


TOWARDS A FUNCTIONAL TYPOLOGY OF INTERMEDIATE CITIES IN THE ALGERIAN NORTHWEST

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Abstract

In this article, we will focus on the Algerian territorial context where our subject will try to define in a conceptual approach, what are the intermediate cities and to what extent do they appear in the urban hierarchy of our territory. This approach is concretized by a multi-criteria analysis of identification of intermediate cities and their functional typology. A special focus on our case study namely: Algerian cities of the North West regions will come to illustrate this research of definition of the intermediate cities, and will question the level of connectedness in a network, the positions relative cities in a road network, and many other intermediation characters of city.

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INTRODUCTION

The distribution of an urban system in general consists of metropolises, large cities and small towns. There is also an "in-between", referred to by statistical analysis as "medium-sized cities". But in reality, this analysis pays little attention to the upper bangs of this "in-between" category, as well as to their spatial structuring, and even less to their socio-economic functions, thus constituting an incomplete and unobjective vision.

The classification of cities in an urban system on a regional scale is not based solely on the demographic criterion, but also on the diversified functional mass attached to these cities and which act in the system. All the more so as situations may vary according to the region or country. Undeniably, regional contexts must be taken into consideration. Thus, a city of 20,000 inhabitants in Norway, in the north of Scotland or in Portugal may have functions within its space that correspond to those usually found in cities of more than 100,000 inhabitants in Germany or France (Carrière, 2008).

The concept of intermediation applied to territories finds a place in almost all countries around the world (Bellet and Llop, 2003). In this article, we will focus on the Algerian territorial context where our proposal will attempt to define, in a conceptual approach, what are intermediary cities and to what extent they appear in the urban hierarchy of our territory. The highlighting of particular cases related to the context of the North-West region will illustrate in an empirical way a more complete sample. Thus, our research translates by synthesizing a part of the results that aims to demonstrate that intermediate cities are the cities of tomorrow, that is, bearers of major economic, social and urban issues. That they are in a position to ensure a real economic polarization, an urban influence and an attractiveness and territorial cohesion that would be sustainable.

The vision of the urban hierarchy as it is usually perceived (metropolises, medium-sized cities, small towns) is a privileged subject of current urban studies, but one that does not alone embody all urban issues. Some researchers such as Nadou (2010) or Deraeve (2014) consider that intermediate cities constitute a possible intellectual overcoming of the broad category of medium-sized cities. This would make it possible to renew the questioning of centre-periphery relations that continue to structure thinking on urban systems. Talking about intermediate cities means changing the territorial vision while multiplying the scales of analysis in a local and regional context.

THE EMERGENCE OF CITIES WITH AN INTERMEDIARY CHARACTER

In order to clarify some elements of understanding concerning the dimension of intermediation of the cities which characterizes our work, it is important to first give some definitions of this notion which will allow us to stabilize the terminology, which is a fundamental requirement of any scientific approach.

The Intermediate City: What are We Talking About?

The intermediate city remains ambiguous and difficult in its definition, which remains relative to the local and regional context. It does not correspond to an administrative or legal level identified in the urban hierarchy of our country, but rather to "a notion to designate the characteristics of certain cities of the urban

system, which are neither metropolises nor small cities" (Nadou, 2010). Their location, size and functions make them intermediary poles between metropolitan areas and peripheral areas with an influence at least on a regional scale (Carrière and Bock, 2007).

If we stick to a minimal definition of the intermediate city in this foreword, we could rely on the one stated by Jean-Paul Carrière (2008): The intermediate city polarizes its territory by offering various and varied services. Among these, we find administrative, cultural, health, teaching and knowledge dissemination, research, etc. functions. At the economic level, it must be competitive and dynamic, but also represent a significant relative weight in its regional environment, and be the seat of decision-making. Intermediate cities are therefore in reality those that have succeeded in emerging from their regional areas by imposing themselves as a socio-economic pole of reference.

According to Nadou (2010), the intermediation role is based on a criterion that truly constitutes a "pivotal" function: connectivity, both external connectivity (to the state and the markets) with strategic functions, and internal connectivity (to the local area) with essential utilitarian functions (service centre). Thanks to this connectivity, the small and medium-sized surrounding cities can therefore benefit from the economic functions and services to the population in terms of equipment and infrastructure that the intermediate cities provide. In this way, the cities of the surrounding regional space have access to other, more global levels of networks.

INTERMEDIATE CITIES: AMBIGUITY OF DEFINITION AND ATTEMPTED DELIMITATION

"On the classic registers of city categorization (location, demography, economic functions), medium-sized cities and intermediate cities differ quite clearly, even if the categories sometimes overlap" (Deraeve, 2014). However, almost all the research that deals with the issue of intermediate cities generally relies on the concept of the medium-sized city. As a result, in order to define the intermediate city precisely, the delimitation of the framework of analysis in terms of size necessarily involves an extrapolation of the "medium-sized city" vector and the data carried out in relation to it. This attempt to define and delimit intermediate cities will lead us to look at whether, in terms of demographic size and morphology, we can arrive at identifiable situations of intermediate cities (possible heterogeneity, different locations).

The Medium-Sized City as an Unavoidable Vector

In order to clarify the stratum of intermediate cities according to the static connotation, it would be desirable first to make an international comparison of the concept of the medium-sized city, and then we will try to identify the concept of medium-sized city according to the national context. (Table 1). In fact, many studies deal with the concept of the medium-sized city according to a common approach based essentially on quantitative and functional criteria as well as qualitative and subjective criteria.

In Europe, the observation is unanimous and all the studies agree on the fact that there is no clear definition linked to the size of the city, and that these vary according to their contexts and countries.

Definition of a medium-sized city	...Related to the size	...Related to the functional role
In France	Between 20,000 and 200,000 inhabitants in the agglomeration (broadest limits)	Between the local centre and the regional metropolis
In Belgium	Between 50,000 and 150,000 inhabitants	It has a population of 200,000 to 600,000
In Spain	Between 20,000 and 100,000 inhabitants in the <i>municipio</i> (broadest limits)	From rural town to sub-regional centre
In the United Kingdom	Approximately 25,000 to 120,000 inhabitants in the urban area	In part and by interpretation: urban centre of a region not dominated by one of the country's largest agglomerations (for "Freestanding FR", for others: size criteria only)
In the Anglo-Saxon literature	It begins with 100,000 inhabitants and can exceed 1 million (Suzhou and Wuxi, in China, with respectively 1.09 and 1.12 million inhabitants in 1999, are considered to be medium-sized cities or "secondary cities".	The Anglo-Saxon literature does not provide a definition of the functional role of medium-sized cities
In the Middle and Near East	La The medium-sized city remains "an elusive category", and the size thresholds are not precise except for Saudi Arabia; from 25,000 to 50,000 inhabitants. In Syria, Deir Ez Zor and Sweida, with 300,000 and 57,645 inhabitants respectively in 2004, are considered medium-sized cities.	The classification criteria and functional role are not specified in the various examples discussed for medium-sized cities in the Middle and Near East.

Table 1. The notion of the medium-sized city in the European, Anglo-Saxon and Near and Middle Eastern literature

In the United States, Latin America, China and South Asia, the process of urbanization is quite original compared to the rest of the world. The average city, in the urban hierarchy of this region of the world, can be placed in a range that starts at 100,000 inhabitants and could exceed 1 million inhabitants.

In comparison with the countries of the Arab world, the three Maghreb countries (Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia) have seen a great deal of work on urban research and demographic analysis. Other authors who have taken an interest in this subject include P. Signoles, A. Prenant, J-F. Troin, M. Cote, etc. Thus, an average Maghrebian city starts at 20,000 and could exceed 100,000 inhabitants.

Medium City/Intermediate City Interaction

In demographic terms, the classification of medium-sized cities shows that these cities do not necessarily play the role of intermediary. Moreover, the population represents only one of the elements of the medium-sized city, which "necessarily involves the conjunction of several geographical criteria: demographic weight, but also the function of a local centre radiating out over a small country. It is at this stage that the notion of the intermediate city is approached.

An intermediate urban area includes a central city corresponding to either a regional capital or a prefecture, but with a range of metropolitan functions less important than metropolitan areas. Because of its position in the middle of the urban system, "the intermediate city is jointly dependent on the capital and the smaller cities that form its base and support" (Belhedi, 2007). It serves a mass of people from the smaller cities on the one hand, and is influenced by the larger, dominant cities on the other. Because of the role played by the intermediary city, as a city-centre, it acts as an intermediary between the upper level of the urban system, whose function is to command the capital and the large cities, on the one hand, and the regional and local centres, on the other (Belhedi, 2007).

As a result, the Intermediate City is one that has a well-developed tertiary sector, i.e. a diversity of government, financial, and health services, as well as a complete school system up to the university level, but also multiple infrastructures that allow a diversity of jobs in the industrial and commercial sectors.

Taking as a reference the work of Sophie Deraeve (2014) on Territorial innovation strategies and mobilization of human capital in intermediate cities, it is appropriate to progressively define what could be a category of intermediate cities, while questioning the relevance of such a categorization. To do this, we rely on the registers of definition of cities: relative dimension, functional specialization and geographical positioning, (Pumain, 1999). These three aspects are mobilized in this chapter to characterize the specificities of intermediate cities. Other aspects are taken into account, such as historical dependence and the territorial representations constructed around the territory. These different variables contribute to shaping the territorial organization of human capital, to varying degrees.

INTERMEDIATE CITIES: A DEMOGRAPHIC AND FUNCTIONAL IN-BETWEEN

Although not sufficient to define what a city is today, and even more so for the notion of intermediate city, the population size approach must nevertheless be taken into account in order to limit a framework of analysis and an object of study within the existing city system. The thresholds defined for intermediate cities generally overlap with those for medium-sized cities for the lower bound, and with those for large cities for the upper bound.

According to Nadjat Kasdallah (2013), and her identification of the stratum of intermediate Maghrebian cities by determining the top and bottom of the urban hierarchy with the use of Zipf's "Rank-Size" rule, an intermediate Algerian agglomeration includes a central city that would be between 70,000 and 290,000 inhabitants.

The most recent work is that of Sophie Deraeve (2014) on intermediate cities in France. Her approach is to choose as the lower limit of intermediate cities, the upper margin commonly accepted for medium-sized cities, and as the upper limit, the threshold for large cities. If we superimpose this approach in the Algerian context, we will have a delimitation between 100,000 and 250,000 inhabitants, which will allow us to have a tighter approach than the one previously proposed. On the basis of these assumptions, our final decision is to keep the lower limit of intermediate cities, the one proposed at 70,000, and the upper limit, the threshold of large cities (250,000 inhabitants).

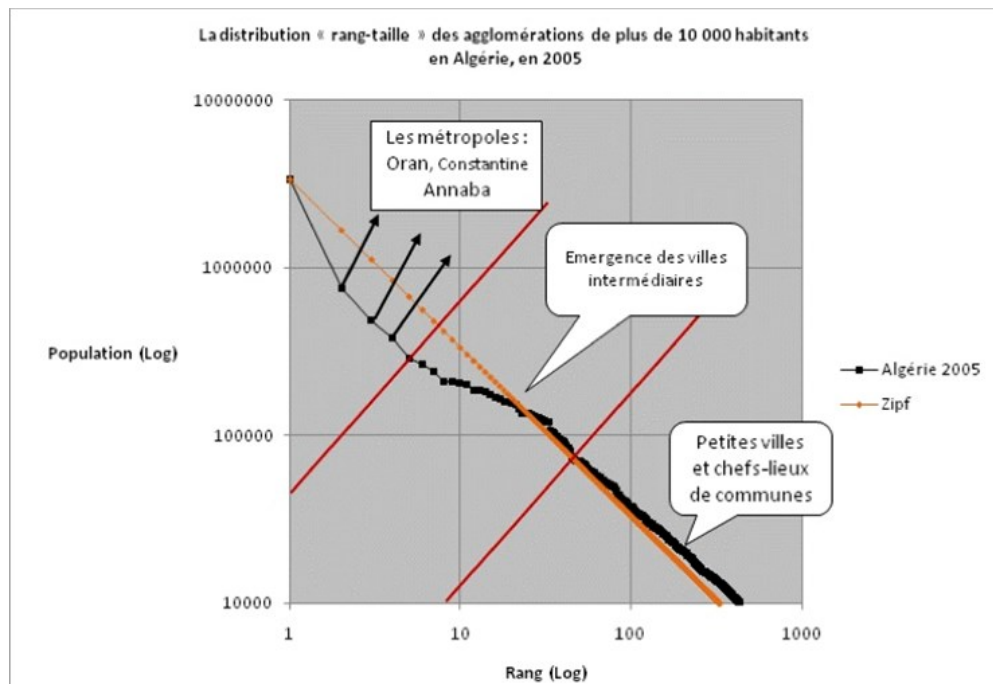


Figure 1. Rank-size distribution of urban areas with more than 10,000 inhabitants in Algeria (2005) using Zipf's rank-size rule (Source : Kashdallah, 2013)

Based on the different definitions mentioned so far, we propose a division of Algerian urban areas into 6 categories:

- The urban area of Algiers is counted separately, because of its exceptional character;
- Metropolises: which correspond to more than 300,000 inhabitants and have higher functions (Oran, Constantine and Annaba);
- Large intermediate cities: corresponding to urban areas between 150,000 and 290,000 inhabitants;
- Small intermediate cities: corresponding to urban areas between 70,000 and 150,000 inhabitants;
- Small cities: correspond to urban areas between 20,000 and 70,000 inhabitants;
- Urban agglomeration: urban area with a population of at least 5,000 inhabitants.

However, these boundaries are still debatable, but they do allow us to establish categories for analysis. In addition to population size, the definition of intermediate cities depends on other criteria. It must be more clearly defined in relation to the territorial framework, the polarization of the area and, in particular, in relation to the function of the capital city.

"On the administrative, political and economic level, the Wilaya (in Algeria) constitutes the fundamental entity of the territorial organization. It is through them that the decisions of the central power pass, they are the ones who guide the distribution of ministerial powers, the diffusion of public equipment and the allocation of a certain number of credits." (Signoles, 1985). Thus, according to the combination of the statistical and functional concept, the intermediate city in Algeria would be a city whose average size would be around 70,000 to 250,000 inhabitants. It is endowed with a certain diversified functional mass, ensuring the function of chief town of Wilaya and playing the role of intermediation between the great national and regional metropolises, on the one hand and the boroughs or small towns, on the other. (Table 2)

Agglomeration size	Number of urban areas		% of urban population	
	1950	2008	1950	2008
Algiers	1	1	28.7	16.9
Metropolises	0	3	-	8.1
Large intermediate cities	1	17	17.2	16.6
Small intermediate cities	2	28	11.5	14.8
Small cities	28	390	42.6	43.6
Metropolises :	More than 300 000 Inhabitants			
Large intermediate cities:	150 000 -290 000 Inhabitants			
Small intermediate cities:	70 000 -1500 000 Inhabitants			
Small cities:	10 000 -70 000 Inhabitants			

Table 2. Distribution of the urban population in Algeria by size class in 1950 and 2008

THE FORMS OF EXISTENCE OF INTERMEDIATE CITIES

The delimitation by the demographic criterion seems incomplete for a precise definition and identification of what intermediate cities are. The range that has been deduced from it (70,000-250,000 inhabitants) is not yet at this stage significant enough of the real situations of intermediation that the cities in question demonstrate. It would therefore be necessary, in order to qualify and define the latter, to propose a finer reading grid based on transversal functional criteria that take on the dimensions of intermediation.

The intermediary city interposes itself between two logics by putting in relation: the connection by the functions which it exerts between logics rather local with an influence on their hinterland, and those more global with an opening on the outside (the State and the national and international authorities, the metropolis and the external economic markets).

Around Which Criteria Does Intermediation Take Shape and Substance?

In order to identify a form of ideal-type of the intermediary city, our approach will consist of highlighting certain criteria that seem to be a relevant basis for the necessary legibility that constitutes an intermediary city through our case studies of selected cities of between 70,000-250,000 inhabitants; identifying those that play a pivotal role and therefore have a "strong added value" to the notion of intermediation, from those that appear more basic but nonetheless essential to the range of criteria to be considered.

The criteria we choose in our analysis will allow us to measure the degree of intermediation that participates in the definition of intermediate cities. This will also allow us to verify whether the cities, from the sample, according to the established criteria meet the dimensions of intermediation.

Connectivity/Accessibility

Is an indispensable and discriminating criterion of the intermediation character. It provides the substance. This criterion assumes that the presumed intermediary city is connected with the rest of the territory at a sufficiently remarkable level, allowing it to establish links and connections at different levels. We distinguish internal connectivity, that which will connect intermediate cities with their proximity space whose legibility is done at the regional scale whose functions are rather of a "utilitarian" nature; external connectivity that

will allow the city to be legible on a scale that goes beyond the regional, whose functions are, more strategic, allowing the city to get closer to external markets and decision centres, favourable to its dynamism and attractiveness.

The Economy and Tourism

Combined, they are essential to look at and analyse competitiveness, a determining component in the profile and functional character of intermediate cities. The measurement of these criteria must go through the analysis of indicators that are interested both in individual dimensions (level of qualification, share of higher jobs, etc.) and in collective dimensions and closer to what happens on the side of companies and the economic fabric (creation of activity, economic specialization, etc.). Intermediate cities also play a full role in their capacity to combine productive and residential activities.

Institutional and Political

These criteria will allow us to look at the positioning of the actors of the territory, through the nature of the places of political and administrative decisions. The presence or not of such or such administration of decentralized and deconcentrated services can serve us as contextual and structuring elements of connectivity. This is important in observing the capacity of actors to carry out projects. As such, the political leadership indicator can help us analyse how important it is for intermediate cities to have a political and/or institutional leader in order to see the connection of its local anchorage with positions defended at higher scales.

Social, Education, Health

Express what cities can offer as public services to the population (hospitals, universities, housing). These are structuring criteria in the sense that they bring social cohesion to the territory and participate in its social and economic development. They mark the action of public policies (local and national) and make the link with economic activities (for example, educational systems adapted to the productive system, location of activities according to the social climate).

Cultural and Leisure

This criterion offers the possibility to identify the forms of expression that characterize a city (Bolay and Rabinovich Behrend, 2003), both in its lived and past history and in the events of the present.

Environmental

Identifies how intermediate cities take into account the elements of sustainable development, and how they are managed in the face of the challenges of safeguarding resources and preventing ecological risks. The impact of activities affects both the urban dimensions of intermediate cities and their surrounding territory, and it is interesting to see how the combinations and management between the urban and the rural are carried out.

Demography

This is a basic element of evaluation of the dynamism of the intermediate city. As we mentioned in the first part, it does not appear to be decisive for identifying intermediate cities, nevertheless the population indicators place the cities studied in a global context of comparison and attractiveness between cities, necessary in a more precise study.

DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY AREA

According to the division into geographical regions comes from the stratification used by the Ministry of Territorial Planning and Environment (MATE) declined by space of territorial programming, the North-West includes 7 *wilayas*: Oran, Tlemcen, Mostaganem, Ain Témouchent, Relizane, Sidi Bel Abbès and Mascara.

This pole is limited:

- To the north by the Mediterranean Sea
- To the east by the wilaya of CHLEF
- To the west by Morocco
- To the south by the wilayas of Tiaret, Saida and NAAMA

Criteria	Dimensions of Intermediation	Examples of Analysis Indicators
Discriminating Criterion		
Connectivity / Accessibility	Communication, transport and network nodes: the scale of connections with the rest of the territory	- Railway lines - Airport lines, Port - East - West highways - Telecommunication networks
Structuring Criteria		
Economic and Tourist	Ability to combine the productive, public and residential spheres: competitiveness and economic dynamism	- Variation in activity creation rates - Share of higher jobs - Level of qualification
Institutional and Political	Places of political decision and the presence of administrative and legal bodies: the presence of a decision-making power	- Decentralized and deconcentrated administrations - Political leadership
Social, Education, Health	Expression of the environment and quality of life offered to the population. It is at the heart of the "service centre" function	- Universities/research centres - Hospitals and polyclinics - Social support structures - Diversity of housing
Cross-Cutting Criteria		
Cultural, Leisure and Equipment	Influence is achieved through complementarity with the economic and tourism sectors	- Concert halls and large sports facilities - Cultural events
Environmental	The articulation of sustainable development and the search for urban/rural combinations	- Treatment sites - Agenda 21, Climate Plan
Basic Criterion		
Demographic	Dynamism of the territory: capacity of generation renewal and attraction	- Net migration - Share of youth under 20 years old and 65 years and older - Population change (1998-2008)

Table 3. Summary of the analysis for identifying intermediate cities (Source: Nadou, 2010 with some modified criteria)

THE AREAS OF INFLUENCE OF THE MAIN CITIES OF THE NORTHWEST

We proceed here to the observation of the ten largest cities in Northwest Algeria. This sample is also explained by the fact that, on the one hand, it allows us to scan the entire size range of intermediate cities (urban areas) defined above, and on the other hand, to observe the different situations and weight of the central cities of the urban area considered.

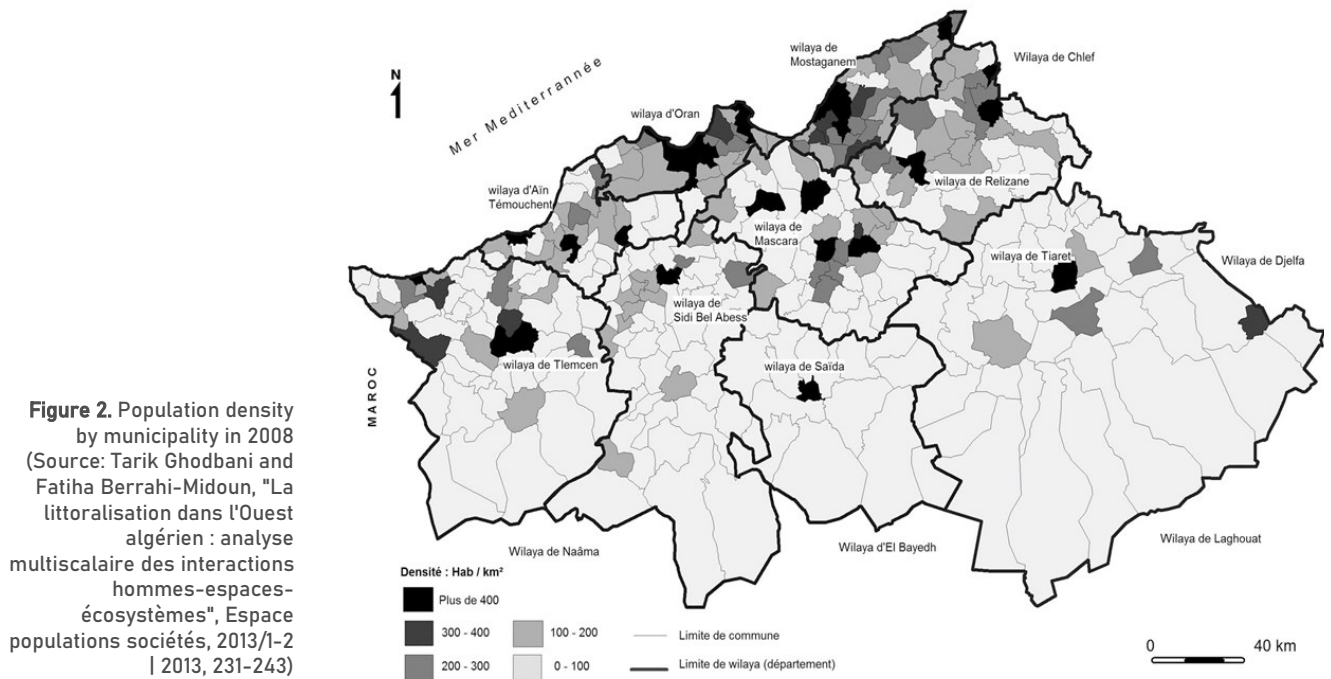


Figure 2. Population density by municipality in 2008 (Source: Tarik Ghodbani and Fatiha Berrahi-Midoun, "La littoralisation dans l'Ouest algérien : analyse multiscalaire des interactions hommes-espaces-écosystèmes", Espace populations sociétés, 2013/1-2 | 2013, 231-243)

Table 4. Areas of influence of major cities in the Northwest (Source: Compiled by us from ONS data)

The table below (Table 4) allows us to look more precisely at the areas of influence of the main cities. Thus, the cities listed in the table as "having an important regional role" and those "having a lesser regional role" appear to be close to our thinking on intermediate cities.

Agglomeration	Nat Rank	Rank Reg	Urban population 2008	Representation of pop. Urb 2008	Inclusion in the selected typology
Tlemcen	16	3	173531	5,30%	City with a significant regional role
Maghnia	44	7	87373	2,67%	City with a smaller regional role
Sidi Belabbes	9	2	210146	6,43%	City with a significant regional role
Mostaganem	19	4	162885	4,98%	City with a significant regional role
Mascara	37	6	108629	3,32%	City with a smaller regional role
SIG	65	10	61373	1,87%	Smaller regional role city
Mohammedia	63	9	62410	1,91%	City with a smaller regional role
Oran	2	1	803329	24,57%	Regional Capital City
Ain Temouchent	51	8	70810	2,16%	City with a smaller regional role
Relizane	31	5	123255	3,77%	City with a smaller regional role

SYNTHESIS: PRELIMINARY RESULTS: TOWARDS A FUNCTIONAL TYPOLOGY OF INTERMEDIATE CITIES

The methodology outlined above will serve as a conceptual framework for a more advanced and concrete study of the cities selected in a larger sample. We will not present all of the results obtained, and there is still room for improvement. But by choosing to focus on a few indicators taken from our criteria, notably connectivity, via accessibility and equipment indicators, we will establish an initial synthesis, which will help us in the search for a functional typology of the intermediate cities studied.

The first observation we can make is that the ten largest cities in north-western Algeria vary in size from 60,000 to 210,000 inhabitants (not including the metropolis of Oran). These cities occupy the place of the chief towns or Daira like: Maghnia, Sig and Mohammedia. We can also add to our sample the case of Arzew which is in the same way as these three Daira, but has a rather special character.

Table 5. Active, employed and unemployed population, and main field of activity (Source: DPSB/Direction of employment 2010- (Algeria))

Agglomeration	Active population	Employed population	Unemployment Rate %	Dominant Activity
Tlemcen	76874	68371	9,10%	Tourism, university center, mine, arts and crafts.
Maghnia	38706	34424	16,30%	Commerce, trade
Sidi Belabbes	98768	90363	9,48%	University centre, construction and public works, agriculture.
Mostaganem	67222	61245	8,90%	Seaside tourism, Fishing, university centre, construction and public works, agriculture.
Mascara	51056	46710	5,80%	Commerce, Agriculture, public works
SIG	28845	27004	6,80%	Agriculture (olive growing),
Mohammedia	29333	27460	6,20%	Commerce, Agriculture (Orange growing)
Ain Temouchent	44324	40624	8,31%	Production of welded wire mesh, food Processing and building materials
Relizane	61775	56845	3,76%	Agriculture, textiles industry
Arzew	34766	31928	5,30%	Petrochemical industry

Intermediate Cities with National Visibility

These are made up of cities that have strengths and assets in all areas, which gives them a role that goes well beyond their regional area. They have national visibility in many areas, including strategic jobs and research centre/university relations. They have a demographic weight that places them at the top of the category of intermediate cities, close to 200,000 inhabitants: the cases of Tlemcen, Sidi Belabess, and Mostaganem can be cited. These cities are also important tourist places on the national level with hotel infrastructures in capacity (such as the seaside resorts in Mostaganem) and remarkable and attractive tourist sites (such as the numerous sites of Tlemcen classified by the ministry of culture).

They are important poles of employment in their regional space, and by the presence of universities, their socio-economic actors are able to develop

projects with strong added value. They are dynamic cities and a reference for the attractiveness of students with diversified and recognized fields of study (medicine, pharmacology, architecture, etc.).

They constitute important poles whose influences sometimes go beyond the limits of their own region. For example, Tlemcen has regular flights to national cities such as Algiers and international cities such as Paris, Marseilles and Lyon, and seasonal flights to major European cities such as Alicante and Lille. The port of Mostaganem has a significant potential due to its geographical position which serves a vast hinterland, composed of several wilayas of the highlands and extending to the south of the country. It has also become a passenger port, serving the lines Alicante, Valencia and Barcelona.

Intermediate Cities with Supra-Regional Visibility

They are, by their demographic weight, less important, behind the previous ones, and thus they lose in effect of size which feeds certain sectors of activities and consumer market. They are recognized and identified on a national scale, but their influence, linked to their economic and institutional functions, is rather limited to a regional scale, and even extends to very close regions.

Relizane and Mascara are in this category, cities whose influence on their local territory (at least regional) is proven but because of the proximity with other equivalent cities, their affirmation beyond the region seems more uncertain (competition with Oran, Sidi Belabes and Mostaganem).

Their transport infrastructures provide them with a fairly good connectivity to the outside world and seem complete. Thus, for example, if we look at an indicator of external connectivity, in terms of 'Highway and Railway Lines: Relizane is served by the East-West highway and has regular trains to metropolises like Algiers and Oran. These lines are currently more involved in "home-work, jobs" transportation than in the tourism or business connections necessary for the development of external markets and sustainable networks. These two cities are also very well connected to the highway network to Oran and major regional cities, putting Relizane to Oran in 1 hour 20 minutes and Mostaganem in 45 minutes, or Mascara - Sidi Balabes in 1 hour 10 minutes.

Their functional situations place them very close to the large regional cities, but shortcomings are noted, particularly in the areas of tourism or so-called "strategic" jobs, such as design-research, management and intellectual services, which are very present in the metropolises (Damette, 1994; Halbert 2003).

Cities with Local Readability

It is difficult to consider the other four cities in our sample as intermediate cities. They certainly have a readability within their regional space, but they do not dominate it nor are they a reference; in terms of the indicators, they are deficient in most of the areas concerned. Their status and the visibility they have in their region stems from the fact that they are a DAIRA or a chief town. If we take the example of Mohammedia, it has a good connectivity to the outside world in terms of equipment and transport infrastructure (railway station, landmark of the East-West freeway), but a weakness that is expressed in the research capacity and the absence of universities, Mohammedia and Sig only develop economic functions that are oriented more towards the utility and service centre of their area of

proximity, with public structures as the largest employers. Large companies with strategic and outward-looking functions are rather lacking. Ain temouchent being close to Oran (less than 80 km by the RN11), in periphery considering the extent of the metropolis, it does not have the functions and capacities necessary for another radiation. As for Mohammdia and Sig, where the activities have a scope of development oriented more in Agriculture (olive growing, cultivation of oranges, ...). Although located among the stratum of medium-sized cities in terms of their demographics, the example of Maghnia and Arzew should be read in particular.

Due to its border location and especially the network it has, Maghnia has known before 1994 (closing of borders) and even after a very important connectivity to Morocco. Considered as the first landmark of the East-West highway (near Oujda and Tlemcen). The trade remains the sector which offers the most employment at the level of this border city of which the translational or the informal occupies an important part (Souq el Kelb, Souq el Toub, etc). Arzew is a medium-sized city in terms of population, but it is home to one of the most important petrochemical zones in Algeria. With its character of great industry, it develops quickly thanks to fishing and to the attraction of its port, but suffers from the competition of the neighbouring ports of Mostaganem and Oran.

CONCLUSION

The identification of intermediate cities can be carried out over a fairly wide range of cities, as we have seen from the size ranges selected for this purpose, oscillating between medium-sized cities and the upper reaches of large cities. The approach in terms of intermediate cities makes it possible to go beyond the frameworks usually used to establish urban hierarchies. It allows for transversality between the cities studied and for reasoning that considers the functions and roles of these cities within their systems. According to Mario Carrier, they "break the hierarchy by numbers. Certain characteristics appear to be decisive for an attempt to define what makes an intermediate city. Beyond the criteria of size, which nevertheless make it possible to establish an important reference base to consider when speaking of intermediate cities, our reflection has made it possible to identify the real forms of intermediate cities, and to model their existence on the basis of functional criteria whose contributions are situated to varying degrees in the substance given to intermediation.

Connectivity, whether external or internal, appears to be the strong pivot of intermediation: "serving as intermediary" is indeed the characteristic of these cities, which by their functions and their locations link two logics. In fact, by taking advantage of the functions performed by intermediate cities, small and medium-sized cities in the surrounding regional space have access to other, more global levels of networks; provided, of course, that they are associated and "connected" to intermediate cities, in proactive political approaches to complementarity and projects.

The analysis and search for a typology of intermediate cities invites us to look at their strengths and weaknesses. This first reading grid also makes it possible to consider devoting more in-depth work to the socio-economic trajectories of these intermediate cities and to draw up an analysis of the performance of these territories.

In addition to the economic functions they perform, as described above, intermediate cities are also important poles in terms of the supply of goods and

services to the population, and in terms of facilities and infrastructure (Bolay and Rabinovich Behrend, 2003), thus playing a social and economic role in structuring their immediate environment (hinterland).

- **Economic issues:** Global competition and the development of activities are both factors in metropolization and continually reinforce the phenomenon. Indeed, metropolises benefit first and foremost from the economic fallout of globalization, and concentrate the wealth creation that generates economic and institutional power. Intermediate cities benefit from this global process of metropolization, and their intermediate status gives them potential.

- **Social cohesion issues:** Their size is conducive to social diversity, while their organization allows for a certain mix through proximity (Aubert, 2010). Intermediate cities represent poles of social interaction, through the services and facilities that they offer in their immediate area, but also in the areas under their influence. They will make it possible to bring together a diversity of actors that may not be found in the other categories of cities in the territory, the metropolis or the small town; it would be interesting to measure this aspect.

- **A territorial development issue:** They are poles of attraction and structuring of activities for the smallest cities, and are secondary economic and network poles, on the bangs and/or as relays for the metropolises and major decision-making centres.


The intermediate city is a better response to the role currently played by certain cities that are neither metropolises nor small and medium-sized cities. Within this new urban hierarchy and new economic order, which are based more on the functionalities, capacities and potentialities of cities (in terms of networks, flows, and the location of activities), intermediate cities can act as pivots between the national and local scales (Carrière and Bock, 2007). This role is played to different degrees, depending on the place of intermediate cities in the urban structure of the territory and the socio-economic functions they develop.

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Kuzeybatı Cezayir'deki Orta Ölçekli Şehirlerin Tipolojisi

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Özet

Bu makale kapsamında Cezayir bölgesel bağlamına odaklanılarak, kavramsal bir yaklaşımla orta ölçekli şehirler nelerdir ve bölgemizin kentsel hiyerarşisinde ne ölçüde yer alırlar sorularına yanıt aranmıştır. Bu yaklaşım, orta ölçekli şehirlerin tanımlanması ve işlevsel tipolojilerinin çok kriterli analizi ile somutlaştırılmıştır. Örnek olay incelemesi Kuzeybatı Cezayir'deki orta ölçekli şehirlere odaklanarak, ara şehirlerin bir ağdaki bağlantılılık düzeyini, şehirlerin bir yol ağındaki göreceli konumlarını ve şehrin diğer birçok aracı karakteri sorgulamaktadır.

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