

OTTOMAN MILITARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLEX IN THE INNER CITY OF SHKODRA

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Abstract

The Ottoman architecture and urban heritage of the end of the XIXth century till the beginning of the XXth century has been very important for the inner core of the Shkodra city. The most representative administrative and social buildings of that period, for new architectural style and urban character, was the Ottoman administration and military complex. New military and administrative complex comprised two barracks joined in “U” shape, constructed in 1881, a yard of 2 hectares, separated from Big Road from the posterior building of ex Prefecture, finished in 1912. The aim of study stresses the need of conservation and preservation of the architectural and urban heritage, helping development of Shkodra’s tourism and serving the younger generation knowing much better city’s history. We arrived at the conclusions that the palace of Municipality, ex-Prefecture and the complex in whole, have historical and architectural values, it represents the architecture of an appointed period of time. Exterior interventions have damaged the integrity of complex, destroying parts of it and the main object itself.

Keywords: *Ottoman architecture, urban heritage, restoration, conservation, architecture history*

Introduction

The Ottoman architecture and urban heritage of the end of the XIXth century till the beginning of the XXth century has been very important for the inner core of the Shkodra city. The most representative administrative and social buildings of that period, for new architectural style and urban character, were: Ottoman administrative and military complex. It began construction at the end of the XIXth century and was over at the beginning of the XXth century, commercial and residential ensemble along the "Popular Avenue" designed mostly by Kole Idromeno, city’s Cathedral ensemble and Round-building for entertainments in ‘80 years of XIXth century (Luzati, Tiranë 2012).

The military and administrative complex comprised two barracks joined in “U”-shape, constructed in 1881, a yard of 2 hectares, separated from Great Road from the posterior building of ex Prefecture, finished in 1912.

Some of the ottoman cultural heritages during the communist and during the transition period have been deteriorated or destroyed. Residential renovations at different times, since 1961 (Russian and Bulgarian engineers) and the 1980 regulatory plan and the interference of the transition, have somehow damaged these Heritage values. The aim of research stresses the need of conservation and preservation of our cultural heritage, helping development of Shkodra’s tourism.

Historical background

Historic Urban Development of Shkodra city

Genesis and development of Shkodra begin in IVth century B.C. The city has its origins associated with Rozafa castle that was a fortified settlement center. Excavations carried out at Rozafa castle fortress prove that it existed as a developed center since the Bronze period (Bushati, 1998). City presents various stages of construction dating from the Illyrian time until today. Illyrian- Roman city extended into southern hill town in the area bordered by the Buna River and Kiri River (Kamsi, 1976). Characteristic of Shkodra city is that it has been inhabited center outside the castle since antiquity.

The medieval city moved from areas flooded by the lake dressed up the hill on which the castle was situated. In the medieval period, the ancient city was populated by people from areas around and tacked expansion in the western side. The invasion of Shkodra by the Turkish army in 1479 eventually removed residents from the castle and stop using it as living center.

During the early Turkish invasion, Shkodra loses its splendor to regain it again. The end of the XVIth century and the beginning of the XVIIth century have found Shkodra as an important economic and administrative center.

Neighborhoods around the castle take the expansion and development in terms of construction and urban planning. At this time was built the Old Bath (Hammam near to the castle) - 1519, Tophana's Mosque - 1617 and raised many new houses. The city counted 1,800 houses. Turkish passenger E. Celebiu describes the neighborhoods of Shkodra as " Shkodra has 1800 Muslim houses with two floors surrounded by vineyards and gardens; it has 15 neighborhoods, 10 mosques and a mosque for each "Medreze," ... as well as a courtroom on top of Bazar" (Parruca, 2001). Of this period are some Venetian engravings of the gravures and Mapping specialist Domenico Zenait - Shkodra etching of 1568 (Figure 1).

At this time the city begins to expand in the north and northeast, by entering into a new phase of Development, which can define as the third stage of the development of the city of Shkodra.



Fig.1 Etching of Shkodra 1568

Different authors give different dates of the city development. Bushati (Bushati, 1998) was based on the construction dates of some facilities as Mosques of "Tophana" neighborhood in 1617, of the "Great Rus" neighborhood in 1711, "Ndoces" neighborhood in 1729 and the "Red Mosque" in Perash in 1745. It concludes that the city began to expand towards the today center of the city by the end of the XVIIth century. The presence of Mosques in the areas proves that around them there were houses.

Austrian albanologist, Mr. Han, confirmed that in the middle of XIXth century, the central part of the city lay in fields in the northeast of the castle that leads to the conclusion that the city had progressed significantly in the northeast. Based on these data, Professor Emin Riza dates back the

enlargement process to the turn of the XVII-XVIIIth century city, accelerating the end of the XVIIIth century and especially in the first half of XIXth century. City expansion except natural growth factors and its influence by some external factors. Residents of older neighborhoods moved into new urban areas for several reasons such as cholera in 1819, earthquakes in 1815, 1837, 1852, 1905 and river floods, which had caused much damage to the dwelling of the old city. Another factor which significantly affects the expansion of the city was administratively moving from the castle to the today's center, in 1865. New urban areas that Armao called New Town were developed in the north, northeast and northwest part of the city, which started from the "Parruca" neighborhood to the upper part.

The extent of the city until the early twentieth century can be judged by on various engravings, notes of foreign travelers and researchers. The first mapping plan of the city, known as "Plan von Scutari," in which we can understand the development of the city (Figure 2), was designed in 1914 by the international bodies (Bushati, 1998). On this plan were presented the road system, the Bazaar, some buildings of military- administrative and religious character and city neighborhoods.



Fig. 2. Plan von Scutari, 1914

With the expansion of the city was changed and urban organization. The administrative center was located on the flat part of the city and the Bazaar as a trailer economic center, remains in the old town, about 1km away from the new city center. The city has three main streets that led to the Bazaar (Figure 3 a, b).



Fig. 3. a- Photo by Taraboshi, 1931

b- Great way

Three main arteries of the new city, the Great Street, Perash Street and Ndocaj Street branch at the beginning of the Parruca Quarter to make the distribution of pedestrians in the neighborhoods. A variety of the second and third category ways traverse the city. They were often a dead end that ends up in housing gates and fences of large yards. At the "Plan von Scutari" clearly could be observed spontaneous development of the medieval city. New City developed in the field was

divided into several neighborhoods (Figure 4, 5) organized around a small center where was located the mosque, bakery and shop. An important role in the city physiognomy of XIXth century plays bazaar as a center of trade and handicrafts. Road system and the planing of new quarters was organic.



Fig. 4 Parruce -Quarter, beginning of XIXth century

Fig. 5 Tabak-Quarter, beginning of XIXth century

National Renaissance Development

History of civil life in Shkodra during the National Renaissance found out its representation in the field of Urbanism and Architecture. Under the influence of inner and outer factors, the Albanian cities undergo too many changes. From the XVth century ottoman invaders tried to give them a view of military centers, equipped even with administrative and oriental culture institutions.

The period of our National Renaissance, comprised years '30 of XIXth century till 1912, which, according to Shkodra (Shkodra, 1984) was divided as follows:

- First phase, comprises years '30-70 of XIXth century, was the phase of our popular revolts, rural and civil, against social repression created from the policy of Istanbul, through "Tanzimat" reforms.
- Second phase comprises years of Prizreni's League (1878-1881). It was a new phase when our national movement had a real rising due to economic and social changes, happening in that period.
- Third phase comprises years (1881-1908). It began from the years '80 of the XIXth century and end on the "Xhonturk" bourgeois revolution. Its feature was visible activities in ideology and social field.
- Fourth phase began with the victory of "Xhonturk" revolution and ended with the proclamation of our Independence, in 28 November 1912.

Shkodra reached the highest economic and political development under the reign of the Shkodran feudal family of Bushati. Besides the economic development given to Shkodra, they often tried to make it independent from the central government. It was a self-rule ambition and was considered the detachment from Turkey, as a possibility for the relations with Europe with whom it had commercial relations. For 75 years of the reign of Pashallek of Shkodra, played its role in the economic and political life of High Gate. Even the fall of the Pashallek, Shkodra was still developing economically, the population became bigger, architecture and town's planning were flourishing (Paruca, 2001). In these circumstances, "new" Turkish movement wanted to represent more progressive than ottoman. So, representatives of that movement tried to have new buildings, with European architectural style. So one example was creating administrative and military building such as that of Municipality-today in Shkodra and two other buildings (Gymnasium and Pedagogical school), of the same military purpose, exactly for Turkish soldiers' accommodation.

New elements of architecture during the renaissance period

Urban planning and architecture of developed cities, for many centuries in the conditions of foreign invasion, entered during the period of the Renaissance in a new developed way, influenced by rising of capitalism. From the second period of the XIXth century Albanian, bourgeois and wealthy progressive elements began constructing everywhere different buildings to a new architectonic style.

Process of bourgeoisie's birth hasn't been equal in the whole country. Feudal remains have been co-travelers in all the cities of Albania and Shkodra too. In these conditions comes so naturally touch of existing dwelling house, with great possibilities for a treatment in compliance with the requirements of the time. The reconstructions were played in different ways for different types. Changes in traditional residence typology must be in three components, such as: composition, in architectural treatment and construction techniques. Traditional residence construction referred to the feudal formation of the society, it wasn't changed too much. In the types called "opened," with "çardak" and "Hayt", suffered not distinct changes. One of the most distinct types of dwelling houses was that with-"çardak"-lobby (Figure 6). That type of housing has been preferred in Small Asia in XVIII- XIXth century. It becomes dominated rich category in Shkodra.



Fig. 6. House of Oso Kuka

In the topological and functional aspect were completed residence types, which fulfill new requirements of the inhabitants. In technical and technological aspect, were widely put in practice new materials more long-lived, like brick, cement, iron, etc.

During the National Renaissance period in the architectonic and decorative aspect were elaborated criteria based on rational style, in simplifying decoration, but in very careful details of architectonic elements such as column, window, frames, window-sashes, etc.

New character of the state organization during the last period of Ottoman occupation in, economic and social sense, created some architectonic features, such as:

1. Diversity of construction, some of them unknown in the past. So in this period were built administrative buildings (prefectures, municipalities, legations, etc.), social and cultural buildings (hospitals, libraries, cinemas, hotels, etc.), while shops were gathered in big market places of some Albania cities. However, in that period, even though in a very restricted number, was appeared creating of new collective dwelling buildings.
2. Big class difference, brought simplifying residence style in one side, and creating luxurious villas, by the other side, with a heavy decorative elaboration.
3. In the architecture of that time were displayed some eclectic tendencies. Somewhere, these features, became the choice of:
 - a. A part of the bourgeoisie brought from abroad, new ready-made constructed models, which naturally differs from our native style.
 - b. It was created an obsession to have as a designer for big building international architects, especially for social and administrative buildings.

4. New requirements for other architectural styles.
5. Crystallization of a relatively good typology of residences dwellings in the cities; growth of technical and technological possibilities and in addition of this, increase of constructive materials used.

Historical overview of the military and administrative complex and its transformations' dating

Around the third decade of XIXth century, in Albania began to appear capitalist relations in manufacturing products. The process which coincides with the great movement of National Renaissance begun to be reflected in Shkodra city architecture, especially in the middle of XIXth century. Changes in the class structure of civil society, news in the lifestyle, and economic development, in the conditions of creating of a regional market, reflected clearly in the architecture and urban concepts. As well as in every historical process, we couldn't be detached by traditional predecessor. Being in before a dialectic process of development, passing of new concepts through older ones, become in different degrees of intensity, in compliance with the economic strength and the degree of the predecessor's architectural achievements.

In the first decade of the XXth century, it has been created the military and administrative complex. It was located in the quarter named "Parruca", and it has been between streets of Parruca and on the southeastern part of the ex - Prefecture, by street "28 November." In the middle of that complex played the "Great Street." According to the map of 1923 (Figure 7), designed by the Jesuit's order, we see that complex of the Prefecture and barracks, later Gymnasium and Pedagogical School formed an inner flower-garden, which opened in the direction of the "Prefecture.



Fig. 7. Map of Jesuits, in 1923

Through the new preconception of space was created a road that joined Main Street of Parruca with "Prefecture." Space between two buildings (schools) later belonged to them. One was turned in the gymnasium, which is until nowadays, while the other building was destroyed in 1985. During this year, in order to have a space in favor of people, and creating a new flower-garden, all the houses, near the Pedagogical school were destroyed. Later, in the years '70 according to a new urban plan appeared new elements of urban reviving which treated part of Parruca and an entry in the boulevard "Great Street," that passed to "Prefecture." Later on, even the fence of Prefecture was pulled off, so creating a new interactive situation.



Fig. 8. Complex of the ex - Prefecture, Gymnasium "28 November", and pedagogical school "Shejnaze Juka" (Survey of Shkodra, in 1961)



Fig. 9 A view of Scutari in 1900



Fig. 10 Prefecture, Gymnasium, Pedagogical school

The military and administrative complex included the building of ex-Prefektura, an administrative and military one, Gymnasium-a military building and ex-Pedagogical school –a military building, too. All these buildings have been utilized for military purposes from Turkish administration. But, something was done in a different manner regarding the architectural style, especially with the construction of ex-Prefektura.

In 1881, the rising of a complex of "Teuta kazerns" (barracks) was finished completely. Ex-Pedagogical school and the other building where now is Gymnasium " 28 November," The middle part of the northern barracks, the first and the second stories, has been used by the governor with administrative and financial offices.



Fig. 11 Ex-pedagogical school "Shejnaze Juka"

Ex Prefecture Building

In the Great Way, is the main building for Shkodra city, one of the most monumental and beautiful works in Albania, inherited from the Ottoman period, that all the people called it palace of the Prefecture. This graceful and magnificent building was designed by the French architect August Briot. At the beginning of XIXth century, years 1903-1905, it was ordered by the Ottoman authorities. Buildings with the same design were constructed in other countries under the Turkish rulers, in Bosnia and even in Damask, Syria. The construction was finalized by the great contribution of the people of Shkodra' city.



Fig. 12 Prefecture, in 1930

Before the new construction, in that place was another building, in which the governor “Kadiu” of the city had his office, and the judges had their offices. The other part of that building was at the disposal of the Gendarmerie. In that building has been located the center of the city’s police.

As belong to the creation of Gendarmerie of that time, even though “de jure” it was an Ottoman commandment, in fact, it was Albanian, always commanded by Albanian governors like Salih Pasha Bebeziqi, Mehmet Pasha Tetova, etc.

But with Turkish government order, that building was reconstructed. In the same place where Municipality is now. Before, governors of Shkodra, from 1864 and later on having their residence in Rozafa Castle. At the very beginning, the government building was transferred, firstly in the house of Selman Kazazi, in the Parruca - quarter. Governor stayed some years there, till big barracks were built.

The transfer of state military mechanisms called for the creation a new administrative and military center in the central part of Parruca. The place was insufficient to carry out administrative and military works. So only for some years, it was found to be constructed a special place for Shkodrës Governor.

In 1910 begun constructing of the palace and 1912 it was completed. With this magnificent palace, together with a complex of barracks and Prison, the center of administrative and military was formulated. During the Balkan War, ex-Prefecture has been used as a Hospital. It is to be considered as a historical object and luckily for Shkodra, even bombardments it is saved.

Architectural study

It is an example of architecture with solemnity, which is quite clear as we see the splendor entrance hall and the main corridors up to 8 m. In addition to that, main entrance forms a big hall of 5.91m height and a pair of 10 stairs create a magnificence. In the center to a high pomposity there are three stairways, which lead to the first floor, while rising to the level under roof, serves a secondary pair of metallic scales, covered in wood. Even it is designed for secondary using, this floor being under “mansard”-style creates on the whole a graceful palace.

The construction type it is with wall-bearing system of 50 cm widths. Slabs are created with metallic beams, but covered with parquet (rooms). Doors and windows have great dimensions too. Windows are in two parts 2 x 105 x 250 cm, but we wave in the central part of the building other

window with three parts to 160 x 250 cm. On the upper floor under the roof, there are windows of the mansard. Windows have an arched form and their dimensions are 90 x 150 cm. The walls were in regulating stones while bearing structure was completed in metallic beams “double T-shape of 160 mm, doors and windows were made with wood. Main stairs were with granulated stone, emergency stairs with the main construction are metal, but covered with planked-board. On the roof was applied the “Mansard”-type, while the truss was in “Polanso”- shape, which allows significant space to be used.



Fig. 13 Present Views of Municipality, ex-Prefecture

Phases of construction

It has been constructed in the years between 1908-1912. More requirements for construction appeared, so other requirements that a new society organization called for like administrative, social and commercial buildings.

Regarding the services that were held through the years, we must say that after the First World War, it has been used as “ Prefektura”, and of the same mission it remains for a long time even in the of the communist period. Only in the year 2007, regarding the new citizens necessities it was appointed as the Municipality of Shkodra.

Investigation of the existing situation

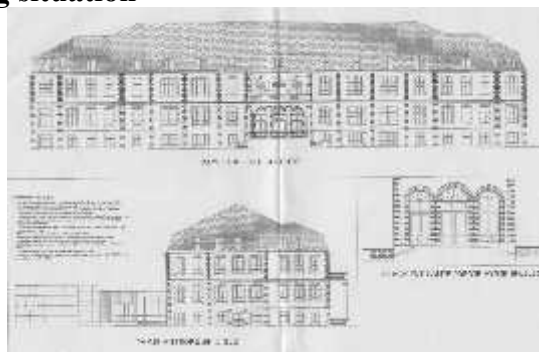


Fig. 14 Main and Northern facades of ex-Prefecture (Municipality), restoration of 2008.

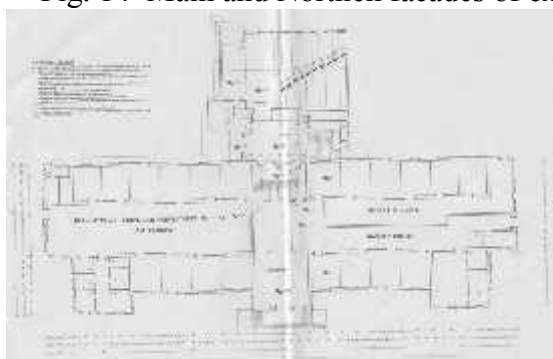


Fig. 15 Ground floor of the ex- Prefecture

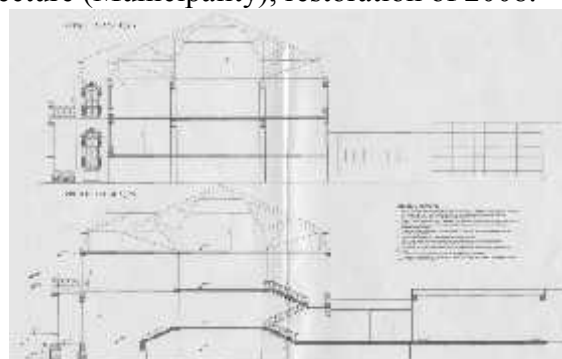


Fig. 16 Two cross-sections

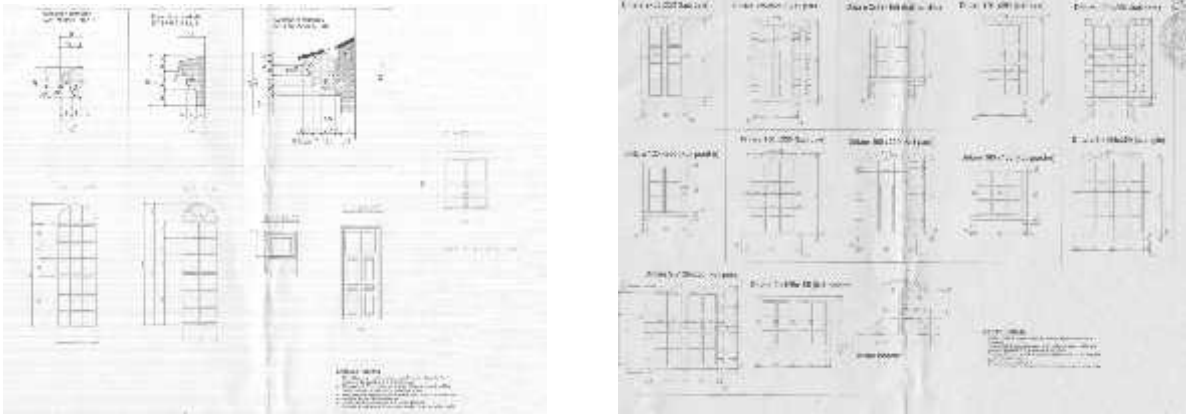


Fig. 17 Details of windows and frames of the ex-Prefecture, Restoration of 2008.

Gymnasium “28 November” building

Gymnasium “28 November” is a cultural monument proclaimed in 2006. Regarding the structural, structural and architectural elements, it remains in good conditions outside, but in the inner part there is no any particular architectural element.

Architectural study

This building has been part of the old military complex. It was constructed together with other building ex-Pedagogical middle school in 1881, that time named ‘Teuta’-barracks. The building has an entrance with 4 columns with simple decoration on their basements. Windows and main outer doors have a smooth arch on the upper part.



Fig. 18 Gymnasium “28 November” in years ‘30

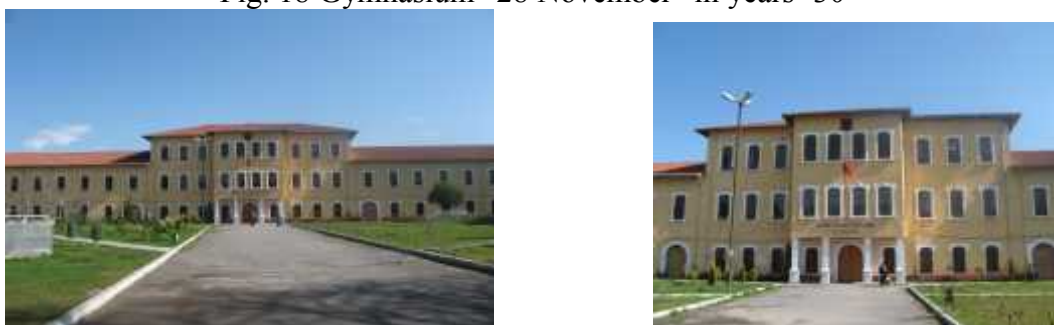


Fig. 19 Present photos of Gymnasium “28 November”

Phases of construction

It has wall-bearing system, where masonry width was 90 cm (outer walls) and 70 cm (inner walls) for the ground floor, 70cm for the first floor and finally 50cm to the second floor. Roof has a great binder raft and a specific triangle is not supported on the basement, but just caught on two wood rafters. In posterior years are held only some restorations, the last one in 2013.

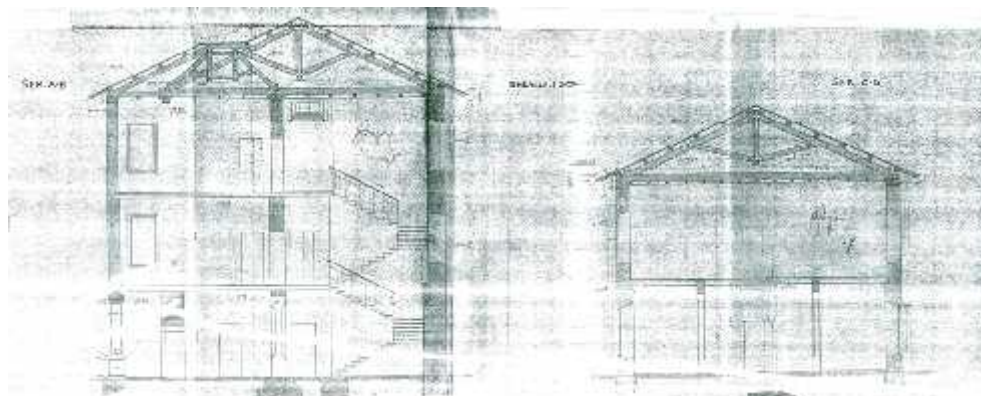


Fig. 20. Sections of the three story building Fig. 21 Sections of the two story building

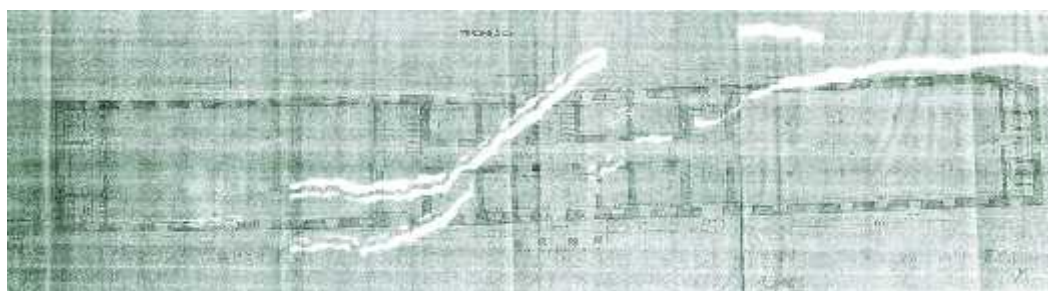


Fig. 22 Ground floor of ex-barrack "Teuta", now Gymnasium "28 November"

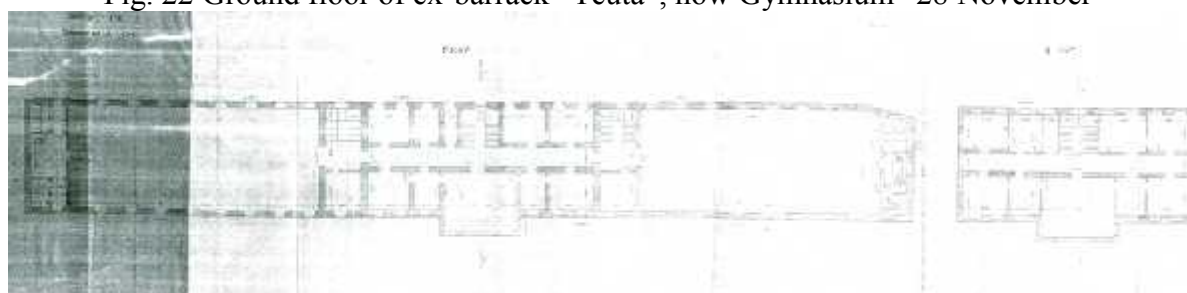


Fig. 23 First floor and the second floor of ex-barrack "Teuta", now Gymnasium "28 November"

Conclusions

The palace of Municipality, ex- Prefecture, and the complex in whole, have historical and architectural values, it represents the architecture of an appointed period of time ending of the XIXth century and the beginning of the XXth century in the city of Shkodra. Posterior interventions have damaged the integrity of complex, destroying parts of it and the main object itself. There are made, some efforts for restoration in 2008. Nowadays there is a need of conservation, preservation of cultural heritage and the development of cultural tourism.

Urban renovations at different times, since 1961 (Russian and Bulgarian engineers) and the 1980 regulatory plan and the interference of the transition, have somehow damaged urban and Heritage values of the city.

A part of our historical and architectural heritage of Ottoman period was adopted in the ending of the XIXth century and the beginning of the XXth century, based on the spirit of a new style (a new classic), represented by Kolë Idromeno.

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