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# Residential Mobility in the Greater Accra Region

## Individual and Geographical Differentiations



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Residential Mobility  
in the Greater Accra Region:  
Individual and Geographical differentiations



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IRD

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# Introduction

Since the “fight against poverty” introduced a “social dimension” to structural adjustment, the community ideal has come to the aid of urban management promoted and financed by international donors in African towns. The “Urban Projects “ of the World Bank have been quick to assume the virtues of all that is “local”, seeking to highlight it by means of the measures of decentralization, and by operations of community upgrading. These are accompanied by a repetitive slogan of “local participation”, bringing into play the willingness and the capacity of townspeople to pay for their convenience services.

This new management framework sometimes explicitly points to the residential anchoring of urban dwellers as the best guarantee of such mobilization. Behind the technical setting up of the ready-made banking systems, it is the prerequisites of what is local, the reasons for it, and the stakes arising from it that can be found from one town to another on the continent: socially regulated development is supposed to make the urban tax system more efficient. Landowners in particular are considered first and foremost as the best settled and most solvent taxpayers. They are thought to make up a stable territorial pattern, with a clear identity on the very local scale of intervention and of urban markets. Identification of such a local level thus lends itself to many theories, either old or renewed, whose multiple facets were first demonstrated by G. Schneier<sup>1</sup> from the case of Buenos Aires during the 1980s.

In the more specific context of urban Ghana at the end of the 1980s, this evolution in management relied on the international framework of decentralization (district assemblies were given new powers and means), then, during the last decade, on a de facto re-politicizing of local competition (election and designation of assembly members and Unit Committees)<sup>2</sup>. It has also brought to the surface older problems, notably in the relations between indigenous people and outsiders, the former using customary procedure as a defence against the migrants’ demographic pressures. Access to land, the mediation of neighbourhood opinion leaders in the neighbourhoods and municipal lobbying, without which the stakes and the conditions of local participation cannot be discussed, have thus become the object of real pressures and identity manipulation, especially among the impoverished populations. Evidently the question arises as to what this “local” concept of practices of good governance, both required and promised

by international donors, is actually composed of in terms of urban population density, residential practices and the introduction of households into the land and property markets.

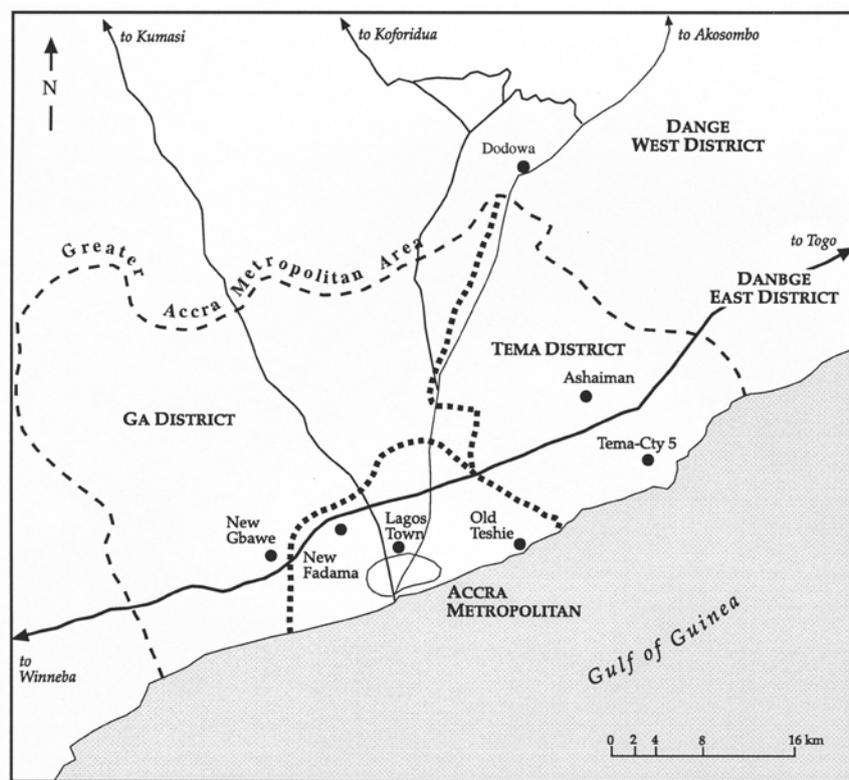
We could advance the hypothesis, according to the social and territorial dynamics of the metropolis, that the urban fabric is torn between the pressures of two apparently contradictory processes: on the one hand, the residential mobility of individuals and households, combining flows in and out of the large towns; on the other, the anchoring effects produced by urban investments. This dialectic is characteristic of modern cities, but has not appeared in the mounting of the successive Urban Projects in Ghana over the last decade. This is the case for Urban IV, for the future Urban VI, and equally for Urban V, designed for secondary urban centres. On the regional scale of the Ghanaian capital in particular, one cannot study the rehabilitation of urban space without examining the constraints and choices existing in the property and employment markets, which redistribute populations in a combination of inward and outward movements, and recompose local territorial groups according to criteria of accessibility and transport services. But the failure to consider tenants is patent when Urban Projects bring up the question of participation and try to identify possible ways out of poverty. Through the so-called virtues of the “local” concept, the rhetoric of “good governance” on the contrary conceals the fact that social relations in the rental sector have become manifestly strained during the past decade. Above all, little is known in Ghana about the movements of city-dwellers, even though they are actors in the increasingly complex organization of their living spaces. Since independence, and again more recently, several studies have indeed considered migration in its classical sense, as a one-way, definitive movement<sup>3</sup>, but there is practically no reference to residential mobility at the heart of the country’s principal labour pool and the main property market, neither to the political stakes involved.

The aim of this study is therefore to measure mobility and to examine the variations in its intensity, leaving aside for future analyses the more qualitative questions of residential profiles or “careers”. Who are the stabilized residents? Are they still the targets of the Projects and real actors with the capacity and the will to pay for a more durable urban environment? Who are the most mobile townspeople? What light is thrown by mobility on the social fabric of what is “local” in the urban area? Conversely, does the diversity in residential anchoring help us to understand individual perspectives of urban insertion ?

## Empirical measuring of mobility in Accra

Our study will make use of the two-round survey entitled “Housing Practices and Residential Mobility in the Greater Accra Region, 2000-2001”, especially its biographical section. These longitudinal data pick out the dates of all the stays made by the individuals questioned in housing they have occupied for a minimum period of six months. Information is supplied from the birth of the individual until the date of the survey, that is, the year 2000 for most of the people questioned, and 2001 for those entering between the first and second passages of the survey. On the neighbourhood level, seven survey zones were chosen on the basis of a geographical selection made using several criteria.

### Location of the study areas in the Greater Accra Region



The first criterion aims to ensure representativeness of the three districts comprising the Greater Accra Metropolitan Area (the metropolitan district of Accra, the districts of Tema and Ga<sup>4</sup>) plus one of the two rural districts – Dangbe East and Dangbe West – on the regional periphery, with GAMA making up the Greater Accra Region. In fact each one of these sub-areas carries unequal weight in the demographical composition of the capital as a whole<sup>5</sup>.

The second criterion takes into account the distance from the metropolitan and port centres. It shows, on two different scales, how long the place has been urbanized. At the heart of what is today a built-up area, Accra Town has, since the end of the nineteenth century, felt the strain caused by migrant intermingling which, over several generations, has gradually formed a semi-concentric urban core. More recently from the 1960s, the port and new town of Tema have organized an eastern labour pool which contains the working-class suburb of Ashaiman<sup>6</sup> as a residential satellite. At the same time, the land reserves to the North and to the West have been taken over by a wave of more recent buildings. Begun in the 1980s, this movement became more pronounced during the following decade. The districts of the outer regional periphery have still remained predominantly rural at the turn of the twenty-first century, at the same time being affected by the city attraction and flows of commuters.

#### Geographical distribution of the metropolitan and regional population

Districts	2000 Census	% of urban population	1984 Census	1970 Census	1960 Census
Accra Metropolis (ex-Accra District)	1 658 937	100,0	969 195	636 667	388 396
Tema Municipality (ex-Tema District)	506 400	88,4	190 917	102 431	27 127
Ga (ex-Ga Rural Local Council)	550 468	72,9	132 786	66 336	33 907
TOTAL GAMA (ex-Accra Metropolitan Area)	2 771 805	90,5	1 296 470	804 834	449 430
Dangbe West	96 809	23,6			
Dangbe East	93 112	18,1			
TOTAL GAR	2 905 726	87,7	1 431 100	851 614	541 933

Note: what appears in italic type in the table reflects an incoherence in the census sources concerning several hundred inhabitants

Within the Accra district alone (nearly 60% of the urban area population and 57% of the regional population), the graduation of the urbanized strata can also be seen. The old core of Teshie represents the coastal settlement of the Ga people, extended along a string

of fishing sites. From the 18th century onward, each of these old settlements organized its customary land rights, gradually pushing their limits inland. Those of Accra Central, Osu and La/Labadi were the first to be affected by colonial influence and the waves of migrants from within the Gold Coast and neighbouring colonies. These century-old “indigenous settlements” offer unequal possibilities of tenancy depending on their distance from the city centre and its opportunities for salaried or informal employment.

Lagos Town, developed on the edge of the first Ring Road is, on the contrary, a typical neighbourhood of former migrants who settled on the limits of the indigenous and colonial towns from the 1930s onward. It was therefore because of its administrative attachment to the “new Accra” (the present Accra New Town, so named at the end of the British colonial period) that it defined a second stratum of urbanization in the first half of the twentieth century. As for New Fadama, derived from a forced resettlement at the dawn of Ghana’s independence, it is inserted into the group of northern neighbourhoods at the forefront of peripheral urbanization since the 1960s. This third wave of filling up the limits of the present metropolitan district took place at the time when the suburbs had already extended to lands farther from the city centre towards the East, and was influenced by the port and industrial development of Tema.

The criteria of distance from the city centre and of unequal oldness are however doubly unsatisfactory in the sample used, as in the general organization of Greater Accra. First of all, the old native-speaking site of Teshie is, like Nungua, located outside the commercial city centre and has only functioned as an urban suburb for about twenty years. Moreover, even if the most peripheral survey zone of our sample, Dodowa, is situated on the limit between GAR and the Eastern Region, it is nonetheless a former small town, urbanized as a stopping-place on an old trade route which was active in the colonial period. It is true that its former function as a relay point for peddling and agricultural collection declined with the development of faster road traffic towards the big city. But the present-day small town is witnessing a sharp rise in population: it housed 7,319 inhabitants in 2000 for respectively 4,733 and 4,412 in the previous censuses of 1984 and 1970; it can supply low-cost housing less than an hour’s journey from Northern Accra. Since the First Republic of Ghana, and with a view to administrative decentralization, it has been scheduled to gain the status of future administrative centre for the capital region. It can therefore be noted that the two native-speaking survey areas – such a delicate question in the assertion of customary land laws and local territorial claims –, Teshie, in a coastal Ga environment, and Dodowa, at the foot of the Shaï hills, are not representative of some graduation in topological and economic centrality, either on the level of Accra proper or on that of the region.

The third criterion, that of the type of housing stock, is equally essential in studying residential issues in a West-African capital just as in a comparative viewpoint with other sub-regional major cities. Questions of land, of housing and of urban insertion are indeed well-documented in the case of the neighbouring cities of Abidjan and Lome<sup>7</sup>, or of Bamako<sup>8</sup> concerning our particular perspective. The same applies, in Ghana, in a close observation of the secondary metropolis of Kumasi undertaken over the past twenty



**Colonial building, Accra Central**



**Badly maintained flat for tenants at Tema Community V**

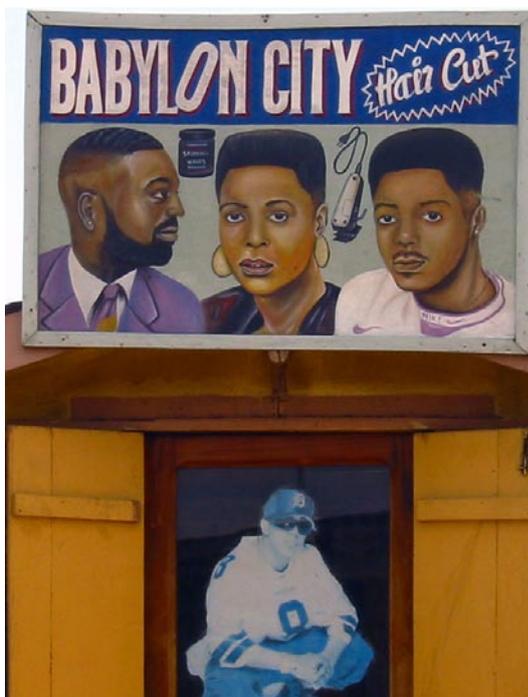
years or so (1,170,270 inhabitants according to the 2000 census). The research carried out on residential questions by the Planning Department of the Faculty of Architecture has supplied precision in the measuring process and an analytical objectivity far superior to those available for the national capital.

Three housing segments are represented in the survey sample, as they are of unequal importance in the metropolis of Accra. The compound housing stock is thus represented in six out of the seven survey zones. It is an old architectural feature, dominant in the sub-region. It is above all an evolutive formula for building and settling population in residential cohabitation. The opening up of these extended-family houses to households unrelated to the owners or the “freeholders” became apparent in Accra at the beginning of the 20th century. It is carried on today in the majority of tenancies. The segment of self-contained houses, some of which take on hybrid forms combining villas and compounds, is very noticeable in the New Gbawe zone, where it reflects the residential aspirations of the middle classes and access to property on the customary lands of the new suburb. Its presence is more exceptional in the sample of New Fadama on a land network already quite densely populated, but where compound housing remains the rule. Finally, the stock of flats is exemplified by the inclusion in the survey of six collective blocks at Tema Community V, comprising sixteen flats, each of which containing two bedrooms and a living-room or simple hall. This stock is a witness to the housing policies set up by the public authorities as soon as Ghana gained independence, in particular in Tema new town (but also at Kaneshie, Adenta and other sectors of the urban area). It has seen its management changing since the policies of structural adjustment. It first only offered flats for rent, providing many modern conveniences and above all more individualized accommodation than compounds (bathrooms with running water, electricity). Today access to ownership is granted preferably to white- and blue-collar workers whose job security is stable and who pay regular contributions on a long-term basis to the Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT, the main sponsor of para-public real estate promotion). At the beginning of the 1990s, the volume of this stock in the city was estimated at 13% of the property on offer, but this figure remains very insufficient and the blocks show clear signs of ageing, as shown, for example, by the SFC block in the zone studied.

Linked to the unequal density in the occupation of housing and neighbourhoods, the socioeconomic level of households is frequently used as a criterion in the typology of Ghanaian urban neighbourhoods<sup>10</sup>. But here, as elsewhere in Africa, it is based on an uncertain estimation of professional statuses and economic resources. In the end, it is the visual characteristics of the buildings, the amenities close by and the neighbourhood environments that provide a reliable basis, much better than the classifying of professional statuses<sup>11</sup>, for asserting that such and such a “community” can be described as deprived, lower or middle class. As for the wealthier categories of the population, they have been excluded from the survey.



Ashaiman : informal activities on labour market



Four areas studied reveal definite poverty, even though less obvious in its residential profiles, and they are registered as deprived communities in the administrative inventory set up by local elected representatives and technicians in the urban neighbourhoods: they are Old Teshie, Lagos Town, Ashaiman and Dodowa. Two other study areas, Tema Community V and New Gbawe, on the contrary represent a type of middle-class residential insertion (not excluding the existence of pockets of poverty in the second case), but which does not always involve stabilized salaried workers (see the impact of international migrants and business people in New Gbawe). Lastly, in New Fadama, in a general pattern which is mainly working-class but not insecure, small middle-class pockets can be found, often corresponding with the presence of self-contained houses.

Indigenous population *versus* migrants is the final filter for analysis of our geographical selection. This criterion is habitually used in the regional surveys and empirical research of the Department of Geography and Resource Development and of the Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research of the University of Ghana (Legon), as well as in the preliminary surveys of the World Bank's Urban Projects. As we have seen above, the indigenous communities are diversely represented, at the northern and southern extremes of the capital region. They reflect the territorial attachments and the land prerogatives traditionally associated with the original communities in the cultural diversity of Ghana. As for the impact of the "non-natives" or long-settled migrants, it is on the scale of a national capital formerly open to ethnic intermixing. However, from Lagos Town to New Gbawe, the ways in which these migrants have dealt with the prerogatives or the customary re-offensives of the indigenous population differ considerably. They will form one of the angles of approach to an understanding of the local features of city functioning with regard to urban and residential insertion.

The analysis presented thus combines two approaches which are usually dissociated. First the questionnaire survey compares the variations in the duration of residential stays with the characteristics of the individuals under survey, those of their households and of the present housing they occupy. As for observation of the survey neighbourhoods, it is conceived as a qualitative case study. If one considers the whole of the "community" occupying a neighbourhood, one is in fact working on the coherence of the residential practices of its members. Because of lack of reliable sample range, the measurements of mobility only represent those people being surveyed, and the inferences on the rest of the population are not provided, neither is the general picture of the factors observed in the variation of mobility. The importance of the statistical analysis lies elsewhere: it is in the comparison of residential mobility in the seven zones chosen as being representative of the city area. Analysis of the variables, repeated in each neighbourhood, follows the graduation in the scale of mobility from one zone to another, and attempts to explain their heterogeneity. The association of quantitative analysis of variables with qualitative monographic studies makes it possible to distinguish between the impact of generic variables and the contextual conditions. If the variation in mobility depending on life course or on sex can be observed everywhere, its scale may well be modulated depending on the history of the neighbourhood and the way it has been populated. Other

characteristics are wrongly generalized by the system of measurement when their nature is sometimes specific to the place lived in; it is the case for residential status in the accommodation or building.

After presentation of some of the main options of the survey and of statistical treatment, the numeric variables and the qualitative effects will be discussed one by one for all the people surveyed, the more particular aspects of each neighbourhood being left until later. Case by case analysis will follow in the second part, through the repetition of a simplified general model.



**Impact of Ghanaians from Abroad in real estate investment**

# General variations in residential mobility

## The choices of the longitudinal survey and its processing

As we have seen, the choice of neighbourhoods was based on the spatial configuration of the city and the history of its settlement. Once this selection was made in the regional area, households were surveyed to obtain a hundred observations on each study area or “community”. On this infra-urban scale, preference was given to the small territorial outgrowths of the city, covering several levels of the basic settlement (in plots at the heart of the blocks, compound houses, “rooms”, often referring to a unit of accommodation), and taking into account all the neighbours in a same block<sup>12</sup>, and possibly of several nearby blocks<sup>13</sup>, all the households cohabiting in the same housing units (compound, self-contained house or flat), then all the members of a same household<sup>14</sup>. However, the residential biographies are based only on the declarations of adults. In each household at least one adult was questioned, of necessity the head of household<sup>15</sup>. A second person was sought in households composed of at least two people, if possible the spouse or, failing this, an adult of the opposite sex. These people can be classified in four groups: 586 male heads of household, 226 female ones, 401 spouses of the head of household (399 wives and 2 husbands, temporary residents recognizing their wives as heads of household), and 183 other dependents of the household (91 men and 92 women, mainly the children or collaterals of the head of household), thus giving a total of 1396 “responsible persons”<sup>16</sup>.

The method draws its inspiration from a corpus of urban surveys embracing geographical preoccupations according to two scales, a metropolitan one and an infra-urban one. It attaches importance to the location, carefully chosen, in order to make the best use of the global knowledge of the city. The effects of location and of the residential context are then reinserted into a general regional process, observed in their minutest details, then replaced in the perspective of the social networks of mobility.

The statistical estimations of residential mobility are drawn from the duration of stays in each unit of accommodation noted by the biographical survey, or else from the length of time spent between two moves. Two measures are available, depending on whether one considers the duration of stay or the hazard of it coming to an end. In both cases,

the statistical models take into account the “irregular”, non-Gaussian distribution of the duration of stays and the fact that the survey ends observation of the stay before it is actually concluded by a move. The record is then said to be “truncated” by the survey. The analysis will use non-parametric formulations for simple comparisons between characterized groups, and semi-parametric approaches (Cox regression models) for numeric variables (mainly age and cohort and/or when several effects are introduced and suspected of interaction<sup>17</sup>). To avoid, at this descriptive stage, the relative heaviness of the not-parametric comparisons of survival functions between groups, an incidence-rate was calculated in accordance with the methods used in epidemiology. It is calculated dividing the number of moves by the person-years. This rate, contrary to others, does not require a period of reference, so it compares with an average rate of mobility for the examined group.

Because of the simple chronological means of measuring, and the non-random selection of individuals, the statistical analysis should not be too sophisticated. On the contrary, in order to obtain a rigorous analysis of the selected biographies from a qualitative and comparative point of view, it was necessary to have recourse to multilevel survival analysis<sup>18</sup>. In this way, to have selected all the households in a same sector at the heart of a neighbourhood is a source of homogeneity for the observations made: people sharing the same type of housing have a great deal more in common. The partial homogeneity of a single individual’s stays must equally be modelled in order to obtain reliable estimation of variance and to calculate the corresponding confidence intervals, which are more restrictive. Attention is paid to these two specific precautions with the introduction of a stochastic error term known as “frailty”<sup>19</sup>. This will be the case in the general analysis of the variables, so as to estimate their real influence in spite of the strong unobserved heterogeneity between the neighbourhoods<sup>20</sup>.

The survey takes up the residential trajectory of individuals from their birth. The first stay, sometimes the following ones, is particular in that it depends on living with parents or guardians. It is of abnormal length, which reflects less the decisions made by the individual than those of the household he/she is living in. Mobility of children is atypical compared with that of “independent” adults<sup>21</sup>: on the one hand it responds to specific factors, and on the other, from the point of view of statistical technique, it does not conform to the hypothesis of proportional hazards required by application of the Cox models. Out of concern for rigour, but also for coherence, the analysis presented only considers changes of residence begun at an age of possible economic activity, that is, from the age of twelve upwards. For similar reasons, moves out of the capital region<sup>22</sup> have been excluded because they often, but not exclusively, form the biographical background of migrants during the stages of their youth before their arrival in the zone of influence exerted by Accra. Therefore all the rates presented, as well as the estimations of hazard, only apply to part of the residential mobility of individuals, that is, slightly less than half of the three thousand residential stays recorded.

During the phases of data collection, entry and cleaning, special precautions were taken to ensure the precision and the coherence of the records. The interviewers were warned as to the risks of error and imprecision in the matter of events chronology (no pre-established schedule was used, however). The biographical information was systematically cross-checked with the chronological references given in the section of the survey concerning all the members of households<sup>23</sup>. The questionnaires were double-checked, any incoherence resulting in a return to the field. The registering of data was based on input masks refusing more than two moves in the same year for the same individual, and checking the chronological sequence of the stays. As for people temporarily absent during the first round of the survey in 2000, they were interviewed retrospectively the following year during the second round, that is, if they had returned to their household and accommodation.

## The variables adopted: analysis and specific influences

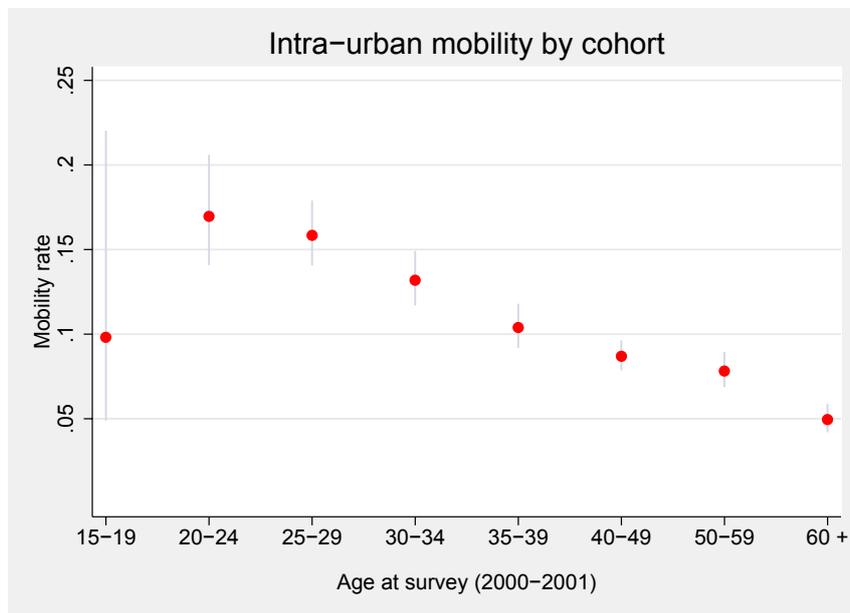
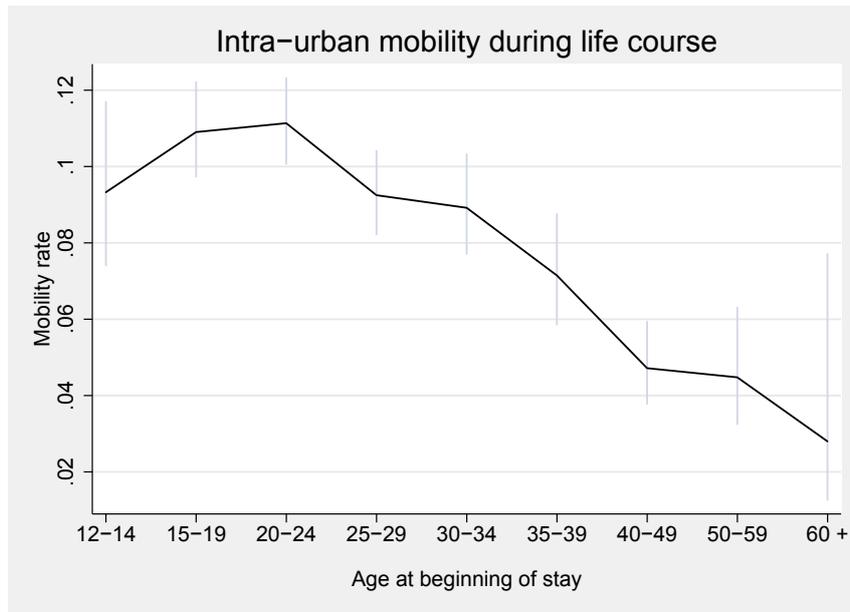
To establish what differentiates the mobility of the inhabitants of Accra, within the perimeter of the capital region, several demographic and socioeconomic indicators are recorded by the survey. Information was also recorded concerning the religion and ethnic group of the people interviewed. Such details are rarely found in studies dealing usually with residential mobility, but they are relevant in the Ghanaian context in which distinguishing migrants from the indigenous population, as well as community references, are appreciable in the local and political management issue<sup>24</sup>. The low degree of representativeness of the population surveyed limits the precision and the scope of the analysis. However it does not question the observed residential behaviours, each conclusion being compared with observation of the neighbourhood as a context. Reasoning on the variables leads to the formulation of hypotheses in the study of each neighbourhood, the object of the second part. Furthermore it helps to distinguish historical time from individual time, and individual variables from contextual effects.

### Individual time

As the number of stays rises, the duration of stays decreases<sup>25</sup>, but only slightly (2% at each new stay) and irregularly. Yet one could expect a gradual stabilizing of city-dwellers as they move into new accommodation. In reality, the multiplying of moves is characteristic of people who are more mobile, whatever their reason of moving, a truism which reflects the statistical effect of rank over the hazard of moving. As for settling in a more stable place, it tends to go hand in hand with maturity, and the introducing of age at the time of a move into the model considerably strengthens the effect of rank, the two factors having an opposite influence.

The life course provides a rhythm for moves; their frequency increases until the age of about 25, which coincides with the search for work and accommodation, and the setting-up of an independent household; then residential mobility decreases rapidly afterwards. Age at the time of the move (see graph) is measured in five-year groups; in the model,

its influence on mobility will be supposed linear for the purposes of simplicity<sup>26</sup>. The variation in mobility according to age, indicating a stage in the life course, precedes contextual factors: it is observed in all the neighbourhoods for all types of population. It must be taken into consideration when one compares the study areas (heterogeneous with regard to structure by age) or when one examines the effect of education, which is advantageous to young people who are “naturally” more mobile, for example.



The cohort effect must be distinguished from that of the life course. It is based on the age reached at the time of the survey and not on that at the time of the move. The incidence of cohort on residential mobility is clearly established for the inhabitants of the Ghanaian metropolis: the annual hazard of moving passes from 17% for the cohorts between 20 and 24 years old in 2000, to 5% for those over 60 years old. Between the two, there is a regular decrease. Yet these results average past experience: for young

people they only focus on the most mobile period of their life course when looking for a job and founding a family; for the older generations, a whole life is summed up in this result which takes account of the gradual stabilization towards the end of the course. So the cohort effect is difficult to interpret, for it is the blend of several phenomena which are scarcely distinguishable from each other. The fact is that certain cohorts are more mobile than others at the same moment of the life course. A result that must be considered as marking the historical evolution of intra-urban residential mobility. This evolution, to be expected in an expanding city, is perhaps stimulated by the increase in salaried work and education during the last century. So the rate of 17% of 20-24-year-olds in 2000 can be compared with the 11% observed retrospectively for the totality of the cohorts aged 20-24. The difference means an increase of about half in the mobility observed between the new cohort and the preceding ones. But this would be to discount the fact that the older cohorts may have forgotten the short stays in their youth. These perfectly understandable memory lapses may contribute to the illusion of historical growth.

Another element of the observation confuses the issue: the survey took place during the latest stays recorded, which are described as truncated. Owing to this, it is impossible to find among the younger cohorts periods of stabilized residence covering several decades, and this contributes to an artificial increase in our perception of their mobility. All in all, the young cohorts are probably more mobile than their elders; but at the same time, they better remember recent short stays and they see their residential history truncated by the survey. As one observes the older cohorts, the average number of moves tends to diminish on a regular basis; the long stays are recorded by the survey and gain in number comparatively; the older stays might be forgotten. So the cohort effect gives rise to dubious interpretation and adds little to the construction of the model. In any case it must be systematically associated with the effect of age, and also for the comparison between those study areas which are not identically age-structured.

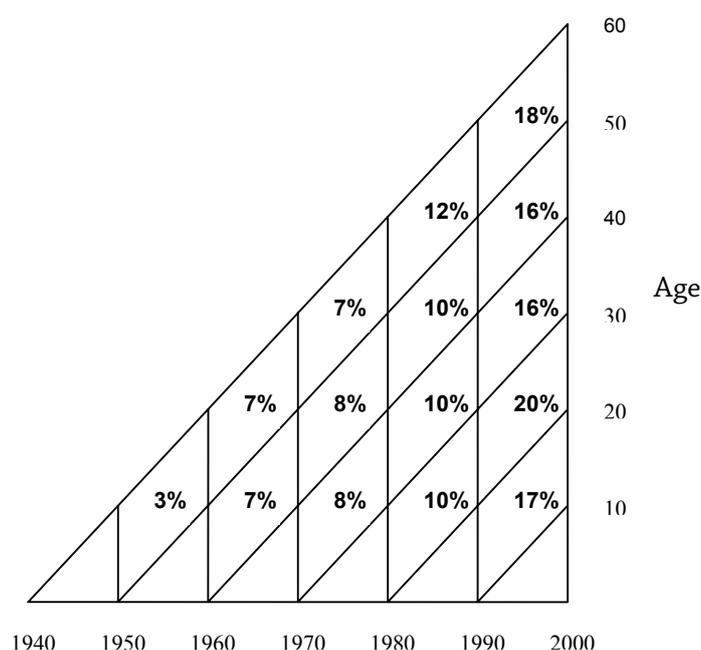
### **Historical time**

If the historical evolution of mobility cannot be revealed by comparison of cohorts, it can be perceived *a priori* by means of two measurements available in the survey: the date of arrival in the Greater Accra Region and the date of the move.

As for the variable of date of arrival in GAR, average residential mobility has been greatly stimulated for those arriving most recently: the annual rate of moves is 5% for people present before 1960; it rises to 15% for those who settled during the 1990s. The increase is regular, but can it be attributed wholly to the history of the city? Do memory lapses contribute to giving this impression by skipping intermediate phases, that is, by wrongly lengthening stays for people who had arrived earlier? What is certain is that these people, on an average, are older; they spend longer periods of residence at the end of the life course. For a clearer picture of those interferences, the following Lexis diagram shows the average mobility, expressed in rates, for the cohorts interviewed, according to their dates of arrival in GAR.

The cohort of people aged between 40 and 49 at the time of the survey were born between 1950 and 1959. Those members of the group who arrived in the metropolitan area between 1960 and 1969 show a 7% rate of residential mobility; those of the same age who migrated towards the capital during the following decade were somewhat more mobile (8%); those arriving between 1980 and 1989 even more so (10%); for the last to arrive, that is, during the 1990s, the rate of intra-urban moves per year reaches 18%. The later the arrival, the higher the mobility therefore becomes the rule for all the cohorts. This result is confirmed by a semi-parametric regression involving both variables of cohort and of date of immigration (or of birth) in GAR: the effect of the historical scale is maintained when the impact of cohorts is checked. Nevertheless, the most surprising result of this division into categories is the absence of systematic difference between the cohorts for arrivals in a same decade (the columns in the diagram). Of those who immigrated during the 1960s, seven out of a hundred left their places of residence every year, whatever the cohort; the rates were 8% in the 1970s, 10% in the 1980s and around 17% in the 1990s. Even though the effect of age should reduce this average rate of mobility for the oldest cohorts, it has not been the case. The results seem to indicate that arriving in Accra during a certain period leads inevitably to a number of moves which depend on the historical context of the city at that precise moment, and that permanent settling is becoming more and more difficult. In expanding and over-populating the oldest urbanized areas, the city makes growing mobility inevitable. But here again, one cannot discount the effect of memory lapses which, for intra-urban stays, depend not on the age of the people surveyed but precisely on the date of their arrival in the city. The care taken at the time of the survey to find evidence of former stays, and the scale of the increase in rates during the 1990s are however arguments in favour of the recent increase in mobility.

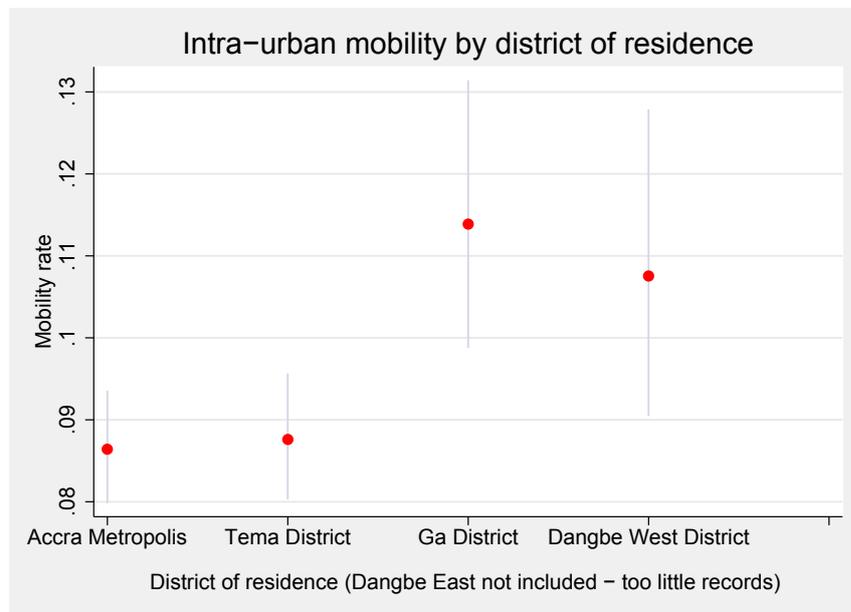
### Intra-urban mobility by date of arrival in GAR (migrants) and age



The date of a move adds a further indication of the historical evolution of mobility: the model clearly establishes the fact that duration of stay has shortened over the past few years. The hazard of a stay coming to an end increases by a little less than 1% per year<sup>27</sup>. Here too one cannot exclude the impact of memory lapses with regard to events in the past, without taking into account the fact that the survey censures the most recent stays, giving the impression of a greater mobility. Finally, the historical scale merges with the cohort effect, which will thus take precedence in the construction of the model.

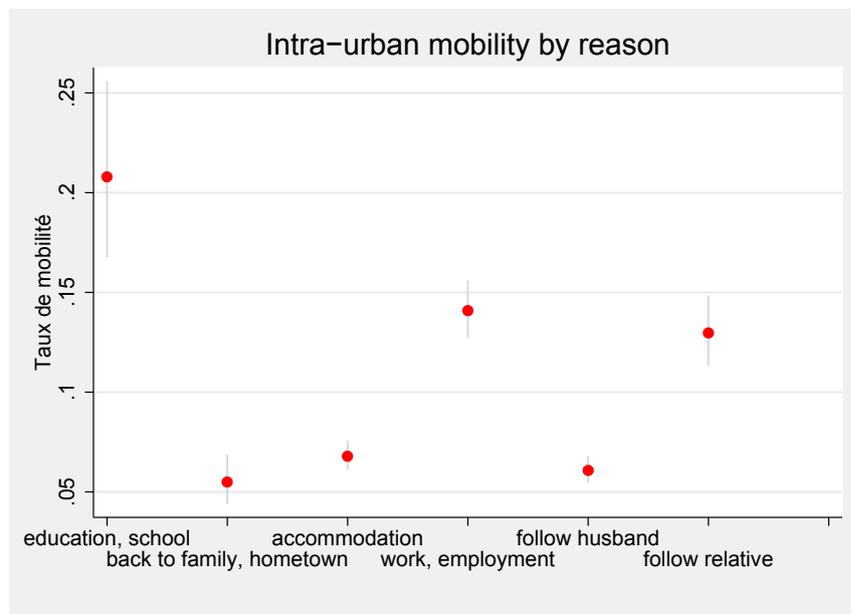
### The effect of location

Places of residence in GAR are simplified for the analysis and Dangbe East have not been included in order to avoid the consequences of an insufficient number of stays (5 stays). Generally speaking, the information collected indicate the localities or neighbourhoods of the move; these places, many in number, have been regrouped according to GAR districts, which gives a classification in four areas: Accra Town, the urbanized districts of Tema and Ga, and the peripheral districts of Dangbe. Observing both profiles and average rates of mobility, it appears that Tema and Accra are identical, so are the Ga district and the Dangbe periphery. These latter areas, still rural in the North and East, or more recently urbanized at the western limit of the region, favour much higher mobility (about 11% instead of the 8,5% in the more central parts of the urban area). The location at a regional margin certainly contributes to this greater tendency to move. This may be a concentric effect, the periphery encouraging mobility, or else the spatial division used, that of the district, is not the correct one to bring out a territorial differentiation which would be better revealed on a more local scale.



## The characteristics of stays

The reason for changing place of residence given by the interviewee can be equivocal. Sometimes it influences the duration of a stay already begun; at other times it speeds up the end of the preceding one, while it can also be applied to both residential stays. The distinction is often a delicate one and the comparison is thrown off balance in the case of censored records. If the reason applies to the present stay, all the latest stays, those truncated by the survey, are not documented, so that the known reasons only apply to stays observed in their totality, therefore longer ones<sup>28</sup>. For want of a clear choice, the reasons for moving have been associated successively with the two stays, before and after the move. The hierarchy of associated categories of reasons changes very little: short stays are motivated by education, then come professional reasons. Three reasons lead to undifferentiated duration of stay: the return to the hometown or to the family, the simple change of accommodation and the accompanying of the spouse (for wives only). Accompanying relatives is a much more frequent reason for mobility.



## Individual characteristics

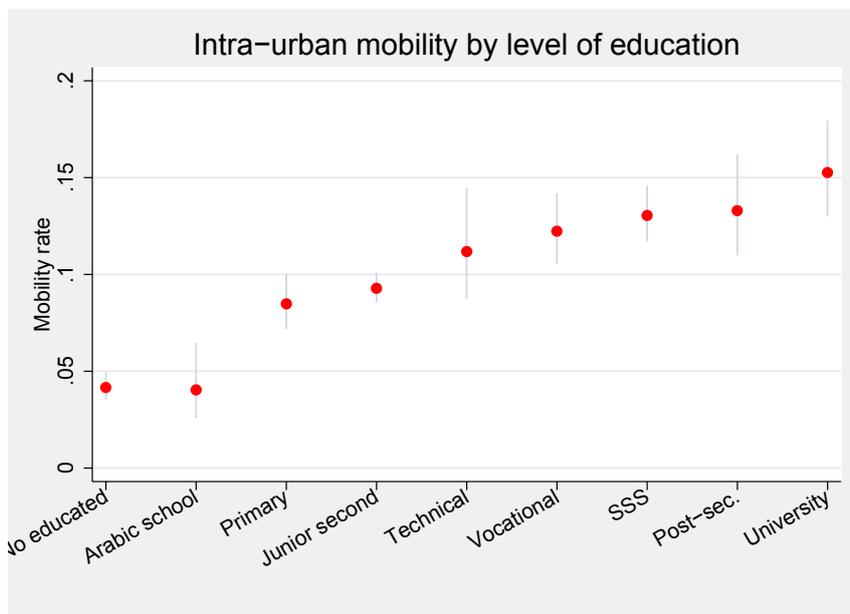
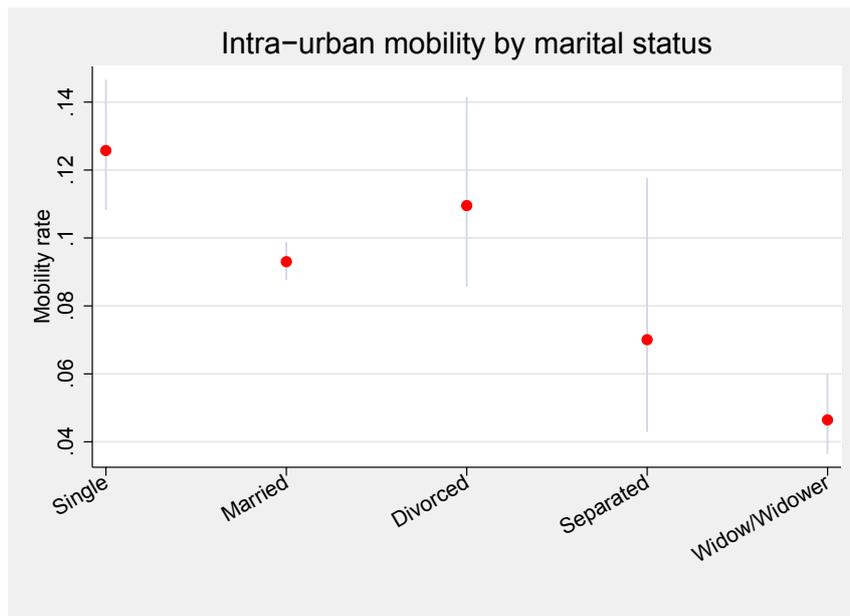
All the variables described as individual and analysed here were measured at the time of the survey and not at each move. Consequently they are applied identically to all the residential stages of an individual, and they influence his/her chronology of stays as a contextual effect: if they are proved to have occurred, they contribute to the homogeneity of the duration of stays<sup>29</sup>.

## Respective mobility of men and women by study area

Study area	Rate of mobility	
	Women	Men
Old Teshie	2,5 %	4,1 %
Lagos Town	4,7 %	4,3 %
New Fadama	8,6 %	9,7 %
Tema Community V	11,4 %	12,8 %
Old Ashaiman	6,1 %	6,0 %
New Gbawe	13,9 %	13,1 %
Upper Dodowa	11,2 %	17,3 %

Analysis residential mobility by sex shows that men are significantly more mobile than women, precisely 12% more. It must be noted that this measurement applies to adults (older than 12) and to urban moves, as it decreases by two thirds (and loses its statistical credibility) when one considers the whole pattern of mobility, before retaining only the stays in GAR. This masculinity is greatly reinforced by controls of age and cohort, but it disappears when there is an equal level of education or if it is conditioned by professional status. It is a social fact, not however favoured in all the study areas, simply because the socioeconomic discrimination of mobility is not operative everywhere, or because it is too weak to be affected. It is in Upper Dodowa, a neighbourhood where it is well differentiated, that mobility of males is the most clearly distinguished from that of females. Collected at the time of the survey, marital status has little statistical relevances. This would certainly not be the case in a completer longitudinal analysis<sup>30</sup>, which would make it possible to establish, for example, whether or not a marriage precipitates a move. Moreover, due to the fact that the survey records marital status in 2000-2001 only, that is, at different moments in the life course of each cohort, the effect of the variable is distorted by different average age for each marital status. Single people apparently made shorter residential stays: their mobility rate is 12%, compared with 9% for married and divorced people and 5% for widowed ones. But considering the fact that marital status depends on age (and controlling for this effet in the model), the differences not only decrease (widowers and married men compared with single people) but they can just as well be reversed: at the same age, divorced people would make shorter stays. Widowhood, if prolonged, often implies a return to the family house (extended family heritage to which the members are linked by usufructuary rights). More unexpected is the difference in mobility between the divorced person and the separated one, the latter being less mobile. These two break-ups between marriage partners are differentiated by the fact that divorced people have been married and registered in a civil ceremony (usually after the customary marriage ceremony), whereas separated

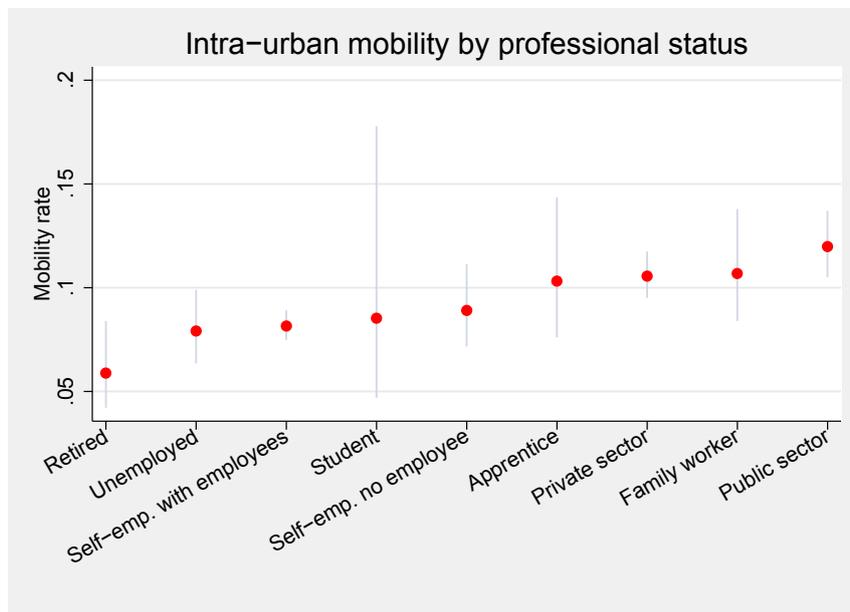
people are “de-married”, as indeed they were married, only with the customary accord of their respective family councils. But the difference in legal treatment reflects that in socioeconomic profiles. Separation is particularly characteristic of poor levels; it is typical of the Ga people in Teshie and the Shai people in Dodowa, who marry more often than migrants within their community of origin. There they benefit from usufructuary rights and are assured of more stable residential security in the region than divorced people from other groups of the population.



Level of education is a strong discriminating factor in mobility, the two progressing hand in hand. The Koranic school is placed at the same low level as the absence of education (4% mobility rate), Primary school has the same rate as junior secondary school (JSS in the graph: 8-9%), followed by vocational training (11-12%), then senior secondary school (JSS in the graph) or undergraduate studies (around 13%). Finally, post-graduate

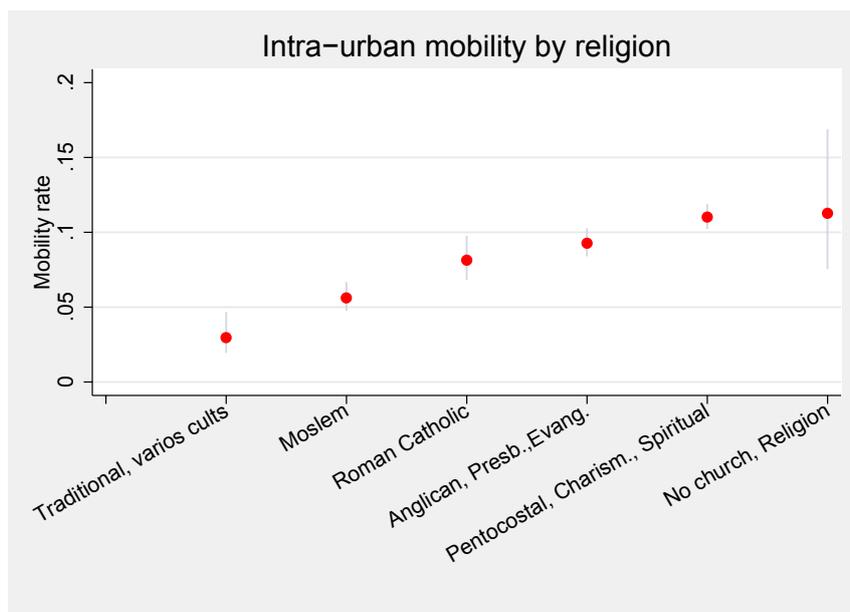
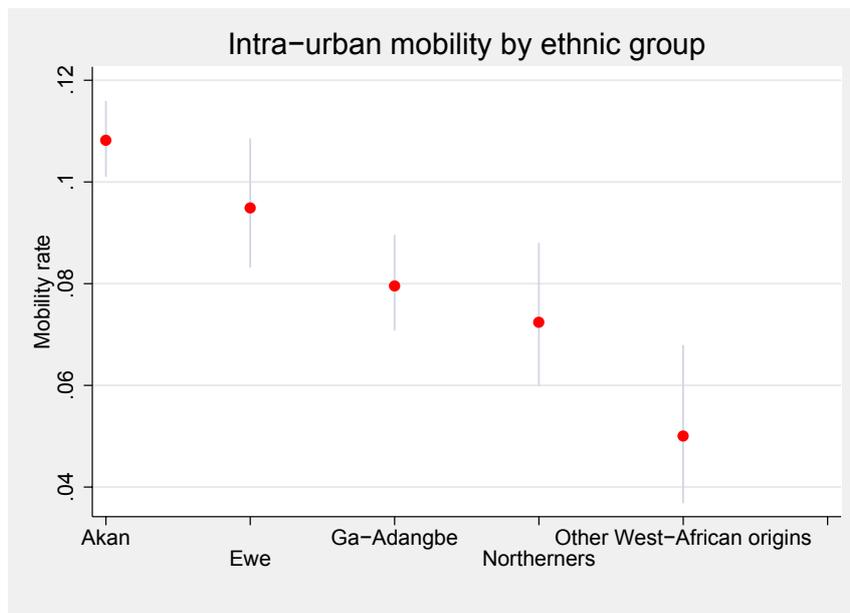
studies correspond to the highest mobility rate (15%). The regularity and scope of the graduation are more convincing than the confidence intervals allowed by the sample: secondary education and technical education are indissociable from this point of view. Admittedly, generations and professions are not equal with regard to education, but introducing these characteristics does not change the discrimination caused by education, which thus remains a satisfactory marker of the socioeconomic status of individuals. It will therefore be introduced to this end in the following stages of modelization.

To know whether a change in professional status can affect the duration of a stay supposes that one knows when the change occurred, which is not the case as, here again, the information was only registered at the time of the survey. The combination of these professional categories with demographic and social specificities indeed influences mobility (see the youth of apprentices, the advanced age of retired people). Because of this, professional status, even if it is a simplified one, does not clearly differentiate the duration of stays; either the classification used is not relevant, or the sample range is not wide enough to establish it. Moreover, the level of education is partly responsible for this noticeable discrimination in professional status. For the record, it must be noted that public sector workers are more mobile (11% of moves per year), but by such a small margin, compared with private sector workers, apprentices and domestic workers, that the gap between them offers no statistical guarantee. Independent workers, students and the unemployed make up a second group whose average mobility is between 8 and 9%.

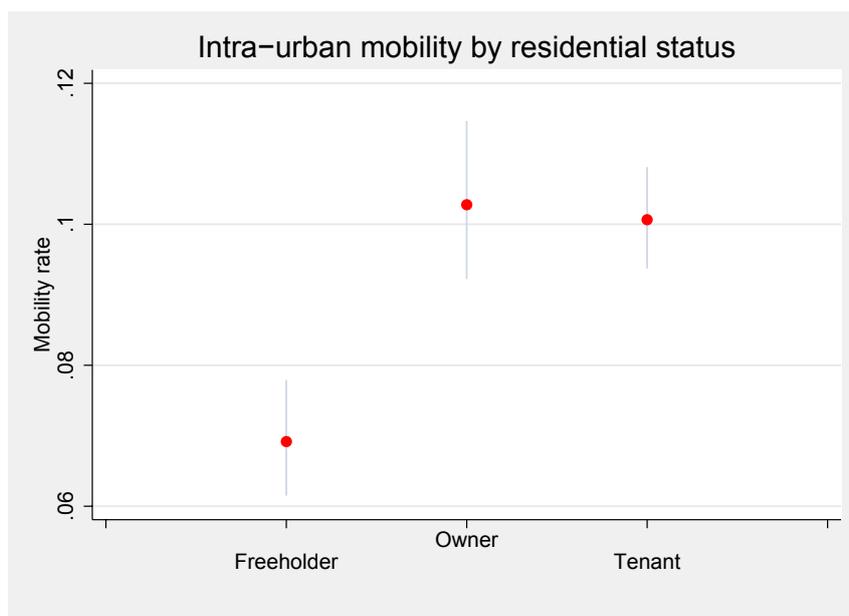


Membership of an ethnic group<sup>31</sup> combines cultural and religious features with territorial origins, and has therefore led to different histories of migration. As these origins characterize less the individual than his/her lineage, the resulting complexity hampers a clear reading of mobility. The classifying of groups according to a decreasing annual mobility in GAR gives the following order: Akan (11%), Ewe (9,5%), Ga-Adangbe (originally from the region of the capital: 8%), Northern people (7%) and finally people of other West-African origins (5%). However these confidence intervals

overlap (except for the two extremes), and differences fade almost completely applying a Cox's model with "frailty"<sup>32</sup> to take into account the relative ethnic specialization of the neighbourhoods surveyed. Elsewhere this classification does not reveal a simple logic which would contrast the group of Ga and Shai indigenous people (respectively to the south and north of GAR, but both included in the Ga-Adangbe group) benefiting from land customary rights, with migrants whose settlement comes up against the precarious nature of tenancy contracts and the difficult access to land. The Akan people, originally from the centre and the south of the country, are migrants who are closer to the indigenous population than foreigners or people from the North. This criterion will therefore be excluded from the case by case analysis of the study areas.



Analysis of religion<sup>33</sup> is not a simple matter either. Comparisons are uncertain due to the presence in Ghana, and particularly in the capital, of a high number of churches which are difficult to classify within the general framework of orthodox persuasions and the amorphous body of Pentecostal or spiritual churches. As well as this, the social or educational situation comes into play with certain faiths, such as Islam. In order of increasing mobility, the group of traditional cults is the most stable (3% mobility rate per year); Islam nearly doubles this figure; Catholics attain 8%, while orthodox Protestants only differ by one point, but in a confidence interval too large to guarantee the gap. Finally, members of Pentecostal churches and followers of the vast charismatic movement turn out to be the most mobile (11% annual mobility rate<sup>34</sup>), along with the few individuals who declared that they belonged to no religion or church (12%). These contrasts become less pronounced when Cox's model controls the unequal levels of education within the religious groups, and their comparative concentration in the neighbourhoods studied, at least for the most socially-underprivileged populations, that is, Moslems and followers of traditional cults. The hazard is then reduced by 20% for the former, compared with members of Pentecostal and associated churches, and by 37% for the latter. The levelling is more clear-cut for certain neighbourhoods when other discriminating factors are controlled.



Finally, individuals' residential status is that recorded in 2000-2001. As it was not necessarily the same as in previous stays, its effect on mobility is conceivable insofar as the status is stabilized during the life course; which is an acceptable hypothesis knowing that very few individuals succeed in improving their residential status. Landowners and tenants made considerably shorter stays than freeholders, who seem to be immobilized, frequently in the same place, by the advantages of customary rights or family links with the official landowner. It is not only the duration of stays which changes but also the motivations for them. Freeholders, for example, return more often to the family or to the hometown (where former inhabitants are generally entitled to land rights or

**Mosque building in progress in an old migrant community in Accra**



**Lateritic road toward the new western developing areas**

customary rights in the family house). Indeed family houses act as refuges and ensure residential security for the poorest and for those going through difficult periods in their jobs or marriages. In this group of freeholders, most of the reasons given for a move are professional ones; the simple wish to change accommodation is twice as infrequent here as for landowners and tenants, who, on the contrary, give this reason for 45% of stays. The hazard function confirms the prevalence of short stays for tenants. On the other hand, that of individualized landowners is distinguished by a clear rise after a 25-30-year stay; this is because accession to land often comes late in life after a long period spent in saving money, as is suggested by the long drawn-out schedules of the building sites in the new suburbs of Accra.

### **Variables describing the household and the housing**

The basic description of the household accommodating the resident being interviewed provides a few precisions concerning the conditions of his/her stay at the end of his/her residential itinerary. These conditions do not provide information for a contextual analysis as such, for only one or two individuals per household are taken into consideration by the biographical survey, and also because these individuals have changed households during their residential itineraries; finally through lack of information concerning the itineraries of the other members of the domestic groups<sup>35</sup>.

It is difficult to imagine *a priori* the processes by which the size of the household (recorded for 2000-2001 stay) would influence the duration of previous residential stays: individuals in extended households may find themselves under stronger pressure to move; single individuals are not supposed to negotiate their mobility with their co-residents. Collected data invalidates the latter hypothesis, but does not clearly confirm the former one. Individuals in single-person households at the time of the survey were less mobile, on an average, than those in households composed of several people; the frequency of moves decreases when the household comprises three or more people, and then increases when there are nine or more individuals per domestic unit.

The place of the individual in the household defines his/her dependence when a decision to move occurs, supposedly on the head of the domestic unit. But this place, as for some of the preceding variables, is only defined at the time of the survey, and not retrospectively for preceding stays. The following hypotheses can therefore be formulated: that a wife is more mobile as she is exposed to the risk of a separation; that children are even more mobile as they leave the parents' residence (education and vocational training, recourse to various systems of guardianship to solve family conflicts, decohabitation...) and sometimes come back when they reach adulthood; domestic staff also run the risk of losing their jobs.

But the survey provides an inadequate answer to this question, as the individuals whose residential itineraries were collected had not been chosen at random within the unit of housing. Heads of household were almost always interviewed<sup>36</sup> (64% of the stays analyzed), whereas only a third of the stays of wives were accounted for, few of dependents or relatives, and practically none of children. In the end, the confidence intervals overlap



Accra North: Signboard and trade center along a main road



Hairdressing salon adjoining a compound at Lagos Town: a typical workplace for « self-employed workers without employee »

for the different modes of social relations in the household. The considerable rise in the mobility of spouses is likely, but not confirmed by the sample. As was expected, mobility doubles for dependents, who are younger on an average; it is a third higher for collaterals, whose presence in households is explained by practices of hospitality and circulation, both current in African urban housing. On the other hand, it would seem to be lower (by about 10%) for children, who are poorly, and perhaps inadequately represented in the survey. It is probably the reason why the higher mobility of spouses (in reality wives) and children is confirmed statistically as soon as the incidence of sex is controlled: if one refers to the figure for the heads of household (either men or women), the hazard of a move is then increased by 16% for spouses and by 33% for children. Although this result conforms to what was expected, doubts exist about this system of measurement for the reasons given; in the end, it argues against the introduction of this criterion into the case by case analysis of neighbourhoods. It must nevertheless be noted that the over-mobility of spouses is especially evident in Old Teshie, a neighbourhood in which conjugal instability is a recognized fact.

Lastly, as we saw earlier, the survey shows the importance of compound housing (receiving 70% of stays) in Ghanaian, and more generally West-African urban building<sup>37</sup>. But these social customs are differentiated, especially in Accra. Certain compounds ("concessions" in French-speaking areas) only house the members of an extended family who have co-inherited a common property. Others are more widely open to renting than to the maintaining in them of family beneficiaries. In a further category of compound housing one sees the prominent role of a family head who declares himself to be the owner with regard to relatives accommodated in the place on a selective basis. In a final group, a simple caretaker, more or less related to the founding line of the family, looks after the site, ensures a minimal maintenance of the building, guarantees the usufructuary rights of certain beneficiaries who have temporarily vacated their rooms, or even collects rents for a non-resident owner. The type of housing is perhaps less analytically significant than the social relationships and ties of kinship which are formed there, implying customary rights; it is also less effective than the economic issues at stake<sup>38</sup>.

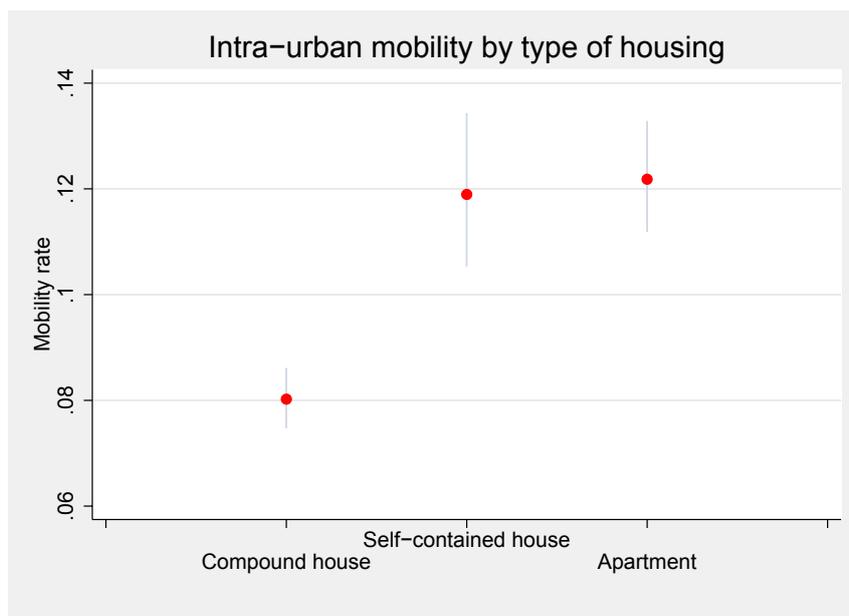
Compound housing most often brings together families of modest incomes, underprivileged or even pauperized ones, while flats and self-contained houses are reserved for the middle classes. In these last two types of housing, average mobility is situated at an identical 12% rate of annual moves, whereas the occupants of compounds tend to settle more, their mobility never rising to more than 8%. However this relative stability of residence only applies to non-educated people, or to those who attend the Koranic school: in those conditions, it is part of the social and territorial processes which prevent them from moving. On the other hand, compound housing does not reduce the mobility of people with education. These no doubt rely on a professional capital which motivates changes of residence, and it would be easier for them to leave this type of housing. They are nevertheless hampered by a restricted land and property market in Accra, which does not always allow them to get away from the compound type of housing.



**Improvement of a gutter at Lagos Town: an issue for local participation**



**Overcrowded compound shared between tenants and freeholders at Lagos Town**



It is not easy to establish empirically the meaning of the combined influences of education (reflecting the socioeconomic status), the type of dwelling and the residential status (always considered at the time of the survey). Freeholding may well be the recourse of some impoverished people (those who have family roots in the region), but it leads to a low degree of mobility in compound housing, in the same capacity and to the same extent as individualized property. On the other hand, the two more comfortable and independent types of housing reduce the contrasts in mobility between levels of education: the social filter comes into play when one enters this type of accommodation

## A general model

With regard to the reservations recognized in the representativeness of recorded residential itineraries, a general model of intra-urban mobility is not very convincing, or at least it cannot be generalized to apply to the whole of the metropolitan region. The choice of typical study areas, surveyed exhaustively for a better understanding of their coherence, creates a homogeneity in observations made inside these local urban areas which compromises statistical inference. Techniques exist to integrate this homogeneity bias (equivalent to an unobserved heterogeneity between neighbourhoods), and they should be incorporated into a general model. The usefulness of such a synthetic model, in spite of these restrictions, resides in examining the recognized factors of mobility in order to control their possible interference and to formulate a diagnosis on those which are finally taken into account. This pattern of the variations in residential mobility thus becomes – and here lies its importance – a reference for the analysis of each neighbourhood to be undertaken subsequently.

To obtain this result, the model relies on the preceding analysis for the least ambiguous effects, those which are the least specific to such and such a part of the city. Possible co-variations of the factors are detected by their gradual introduction in a reasoned order.

The most universal factors are analyzed first: the effect of age at the beginning of the stay (the chronology of the life course), then the effect of the seniority of the cohorts, which introduces historical time and non-fulfilment of itineraries. The criterion of sex is excluded, as the discrimination associated with it is a product of the socioeconomic inequalities between men and women, inequalities which are better associated with individual level of education, and controlled in the model by this variable in two ways. Residential status and type of housing are the two decisive criteria of residential mobility: they are finally evaluated once the preceding factors have been controlled.

#### A synthetical model of the factors of variation in residential mobility in GAR

Effets	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Gender (male)	1,17 (0,05)	1, 18 (0,05)	1,08 (0,05)*	1,08 (0,05)*	1,08 (0,05)*
Life course	0,86 (0,01)	0,90 (0,01)	0,90 (0,01)	0,90 (0,01)	0,90 (0,01)
Cohorts		0,90 (0,01)	0,92 (0,01)	0,92 (0,01)	0,92 (0,01)
Primary school / junior secondary <i>versus</i> non-educated			1,38 (0,11)	1,38 (0,11)	1,36 (0,11)
Secondary school or University <i>versus</i> non-educated			1,67 (0,15)	1,69 (0,16)	1,63 (0,15)
Compound housing <i>versus</i> flat/self-contained house				1.07 (0,09)*	1.07 (0,09)*
Freeholder <i>versus</i> owner/tenant					0,71 (0,05)

Parameters are expressed in odds ratio; they are followed, between brackets, of the standard error.

\* Null hypothesis (ratio equals one) possible in more than five cases out of hundred.

The life course is introduced as a continuous variable with 5-year units (age 12-14, age 15-19, age 20-24 ...). The hazard of a move is reduced by 10% for each group with advancing age<sup>39</sup>. The reduction is identical between cohorts ordered by 5-year groups controlling for age at moving. It must be remembered that the cohort effect amalgamates the historical scale and the memory lapses of certain interviewees with regard to former stays.

The two control variables referring to education are a simplification according to three categories of the level of education registered. The category of reference is the absence of education (or only attending Koranic school). Attendance restricted to primary school or junior secondary school raises residential mobility by 40%; senior secondary school, technical or university educations increase it by 70%. Here education reveals an upward social movement towards the middle classes, with professional, religious, even ethnic

elements being associated (it must be remembered that the sample does not include individuals from the upper classes or from wealthy neighbourhoods). In fact these characteristics tend to disappear when the model controls education.

Compound housing is then compared with accommodation in flats or self-contained houses, and it was thought that it would influence residential mobility. This was before introducing the stochastic term to measure the resemblance between individuals within the same area of survey. Indeed this type of housing is the only one in certain nearby communities, but excluded from others (as in Tema Community V). If we consider this fact, living in a compound does not exert any considerable influence over mobility, everything else (age, cohort, education) being equal, a result which was already hinted at in the analysis proper of this variable.

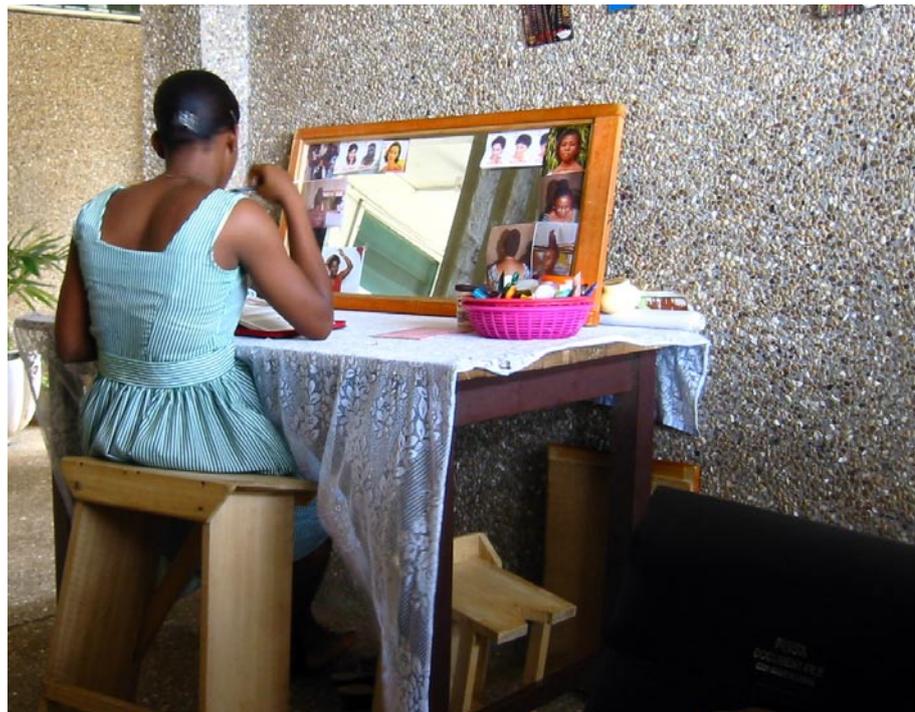
Finally, the stabilizing influence of freeholding is confirmed in comparison with the other two indissociable residential statuses, property-owning and tenancy: the fact of being a freeholder at the time of the survey reduces mobility by about 30%.

If this model retains only very few variables, it is to rely on guaranteed results for each variable in turn. The resulting model is remarkable in that each variable or factor preserve the meaning and the scope of its proper influence as others are introduced: this ensures their independence from each other, and therefore their real explanatory value. What is missing, however, is the spatial dimension of mobility, the discriminating influence of location in the city. This dimension will be examined in the following part, focusing on local scale, at the neighbourhood level, of mobility.



**The kiosk: a place for work that could accommodate someone as well**

**Informal activity in  
a flat at Tema Com-  
munity V**



# Analysing mobility in seven neighbourhoods

In describing residential mobility by neighbourhoods, case by case, analysis of the variables comes closer to intra-urban composition. Each of the seven study areas is documented by the statistical description of the population under survey and especially of its mobility, within the capital region, according to the model previously discussed. The exercise is unusual, imposed by the lack of general statistical inference, but useful, as it completes the on-the-spot observation of a complex urban reality. Here, the qualitative and quantitative analyses of each community<sup>40</sup> are complementary. The latter proceeded in two stages: a) an automatic procedure to look for the best model by selecting the factors and variables which contribute most to variation in duration of stays; b) an empirical and systematic revision of the principal factors of variation in mobility for each neighbourhood. The former treatment was a semi-parametric formulation of the models of duration of stay (Cox), with robust methods of calculating the variance/covariance matrix, considering the repetition of stays per individual. The second treatment processes with non-parametric formulations.

From a purely statistical point of view, the specific nature of each study area restricts the conclusions to the hundred or so households interviewed, who show a high level of homogeneity due to their living near each other. It is not unusual for the whole population of a survey area to be living in one type of housing, often a compound, and with a single residential status, that of freeholder, for example. This leads to the observation, all other things being equal, of further discriminating factors in mobility. Another heuristic advantage to proceeding in this way is to be able to compare very contrasting levels of residential mobility from one neighbourhood to another. These contrasts do not only exist in terms of degree of mobility, they also concern its determining factors. Not only are certain discriminating variables not operative everywhere, but in certain neighbourhoods the expected statistical determination is absent: residential mobility remains widely undetermined. In other cases, for local reasons, residential mobility is not per se sufficiently intensive to be influenced by socioeconomic factors.



**Teshie: traditional and new religious marks**



**Low level of education at Teshie**

The seven study areas will be presented in order of increasing mobility, an order whose scope is already instructive since each area represents a type of urban settlement, linked with access to land, the nature of the housing stock, urban transport services and the ways in which tenancy is distributed. Average mobility is measured, let us remember, by the annual percentage of the population over 12 years of age who change their place of residence within the metropolitan area. It begins at a rate of 3% in Old Teshie, and reaches nearly 14% in Upper Dodowa. The comparing of neighbourhoods aims first of all at understanding such diversity.

#### Rate of residential mobility per study area

Study area	Rate of mobility
Old Teshie	3,0 %
Lagos Town	4,5 %
Old Ashaiman	6,1 %
New Fadama	9,3 %
Tema Community V	12,2 %
New Gbawe	13,5 %
Upper Dodowa	13,6 %
Total	9,1 %

This order of increasing mobility would validate an interpretation in terms of increasing distance from the historic centre of regional urbanization if Ashaiman, a working-class suburb marked by the intermixing of migrants from the district of Tema, did not appear in the graph as an area little concerned by mobility, and if the link between distance and oldness of urbanization had not been qualified above. The occupiers of New Gbawe, a new front of peripheral outgrowth since the end of the 1980s, show a greater propensity for moving than those of Tema Community V, urbanized beforehand, yet farther from the town of Accra and engaged in the relatively independent logics of the industrial and port labour pool. The old fishing village of Old Teshie, “an indigenous community” *par excellence*, does not clearly correspond to the idea of a centre (which would be, historically and economically, better embodied by the Ga neighbourhoods of Accra Central, such as James Town and Ussher Town); its original core was hardly modified by the colonial processes of urbanization, and it is only in the last twenty years that it has responded to the property market pressures of the metropolis.

The opposition between poor people and the middle classes better fits the description of the gradient of mobility: whether they have an indigenous population (Old Teshie) or are destined to receive different strata of migrants (Lagos Town since the interwar period, Ashaiman a generation later), whether they are linked to the labour market areas



**An indigenous ga community**



**Improvement of road and electricity providing at New Fadama**

(Lagos Town at the peri-centre of Accra, Ashaiman facing the port and the factories of Tema) or they accommodate those populations affected by unemployment and who fall back on informal activities associated with overcrowded areas (Teshie, Ashaiman since the 1980s), the three study areas the least engaged in residential mobility are typically deprived communities. Indeed they are listed as such by the officials of their respective districts. Their political representatives make abundant use of such a “label of poverty” to engage, among growing competition, in the race for international urban development grants. Here one only sees compounds in a state of deterioration, enclosure and lack of infrastructures. The running costs of residential cohabitation are high, as a result of keeping the poorest freeholders in inherited family houses, and of the worsening of relations between tenants who are unskilled workers and landlords who are hardly better educated.

A quantitative threshold is crossed in terms of mobility with New Fadama, a study area in many ways occupying an average place in the scale of the survey. The presence of some self-contained houses next to the compounds, constructions resulting from more recent urbanization in the north of Accra, better access to water, sanitation and other facilities, a mixing of the three residential statuses: these are all visible indications of such “averageness”. And this seems to be reflected in the residential itineraries of the inhabitants before their arrival in the neighbourhood, by a centrifugal redistribution from the more densely populated neighbourhoods in the centre, or by a centripetal flow from the interior of the country. But it is above all the more modern housing stock and the better individualized accommodation in Tema Community V and New Gbawe which show presence of middle-class people and indicate the type of housing they prefer, at least for the moment.

This general socioeconomic graduation is not always so clear-cut and certain shades of difference must be noted: the remarkable degrees of mobility in Upper Dodowa, on the northern edge of the capital region, involve a population which is fairly poor on the whole and which seeks the security of freeholds in compounds, the proximity of areas cultivated for food or the low rents requested for modest houses. This population, as we have already hinted, is often concerned by reasons for mobility (back to family, back to hometown) linked to the need for withdrawal in cases of professional or conjugal difficulties. It is an important difference, as it destroys the coherence not only of the areas inhabited by poor people, but also of those with indigenous populations by introducing the criterion of distance from the centre on the regional scale. It is therefore significant to see that the two surveyed indigenous communities are situated at the two extremes of the mobility gradient: Teshie (Ga coastal community) holds the record for stability, and Dodowa (Shai hills in the north of GAR) has one of the most restless populations in the region. The effects of residential stagnation and the logic of frontier (rural *versus* urban, GAR *versus* the Eastern Region) meet in the interpretation of areas of poverty. Deprived populations seem here to be more diverse, in terms of their propensity for mobility, than is suggested by participative watchwords, used so widely in the new canons of urban management with regard to the civil society mobilization.

The inhabitants of *Old Teshie* are the most “sedentary”: half of the people have not moved after 25 years in the same place (according to the Kaplan-Meier Product-Limit Estimator). The profile of the hazard of moving is abnormally regular during the stay, at least compared with what can be observed elsewhere, when the hazard increases during the very first years, then gradually decreases. In Old Teshie, the decision to move seems to depend on needs or choices which are relatively independent of residential strategies. However the variation in mobility can be perceived in connection with the life course, although at a low level, but with irregularities due to the infrequency of stays<sup>41</sup>. There is no clear distinction between the cohorts, as can be observed on the contrary in other neighbourhoods. One important exception can be seen in the cohort aged 20-24 at the time of the survey (14%), which could be explained by a recent increase in mobility for this younger population, already noticeable during the previous years. Moves, mainly to accommodation nearby, almost exclusively take place from one compound to another; most involve freeholders (80% of stays) at the time of the survey. This characteristic remains highly significant in the automatic selection process of the model: in fact, for the very few people in the neighbourhood having a definite residential status (tenancy), the rate of mobility is close to the general average.

The most essential feature of the analysis is the low level or absence of socioeconomic discrimination in mobility. The influence of education is not only weak, but even tends to be less regular and predictable than elsewhere. So there is no difference between those with primary school education and the non-educated; it is not the case for junior secondary school. As for professional status, it has no influence on mobility. It must be admitted not only that the groups present are not very mobile in general (unemployed, retired people, workers in the informal sector), but what is more, that there is no difference between them.

All in all, the population of Old Teshie is set rigidly in a structure of compound housing, customary residential status, a rudimentary education and a traditional fishing activity (catching fish for the men, smoking the catch, preparing and selling it for the women). The neighbourhood is already densely populated, with a deplorable lack of sanitation, and does not willingly welcome the arrival of outsiders who could have contributed to the residential mobility and mixing. Economic diversification is moderate and does not seem to have stimulated mobility very much beyond a minimal threshold due to the life course, when it is not an accidental instability. Mobility therefore cannot be differentiated as it does not exist.

In *Lagos Town*, the rate of mobility observed is 4,5%, that is about half the estimated rate for Greater Accra. After 14 years, half the population has moved at least once. The hazard distribution of moves conforms to the usual profile of residential mobility: gradual increase during the first five years of the duration of stay (to reach a little less than 8% per year), followed by a regular decrease. The life course variation of mobility can therefore be perceived but appears to be “uneven”, with a maximum distributed among groups of under-25s, which is not unusual. Combined with the cohort effect, itself clearly noticeable, the effect of age at the beginning of a stay tends to disappear. With a rate

of 12%, the 20-24 age group observed today are about twice as mobile as all the other cohorts at the same age. It is difficult to ascertain whether this is due to memory lapses or to an increase in moves, but this disparity is not observable everywhere. Here more than elsewhere, older cohorts present a lower mobility rate, reduced by 25% comparing each 5-year age group, which may reflect a historic change. The inhabitants' attachment to this old immigrant neighbourhood, very near to the centre of Accra, is combined with the usual residential fluidity of the new cohorts. This is no doubt the effect of renewal and of a real worsening in relations between tenants and landlords: older tenants, confined within these overcrowded compounds by former social links with the freeholders of the family houses, live side by side with younger households often composed of single men and women. The residential turnover of the latter is rapid because of rents having to be paid in advance (now paid for two or three years) or of evictions ordered by landlords. Indeed all the residential stays of the interviewees took place in poor compounds but, unlike the situation in Old Teshie, there are very few freeholders here (15% of the stays); they have become a minority through the spread of tenancy practices since the end of British colonization. The residential mobility of these impoverished freeholders, who lack the means to free themselves from a degraded environment (4% mobility rate), is closer to that of the many tenants, especially the oldest ones (5% mobility rate) than to that of the few owners, also disinclined to move.

There are a great many Moslems in this neighbourhood, the result of the arrival in the past of immigrants from the North and from the West-African Sahelian regions (Niger, Mali – the former French colony of Soudan – during the colonial period, North Togo and Nigeria today), and this has caused Lagos Town, unlike close-by Nima-Mamobi, to be called a peri-central “zongo”. In fact this population lives alongside many Ewe people, of other religious persuasions<sup>42</sup>. It is, however, one of the least inclined to change residence because of the strained relations with distant hometowns arising from the long journey to them. But in this it is similar to Catholics, themselves less mobile than Protestants.

As is the case for mobility in general, these disparities are too restricted to be statistically significant; they are nevertheless credible. Here as elsewhere, membership of a religious group reflects disparities in education, and its effect on mobility is greatly attenuated when education is controlled. Education remains a determining factor in the simplest statistical model, but its effect is especially valid for primary schooling, again involving poor populations. For professional statuses with enough individuals to provide a reliable and acceptable statistical threshold (public and private sector salaried workers, independent workers), the degrees of mobility are almost identical – between 4 and 5%, a little more for salaried workers –, but the differences are minimal and insignificant.

Compared with Old Teshie, the increased residential mobility can probably be explained by the greater number of tenants, a residential status which favours moves due to its relative adaptability, especially among the youngest generations, as we have already seen. And this is the case even though in the history of crowded family houses, there still remains a paternalist welcoming of the most stable outsiders by their landlords.



**Family house at Dodowa**



This function of renting has nevertheless opened up the neighbourhood to other city-dwellers, especially because of its strategic location in the urban transport network. This supplementary factor introduces a slight socioeconomic differentiation, visible through education, and particularly through professional status, but it remains minimal in an underprivileged milieu.

In *Old Ashaiman*, the vocation of certain zones for tenancy is confirmed, here in the district of Tema where instances of landlords living beside tenants are far less likely than in Lagos Town. Mobility rises by one and a half points to 6%, a lower figure than the general average however, and the sign of a confinement to overcrowded houses for poor people. The median duration of residential stay is 10 years. The life-course and cohort profiles are both clearly drawn, following an expected pattern. Yet here, the mobility of young adults (aged 20-24) is three times higher than that of the whole population of the neighbourhood; it is twice as high as that measured at the same age for all the cohorts. This apparent upsurge can be compared with that observed in Lagos Town. It points to tenants who are still single, forming households of one or two people, freer to come and go but more vulnerable to evictions by landlords when rent is not paid in advance. Moreover their mobility seems more like restlessness than securing a roof, and their residential autonomy is illusory. Moves are often made to nearby accommodation, from one room to another, or one compound to another, in the same neighbourhood or the same urban sector, depending on personal acquaintances. Here the slowdown of older cohorts' mobility (the cohort effect) is the prime factor in the variation of stays.

The rise in mobility of young cohorts (18% increase for each 5-year age group) who are affected by the worsening of tenure conditions and by the obvious informalization of activities in local employment, can be linked with the increase in population of the neighbourhood in the 1980s following the massive laying-off of workers in the labour pool of the port of Tema. Everyone has to fend for himself, and this often leads to moves within a limited area. Another contributing factor is the present tendency of these people to move towards the new northern neighbourhoods, recently increasing the population of Ashaiman to a total higher than that of Tema. It is an opportunity for the least insecure among the older cohorts, once retirement age is reached, to acquire plots and reproduce the pattern of multiple tenancy farther away. This is essentially a reflex of poor people to ensure a regular income, and seems to be the case for former workmen, Ewe people as well as Moslems, who first experienced the same practices when they were tenants of compounds in southern areas of the city. It is also the proof that, for a whole generation of migrants over the past forty years, Ashaiman has become the hometown in which the property market and residential mobility are active, albeit sometimes in a closed circuit.

The way in which houses are built in Old Ashaiman and their occupiers' residential status are in fact comparable with those in Lagos Town. Compound housing is practically the only type of construction; owners merely represent 5% of residential stays, and freeholders 20%, the remaining three-quarters being tenants. Between them difference in mobility is slight, with a rate of 5% for owners, 6% for tenants and rising to a surprising

7,5% for freeholders. But the confidence intervals overlap, which prevents any definitive conclusions, especially for freeholders. These may find a temporary lodging more to their advantage in cases of professional or conjugal difficulties, and do not necessarily opt to settle permanently, as is the case observed in Old Teshie, for example.

The differentiation in mobility made by education is wholly as expected here, even for detailed categories; statistical significance is thus lost. Proof is made of a mobility affected by the socioeconomic status of individuals. This observation is confirmed by the division into categories of professional statuses and by the distribution of their mobility: private sector workers and independent workers without employees are the most mobile, with respective rates of 7% and 9%, around that of domestic employees (8%) and exceeded by a few rare apprentices (12%). The least mobile are “self-employed workers with employees” (4%). As for religion, it is a weak discriminating factor.

The mobility of the inhabitants of Old Ashaiman therefore takes on a new social and economic connotation compared with previously mentioned neighbourhoods, in an environment influenced by the proximity of Tema and by the crisis in port activities. In such an economic context, the low degree of mobility is surprising. It may be explained by an attachment to the town and its nearby areas of activity where work may be available. It is above all the legacy of a combination of social and economic factors which have always made Ashaiman a pool of labour and cheap accommodation for Tema. We should nevertheless keep in mind the signs of a change towards mobility in tenancy which is growing, but within a limited geographical area, as Ashaiman itself has become a source of jobs and informal opportunities for a vast consumer market.

The inhabitants of *New Fadama* have the same mobility rate as the whole city, that is, 9%. The median duration of residential stay (7 years) illustrate this shortening of stays. This intermediate position in the grading of mobility in the neighbourhoods conforms to the average situation in the study areas for several characteristics.

In this intermediate situation, one distinguishing feature of the neighbourhood is a slight difference in mobility between men and women, of only one point (8,6% for women, 9,7% for men), perhaps due to statistical limitation. A second particularity is the relative conformity of young adults both with the rest of the occupiers and with their elders at the same age. So the mobility of those aged 20-24 (13% current rate) is only slightly different from that of the whole – four points higher – whereas elsewhere twice that rate is frequent. A practically identical rate (12%) is observed for the whole population of the neighbourhood at the same age at the beginning of the stay. These are all signs of a relative stability in mobility in successive cohorts, contrary to what was observed in the other neighbourhoods. On the other hand, its variation during the life course is clear: it forms a bell-shaped distribution, with the largest part being indeed for this group aged 20-24.

Accommodation surveyed at New Fadama is mainly situated in compounds (an architectural feature varied however by the presence of self-contained houses and by a generally better quality of building than in the three areas studied previously), which

contributes to reducing the number of occupiers' moves. Once again, the status of freeholder is the most radical factor in stabilizing the population (mobility reduced by two thirds for freeholders), but it only applies to a low number of stays (one fifth). There are slightly more freeholders than owners, who appear to be much more mobile (7% of them move per year). Rented accommodation is the mode of living for the majority, in comparable proportions to that in the other neighbourhoods (two thirds of stays), still implying more frequent moves (a significant mobility rate of 12%).

The distribution of residential stays according to professional status at the time of the survey confirms the large number of private sector workers (a quarter of the stays) and their mobility (12% rate), which is much higher than those of other categories. That of public sector salary earners and self-employed workers is close to the general average with no clear difference between them. The duration of stay decreases regularly as the level of education rises: a gap of three points is observed between non-educated people (6% mobility rate) and those with the highest levels (9%). Socioeconomic diversification attenuates the gaps in mobility associated with the different religions, the Pentecostal group showing shorter stays and a much greater tendency to move than the Moslem population.

So the people of New Fadama have the means for a mobility principally dictated by the course of family composition. They are nevertheless modest means, as illustrated by the importance of residence in compounds, mainly rented. These lower middle-class populations have been settled in a neighbourhood for an "intermediate" period of forty years (that is less than in old migrants areas such as Lagos Town and more than in new suburbs such as New Gbawe). So that there is little sign of any new occupation and the residential mobility of the younger generations does not really seem to be on the increase. Here the signs of socioeconomic differentiation are more clearly contrasted compared with the more central, longer-settled neighbourhoods analyzed previously. The comparative youth of the population also contributes to the level of mobility attained: structure through age is similar to that in New Gbawe.

For the inhabitants of *Tema Community V*, average mobility rises by three points to reach 12%. Here we find a population which is homogenous and singular with regard to education and religion ... but also in age groups. Through lack of diversity, the statistical model set up with the general factors selected is ineffective. The hazard curve is itself atypical in that it does not satisfactorily estimate short-term hazards because of the advanced age of the individuals and memory lapses concerning certain stays in their residential trajectories. But here, age does not reflect the duration of urbanization in the neighbourhood. For even if one of the six buildings surveyed was built about ten years after the five others, it is above all since the beginning of the 1990s that the study area has become peopled with blue- or white-collar workers, certain salaried workers today switching to independent activities. Access to property or to the tenancy of more self-contained and better equipped accommodation is the principal marker of the advanced age of individuals in their professional careers and family development.

Indeed the group of 50-year-olds, with a life course already well under way, is the majority group in Tema Community V. Their presence accentuates the life course effect, that is the variation in mobility according to age at the time of the stay; it reaches a maximum of 18% for the group aged 20-24. Ten years later, it falls to the average result for the area, and then concludes at about 5%. This relatively old population prevents the highlighting of clear differences between cohorts and a possible evolution over chronological duration. Cohorts over 35 years old at the time of the survey show strictly identical rates. Taking the life course into consideration, this would suggest a reduction in residential mobility for the new cohorts. But the few people in the group aged 25-34 invalidate such a conclusion. In fact, late access to this modern housing has indeed led to mobility at the end of the life course for the 50-year-olds surveyed.

Unlike the preceding neighbourhoods and their compound housing, Tema Community V is only composed of flats in which freeholding is practically absent. Former residential stays are attributable for one third to flat owners at the time of survey and for two thirds to tenants (a relatively stable proportion from one neighbourhood to another). Owners are much more mobile (15% rate compared with 10% for tenants); the gap is not questionable from the point of view of statistical precision, but is contrary to what is usually observed. Such a particularity is due to circumstance concerning the history of one of the blocks of flats: “abandoned” by the landlord to his tenants, in already poor condition (absence of collective maintenance, two households per flat), it now offers practically rent-free accommodation which keeps the occupiers in overcrowded housing but in an atypical situation of stability.

A final characteristic of mobility in Tema Community V is the low level of variation due to socioeconomic factors. All the inhabitants have had some education, and the only perceptible difference is between primary school and senior secondary school. No appreciable difference is introduced by professional status; the vast majority, composed of public and private sector workers and self-employed workers with employees, conform to the average mobility. On the other hand, the least privileged category, that of independent workers without employees (assimilated into the informal sector) stands out with an annual rate of moves at 17%, five points higher. As for the religion, it makes no difference.

In the end, in Tema Community V everything happens as if the housing environment, more open and with a single type of accommodation (blocks of flats today on sale in instalments) had contributed to a prior selection of the people living there, a process which will be seen again, with a different type of accommodation and a population belonging to a different age group, in the new self-contained houses of New Gbawe. Access to decent housing, whether through tenancy or ownership, at the end of the life course has only been possible for an educated population integrated into the labour market. The homogeneity of the housing can be linked with a certain similarity in the inhabitants' religious practices (more orthodox churches, fewer charismatic faiths, few Moslems). This social filter has also counted in favour of the homogeneity of residential moves, whose variation in duration of stays is lower than elsewhere.

*New Gbawe* is the second of the three neighbourhoods with a high rate of mobility (13%): the median duration of stay is five years. The relative youth of the population is a contributing factor to this high level in a general context where residential mobility is on the increase. Can there also be seen here an element of the difficulty, to be demonstrated later, in understanding individual variation inspiring the hypothesis that mobility is less discriminated during the initial period of the life course? In the group aged 20-24, one fifth of the population will move within a year. The two effects, of age and cohort, are clearly established, especially the latter. So here the youth of the population is a sign of the recent urban settlement, in the 1990s, of this former rural customary domain, linked with the neighbouring village of Gbawe. But the present occupiers do not always invest in property, as access to land and then the building of the new self-contained houses come late in life. This is generally the case in a restricted land and property market, even though the weight of international Ghanaian emigrants in the new investments has introduced younger property holders in the area. The rapid spread of tenancy and practices of temporary accommodation in this new stock, often still under construction, also seems to be an important factor in the youth of the population.

Indeed New Gbawe provides the opportunity to observe a more balanced division of residential statuses: two out of six stays concerned freeholders at the time of the survey. But here it is less a question of freeholders with rights to the new property heritages, than of distant relatives or bricklayers in rent-free lodging and employed as caretakers of the houses. 35% of observed residential stays concerned actual individualized owners (an exceptionally high figure, even though all the houses are not yet occupied by their owners), and half concerned tenants. These, whose rise in number to replace the first building-site guards dates from the second half of the 1990s, are the most mobile (18% rate); owners are the most stable (only 10% move within a year); the rate for lodgers is between the two. It must be noted that the landowners belong to older cohorts, which contributes to their stabilization.

Low numbers introduces some uncertainty about the detailed incidence of education. Nevertheless average mobility is regularly spaced between 9% and 15%, from non-educated people to university graduates. Here again, age is a interfering factor, the most mobile young adults being the most educated. And in fact education modifies mobility much less clearly when the cohort effect is introduced. The configuration of mobility depending on religion, at least for groups with enough members, does not quite conform to what is observed elsewhere. Moslems, members of Pentecostal and spiritual churches reach the same rates (14-15%). The slight difference between professional statuses is even more surprising in a situation of high mobility: apart from the few retired people (10% mobility), only two points separate the moves of self-employed workers with employees (13%) from those of private sector workers (15%), public sector workers and unemployed people coming between the two.

So the mobility of the people of New Gbawe is both high and largely undetermined, unless by the life course timing. Indeed, access to ownership of land and the ambition to leave compound housing bring together, in the same laborious search for secure

housing and in this new, still poorly-equipped suburb, varied professional and migratory itineraries: people at the end of their working lives or benefiting financially from an international exodus; locally-born people from a nearby village or those from the regions, who have decided to settle their families and descendants in the capital. Education and residential statuses count as much in themselves as through the effect of older, less mobile cohorts. If the rate of mobility is high, it is first of all because the population is young and the neighbourhood newly settled. These inhabitants seize the opportunities offered by the conversion of community land rights into long leases, sold for a high price by “indigenous” people to “outsiders”. Their characteristics are already the result of this filter of land transactions and property investments. They are here partly because they have not been able to stay elsewhere and because they have the means to pay to settle here. It is also likely that socioeconomic discriminations, in professional activity as in religion, do not assert themselves until later in the life course, and this is not yet apparent in the still fairly immature profile of mobility.

Finally *Upper Dodowa* is the study area with the highest mobility rate (an average of 13% annual moves). This mobility is nevertheless comparable with that of New Gbawe and Tema Community V, as no distinction can be made between the three neighbourhoods with the figures at our disposal. Unlike those of the preceding neighbourhood, most of the individual characteristics lead to a significant diversification in the durations of residential stay. Here, half the people have moved by the end of four years: it is the sign of a short-stay mobility informed by the reasons for moving and confirmed in interviews carried out after the survey<sup>43</sup>. According to the structure by age group, the mobility shows two peaks, the highest situated around the age of 30, often a period of marital difficulties for women, many of whom are heads of household in Dodowa, and of professional setbacks motivating a return to the community of origin. The other peak is around the age of 60, a time for other withdrawals to the family house or land. Such irregularity makes for uncertainty in estimation of mobility by age group and cohorts, even if the general tendencies towards a decrease are confirmed with advancing age in both cases, with practically identical drops in the statistical curve.

One third of residential stays were located in the district of Accra, a lower proportion than in New Gbawe but an important one if we consider the geographical distance from the study area. Here stays are much shorter: the hazard of a move is up 75% in the districts of Dangbe West and Dangbe East. But if stays outside the Greater Accra Region were taken into account, this would show an equally strong tendency to move between Dodowa, a former centre of agricultural trading, and the plantation areas, of cacao in particular, in the neighbouring Eastern Region, especially the district of Suhum Kraboa Coaltar with which the Shai people from the capital region have kept up close relations concerning migration and land since the beginning of the 20th century. On the other hand, mobility outside Accra proper (in the districts of Tema, Ga and Dangbe West) maintains a moderate rate of 11%.

Housing in Dodowa is exclusively in compounds, with a residential status principally that of freeholders (two thirds of stays). The remaining third is composed of people who declared themselves to be tenants at the time of the survey. The gap in mobility between the two groups is exceptional: 11% of moves per year for freeholders, 24% for tenants, the latter being here in search of some of the lowest rents in the area around Accra, thus avoiding the overcrowding and insalubrity of the deprived communities nearer to the areas where work is to be found. A cohort effect is also noticeable while this group of tenants is concentrated in the middle of the life course, and then disappears among those advancing in age, mainly freeholders with origins in the community.

Level of education is also a strong factor of discrimination: individuals with primary and junior secondary schooling show an average annual mobility three times higher than those without education. Advanced secondary, university or technical education (mobility between 25 and 30%) multiplies it by four and a half. It is this strong differentiation rather than its classification that is first surprising in a small town with a rural environment. Dodowa in fact continues to benefit from a concentration of schools linked to religious missions, the legacy of its role as a small stopping-place on an old trading route. Moreover it attracts more and more city-dwellers, tenants employed on the labour market of Accra and its suburbs. Its functions as administrative centre for regional chiefdoms (seat of the Provincial Council of Chiefs since colonization, then of the Regional House of Chiefs), for Dangbe West district, and perhaps as regional capital in the future, explain this more contrasted ranking in levels of education and mobility in the population studied. Professional status may provide some explanations. If one only counts groups with sufficient numbers, civil servants stand out for their high rate of mobility (a quarter of them move within a year) and are followed by private sector workers (18%), independent workers and retired people maintaining a more moderate rate (around 12%).

Beyond these traits associated with socioeconomic influences, ethnic and religious characteristics also discriminate mobility: the Akan and Ewe groups can be distinguished from the indigenous Ga-Adangbe people (Shai populations, as it happens) for more frequent moves. Members of Pentecostal and spiritualist cults are less inclined to move than orthodox Protestants of Anglican or Evangelist tradition (15% compared with 11%), but it is not easy to find a reason for this difference.

Situated outside the metropolitan area, this small town, ranking 230th of the urban localities in Ghana in the latest census, would seem, according to the study area, to house a population which is modern considering its density of mobility, though often constrained by unfavourable circumstances. Such mobility seems to be conditioned by education and professional status and is strongly stimulated by tenancy. In this area, the statistical model resulting from a systematic selection of the variables recognizes the contrast introduced by many factors, that is, a determination which gives its rationality to residential mobility.



Précarités du logement et de son occupation



## Conclusion

Filling up a real gap in knowledge of residential dynamics in the capital of Ghana, the biographical section of the survey “Housing Practices and Residential Mobility in Greater Accra Region, 2000-2001” provides updated measurements of intra-urban mobility and emphasizes, as for many large towns in the South, its recent global increase<sup>44</sup>. These measurements rely on a double and original approach. By establishing the chronology of moves, themselves identified by the principal characteristics of the inhabitants, the variations in mobility are modeled variable by variable. Those tested are generally recognized as being discriminating factors in the duration of stays: life course, rank of cohorts, educational and professional statuses, ethnic groups ... After being worked out for the whole of the metropolitan region, analysis of variables is then applied to each study area, that is, to a selection of seven groups of blocks representative of settlement in the metropolitan region. Becoming monographic in form, the study considers each neighbourhood in order to examine all the mobility levels of its inhabitants, the often original interplay of its variations (all the variables do not play the same role everywhere), and above all the particularities of the local context. In all, residential mobility on the one hand varies according with the individual characteristics, partly estimated by the statistical model; on the other, it adapts to the specific conditions on the spot, which are described from a qualitative point of view. No doubt the quasi monographic forms of the collection of data reduce the statistical validity of these estimations; on the other hand, comparative analysis gives a better picture of the sociological or geographical differences at work, those indeed ignored by the models. These differences are the most important factors responsible for local levels of mobility. It is only beyond a certain threshold (roughly that of average mobility) that a clear individual differentiation occurs. Beyond the analysis of duration of stays, the next stage would be to reconstruct the geographical paths taken in the Greater Accra Region so as to have some idea of the direction and the spatial extent of mobility, following the example of complementary research carried out for the metropolis of Bogotá<sup>45</sup>.

The originality of the study resides in its way of measuring urban mobility on a fine scale, close to the preoccupations of inhabitants concerning housing and attachment to their place in the city. *The geographical effect of location seems especially obvious in deprived urban areas* which suffer from a deficit in mobility. In an environment of packed compounds, inhabitants are given the impression of security of tenure by

the residential status of freeholder, more often forced upon them than the result of a choice; but there is a price to pay for this security: overcrowded cohabitation in family houses and also many types of precariousness and insufficient services. A situation of residential confinement is therefore not the best guarantee of financial participation, social mobilization and adhesion to the community, all required by political sources of mediation and by international donors in the name of good urban governance and better management of the city at the “local” level. The trend toward more tenancy in the compound stock no doubt leads to a growing residential mobility. This has been observed for instance in New Fadama and New Gbawe because of the youth of the tenants, the widening educational and professional scope and the tenancy relations worsened by the recently generalized system of rent having to be paid in advance. But these moves within a limited geographical area hardly make for a rise in social mobility, as the social and territorial bases of the city (land market, limits of property capitalization) still hinder real promotions in the different residential statuses to such a great extent. So the effect of the “local” context reduces the extent of this type of move by confining it within a nearby area (in the same neighbourhood or urban sector) and on a short-term basis often for reasons of urgency (finding a roof).

In this respect the case of Upper Dodowa seems to refute the equation between poverty and relative stabilization by showing that belonging to a community of origin (“hometown”) may very well go hand in hand with high mobility. When this exists, the variables discussed in the global analysis produce a clear-cut discrimination. What determines the high level of mobility here is the position of the study area at the “crossroads” of the rural and the urban, between Accra and its neighbouring region, a gateway onto the whole nation. But mobility is hardly more indicative of promotion than in other areas of poverty: it arises above all from commuting, temporary withdrawals and essential needs for shelter. Its adaptable nature demonstrates the same type of adjustment as that shown in other populations, in other places, when faced with difficulties, either individual or structural ones: crisis in salaried work here (as in Ashaiman), marital instability there (as for the female heads of household in Dodowa), and a worsening of relations between landlords and tenants elsewhere (as in Lagos Town, Ashaiman or New Fadama).

Once local conditions give rise to more frequent moves, individuals will be differentiated according to their own characteristics. We found that the *effect of these variables* is more conclusive when they concern the particular sociology of the middle classes, distributed in enclaves across the metropolis. Difference between residential trajectories is manifest here because they have taken complex paths, diversifying as to life course duration. They are subject to socioeconomic filters, sometimes accompanied by cultural characteristics shown by the model of analysis: advantage comes from higher level of education and effect of professional career, that is, given prior the moving in self-contained houses or flats. In this case, the study areas and their types of housing, even though original compared with the dominant pattern of compounds, only become evident when the individual residential itineraries have been completed, and not as a causal factor at their beginning.

Will residential mobility do more than the concentration of poor people in deprived, politically “visible” areas, to guarantee the mobilization of civil society and the participation of the population in the improvement of their environment to sustain development? It is doubtful, and one should beware of politically correct assertions on poverty. If the anchoring of new individualized landowners in the residential investments of New Gbawe is patent, it is no guarantee of their awareness of the infrastructures of the neighbourhood and their maintenance; neither does it mean an unequivocal and exclusive adherence to the model of citizen participation. Other territorial attachments, other social affinities intervene to make up a more complex living space. For citizenship tends to be a matter under pressure in metropolitan contexts. As for the flats in Tema Community V, their relative comfort does not mean that there are no reasons for dissatisfaction among the residents (lack of room to spread, difficulties caused by the many storeys, dependence on a “bureaucratic” landlord). There is no evidence that access to the flats will put an end to urban peregrinations or encourage active forms of sociability with neighbours. Whatever the residential future of their population, these last two study areas introduce an effect of location depending on the level of accommodation or that of its urban environment: access to individual ownership in New Gbawe, but in a suburb still under construction and badly equipped; a taste of modernity at Tema, not so much limited to the unit of housing itself as to its wider urban environment (the standing of the new town).

On one side, to start from the effects of location in the geography of poverty and to qualify its extent by studying the effects of individual characteristics; on the other, to start from the filters of variables in the sociology of the middle classes and qualify its present form by the effects of the geographical context: these are the two approaches used in the present analysis of urban mobility. If their inversion may seem oversimplified, they nevertheless illustrate the necessity for statistical and geographical analyses to complement each other.



## Notes

<sup>1</sup> SCHNEIER G. 1992, « Le local : itinéraire d'une notion ou les notions du local dans l'agglomération de Buenos Aires », in Haubert et alii (eds.), *Etat et société dans le Tiers-Monde. De la modernisation à la démocratisation ?*, Paris, Publications de la Sorbonne, pp. 329-343.

<sup>2</sup> BERTRAND M., 2002, « Profils du leadership local au Ghana : conflits et fragmentation urbaine dans la métropole du Grand Accra », *Autrepart (Gérer la ville. Entre local et global)*, n° 21, pp. 135-149.

<sup>3</sup> CALDWELL J.C., 1969, *African Rural-Urban Migration: The Movement to Ghanaian Towns*, New York, Columbia University Press/London, C. Hurstand and Co ; GHANA STATISTICAL SERVICE, 1995, *Migration Research Study in Ghana. Internal Migration. International Migration*, 2 vol., (edited by K.A. Twum-Baah, J.S. Nabila and A.F. Aryee), 332 and 213 p.

<sup>4</sup> The district of Tema experienced the greatest increases in population between the 1960 census and that of 1970. (TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEPARTMENT, ACCRA PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME, 1990 July, *Demographic Studies and Final Projections for Accra Metropolitan Area (AMA). Final Report*, Legon, Government of the Republic of Ghana, Ministry of Local Government, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, University of Ghana (Legon), Department of Geography and Resource Development, 216 p.). The most recent census (2000) showed that the district of Ga is following the same trend, with higher rates of urbanization and progression in the western suburb since the 1980s.

<sup>5</sup> The changes in the administrative names (districts and metropolitan whole) took effect when the decentralization laws were passed in 1988 and 1993.

<sup>6</sup> It is worth noting that at the last census in 2000, the population of Ashaiman (more than 150,000 inhabitants) overtook that of Tema Town (less than 141,500), which makes the port suburb the fifth largest locality in the country, just in front of Tema New Town.

<sup>7</sup> ANTOINE Ph., DUBRESSON A., MANOU SAVINA A., 1997, *Abidjan « côté cours. Pour comprendre la question de l'habitat*, Paris, Karthala, 277 p. ; MARGUERAT Y., 1999, *Dynamique urbaine, jeunesse et histoire au Togo*, PUB, coll. Patrimoines n° 1, second edition, 230 p.

<sup>8</sup> BERTRAND M., 1995, « Bamako, d'une république à l'autre », *Annales de la Recherche Urbaine*, n° 66, pp. 40-51 ; 1998, « Marchés fonciers en transition : le cas de Bamako (Mali) », *Annales de Géographie*, n° 602, pp. 381-409 ; 1999, « Bamako (Mali) : habitat de cour et mobilités résidentielles », *Espace, Populations, Sociétés*, n° 1, pp. 119-138.

<sup>9</sup> This term is commonly used in Ghana despite its ambiguity. It there designates, for the vast majority of freeholders, beneficiaries of usufructuary rights in family houses or on lands devolved as community property. Freeholders are thus distinguished from owners who have definitively acquired their plot or property on an individual basis. In this study, the term “freeholder” will also refer to the few occupants of certain dwellings who pay no rent (caretakers, for example, as in New Gbawe or Dodowa), and who are usually classified in the “rent-free” category of censuses. They are the subject neither of a social form of property, nor of the rental market.

<sup>10</sup> TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEPARTMENT, ACCRA PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME, 1990 ; BENNEH G., SONGSORE J., NABILA J.S., AMUZU A.T., TUTU K.A., YANGYUORO Y., McGRANAHAN G., 1993, *Environmental Problems and the Urban Household in the Greater Accra Metropolitan Area (GAMA)*, Ghana, Stockholm, Stockholm Environment Institute, 126 p.

<sup>11</sup> Especially if one considers the relative decline and the growing in insecurity of salaried workers on the labour market, the heterogeneity of the “informal sector” and the fact that a great many trading activities, either secondary or irregular ones, are not counted.

<sup>12</sup> In fact less than a whole block, to obtain the hundred households required for the houses adjoining Old Teshie, Lagos Town and Ashaiman, due to a particularly high residential density in the compounds (never less than two households, sometimes as many as twenty-five).

<sup>13</sup> One block in Dodowa, two in New Fadama, four (some still under construction) in New Gbawe and six flats in Tema Community V, neighbouring housing units being less densely populated.

<sup>14</sup> The accepted definition of a household is that of the national Ghanaian census, that is, the sharing of a common roof, “sleeping arrangements” not necessarily coinciding with “cooking arrangements”. « The household is defined as a person or group of persons who live together in the same house or compound, share the same house-keeping arrangements and are catered for as one unit. The emphasis is on living in the same place and having common provision for food and necessities for living, irrespective of size and relationship. » (*2000 Population & Housing Census. Summary Report of Final Results*, Ghana Statistical Service, March 2002) But other definitions, based more on the sharing of a household budget, not always implying a shared roof, are also used in Ghanaian surveys.

<sup>15</sup> As many heads of household as households were surveyed (720 households identified in 2000, and 96 new ones in 2001) with two exceptions (head of household absent at the time of the first interview, then of the second in 2001).

<sup>16</sup> These same “responsible persons” were also questioned, among all the members of households (3297 after the two stages of the survey in 2000 and 2001) for two other sections of the general questionnaire, one concerning the metropolis and its neighbourhoods, the other concerning their socialization. From the latter section, data was collected on the religion and the ethnic group of the people surveyed.

<sup>17</sup> COX D.R., 1972, “Regression models and life tables”, *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, B34, pp. 187-220.

<sup>18</sup> HOUGAARD P., 2000, *Analysis of multivariate survival data*, New York, Springer, xvii, 542 p.

<sup>19</sup> SHIH J.H. and LOUIS T.A., 1995, “Assessing gamma Frailty models for clustered failure time data”, *Lifetime Data Anal*, 1 (2), pp. 205-220.

<sup>20</sup> If a contextual characteristic affects the dependent variable, one can expect that the individuals sharing this context present a degree of similarity in this respect. The context produces homogeneity within itself, and consequently heterogeneity between the contexts. If the inhabitants of a neighbourhood show socioeconomic affinities, the social contrast between neighbourhoods is accentuated. Multilevel analysis, in estimating the complex structures of unobserved variance, considers and explains the similarity due to contextual influences.

<sup>21</sup> Even though the notion of independence is a relative one in this Africa of cities, where the idea of de-cohabitation (leaving family accommodation), along with a real individualization in the practices and choices of mobility, is not always relevant, especially in a restricted property market such as that of Accra.

<sup>22</sup> It should be kept in mind that the Greater Accra Region comprises five districts (including the two peripheral districts of Dangbe West and East), and thus exceeds the limits of the Greater Accra Metropolitan Area (GAMA, comprising only three urbanized districts) which however, with 2,725,895 inhabitants, contains 93,7% of the regional population (*Population & Housing Census, 2000: Provisional Results*).

<sup>23</sup> Place and date of birth, period of residence preceding arrival in or return to GAR for migrants ; period of residence preceding arrival in or return to the survey neighbourhood for people moving within GAR and the study area.

<sup>24</sup> QUARCOOPOME S.S., 1992, “Urbanisation, Land Alienation and Politics in Accra”, *Research Review*, Legon, University of Ghana, Institute of African Studies, Vol. 8, N°1-2, pp. 40-54 ; Bertrand, 2002.

<sup>25</sup> Actually, we process data beginning at the second stay, due to the prior selection made considering only moves when an economic activity is possible. We should remember that the first stay taken into account by the survey begins at birth ; it has therefore been systematically excluded from the analysis by the choice of a minimal limit of twelve years.

<sup>26</sup> A quadratic polynomial regression would be more exact, but in that case would add an inappropriate complexity. It would be necessary if early mobility, before the age of twelve, had been taken into account, for it is equal to that of older relatives, and the distribution diagram would take on a more regular bell shape.

<sup>27</sup> A regression originating in 1960 and the stays beginning at that date.

<sup>28</sup> This prevents proceeding according to two groups of reasons, depending on whether they explain the duration of the present stay or that of the preceding one.

<sup>29</sup> As the durations of stay for a same individual are therefore not wholly independent, robust confidence intervals must be calculated.

<sup>30</sup> That is, if the marital status of individuals was noted at each stage of their residential itinerary.

<sup>31</sup> The main groups identified in the survey are, in order of size: Akan, Ga-Adangbe, Ewe, Northerners, “other West-African origins”, “out of Africa”.

<sup>32</sup> The statistical processing of residential trajectories was carried out with the help of the STATA software programme.

<sup>33</sup> The principal groups identified in the survey are, in order of size: “Pentecostal/charismatic/spiritual churches”, “Anglican/Presbyterian/Evangelical, Presbyterian/Methodist and other orthodox churches” (orthodox Protestants), “Moslem”, Roman Catholic”, “Traditional and various cults”, very few “Buddhists” and some “no church/religion”.

<sup>34</sup> Their residential mobility no doubt influences their moving from one church to another on the spiritual market of the charismatic movement, as many changes of residence are accompanied by a change of church, depending what the nearby area has to offer.

<sup>35</sup> These reservations are linked with the questions arising from the use of this statistical category in Africa, particularly as a residential unit. Customary rights pertaining to freehold, compound housing grouping together members of an extended family, and separate accommodation for many spouses in the traditional Ga milieu at Old Teshie, for example, add further complexities to the defining of a contextual effect of the household or the nuclear family.

<sup>36</sup> With two exceptions.

<sup>37</sup> We should remember that this type of building characterizes individuals at the time of the survey. This morphological trait was not noted retrospectively for previous stays.

<sup>38</sup> Even then, the physical framework of the compound, laid out in a series of adjoining rooms, certainly affects the average sizes of accommodation and of the households occupying it, which are smaller than those in self-contained houses and even those

in the smallest flats in collective blocks. Moreover, the architecture of the compound determines a type of access to nearby domestic amenities, running water in particular, an access which is marked by penury and conflicts arising from shared facilities.

<sup>39</sup> The linear regression is an acceptable approximation, as observation begins at the age of 12. In reality, mobility rises until the age of 20-24, then decreases afterwards.

<sup>40</sup> The word « community », which in English refers to a neighbourhood, cannot be translated literally into French by « *communauté* », referring rather to a common identity among its members.

<sup>41</sup> Each study area includes a similar number of households, but the number of stays recorded varies according to the mobility of the individuals questioned.

<sup>42</sup> Lagos Town presents similar characteristics of ethnic and religious mixing to those which will be observed in Ashaiman.

<sup>43</sup> In February and March 2003 our fieldwork in Dodowa was devoted to what had become of 26 households newly settled between the survey round of 2000 and that of 2001. Almost two years after their settling, 11 of them were still living in the same houses, 12 had moved (mainly due to commuting to the cultivated areas of the Eastern Region for freeholders, but also due to the search for new accommodation, still in Dodowa, for tenants. Three households remained freeholders in the compounds surveyed which awaited their return, but they were temporarily absent from the accommodation because of visits to their children lasting more than six months.

<sup>44</sup> The relevance of the residential mobility issue is therefore not only reserved on the continent for the case of South Africa, even if, for some researchers, it is the only place to align its urbanization processes with those formerly observed in Latin-American cities (GILBERT A., CRANKSHAW O., 1999, "Comparing South African and Latin American Experience: Migration and Housing Mobility in Soweto", *Urban Studies*, Vol. 36, N° 13, pp. 2375-2400).

<sup>45</sup> DELAUNAY D., DUREAU F., 2003, « Des individus dans la ville : les transitions résidentielles à Bogota », *Autrepart (Dynamiques résidentielles dans les villes du Sud. Positions sociales en recomposition)*, n° 25, pp. 87-106.

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Since the management of towns undergoing structural adjustment has taken on a more social dimension, the community ideal has made headway in the "Projects" financed by the World Bank for the benefit of the South. Neighbourhood upgrading programmes in particular call upon inhabitants to participate in local development; community consultation and decentralization are supposed to contribute to a more effective recovery of the costs of market services, which must also justify the "good governance" of towns.

The Greater Accra Region thus addresses the issue of the residential anchoring of its nearly three million inhabitants. Households' unequal access to land, housing and employment markets raises questions as to the composition of the "local" urban elements highlighted. The diffusion of renting on the one hand, and a complex combination of flows into and out of the city on the other, redistribute townspeople in an ever-growing built-up area and recompose territorial attachments according to the criteria of cost and accessibility. The study therefore aims to measure mobility on both metropolitan and infra-urban scales.

The empirical analysis makes use of the biographical module of the longitudinal survey entitled "Housing Practices and Residential Mobility in Greater Accra Region, 2000-2001" (IRD and University of Ghana, Legon). Although it is not representative of the general demographical dynamic and does not allow a statistical inference between local and regional levels, the collection of data draws on seven significant zones with regard to population and urban space. By means of a reasoned selection of households clustered in neighbouring blocks, it gives a precise reconstitution of the stays of a now adult population within the limits of Greater Accra. The quantitative analysis first measures the duration of these periods of residence and models their variation according to the characteristics of the individuals surveyed, of their households and of the housing they occupy at present: like many cities, the capital of Ghana shows a significant increase in the residential mobility of its inhabitants. The study then considers each survey zone more monographically for the contextual particularities they offer, not only concerning the intensity but also the determining factors in the process of mobility. Geographical differences then reveal their prime importance at this level of detailed investigation, close to the inhabitants' preoccupations with housing and territorial attachment, but not usually found in demographic models. However it is beyond a certain threshold of mobility, that is to say not in all the neighbourhoods, that individuals are significantly differentiated in such local contexts.

The cross-analysis of the variables and effects of place therefore provides a relevant supplement to the observation in situ of a complex reality. It especially accounts for the highly contrasted levels of residential mobility from one neighbourhood to another and even between the "Indigenous neighbourhoods" of the sample, even though they are equally called upon in terms of mobilization against poverty. Three hypotheses are examined: that of the distance from the centre and the age of the settlements under consideration in the metropolitan area; that of the economic gradient which increases the likelihood of moving, from the poorest population, suffering from a deficit in mobility, to the middle classes in the sample; and finally that of the effect of peri-urbanization. Certain situations of stability indeed come close to being veritable residential captures and do not provide the best guarantee of financial participation or of community mobilization, all required by politicians or financial sponsors for a better management of the city at a "local" level.

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