

## Evolutional Housing in the Last Years of French Algiers

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### ***Abstract:***

In 1950's, Algiers was a great place to train for a young Japanese boy. Gyoji Banshoya was a Japanese planner whose life's work was urban planning in the Middle East and North Africa. The purpose of this chapter is to examine his work for the slum upgrading projects in Algiers under Mayor Jacques Chevallier, which still remains unknown. After studying in the laboratory of Kiyoshi Seike, Banshoya studied under the supervision of G. Hanning and G. Candillis at ATBAT. His experiences at ATBAT in Paris led him to Algiers where housing policy permitting Muslims and Christians to cohabit had been introduced. Banshoya engaged in the study of an evolutional housing system. Jean-Jacques Deluz testified that he was a genius of dessin. As micro scale and macro scale were clearly unified in French-Algerian urban design, Banshoya started to work not only on housing design but also on urban design including the slum upgrading projects in Algiers. In fact, he participated in the Les Annassers, Mahieddine, Champ de Manoeuvres, Chateauneuf Frais-Vallon and "Temporary housing replacing tin-roofed shelters projects". Though none of these projects were solely credited to Banshoya, the fact that Mayor Chevallier listed Japanese at the top of his list of member nationalities at the Agency suggests that Banshoya performed some important tasks.

### ***Keywords:***

Gyoji Banshoya, Algiers, ATBAT, CIAM, Evolutional Housing

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In 1950's, Algiers was a great place to train for a young Japanese boy. Gyoji Banshoya was a Japanese urban planner whose life's work was urban planning in the Middle East and North Africa. After studying in the laboratory of Kiyoshi Seike at the Tokyo Institute of Technology, Banshoya went to Paris and trained under the supervision of Gerald Hanning and George Candillis at ATBAT (Atelier des Bâtitseurs). Then he went to Algiers and participated in some HLM (habitation à loyer modéré) housing projects managed by "l'Agence du Plan à Alger" for the cohabitation of Muslims and Christians. Based on this valuable experience in Algiers, he would start to work in Middle Eastern cities as a UNDP (United Nations Development Program) expert to finally become one of the most important urban planners in the area who created master plans for Beirut, Damascus and Aleppo in cooperation with Michel Ecochard.

In this chapter, I will clarify some of the details of Gyoji Banshoya's work in Algiers which have not yet been completely verified. According to previous research [1], Banshoya, in his younger days, tried to develop his own theory in order to combine tradition and modernity and suggested the "*Habitat Evolutif*" (Evolutional Housing) to realize a design for low cost housing reconstituting historic style. Algiers was the first place where he applied this theory. In addition, looking back on his whole career, we can suppose that Algiers was the place where he first became interested in the Middle East and North Africa. A four year stay in Algiers may have provided this unique Japanese architect with essential knowledge of form, color and the functions of Islamic architecture and urban fabric.

The main question of this chapter is: exactly what did he do in Algiers? Or, how he did experience the spatial characteristics of Algiers?

Primary research resources were official documents such as "*Bulletin Municipal Official de la Ville d'Alger*" which includes minutes of municipal parliament sessions, and "*Alger Revue*", the city magazine. To define the contents of his work, I referred to the CV created by Banshoya himself. Other important primary sources such as planning documents, dessins, notes and letters about Banshoya were also used. I also make reference to interviews with his colleagues and family who are still alive today [2].

## 2. ATBAT AND ARCHITECTS-ACTIVISTS IN ALGIERS

### 2.1. Training at ATBAT

After World War II, there was urgent demand for designs for low cost housing in Japan. The motivation that Banshoya fostered during his time at Seike's laboratory was to unify tradition and modernity. He published his first piece, in 1953, "The Square House" [3] and an article, "Italian Housing after the World War II" [4] in *Shin Ken-Chiku*. He didn't intend to simply restore traditional style, but he tried to reconstitute it in order to manage both of conservation and modernization [5]. As a result, he suggested "Evolutional Housing" in which architects can reflect the respective local cultures. Banshoya's theory was fortunately accepted in French architectural currency at that time. In particular, George Candillis, who himself had much experience of evolutional housing in Morocco, evaluated Banshoya's work "The Square House" with his own sketch and encouraged him in *l'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* (Figure 1) [6].

In October 1953, Banshoya started work as a scholar-trainee with the French government at ATBAT. ATBAT was an architectural office founded by Le Corbusier, and some of its young architects such as Vladimir Bodiansky, Gerald Hanning and G. Candillis were well-known for their activities based in Casablanca. G.Hanning was the managing director of the office of Le Corbusier [7], and G. Candillis was a leading architect at CIAM (Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne) in its later days. According to his CV, Banshoya was dispatched to the Paris office of ATBAT and worked on researching case studies in Madagascar and Paris concerning "*Habitat pour le Plus Grand Nombre* (Housing for the General Public)" [8]. Unlike Takamasa Yoshizaka who went to Paris in 1950 to study under Le Corbusier for two years, Banshoya, who studied under the new generation of CIAM, was able to learn organically about urban issues in the Middle East and North African areas.

## 2.2. Architects-Activists in Algiers

Algeria had been a French colony since 1830 and the city had experienced many manifestations of modern urban planning. The sequence of French apartment-style facades in the coastal area at Algiers port already existed in the 1840s. In the 1930s, René Danger, Henri Prost and Le Corbusier made proposals and their plans were partially realized. From 1953, a French architect, Fernand Pouillon was invited by Mayor Jacques Chevallier to create three collective housing projects of *Diar es-Saada*, *Diar el-Mahcol* and *Climat de France* [9]. Banshoya himself lived in a *Diar el-Mahcol* apartment and Banshoya came into contact with the aesthetics of Algiers's colors and forms in everyday life.

## 3. AGENCE DU PLAN IN ALGIERS

### 3.1. L'Agence du Plan

In July 1954, Hanning was invited by the mayor of the city of Algiers and his colleague and student Banshoya also crossed the sea to follow him there.



Figure 1. Candillis's sketch of the Square House in l'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui  
"evolving" from Left to Right.

The mayor was Jacques Chevallier who had just founded a special institution called "Agence du Plan (Planning Agency)" in June 1954. It was a consultative body under the direct

control of Mayor Chevallier who intended to make Algiers into a “Ville d’Exemple” (model city) or a “Ville Pilote” (pilot city) of North Africa where indigenous Muslim Algerians and French Christian colons could cohabit. It was Pierre Dalloz who advised the mayor to found the Planning Agency following the example of the office for the reconstruction of the city center of Le Havre established by Auguste Perret. He was installed as the director of the Agency and G. Hanning was named as his manager. Under Hanning, there were some assistant architects including Banshoya.

According to an article in the *Alger Revue*, the Agency constituted two study groups, one for economical geography and ethnography and one for urban planning and architecture. Banshoya was belonged to the latter as one of the Agency chief Hanning’s adjuncts (Figure 2).

### 3.2. Urban Planning for Cohabitation

However, the period during which Banshoya stayed in Algiers was in quite a critical phase politically. Just after his arrival, the FLN (Front de Libération Nationale) launched their anti-France movement in November 1954. The battle of Algiers, famous for its acts of terrorism, described in the Gillo Pontecorvo movie started in 1957.

Under such circumstances, Chevallier's administrative policy was to improve people's living environment by providing low-cost houses as much as possible. In particular, it was quite important to make balance of housing policy for both Muslims and Christians. For example, here is a quotation from the minutes of the first municipal assembly on 11 May 1953 published in “*Bulletin Municipal Officiel de la Ville d’Alger*”, the city magazine at the time. Mustapha Bouchakor, a deputy mayor of Muslim origin is asking the mayor about the targets for Pouillon’s housing. The new mayor of Christian origin responds that it does not matter whether the habitants of the new houses are of Muslim or Christian origin (Table 1).

As mentioned here, Chevallier fought for cultural symbiosis between Algerian people regardless of their origins.

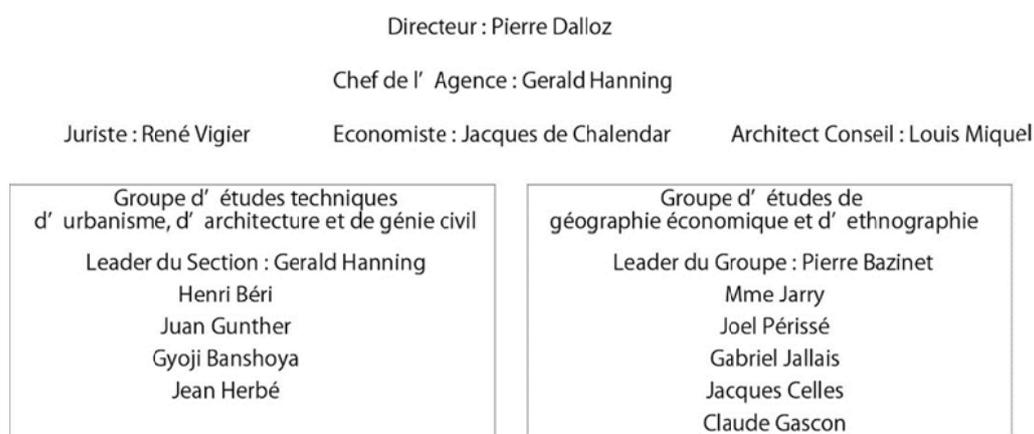


Figure 2. Organization of the Agence according to Alger Revue.

Table 1. Bouchakor and Chevallier's Discussion

Original Text: Procès-Verbal de la séance de 11 Mai publié dans «Bulletin Municipal Officiel de la Ville d'Alger»
<p>M. Bouchakor, Adjoint. -Evidemment, nous sommes favorables à l'exécution de ce projet, mais je tiens tout de même à répondre à la question d'ordre pratique que j'avais posée en Commission des Travaux et Finances: à quelle catégorie seront destinés ces appartements?</p> <p>M. Jacques Chevallier, Député-Maire. -C'est avec plaisir que je répèterais ce que je vous ai répondu en séance privée: je considère que tous les hommes, quelle que soit leur origine, doivent être logés et bien logés. Il n'est pas question de créer un habitat spécial pour les habitants d'origine européenne ou pour les musulmans, mais un habitat mixte dans lequel les européennes et les musulmans ayant atteint le degré d'évolution que vous connaissez, pourront cohabiter. Une répartition équitable sera faite entre les uns et les autres.</p>
English Translation
<p>Mr. Bouchakor, Deputy Mayor -Of course, we are in favor of the execution of this project, but I would still like to answer the question of practical order that I asked at the Commission of Public Enterprise and Finance: To which category of habitant will these apartments be distributed?</p> <p>Mr. Jacques Chevallier, Mayor -It is my pleasure to repeat what the response I gave you in our private session: I consider that all people, whatever their origin, have to be lodged and well lodged. It is not question of creating a special habitat for those of European origin or for Muslims, but of creating a mixed habitat in which both Europeans and Muslims who have attained a degree of evolution as we know, will be able to cohabit. There will be equitable distribution for all.</p>

Under Mayor Chevallier, many H.L.M. housing projects were planned and implemented. However, the political situation was so serious that M. Bouchakor from MTLD (Mouvement pour le Triomphe des Libertés Démocratiques) was arrested by French authorities just after the FLN rebellion. As the independence movement gathered momentum, Chevallier's idea of symbiosis became a target of criticism from both the Muslim and Christian sides. After years of struggle, Mayor Chevallier was forced to resign in May 1958 and then the Quatrième République collapsed in October 1958. Banshoya resigned from the Agency at the same time as Chevallier's resignation. In 1962, Algeria finally got independence.

## 4. BANSHOYA'S WORK IN ALGIERS

### 4.1. Two Testimonies about Banshoya's Work

Although there are some published documents that mention Banshoya, only two direct testimonies with information about exactly what he was doing at the Agency are available. The first of these is an article in the *Alger-Revue*, the city of Algiers magazine.

The second is a recent interview [10] from Jean-Jacques Deluz who was a colleague at the Agency and who would later become an architectural historian.

In May 1955, Banshoya was introduced as a member of the Agency in the *Alger-Revue* [11]. He was described as an "Architect-Engineer from the Tokyo Institute of Technology studying a plan for Evolutional Housing"(Figure 3). On the other hand, J-J.Deluz said in 2002 that Banshoya was engaged in the planning of roads and intersections because he was "genius of dessin as well as Japanese calligraphy" [12]. Here he gave two different opinions of Banshoya: the first was that Banshoya's work in traffic planning should be considered as simple fact while the second was that his statement about Banshoya's genius is qualitative based on Deluz's observations.

In order to give an overview of the work of Banshoya in Algiers, here it is necessary to compare these opinions with the CV created by Banshoya himself.

### 4.2. Teamwork Achievements

The projects that Banshoya participated in were noted in his C.V. [13] (Table 2).

*Alger-Revue* continuously reported the progress made with these projects. Here I will briefly explain Banshoya's work based on his CV and some articles from the *Alger-Revue*. Project No.2, the collective housing of the quarter called *Annassers*, was the most frequently reported. The first article about *Annassers* appeared in 1956 as a report on the project [14], then the second article in 1959 reported that Banshoya was working on maquette of the project site (Figure 4) [15]. In 1961, some photos were published showing a partial realization of *Annassers* [16].

Project No.3 was a project to for improvements on a huge, modern apartment designed by Bernard Zehrfus in 1952 in order to reorganize it from Corbusier-type space to a more sophisticated space. This improvement work was briefly reported in *Alger Revue*. Project No.4 was a project to provide H.L.M. to about 8,000 habitants squatting in the city center - completion was reported in 1959 [17]. However, it should be noted that no work credited solely to Banshoya appeared in these articles.

What exactly was he doing for these projects? As far as he was engaged in evolutional housing or H.L.M, he may still have been working as an architect of houses as Candillis expected.

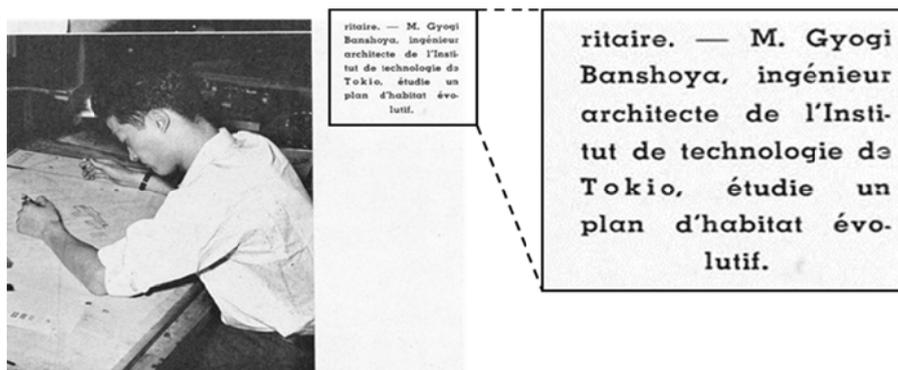


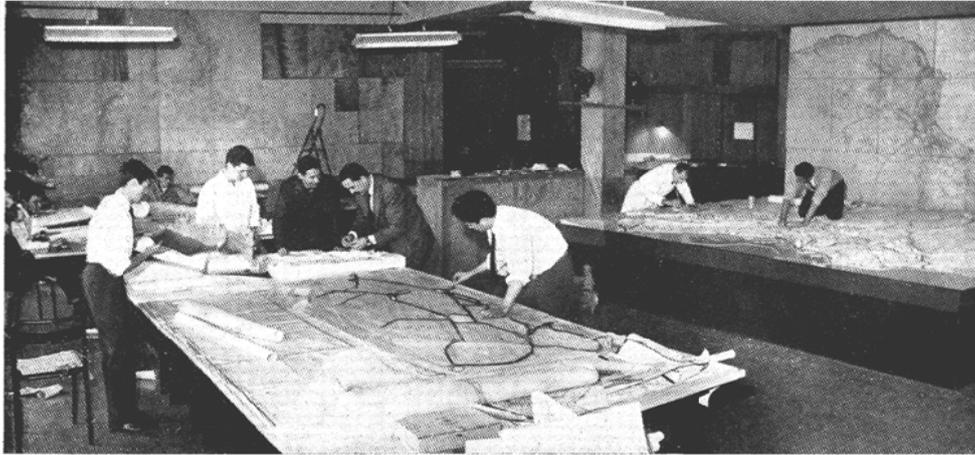
Figure 3. G. Banshoya introduced in *Alger Revue*.

Table 2. The projects Banshoya participated in, in Algeria

Original Text (Banshoya's C.V. at the end of 1960s)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Plan d'Aménagement au 1/2,000 ème de la réorganisation du centre-ville d'Alger (surface approximative: 30 ha)</li> <li>2. Plan d'Aménagement, études du plan de masse et mise au point d'infrastructures (du 1/5,000 ème au 1/500 ème) de la nouvelle ville des Annassers (100,000 habitants — 700 ha)</li> <li>3. Plan d'Aménagement du quartier du Champ de Manœuvres à Alger (1/500 ème — 1/200 ème — 1,500 habitants)</li> <li>4. Plan d'Aménagement et recasement du «bidonville» de Mahiedine (1/500 ème — 5,000 habitants).</li> <li>5. Plan d'Aménagement de Châteauneuf à Alger (1/500 ème — 3,000 habitants)</li> <li>6. Plan d'Aménagement et plan de masse du quartier de Frais-Vallon (1,500 habitants).</li> <li>7. Plusieurs études sur l'habitat pour le recasement de «Bidonville»</li> <li>8. Plan Directeur de la région d'Alger (1 million d'habitants (1/5,000 ème et 1/2,000 ème))</li> <li>9. Plan d'Aménagement d'urbanisme de Mostaganem (Oran) en association avec M. Pierre André EMERY architecte –urbaniste</li> </ol>
English Translation
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. District plan (1/2,000 scale) for the reorganization of the city center of Algiers (Approximate Surface : 30 ha)</li> <li>2. District plan, mass plan studies and infrastructure adjustment (from 1/5,000 scale to 1/500 scale) of the new city of Les Annassers (100,000 habitants – 700ha)</li> <li>3. District plan of the Champs de Manœuvres quarter in Algiers (1/500 scale — 1/200 scale — 1,500 habitants)</li> <li>4. District plan and readjustment of the Mahiedine slum (1/500 scale — 5,000 habitants).</li> <li>5. District plan of Châteauneuf in Algiers (1/500 scale — 3,000 habitants)</li> <li>6. District plan and mass plan of the Frais-Vallon quarter (1,500 habitants).</li> <li>7. Several studies on habitat for readjustment of “slums”</li> <li>8. Master plan of the region of Algiers (1 million inhabitants (1/5,000 scale and 1/2,000 scale))</li> <li>9. District plan for urban planning of Mostaganem (Oran) in association with M. Pierre André EMERY architect –urban planner</li> </ol>

Houses that were required in Algiers were those that would implement the cohabitation of Christians and Muslims. This design principle can be recognized as a kind of reconstitution of historic spatial composition because here the design tries to adapt to Algerian housing traditions, especially those of Algerian Muslims.

In this sense, a concrete result of Banshoya's achievements in Algiers is Project No.7 "Several Studies on Habitats for Readjustment of 'Slums'", reported in the Japanese architectural magazine *Kenchiku Kai* in December, 1955.



A l'Hôtel de ville. — Sur les vastes tables de l'Agence du Plan s'élaborent les projets d'urbanisme dont, au premier plan, celui des Annassers. On aperçoit au fond (à dr.), l'immense maquette de l'ensemble algérois, construction savante qui fait l'admiration de tous les visiteurs.

\*The text notes: A l'Hôtel de ville. Sur les vastes tables de l'Agence du Plan s'élaborent les projets d'urbanisme dont, au premier plan, celui des Annassers. On aperçoit au fond (à dr.), l'immense maquette de l'ensemble algérois, construction savante qui fait l'administration de tous le visiteurs.

Figure 4. Banshoya working on the maquette of Les Annassers.

It was an article in Japanese that Banshoya himself titled "Apartments in Algeria", with the main theme of housing problems stemming from the migration of people from rural areas into the cities, and his proposal for its solution was called "Temporary housing replacing tin-roofed shelters" [18]. This proposal is analyzed in the next section.

On the other hand, J-J. Deluz was a latecomer to the Agency in 1957 so his description is considered to refer to Banshoya's later days in Algiers.

Considering the two opinions mentioned above, it can be said that Banshoya's work was expanding from the study of evolutionary housing to a kind of traffic design. According to Banshoya's brother, Junichi, this change of interest was due to the influence of G. Hanning [19]. However, since evolutionary housing was originally a method to realize "*Habitat pour le Plus Grand Nombre*" which was partly in common in Italian low-cost housing area, it was quite natural that Banshoya had expanded his view to urban planning as collective housing planning. In addition, traffic planning was an essential element of French urban planning based on a clear road line.

Through his experiences in Algiers, Banshoya learned French-Algerian style urban planning in which micro scale design and macro scale planning were tightly unified.

In 1958, Mayor Chevallier received the architectural prize, "Grand Prix d'Architecture" from the Cercle d'Etudes Architecturales. In his acknowledgement of the Grand Prix, he

demonstrated his appreciation of the members of the Agency saying he owed all this success to them (Table. 3). In fact, he listed Japanese at the top of his list of member nationalities at the Agency [20]. There is no doubt that this "Japonais" refers to Banshoya who contributed to the Agency to make Chevallier's teamwork so successful. Because work for the Planning Agency was usually carried out in team projects, other Banshoya's works were not credited to him individually. However, it should be enough clear that Banshoya played an important role at the Planning Agency as a planner of evolutionary housing, and as a genius of design for road planning as well.

Table 3. Acknowledgement from Chevallier

Original Text (Chevallier, Jacques (1958), <L'allocution de M. J. Chevallier>, <i>Alger-Revue</i> , février 1958, pp.12-13)
M.Pierre Dalloz est venu nous aider dans cette tâche en groupant autour de lui un certain nombre de jeunes hommes et de jeunes femmes, français et étrangères (des Japonais, des Américains, des Polonais, des Péruviens) qui tous ensemble, travaillant en équipe, permettent de faire une synthèse de nos problèmes et de répondre à tout.
English Translation
Mr.Pierre Dalloz came to help us with this task with a group of young men and young women of both French and other nationalities (Japanese, American, Polish, Peruvian) who made it possible to analyze our issues and to respond to everything by working as a team.

## 5. ANALYSIS ON “TEMPORARY HOUSING REPLACING TIN-ROOFED SHELTERS”

### 5.1. Resources

The project in which Banshoya participated was not an official HLM but a project for temporary housing called *Cité de Recasement* which was a sort of slum upgrading project implemented widely in Algiers. For example, the HLM “Climat de France” by Fernand Pouillon in the “Legembre” quarter was constructed just beside the HLM, where farmers who had moved to the city from rural areas were received and educated in the manner of city life before the official HLM was constructed. In this section, the most detailed working report by Banshoya himself is analyzed. In his article “Apartments in Algeria” written in Japanese, he reported his work “Temporary housing replacing tin-roofed shelters” with the following planning documents:

- Plans: Block Plan, Unit Plan, Floor Plan (first step), Floor Plan (second step), Floor Plan (variation), Piping Plan, Roof Plan
- Photos: Reference photos of the slums
- Texts: Text of the article, Notes for the plans

## 5.2. General View of the Plan

The block plan was composed of 10 units of collective housing with a courtyard in each unit (Figure 5). A unit usually has 16 houses (Figure 6), and the floor plan (first step) of a house is composed of two rooms (Figure7).

On the whole, this project provides 160 houses in total on a rectangular site of 1.2 Ha (71m x 171m). Each room has 3 beds and a house has 6 beds in total. So, the planned population is 6 per house and 960 in total. The population density per house is quite high, but the room function is limited to be just a place to sleep. Meanwhile, a unit is 625 m<sup>2</sup> including its courtyard and about half of the project site is occupied by streets and green areas. As a result, this housing area appears to be open. The green areas are equipped with garden facilities such as showers, W.C.s, benches and fountains.

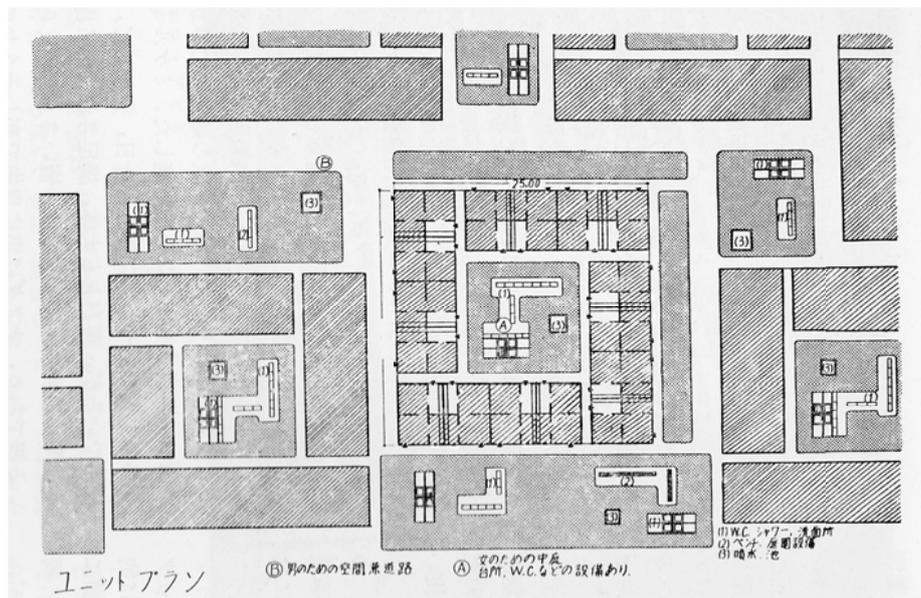


Figure 5. Block Plan with 10 units (1.2Ha).

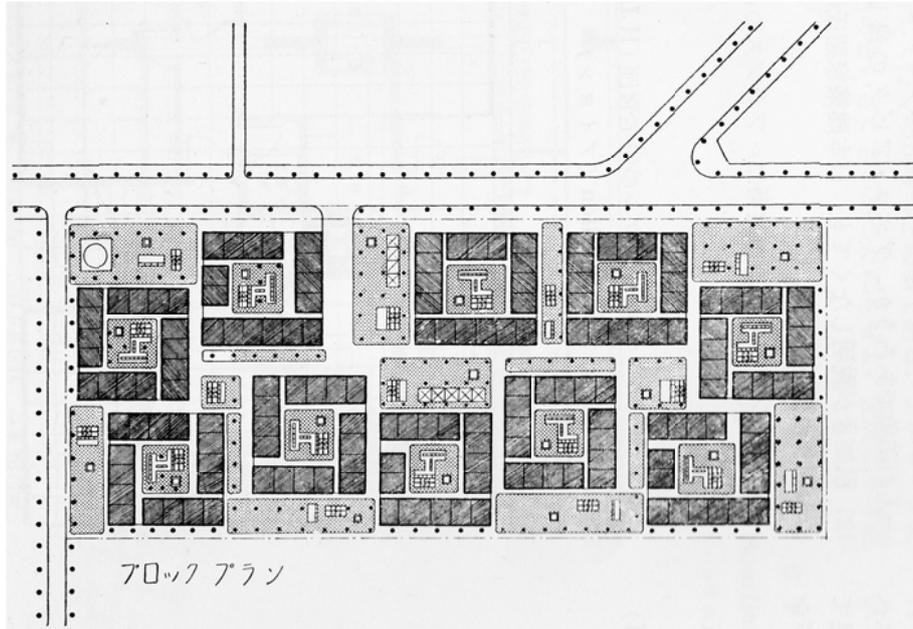


Figure 6. Unit Plan with 16 houses and a courtyard.

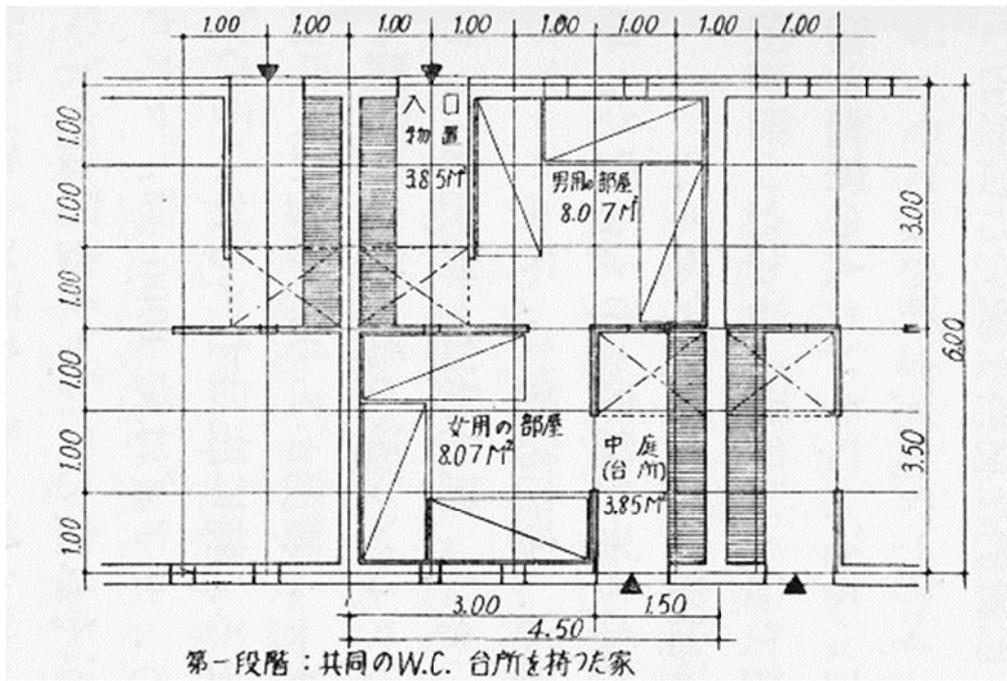


Figure 7. Floor Plan (first step) a house with a vacant patio or entrance.

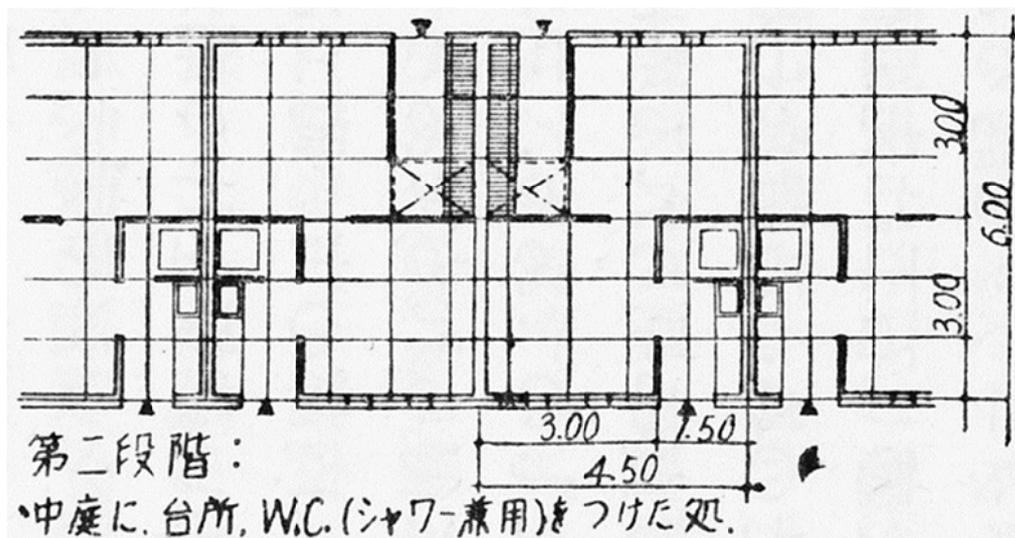


Figure 8. Floor Plan (second step) of a house with a patio equipped with a Kitchen and a W.C.

One room is for men and the other is for women and each has its own entrance. The entrance of the room for men is used as a closet, and the entrance for women is also used as the patio of the house. The living environment is enhanced in two steps: the W.C. and kitchen in the courtyard are shared by all the residents of the unit in the first step, and the floor plan (second step) indicates that each house will have its own W.C., shower and kitchen on the patio so that the house becomes more private (Figure 8).

### 5.3. Characteristics as Evolutional Housing

As Candilis said, evolutional housing is basically a method in which the architect provides only a minimum framework which is adapted to the lifestyle of the region, and its evolution and customization are left to the residents. In the case of “Temporary housing replacing tin-roofed shelters”, what is provided as a framework, and what is left to the residents?

At first, the framework is structured with the three layers of [Unit]-[House]-[Room]. According to the text, then, it is suggested that three rules based on Arab custom should be respected.

- (1) The interior cannot be seen from the exterior
- (2) The courtyard is necessary
- (3) Men mainly live outside of the house, and women mainly live inside the house or outside in areas where there are only women. Women never show their faces outside of the house except in the presence of their husbands.

Let's examine how the three rules are reflected in the plans. For (1), windows are limited to only two per room, and the entrance is intentionally created so that the interior cannot be seen from the exterior. For (2), a courtyard at the unit level and a patio at the house level are planned. But the former is far from the typical image of a courtyard with a fountain and greenery because it is used as a kitchen and W.C. as well, and the latter is so small that it seems almost makeshift.

And for (3), the streets and green areas outside of the unit are designated as a space for men, while the courtyards of the units are defined as a space for women. Rooms for men are planned towards the outer side of the unit while rooms for women are planned towards inner side of the unit to them locate in the heart of unit. In other words, the entrance (and actually the patio as well) is carefully planned to directly connect to the courtyard of the unit. All these rules are related to the separation of public and private, and the rules are reflected in all the levels. But the most respected element is the separation of men and women, and the framework is structured by the unit which realizes physically the separation of men and women.

Another question was which manners of urban life are expected to be learnt and developed. The first thing was how to use the W.C.s installed inside and outside of the unit. For the residents of *bidonvilles*, this was an urgent issue. The next custom to be acquired was to share a kitchen. These manners are considered to be the actualization of the separation of men rooted to Islam, and could give women a good sense of security.

However, Arabs, who think a great deal of privacy, were not satisfied with them. So in the floor plan (second step), the sharing of daily facilities in the courtyard is abolished, and the facilities are built in each house. Thanks to this enhancement of privacy, the houses are completed with a small but private patio. On the other hand, the courtyard is no longer a place for daily activities but is now an open space with greenery. In other words, in the second step, the rooms for women are further divided into a room and a patio meaning that there is more private space located in the depth of the house, while the courtyard becomes more public and plays the role of a meeting place. What was left to the residents in “Temporary housing replacing tin-roofed shelters”? They were to make a living environment with enough respect for privacy using the courtyard and patio. This is certainly a characteristic of evolutionary housing.

#### **5.4. Relationship with the Concept of “the Islamic City”**

From the modern viewpoint, the three rules may seem to be a little old fashioned. For example, Abu-Lughod criticized the typical concept of “the Islamic city”[21]:

They have been influenced, whether wittingly or not, by a body of literature produced by Western Orientalists purporting to describe the essence of the Islamic city. ...Can we nurture neighborhoods that are supportive but not defensive? Can we foster privacy not for women alone but for households? Can we guard the rights of neighbors while still applying laws consistently? That is the task Arab city planners must set for themselves.

Her discussion is important not only for historians but also for architects/planners. “Temporary housing replacing tin-roofed shelters” was a project from before 30 years from Abu-Lughod’s discussion, but it is still quite important because evolutionary housing is just a method to adapt to the local culture and to reconstitute historical space.

At first, the block plan does not seem to be much of a labyrinth which was the typical image of “the Islamic city”. At most, the units are not arranged in an accurate grid, but they are a little slanted towards each other in order to avoid making the space inorganic. In addition, there is no access to blind alleys. Blind alleys are also typical of “the Islamic city”. The units have their entrances on all sides and access is possible from any side through the room for men. It is very

different from Ecochard's plan in Morocco in which there were unconditionally blind alleys even though they were quite narrow. The courtyards of units are not completely closed in; there are four narrow alleys directly connecting it to the outside. So, this is not a simple imitation of the traditional style of courtyard. In addition, the four alleys don't meet at right angles, so visitors cannot pass through the courtyard and go straight on. They are expected to stop or stay to communicate with the residents. Men are permitted to access this area. On the whole, it is certain that the courtyard is the core of the spatial composition of the site, but the site give the impression of being quite open because of the many communal alleys and green areas.

As mentioned above, "Temporary housing replacing tin-roofed shelters" is not a physical imitation of a typical historical space in "the Islamic city". It was not expected to be traditional urban housing where Arabs live from generation to generation based on the strict rules of the city life. Rather, it was a temporary housing project to house people who had arrived from rural areas and had been forced to live in slums suddenly without understanding what exactly had happened to them and to help them live their lives day by day.

## 6. SPATIAL EXPERIENCE IN ALGIERS

As this chapter is a biography, it deals with the question of how Banshoya's talent was cultivated and directed to the Middle East and North Africa through his spatial experience in Algiers. Here we refer to some letters with photos or sketches from Banshoya's family.

In a letter dated 27 October 1955, the family described their new house in *Diar el-Mahcol*. According to the *Alger Revue*, the opening ceremony of *Diar el-Mahcol* was held on 3 October, so they moved to this house, a Pouillon masterpiece, just three weeks after this. The sketch accompanying the letter depicts the view of the Mediterranean from their house. What is most important about this sketch is the existence of a mosque in this new quarter. The existence of a mosque implies that this quarter was planned not only for French people but also for Algerian Muslims (Figure 9).



Figure 9.

The bay of Algiers viewed from Diar el-Mahçol.

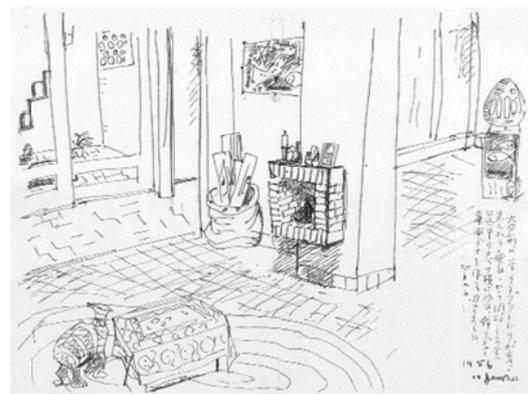


Figure 10.

Sketch of the interior of Banshoya's house.

A letter dated 30 December 1955 reported that they visited the *Casbah* (the old city registered as a World heritage site in 1992) to experience its lively and exotic townscape. Banshoya surely came into contact with the various colors and forms of the sea, sky, greenery, fruit and white buildings in Algiers.

A sketch drawn on 12 January 1956 shows the interior of the house including a balcony, a gallery and a *pechka* (Figure 10). A letter dated 19 March 1956 describes their neighbors, G. Hanning and Jean Herbé. According to the letter, Banshoya's teacher, Hanning, lived in the house to the left of Banshoya's house in *Diar el-Mahcol* as the photo shows. And Jean Herbé, who was his best friend, lived in the house to the right. At least three principal Agency staff were living in apartments located on the edge of *Diar el-Mahcol* (Figure 11 and 12). According to an interview with the family, Banshoya and his neighbors were really good friends. Within the scope of this close relationship, Banshoya might have been able to learn both officially and privately from his neighbors. J-J.Deluz stated that he replaced Banshoya when he left Algiers in 1958.



Figure 11. Overview of Diar el-Mahcol.

A photo in another letter dated 19 March 1956 shows the location of the Agence du Plan (Figure 13). It is located on the top floor of the city hall which is in a row of on the coastal road. This information can be supported by *Alger Revue*. This means that Banshoya's work place was located in a building with a typical French facade in Algiers.

According to an interview with Banshoya's wife, he really loved the spatial characteristics of Algiers where French colonial architecture and urban design, Ottoman architecture and Islamic architecture are mixed. It is certain that this spatial experience drew Banshoya to the Middle East and North Africa.



Figure 12. Banshoya's house.



Figure 13. The Agency on a street of apartments.

## 7. CONCLUSION

According to some articles in *Alger Revue*, Banshoya was still young and devoted to the study of an evolutionary housing system. On the other hand, Jean-Jacques Deluz, one of the members of l'Agence du Plan, said that Banshoya was also involved in a kind of traffic design. How should be interpreted these two different preoccupations? Banshoya started to work on not only housing design but also on urban planning in Algiers probably because micro scale and macro scale were clearly unified in French-Algerian architecture and urban design. In fact, he participated in projects for district plans for the city center of Algiers, the new city of *Les Annassers*, the quarter of *Champs de Manœuvres*, *Mahiedine*, *Chateauneuf*, *Frais-Vallon*, and the master plan of the region of Algiers. However, work at the Agence du Plan was mostly teamwork and no work was credited to Banshoya alone.

Based on the findings of this chapter, a number of assumptions can be made. Firstly, the fact that Chevallier listed "Japanese" first in his acknowledgment suggests that Banshoya was very familiar to the mayor, and that Banshoya was involved in many important tasks for Chevallier's housing projects - his activity was to stand out among the team members. Secondly, Algiers was an ideal place to examine his theory for evolutionary housing because the creation of low-cost housing reconstituting tradition based on modernism was an urgent issue here, too. In fact, the concept of evolutionary housing was clearly reflected in his slum project "Temporary housing replacing tin-roofed shelters" as far as it had a step by step development process. Thirdly, for Banshoya, Algiers was not only a place of work but also a place from which he learned many things. He himself lived in Pouillon's new apartments, he visited the old city of Algiers, and commuted to the city center. These diverse experiences in Algiers enlightened him and would provide a basis of knowledge about architecture and urban planning in the Middle East and North Africa.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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## NOTE AND REFERENCES

- [1] According to Matsubara (2012), an analysis of "The Square House (1953)" shows that the influence of Kiyoshi Seike brought about a concept of reconstitution of historic spatial composition to realize width and convertibility in low-cost houses. This theory was introduced as a symbol of the transformation of Japanese housing and accepted in international architectural trends at the time. Matsubara Kosuke (2012), <The early works of Gyoji Banshoya in Japan>, *Journal of Architecture Planning*, AIJ, vol.77. No.674, pp.931-940.
- [2] The author conducted a number of interviews with Banshoya's wife intermittently from 2006 to 2012 and an interview with his colleague Mr. Masao Okui in January 2006.
- [3] See Banshoya, Gyoji(1953a), <Seihokei no Ie>, *Shin Kenchiku*, May 1953, pp.18-22.

- [4] Banshoya, Gyoji(1953c), <Sengo Italy no Jutaku Chiku Keikaku>, *Shin Kenchiku*, Sep. 1953, pp.42-52.
- [5] Banshoya, Gyoji(1953b), <Maison de plan carré à Tokio>, *L'architecture d'aujourd'hui*, no.49, octobre 1953, pp.2-3.
- [6] See Candillis, Georges(1953), <L'habitation Individuelle Minimum>, *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*, no.49, octobre 1953, pp.0-1.
- [7] Anon. (1981), <La carrière internationale d'un grand urbaniste: Gerald Hanning (1919-1980)>, *Cahier de l'IAURIF*, vol.62, 1981, pp.1-12.
- [8] From Banshoya's CV. "Housing for the General Public" was a movement led by Ecochard in Morocco to provide many low cost houses to resolve the slum problems. It was also called "Urban Planning for General People". ATBAT also participated in this movement.
- [9] For example, Fernand Pouillon(1973), *Mémoires d'un architecte*, Le Livre de poche, 1973.
- [10] Deluz, Jean-Jacques (2003), <La contribution de l'Agence du Plan>, à Jean-Louis Cohen (ed), *Alger, paysage urbain et architectures, 1800-2000*, Besancon, 2003, pp.228-251.
- [11] Dalloz, Pierre (1955), <Le bureau du plan de la ville d'Alger>, *Alger-Revue*, mai 1955.
- [12] Deluz (2003) p.233. Banshoya was employed as the third architect of the agency. Deluz himself became involved with the agency in 1957 and became the director in 1959.
- [13] From Banshoya's CV.
- [14] Dalloz, Pierre (1956), <Naissance d'une cité de 100,000 habitants>, *Alger-Revue*, Noël 1956.
- [15] Anon. (1959a), <Les Annassers>, *Alger-Revue*, printemps 1959, pp.36-43.
- [16] Anon. (1961), <Naissance d'une cité: Visite aux chantiers des Annassers>, *Alger-Revue*, été 1961, pp.8-9.
- [17] A. Jahan (1959), <Mahieddine: vaste bidonville au coeur d'Alger va faire place à une cité H.L.M. moderne>, *Alger-Revue*, automne 1959, pp.32-37.
- [18] Banshoya, Gyoji(1955), <Algeria no Apart>, *Kenchiku Kai*, vol.4, No.12, Dec 1955, pp.2-7. This article was composed of three parts: an introduction to urban planning in Algeria, a critical essay comparing Louis Miquel's *Aero Habitat* and F. Pouillon's *Diar es-Saada* and *Diar el-Mahcol*, and a short report of his own work subtitled "Temporary housing replacing tin-roofed shelters".
- [19] Source: Junichi Banshoya (brother).
- [20] Chevallier, Jacques (1958), <L'allocution de M.J.Chevallier>, *Alger-Revue*, février 1958, pp.12-13.
- [21] Abu-Lughod, Janet L.(1987), <The Islamic City--Historic Myth, Islamic Essence, and Contemporary Relevance>, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, No.19, 1987, pp. 155-176.