

Final International Congress "Noz Num"
14th and 16th march 2023
University of Brest, France

The nighttime city is not a uniform space-time. It is composed of different temporalities and socioeconomic and cultural dynamics of its own, including a specific organization of territories and an offer of urban nighttime services often concentrated around "hot spots" of activity.

Neither is the nocturnal city a neutral space-time. It is the place where "gendered norms take shape" and where they are reproduced through daily interactions between users. Thus, access to and practices in night-time public spaces are gendered; that is, structured by unequal social relations based on gender. Numerous research studies report a feeling of fear and insecurity in these spaces (higher for women than for men) which impacts women's mobility. However, it is worth noting the paradox, which has been widely discussed and questioned, that according to official statistical data, women are less likely to be victims of assault in public space by strangers than men. Nonetheless, it is the types of aggression and violence counted in these official statistics (and those left out) as well as the social, political and media injunctions on the supposed and natural fragility of the female body which feed into this paradox and reinforce the narrative that urban space, at night, is a space-time to be avoided. This deconstruction of the paradox reveals, firstly, that the category "women" is perceived as homogeneous, whereas the intersection of characteristics (age, social class, racialization, gender identity or sexual orientation) is at the origin of a diversity of positionings, experiences and practices within the city at night. In this sense, an intersectional approach is fundamental to achieve a better understanding of the uses of and access to urban space at night. This approach also makes it possible not to lose sight of the unequal context of gender relations. It can be reasoned that the feeling of fear and insecurity is a social construction linked to gendered social relations as well as to hegemonic social representations of the masculine and feminine. The theory of social representations thus constitutes a relevant epistemological framework to apprehend the way in which the urban nocturnal space is elaborated and invested with meanings imposed by people according to their social status and background. Social representations are defined as forms of knowledge socially elaborated and shared, with the aim of contributing to the construction of a commonly shared reality.

Exploration into the social representations of the feeling of fear and insecurity linked to the city at night, elaborated by various women, will make it possible to reveal the diverse strategies developed by these women to circulate within the city at night, following the example of various research studies carried out previously on this same axis in Human Sciences.

In addition to this work, there are other projects that take a more quantitative approach. An example includes research linked to urban morphology which categorizes the spaces that participants (women) identify as reassuring or not. This qualitative data is correlated with physiological measures collected during walks by participants in the same neighborhood. This type of research, despite certain limitations (conditions of the experiment, exclusively student population), constitutes a decisive aid for city managers in terms of urban planning.

Various studies within computer science have equated physiological measurements (heart rate, perspiration, walking speed among others) with emotions. This offers the possibility to confront these measurements with the data of the Human Sciences, such as the discourses and representations of the nocturnal city, in order to have a more complex view of the actions, reactions and emotions related to urban walking at night.

The conference will focus mainly on womens' experiences of walking at night in the city and the experimental methodologies which cross Human Sciences data and emotion computing, artistic approaches and emotion computing, or Human Sciences data and artistic approaches.

We also welcome contributions related to other activities linked to mobility at night and methodologies, but kindly invite speakers and participants to actively search for connections with, and insight relevant to, walking at night (experiences, representations, practices, emotions, affects). The conference covers a broad range of themes, including the following. When submitting your abstract, please mention the theme(s) relevant to your contribution.

- I. Experiences and perceptions about night in women populations
- II. Hybrid methodologies related to walking at night (qualitative, quantitative, artistic)
- III. Pedestrians and the feeling of safety at night
- IV. Other

The conference will take place face-to-face at the University of Western Brittany, but in view of the international situation, it will be possible as a last resort for foreign researchers to intervene remotely.

Proposals (in French, Spanish, English or Portuguese) must include the name and surname, the title, a summary of the communication of approximately 250 words + bibliography and a brief biographical note.

They must be sent before **December 30th** to the following emails:
edna.hernandez@univ-brest.fr and christele.fraisse@univ-brest.fr

or on the web site of congress : <https://noznum23.sciencesconf.org>

Deadlines :

Abstract Submission before December 30th 2022
Abstract acceptance notification on Janvier 9th 2023
Registration until February 20th 2023
Conference Date: March 14th to 16th 2023

Scientific Committee :

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