

<div class="logo logo-mobile"> <a href="https://fr.forumviesmobiles.org/">[11]</sup> as well as those carried out under the ANR project<sup>[12]</sup> led by Nora Semmoud enabled a greater understanding of the tenuous relationship between mobility strategies and the symbolic reconstruction processes of urban identities.

## **Impact of residential mobility on daily mobility**

Sociological and urban-anthropological research on residential mobility has gradually moved from a holistic level to a more microsociological level more attentive to the processes of urban construction through mobility. These studies show how residential mobilities, whether forced or desired, lead to the production of new systems of daily mobility, because inhabitants must solve the problem of reaching often remote workplaces, as well as the city with its economic, social and symbolic centrality.

The impact of residential mobilities on daily mobilities can't simply be measured through the effects of uprooting, as some older studies<sup>[13]</sup> may suggest. An issue that unquestionably deserves to be analyzed is the struggle to remain rooted to places and neighborhoods in the contemporary Algerian city and especially in Algiers. This city has constantly been reshaped by powerful movements of people coming to settle here from around the country and by great flows of residential displacement caused by the government's rehousing policies.

The relationship of the inhabitants of Algiers with their living space, based on an unprecedented and massive movement to reclaim the "European" city by the Algerian people during the country's independence in 1962, has since evolved in often contradictory and antagonistic directions. The frenzy of this initial recapture<sup>[14]</sup>, which drew the inhabitants of the so-called "Muslim"<sup>[15]</sup> peripheral neighborhoods to the higher-quality, central districts abandoned by the pieds-noirs (French nationals born in North African colonies), gave way to a short phase of residential stability, which was then quickly replaced by a new frenzy of residential change following the legal liberation of all vacant property in 1981.<sup>[16]</sup>

Within a decade, this new real estate market paved the way for profound reclassification processes of the Algerian populations into locations that was governed by speculative market dynamics, reinforcing daily mobilities even more than before and increasing the distance between living spaces and workplaces<sup>[17]</sup>.

So much so that by the early 2010s, Algiers had a completely fragmented and disintegrated social landscape, exacerbating the two contradictory trends observed in previous decades: on the one hand, the "villagization" or "communitarianization" of residential installations, and on the other, the breakdown of the urban fabric. This produced enclosed areas where communitarian groups reinforced dictatorships of neighborhood proximity and traditional conformism, as well as trends of individualistic retraction into private residences and apartments located in large collective housing complexes.

Recent statistics on population relocation since 2014 show large-scale centrifugal movements, away from central neighborhoods towards the peripheries. In the space of five years (from 2014 to 2018), more than 600,000 people (representing 155,000 families) were subject to involuntary displacement from precarious housing sites (slums and other fragile buildings) to new collective housing estates located in very peripheral locations. This made the mobility systems between housing and workplaces more complex and created new problems for the inhabitants, insofar as the choice of new residential settlements was made by the local authorities (the wilaya), not according to their accessibility but to the availability of land plots.

From a sociological point of view, a new and radical phenomenon has appeared since the government's implementation of large-scale rehousing operations that bring together, on the same site, whole communities from different slums who don't know each other. This situation brought into question the validity of the findings from studies conducted in the 2000s. How must we rethink the processes by which new forms of urban segregation appear in the context of new housing estates that are isolated and enclaved, as well as the causal relationship between strong communitarian groups living in close proximity and urban violence and insecurity?

In this context LASADET launched a new research project (currently being validated) aimed at documenting the extent of residential displacement by mapping the places of deportation and relocation, and revealing the complex responses of the inhabitants of these new neighborhoods to their exclusion from daily mobility through their inclusion in residential normality. The new PhDs being undertaken at the laboratory<sup>[18]</sup> will further develop methodological and conceptual frameworks to observe these changes in residential mobility processes: the research can thus study how these processes are driven by what Bourdieu calls<sup>[19]</sup> trends of fusion (strategies of family groups) and fission (laws of the market), and also question the

resulting mobility strategies for the women of Algiers.

## **Place, state of play, specificities of mobility research in Algiers**

What is specific about the mobility research performed at the LASADET lab, a research laboratory in urban sociology and anthropology, can be understood this way: we consider mobility as a “social phenomenon,” in the words of Marcel Mauss. This is not a new idea, as Alain Bourdin wrote that “all urban sociology is built around mobility.” It has, however, been picked apart and reduced to its simplest expression by competing approaches. A quick review of the country's research trends on mobility has shown that in recent years specialized expertise has developed in this field, thanks to the work of geographers, urban planners and economists working with various institutions, laboratories and universities around the country.

While being necessarily selective, we can identify the following major research themes:

- the evolution of urban transport systems and networks, particularly in the capital, by comparing the supply of networks and new means of public transport with social demand, expressed in demographic terms and other social indicators;
- the analysis and evaluation of public transport policies;
- the analysis of market deregulation and how people respond to deficits in the public transport supply by implementing alternative solutions (DIY transport, private companies, etc.);
- the analysis of how the mobility behaviors of city dwellers were reorganized by the introduction of new means of transport with exclusive rights of way (metro and tram), with special attention paid to “modal shifts”;
- paying special attention to the problems of unequal consumption, especially gendered, of mobility resources by the users of transport systems.

This latter point - a promising and innovative research imperative - has largely guided the work stemming from new questions developed in Aline Delatte's study in the MENA region (Middle East and North Africa) on public transport users<sup>[20]</sup>, with the LASADET laboratory being an active partner in conducting focus group surveys in the city of Algiers.



It should be noted, however, that despite the current proliferation of academic work, including unpublished theses and dissertations constituting a fairly substantial stock of references and information, research on the issue of mobility remains trapped in departmental boundaries and university silos. Algerian researchers remain very disconnected and "specialized," not reading their respective papers or sharing their knowledge, and often expressing contempt for and rejection of multidisciplinary approaches. The fact that most of the grey literature (i.e. doctoral theses) is written in Arabic and that social science journals are mostly published in that language also helps explain why these works are poorly shared internally and scarcely disseminated internationally. In addition to the traditional disciplinary silos that are already extremely hard to break down, there are linguistic boundaries which are becoming increasingly insurmountable. Generations of bilingual "transmitters" between French and Arabic, these teacher-researchers are giving way to new generations, reinforcing the trend towards a decline in critical thinking involved in international scientific debates.

Algeria still has no specialized publication dedicated to mobility issues in their various manifestations and dimensions, and the few conferences or seminars held over the past decade were still very much constrained by the "State's doctrine," i.e. a very technical and pseudo-operational conception of scientific knowledge, and consequently of public policy.

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[^1]: The researchers responsible for these projects are, respectively, Professors Madani Safar Zitoun, Larbi Icheboudene, Mohamed Raouf Kacimi, Brahim Benmoussa and Abdelaziz Rasmal. [^2]: Safar Zitoun M. and Tabti-Talamali A., 2009 : "Les mobilités urbaines dans l'agglomération d'Alger : évolutions et perspectives," World Bank, UNEP Blue Plan, Sophia-Antipolis, 110 pp. [^3]: See the (unpublished) report of this study by CREAD and MATE in 2011: "Étude plan de réinstallation des récupérateurs de la décharge de Oued Smar, Wilaya d'Alger" Volume 1: Results of the socio-economic study, Algiers, 61 pp. (under the direction of Madani Safar Zitoun); and Safar Zitoun Madani, 2015: "La reconversion économique des récupérateurs de la décharge d'Oued Smar (Alger) ou le dilemme communautaire in Sociétés urbaines et déchets," Éclairages internationaux, François Rabelais University Press, Tours, p. 101-121. [^4]: See Larbi Icheboudene's article, 1998: "L'intégration citadine. À propos de la difficulté d'être algérois," in La ville dans tous ses états, Revue Réflexions, Ed. Casbah, Algiers, p. 5-23. [^5]: Dris Nassima, 2002: La ville mouvementée. Espace public, centralité, mémoire urbaine à Alger, Harmattan, 435 p. [^6]: Bourdin Alain, 2017: "Les mobilités et le programme de la sociologie", Cahiers internationaux de Sociologie, Vol. CXVIII [5-21], Puf, Paris, Document downloaded from [www.cairn.info](http://www.cairn.info) [^7]: Kaufmann Vincent, 2007 : "La motilité : une notion clé pour revisiter l'urbain ?", in Enjeux de la sociologie urbaine, Michel Bassand, Vincent Kaufmann and Dominique Joye (Dir.), Presses polytechniques et universitaires romandes, Lausanne, p. 171-189. [^8]: See the works of Benatia Farouk, 1983, Alger,

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