

Squatter Housing in Annaba City-Algeria

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Abstract: Squatter housing problem being dispersed in Annaba city, situated in North-East of Algeria, is considered as the major constraint to the city spatial expansion. The disproportionality between population size and squatter houses expansion makes the situation very intricate, especially on social, economic and environment aspects. After the country independence in 1962, the problem of housing was resolved by succession process by houses left by french conquerors. However, by the industrialisation, housing need seems to be more and more serious. Annaba is a good example representing the housing issues in algerian cities. Among them we can introduce: Municipal land speculation, marginalisation, low standard housing, illicit constructions, etc. The absence of well thought urban policy and inadequate urban legislations are the major causes for the no response to the housing needs in Annaba metropolitan area.

Key words: Squatter housing, environment, industrialisation, urban legislation, urban marginality

INTRODUCTION

Demographic development and migration from rural areas towards urban areas have played a major role in the process of urbanisation in Algeria, especially on the increase of their population densities. This role was related according to the political, economic conditions adopted by algerian government since the nation independence in 1962. In addition to the lackness of urban structure, the natural increasing of algerian cities' population has stimulated more and more the problem of housing needs (Khalfi, 2004).

As we know the economical policy adopted by government was focused essentially on heavy industry, so agricultural sector was marginalised although some tentatives in which were not well adapted with algerian village dweller mentality. As a result, out migration from rural areas to cities came up (Chekil, 2006).

Political instability has also its effects on outmigration towards cities, either during french war before 1962, either after especially after 1992 because of terrorism. Another problem characterising algerian cities is the problem of landownership, in which is a serious handicap to government urban actions. The non respect of urban rules by the population has aggravated more and more the chaos and disorder of the cities. The form of the awareness can be seen by two sides, one side by land speculation by rich mans and by the other side by government negligence in applying urban instructions (Larouk, 1997).

So all these factors of economical, social and political instabilities have contributed negatively on the urban form and landscape of algerian cities (Tijani, 2000).

Since our subject concerns with squatter houses (Fig. 1), we should at first introduce its definition: Squatter houses can be defined as each construction that not respect urban laws and this non respect is determines

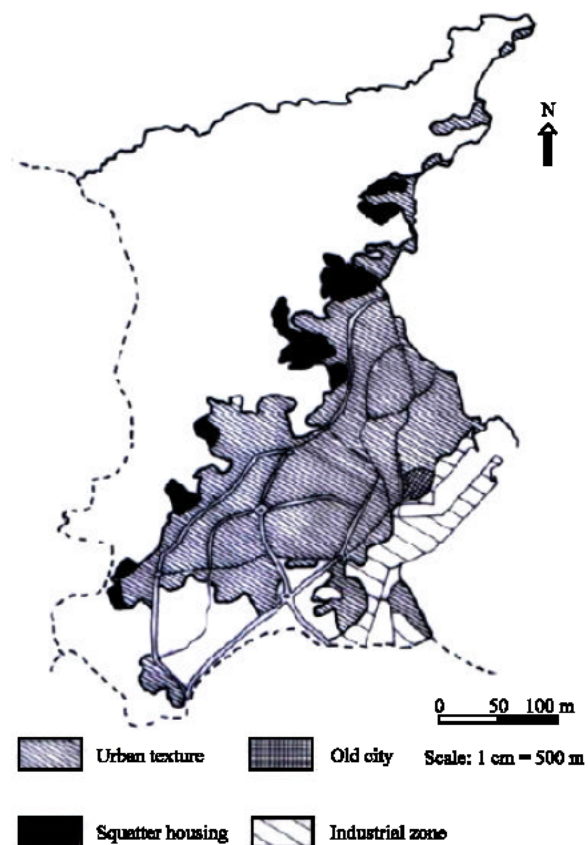


Fig. 1: Squatter housing being distributed in Annaba city

under 2 basis: Land ownership non respect: Landownership is not clear and technical non respect: Construction not allowed (Urban Planning Agency of Annaba city).

Objective of the study: The objective of this study is to determine the different locations of squatter houses being located in Annaba city, then introducing their characteristics.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

After a theoretical background about squatter houses, a survey form was set up over three major groups: construction characteristics, population characteristics and holding district characteristics. The study area was delimited by a map given allowed by building and municipal planning director (Urban Planning Agency of Annaba city).

Before the interpretation, I preferred to make a statistical description of the survey results then introducing the results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study has revealed that almost districts holding squatter houses in Annaba are characterised by:

- Deartness, waste water, absence of roads and ways, absence of drinkable and potable water, installation of electrical wires is not conventional and the lackiness green spaces.
- The main causes of immigration toward Annaba city are as follow: 58.27% out of total inhabitants of squatter housing in the city are Looking for comfortable houses buy local authorities, so it is a social message, 21.48% looking for job, 13.58% because of worse social conditions and 6.67% because of security. As we see, all previous causes are the result mainly of regional disparities, out put of absence of government conscious, inwich it should not mixt politic with urban planning objectives.
- Squatter housing in Annaba city represents a serious constraint against the city spatial extension, this problem must be resolved by emergency by presidential

CONCLUSION

Squatter housing in Annaba city seems to be a permanent phenomenon since the political independence of Algeria. The major cause of squatter housing is marginalisation of rural areas and absence of permanent control of different urban plans achieved by concerned authorities.

The previous study has allowed us to introduce the following propositions:

- Encouraging economical investments either in or out of the city by facilitating all administrative procedures.
- Giving the real authority to urban police to control urban laws
- Developing transportation system
- Introducing all necessary urban facilities that can attract investors
- Learning the professional behaviour with customers.
- Well representing the city by international and national fairs
- Making environment and urban conferences to aware the population.

On the basis on national plan, all regions should be taken into consideration equally by algerian government urban plans to decrease the problem of migration between regions.

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