



TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT REPORT NATIONAL MUSEUM OF HISTORY





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1. GENERAL

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Located in the center of Tirana, in "Skënderbej" square, the National Historical Museum is the largest in Albania in terms of wealth and historical heritage. It has a dominant façade, because to the mosaic called "Albania", a work of art where Albanian heroes of different historical stages are presented, with the emphasis placed on the working class. Inaugurated in 1981, it took three years of work to open the museum where today are preserved about 5 thousand objects divided into several pavilions.

The Ancient Pavilion is considered one of the most important pavilions, with nearly 400 objects coming from the Bronze Age. The undisputed masterpiece of the halls of this pavilion is the mosaic "Beauty of Durrës", which dates back to the century. IV BC, and is made of pebbles of various shapes. "Dea e Butrintit" is also one of the most famous objects discovered in Albania, where classical art comes in all its glory.

The Ancient Pavilion pavilion has two halls, where visitors are introduced to the organization and development of social life from the century. VI to XV. From the exhibition of this period stands out the Epitaph of Glavenica of the century. XIV, embroidered with gold thread on silk by the monk Savia by order of Gjergj Arianiti. Some other objects that you will encounter here include handicraft products, coins of Albanian principalities, Arber emblems, etc. The National Renaissance Pavilion is very close to the Independence Pavilion, and they testify to the period of awakening of the national consciousness and that of the proclamation of Albania as a state in 1912.

Iconography Pavilion with a collection of 65 icons of the century. XIV-XIX, is represented by the masters of the religious art of painting such as Onufri, son Nikolla, Onufër Qiprioti, Kostandin Shpataraku, David Selenicasi, Kostandin and Athanas Zografin etc. Another important pavilion is that of Ethnography with over 250 objects, or that of the Second World War. There are 200 relics of martyrs or fallen of the war, which best complement the Anti-Fascist War Pavilion. Finally, in the museum you will be able to see one of the newest pavilions, that of the Communist Genocide, with events from '44 -'91, which holds over 130 objects, and which serves as a documentation of a dark period that should never be returned.

In the National Museum, compared to years ago, in recent months the number of visitors from home and abroad has increased significantly.



1.2 PURPOSE

Tirana has a year-round tourism, as it is favored by the values it carries, but also by the location. One of the special museums in Albania is the National Historical Museum. Objects and artifacts bring traces of different historical periods of our nation.

These artifacts best prove the life of our people over the centuries and over time this museum continues today to be enriched with new objects found belonging to different periods.

The project proposal to preserve the values of the building comes as a need to preserve the architectural heritage, especially after the damage from the earthquake of November 2019, which has highlighted the degradation and consequently, the need for conservation of this museum.

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The National Historical Museum is located in the center of the capital and is the largest museum institution in Albania. The museum was built in 1981 according to the project designed by a group of specialists in the fields of history, linguistics, archeology, ethnography, cartography, architecture and art. The working group was led by prominent personalities such as Aleks Buda, Stefanaq Pollo, Selami Pulaha, Skënder Anamali, Emin Riza, Burhan Çiraku, Kleanthi Dedi, Iljaz Goga, Rrok Zojzi, Abaz Dojaka, Ramadan Sokoli, Enver Faja, Nina Shehu, Wilson Kilica, Fatmir Haxhiu, Myrteza Fushekati, Met Deliu, Aleksandër Meksi etc.

The National Historical Museum was realized according to an urban study of the center of the capital, compiled in 1976. The study was approved by the Political Bureau of the Party-State. For this museum was worked in an organized way, according to the relevant sections, for almost 3 years, until its opening. The object of the museum is a Cultural Monument of Category II. The material and intangible cultural heritage of Albania is promoted through the stands of the National Historical Museum. There are about 6000 objects in the museum premises, which belong to a relatively long period of time from the IV millennium BC to the second half of the XX century. These objects are exhibited in 8 pavilions, the Pavilion of Antiquity, the Middle Ages, the National Renaissance, Independence, the Pavilion of Icons, the National Liberation War, the Pavilion of Communist Terror and Mother Teresa. Built in the style of the communist regime, the museum line was based on the isolation of Albania, manifesting its liberation and battles throughout the centuries of wars and self-defense. His political message was one of the successful self-determination in line with Enver Hoxha's goal of "defending a country surrounded by enemies".

Today, the National Historical Museum will have to tell the history of the country in a new perspective, emphasizing the great diversity of Albania in its geography, habitat and cultural achievements, including many aspects of daily life, values of his people and the lessons of life.



Fig. 1 Connection with the city center

3. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

3.1 Architectural description

A building with a compact volume in the shape of a cube, somewhat a modernist influence, but dressed with figurative elements to add monumentality, is dominant in "Skënderbej" square. The ground floor of the building is treated with dark carved stones and with limited transparent surfaces, giving this floor the character of a strong supporting foundation. While the two upper floors are clad in lightly worked white marble. Marble from Saranda in two forms, white polished and white marble worked with vertical channels made of disk, hand carved.

Exterior simplicity and monumentality create a more emotional interior. Hierarchical spaces of the "open space" type, provide a way of exposure easily perceptible and accessible with a free movement scheme. The story is elaborated and exhibited in museums in several pavilions; that of Antiquity, the Middle Ages, the National Renaissance, Independence, Iconography, Ethnoculture, the Anti-Fascist War and the Communist Genocide.



The museum has a construction area of 27,000 m² and 18,000 m² of exhibition area where 3,600 objects of historical heritage are exhibited. The exposure takes place along the front volume and the two side volumes which surround the inner courtyard of the building, while the administration is located on the three floors of the back volume which makes the complete enclosure of the courtyard. The National Historical Museum is the museum with the largest exhibition area and its enrichment has been continuous. What was soon realized was the lack of laboratory facilities and the museum fund, a situation which the museum continues to suffer today. Some premises have been adapted as such, but may not meet the proper standards for a museum.

On the main facade of the National Historical Museum is a mosaic measuring 37 x 11 m and 10 m high. It occupies an area of 400 m². The mosaic is entitled "Albania". It was realized by Wilson Kilica, Met Deliu, Agim Nebiu, Josif Drobroniku, Aleksandër Filipi etc.

According to the floors, the museum is organized in this way:

The basement consists of rooms such as high voltage room 6KV, low voltage room 0.4 KV, automatic diesel room and dimmer, transformer, staff room, bunker, storage.



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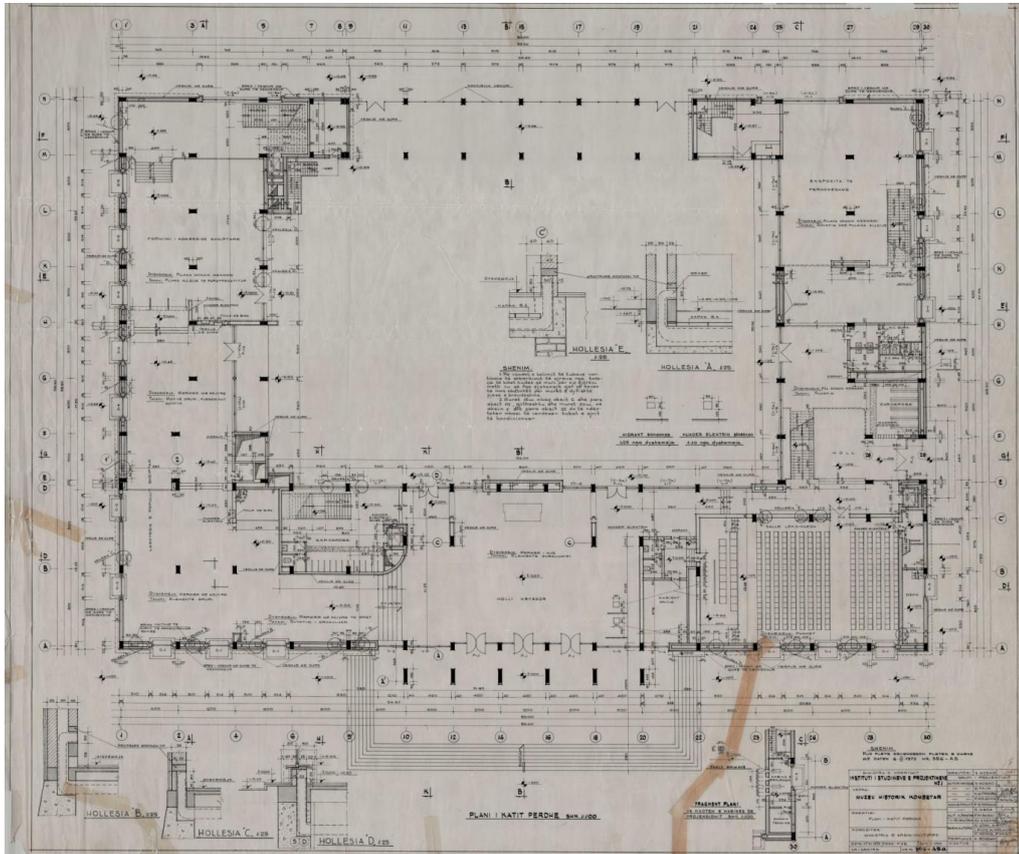


Fig. 3 Ground Floor Plan

First floor: In the volume from the west the first floor starts with the Medieval Pavilion then the Late Medieval Pavilion. A hall connects this pavilion with the conference hall "Shpartaraku" and the Exhibition Hall. It is followed by the Mother Teresa Pavilion and the Communist Terror Pavilion. In the building from the east, on the first floor is the Ethnography Pavilion. In the northern building located above the colonnade are the administration offices, the library and the museum fund.



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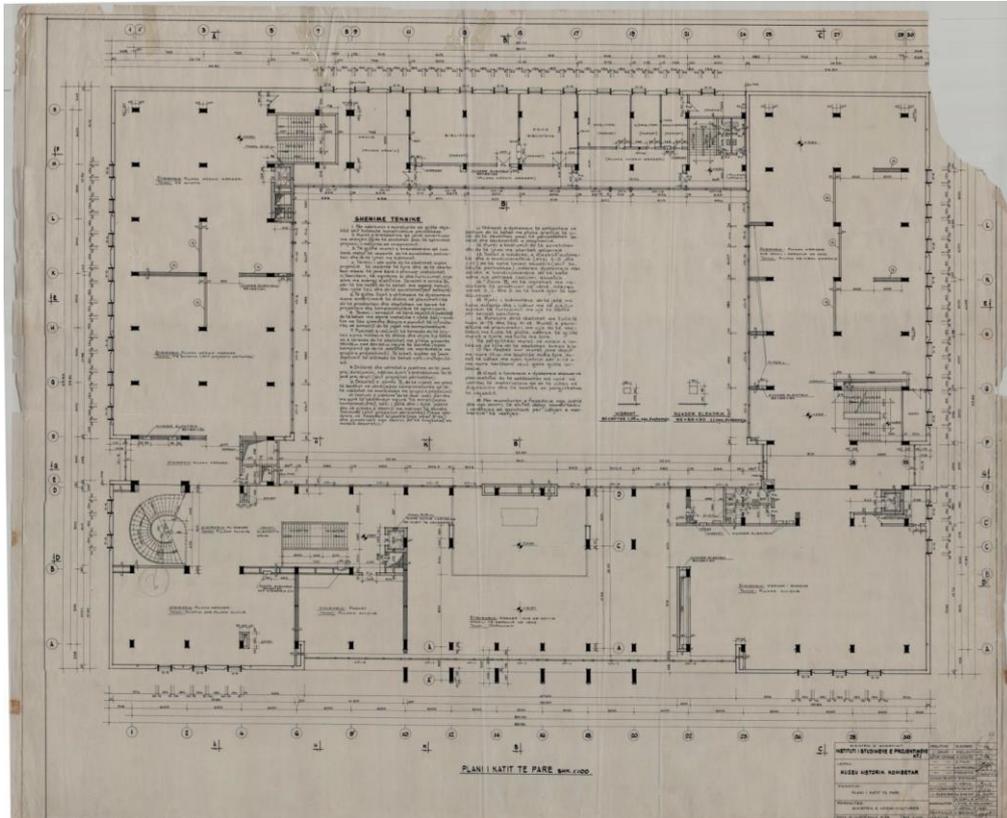


Fig. 4 First Floor Plan

Second floor: On the second floor is the National Renaissance Pavilion, then the hall that connects this pavilion with the pavilion of National Independence, that of the Monarchy, Iconography and the Iconography fund which is located inside the pavilion. After the Iconography pavilion comes the pavilion of the National Liberation War. To the Ethnography pavilion which is located on this floor, access is made from the entrance to the east. In the northern building on this floor is the administration and the administration fund.

4. CONSERVATION AND DEGRADATION

4.1 General Description

If we take a general look at the National Historical Museum, the object does not show obvious and immediately noticeable degradations. During our detailed analysis, major degradations were observed, mainly on the exterior and interior facades of the building, damage mainly from atmospheric conditions, latest earthquake, humidity due to rainwater infiltration, or lack of



maintenance interventions. The only intervention that was carried out in the building are the interventions on the terrace in 2014, due to humidity.

Constructively, the building shows cracks, in the walls of the building or on the floor, due to the detachment of the monolithic soles. It is thought to make the general reinforcement of the structure to increase the durability of the building.

4.2 Facades

From the investigations and surveys carried out in the facility, in the facades of the National Historical Museum, some problems are identified.

- Strong impurities in the facade cladding tiles
- Dirt from sticking posters
- Advertisements displayed by mounting or pasting on the facade
- Damaged tiles from holes and drills in the facade
- Wet damaged tiles
- Tiles partially broken or detached from the facade
- Risk of tile breakage due to moisture
- Damage to the black marble facade on the ground floor - mass collapse of tiles
- Disconnect the façade tile connection from the floor tiles
- Moisture and consequently cracking of the plaster
- Existing windows are damaged and do not meet the requirements of thermal efficiency.
- Air conditioners are found exposed on the facade
- Electrical infrastructure, cameras and other installations identified (electrical cables on the facade)



Fig. 5 Impurity on the facade by atmospheric agents



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Fig. 6 Tile removal from the floor



Fig. 7 Cables, installations and air conditioners on the facade

4.2.1 Main exterior facade

- Damaged mosaic, longitudinal cracks and lack of mosaic parts are noticed
- Impurity on the facade
- Posters on the facade
- Damaged tiles from holes and drillings in the facade
- Wet damaged tiles
- Tiles partially broken or detached from the facade
- High-risk damaged damaged columns and window panes to break off
- Detach the column tiles from the floor tiles leaving space between them
- Broken glass, reinforced with silicone
- Air conditioner exposed on the main facade



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Fig. 8 Broken glass



Fig. 9 Broken tiles



Fig. 10 Detached tiles



Fig. 11 Cracked tiles on facade

4.2.2 Exterior facade

- Impurity on the facade
- Posters and posters for pasting posters without criteria
- Wet damaged tiles
- Tiles partially broken or detached from the facade
- Cracking and moisture in plastered parts
- Damaged and glued silicone glass, high risk cracked glass
- Air conditioning equipment exposed on the facade

- Electrical infrastructure, cameras and other installations identified (electrical cables on the facade)
- Unstudied exterior lighting



Fig. 12 Impurity on the face from the sticking posters



Fig. 13: Damage to tiles and finishes

4.3 Terrace

The terrace of the building can be accessed only through the stairs of the administration. The terrace is developed in several quotas, where the highest quota is reached in the front part, in the volume where the "Albania" mosaic is located. The levels are connected to each other through improvised metal stairs.

The terrace appears degraded. Despite the repairs, cracks and cracks are noticed again due to various reductions that the building undergoes over the years, as a result of the lack of connection that the building has structurally. Damage to the terrace has caused water to seep into the interior as well as the facades causing the breakage of the marble tiles which continue to be a danger to people passing by. In addition to total detachment, most tiles have cracked by not withstanding the water filtration pressure in the tile capillaries due to freezing-thawing during changing atmospheric conditions. The penetration of water from the terrace has caused damage to the interior of the building, becoming a danger to the exposed objects.

4.4 Courtyard

- Stairs that connecting the levels are amortized
- Enclosure and moisture damage is observed in the inner courtyard mosaic
- There are two out-of-function fountains with damaged and broken tiles
- Paving slabs are damaged, broken and moving.
- The lighting in the colonnade is ceiling and damaged
- The camera system in the yard does not meet the technical safety requirements



Fig. 14 Damaged floor tiles



Fig. 15. Damaged stairs treads



Fig. 16 Amortized and non-functional fountain



Fig. 8 Technical equipment exhibited in the yard

4.5 Interior

In the interior, the unrestored ceilings are mainly visible, which need intervention as significant degradations are noticed. There are also some interferences in the ceiling due to different installations.

The railings and parapet of the stairs connecting the floors are typical of the communist architecture of that time. In the interior of the pavilions, interventions have often been made with gypsum walls,



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coming from the original design of the '80s. Resorts during the visit to the museum are random and unstudied. During the investigation of the pavilions it is noticed the existence of many closed doors often times with the sign of the danger of high voltage which through direct access increase the danger of the visitors during the visit. Also in the pavilions there are scattered hydrants, electric frames, wires and exposed plugs which in addition to being dangerous are not aesthetically good for a showroom.