

# The multidimensional approaches aimed at knowledge, conservation and regeneration of the Albanian territory.

Luigi Corniello<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Second University of Naples, Department of Architecture and Industrial Design "Luigi Vanvitelli"  
Abbey of San Lorenzo in Septimum - Aversa (CE)

**Abstract:** *The research is focused on the study of multidimensional approaches aimed at understanding, conservation and regeneration of the Albanian territory. In applying this method to the Albanian territory, we analyze a site on which the research consisted of the reading given to the understanding of all the complex issues that contribute to determining the form, not only as the outward appearance, but also as a carrier of values intangible assets related to the history, culture and traditions over the centuries have stamped their marks to the environment by initiating a knowledge of the genomic region. The study explores the concerns of the UNESCO heritage city of Berat and Gjirokastra, the archaeological site of Apollonia and the castles of some cities of Albania.*

**Keywords:** *multicriteria analysis, knowledge representation, Albanian territory*

## 1. The multidimensional methodology

The various formal and aesthetic aspects of nature and the built environment, the Albanian territory, facing historical reasons of the relationship between housing and factories religious in the geographical context of Albania and give life and individuality to the natural and built landscape. Founded the roots of drawings of the natural environment in the cultural life of the region dotted with architectural minor prevailing religious vocation, pursuing knowledge through an analytical detection. To document graphically the religious environment, the images are compared aspects of nature in the urban context of the city and religious history. History, religion, economics, but also customs and appear as written in the Albanian landscape, set in the frames of archaic agriculture obsolete, which fragments the territory. The landscape was dotted with minarets and characterized by large crosses, especially in the inner areas, from some centers, integrating them into the oldest part. In the landscape we read the industrialization of the 60s, in the giant grayish moles of abandoned factories, we note the significant increase of the population, determining factor of intensive Soviet-style, devoid of any imagination and now, degraded and we see the fear of attacks by enemies who did realize, all over the country, more than one million small bunker. But we also see the ancient history: the archaeological sites, Byzantine chapels urban and rural areas, the post-Byzantine churches, mosques different type.

*The research is based on the belief that any action to protect and enhance the places can not be separated from one activity to multidimensional knowledge based of discretization and measurement of assets. The measure is the basis of knowledge and representation of the values of all physical and intangible assets of the reality and documentary traces of man in his biological evolution as a function of the environmental context in which they live. Measure and capitalize the endless reasons of nature, as we recommended Leonardo, is to recognize the genetic heritage, the identity of places, the founding of the ongoing process of restoration and regeneration as modification against any notion of transformation. Transforming involves action dictated only from a technological necessity conduct going beyond the limit imposed by knowledge. The instruments of*

knowledge allow us a multidimensional representation, in which each component, material and immaterial, returns the territory as a dynamic entity in constant evolution. The methodological system is not given by the summation of the individual single issue knowledge, but by an integral of knowledge, in which data is qualitatively and quantitatively itself. Each point is described by a range of information that analyze the characteristics of tangible and intangible assets triggering an ecogeometric approach that allows you to measure the complexity, ie to recognize characters founding by reading the signs. It is the most effective means not only to analyze a territory, but also for programming the management by defining a hierarchy of interventions. In applying this method to the Albanian territory, analyzing a vast and varied place, where knowledge is consisted of the reading given to the understanding of all the complex issues that contribute to determining the form, not only as the outward appearance, but also as the bearer of intangible assets related to the history, culture and traditions over the centuries have stamped their marks to the environment by initiating a knowledge of the territory, so to speak genomics. (cfr. Carmine Gambardella, *Atlante di Pompei, La scuola di Pitagora Editrice*, 2012)

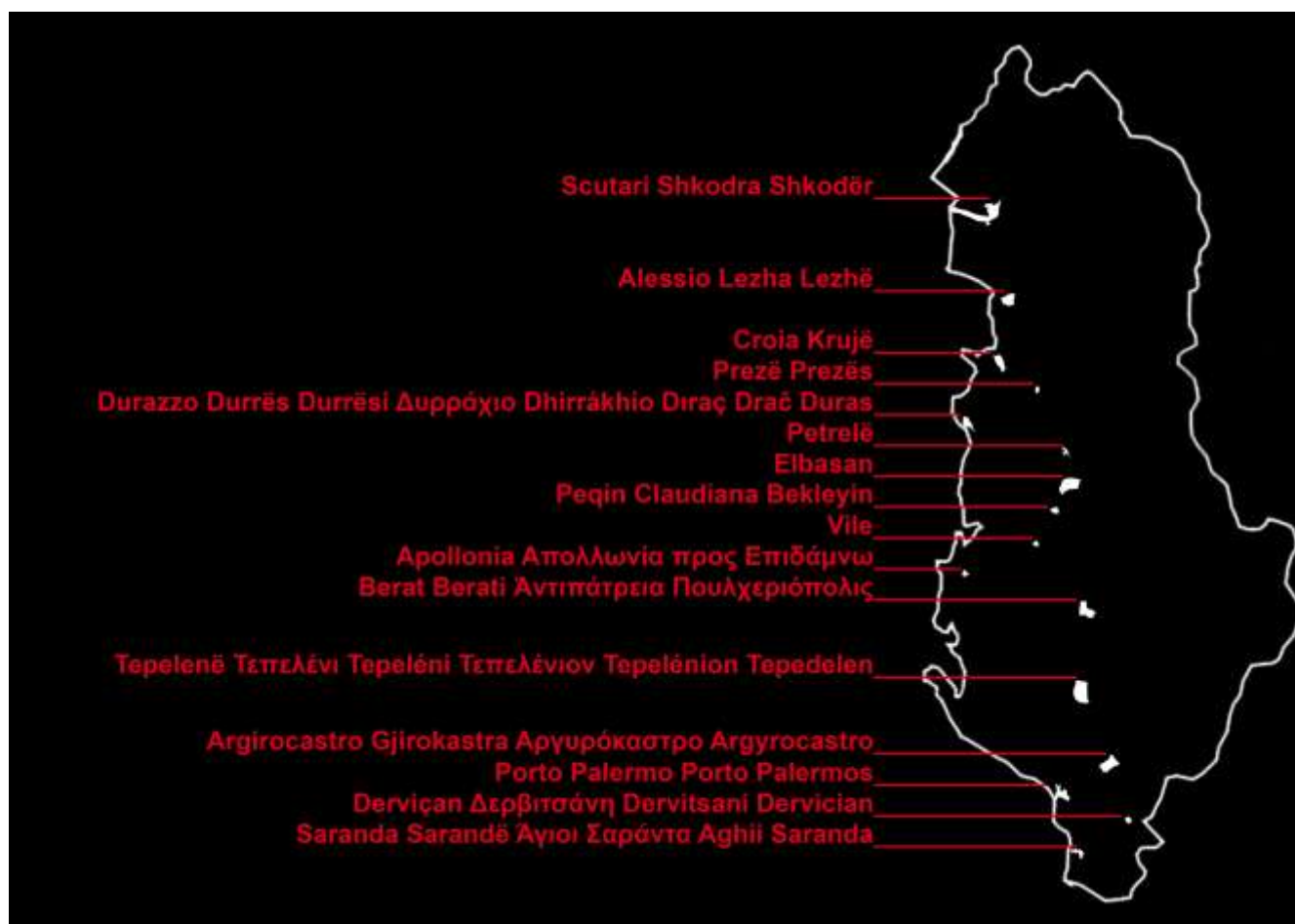


Fig. 1: The Albanian territory, synoptic table with identification of the city.

## 2. The knowledge of the heritage.

The city of Berat, a UNESCO site in the south - east of Albania, July 2008 a World Heritage Site, as “a rare example of well-preserved Ottoman town”, documents the peaceful coexistence of different religions in past centuries. The site is crossed by the river Osum, which originates from the mountains of Vithkuq to 1050 m in height, has a unique cultural heritage and the year 1961 was proclaimed a City - museum. Berat, formerly called Antiparea by Polybius and Livy, now known as “the city of a thousand windows”, one of the oldest in the

country, founded in the fourth century by the Illyrians. There are present in the bend of typical buildings of white stone with red roofs and many windows, which made known the city center, as the “city of a thousand windows” and has assumed different names over the centuries: Antipatreia, Pulkeropolis, Belgrade and, after the Ottoman conquest, Berat.

The UNESCO criteria for selection are two:

The old town remains an exceptional testimony to a way of life now vanished, influenced by the tradition of Islam Ottoman (criterion iii);

The old town is a rare example of typical Ottoman city with buildings like kule (criterion iv).

The Albanian national cultural heritage has always been protected by specific legislation, but only in 1948, was approved by the communist government's first legal instrument on the protection of so called cultural monuments. On the basis of a filing made in those same years, the entire region of Berat was numbered among churches, mosques, homes, bridges and castles, about six hundred architectural heritage.



Fig. 2: The Albanian territory, synoptic table of the city of Berat with identification of residential districts.

The city is divided into three districts: Kala, Mangalem and Gorice.

The district of Kala, with thirty churches and the ruins of two mosques, preserves - almost unique case in the Balkans - almost intact its character, with narrow defined by the boundary walls of the gardens and the white of the houses, with their projecting parts, wood and widely windows. Another detail of singular beauty color are the roof with reddish tiles, with a low pitched. The district is located 187 m above sea level with an area of 9,6 hectares on a rocky hill on the left bank of the river Osum. It is made from the castle of Berat, built on a plain triangular shape, is one of the greatest historical monuments in the Balkans. The 24 towers of different shapes and sizes, surrounding the imposing walls of the foundation and then the Hellenistic Ages. The sources date

back to about 200 C, after the fire of the fortress by the Romans and the subsequent strengthening of the structure, in the fifth century by the Byzantine Emperor Theodosius II, and rebuilt during the sixth century under the Emperor Justinian.

The second district, the Muslim district of Mangalem, is a well preserved area with characteristic buildings of fascinating narrow streets. Particularly compact, the set of unitary and indivisible houses, at the base, stands the Mosque of the Bachelors. The village was a bazaar area, residences of merchants and craftsmen and stretches on the steep slope forming the shape of a pyramid, on top of which lies the castle. The main feature are the many windows. There are some mosques, including the Mosque of Lead, the King's Mosque, the Mosque of the Bachelors and the Alveti Tekke. The Orthodox Christian district of Gorica, third district of Berat, if it is developed from the sixteenth century and extends to the right bank of the river Osum and is connected by the old bridge from 7 arches and a modern bridge to the Muslim district of Mangalem. Private homes have spacious gardens reminiscent of the primitive character of the rural character of the village. The strong sense of religious tolerance is the specific characteristic of the Albanian nation. Originated from the secular co existence of different faiths, Catholic and Orthodox Christians, Muslims and bektaschi who have given birth, over the centuries, in an extraordinary example of co existence and mutual respect, a phenomenon unparalleled in the European continent. The religious buildings of Berat stand in Churches, Mosques, Monasteries of the Dervishes and the Madrasas (Islamic schools). In the city there are a total of fortytwo churches, but the oldest, dating from the fourth to sixth centuries, have retained few traces originate. Built between the seventh and fifteenth centuries and were relatively well preserved is the Church of St. Mary of the Assumption, while outside the city walls on the south side of the castle, stands San Michele, built on a steep rock. In the district of Kala is the Church of St. Mary of the Assumption, a building typical of the Ottoman period, built in the late seventeenth century and completed in 1797 from the porch you enter the three aisled basilica was rebuilt in the eighteenth century. Among the icons stand out a Madonna of the Albanian painter Onufri, breaking the tradition, holding the baby with the right hand. The church of the Holy Trinity in Berat, built in the fourteenth century, near the walls of the second siege of the castle and the headquarters of the garrison and gentlemen, is covered with vaults and brick arches. The church of San Michele, dating from the fourteenth century, is built on a sharp rock on the south side of the castle. The factory has walls of stone and brick octagon surmounted the dome. There are also the Churches of St. Nicholas, the Church of St. Constantine and the Church of San Teodoro, where you can see the floor and a column placed in front of the window. The Monastery of Santo Spiridion, located in the district Gorice, has a church preceded by an arched gallery. The interior has three naves and four domes, has been recently restored. Inside the walls of the castle, there are two buildings of Islamic worship, the Red Mosque (XVI century) and the White Mosque (XV century). Red Mosque, architectural example of considerable interest, there remains only the minaret, while the ruins of the White Mosque, built on the foundations Illyrian, Byzantine and Turkish, few traces remain. In the Muslim Quarter of Mangalem there are three mosques: the Mosque of Lead, the Mosque of the King and the Mosque of the Bachelors. The Lead Mosque was built by Uzgurliu, a member of the powerful family of feudal Skuraj, in the sixteenth century and is named for the coverage of its domes. The former Islamic center built by Sultan Bayezid II in the sixteenth century is the mosque of the King, the Helveti Tekke and the Houses of Dervish. In this area was a graveyard, removed during communism. The Mosque of the King is composed of the prayer hall, a deep porch white washed wood from the roof and the minaret. In the ceiling there are inscriptions from various passages in the Koran. The Helveti Tekke was built in the fifteenth century and rebuilt in 1782 has wooden ceilings with paintings that depict geometric shapes, natural landscapes, mosques and Ottoman vernacular houses and painted. To improve the acoustics, small holes were drilled through the walls and inside the walls there are ceramic pots used for this purpose. This technique was commonly used in the temples Helveti order of Sufis (a mystical tradition of the Muslims). The Rooms Dervish are the rooms that housed the Dervishes (Sufi sect of priests). On the ground floor you will find the stables used for animals and the small rooms on the first floor with a fireplace. In addition, in 1827, was erected the Mosque of Bachelors.

The UNESCO site of Gjirokaster, however, has a large and diverse city center, completely isolated from the modern city, built in the plain below. Extraordinary compactness of its neighborhoods, and almost only the large number of nineteenth century houses preserved, which determines, as a whole, the landscape.

The dwellings, despite the monumentality and featuring the substantial external monochrome, have been categorized into types and subtypes. Three basic types of construction and iconography. First type, the most simple, square shape, the shape of the tower, undeniable aspect of building defense dating back to the late eighteenth century. Second, more complex plan, with several buildings juxtaposed parallel or perpendicular to each other of the nineteenth century. These buildings are of considerable height, in most plans, with a protruding portion, in which, to the defensive side, but open at the top by an open gallery, is approached with a side gable, making it look more urban. Third type, tall, tripartite dating from the nineteenth century. The central part, balcony and back, is hold by two buildings jutting, symmetrical, gable roofs covered by the different slopes, open windows in the decoration of wooden frames, and other windows, easier on the lower floors. It is the culmination of an architectural research, which also reveals the changing economic and social conditions of the city, as well as a safety achieved. The internal structure is kept very simple. The construction of Gjirokastra reflects the socio economic conditions of those who built it, but it is also determined by the morphology of the site and climate.



Fig. 3: The Albanian territory, synoptic table of the city of Gjirokastra with identification of the layers.

The mountainous necessitated the provision of terraced houses in different districts making it essential for the breakdown of floors: on the ground floor, darkest, warehouses, tanks, stables, on the upper floors, more open to light and air, the rooms of the house. The need for maximum insulation has determined the orientation, with the front facing the valley, while the heavy rainfall has made the necessary technological solutions against



moisture. Please note the importance of Ćardak, porch under the roof, taller, many times because the two upper floors, open to the outside, with a complex and elegant wooden structure. Effective in winter to make the most sunny interior rooms, useful in summer to create a more airy and therefore more livable.

The local stone, carved into blocks more or less large, but not particularly refined, is the main material, in addition to the brick masonry covered with plaster clear, and the wood for some tops, as well as for the interior. The roofs at multiple slopes, covered with slabs of gray stone, have significant drooping, supported by wooden beams oblique. The functional layout of the different environments is generated by the customs and traditions of the Albanians of that period: in particular, the duplication of certain environments, the definition of space for guests and family members only space, and even more detail spaces for women and for children (for women, grate openings inside to watch, without being seen, for children, balconies very low). The most important room was of the fire, said also stanza winter reserved for the family, the true center of the core social housing and family. For guests to a larger room, with a fireplace more monumental, or at least more impressive, sported greater sophistication in its entirety. The rooms for the guests were generally larger in size, while the other rooms are quite cramped. The interior, in residential areas, looked very cozy, with wooden ceilings of great decorative value, with large fireplaces from masonry hood covered with plaster clear, prominent, circular in shape, more or less monumental, with floral motifs in colors alive, that reflect the most elaborate wall paintings in the room. One particular factor for elegance and functionality, is represented by an elaborate wooden wardrobe, almost architectural setting, which occupies an entire wall.

### **3. The preservation of Archaeology.**

The archaeological site of Apollonia is located 12 km west of Fier, near the village of Pojan. The ancient city is located at the foot of a lonely hill in front of the lagoon between the mouth of the river Seman and to Vjosa. The archaeological site covers an area of 137 hectares, where reminiscences of civilization Illire, Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Ottoman, fascist, communist testify today the story. Apollonia was founded in 588 BC by Corinthian colonies from Corfu. It is one of the most important colonies and ports of the Adriatic coast, where the trade to and from the hinterland of Albania, Macedonia, Italy and Greece went to intensify and to expand and beautify the city. Developed schools, arts, architecture and philosophy, in the fifth century BC Apollonia was a city state and minted its own silver coin expanded into the entire Balkan area. In 299 BC, the city came under the rule of Rome that connect making it a focal point of trade along the eastern Adriatic coast. Caesar in 48 BC, chasing Pompey and his troops settled in Durres, camped in Apollonia. The support given to Caesar during the war against Pompey in Apollonia earn the status of a free city guaranteeing a prosperous future. In the third century, a strong earthquake caused extensive damage to the city was changed the course of the river Vjosa, making it unseaworthy, the port, now abandoned, gave rise to a marshy area, a result of malaria. These social and economic consequences in Apollonia led to a progressive decline and abandonment. In the first half of the thirteenth century, when the city was abandoned and now his fate reduced to a small community, a group of Orthodox Christians built a monastery and the church of Santa Maria. For the edification of monastery were used stones and colonies of the city and it is believed that the monastery of the Virgin Mary stands on the ruins of the temple of Apollo.

### **4. The regeneration of the military fortresses**

The itinerary focuses on some castles sites in Albanian territory: the castles of Shkodres, Lezha, Kruja and Preza in the north, Petrela and Elbasan in the center, Berat and Porto Palermo in the south, by analyzing the defensive characteristics of fortified structures and religious values present in the mosques site inside the fortified structures.

The castle of Rozafa to Shkodres is one of the oldest and most charming of Albania. It rises to a height of 120 meters above the sea level and has an area of 3,5 km and a perimeter of the walls of 881 m. The walls are interspersed with seven towers and three gates, placing inside the fortress where you can admire the remains of

the mosque with minaret and the imposing castle gates with leaves characterized by spikes, arches, secret passages and tanks that were used for the supply of water in case of siege.

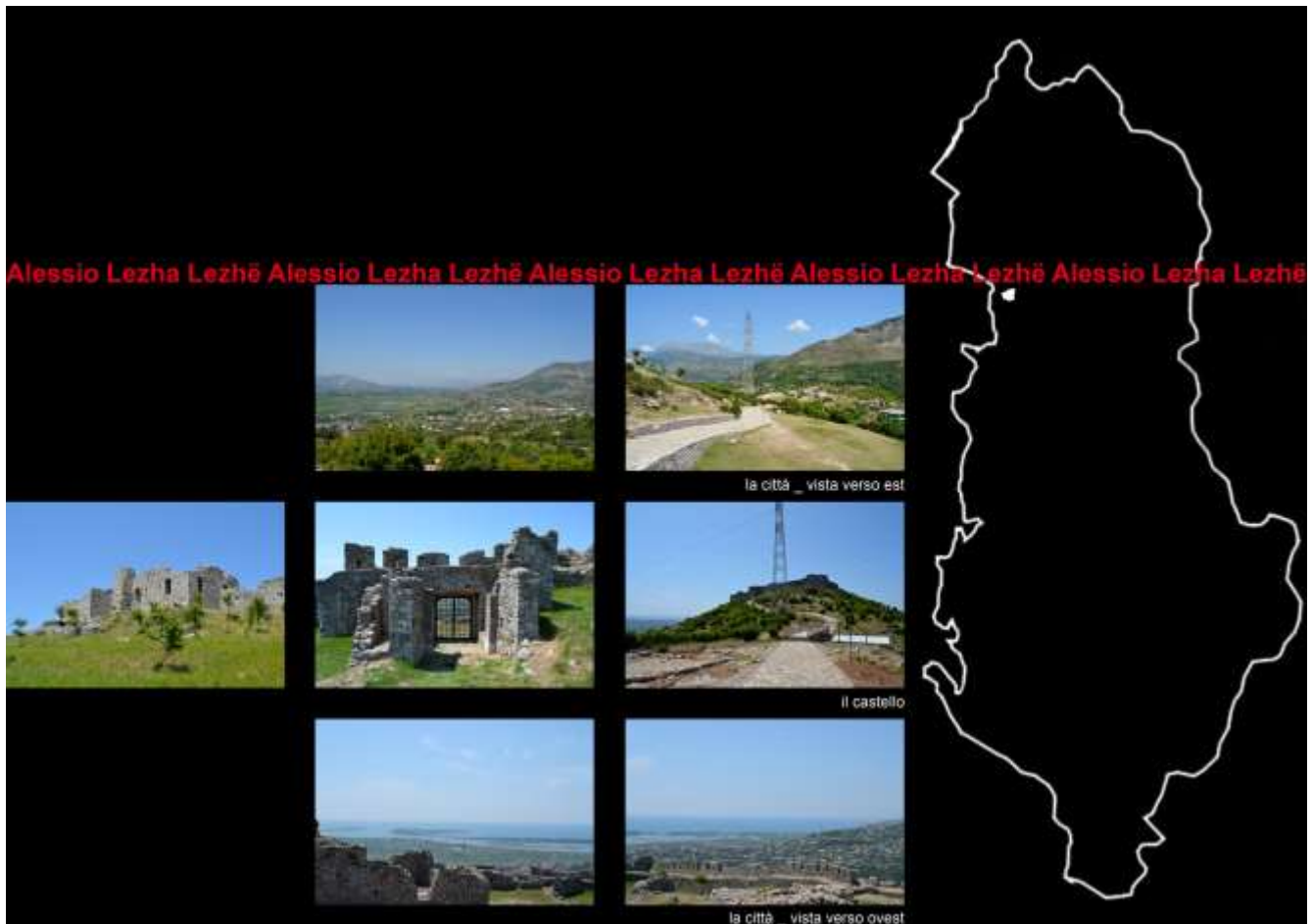


Fig. 4: The Albanian territory, synoptic table of the city of Lezha with identification of the castle.

The castle of Lezha, rises to a height of 186 meters above sea level. The current appearance of the fortress is due to the restructuring of 1515 commissioned by Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent. Of the mosque, discovered during excavations in 1966 is not the minaret.

The castle of Kruja was built in the fourth century AD on the remains of an earlier Illyrian settlement of the third century BC and became a stronghold of resistance against the Ottoman Turks. At the end of the twelfth century the castle reached its full form and became the center of the Byzantine garrisons. The mosque with minaret is located to the right of the main entrance to the city.

The castle of Preza was built in the fifteenth century in a dominant position in front of the castle of Kruja. The four towers of the fortress enclosing a mosque with minaret, located to the right of the main door entrance.



Fig. 5: The Albanian territory, synoptic table of the city of Preza with identification of the castle and the mosque.

The castle of Petrela, built in the Byzantine era, is located in the south east of Tirana. Triangular in shape has two towers that were part of the defense system in Albania consists of the central fortress of Kruja, Preza and Petrela. Inside are the ruins of a mosque.

The castle and the walls that surround the city of Elbasan, tell the great military importance that the city had in the Ottoman period. The fortress of Elbasan, whose walls composed of 26 defensive towers 9 feet high, is in the southern part of the castle still intact; it was rebuilt in 1466 on the ruins of the ancient city of Skampa, as a base for the Ottoman troops. The mosque with minaret has recently undergone a restoration.

The castle of Berat rises to 187 m above sea level with an area of 9,6 hectares on a rocky hill on the left bank of the river Osum. The 24 towers of different shapes and sizes, surrounding the imposing walls of the Hellenistic and medieval. The sources date back to after the fire of the fortress by the Romans and the subsequent strengthening of the structure, in the fifth century by the Byzantine Emperor Theodosius II, and rebuilt during the sixth century under the Emperor Justinian. The interior contained 14 churches and two mosques was built since 1417, with the beginning of the Ottoman era.

The castle of Ali Pasha on the beach of Porto Palermo is a small defensive structure located on a beautiful peninsula in the small bay. The castle has a triangular shape of 150 x 400 meters with walls that reach a height of 20 meters. On the ground floor, after passing a distributive environment octagonal in shape, there is a mosque.





Fig. 6: The Albanian territory, synoptic table of the city of Elbasan with identification of the walls.

## 5. Conclusions

Knowing the Albanian territory means to review the history of its inhabitants and its urban fabric or acquire social structures and architecture of the past and present and with greater attention also to what remains of the architectural heritage to be safeguarded as a sign of strong current and future of cultural and social well being. Acquire news and understand the value of human resources, urban and monumental, it means to own the image of the city and its historic identity and future. For acquisitions may refer to mediation between moments between them in the language of related experience such as the categories of space, time and ethics of the people participates expressions of nature and the landscape as a value generator, passing from ethics to aesthetics, from real to nice. The landscape therefore, seen as a tangible manifestation of the environment and spatial reality, can be interpreted with the noble sense of sight that can be addressed not only to the perception of form, but with other studies, including those of building materials for color, light as a result of climatic changes. Are readings of places and architectural works that refer to the territory; are analyzes that are fruitful of knowledge necessary to be perceived, represented and documented in the main dimensions through the existence of points in time and the architectural continuity in the experience territorial. The kaleidoscopic visions of reality in dealing with architectural shapes and colors derived from the experience of life and customs of the social structure are acquisitions that belong to the detector through the graphic documentation. The expressive language shows comparison images of the area and the current reality, both played with the scientific discovery of places and to be conserved with the necessary protection as an economic resource to be developed on the basis of previous experience of society as cognitive elements that tend to search for values.

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