of deadly epidemics and the repercussions on local economies of the changing patterns and balances of power in the global market for goods and money. These risks imposed the empirical adjustment of State structures and the development of increasingly efficient and sophisticated control and preventive procedures and mechanisms, to avoid conjunctural and structural crises.

The present contributions are therefore devoted to the concept of movement – or rather movements – in a global dimension, as a basic aspect of the Euro-Mediterranean space’s transition to modernity.