

Prof. Dr. Ali MUKA

A MONOGRAPHY DEDICATED TO OBJECTS OF THE MUSLIM CULT

Recently it was published a new monography in the field of the history of the Albanian architecture, dedicated to the specific genre of this architecture – mosques built from the 15th century to the 20th century. Building of these shrines of the Muslim faith during a period of time that is not at all short one, along with other preserved genres, seen as architectural phenomena, form a picture of interest for the time. As it is pointed out in the book, among the monuments of the Muslim cult that we inherit by the past, mosques occupy the main place because of their number, values and spread. Also, differently from other building genres of the same period; there exist comparatively many data, publications of researchers and contemporaneous travelers, and archival documentation.

Prof. Dr. Aleksandër Meksi, a well-known historian of the architecture inherited by the past, authors the book. Along with other colleagues, he has been engaged for decades in *investigation, documentation, protection and restoration* of the monuments of architecture in Albania, especially those of cult.

In this monography, it is evident that these buildings occupy an important place in the Albanian architecture. They have been built all over the territories inhabited by Albanians during these centuries, thus remaining live testimonies of a very significant period in the history of this people. The interested reader acquires information on studiers who investigated in field, documented and studied these monuments of cult, especially those of the last decades of the XX century. Also, the reader is introduced with

researchers' names, one of which is the author himself.

In the end of these modest notes, I will stop at any essential feature of this monograph:

1. The to-date studies including the book at question constitute a contribution of value; taken as a whole, they complete the picture for knowing the architecture of the XV-XX centuries, they tell about the degree of this architecture's development and the level of the masters of building. They testify that mosques as buildings of cult are natural part of our medieval architecture; they remain an authentic creativity of the Albanian people.

2. Despite all the achievements, researchers of this field will face such problems as the immediate need for extend their tracings and researches in all the territories inhabited by Albanians, thing that would lead to the drawing of comprehensive conclusions not limited to a single region. Also, researches should extend and deepen more, except in the ACA's archives, the Archives of Turkey would be a very good source for providing data on such aspects as the leases of construction, commissioner and builder, influences and relations with the capital and other provinces. Also, the publication of work of scientific character of Vexhi Buharaja "Inscriptions of the Turkish-Arabic building in Albania", or the registers of census and those of *jizje*, mark another contribution to the deepening of the to-date studies. Another important instance is the need to know better the works of the Albanian Architects in the Ottoman Empire, their contributions, both in their country and in other centers of the Empire, including besides the archives new and yet unknown publications.

3. Along with a better care and evaluation of the mosques, attention should be paid to the necessary specialized cadre, its further qualification and treatment in accordance with the time and its requirements. Only this way will be preserved and consolidated the investigative and researching continuity, and much more light will be shed on our cultural identity as people and nation.