

The domes of Albania: architectural elements of a cultural heritage to discover and preserve

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Abstract Characterized by a long history, Albania still remains almost unknown, after the isolation into which it was forced for more than forty years. Surrounded by the still detectable paths of this period, plunged in an extraordinary natural landscape, cultural treasures are hidden. Among them, stand impressive domes that, as guardians of the past, characterize Ottoman mosques, Catholic churches and Orthodox monasteries and are bearers of the universal principles of religious tolerance and social coexistence. Moving from the basic need "*to first know in order to forward to the next generations*", the authors of this work have focused their attention on the most significant architectural objects of the Balkan country. With its emphasis on the symbolic and identitarian character of cultural heritage, this work pursues the goal of helping local communities to re-appropriate these precious remnants of the past, bringing them to light with respect for their historical and esthetic qualities.

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