

Aleks TRUSHAJ * (Ismail Qemali University of Vlorë, Albania)

Gladiola ELEZI** (Ismail Qemali University of Vlorë, Albania)

The history of the Porto Palermo Castle and the significance of its Greek inscription

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Abstract: *The castle in Porto Palermo is an important historical site with a Greek inscription, which is of great cultural significance for the region and the whole world, testifying to the ancient history and connection with different cultures and eras. The aim of this study is to investigate the significance of this inscription in the context of the history of the castle in Porto Palermo. Throughout the study, various theoretical methods of understanding were employed, including analysis, synthesis, specification, abstraction, and generalization. The research revealed that Porto Palermo, formerly known as the ancient Epirot city of Panormi, maintained its significance as a fortress throughout the Middle Ages, serving trade interests. By the end of the 18th century, the region came under the governance of Governor Ali Tepelene. It was determined that the Porto Palermo Fortress, constructed in 1803, situated on a peninsula, features a triangular shape, towering walls, bastions, and marble slabs inscribed with Greek text, emphasizing the historical importance of the castle and past events. It is described that in the Paschalëk region under the Ottoman Empire's rule, where the fortress stood, Greek became the official language at Ali Pasha's court, fostering unity among different ethnic groups despite linguistic differences. Remarkably, during Ali Pasha's era, Albanians had yet to acquire national status. It is described that on the white marble plaque, there is a relief inscription in Greek script, which elaborately describes the historical aspects of the castle, the greatness of Ali Tepelene, his significance as a historical figure for Albania and Greece, and his recognition as an unparalleled military leader. This study is important for historians whose subject is Albania under Ottoman rule, as it is possible to deepen and broaden general historical knowledge by studying such elements of culture and architecture.*

Key words: Ottoman Empire, Porto Palermo Castle, Fortification, Greek Inscription, Poem, Navigation

Introduction

Porto Palermo Castle is an important historical site of great cultural significance for the region and the world. It is a testament to the ancient history of the area and its connection to different cultures and eras. In addition, the Greek inscription on the castle is

* Corresponding Author. ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-4251-4530>. trushajaleks@gmail.com

** ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0008-7973-7115>. gladiola_elezi@outlook.com

a key artefact that may contain important information about the history and function of the structure. Thus, the study of this topic is important in the context of general historical research, as well as in the context of preserving the cultural heritage of Albania. The problem of this study is that there is currently a lack of primary sources on the history of the castle in Porto Palermo. In particular, little is known about the Venetian period of the history of this building. In addition, the analysis of the Greek inscription itself is difficult, as it has certain ambiguous aspects that need to be clarified from other sources.

The management system in the Ottoman Empire was quite complex and diverse, especially in the context of its peripheral territories like the Balkan Peninsula. In the Ottoman Empire, power was centralized yet decentralized at the same time, allowing for a certain level of autonomy for local rulers and ethnic groups. In peripheral territories such as Albania, the Ottoman Empire employed a system known as “millet”, where religious or ethnic groups had their own laws and regulations under the leadership of local leaders known as “mildar”. This system promoted religious and ethnic tolerance within the empire. The management of Porto Palermo Castle occurred within the framework of this overall system, considering its strategic importance for the empire in the Balkans. Ali Pasha, as a prominent figure of the time, played a significant role in the development and administration of this fortress, considering his political and strategic objectives. Thus, understanding the management system in the Ottoman Empire helps contextualize the study of Porto Palermo within a broader historical framework.

E. Fili¹ in his scientific work considered the development of this personality. The author delved into the broader theme of Ottoman governance across the Balkan Peninsula, focusing particularly on the administrative mechanisms at play. While highlighting the Ottomans’ involvement in fortification construction in Albania, the author overlooked the specific development of Porto Palermo Castle. Within the scope of this article, the significance of Ali Pasha, also known as Ali Tepelene, emerges as pivotal. The author emphasised that Ali Tepelene was a native of the local area, and that in his youth, national motives had a great influence on the development of his personality, which is very important for understanding his future activities. Another researcher who studied this personality is M.S. Krasniqi.² In his work, the scholar studied Ali Tepelene’s activities in the context of the development of the castle in Porto Palermo. In particular, the author mentioned his political activities and drew attention to the Greek inscription on the castle walls. E. Sygkellou, A. Athanasopoulos and C. Tsatsoulis,³ in their scientific work studied the topic of castles and fortifications on the territory of modern Albania. This work has become important in the context of under-

¹ Fili, 2021.

² Krasniqi, 2021.

³ Sygkellou, Athanasopoulos & Tsatsoulis, 2022.

standing the history of the castle in Porto Palermo. It is also necessary to understand why the inscription on the castle walls was made in Greek, and in this context, the work of K. Giakoumis,⁴ who examined the development of the Greek national movement and its impact on the Balkans, is necessary. The analysis of the inscription on the wall of the castle in Porto Palermo was carried out by E. Shehi, R. Ruka and E. Caka,⁵ but researchers considered the topic of the external features of this text and the board, without a substantive study.

The purpose of this study is to analyse the Greek inscription in the castle of Porto Palermo in the context of the general history of this building.

Materials and Methods

Through the method of analysis, each main element of this article was thoroughly examined. Specifically, the intricate matter of the construction and early history of Porto Palermo Castle was tackled, despite the scarcity of available information. Given the castle's development during Ottoman rule, closely tied to the figure of Ali Pasha, a comprehensive study of his influence was deemed necessary. Furthermore, the Greek inscription on the castle underwent meticulous analysis, considering not only its content but also its creation and form. Following the analysis, the method of synthesis was employed to amalgamate all obtained information into a cohesive result. This facilitated an understanding of Ali Pasha's motives for restoring the fortress, taking into account his political imperatives and the prevailing situation. Additionally, given the limited prevalence of Greek at the time of the inscription, an exploration of Ali Pasha's governance approaches was crucial to comprehend the choice of Greek for the inscription. The article utilized the method of analysis to scrutinize each element, followed by synthesis to consolidate findings into a coherent whole, shedding light on the motivations behind Ali Pasha's actions and the significance of the Greek inscription.

Another important method used in this research is that of specification. This method was employed to focus on the main elements. Specifically, when studying the meaning of the Greek inscription, it was necessary to be specific about certain fragments of the text and explain their significance. Additionally, it was important to emphasize various aspects of Ali Tepelene's life and work, as they directly relate to the topic at hand. It's important to note that this study primarily dealt with the topic of Ottoman rule in the Balkan Peninsula, so the method of abstraction was crucial. Given the existence of several preconceptions about the policies of this state, it was necessary to approach the coverage of this topic from an objective standpoint to ensure the most accurate results. The next method utilized in this study was generalization. Throughout

⁴ Giakoumis, 2021.

⁵ Shehi, Ruka & Caka, 2021.

the study, broad conclusions were drawn that addressed various aspects of the topic. Thus, the method of generalization was necessary to derive overarching conclusions.

Results

Porto Palermo, a former ancient Epirot port city, was called Panormi (Πανόρμιος) and served the fortified city of Chimaira (Χειμάρα, now known as Himarë). The area around Chaimara (Chimaira) was inhabited by Chaones-Epirot until the Roman occupation. Panormi is also mentioned in the works of Strabo and Ptolemy. The name Panormi was most likely changed to Porto Palermo during the Byzantine era, possibly from the origin of the name Palermo in Sicily, which was also derived from Panormi.⁶ In the Middle Ages and during the early modern period, a fortress was built near Porto Palermo. In general, there is very little information about this period, but it is known for certain that the castle was built by the Venetians to pursue their trade interests.⁷ By the mid-17th century, the governance system of the Ottoman Empire's vilayets/provinces had evolved into a quasi-autonomous rule by local rulers known as pashas. At the end of the 18th century, the Sultan appointed a certain Ali Tepelene as governor of a large part of Epirus, modern southern Albania and most of mainland Greece, together with his court in Ioánnina. Ali's ancestors were Albanian Christians who converted to Islam during the Turkish Empire. Young Ali, as a bandit, patrolled the streets and roads, holding ransoms or robbing everyone he met.

The castle surrounding Porto Palermo was vulnerable to cannon fire, as it had only a small number of cannons, possibly due to the early date of its construction when cannons did not have such a long range. In 1662, the Venetians were concerned that the Turks might repair the castle and destroy it. At that time, the fort was defended by only a small garrison of a few people with limited resources for maintenance and command. Under the leadership of Ali Pasha, the fortress was rebuilt.⁸ Porto Palermo Castle is located on a small peninsula near the village of Keparo and is shaped like a triangle with dimensions of 150 m by 400 m, with walls up to 20 m high and three massive bastions in the corners [Fig. 1]. The only entrance to the castle is located in the middle of the southern wall and has a plaque with an inscription [Fig. 2].

⁶ Nef, 2013.

⁷ Fischer & Schmitt, 2022; Kaplan, 2022.

⁸ Sygkellou, Athanasopoulos & Tsatsoulis, 2022.



Fig. 1. Castle in Porto Palermo
(by the Authors)

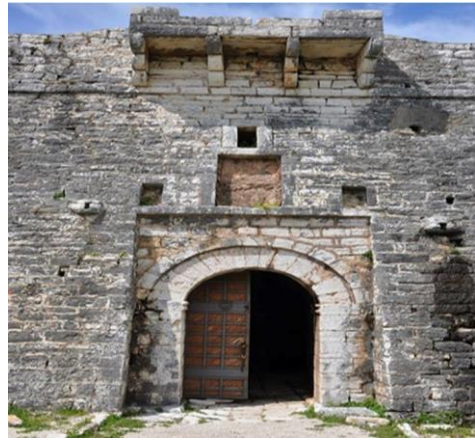


Fig. 2. Gate in Porto Palermo Castle
(by the Authors)

Based on historical sources and archaeological observations, it can be argued that the castle, which was built in the time of Ali Pasha, was constructed by local craftsman Yorgo Permetari in collaboration with Italian and French architects. It was based on the fortified settlement of Panormi, which was used for defence during the time of Pyrrhus of Epirus, as evidenced by an inscription on the castle's entrance gate. With the completion of the construction of the Porto Palermo fortress, marble slabs with inscriptions were installed at the entrance gate.⁹ The Porto Palermo Castle is an important historical site that testifies to the military construction of the past. Ali Pasha asked for an epigraph to be placed on the gates of this castle, and it was Ioannis Vilaras who composed the poems and hymns dedicated to this castle and the ruler of Pashalek Janina, Ali Pasha. The inscription was later observed and researched by various historians, including Papa Pano Petridi, Jani Vlahojani and Janko Pali, who made copies and translations of the inscription. The first translation into Albanian was presented in the book by S. Rusch, but it differs significantly from Vilara's original style and J. Pali's fantastic translation.¹⁰

The region called Paschallek Janina covered the territories of Southern Albania and Northern Greece, functioning as a power in the Ottoman Empire. However, there was a tendency in this region to secede from the Ottoman Empire. In Pashalek, there was multilingualism among the Albanian population, and the use of Greek as the official language in Ali Pasha's court became a common ground for meeting different ethnic groups of the time. Although Ali's language was Albanian, he was fluent in Greek and Turkish, and when he needed to correspond, he wrote in the Greek alphabet, transcribing the different languages he used into the Greek alphabet, which he knew

⁹ Pouqueville, 1827; Sygkellou, Athanasopoulos & Tsatsoulis, 2022.

¹⁰ Krasniqi, 2021.

better.¹¹ During the reign of Ali Pasha Tepelene, the language had not yet acquired a separate national character, which emerged after the formation of nation-states in the Balkans. In addition to important Muslim and Orthodox Albanian individuals, Ali Pasha Tepelene also had Greeks in his court, who were used as advisers and mediators to communicate with the Greek population in his neighbourhood. One of these Greeks was Jani Vilara, who wrote poetry dedicated to Ali Pasha Tepelene, and these poems were inscribed on a marble tablet in the fortress of Porto Palermo on the coast of the Chimaira.¹²

Ioannis Vilaras was also interested in linguistic issues and remains a prominent figure in Greek Renaissance literature. He is known to have created the “Romeiki Glossa” in 1814, which differs from the traditional Greek script. It is also known that he worked on the Albanian alphabet “Velara”, which is still known only on a few pages where he wrote in Albanian.¹³ The Albanian language at that time did not yet have a separate identity, and this is confirmed by Vilaras’s correspondence in Albanian using the Greek alphabet. He was also an active member of the Philiki Etaireia society and played an important role in the preparation of the Greek Revolution of 1821. A plaque with his poems on the entrance gate of Porto Palermo Castle testifies to the high artistic level of his works and multilingualism, as it contains many Albanian words.¹⁴ This plaque is an important historical source that confirms the cultural exchange and linguistic diversity in this region in the past.¹⁵ The plaque itself is made of white marble and bears a relief inscription in Greek letters with exquisite calligraphy [Fig. 3]. The plaque measures 49 cm in height, 59 cm in width, and 5 cm in thickness. The capital letters of the inscription are 3.5 cm high. The text on the plaque consists of nine lines, with eight lines containing verses and the top line indicating the date.¹⁶ The inscription is in capital letters and is inscribed in an arched frame with a large arch in the middle and two small arches on either side, forming an acrotery of arcs; the frame is straight at the bottom and on both vertical sides, as is the end of the horizontal line of the plate. On the reverse side of the plate, grooves are cut for easy on-site installation.¹⁷

¹¹ Fili, 2021.

¹² Kappler, 2022.

¹³ Fleming, 1999; Kappler, 2022.

¹⁴ Kappler, 1993.

¹⁵ Giakoumis, 2021; Ndreu & Lazri, 2023.

¹⁶ Kappler, 2022.

¹⁷ Shehi, Ruka & Caka, 2021.

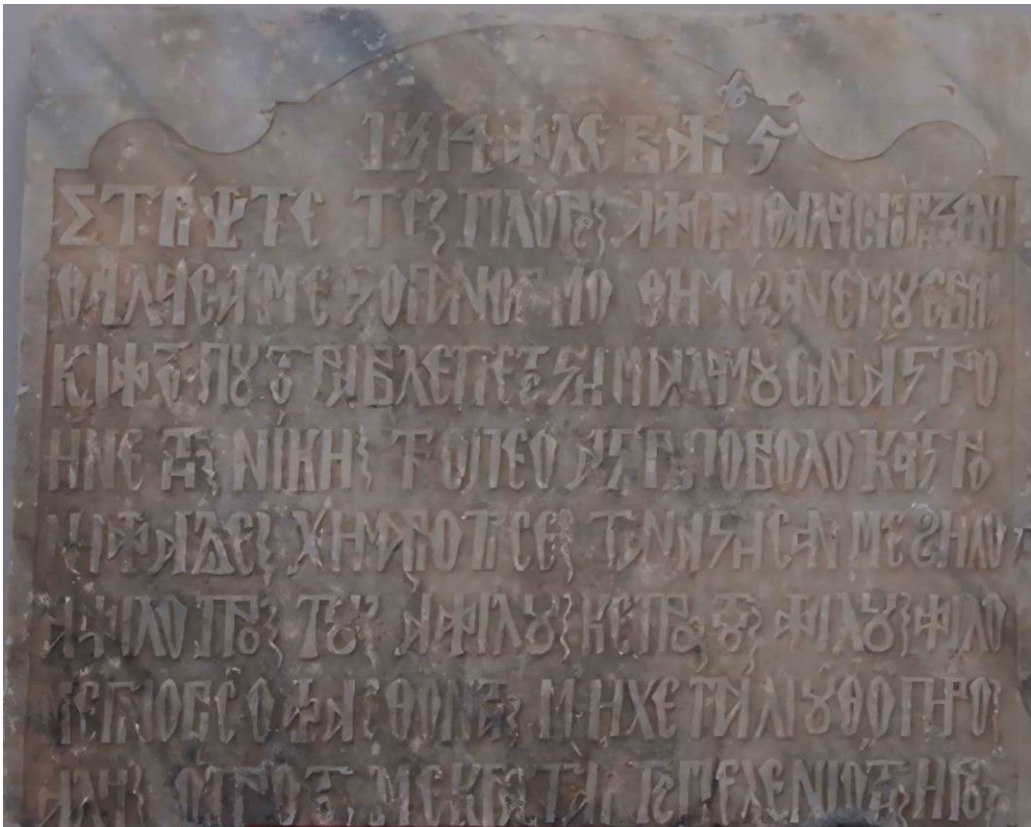


Fig. 3. Greek inscription in the castle of Porto Palermo (by the Authors)

The month and year are indicated at the top of the eight lines of the inscription. The second six-verse poem is placed below this plate; there is no information on its calligraphy, but only the content is known. This text is devoted to the greatness and characteristics of Ali Tepelene, which are presented in poetic form. The inscription on this slab begins with the date – day, month, and year – but the content of this data is missing in the translation made by J. Pala, which may indicate his limited information. The year 1814 in this inscription may be related to the completion of work on the castle, which took place during this period, when Ali Pasha gained full control of the Ionian Sea coast after the withdrawal of Napoleon’s troops.¹⁸

¹⁸ Shehi, Ruka & Caka, 2021; Vokshi, Shehu & Dervishi, 2021.

The content of the inscription in Greek taken directly from the inscription plate:

1814 ΦΛΕΒΑΡΙου 5

ΣΤΡΨΤΕ ΤΕΣ ΠΛΟΡΕΣ ΑΦΟΒΑ ΘΑΛΑΣΟΠῶΡΗ ΞΕΝΗ
ΘΑΛΑΣΑ ΜΕΣ’ ΤΟ ΠΑΝΟΡΜΟ ΘΗΜῶΣ ΑΝΕΜΟΥ ΣΒΕΝῆ
Κ’ ΙΦΤΟ ΠΟΥ ΤΟΡΑ ΒΛΕΠΕΤΕ ΣΤΗ ΜΠΑΛΑ ΜΟΥ ΣΑΝ ΎΑΣΤΡΟ
ἮΝΕ ΤΗΣ ΝΙ΄ΚΗΣ ΤΡΟΠΕΟ ΑΤΡΑΠΟΒΟΛΟ ΚΑ΄ΣΤΡΟ
ΝΗΦΑΔΕΣ ΧΗΜΑΡΙΟΤΙΣΕΣ Τ’ ΑΝΑΣΤΗΣΑΝ ΜΕ ΖΗΛΟ
ΑΦΙΛΟ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΥΣ ΑΦΙΛΟΥΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΥΣ ΦΙΛΟΥΣ ΦΙΛΟ
Μ’ ΕΓΝΟΡΗΣ’ Ο ΦΑΕΘΟΝΤΑΣ Μ’ ΗΧΕ ΠΑΛΙΟΥΘ’ Ο ΠΗ΄ΡΟΣ
ΑΛΗΣ Ο ΠΡΟΤΟΣ ΜΕ ΚΡΑΤΑ ΤΕΠΕΛΕΝΙΟΤΗΣ ΗΡΟΣ

February 5 ,1814

Turn the course you sailors, bravely head on the bay
Here in Panorma, the noise of storms is refusal lay
And me who you see in the clouded sky
I won't win a castle trophy like that that fires lightning
Newly-wed Chimaira girls affectionately shaped me up
Hell to enemies and shelter to friends erupt
Phaethon showed envy, and jealous wars Pyrrhus on me
Ali Pasha Tepelena ruled me the way to be)

This inscription, based on the Albanian translation, has the following content:

The year 1814 in this epigraphic poem can be linked to events related to the history of Ali Pasha and the castle, which became a symbol of his power. The poem mentions the “Trophy of the Castle...”, and the last reconstruction of the castle actually took place in 1814-1817, which confirms the completion of the work on the castle in 1814. February reminds us of a tragic event in the history of Ali Pasha – his assassination on 5 February 1822. The controversy over the date of 5 February may be a coincidence, but the existence of two separate plates with the inscriptions and the year 1814 may leave questions about the time of the plate’s placement. However, the framing of the slab resembles that of a tombstone, which may be in favour of its placement after Ali Pasha’s death. The poem also refers to the castle’s role as a shelter for sailors during sea storms in the Panormi Bay. It reflects the importance of the castle in the culture and history of the region. The poem also describes the brides of the Himariots, emphasising their strength and indestructibility, similar to the castle. It speaks of their role in building traditions and defines the character of Albanian women in the area. The poetic lines also highlight the honourable role they played in the life of Ali Pasha. The inscription on the second plaque, which is placed below the main one, is entirely devoted to the greatness and characteristics of Ali Tepelene. The presence in

the text of the phrase στρατηγός ασύγκριτος (unsurpassed general) shows great respect for Ali, and the information about his origin from Athens and his military skills, like those of Mars (Ares), make him look like a mythological hero. This inscription testifies to Ali Tepelene's important role as a historical figure for both Albania and Greece, and to his fame as a warrior and ruler:

του Αυθέντης πληρεξούσιος στις Ήπειρος τα μέρη,
Και στρατηγός Ασσύριος με το σπαθί στο χέρι,
Πέντε μυριάδες στράτευμα κρατεί στον ορισμό του
άγρυπνα πάντα κι άφοβα, ενάντια στον εχθρό του.
Στα Γιάννινα αναπαύεται, τ' ανδρείο λεοντάρι,
της Αθηνάς το γέννημα, τ' ανάθρεμμα ιρη

Content in English:

Powerful his mighty God across Epirus plain
Asirian (incomparable) general with sword and brain
Fifty thousand soldiers sharp under his order
Bravely and fiercely the enemy sent to disorder
In Ioannina now does the lion stoutly rest
Born by Athina and by Mars to be blest

It is worth noting that the content of the poems focuses on the theme of sailors, which in turn is important for understanding the essence of this format. The castle in Porto Palermo positioned itself not only as a defensive structure, but also as a place where any ship could dock to replenish its supplies. The location of this inscription in the castle of Porto Palermo reflects the proscenium context and the importance of this site to Ali Pasha, as well as his connection to his family members, such as his girlfriend, sister, and mother. Ali Pasha personally used the fortress of Porto Palermo, just as other members of his family used other fortresses such as Libogov, Butrint. The placement of this epitaph in the Porto Palermo fortress is connected with both the completion of its construction and the transfer of this fortress to the control of Pasha Janina after the withdrawal of Napoleon Bonaparte's French troops.

Discussion

The topic of the inscription on the Porto Palermo castle plaque is related to many different aspects of general knowledge in the context of Albanian history. In view of this, a significant number of scholars have studied this issue.

In the scientific works compiled by G. Verdiani,¹⁹ the issue of fortifications and castles in Albania was considered. As a result of the papers, it was determined that the building of the castle in Porto Palermo has a triangular layout, in which there are three large jagged corner bastions, as well as another in the western courtyard. These bastions have flat roofs and are made of sculpted stones. Inside the building there are spacious halls and warehouses. In the centre of the building is a stone staircase leading to a terraced roof. The entrance to the building is on the south side and is located in the middle between two bastions. The inner side of the entrance is equipped with a sloping wall with a gap for control and protection. Outside the building, there is a terrace that protrudes above the entrance door and can be used to house defence systems. The materials state that this castle is similar to many other examples of military architecture in Albania, and it is noted that this type of construction and layout was chosen due to the peculiarities of military art of the time, namely the use of modern artillery. In addition, the castle was surrounded by high hills, which made it difficult to defend, and this was reflected in the choice of a triangular structure. It is worth agreeing with these opinions, since, as noted in the results of this works, this building was indeed created on the basis of an old castle, taking into account all the features of the military art of that time.

The inscription on the plaque of the castle in Porto Palermo was made in Greek, which is a rather controversial topic for scholars studying the topic of national movements on the Balkan Peninsula. In particular, R. Beaton and D. Ricks²⁰ studied the development and formation of modern Greece in their research. This research was related to the study of the spread of the ideas of romanticism and nationalism in this territory, and, accordingly, to the topic of language. In general, it is true that the Greek national liberation movement was actively developing in the first half of the 19th century. However, it should be emphasised that the movement was more radical in nature during this period, and it did not have a significant impact on the use of Greek by Ottoman officials. Thus, we should disagree with thesis that the inscription in Greek in Porto Palermo Castle is evidence of the spread of Greek national ideas, since at the time of its creation, the liberation movement did not have such a great impact on the spread of the use of the Greek language. It is more likely that the choice of Greek is related to Ali Pasha's worldview, since, as already noted in the results of this study, this figure often used Greek language to communicate with the local population and gain their favour.²¹

The study conducted by B.P.C. Osswald²² sheds light on the Ottoman approach to architectural development. According to the author, the Ottomans had a systematic

¹⁹ Verdiani, 2016.

²⁰ Beaton & Ricks, 2016.

²¹ Kotzageorgis, 1997.

²² Osswald, 2008.

approach of demolishing historical structures and replacing them with their own constructions. For instance, Ali Pasha, who governed the city from 1788 to 1821, constructed a grand palace within the citadel. Over the course of the 19th century, the city centre gradually shifted away from the castle and extended beyond its walls, settling in the surrounding neighbourhoods with rich historical backgrounds. Consequently, towards the end of the Ottoman era, the “*Lieux de Pouvoir*” (high officials) had already begun to migrate outside the castle.²³ It is reasonable to concur with these observations, as the construction of citadels indeed played a role in the development of neighbouring cities. In the context of the Porto Palermo fortress, it is essential to consider that it was a port city, where sailors were always well-received. This aspect, as mentioned in the findings, is evident in the inscription on the tablet.²⁴

M. Brestovci, D. Abdullahu and F. Sahiti²⁵ brought attention to a significant aspect of Ali Pasha’s role as a military and political figure. Specifically, they highlighted that in June 1797, following the French capture of the Venetian Republic, French troops landed on the Ionian Islands. Venetian Albania, encompassing Butrint, Parga, Preveza, and Vonica along the coast of South Albania and Epirus, also fell under French influence. Ali Pasha was not oblivious to these crucial political shifts. In anticipation, he dispatched his emissaries to Italy to approach General Napoleon Bonaparte, offering his support and seeking his patronage. With French backing, Ali Pasha managed to secure control over parts of Chimaira, including Porto Palermo and Saranda. In 1798, during a challenging period for the French and Bonaparte in Egypt following the defeat of the French fleet in the Battle of Abukir, Ali Pasha seized the opportunity to capture Venetian Albania.²⁶ Subsequently, in 1799, the Russian fleet led by S. Ushakov captured the Ionian Islands, prompting Ali Pasha to clandestinely support the French and Turks in their struggle against the Russians, who were backing the Albanian feudal lords of Chameria, Ali Pasha’s adversaries. These arguments underscore Ali Pasha’s significant role during that era, which is also corroborated by the content of the second plaque within the Porto Palermo castle, dedicated to Ali Pasha’s persona.²⁷

Another important question is what importance the castle in Porto Palermo had for Ali Pasha. While researching this topic, J.C. Carvajal López²⁸ came to the conclusion that this castle was hardly used by Ali Pasha, instead he mainly used the castle in Butrint. Also, the text of the inscriptions on the walls of this castle plays a significant role in glorifying this figure not only in the military but also in the administrative context, which may indicate his contribution to the development of this city.

²³ Niehoff-Panagiotidis, 1999.

²⁴ Kotzageorgis, 2009.

²⁵ Brestovci, Abdullahu & Sahiti, 2022.

²⁶ Panagiotopoulos, 2009.

²⁷ Kyriazis, 2019.

²⁸ Carvajal López, 2019.

In general, it should be noted that the topic of the inscription on the castle plaque in Porto Palermo is quite important, as it allows us to explore the issues of the general context of the construction of fortifications and the history of this region in more depth.

Conclusions

As a result of the study, it was determined that Porto Palermo is the former ancient Epirot city of Panormi, which served the city of Chimaira. In the Middle Ages, a fortress was built near Porto Palermo for trade interests. At the end of the 18th century, the Sultan appointed Ali Tepelene as governor of the area. In 1803, he began restoring the fortress. The Porto Palermo fortress was built by the famous master Giorgio Permettari together with Italian and French architects and was based on the Caon settlement of Panormi, which was used for defence in the past. The castle had marble slabs with inscriptions that were compiled by the Greek scholar Ioannis Vilaras at the request of Ali Pasha.

The region of Paschalëk, where the fortress was located, in the Ottoman Empire covered Southern Albania and Northern Greece. Although there was linguistic diversity here, in Ali Pasha's court Greek became the official language, uniting different ethnic groups. At that time, the Albanian language did not yet have national status, and Greek consultants worked at Ali Pasha's court. Ioannis Vilaras, a Greek, wrote poetic verses about Ali Pasha, which were inscribed on a marble plaque in the fortress of Porto Palermo on the coast of the Chimaira. The plaque is made of white marble and contains a large relief inscription in Greek letters, consisting of nine lines. The first line indicates the date, and the next eight lines contain the verses. The upper part of the inscription shows the month and year (1814), and indicates the historical aspects of the castle, namely that it was a war spoil. This is followed by poetry. The second plaque, placed below the main one, is entirely devoted to the greatness and characteristics of Ali Tepelene. The inscription emphasises his important role as a historical figure for Albania and Greece and recognises him as a consummate general.

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