



Research Article

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Tertiarization Contribution to Cities Dynamics. Study Case: Bab Ezzouar, Algiers

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Abstract

This article presents a study on the tertiarization phenomenon of Algerian cities built after independence, to provide adequate housing and access to better living conditions. To be more effective in our research, we selected as a case study the municipality of Bab Ezzouar. Bab Ezzouar is a city built during the seventies to receive the eastern extension of the capital Algiers through a mass habitat-production project – but had been for long time a dormitory suburb-. Today, with the increase in the supply of services and consequently the population, this municipality hosts the business district of the capital. Its new economic tendencies are reflected by the intense development of the number of enterprises located at its level. They rose from 334 in 2000 to 2,631 in 2019, then 2,803 in 2021. In other terms, an estimated growth of 839%. Our main objectives of this research are: a) to measure how tertiarization contributed to create new dynamics in the area with a strong impact on competitiveness, attractiveness and quality of living, b) to understand if this requalification of the built environment resulted in other urban phenomenon, such as a gentrification process of the area. To achieve the proposed objectives, we defined a methodology which comprehends: literature review about the main topics, data collection about city different trends and aspects, interviews with municipal decision-makers, population questionnaires; and space syntax, to better understand the development of tertiarization and its impact on the dynamics, gentrification, and growth perspectives of Bab Ezzouar city.

Keywords: habitat policy, tertiarization, city dynamics, attractiveness, competitiveness, gentrification

1. Introduction

Tertiarization of economy is a global phenomenon. It is an essential element of modern economic development (M.Polèse, 1988). Even though the tertiary sector developing in the Third World has entirely different characteristics than in developed western countries. It is the sector that have the highest rate of labor and added value to GDP in both. However, in developed countries, it

predominates thanks to modern and knowledge-intensive services (Arvanitis, Kushtrim, & Worter, 2014). In developing countries, it is predominated by retail trade (Santos, 1968).

Cities are places of attraction and concentration of goods and services, knowledge, decision-making bodies, and a large diverse workforce. Thus, they represent centers of mass consumption. They increase needs, satisfy them, and create new demands constantly (Prud'Homme, 1973).

Urbanization presents an optimal ground for tertiarization. Cities kept growing, economic systems changed, industries were relocated. Factories were moved from urban centers to the peripheries or even to new regions in search of production costs optimization. It is the tertiary activities that came to settle in the urban centers, occupying the most desirable districts of the cities. This is how the business districts are born, triggering the boom in innovative tertiary sector, and becoming places to showcase attractiveness and economic competitiveness of cities and capitals...centers of modern service sector activities concentration, and wealth creation hubs.

Many developing countries, including Algeria, are looking to develop their tertiary sector in a way that helps economic growth and limit dependance to oil income (for Algeria, oil represents 60% of total income with the economic crisis and the pandemic, the national GDP registered an annual increase of only 0.7% in 2019, then -0.5% in 2020, one of the lowest since 1962) (World Bank Data, 2021). However, this process might generate other urban phenomena.

1.1 Problem statement

Since its independence, Algeria has started a process of habitat intensive production, in response to a strong demand, generated by many factors: the increasing demographic growth, the rural exodus, the obsolescence of the built environment, the population right of a better living.

This will lead to an intense urbanization phenomenon. Its rates went from 40% in 1977, to 50% in 1987, 60.5% in 2000, then 65.94% in 2008. According to the National office of statistics ONS, the rate was estimated to exceed 70% starting from 2018 (ONS, 2011).

Many of cities fruit of this policy, were for a long time dormitory suburbs, deprived of any aspect of attractiveness, competitiveness or economic performance. For whatever reasons, some of them have succeeded to emerge into dynamic and innovative hubs.

The city of Bab Ezzouar, is a representative case of cities made of habitat intensive production programs in Algeria; This element was one of the principles criteria for the analysis; and for the selection of this relevant case study. Thanks to the new strategic vision of Algiers Master plan, this city takes part of an area of great constructive dynamism, economic growing and social vitality - according to the strategic vision of Algiers 2025-. It has become an essential economic address with a regional outreach by hosting the Business district of Algiers. With the new status of this municipality comes many changes that effects in the first-place urban development.

This research is a path to understand evolution process of this city, we are focusing on the tertiarization phenomenon and its impact on urban dynamics at its level.

2. Methodology

To assess this phenomenon, we have based our research on an analytical approach, namely an analysis of quantitative data. Therefore, the tools of the research are: the field survey, the population questionnaire, data collection and interviews with various officials of several public administrations, including the municipality office, the urban planning direction, the national center of the trade register, between 2019 and 2021.

1. The section dedicated to the presentation of the field study, is based on an analytical method that will allow a better understanding of its structure, its characteristics and its

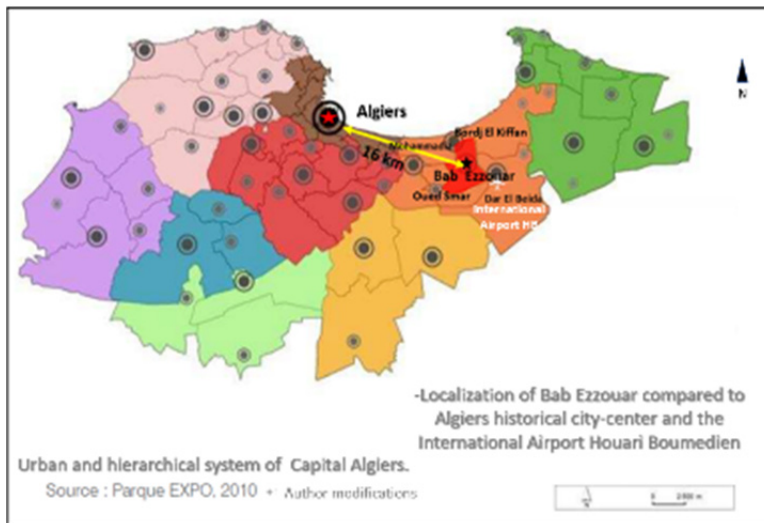
development process. To realize this work, we used the «Spatial Syntax»¹ as well as the various cartographic supports available.

2. The field analysis section is based on an inductive method, which is built on the collection, analysis and interpretation of quantitative and qualitative data.
3. Interviews were based on direct questions that were answered by the interviewees.
4. The questionnaires are composed of closed direct questions. The sample chosen is a random sample, with a size of 600 people².

2.1 Study area

The municipality of Bab Ezzouar, one of the 57 municipalities of the greater region within Algiers. It is located to the east of the capital, at 16 km from Algiers-center and 03 km from the primary international gate of the country: the International Airport Houari Boumediene.

Covering an area of 08.23 km², it represents 0.7% of the total area of Algiers. Bab Ezzouar is bordered by the following municipalities: to the east and north-east by Dar El Beida and Bordj El Kiffen, to the south by Oued Smar, to the west and north-west by El Mouhamadia.



Map 1: Localization of the municipality of Bab Ezzouar compared to the capital Algiers and its urban system.

Source: Parque Expo 2010 + Author's modifications.

It consists of three major zones: a habitat zone with 14 different collective housing districts, individual housing and old buildings covering about 423 ha. The USTHB university covers an area of 150 ha, and the business district covers within an estimated area of 70 ha.

¹Using DepthmapX, an open-source and multi-platform spatial analysis software for spatial networks of different scales.

²This sample represents about 05% of the population of Bab Ezzouar Municipality. They are from different places all over it: housing districts, business district, university, and different commerce and services areas. Google forms were also used in this questionnaire. They were shared on social platforms dedicated to Bab Ezzouar population.



Map 2: The use of land (zoning) in the municipality of Bab Ezzouar, Algiers.

Source: Mapsme.com + Author's modifications

The municipality of Bab Ezzouar, which has an area of 08.23 km², has: a historical core of old individual housing, collective housing districts of all types of government habitat programs, within ZHUN (“*Zone d’habitation Urbaine nouvelle*”, meaning “New Urban Housing Area”), AADL (“*Agence nationale de l’amélioration et du développement du logement*” meaning “National Housing Improvement and Development Agency”) dwellings, and individual housing neighborhood subdivisions. In total Bab Ezzouar has 22371 dwellings, spread over 422.12 ha, which gives a population density of 137.80 inhabitant/ha.

Despite the importance of its housing park, the municipality suffered a glaring lack of public facilities, - for a large period of time as a result of the policy of emergency massive housing production - despite the inauguration of the university USTHB³ in 1974- . What made Bab Ezzouar, a dormitory city made of housing towers and blocks....

Bab Ezzouar-once called « Retour de Chasse »- was a small agricultural village, transformed in the 1970s to a large construction site, to implement the requirements of the Comedor⁴, of creating the eastern extension of the capital Algiers. This was the launch of what has been called ZHUN, the largest project of its kind on the national level (Ichebouden, 2006).

As a result of multiplied housing projects in site, Bab Ezzouar reached the status of Municipality – a “Commune” in Algerian urban system- in 1984. On the other hand, it was in reality a large “dormitory suburb” characterized by a glaring deficit in public facilities, activities... and therefore of attractiveness for people to live in.

Since the 1980s, the creation of a business district was planned at its level. But for a long time, the only project that was realized from the whole program is the Mercure Algiers Airport hotel. Together with the USTHB University, they represented the only outstanding facilities and landmarks of the city.

³ University of Science and Technology Houari Boumediene, Designed by Brazilian Architect Oscar Niemeyer. It is the 1st and one of the biggest universities on national scale. (More than 100.000 graduated students since its inauguration).

⁴ Comité Permanent d'Etudes, de Développement, d'Organisation et d'Aménagement de l'agglomération d'Alger. Meaning “Permanent Committee for Studies, Development, Organization and Planning of the Agglomeration of Algiers”. It was Created in November 1968, placed under the Presidency, and transferred in December 1977 to the Ministry of Housing.



Figure 1: Collective public housing from the 80's
Source: Author, August 2018.



Figure 2: Collective public housing from the 2000's
Source: Author, August 2018.

Today, as a result of economic, political and social factors, Bab Ezzouar is undergoing a metamorphosis. It has become an essential economic address with a regional outreach by hosting the Business district of Algiers.



Figure 3: The Business District In Bab Ezzouar
Source: google image, 2013.



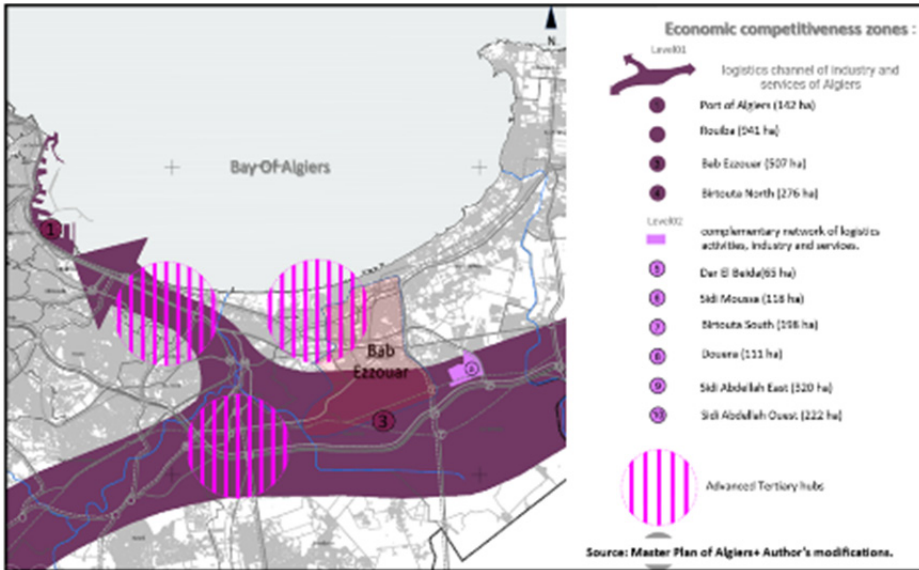
Figure 4: The Business District In Bab Ezzouar
Source: Author, August 2018.

Since 2011, the capital Algiers established a new urban system in order to create a balance of: spatial distribution of population, activities, and thus, wealth. It transforms the capital into a polycentric city, in favor of new social and economic dynamics.



Figure 5: Diagram of the strategic vision of Algiers Master Plan.
Source: Master plan of Algiers 2025+ Author

The new urban configuration of Bab Ezzouar as a new centrality did not come at random; it was born as a result of several economic, political, social and spatial factors. They made of it a part of an area of great constructive dynamism and growing economic and social vitality; characterized by higher level functions (Berezowska, 2016). It is at the heart of the strategy of redevelopment of economic activities according to the Master Plan of Algiers; which defines it as: an area intended for the development of advanced tertiary sector. It is located at the logistics channel of industry and tertiary services of the capital Algiers and part of advanced tertiary hubs. (Alger, 2012)



Map 3: Bab Ezzouar in the Economic competitiveness zones of the capital Algiers.
Source: Algiers Master Plan horizon 2025+ Author's modifications.

As part of our urban analysis of the municipality of Bab Ezzouar, we carried out a modeling by the systems of spatial syntax using the DepthmapX software. We will select R3 to perform it.

In the framework of this study, we will present two indicators in strong connection with the topic: global integration and local integration.

For global integration, its values vary between 1.445 as the maximum value and 0.456 as the minimum value.



Map 4: Bab Ezzouar, the Global integration Map.
Source: depthmapX



Map 5: Bab Ezzouar, the Local integration Map.
Source: depthmapX+ Author's modifications

For local integration, we chose R_3 to measure local integration -, its values vary between 3.421 as the maximum value and 0.333 as the minimum value.

Local integration allows us to identify local centralities that are immersed in the city, so areas of attractiveness, or are concentrated economic activities. The results match what we observed in our field study.

3. Indicators of Tertiarization in Bab Ezzouar

To explain the phenomenon of tertiarization of Bab Ezzouar, the following points are addressed:

3.1 Employment

According to official data published in 2020, the tertiary sector is the dominant sector of the Algerian economy. It employs 60.1% of the labour force and contributes to 44.1% of GDP (Banque d'Algérie, 2020). The share of the tertiary sector of employment has changed over the years. It rose from 54.68% in 2001 to 55.23% in 2010, followed by 58.37% in 2011 and 60.1% in 2019 (ONS, 2019).

It was the country's economic context (politic and economic reforms, the end of the administered economy and the transition to the market economy in the 1990s) that made the sector the first to offer jobs and generate income. Trade new dynamics and oil high rent during the 2000s were very favorable factors for tertiarization in Algeria.

89% of all economic entities in Algeria are active in the tertiary sector. 83.5% of these entities are located in the urban environment (ONS, 2019).

City represents a favorable environment for businesses. It is a place of territorial attractiveness for tertiary activities, offering the possibility of: investment extensions, a large population and density of consumers, developed infrastructures (transport, communication, networks, decision-making bodies, financing, office buildings)...

61.5% of economic entities in the tertiary sector are active in distributive trades. 84% of them are active in retail commerce. As a result, trade is the major activity of the national economy. 95% of

businesses are represented by natural persons, 05% are companies⁵.

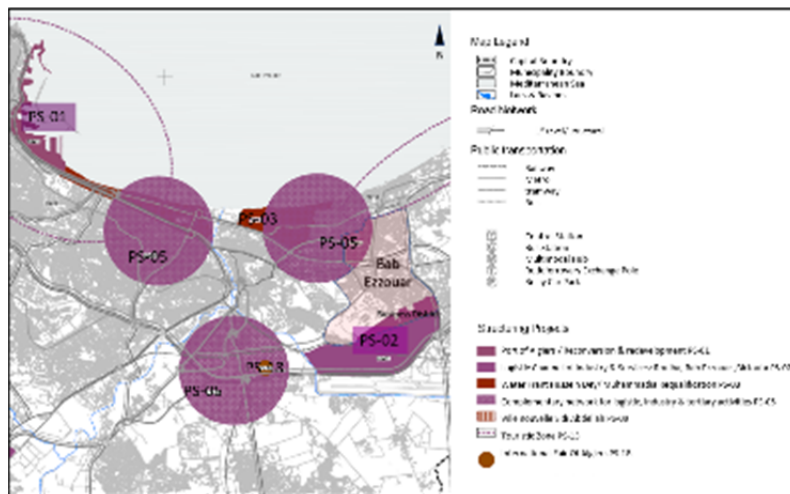
According to the first economic census of Algeria, the wilaya of Algiers comes on top of the list as a place of concentration of tertiary investments. Enterprises represent 21% of its economic fabric. In the same period, in the municipality of Bab Ezzouar, companies represent 26% of its tertiary economic fabric (ONS, 2012). In 2019, the rate rose to 32% in Algiers, and to 28% in Bab Ezzouar (ONS, 2019).

Algiers, the capital, has 10.4% of the total number of commerce activities in the country. 04% of these activities are located in Bab Ezzouar, while it represents only 0.8% of the total area of the capital.

Bab Ezzouar has 62 shops/ 1000 inhabitants. It exceeds the average of Algiers which is 50/1000 inhabitants. This confirms the dominance of the commerce activities in this municipality (CNRC, 2021).

3.2 The investment

The interesting strategic location of the municipality, the easy accessibility and the various offers of public transportations, the presence of large-scale scientific facility such as the USTHB University, availability of land as well as the new configuration of the municipality as a new trad-hub and as an area of economic competitiveness, part of the new logistics corridor of industry and services of Algiers, are factors that have created a favorable investment climate, hence the decision to create the new business district of the capital at its level.



Map 6: Bab Ezzouar in the Structuring Projects of the capital Algiers.

Source: Algiers Master Plan horizon 2025+ Author's modifications.

3.2.1 Business District

The creation of the business district of Bab Ezzouar is one of the most important projects of the Capital Algiers in its quest to become a "Global City": «This operation will generate a global dynamic that will allow the upgrading of the capital, in a spirit of renewal like the cities of Barcelona, Seville,

⁵<https://www.commerce.gov.dz/commercant> According to the Algerian Ministry of Commerce, the trader (natural or legal person) can be a producer, a wholesaler, a retailer, an importer - exporter or a service provider. Agricultural activities, craftsmen, civil societies, associations, non-profit cooperatives, liberal civil professions, and establishments of an administrative nature do not have a commercial character.

Lisbon, Frankfurt or Shanghai» according to F.Lateb, director of the AGERFA Urban Land Management and Regulation Agency of Algiers. This Agency is in charge of the project with a funding of 10.000.000.000 DA. (equivalent of 65 million euros).

With its location near to Algiers hyper-center, at 05 minutes from an international airport Houari Boumediene, close to the major schools and universities of the capital, as well as the industrial areas of Rouïba and Oued Smar. Bab Ezzouar offers a huge land base of 63 ha which has been chosen to receive the project. This latter consists of:

- 01.5 million square meters for the creation of offices and higher services, administrations, banks, hotels, leisure centers, headquarters of national and international large companies, etc.
- 07 ha for the creation of an urban park that will be in close proximity to the above-mentioned facilities.
- The project is expected to generate 15,000 direct jobs in the short term, and receive 50,000 visitors per day. (Ville, 2012)

According to data from the communication unit of the shopping and leisure center Bab Ezzouar CCL, located in the business district, this facility receives since 2015 an average of 07.7 million visitors per year on its own. Which reflects the national attractiveness of the area.

The business district hosts headquarters of the following national and foreign companies: ATM Mobilis, Algeria post, Air Algérie, COSIDER Group, SONATRACH-commercial, the EGCA shopping center, Maghreb CMA / CGM, Natxis Algeria, Aigle Azur, DORSH Africa, KPGM, Tours Trust... and also the following banks: BNP Paribas Algeria, ABC bank, BNA, BEA, BADR, El Baraka bank, Al Salam bank...

The creation of the business district in Bab Ezzouar implied a series of operations to enhance the urban space quality of the municipality. According to our interview with the vice-mayor of the municipality, many projects have been realized under the frame of the new Master Plan of the capital and the new business district. This helped strengthen the infrastructure of this municipality, such as the installation of tramway and metro, a new urban parc of 07ha , buildings restoration and innovation, new green spaces an playing grounds in neighborhoods, the new stadium and city-hall projects and many different urban improvement operations... which impacted positively the urban space and living quality at its level, consequently its attractiveness (Mousaoui, 2018), the implementation of a selective waste collection system and the introduction of renewable energy in public spaces are the next challenges for Bab Ezzouar municipality.



Figure 6: Tramway in Bab Ezzouar, Algiers
Source: google image, 2018.

3.2.2 Trade

Economic and politic factors were after the appearance of El Djorf market, one of the oldest markets of Bab Ezzouar -established at the ground level of buildings of a subdivision bearing the same name- this later become quickly a shopping attractive address on a regional level. Little by little, more other commercial centralities had emerged along sides principal avenues of the municipality. Shops kept growing and diversifying; today this market has reputation and national attractiveness.

Following our field survey, and the analysis of the data collected, we were able to draw a curve representing the evolution of commerce and services at the level of the municipality of Bab Ezzouar.

Since 2000 to 2019, the municipality has experienced a boom in commercial activity. The number of commerce shops recorded in 2000 was 1932. The number of businesses was 334. In 2010, commerce shops grew to 4,965. Businesses to 1,588. In 2021, there are 7469 commerce shops and 2803 businesses located at Bab Ezzouar.

This represents a total commerce and business growth of 453% in 20 years.

According to the population questionnaire, 96.50% of the questioned population weather they find Bab Ezzouar an attractive city or not answered yes, it is attractive. 59.47% said it is because of the diverse offer of commerce and services, 19.14% said it is because of the presence of the university USTHB, 12.03% because of the presence of the business district, and 09.35% because of the presence of public administrations and facilities. (Population, 2019)

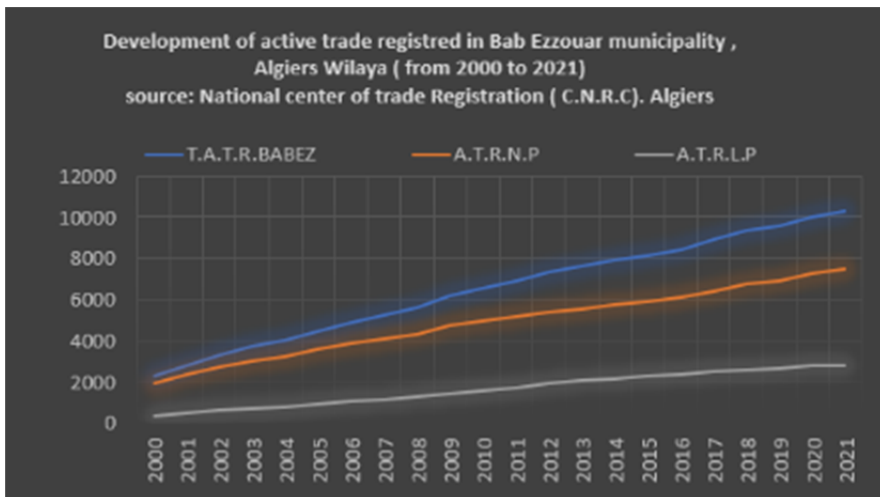


Figure 7: Development of active trade registered in Bab Ezzouar municipality, Algiers (from 2000 to 2021): T.A.T.R.BABEZ(total active Commerce registered in Bab Ezzouar), A.T.R.N.P (Active trade registered as natural person), A.T.R.L.P (aActive trade registered as legal person).

Source: National center of trade Registration (C.N.R.C)+ Author.

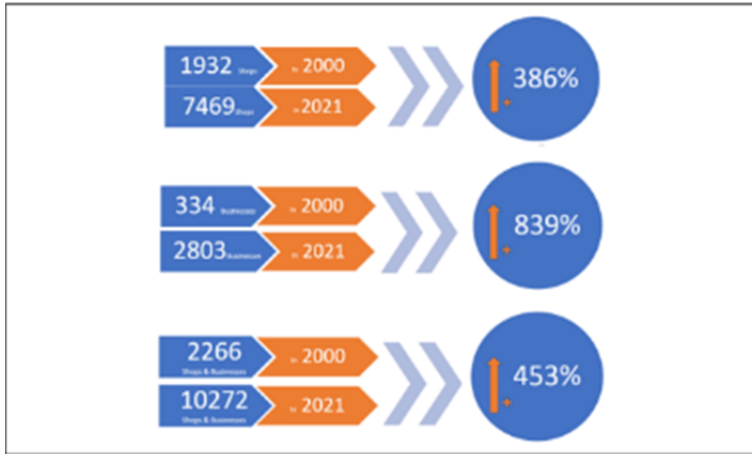


Figure 8: Growth Percentage of the number of commerce shops and businesses in Bab Ezzouar from 2000 to 2021.

Source: CNRC 2021+ Author.

3.2.3 Hotels

The municipality of Bab Ezzouar today has 10 hotels in different categories: from 0 to 5 stars. The most recent one inaugurated in 2019 is the Marriott Hotel, a part of the Trust Real Estate towers, the biggest hotel on national scale with 227 rooms and 180 apartments.

03 hotels are located at the business district: IBIS ***, MERCUR**** & Marriott*****. The rest are all over the municipality.

05.5% of the total number of Algiers hotels (10 out of 182) are located in Bab Ezzouar. while this municipality represents only on 0.8% of the total area of the capital.

They offer 2637 beds, or 12.60% of the general capacity of the wilaya of Algiers, which is 20924 beds. (<http://www.wilaya-alger.dz>, 2021)



Figure 9: Growth of hotels number in Bab Ezzouar(2000to 2020).

Source: Field survey2021



Figure 10: Classification of hotels located in Bab Ezzouar.

Source: field survey 2021.

3.3 Premises of Gentrification...

Gentrification is an urban phenomenon that is always related to new economic dynamics in cities. However, how to approach it is a debate triggering subject, how it appears, what are its influencing factors, its impact and dimensions... many questions revolve around this concept that emerged in the 60's and was first coined by the British sociologist Ruth Glass, to describe London's neighborhoods change by displacement of residents of working class, and their replacement by middle-class new residents (Subramanian, 2020).

Researches show that gentrification is more likely to be in big cities, it is concentrated in larger cities with vibrant economies. Though, it can also appear in smaller cities and impact areas with the most amenities near business districts (Jason Richardson, Bruce Mitchell, Juan Franco, 2019)...

After a prolonged disinvestment for decades; the development of infrastructure of the municipality, the booming of tertiary activities and improvement of living quality in Bab Ezzouar had huge impact on real estate prices at its level. Price of land passed from 20.000 da/m² in 2000, to more than 220.000 da/m² in 2020. Rental prices also had known a spike. For example, for an apartment of 70m², rent went from a minimum of 7000da/month in 2000, to a minimum of 35.000da/month in 2020. For commerce shops, rent went from an average of 40.000da/month in 2000 to an average of 200.000 da/month. Prices can go even higher according to demand and offer. (Bakr Real Estate Agency, 2020)

Based on that, real estate prices per m² had known a rise of 1100% between 2000 and 2020. Rent prices for the same period had known a rise of 500%.



Figure 11: Growth of Land and estate prices in DZ da per m2 in Bab Ezzouar Between 2000 and 2020.
Source: Bakr real estate agency+ Author

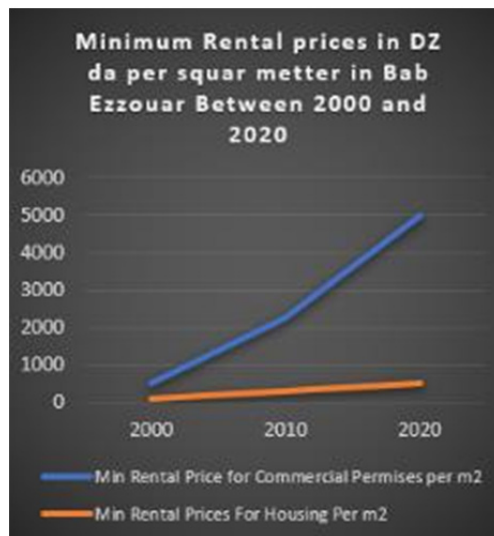


Figure 12: Growth of minimum Rental prices in DZ da per m2 in Bab Ezzouar Between 2000 and 2020.
Source: Bakr real estate agency+ Author

With the almost saturation of land in this municipality, prices are more likely to go higher. It means a limitation of access to propriety or even rent for working/middle-class, that represents the majority of Bab Ezzouar municipality's population. From another side, it can also represent an opportunity and lead people to sell their proprieties and move out to a less expensive municipalities. They will be replaced by more fortunate population from a higher socio-economic class.

Yet, prices of services reman same, since they are regulated by authorities on a national level

(electricity, gas, transportation, free public schools, free public health care, free universities, very low or no taxes on propriety...). Prices of goods and services offered by popular markets in the municipality also helps original population to keep same living expenses.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The municipality of Bab Ezzouar had a significant evolution process. It was first built under the frame of a massive habitat production policy. Then it received an important masse of the capital's population. Between 1977 and 1988, its population growth rate was 22.13%. the imbalance between the progress of the housing production operations and public facilities, has made of it a dormitory suburb, struggling a lack of living quality and urban dynamics for a long period.

With the metamorphosis of the Capital Algiers-the largest city of the country and its politic and economic locomotive-, and its new quest of modernization and globalization through a profound restructured urban and economic systems. Bab Ezzouar, for the accounted reasons, has gained a new configuration into this new system; thus, a new urban and economic aspect. It has been chosen to host the first business district of the country. With this project came multiple infrastructure enhancing projects that helped to showcase the assets of the municipality, but also improve the living quality it is offering for its population. It also presents many local centralities with a high level of attractiveness and economic activity.

Thanks to an imposing tertiarization process that began from scratch, Bab Ezzouar started to become an attractive business address and acquire a new vocation. The remarkable growth rates of commerce and businesses at its level, and the importance of new structural projects it is hosting, are a reflection of an impressive constructive and dynamic era this municipality is crossing nowadays. In fact, it become the 6th most active municipality of the capital Algiers in 2021. A huge added value to its growing regional competitiveness.

This new status has been leading lately to a new urban phenomenon in the region. We were able to observe its premises through our field study: Gentrification. The soaring prices of land and real estate are the first signs of this new phenomenon in the area. However, it is more remarkable when it comes to land and commercial real estate. This growing gentrification phenomenon can have huge impact on the development process of Bab Ezzouar in the future, but it might also be a new opportunity to its population historically composed of working-class families. Its impact on a social level is reduced thanks to the socioeconomic context of the country, which has been always affirming the social character of the state, one of the foundations of national policy in Algeria.

Through the study of Bab Ezzouar, we came to understand the importance and impact of strategic vision in reconstructing urban systems, consequently territories. The continuous assessment of urban assets and tendencies of cities is way to implement their role in dynamizing growth and development. Prospective studies might be helpful to prevent any unwanted diversion in the future.

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