

A Comparative Study of Ottoman Inns in Albania during the XVII Century

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of the present research paper is to evaluate the characteristics, architectural values and potential of Ottoman architecture of inns in Albania. In general, inns represent one of the most important structures in the Ottoman architecture. Their development dates on the XIII-XVI century on the territory of today's Turkey, while in Albania in a slightly later period, developed as a building typology during the XVII century. For estimating their historic and architectural impact and development, a comparison between different inns is made based on the urban position in the city, compositional scheme and architectural treatment. The comparative methodology was mainly focused on inns composition, functional organization and architectural treatment. The results concluded that, despite similarities in the compositional scheme and the use of local materials, inns differ from each other from the number of spaces that contain, construction techniques, architectural and formal treatment. The revaluation and re-treatment of the inns offers potential for the development of cultural, historic and architectural tourism, also for the continuation of architectural heritage.

KEYWORDS: Inns, Ottoman Architecture, City, History of Architecture

1 INTRODUCTION

Bazaars were important part of the urban scheme of the cities, in most cases, by occupying an area separate from the living quarters and dedicated entirely to trade. Bazaars were organized by three important units of namely: squares of trade, shops for production and trade and inns for accommodation (Thomo, 2012). Inns represent commercial object of the ottoman period, originally constructed in Turkey region on the XIIIth century (Culcu, 2005).

The first inns were constructed in Bursa, the center of the Ottoman Empire at the time. First documented inns were small in dimensions and simple in treatment referring to other inns in cities like Istanbul, where their construction demonstrates economic development of the time, also progress in terms of architecture and construction techniques. An example of a more developed inn is the Fatih complex in Istanbul. As shown by Sanderson (1931), the inn had a rectangular plan containing one hundred rooms. The complex also contained a mosque, shops, stables and barn. Spaces were organized around the courtyard (Saoud, 2004).

Inns were situated on central parts of cities, near bazaars and their function was entirely utilitarian. They served as space for relax and accommodation of travelers as well as space for animals. (Thomo, 2012)

In Albania inns occupy key part of bazaars, mainly along roads that connect cities with suburbs. Their conception has evolved over the years, transforming from daily spaces for relax and accommodation spaces, bringing addition of facilities and functions. Bazaars with a significant number of inns were that of Korca, Shkodra, Kavaja, Tirana, etc, but a few of them have survived in the bazaar of Korca.(Sukaj et al., 1988)

Their existence in our days is an historical document that demonstrates the economic, commercial, social and physical conditions of time, on the other hand an important proof of Ottoman architecture, which has dominated for centuries the urban settlements in Albania.

This research focuses on the identification of these values. To demonstrate their architectural features, all examples are analyzed in all their components. Study method is based on the investigation of historical documentation and study of the architectural character made for inns.

The study begins with a brief historical overview of the development of Ottoman bazaars in Albania, which is mostly concentrated in the period of their development, positioning in relation to the city and their functional organization. During the XVI-XIX century in the Albanian cities important developments occur, in the way of living and in a new organization of cities, but also in urban schemes. During this period, the city consisted of two basic units: residential neighbourhoods and economic areas, where all activities of commercial character were concentrated. The city strengthens its role as a centre of economic production and trade and begins the construction of bazaars. (Sukaj et al., 1988) Renowned in Ottoman countries years ago, in Albania they represent a relatively late urban typology. Bazaars were developed as urban ensemble, next to open weekly bazaars. Later, they focus on specific areas dedicated entirely to production and sales. Over the centuries, most of the major Albanian cities had their bazaar. Among the most prominent bazaars of that time can be mentioned the bazaar of Korca, Kruja, Tirana, Gjirokastra, Kavaja, Shkodra, Berat, etc.

Bazaars were positioned in city centers separated from the neighborhood. Bazaars ensembles were formed by a series of roads, which do not maintain a regular geometry. Along these roads were developed specific crafts. (Thomo, 2012)

The study continues with a historical background of the inns, where we investigate their origin in Ottoman word, the conditions of their development, also functional and architectural characteristics of the typology. Search expands further in case studies in Albania. Three inns are studied, two inns in Korca and one inn in the bazaar of Kavaja. In the bazaar of Korca, the research focuses on Manastiri Inn, which has survived and represents the traditional organization scheme of inns and Stavro's Inn, which represents a deviation from the scheme of inns with courtyard. In the bazaar of Kavaja, the study focus in the Hasan Hushi inn, which does not exist today, but the aim of the study in this point is to revive historical memory, through the identification of its characteristics.

The three cases are studied in several aspects, such as the positioning on the bazaar, functional and formal organization, elements of comfort, and construction materials up to their decorative treatment. Analysis of these characteristics becomes comparable between each other, to draw conclusions on the most valuable inns of the time.

Even though a few of them have survived during the years, the first thing to do is to determine their original architectural characteristics and to estimate the potentials to re-use them.

2 METHODOLOGY

The study focuses on three inns; Manastiri Inn, Stavros Inn in the bazaar of Korca and Hasan Hushi Inn in the bazaar of Kavaja. Manastiri and Stavros Inns exist today and represent the typical Ottoman inns in Albania. Instead, from Hasan Hushi Inn failed to survive anything, except historical documentation, which is worth studying for demonstrating features of Ottoman architecture in Kavaja. This methodology includes the following steps: 1) general description of inns and their characteristics; 2) position of inns in the city; 3) formal and functional organization of inns; 4) elements of comfort in inns; 5) building materials and architectural treatment.

2.1 General description of inns

The oldest ottoman inn that exists today was built in Bursa by Orhan Gazi. The inn has 16 rooms with windows and 36 small spaces for storage on the ground floor. This demonstrates small dimensions of the first inns. Much larger in dimensions and functions were the inns of Istanbul (Gamm, 2013).

Usually inns were organized in three or more floors. The general plan consisted on a number of cells and units surrounding the courtyard, to ensure all the amenities for the travelers. They contained a mosque, shops, stalls and rooms. In a later period inns in Turkey changed in their organization, being part of the urban scheme of the city and not just as e separate unit (Sukaj et al., 1988).

In Albania, inns were developed on the same functional basis and with similarities with inns of Turkey, but smaller in dimensions and modest in decorative treatment. In Albanian bazaars inns were considerable in number. Their position was along the routes connecting the suburbs or villages with the bazaar and often takes the names of streets or country of origin of clientele. The large number of inns demonstrates the clientele of the bazaar.

Initially inns were used on a daily basis, where clients stayed during the day. Later this concept evolved, making them function also during the night. Earlier inns were very simple and entirely utilitarian. The most common scheme was it with internal courtyard, as shown in Figure 1. Spaces were organized mainly in two floors, where the first floor served partly for the animals and partly with facilities for the client (Thomo, 2012).

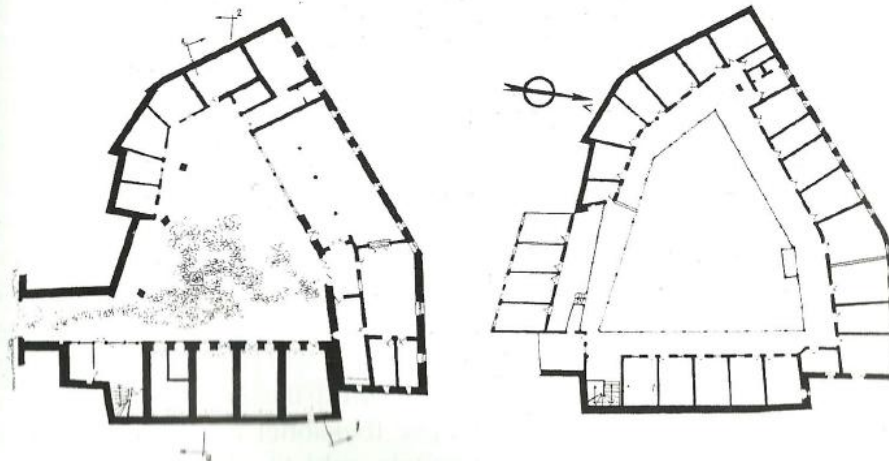


Figure 1: Typical compositional scheme of inns with courtyard (ref: P.Thomo)

In later inns, on the ground floor we can find also shops facing the main squares. On the upper floor were organized the rooms along a perimetral hallway facing the yard. The plan scheme was usually regular

rectangular. The main entrance of the inn was along the main street. Inns were constructed with local materials, mainly stone and brick, but we also can find 'catma' method. Their decorative treatment of the exterior and the treatment of rooms were very simple (Figure 2).



Figure 2: Inn in the bazaar of Korca (ref: P.Thomo)

More advanced in this aspect were the inns of the bazaar of Shkodra, which in their treatment brought element of the Italian architecture. They were more similar with hotels than inns.

2.2 Position of inns in the city

Bazaar of Korca is positioned in an important part of the city, near the center and near the main boulevards of the city. It lies on the northwest side of the city, as an urban ensemble. Manastiri Inn and Stavros Inn are two of the four inns that have survived until today. Manastiri Inn is positioned in a favorable position on the bazaar, on its northern part (Figure3).Its south facade is oriented towards the main square of the bazaar. Its position shows its important role in the structure of the bazaar and clientele who frequented it.

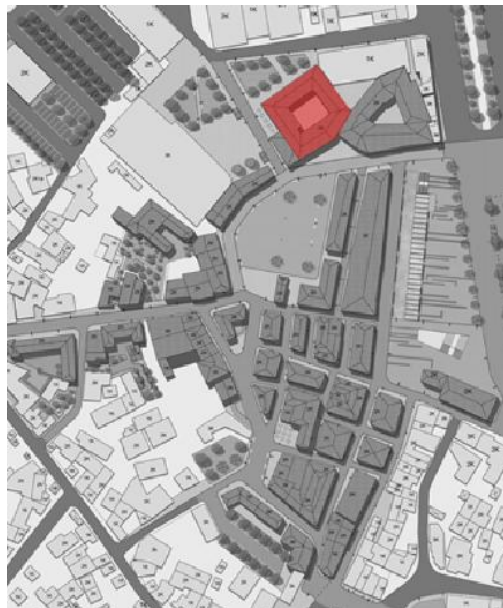


Figure 3: Position of Manastiri Inn in the bazaar of Korca

Similar in terms of position is also Stavros Inn, which is situated only a few meters away, in the western part. (Figure 4)The inn has its east facade oriented in the main square, but it lies more in depth of the bazaar and only a small part of it interacts with the main square. Unlike the previous two inns, Hasan Hushi Inn in Kavaja was situated away from the center of the bazaar. The inn was situated along the street of Zguraj neighborhood (Figure 5), on the north side of the street with proximity of 100 m to the bazaar.

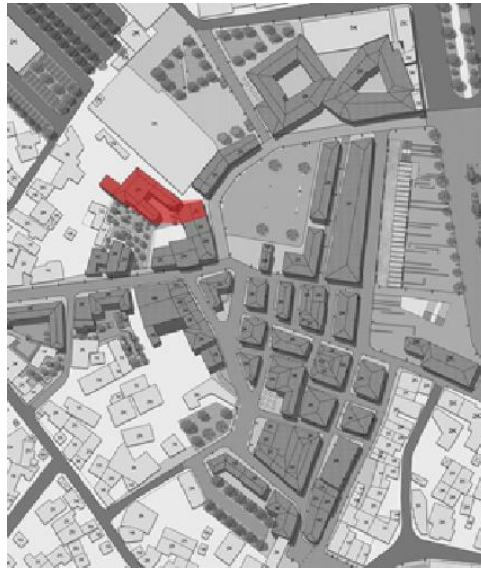


Figure 4: Position of Stavros Inn in the bazaar of Korca

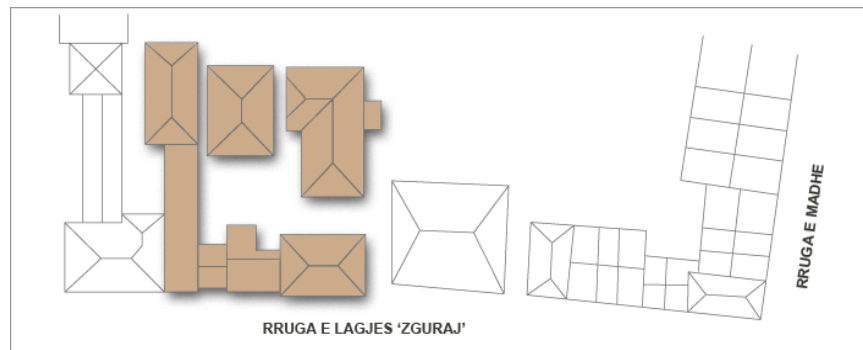


Figure 5: Position of Hasan Hushi Inn in the bazaar of Kavaja

2.3 Formal and functional organisation of inns

Manastiri Inn is organised on the typical compositional scheme of inns. The inn is organised in two floors. It has a simple formal composition, with two compact volumes and roof cover, similar to the most of inns. The main entrance is located along the southern facade, facing the main square. The plan is a regular rectangle with inner courtyard, typical for this building typology. Spaces are organised around three hallways on the ground floor, where the first connects the main square of the bazaar with the courtyard and the two others connect with the back spaces of the inn. On the ground floor are located also shops with entrance from the main square and spaces for storage and animals on the back part of the inn, as shown in Figure 6.

Ground floor consists of a number of small spaces, which have doors and windows opening in the yard. The stairs connecting with the upper floor are positioned on the two parts of the entrance. Stairs lead

to the gallery on the first floor, which connects the rooms on the upper floor. Rooms are positioned next to each other. The gallery is closed with large showcases. The front wing of the inn has a higher level from the ground, which gives the necessary height for the shops. (Thomo, 2012)

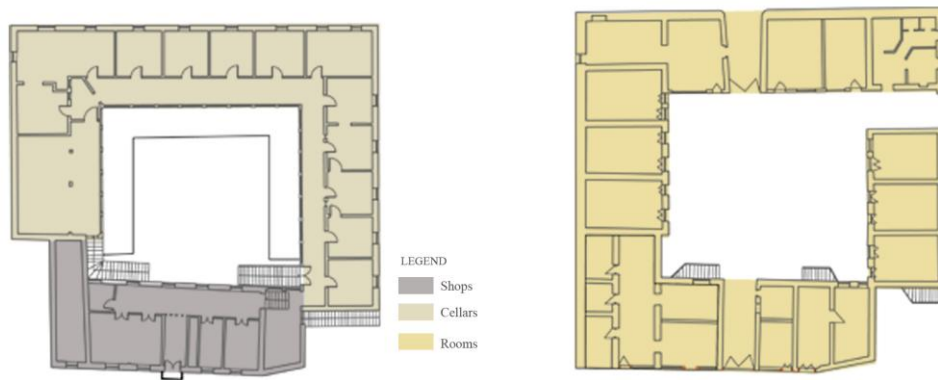


Figure 6: Ground and first floor plans of Manastiri Inn

Stavros Inn represents a deviation from the traditional scheme of inns with inner courtyard. The courtyard here is reduced to a narrow passage. (Thomo, 2012) The inn is not composed as a compact volume, but as a complex of buildings, which are different from each other, demonstrating the different functions that contain and different periods of construction. Ground floor consists of three volumes, two longitudinal located in depth and parallel to each other and a rectangular volume oriented toward the square. On the last one is the main entrance of the inn. Its space was used for shops because of their favourable position. Longitudinal volumes contained high basements, each one with separate entrance and oriented toward the passage. The functions are the same with that of the Manastiri Inn, where on the ground floor were organised spaces for shops and warehouse facilities or space for housing the animals, while on the first floor bedrooms. Planimetric shape of the upper floor is different from the ground floor. Rooms are grouped in a compact plan around a central hallway. (Figure7) Stavros Inn has a considerable area, but fewer rooms.

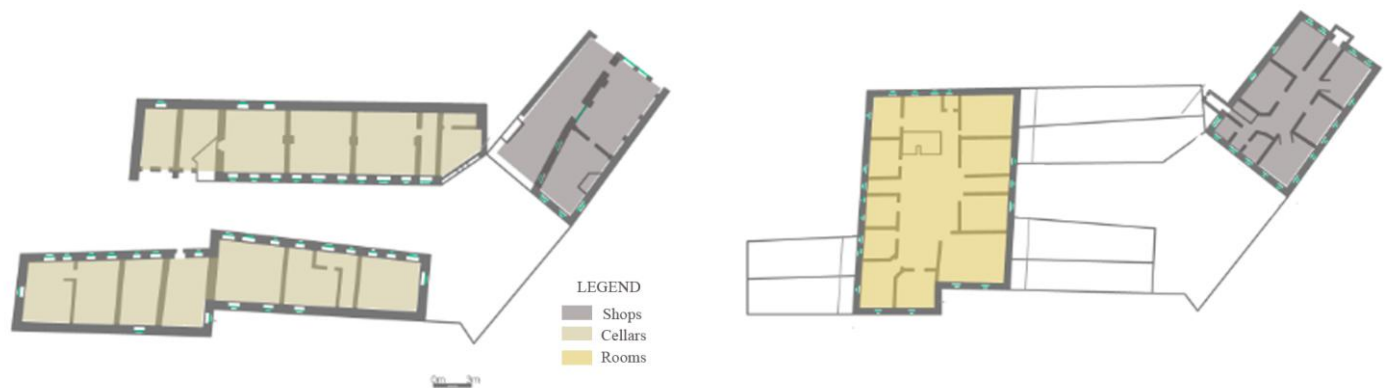


Figure 7: Ground and first floor plans of Stavros inn

From the historical documentation of Hasan Hushi Inn we can conclude that the inn had a similar compositional with the traditional inn, with inner courtyard. Hasan Hushi Inn was not composed as a single compact volume, bur as a complex of buildings. The inns consisted of three separated volumes, each of them having different functions. The courtyard had reduced dimensions compared to other similar inns, covering an area of 140 sqm. The main entrance was along the street, in the same way as in the two other inns. Buildings were organized partly in one floor and partly in two floors. On the north part of the

yard was the two storey building, which on the first floor had spaces for animals and also the stairs connecting with the upper floor. On the first floor were 6 rooms organized on two parts of a transverse corridor (see Figure 8).

In the western part of the yard was a one-story volume, which served for animals, mainly during the day. In the third block on south of the yard, on one floor, was the room of the owner of the inn. (Sukaj, 1998)

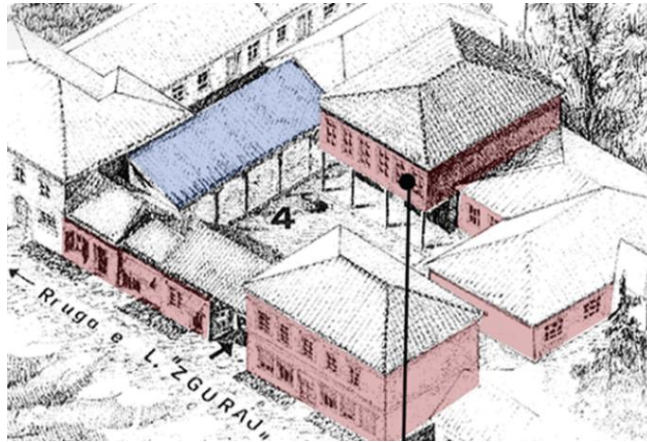


Figure 8: Perspective drawing of Hasan Hushi Inn (ref: I.Sukaj)

2.4 Elements of comfort in inns

Courtyard is the compositional centre of the building, surrounded by all other functions and through the centuries has had various functions like cooking, relaxing, playing, etc. Courtyard has served for creation of a microclimate regardless the outside climate. Also, it was a good place for privacy and for preventing noises from surrounding buildings or the street. In the case of inns, whose primary functions were relax and accommodation, courtyard avoided noises from the bazaar. Another important feature of the courtyard was its role as a buffer zone and thermal regulatory between the outside and inside. (Al Masri, 2010) It has been widely used in different shapes, times and climates. The most common is the rectangular shape, with more efficient proportions of length and width 1:1.8. (Edwards et al., 2006) Manastiri Inn has a ratio of 1:1.2, approximate with the optimal proportion. (Figure 9) The same can be found on Hasan Hushi Inn courtyard.

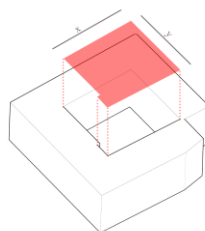


Figure 9: Proportions of Manastiri Inn courtyard, length (x)/width (y)

Another factor to be considered is the ratio of the built area to the courtyard area, which should range from 1.5 to 2.7 (refer to Al Masri, 2010). If the ratio is not in these values, the courtyard will be too big or too small to be environmentally effective. Manastiri Inn has a ratio of 1.4, approximate with the optimal value, what makes it effective in terms of energy efficiency. Hasan Hushi Inn has a ratio of 1.3. The other important factor is “Aspect Ratio” which is considered as the degree of openness to the sky, calculated as the ratio of the courtyard area (sqm) with the average height of the walls (m). (Reynolds, 2002) High ratio shows that the courtyard is exposed to the sky. In the case of Manastiri Inn the ratio is

21 m and this is considered a high value. A wide and shallow courtyard serves as a solar gain. This is recommended in places with cold winter, like Korca.

Regarding daylight, a wide and shallow courtyard is more efficient, as favouring a greater amount of light inside. But openings for daylight should be designed in a way to avoid direct daylight. In Inns, the presence of the gallery on the first floor avoids this problem.

Good ventilation is also one of the features of the courtyard. Small openings on the outside walls of the building, which is in contact with the wind and big openings on the interior part of the courtyard encourage cross ventilation. (Al Masri, 2010) This can be found on Manastiri Inn, where the perimetral walls are designed with small windows and the inside with doors. (Figure 10) It brings a good ventilation of the spaces.

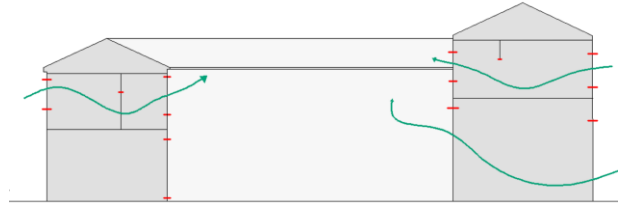


Figure 10: Schematic section of Manastiri Inn, showing the small openings on the outside wall and big openings on the interior part simulating ventilation

2.5 Construction materials and architectural treatment

Manastiri Inn is constructed mainly with two materials. The ground floor is realized with stone and the first floor with brick. The inside walls are constructed with ‘catma’ method. The stairs are constructed of wood and stone, an innovation for the time. Stair steps consist of a block of carved monolith stone to support one over the other. The slabs represent another innovation on the construction methods. They were constructed with metal profiles. Spaces between the beams are filled with bricks. (Thomo, 2012)

The inn is simple in decoration, emphasizing the utilitarian character of the inn. The facade facing the main square has a decorative treatment similar to the treatment of shops. The first floor is characterized by numerous windows and a balcony in the central part of the facade, protected by a metal parapet. (Figure 11) The interior retains a simple treatment, where dominate the wood columns along the gallery.

Similarities can be found on Stavros Inn. The facade oriented toward the square is richer in decoration, with large windows and balcony with metal parapet. Windows are decorated with detailed frames and decorative reliefs. (Figure 12)



Figure 11: View of the main facade of Manastiri Inn (ref: P.Thomo)



Figure 12: View from the entrance of Stavros Inn (ref: P.Thomo)

The ground floor contains large showcases and on the upper part of them, a half circle window with metal elements. The two other buildings of Stavros Inn are constructed with stone and are less decorated. Windows and doors are decorated with simple frames. (Figure 13)



Figure 13: View of the inside passage of Stavros Inn (ref: P.Thomo)

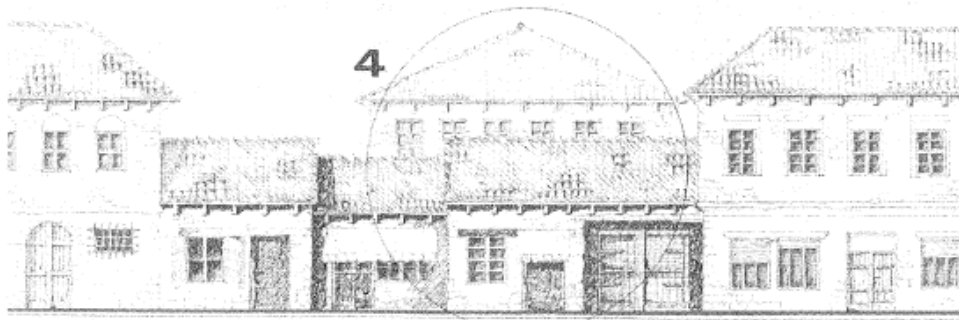


Figure 14: Main facade of Hasan Hushi Inn (ref: P.Thomo)

Hasan Hushi Inns was constructed with local materials, like stone and 'catma' method. The two storey volume had its ground floor constructed with stone, while the first floor with 'catma'. (Sukaj, 1998) In comparison with the other inns, Hasan Hushi Inn used 'qerpic' as a construction material. The two other volumes of the inn were constructed with 'qerpic' combined with wooden horizontal beams and were covered with local tiling. In the facade can be found only very few decorative elements. The only significant decorative features were the frames of the windows, while the rest of the facade remained simple and clear, emphasizing the utilitarian character of the inn. (Figure 14)

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSIONS

Inns in Albania were developed based on the same typological characteristics of ottoman inns, but did not have the same accomplishment achievement and dimensions. Even in inns in Albania we can distinguish differences from one city to another. Inns of the bazaar of Korca are more advanced in terms of realization than those of Kavaja. Inns of Korca are larger in dimensions what shows for a more developed economic life of the city and for a wider clientele. In terms of plan organization we can distinguish common features between inns of two cities. Manastiri Inn and Hasan Hushi Inn share the same compositional scheme with spaces organized around the courtyard. Stavros Inn is organized based on a different scheme, away from the traditional courtyard. Compared to two others, Manastiri Inn is larger in dimensions and contains more functions. This is due to its proximity to the center of the bazaar of Korca. Inns with courtyard possess also elements of comfort. The presence of the courtyard brings advantages related to the thermal comfort, daylight and ventilation (Al Masri, 2010). In this aspect, the

most advantageous is Manastiri Inn, whose courtyard has dimensions and proportions related to the values of an optimal courtyard. Similar features are found also in Hasan Hushi Inn in Kavaja.

What inns differ from each other is the decoration of the facades. Inns of Korca have a richer decoration compared to those of Kavaja. This is evidence of a higher level of construction methods. However, despite the differences, inns of both cities are testimonials of a valuable architecture and a tradition in the field of construction based on innovative methods and principles. In our days inns retain characteristics that should be reevaluated with a revitalization and reuse potential.

Table 1 Summary table

	Manastiri Inn	Stavros Inn	Hasan Hushi Inn
<i>Location</i>	Korca	Korca	Kavaja
<i>Position related to the bazaar</i>	In the center of the bazaar	Near the center of the bazaar	100 m from the bazaar
<i>Compositional scheme</i>	Traditional scheme with courtyard	Longitudinal scheme	Traditional scheme with courtyard
<i>Number of floors</i>	2 floors	1 – 2 floors	1 – 2 floors
<i>Entrance</i>	In southern facade in the main square	In western facade in the main square	Along the street
<i>Ground floor functions</i>	Shops, spaces for storage and animals	Shops, spaces for storage and animals	Spaces for animals, the bedroom of the owner
<i>First floor functions</i>	Bedrooms	Bedrooms	Bedrooms
<i>Proportion of length and width of courtyard (1:1.8)</i>	1:1.2	-	1:1.2
<i>Ratio of the courtyard area to the built area (1.5 – 2.7)</i>	1.4	-	1.3
<i>Ground floor construction materials</i>	Stone	Stone	Stone
<i>First floor construction materials</i>	Brick	Stone	‘Catma’ method and qerpic
<i>Decoration of the main facade</i>	Large windows and a balcony with metal parapet; large showcases on the ground floor	Large windows with decorated frames and reliefs; balcony with metal parapet; half circle metallic window	Simple and clear decoration; windows with stone and wooden frames

4 CONCLUSION

The paper evaluated the characteristics, architectural values, elements of comfort and potential of Ottoman architecture of inns in Albania. The study showed the importance of this building typology, which dates back in the XVII century in Albania. In order to estimate their historic and architectural development, the three case studies were compared with each other in terms of urban position, compositional scheme, elements of comfort and architectural treatment. The case studies represent prominent examples of inns in two cities, Korca and Kavaja. In Korca, the study was focused on Manastiri Inn and Stavros inn, while in Kavaja in Hasan Hushi Inn. The study concluded that inns share common characteristics in terms of compositional scheme and use of local materials, but also differ from each other from the number of spaces, dimensions, construction techniques and architectural decoration.

The three inns contain elements of comfort related to thermal comfort, daylight and ventilation, which could be the focus of another paper in the future.

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