

HISTORY OF DURRËS

CAPE OF RODON

Local underwater investigation

APPRODI project aims to valorise numerous ancient harbours as cultural heritage of the Adriatic-Ionian area, and increase their popularity as destinations for transnational ecotourism. The project aspires to engage local community and ecotourism stakeholders to promote environmentally friendly tourism on the grounds of the ancient ports as seemingly marginal content, but in fact enrich cultural heritage that needs to be well explored.

Pilot actions aim to create interesting and rich content attractive to visitors, which can be presented in an innovative way without endangering heritage sites. For this reason, underwater archaeological research has been carried out in both pilot areas: Currila/Batlla site and Cape of Rodon. During the underwater archeological research, this pilot area was divided into two parts: Northern area and Southern area.

The archaeological material identified in the Northern area dated from the end of the IV Century BC and continued until the end of the medieval period. Parts of modern ships built of wood or metal have also been found scattered, and some of them probably belong to the wrecks of the First World War. Earlier, in the past years, in this area have been identified two wrecks of the Hellenistic period that transported amphorae and building materials from Dyrrahium to Lissus.

While the archeological material identified in the Southern area of Cape mainly consisted of fragments of amphorae and tableware, which belonged to the Roman imperial period (1st-3rd century AD).



The city of Durrës, nowadays is located exactly on the ancient ruins of Epidamos. Durrës is the one of the most important city in Albania and Adriatic area, enriched with history, architecture and archeological sites such as the Roman Amphitheatre, the Byzantine market, the Venetian Tower, the surrounding Walls, Roman Baths, the Observation Tower, Basilica of St. Michael Arapaj, the fortification of Rodon Cape, etc. One of the most considerable attraction of Durrës is the Roman Amphitheatre that is included on the tentative list of Albania for designation as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Also, Durrës has a wealth of underwater archaeological sites that has not been investigated to date



CAPE OF RODON

The Cape of Rodon is the largest cape in Albania, that lies on the Adriatic Sea in north of Durrës. It extends in a triangular shape between Rodon Bay in the north and Lalzi Bay in the south. Parallel to its shore lie clay hills, which are distinguished by the round shapes that surround the entire cape. Some of them are covered by small forests creating two relaxing colors: the blue of the sea and the green of the shore. This area is important for research because it includes the entire northern part of the Skanderbeg fortification as well as the northern shore of the valley in which the Saint Anthony Church is located.



SAINT ANTHONY CHURCH

On a low neck between the two hills near the sea shore in the northern part of Cape of Rodon, are preserved the ruins of Saint Anthony Church. This monument represents a cultural heritage value, as long as this building belongs to the Roman-Gothic architecture of the XIII Century. Different scholars set up the construction of the St. Anthony Church and Monastery of the St. Mary in the XIV Century. Due to its monumental values and its stunning geographical position and landscape, the St. Anthony Church is one of the most visited places by tourists.



SKANDERBEG FORTIFICATION

The Fortification at Cape of Rodon, known as Skanderbeg's Castle, is built by Skanderbeg around 1460 to defend the country in the rebellion against Ottoman occupation. The castle had a quadrangular design and defensive towers at each of its corners. According to Marin Barleti this castle was razed to the ground by the Ottomans in 1467 and was rebuilt by the Venetians 33 years later. Only the central tower, which is 10 meters high, and some parts of the defensive walls of 3.5 meters thick, are still standing.

