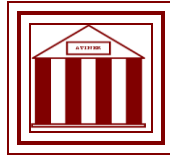


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**Numerical and Economical Study of
Thermal Insulation in Multi-layer Wall
Exposed to Real Climatic Conditions**

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This paper should be cited as follows:

Tamene, Y., Bougriou, C. and Abboudi, S., (2014) "Numerical and Economical Study of Thermal Insulation in Multi-layer Wall Exposed to Real Climatic Conditions" Athens: ATINER'S Conference Paper Series, No: CIV2014-0975.

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Email: info@atiner.gr URL: www.atiner.gr
URL Conference Papers Series: www.atiner.gr/papers.htm
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ISSN: **2241-2891**
25/6/2014

Numerical and Economical Study of Thermal Insulation in Multi-layer Wall Exposed to Real Climatic Conditions

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Abstract

In this work a numerical study of the thermal behavior of a multi-layer building wall (3 and 5 layers) is presented. The external side of the wall is subjected to the local atmospheric conditions of Algeria. The finite differences method is used to solve the transient heat transfer equations through the building wall, which is submitted to a solar heat flux, and a convective heat transfer with the environment. A sinusoidal forms of the external temperature and the solar flux were used to approach the measured data of Ouargla city (Algeria) (attitude 31°57' N, longitude: 5° 20'E, altitude 123-315 m), during summer and winter seasons. An economic study is presented and a solution for a good thermal insulation at a lower cost is proposed.

Keywords: Heat transfer, solar flux, transient regime, economical study, multi-layer wall.

Introduction

Global warming is not currently disputed by the scientific community, according to forecasts; Earth may suffer from a global warming of 1.8 C to 4 C, if no serious measures are taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (Kaemmerlen 2009).

One area that consumes a lot of energy and contributes significantly to the proliferation of greenhouse gas emissions is the building sector. A decrease of the energy consumption in buildings, through improved insulation of walls will have consistent economical and environmental benefits.

The building sector is not the only concerned by the thermal insulation optimization, it appears in all domains where energy consumption is important in volume and cost: example the cold rooms (Al-Radaedeh et al 2013), transportation (road, rail, etc.), and in the conservation of foods and medical products. The insulation also has an environmental interest because the reduction of energy consumption remains a priority in the context of sustainable development.

Unfortunately, in Algeria and in many other third world countries, little importance is given to the thermal insulation; the price is the most important. In the current paper, the research of the optimal configuration for a good thermal insulation at a lower cost is presented. For this, we have developed a numerical program in FORTRAN to study the heat transfer in a multi-layer building wall under extreme atmospheric conditions of Ouargla city in the south of Algeria, during the months of January and of July.

Formulation of the Problem

We will be interested to external walls of buildings, in order to find the best configuration for a good thermal insulation, for this we have studied the case of a wall composed of three layers Figure1 and another composed of five layers Figure 2.

Figure 1. Wall Composed of Three Layers

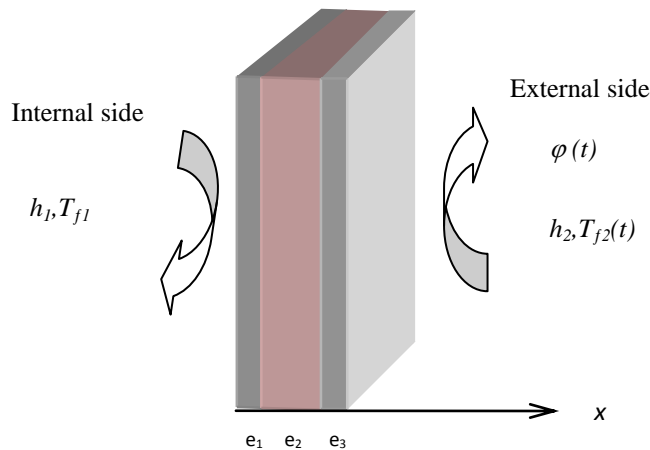
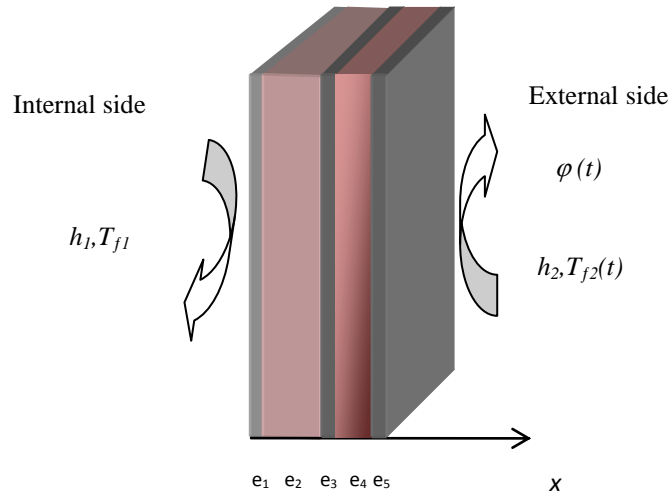


Figure 2. Wall Composed of Five Layers



For the solar flux and the external air temperatures, we have chosen to use the climatic data of the region of Ouargla, south of Algeria (attitude $31^{\circ} 57' N$, longitude $5^{\circ} 20' E$, altitude 123 to 315 m), during the month of July for its high temperatures and the month of January for its low temperatures.

The measured solar heat fluxes (Capderou 1986), is presented, for the two mentioned months (Table 1).

Table1. Measured Solar Heat Fluxes.

January		July	
Time (h)	Flux ϕ (w/m ²)	Time (h)	Flux ϕ (w/m ²)
0	0	0	0
1	160	1	120
2	320	2	320
3	450	3	535
4	550	4	700
5	570	5	850
6	550	6	950
7	450	7	980
8	320	8	950
9	160	9	850
10	0	10	700
		11	535
		12	320
		13	120
		14	0

An interpolation of these data leads to the following relationships:

For January month:

$$\varphi = A' \sin\left(\frac{2\pi t}{\tau}\right) \quad \text{for } 0 \leq t \leq 10 \text{ h} \quad (1)$$

$$\varphi = 0 \quad \text{for } 10 \leq t \leq 24 \text{ h} \quad (2)$$

For July month:

$$\varphi = A'' \sin\left(\frac{2\pi t}{\tau}\right) \quad \text{for } 0 \leq t \leq 14 \text{ h} \quad (3)$$

$$\varphi = 0 \quad \text{for } 14 \leq t \leq 24 \text{ h} \quad (4)$$

Were $A' = 570$ and $A'' = 980$

Figures 3 and 4, show a good agreement between the proposed relationships and the measured heat flux.

Figure 3. Solar Heat Flux for July

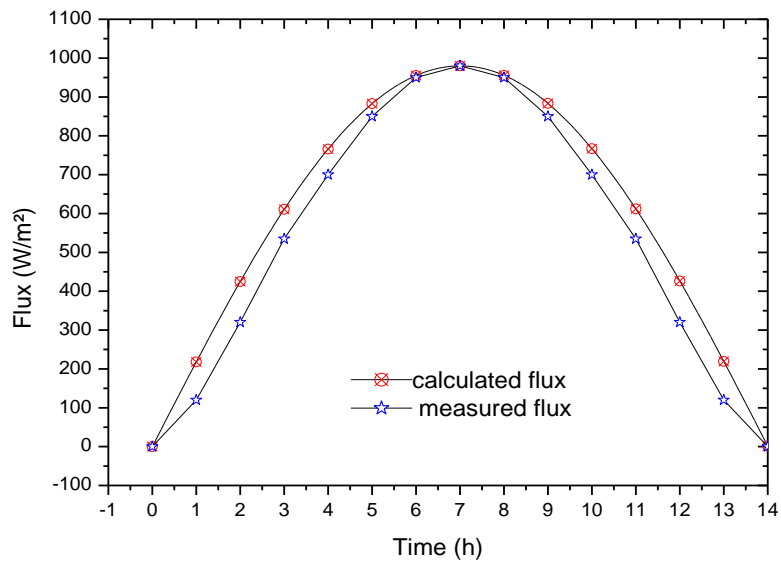
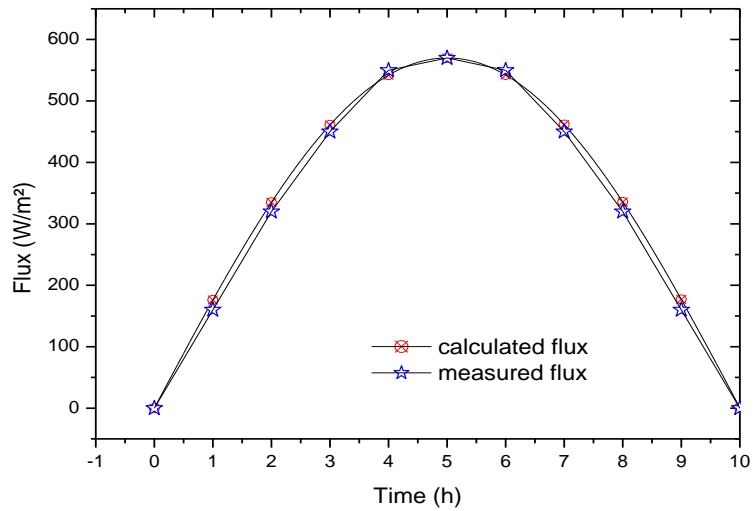


Figure 4. *Solar Hear Flux for January*



The values of the average maximum temperature and average minimum temperature are used to find the relationship below.

$$T = A \sin\left(\frac{2\pi t}{\tau}\right) + B \quad \text{for } 0 \leq t \leq 24 \quad (5)$$

Were $A = 7,05$ and $B = 10,95$ for January

And $A = 8,1$ and $B = 36,8$ for July

Representing this relation, we have obtained the figures 5 and 6. This corresponds to the measured values, obtained from the international website of meteorology, <http://www.tutiempo.net/en/Climate/Ouargla/>, (Table 2).

Figure 5. *Evolution of the Temperature for July*

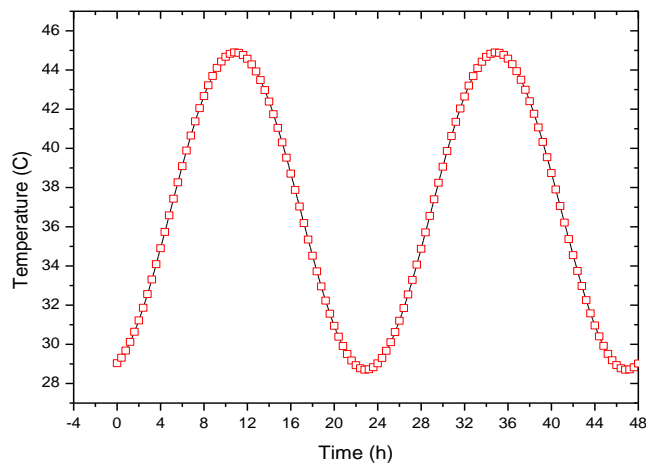


Figure 6. Evolution of the Temperature for January

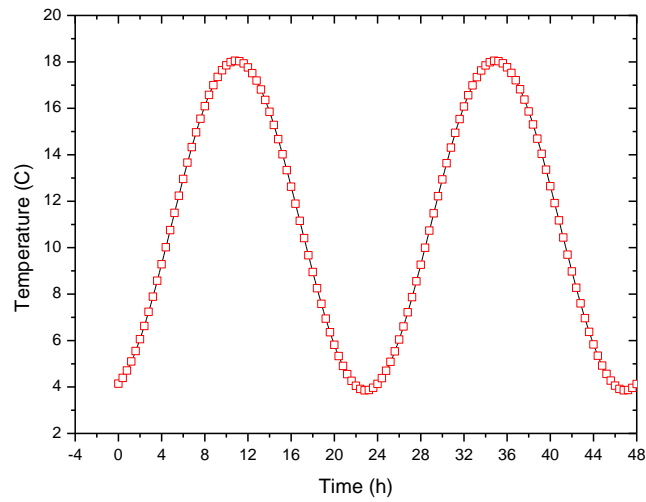


Table 2. Measured Temperatures

	January		July			January		July	
Day	T _M	T _m	T _M	T _m	Day	T _M	T _m	T _M	T _m
1	19	2,5	45,8	29	17	16,4	2	41	29,5
2	20,4	2	43,6	28,4	18	13,5	9	40,4	28,7
3	20,1	6,4	44	30	19	15,5	7	38,9	25,8
4	17,5	6	46	28,4	20	16	4,5	40,6	24,4
5	19,6	1	47	31,8	21	16,6	4	44	26
6	24	6	48,3	31,2	22	13,4	7,4	43,8	26
7	17,8	5	48,6	32	23	16,7	7,5	37,5	26,2
8	18,2	1,6	48,3	32,5	24	20	4,7	37,7	24,5
9	18	1	48,3	33	25	21,1	4	41,6	25
10	17,4	1	48	31,1	26	19,3	4,3	45,5	24,4
11	16,5	0	46,5	30	27	20	4,3	45	29
12	16,2	0,1	47	29,2	28	16,8	7	46	25
13	16,5	0	48	29,9	29	20	6,2	46	28,5
14	19,5	0,4	49	30,1	30	15,3	6,5	46,8	29,4
15	20,5	0,6	49,6	31	31	17,8	6,5	45	30
16	20	2	43,5	31,2					
Monthly means						18	3,9	44,9	28,7

T_M: Maximal temperature (°C)

T_m: Minimal temperature (°C)

Numerical Resolution

Assumptions

Heat transfer in the wall is one dimensional and unsteady.

- Physical properties are constants.

- No heat sources in the wall.

So, the heat transfer in the multilayer wall is governed by the following equations:

$$\alpha_i \frac{\partial^2 T_i}{\partial x^2} = \frac{\partial T_i}{\partial t}, \quad l_{i-1} \leq x \leq l_i, \quad t > 0, \quad i = 1, \dots, 5 \quad (6)$$

Where:

$$\alpha_i = \frac{\lambda_i}{\rho_i C_i}, \quad l_0 = 0, \quad l_i = l_{i-1} + e_i, \quad L = l_5$$

And this initial and boundary conditions

Boundary conditions

$$-\lambda_1 \frac{\partial T_1}{\partial x} = h_1 (T_{f1} - T_1) \quad x = 0 \quad (7)$$

$$\lambda_i \frac{\partial T_i}{\partial x} = \lambda_{i+1} \frac{\partial T_{i+1}}{\partial x}, \quad T_i = T_{i+1} \quad x = l_i, \quad i = 1, 4 \quad (8)$$

$$-\lambda_3 \frac{\partial T_3}{\partial x} = h_2 (T_3 - T_{f2}) - \beta \varphi(t) \quad x = l_5 \quad (9)$$

where $\beta = 0.3$

Initial conditions:

$$T_i = T_0 \quad \text{for } t = 0 \quad \text{and} \quad 0 \leq x \leq l_5 \quad (10)$$

The resolution of the system of equations (6) with boundary conditions (7), (8), (9) and initial conditions (10) is performed by finite differences method according to the Crank-Nicolson scheme (Gerald 1978). At each time, the Tri Diagonal Matrix Algorithm (TDMA) (Boumahrat and Gourdi.1993) is used to solve the obtained algebraic system.

The simulated results are performed for commonly materials used in building constructions. Their physical properties (the specific heat C_p , the mass density ρ and the thermal conductivity λ) are presented in Table 3, (Tamene et al 2011), (Bekkouche et al 2003).

Table 3. Physical Characteristics

	Brick	Mortar	Plaster	Air	Polystyrene
ρ (kg/m ³)	1900	2050	825	1.2	29
C_p (j/kg.k)	920	950	1000	1008	1850
λ (w/km)	1.11	1.96	0.25	0.026	0.04

The initial and boundary conditions used are:

$$h_1 = 5 \text{ W/m}^2\text{°C}, h_2 = 10 \text{ W/m}^2\text{°C}, T_{f1} = 25 \text{ °C}, T_0 = T_m$$

Results and Discussion

To verify the program we have compared the results obtained by calculating the temperatures at the interfaces in the steady state with those calculated by the program in the case of a wall composed with five layers (configuration 2). The solar flux is made zero, the indoor and outdoor air temperature are taken constants.

Numerically, the number of steps used in each layer is as follows:

$$N_1 = 8, \quad N_2 = 30, \quad N_3 = 12, \quad N_4 = 15 \text{ and } N_5 = 8$$

At steady state, and based on the relationship of the flux we have:

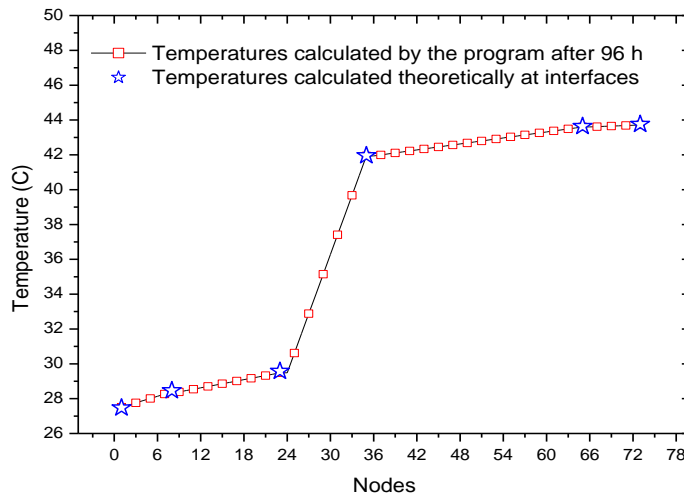
$$\phi = \frac{T_{f1} - T_{f2}}{R} \quad \text{with } T_{f1} = 25\text{°C} \text{ and } T_{f2} = 45\text{°C}$$

$$R = R_1 + R_2 + R_3 + R_4 + R_5 + R_6 + R_7 = \frac{1}{h_1} + \frac{e_1}{\lambda_1} + \frac{e_2}{\lambda_2} + \frac{e_3}{\lambda_3} + \frac{e_4}{\lambda_4} + \frac{e_5}{\lambda_5} + \frac{1}{h_2}$$

$$T_{i+1} = T_i - \phi R_{i+1} \quad \text{were } i = 0,6 \quad T_0 = T_{f1} \quad T_7 = T_{f2}$$

The interface temperatures obtained at steady state are the same as predicted analytically, figure 7.

Figure 7. Evolution of the Temperature through the Multilayer Wall



Several configurations of multi-layer materials (Table 4) were analyzed to find the best material providing better thermal insulation with a lower cost.

Table 4. Different Configurations

Thickness	Configuration 1	Configuration 2	Configuration3	Configuration 4
e_1	2 cm plaster	2 cm plaster	2 cm plaster	2 cm plaster
e_2	10 cm brick	10 cm brick	30 cm brick	15 cm brick
e_3	4 cm air	4 cm polys	2 cm mortar	2 cm mortar
e_4	15 cm brick	15 cm brick	0	0
e_5	2 cm mortar	2 cm mortar	0	0

For all cases, the internal temperatures calculated for July month are presented in figures 8 and 9. For each configuration, the domain variation of the temperature is:

Configuration 1: $26.75^{\circ}\text{C} \leq T \leq 27.15^{\circ}\text{C}$

Configuration 2: $27.45^{\circ}\text{C} \leq T \leq 28.05^{\circ}\text{C}$

Configuration 3: $30.75^{\circ}\text{C} \leq T \leq 33^{\circ}\text{C}$

Configuration 4: $27.5^{\circ}\text{C} \leq T \leq 35^{\circ}\text{C}$

Figure 8. The Temperature of the Internal Side (1st and 2nd Configuration)

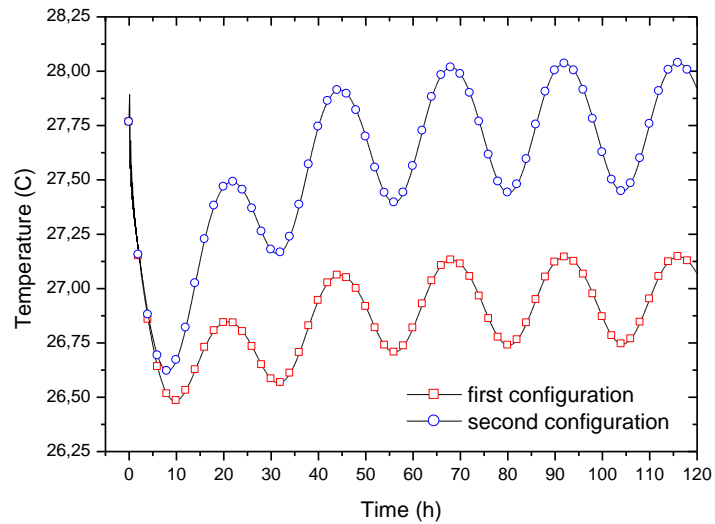
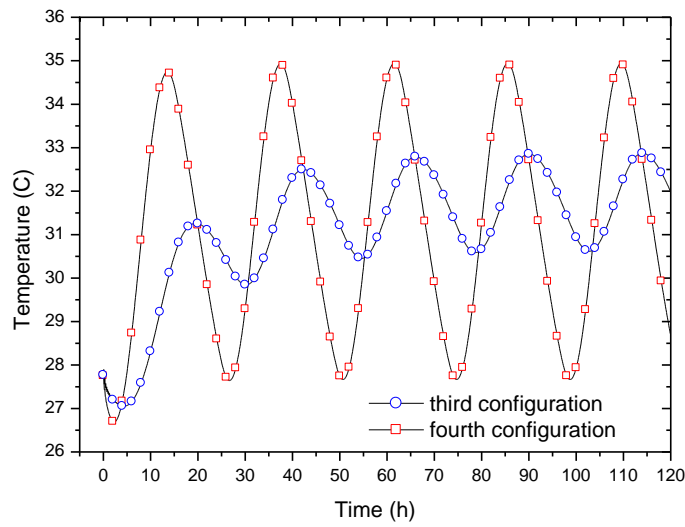


Figure 9. *The Temperature of the Internal Side (3rd and 4th Configuration)*



Since, in summer the internal temperature must be as low as possible relative to the external, so we note that for a good thermal insulation, in summer the first configuration is better than the second, the third and the fourth.

Similarly, the results of January are presented in figures 10 and 11

However, we see that the temperature change is as follows:

Configuration 1: $23.75^{\circ}\text{C} \leq T \leq 24.5^{\circ}\text{C}$

Configuration 2: $23.5^{\circ}\text{C} \leq T \leq 24^{\circ}\text{C}$

Configuration 3: $21.5^{\circ}\text{C} \leq T \leq 22.75^{\circ}\text{C}$

Configuration 4: $19^{\circ}\text{C} \leq T \leq 22.75^{\circ}\text{C}$

Figure 10. *The Temperature of the Internal Side (1st and 2nd Configuration)*

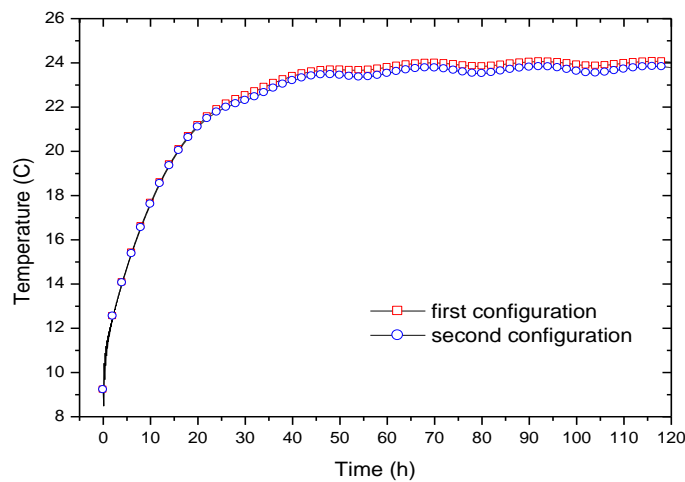
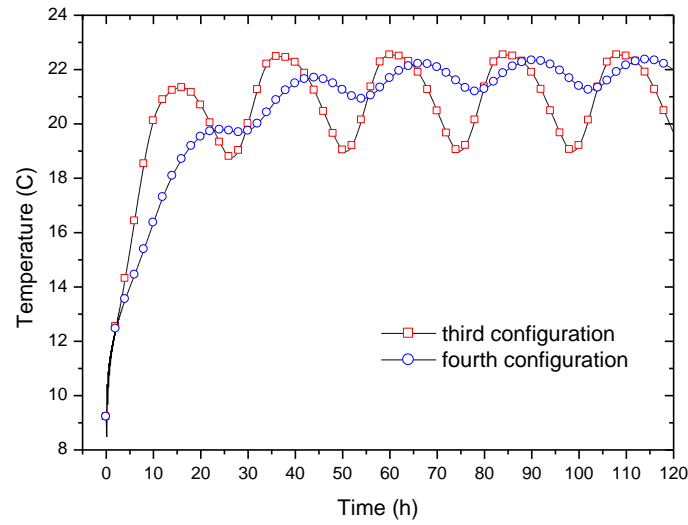


Figure 11. *The Temperature of the Internal (3rd and 4th Configuration)*



In winter the internal temperature must be as high as possible relative to the external, so we note that for a good thermal insulation, in winter the first configuration is better than the second, the third and the fourth.

Economical Study

From the thermal analysis presented above, we propose an economic analysis in terms of cost of the four configurations. The materials used are brick and polystyrene their prices are shown in Table 5, for the internal and external layers it is the same for the four configurations.

Table 5. *Material Prices (120 DA = 1 Euro).*

Materials	Dimensions (cm)	Price (DA)
Brick 12	30x20x15	0.25
Brick 8	30x20x10	20
Polystyrene	200x100x4	300

The number of brick required, for a surface wall (4 m x 3 m), is:

$$M_1 = \frac{12}{0.3 \times 0.2} = 200$$

Then the cost is: $P_1 = 30 M_1 = 6000$ DA

And the cost of a double wall of brick is: $P_2 = 2 P_1 = 12000$ DA

For a wall thickness of 10 cm, the number of bricks required is:

$$M'_3 = \frac{12}{0.3 \times 0.2} = 200$$

Then the cost is: $P'_3 = 20 M'_3 = 4000$ DA

The number of the polystyrene plate required is: $M''_4 = \frac{12}{1 \times 2} = 6$

And the price of polystyrene is: $P_4 = 300 M''_4 = 1800 \text{ DA}$

So, the cost of double wall of 15 cm and 10 cm of brick spaced a 4 cm layer of polystyrene is: $P''_5 = P''_1 + P'_3 + P_4 = 11800 \text{ DA}$

And the cost of double wall of 15 cm and 10 cm of brick spaced a 4 cm layer of air is: $P''_6 = P''_1 + P_3 = 6000 + 4000 = 10000 \text{ D.A}$

A summary of the prices of the four configurations in euro is shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Configurations Prices

Configuration	First	second	third	fourth
Price (Euro)	83.33	98.33	100	50
Price per m ² (Euro)	6.94	8.19	8.33	4.16

From a viewpoint of heat insulation and price, the first configuration is better than the second and third. Note that the fourth configuration is the cheaper but it ensures the poor thermal insulation.

Conclusion

A numerical study of the thermal behavior of multi-layer wall for four configuration used in buildings is presented. The real climatic conditions (the measured solar flux and the temperature of external air) of Ouargla town are used to find the better thermal insulation in winter and summer, with the lower cost. An economic study has been presented and shown that it is possible to have a good thermal insulation with a lower price. Therefore and to have a good thermal insulation with a cheaper cost we recommend to use the first configuration, the economy is made also in long-term on energy consumption and the environment protection.

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