

THE COLONIAL ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE IN ALGERIA: BETWEEN CONSERVATION AND MARGINALIZATION

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ABSTRACT

The cities of Western Algeria today, and especially the city of Sidi Bel-Abbès, show by the presence of remarkable buildings, which punctuate the landscape of their urban fabric, traces of the passage of French colonialism which lasted more than a century. Indeed, these numerous buildings, qualified as «colonial heritage», «shared heritage» or «recent heritage» have undergone a multitudes of transformations since independence until today. The latter have, within the town of Sidi Bel-Abbès, on the one hand been the object of several conservation and safeguarding operations so that they can ensure the initial function for which they were intended or another function to which they were going to be adapted, and, on the other hand, they have been marginalized, abandoned and demolished in order to be replaced by other types of constructions.

In the present work we have carried out research on the notion of «shared heritage» and its emergence within the Mediterranean Basin in order to grasp the characteristics of the public buildings to which it refers to the city of Sidi Bel-Abbès. We have then highlighted, through some important buildings dating back to the colonial period of this city, the different and multiple transformations that they have seen in order to grasp the evolution of this colonial built heritage from independence to the present day in the West of Algeria.

Keywords: *conservation, heritage evolution, recent heritage, shared heritage, Sidi Bel-Abbès, transformation, west Algerian.*

INTRODUCTION

It is generally accepted that from the Mesopotamian City public and collective buildings are the places and buildings where people go to practice their religion or to benefit from various services. Urban planning, which refers to planning policies at the territorial and urban levels and underpins the existence of a policy and the instruments of this policy « urban plans » (Saidouni.M, 2000), is the tool which gave French colonialism, in Algeria, the means to reorganize the pre-existing Medinas or to make new cities on the western urban model imported from Europe, as was the case of the city of Sidi Bel-Abbès. The urban structures, describing the functioning and structuring of the Bel-Abbesian urban space, are closely linked to the public and collective buildings inherited from the colonial urban planning of the 20th century, which fulfils, at the same time, many functions (administrative, educational, commercial, health and assistance...).

However, we should not lose sight of the fact that in the urban actions in the Algerian city, both past and present, we find the artifacts of the development models which presided over the urban dynamics of the western city (Spiga. S, and Guessoum. D-E, 2012).

This has led to lively debates on their conservation and protection around the Mediterranean Basin in the various countries surrounding it; public buildings dating from the periods of colonialism have been widely documented and studied according to their origins and their development in the cities of the countries that were colonized during the 19th and 20th centuries. The works published by the «Euromed Heritage» project, such as those by (Volait. M, and Piaton. C, 2003) working on the city of Heliopolis in Egypt and (Cohen, 2004) on the city of Casablanca in Morocco, provide a broad vision of the architectural typology of buildings. In the same way, other works have focused on their study as a new form of architecture that appeared during the colonial period, such as BEGUIN's work with « *Arabisançe* » (Beguin. F, 1983) and that of Girard and Jelidi, (2010) on the case of Tunisia and Morocco entitled «*Hybridites architecturales en Tunisie et au Maroc au temps des protectorats: orientalisme, régionalisme et méditerranéisme* ».

Regarded as an important resource for studies and research on the so-called «shared heritage», this colonial urban and architectural legacy, which in some cities in western Algeria represents more than 3/5 of the public buildings and collective facilities of the entire city, has seen an evolution within the urban space which is not directly identifiable.

Sidi-Bel-Abbès, a city located in the north-west of Algeria and built in ex nihilo during the colonial period, has no fewer than 78 public buildings and collective facilities dating from the same era. More than 4/5 of these buildings still exist and continue to fulfill an urban function either identical to that for which they were built or a function which is adapted to the new organizational, economic or political requirements which the local administration has imposed or which was envisaged under the impetus of other parameters emanating from the will of civil society and meeting the common requirements of two important actors in the city, namely the decision-makers and the users, as a testimony to the good practice of the principle of governance within the city of Bel-Abbès.

Located in the city centre and in the suburbs, the public 20th century colonial building, present in the urban fabric of the city of Sidi Bel-Abbès, have seen changes that differ from one building to another, and depend on many parameters according to the uses intended for them and the policies applied to them. Their safeguarding, preservation and maintenance has only started during the last decade due to a lack of initiatives, regulations and the unavailability of qualified human resources and sufficient financial resources. Having said this, the «Petit-Paris Bel Abbésien » of Western Algeria, qualifier given to the city of Sidi Bel-Abbès by Emperor Napoleon III, will integrate in 2014, as part of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy. Following the different objectives of the convention, the rehabilitation of the old buildings in Sidi Bel Abbès, including buildings of the nineteenth and twentieth century's of the city, was part of a territorial logic of readaptation of the built heritage to the energy and climate conditions of the twenty-first century. Similarly, this rehabilitation of old buildings in Sidi Bel Abbès, in order to make them energy efficient, is one of the priorities after the transport and lighting of the city. The architects and engineers in charge of the rehabilitation works had, however, according to their field experiences, to follow the thermal rehabilitation of the building on a case by case basis (Hovig.T.M, 2014).

An understanding of the multitude of transformations, form of functional and formal change, which has affected the so-called «shared heritage» in the various public buildings, would make it possible to evaluate. Firstly, the capacity of the latter to adapt to the political and economic changes affecting the Algerian City, and secondly, to know the extent of the formal and/or functional transformations that these categories of buildings have undergone.

And so what were these forms of functional and/or formal mutations that affected these buildings? And what were the causes behind these

transformations and mutations? Are the policies for safeguarding and preserving public and collective buildings in line with the mutations and transformations they have undergone?

A REMARKABLE BUILT LEGACY FROM THE COLONIAL PERIOD IN ALGERIA CALLED "SHARED HERITAGE" AND "RECENT HERITAGE"

The geographical areas delimiting the southern part of the Mediterranean Basin (see Figure 1) constitute vast spaces in which numerous constructions of multiple and varied architectural styles were built during the 19th-20th centuries and during the various periods of colonization they underwent.

Nevertheless, the recent heritage and the shared heritage are not limited to these areas of the southern shore, but also extend and encompass the geographical areas to the east and north of the Mediterranean Sea. This also implies the different achievements of the countries belonging to the European Union in contact with the Mediterranean Sea and the countries of the Near East, such as Syria, Palestine, Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, as Abry and Carabelli (2006) stipulated in this regard:

«While the geographical scope of the project's action is approximately clear and corresponds to the administrative boundaries of the countries concerned, the delimitation of the temporal framework within which to situate recent heritage requires finer nuances than the simple demarcation of "recent" heritage by the period between the mid-nineteenth and mid-twentieth century's, defined by the period '1850-1950'.»

Although, it remains to be stressed that some geographical areas belonging to Eastern Europe do not adhere to the shared heritage project despite the fact that they are in direct contact with the Mediterranean Sea, as Carrabelli (2005) pointed out :

«Jean Baptiste Minnaert reminds us that forces external to the project force us to relatives our space for action: 'Other countries would have deserved to join the project, but geopolitical or prosaically administered obstacles have forced us into certain deadlocks.»



Figure 1. Country on the southern shore of the Mediterranean Sea.

Source : Encarta 2009.

The temporal delimitation of the « recent/shared heritage» in Algeria is not easy either, because like its Mediterranean neighbors, Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt, it contains traces of the passage of the Ottomans through numerous productions found on its territory (Cherif. N, and al., 2013).

However, the period attributed for heritage and "recent" inheritance seems, according to research work in Algeria, to correspond with the period of colonialism, Abry and Carabelli (2006) asserts in this respect that:

«The characterization of the recent period with direct reference to the colonial period as made, for example, by the Maghreb partners is only relevant in the case of Algeria. Algeria is in fact the only country where the French presence from 1830 to 1962 corresponded with the implementation of a policy of Westernization ».

This temporal delimitation finding reference in the number of works concerned with architectural and urban production during the 19th and 20th centuries in Algeria is only very thin if we refer to the percentage curve of works produced during the four decades following independence (1962 to 2000), and if it is compared with the number of works of these Mediterranean counterparts on the southern shore, as shown in Figure 2.

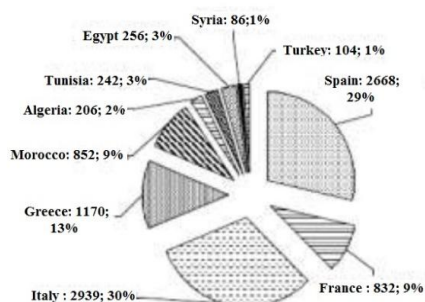


Figure 2. RangeNumber and percentage of books and scientific works dedicated to shared heritage in the Mediterranean basin by country.

Source :Bouchet.R, Carabelli.A, (2005)

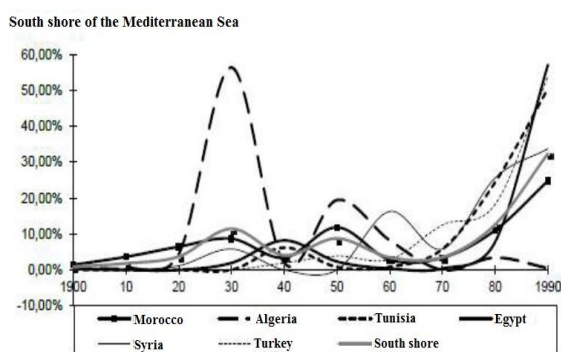


Figure 3. Curves showing the percentages per decade of research work on shared heritage by country in the Mediterranean basin.

Source :Bouchet.R, Carabelli.A, (2005)

Other parameters are also at the origin of the definition of this built heritage dating from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The presence of art nouveau style buildings in Algeria also contributes to the enrichment of the architectural and urban landscape of the metropolises and Algerian cities and villages. The latter is especially located in coastal cities and those of the interior of the north of the country such as Algiers, Oran, Constantine or Sidi Bel Abbès is considered a reference at the Mediterranean scale, particularly through the aesthetics given to the various facades of buildings. We quote as example certain buildings of reports present within the town of Algiers such as the Building N°4, present on the boulevard of the street Khemisti in Algiers, with ornaments in curve giving thus a shape of frontage in whip.

Other buildings in a modern style and with architecture of international style, present in the West of Algeria, dating from the colonial period, come to enrich the list of public buildings construct by the French in Algeria before the independence of the country. These last ones date, moreover, from the beginnings of the various C.I.A.M. which had started in 1928 in La Sarraz in Switzerland, as many prototypes and buildings using new materials and new constructive techniques in Algeria built during the colonial period testify. Examples such as the «Wholesale market» of Sidi Bel-Abbès, built between 1953 and 1957, which is the masterpiece of the architect Marcel J. Mauri in a modern style, was considered an archetypal reference in the construction of buildings with commercial function at the time.

In the studies on the uses of the latter in Algeria, Oulebsir (2004) states that:
«However, there is one thing in common between these two generations, the aesthetic appreciation recently expressed by both older and younger people, who can be linked to the sensitive memory of each. This new taste for images of cities and monuments can be seen in the spread of figures and postcards showing places dating from the 19th or mid-20th century. Thus it is common to find in large cities, at the disposal of the amateur and the buyer, reproductions of maps, appreciated and sought-after by all, representing monuments such as, in Algiers, the equestrian statue of the Duke of Orleans, the war memorial - Boulevard Khemisti/Laferrière - which is hidden by a cement screed but which appears on recent maps according to the initial conception proposed by Landowski...» .(Oulebsir.N, 2004)



Figure 4. Postcard of the city of Oran dating from the fifties.

Source : www.forgalus.fr



Figure 5. Postcard of the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart of Oran.

Source : www.carmeldelaval.fr



Figure 6. Recent photo of the Grande Poste of Algiers.

Source : <http://www.alger-city.com>.



Figure 7. Photo of the Grande Poste of Algiers dating from 1956.

Source : <http://algerieartist.kazeo.com>.

THEORETICAL APPROACH AND IN-SITU INVESTIGATION TOOLS OF A WORKING METHODOLOGY

A varied «shared heritage» in Western Algeria

Constructed in a variety of architectural styles, the public buildings and collective facilities, still present throughout the southern part of the Mediterranean Basin, as a legacy of the European colonial period, show a direct projection of the architectural and stylistic movements and doctrines imported from Europe to Africa from the mid-19th century to the 1960s.

The example of the city of Sidi Bel-Abbès in the northwest of Algeria provides an important testimony of the many achievements produced by the French in Algeria during the period 1830-1962. Thus, several testimonies on the city of Bel Abbès come to justify the value of the latter by describing it as one of the most important cities in Oranie and in the North-West of Algeria, equaling in embellishment and development, however, very large agglomerations such as the city of Oran.

One of the impressions that Jules Renard, officer of the legion of honor, teacher and director of the communal school of the city of Oran, makes us discover when he arrives to the city of Sidi Bel Abbès, at the end of the XIXth century, is reported in his book *«The steps of a small Algerian in the province of Oran »* (Renard.J, 1888), and where he says that:

«What strikes you first when you enter this chief town of the district, located 78 kilometers from Oran, are its beautiful avenues lined with mulberry trees and plane trees shading vast, well-constructed roadways. At first glance, one can see that the city is composed of two distinct districts, the civil district and the military district. The first one includes the sub-prefecture, the city hall, the court, the church, the schools, the theater; in the second one are the barracks, the hospital, the officers' circle, etc. What a difference with Oran! Here we are on flat ground like a table, and the streets, which are up to 25 meters wide, have been laid out. As far as appearance is concerned, Oran is a fanciful, implausible city; Sidi Bel-Abbès, a regular, geometric city.»(Renard.J, 1888)

Variety in functions

The identification of the «shared heritage» present in the case of the town of Sidi Bel-Abbès, which extends over more than 811 ha, has enabled us to establish a series of tables grouping together the different public buildings of the town dating from before 1962 and which shows a multitude of functions initially occupied by the latter such as: as administrative, cultural, educational,

religious, sports, transport, health, leisure and finally supply and storage functions.

Following this, we began to visit the buildings identified one by one and to be able to check whether they were still functional and present within the urban fabric or whether they had undergone a change in their original function. These could also be demolished or in an advanced state of degradation, which was also taken by a series of photographs we were able to take.

Thus, we were able to identify more than 78 public and collective buildings, dating from the French period, scattered homogeneously throughout the city. We have also noticed that some buildings which, depending on their function, were located outside and on the periphery of the city are now surrounded by individual houses and collective housing. Among these buildings we can mention the railway station located in the district called Perrin La gare (northern part of the city) and the Olympic stadium, former municipal stadium, located in the south-eastern part of the city in the district called Hai El Badr.

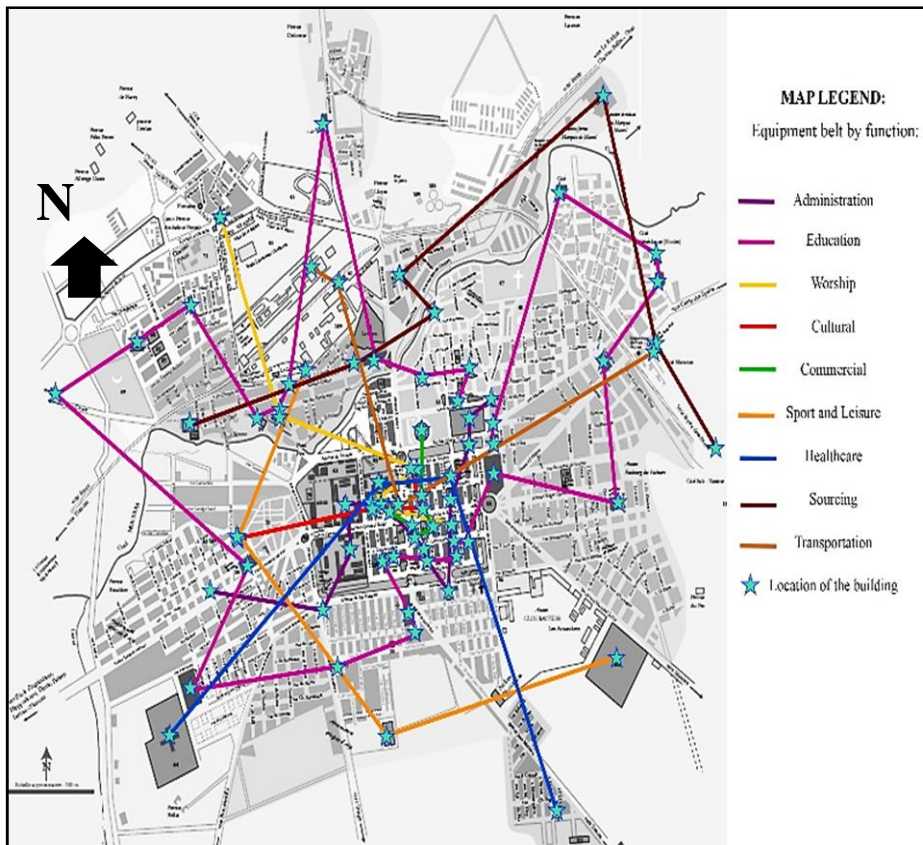


Figure 8. Plan of the town of SidiBel-Abbès obtained from the synthesis plan of 1962 grouping together the buildings dating from the colonial period, their location and their distribution according to function within the urban fabric.

Source :Plan SidiBelAbbès 1962, treatise by the authors.

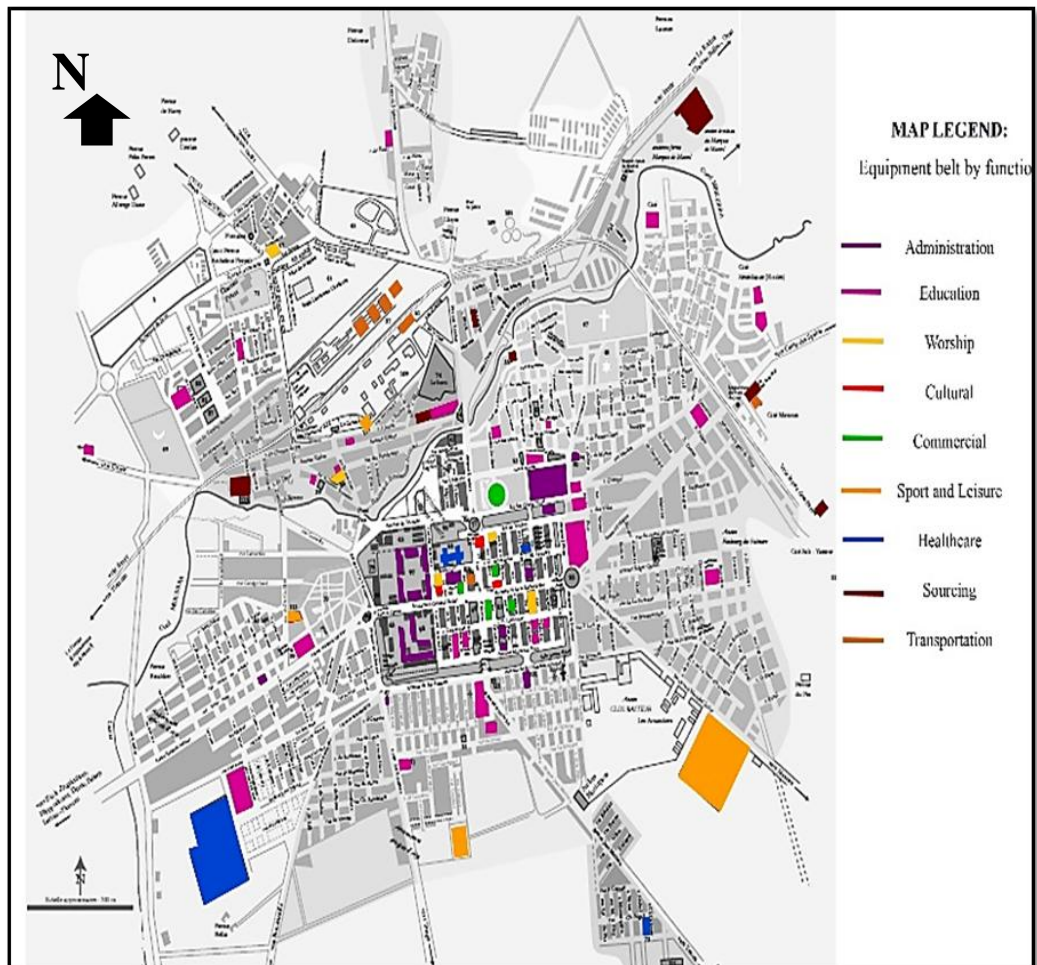


Figure 9. Map of the city of Sidi Bel Abbès showing the distribution of public buildings from the colonial period and considered as « shared heritage ».

Source: Treatise by the Authors.

Architectural styles

The various observations subsequently led us to bring out from the synthesis plan of the town of 1962 a concentration of buildings which, in comparison with other areas of the town, significantly combine the characteristics of an architectural style on spaces which are more concentric than elongated. Many of these buildings still manage to retain their original function and are frequented on a daily basis by the local population.

Thus, Figure 10 shows their distribution according to the function of the buildings and then their stylistic variation in the city according to the three rings of different colors - green, red, blue - with the crown of each ring having a distance of approximately 500 m covering and thus going from the quadrilateral of the city centre to the limits of the already established field of study and investigation.

Constructions and buildings with an architectural style that can be neither Neo-Classical, Art-Deco nor of an Art -Nouveau style are particularly concentrated in the city centre and in adjoining suburbs the city centre such as the current suburb Négrier and Amarnas Hai Benboulaid and Hai El Badr as well as in the current suburb Bugeaud in the Emir Abd El Kader district, and can only be taken in the case of certain functions and particular uses affiliated to these public buildings in the city.

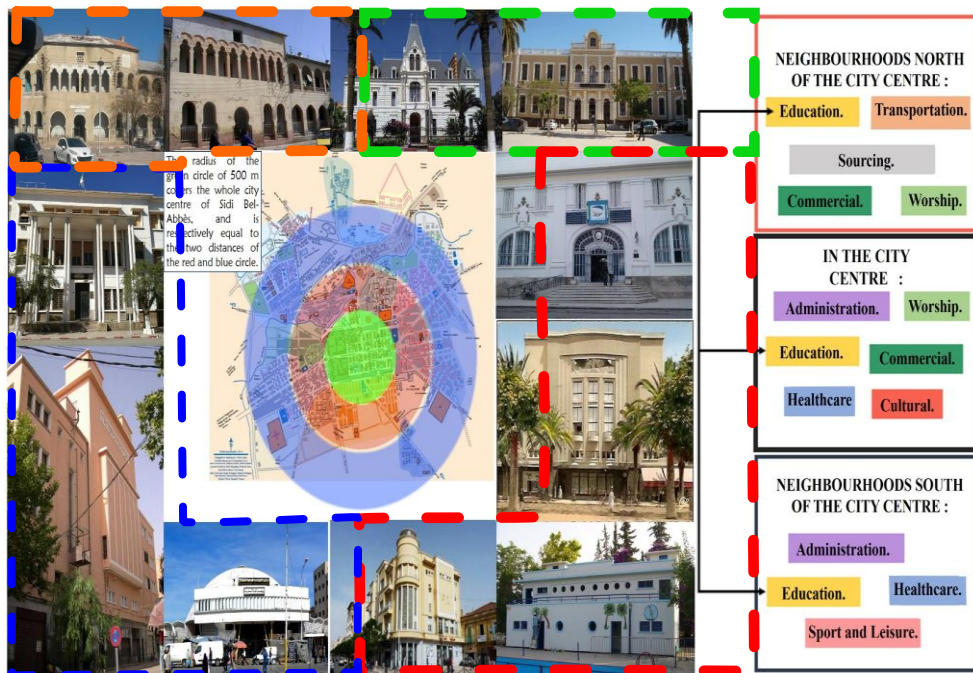


Figure 10. Distribution according to function (on the right) and variation in architectural styles (on the left) of public buildings and collective facilities in the town of Sidi Bel-Abbès since the synthesis plan of 1962.

Source : www.mekerra.fr, treatise by the authors.

The case of buildings used for administrative purposes and for the management of the social and political affairs of the city, such as the town hall, the court, the sub-prefecture, the multiple military buildings as well as the city's military hospital dating back to the colonial period show a rigidity in the architectural

style to be attributed to them and their failure to adapt to the new tastes of architecture, whereas in the case of buildings with functions other than the administrative one, such as the cultural function; The latter undergo a readaptation to the architectural trend of a new era, case of the regional theatre of the town of Sidi Bel-Abbès (see Figure 11).

Neo Moorish-style buildings are located in the suburbs far from the city centre, such as the Montplaisir suburb, and the Ibn Badis district, within the Maconnais suburb, the Adhim Fatiha district, the Sénéclauze suburb, and the Houari Boumédiène district, or even the case of certain school buildings located within the Eugène Etienne suburb, and the Sidi Yacine district. However, it should also be noted that constructions in a modern architectural style also came to settle in the city centre after the Second World War, even if, as we have pointed out, they are concentrated in the 3rd and last crown of the 500m that we have been able to establish for the distribution of architectural styles of the city's public buildings and collective facilities of the colonial period.

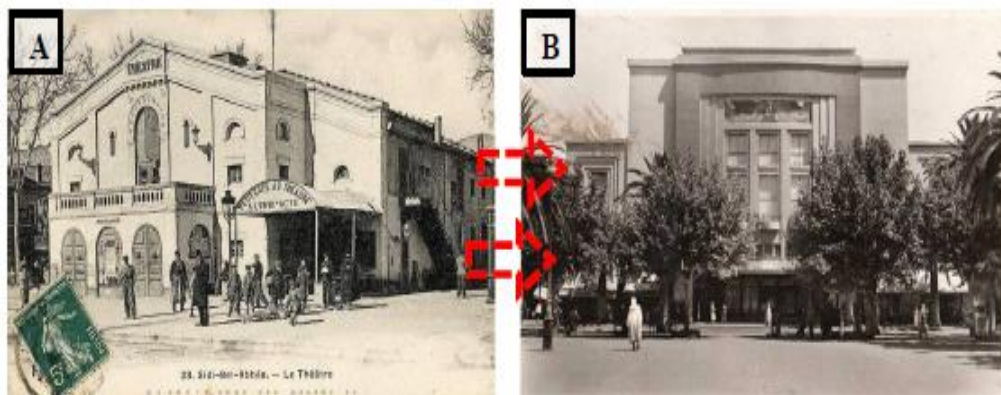


Figure 11. Architectural rehabilitation of the theatre of the town of Sidi Bel-Abbès by a reconstruction of another one in an Art-Deco style; A: the first theatre built in 1864, B: the theatre built in 1936.

Source : www.mekerra.fr, treatise by the authors.

Building systems

The city hall of Sidi Bel-Abbès, a building whose construction began in 1875 and lasted three years, while possessing particular characteristics (predominance of orthogonality and linearity, symmetry, rigor and serenity of forms proportionally harmonious.), which refer to buildings with a neo-classical style in Algeria, is one of the oldest buildings in the city, as illustrated

by various drawings Figure 12 and photographs Figure 13. of the building that were made on it.

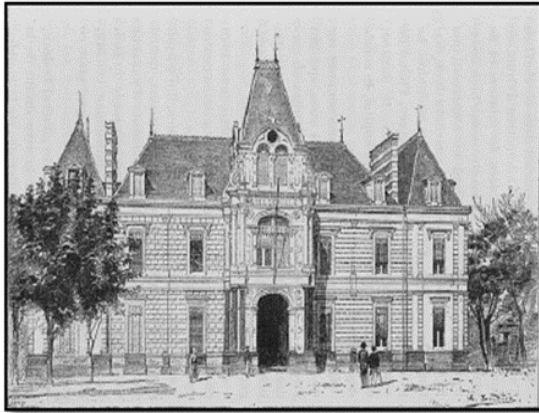


Figure 12. Perspective drawing of the main facade of the City hall of Sidi Bel-Abbès.

Source : Renard. J, 1888.



Figure 13. Photograph taken of the entrance of the City hall of Sidi Bel-Abbès during the 1920s.

Source : www.Oran1950.free.f

From 1964, the city of Oran is the owner of the building because of the status of the city of Sidi Bel-Abbès which is then only a daïra, it is from 1974 and with the administrative division which arises there, that the building of the old city hall will house the offices of the local authority and will be the object of the first works of extension which begun in 1981.

Under the socialist political and economic regime adopted by the Algerian state since independence, the extension project (see Figure 14) selected at that time was that of the architects M.N Reffas, A.Henni and the Russian architect P. Botcheva, for whom projects with characteristics of brutalist architectural production were considered as a reference point during the 1980s, was given the task of using new and local building materials and techniques in order to distinguish the two buildings, and will therefore be attached to the city hall (see Figure 15), but adopting an architectural and technical language which is disproportionate and unassimilable to the first building.

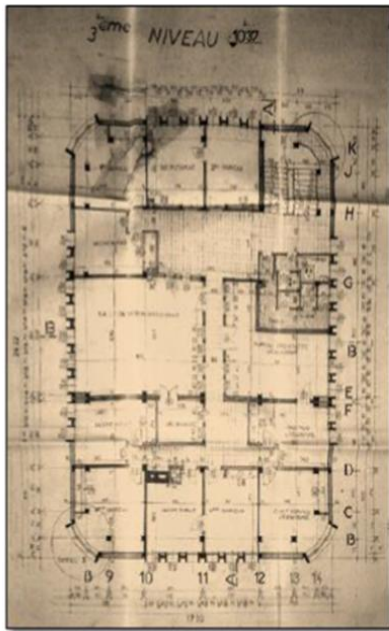


Figure 14. Plan of the extension project of the A.P.C of Sidi Bel-Abbès.
Source : Municipal archives of the town hall Bouaza El GHARBI de Sidi Bel-Abbès, treatise by the authors.

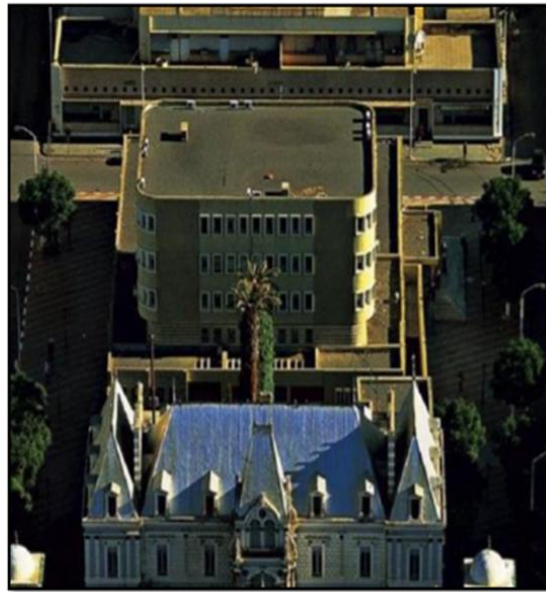


Figure 15. Aerial photo of the A.P.C of Sidi Bel-Abbès and the extension project (the City hall in the foreground).
Source : www.algeriemeracines.com

The latter, referring to modern architecture and using reinforced concrete as the main building material, adopts a structural system that differs from that of the load-bearing walls present in the City Hall building. The various façades of the new extension of the A.P.C. will thus be marked by a typology of windows of smaller dimensions and reduced in size compared to those of the Haussmann-style windows, oblong and dormer windows, thus reinforcing the character of distinction between the two buildings.

The hipped, gable roof covered in black slate, which was characteristic of the old Hotel building, was not adopted for the new extension, which in the case of the latter is characterized by an inaccessible flat roof, thus accentuating the parameter of temporality between the two adjoining buildings within the same block, occupied in its entirety by the administrative function of the town hall.

The superimposition and juxtaposition of the different planes as well as that of the different elevations Figure 16 and Figure 17, including the main frontispieces of the two buildings, highlight the change and transition to another aspect of the form which characterizes the two buildings; the change in construction techniques, particularly through the comparison of the structural

system peculiar to the two buildings, is particularly highlighted by the different planes of the latter.

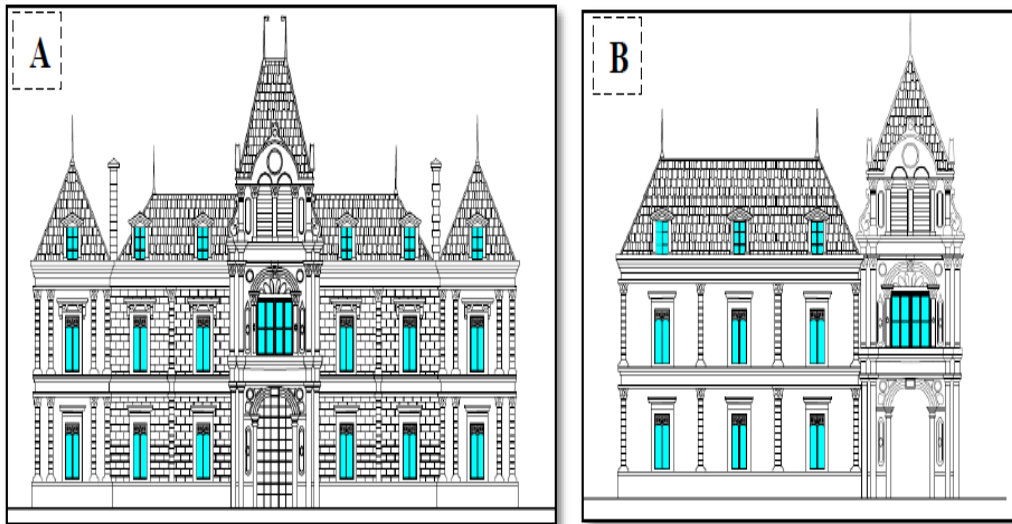


Figure 16. Elevations of the building of the current Town Hall (A.P.C.) of Sidi Bel-Abbès, (A) main facade of the building; (B) left side facade.

Source : Authors.

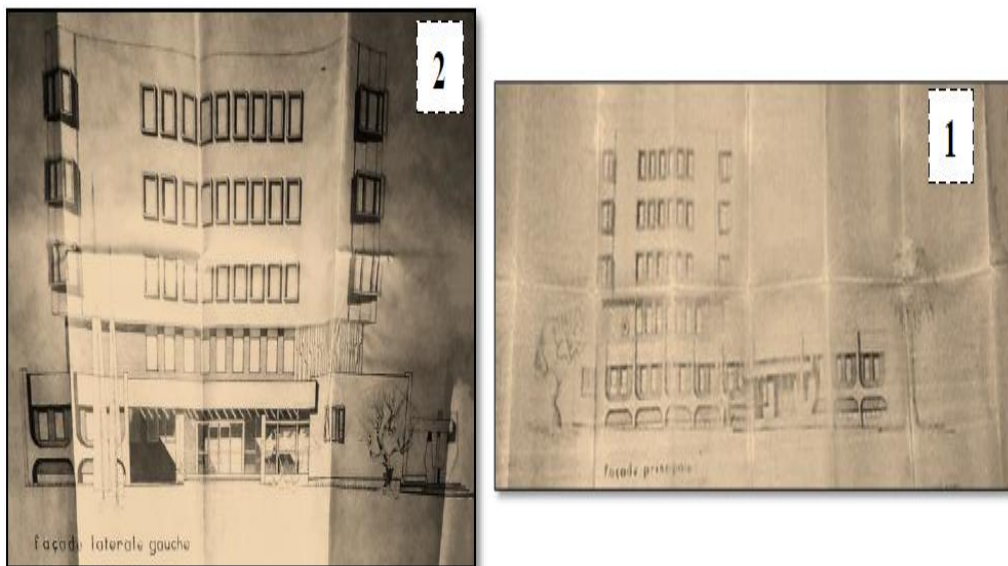


Figure 17. Elevations of the extension of the town hall (A.P.C) of Sidi Bel-Abbès, (1) the main facade of the building; (2) left side facade.

Source : Authors.

The use of materials

The use of architectural stratigraphy in studies for the documentation of constructive interventions and successive occupations (changes of use) known by buildings and various constructions, from their construction until very late in their life, is widely used in the field of «archaeology of the built environment», as Mileto. C (2007), stated:

«At the end of the 1980s, some architects who were involved in architectural restoration (especially Doglioni and Parenti) and some archaeologists who were involved in architecture (Brogiolo, Francovich, etc.) realized the potential that this type of study could have in documenting and interpreting historical architecture,... .In fact, in the majority of cases, historical architecture is characterized by its complexity due to the many different interventions it has undergone during its life. Architectural stratification is the set of constructive phases and periods of use of a building in the course of its history. The constructive phases are characterized by positive actions of construction, negative actions of demolition and actions of transformation that modify what exists. The periods of use between the successive construction phases are characterized by the entropic deterioration due to the use of the building as well as by the natural deterioration due to the action of atmospheric agents. The architectural stratification is manifested by a set of strata, i.e. by the remnant parts of the various contribution actions that have occurred throughout the history of the building, as well as by the negative interfaces that are the traces of demolitions.» (Mileto, 2007).

In recent studies carried out using the stratigraphic method as the main tool for research and investigation into former Algerian summer houses, considered as remarkable buildings and an integral part of the Algerian real estate heritage, a number of questions about their history have been brought to light, despite the little documentation available on them. In fact, the applications of architectural stratigraphy have made it possible to lift the veil of hidden phases in the life and in the different phases of construction of these buildings as well as their evolution in their built environment and in their urban environment.

The stratigraphic analysis of the buildings previously selected in Sidi Bel-Abbès (see Figure 18) considered to be representative of a high heritage interest and which are therefore the subject of an in-depth investigation into the transformations and metamorphoses undergone by the city's 19th and 20th century public buildings has thus forced us to use a few technical data sheets on the survey of building pathologies such as those proposed by the

Construction Quality Agency: preventing disorders, improving the quality of construction and which are available online(see Figure 19).



Figure 18.Stratigraphic analysis of the mosque Abu Bekr ESSEDIK ex-Church Saint Vincent de Paul (A- main facade of the church, B- main facade of the Abu Bekr ESSEDIK Mosque).
Source : Authors.



Figure 19.Building pathology sheets, produced by the AQC and the SMA excellence foundation, used as tools to assist in the stratigraphic analysis of public buildings in Bel Abbès.
Source :<https://qualiteconstruction.com>

However, the predominance of the «stone» material in the load-bearing structure of the selected constructions, as well as its almost complete use for the different exterior and interior walls of the buildings that we found on the plans, elevations and sections as well as the different descriptions and historical data on 3 of the 4 study cases in Bel Abbès (the church of Saint-Vincent de Paul, the City hall and the Marceau School) forced us to use, in addition to the building pathology sheets, the various definitions of the pathologies linked to the deterioration of the «stone» found on the latter and thus to be able to determine and subsequently trace the probable origins of the causes that led to the current state of the building, and which may be either anthropogenic, linked to the use made by city dwellers and the resulting human activity, or natural, linked to the environment and the immediate climate in which the buildings evolve within the urban fabric of the town of Bel-Abbès. Bel-Abbès.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A marginalized legacy

Located in the city centre and in the suburbs adjacent to it, the public buildings and collective facilities of the 19th and 20th centuries, dating from the colonial period, present in the urban fabric of the city of Sidi Bel-Abbès, have undergone mutations and changes of use which differ from one building to another and which also depend on many parameters according to the uses intended for them and the policies applied to them. That said, an understanding of the mode of evolution and the form of functional and formal change that have affected these public and collective buildings would make it possible to evaluate, firstly, their capacity to adapt to the political and economic changes affecting the Algerian city, and secondly, to know the extent of the formal and/or functional transformations that these categories of buildings have undergone since independence to the present day within the Petit-Paris.

The histogram (Figure 20) gives the different percentages of all the public buildings and collective facilities dating from the colonial period and delivered in the previous figures (Figure 6) and which were obtained from the census carried out from the field of investigation delimited in the town of Sidi Bel-Abbès. Thus the different percentages for the different categories of buildings, in descending order from the highest percentage value to the lowest, are as follows:

Buildings with an educational and training function are in the first position, with a percentage of 37% of the total number of buildings surveyed and are scattered throughout the urban fabric, as shown in the synthesis plan of 1962. Next come the administrative buildings with a percentage of almost 17.9% of the total number of buildings dating from the colonial period, which are mainly located in the centre of Sidi Bel-Abbès; Just after the administration comes in the same position with similar percentages of 9% of all the categories of buildings surveyed, the commercial and supply functions of a respective number of 7 buildings for each of the two functions. The number of religious buildings represents 6.4%.

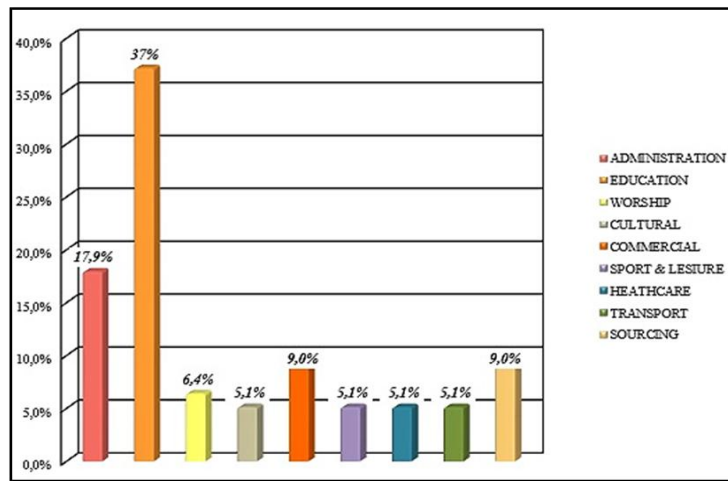


Figure 20.Percentage of public buildings and collective facilities in the town of Sidi Bel-Abbès from the colonial period obtained since the synthesis plan of 1962.

Source :Authors.

When French colonialism penetrated the city of Algiers, one of the most important reconversion operations that it was going to carry out within the city was surely that of the transformation of the Ketchaoua mosque of Algiers into the Saint-Philippe cathedral from 1832 onwards and about which Oulebsir declares that: « *The project to convert the Ketchaoua mosque into a cathedral was the most important restoration project undertaken by the administration in the aftermath of the conquest.* »(Oulebsir.N, 2004). It is moreover one of the most important places of military domination as well as one of the most important places of imposition of political and religious authority within the city of Algiers, Oulebsir also reports that:

«*The Ketchaoua mosque represented for the population of Algiers the most important leu of Muslim worship in the city.... But by fixing his choice especially on the Ketchaoua mosque, the Duke of Rovigo wanted to make a show of strength to the population of Algiers..., the Duke of Rovigo addressed*

his intendant Pichon who was more inclined to respect the treaties signed during the capture of Algiers and to build a church at the army's expense, in these terms: " You have been given the most badly placed and least venerated mosque in the city. I don't want it! I want the most beautiful! We are the masters, the victors.» (Oulebsir. N, 2004).

After the country's independence, the most important operations that Algerian cities also saw concerned the recovery of religious buildings left by French colonization, which generally showed an architecture that bore the features and mode natures of a building intended for a cult other than that of Islam and thus came to occupy important places within the urban fabric, either by filling an island in its entirety or half of the island by adjoining dwellings and residential towers or other public buildings with tertiary functions within the city.

As representative cases in Sidi Bel-Abbes, the example of the Church of St. Vincent de Paul, and where the interior of the latter will see and know a reorientation of the quibla to the east. This will contain the mihrab of the mosque and a niche reserved for the minbar on the wall Quibli; and in the same way the transformation of the apse located due south inside the church in a small library of mosque, which will allow young apprentices to come and learn the Koran in the latter.

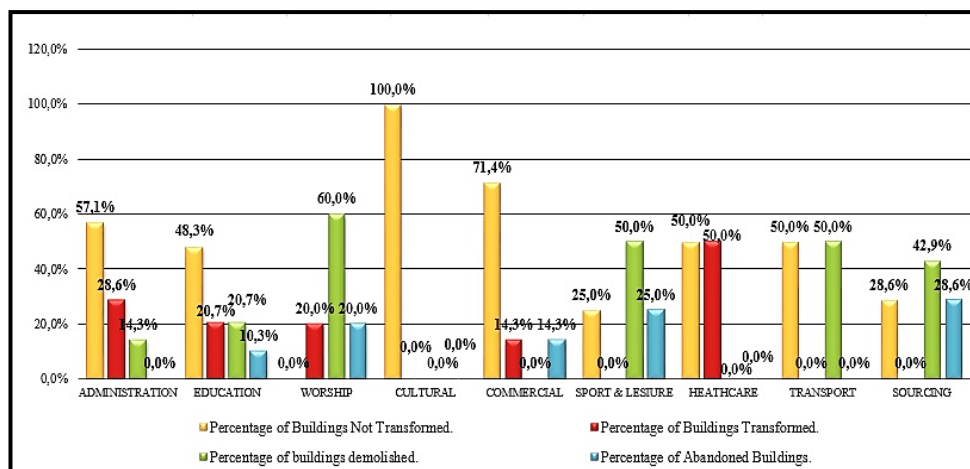


Figure 21. Percentages of public buildings and collective facilities from the colonial period that have not been transformed, transformed, demolished and abandoned according to their function in Sidi Bel-Abbès.

Source :Authors.

The percentages obtained since (Figure 21) had shown that there were 0% of the worship buildings not transformed, and this explains the significant percentages of changes and transformations that these religious buildings have seen in the city of Sidi Bel Abbès. However those which have been

transformed represent only 20% of all worship buildings, while 60% have been demolished and the remaining 20% are currently abandoned. The transformed buildings have thus been assigned to fulfil an administrative function Figure 22 except in the cases of the former church of St. Vincent de Paul and that of Notre Dame of all Grace, which have been converted into mosques.

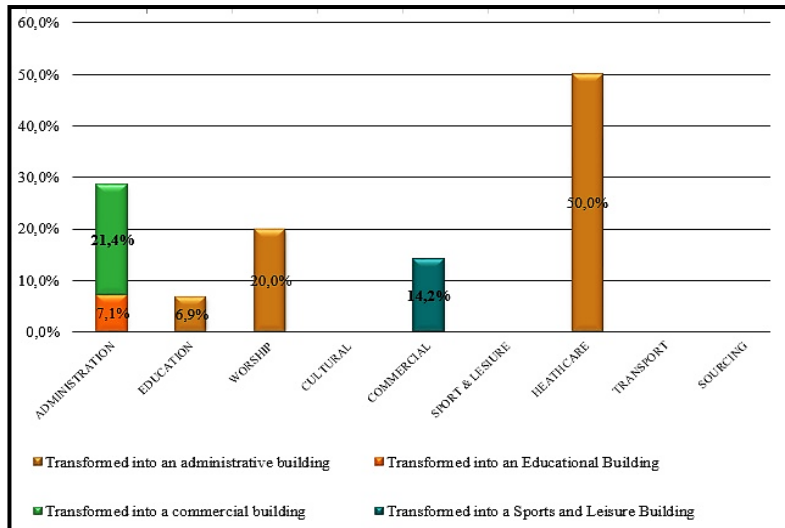


Figure 22. Histogram and percentage of public buildings and collective facilities from the colonial period according to their initial function and the new function assigned to them after independence in Sidi Bel-Abbès.

Source : Authors.

The recovery of a marginalized heritage

In 2009, the city of Sidi Bel Abbès was destined to host a major project of national scope that of the City of Cinema, the realization and studies of which continued until 2015; accompanying this major project, the renovation and rehabilitation of its Tessala cinema, formerly the Vox-Cinema (see Figure 23) located in the city centre, which was also initiated. The Vox-cinéma saw a rehabilitation and remodeling of its various façades, giving them a new look and a new reading for architectural interpretation.

An interview and an exchange full of explanations for the renovation operations provided by the BET in charge of the latter, as well as an analysis of old photographs taken at the cinema with the one we carried out ourselves on the Vox cinema in Sidi Bel-Abbès (see Figure 24), led us and led us first to draw up a summary table on the history and architecture of the latter, but also on its conservation and management before the renovation operation was launched. Thanks to the use and comparison of the main frontispiece of the

building before renovation and after renovation, (see Figure 25); we were then able to see that the transformation and metamorphosis of the building to be transformed and induced a new relationship and a new language between the public building and its urban environment, as well as its location, had an influence on the perception of the landscape of the fabric in which it is embedded.



Figure 23.Photography of the Tessala cinema, ex-Vox cinema after renovation.
Source : Authors.



Figure 24. Photography of the Tessala cinema, ex-Vox cinema before renovation.
Source :<https://mapio.net/pic/p-45464624/>

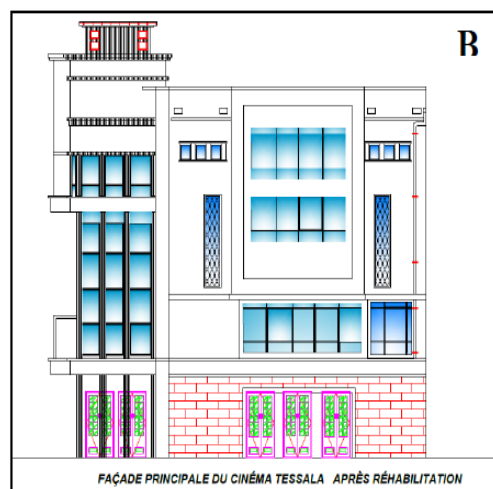


Figure 25 : Comparison of the main facade of the Tassala cinema, former Vox cinema of Sidi Bel-Abbès before renovation operation (A) and after renovation operation (B).Source :Authors.

THE MANAGEMENT OF THE « SHARED HERITAGE» THROUGH CONSERVATION AND SAFEGUARDING OPERATIONS IN SIDI BEL-ABBÈS

Having joined the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy on 16 March 2014 (see Figure 26), the city of Sidi Bel Abbès is a signatory to the Sustainable Energy Action Plan which outlines the steps to be taken to achieve short and long-term objectives. The main guidelines of this action plan in favour of Climate and Energy in the municipality of Sidi Bel Abbès contain 13 objectives and those concerning the old buildings and public buildings of the town are objectives 2, 3, 8 and 12:

2-Strengthen and promote the energy efficiency of the municipality's public infrastructure assets and other activities on the territory,

3-Promote the integration of energy efficiency and renewable energies in public and private housing construction projects in the territory,

8-Reduce fossil energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions in public buildings, schools and mosques in the municipality by 20% by 2030,

12-Managing the demand for electricity on the territory of the municipality, by changing behaviour and electricity and gas consumption habits, to reduce the demand for energy during peak periods.

Considered as the historical and cultural heritage of the city, these buildings offer, through their functions, services and leisure activities that contribute to the cultural and scientific development of the city's inhabitants. This heritage is also known as the «Shared Heritage» of the contemporary period in the Mediterranean; its protection and enhancement through partnerships such as the Euroroomed Heritage 4 programme, in which Algeria is one of the partners of the Partner countries in the Mediterranean (MEDA) countries, gives it major stakes in human development. Heritage is considered as a resource for human development, with the control of economic and social transformations by the public authorities and the active participation of local communities and citizens in the promotion of their living environment. The Mediterranean countries share geographical conditions and cultural and artistic trends that call for dialogue between them for the recognition of a common heritage, the safeguarding of which is also a common responsibility.

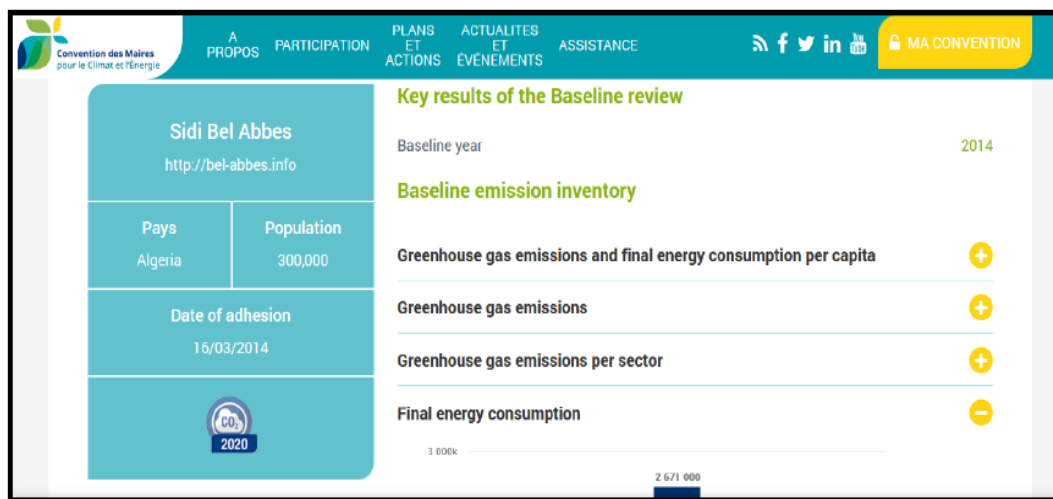


Figure 26. Accession of Sidi Bel Abbès to the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy and data on energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions by sector in the city.

Source : <https://www.conventiondesmaires.eu>.

CONCLUSIONS

The architectural heritage of the colonial period of the 19th and 20th centuries in Algeria will, from the beginning of the 21st century, be given a new designation following the expansion and growth of the notion of heritage, thus qualifying it as "shared heritage" and "recent heritage". The latter was born within the Mediterranean Basin, thanks to the launching of the various Euro-Mediterranean programmes through the combined efforts of the European Union and the countries around the Mediterranean Basin, and where Algeria is described as a cosmopolitan country and a hub of crossbreeding between nations and peoples within the latter, as we were able to show in the beginning of the article.

The shared and/or recent heritage, which takes on its full significance through the many architectural works dating from the 19th and 20th centuries, is displayed and announced in Algeria by a variety of material forms, particularly within cities through town planning and urban fabrics as well as through the architecture of the many buildings within them, and which were carried out during the second half of the 19th and first half of the 20th century, thus testifying to the evolution of the buildings and constructions present within the urban spaces of the latter, and thus providing a tool for the study of the transformations and metamorphosis of the shared and recent heritage within the cities.

It is therefore based on our observations of the transformations of 19th and 20th century buildings in western Algeria that we will be led to conduct research on these buildings; these buildings had left us perplexed as to what led to the many transformations and mutations that affected them. The shared and/or recent heritage, through the public buildings and collective facilities of the city, has thus undergone an evolution within the urban space through changes of use (functional transformation), but also through transformations in the architectural form of its buildings and their structural system. The latter have therefore led to a transformation in the appearance and image of the different buildings encountered within the urban space of different cities, and which in the case of the city of Sidi Bel-Abbès, a city created in ex nihilo during the colonial period, are much more evident.

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