

Dyrrhachion/Durrës – an Adriatic Sea Gateway between East and West

Ferries and cargo ships alike pass through the entry channel between the two enormous artificial moles that today protect the busy port of Durrës (*Porti i Durrësit*) in Albania (fig. 1). With eleven berths, divided into four terminals, the port covers approximately 65 hectares of built-up areas that skirt the basin of another 67 hectares of water surface. Durrës harbour handles more than three quarters of the total cargo that leaves or reaches Albania by sea, comprising 3.4 tons in absolute numbers in 2014. In its fourth terminal, ferries of different sizes load and unload roughly 1.5 million people each year, a number that makes Durrës the largest passenger port in the Adriatic Sea providing especially convenient connections to Ancona, Brindisi and Bari¹.

Durrës' importance in terms of maritime traffic and trade is of course not a recent phenomenon. Ever since its foundation in the 7th century AD under the name of Epidamnos/Dyrrhachion², the town has played a vital part in maritime networks, especially in Roman and Byzantine times. Durrës has not only functioned as a natural gateway for traffic into the central Balkan plains – its harbour has also served as a hub for routes along and across the Adriatic. For centuries, there was no single town to compete with Durrës, which offered virtually the only safe harbour along the coast between Ulcinj and Vlorë (about 161 km).

Despite its undeniable continuity as a central place, Durrës has undergone many transformations both in terms of geomorphology and infrastructure. Even though the town's history has always been linked so closely to its harbour, very little is known about it. I will thus attempt to outline the town's medieval history up to 1204 from a maritime perspective, focussing on economic, military and traffic issues. Moreover, the location of the harbour(s) of Byzantine Durrës shall be discussed.

Pre-Byzantine History

The first Greek colonists from Corfu and Corinth, who set foot on the shore of what is today the city of Durrës in 625 or 627 BC in order to establish an *emporion*³, were perhaps not the first people to settle there. Archaeological findings suggest that there had been an earlier Illyrian settlement, but so far, no buildings could be connected with certainty to a pre-colonial phase⁴. In any case, the Greek settlers had chosen the place for their *emporion* wisely, as it offered excellent access to the hinterland. The distribution pattern of coins minted in Epidamnos between the end of the 4th and the middle of the 1st century BC points to strong commercial relations deep into the Balkan peninsula as far as Dacia⁵. Apart from this, the colony established itself as an important stop on the main routes across and along the Adriatic Sea⁶.

According to recent archaeological research in Rruga A. Goga – and contrary to an earlier hypothesis of an acropolis – the Hellenistic settlement was probably situated on the plain that extends east of the old town. This settlement evolved along two axes, one leading from west to east (and being probably the precursor of the later *Via Egnatia*) and the other leading north, following the hill range. The latter perhaps connected the settlement to some landing place east of Capo Pali (Kepi i Bishti i Pallës), as it is known from later centuries that vessels sought shelter there from winds against which the bay of Durrës could not provide any protection (see below)⁷. Traces of Hellenistic fortifications were so far only identified in the south-eastern bastion of the city walls⁸.

The town of Epidamnos became a Roman protectorate in 229 BC. The main layout of the Hellenistic settlement does not seem to have changed considerably in Roman times as there are corresponding construction phases on most Hellen-

1 Metalla/Vyshka/Nexhipi, Performance Measurement.

2 Depending on the period in concern, studies on Durrës use the town's Greek (Epidamnos/Dyrrhachion), Roman (Dyrrachium) or Italian (Durazzo) name. For the ease of better understanding, I chose to use the modern name ubiquitously, if not referring to proper names of historical administrative entities (e. g. »*thema* of Dyrrhachion«).

3 On the history of ancient Epidamnos/Dyrrhachion see RE V/2 1882-1887. – DNP III 858. – On the foundation myths of the city see Santoro, *Urbanistica* 149: 177-189.

4 Santoro, *Nascita* 9-13. – Santoro/Sassi, *Aree suburbane* 36-39. – Shehi, *Topografia* 160-162.

5 Picard/Gjongekaj, *Drachmes*.

6 Santoro, *Epidamnos* 25.

7 Santoro/Sassi/Hoti, *Nuova immagine* 313-314.

8 Gutteridge/Hoti, *New Light* 367. – Shehi, *Topografia* 161.



Fig. 1 Aerial view of the modern harbour area of Durrës. – (https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/34/Hafen_Durres_von_oben.jpg [29.3.2018]).

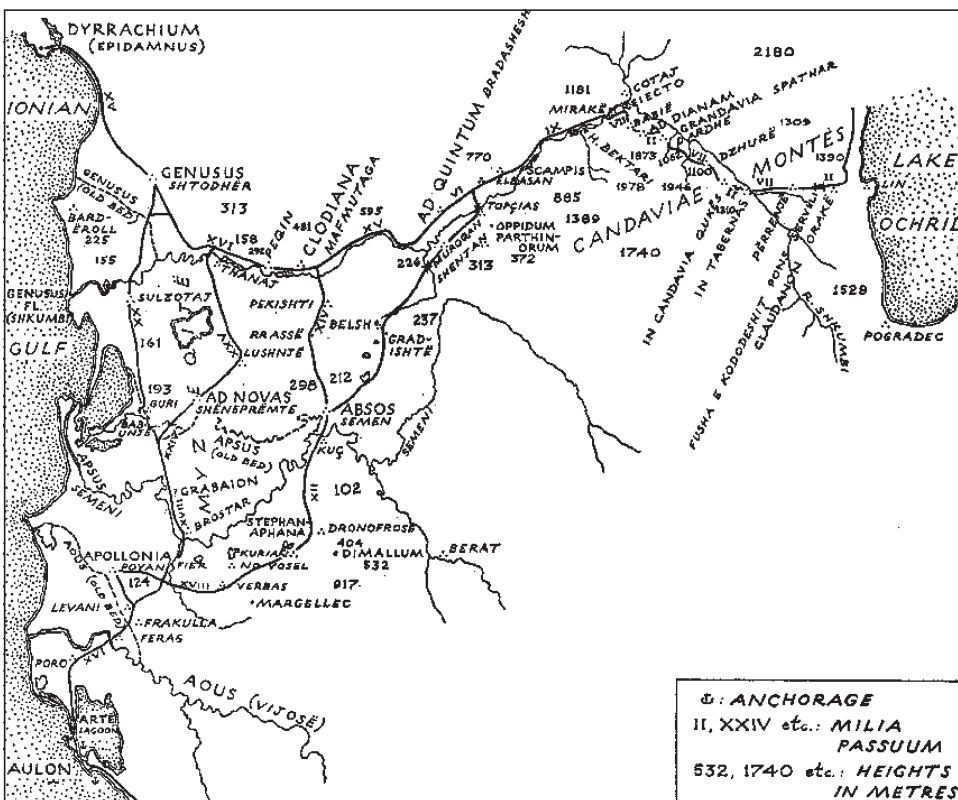


Fig. 2 The western part of the Via Egnatia. – (After Hammond, *Via Egnatia* 186).

istic sites. The city prospered as a main trading centre and was of strategic importance in the Roman-Illyrian wars⁹. A key event for the town's future evolution was the establishment of the Roman province of Macedonia in 146 BC and the subsequent construction of the *Via Egnatia*, a new road leading

from Byzantion across the Balkan peninsula and reaching the sea both near Apollonia and at Durrës, the latter being more advantageous than the first¹⁰. However, the importance of the road increased considerably only after the foundation of Constantinople in 330 AD (fig. 2)¹¹. By this time, Apollonia

9 On the building activities during the Roman protectorate see the overview in Shehi, *Topografia* 161-174.

10 Fasolo, *Via Egnatia* 140-143, 177-180. – Cabanes, *Ports* 130-131. – Several antique sources name only Durrës as the beginning of the road: Hammond, *Via Egnatia* 193.

11 Gutteridge/Hoti/Hurst, *Walled City* 395-396.

Fig. 3 The Amphitheatre of Durrës. – (Photo D. Heher 2014).



was already in decline. A new southern alternative to Durrës was established at Vlorë (Valona/Aulon) with its excellent natural harbour¹².

The promotion of Durrës to *colonia* under Augustus, presumably in 30 AD, led to an intensive Romanisation of life-style, which included the building of the amphitheatre (fig. 3) and the thermal baths¹³. The city continued to prosper, and cemented its role as the most important commercial harbour in the southern Adriatic. It is possible that African Red Slip Ware from workshops in Northern Africa had already begun to reach Durrës starting in the 1st century AD¹⁴. During the restructuring of the province of Macedonia under Diocletian, Durrës became the capital of the newly established administrative unit of Epirus Nova in 286 AD. However, the city experienced a major setback when a devastating earthquake destroyed large parts of the town in 346. From this point onward, Durrës took on a new, more »Byzantine« shape as the town walls were newly fortified and several focal points developed around then newly-built churches¹⁵. Its bishopric remained one of the most important ones in the Balkans throughout the centuries¹⁶. The continuous participation of its bishops at councils from the 6th century – and the even more remarkable presence of Bishop Sisinnios at the synod of 692 in Constantinople where so many other bishoprics from

the Balkans were not represented¹⁷ – illustrate that even in times when inland routes were not viable (see below), Durrës benefited from it being part of maritime networks¹⁸.

Early Byzantine Durrës (5th-8th centuries)

The gradual disintegration of the Roman Empire in the second half of the 5th century made the Adriatic a pivotal area between East and West. Even though the whole province of Illyricum was theoretically governed by Constantinople, the Western Empire with its seat in Ravenna had some natural interest in holding sway over the Adriatic coasts. It is not surprising that Dalmatia played a key role in the struggle for the crown in the last decades of the Western Empire¹⁹. For Durrës, the vacillating claims of authority as well as the Hunnic and Gothic incursions meant that direct rule from Constantinople was only loose²⁰. However, Byzantine administration was brought to a first formal end only in 479, when Theodorich the Great's Goths took the city by ruse and held it until 482/3, making Constantinople especially concerned about the dangers of the establishment of a considerable Gothic fleet²¹.

Constantinople took a firmer grip on Durrës only after the establishment of the Ostrogothic Kingdom in Italy in 493, as

12 Fasolo, Via Egnatia 166-169. 180. – Hammond, Via Egnatia 193. – Gilkes, Guide 299-302.

13 Santoro/Sassi/Hoti, Nuova Immagine 315. – Overview of the building activities in Shehi, Topografia 175-192.

14 Shehi/Shkodra Rrugja, Importazioni. This assumption is based on stray finds. The earliest finds from stratigraphic contexts date to the 3rd c. and comprise ARSW A/D and C from Tunisia (Hayes 32, 44, 50A, 57).

15 Santoro/Sassi/Hoti, Nuova Immagine 315.

16 Gutteridge, Cultural Geographies 33.

17 Ohme, Concilium Quinisextum 205-206. 225-227.

18 Gutteridge, Cultural Geographies 33-34.

19 Kulikowski, Marcellinus. – Kislinger, Randlage 246-247.

20 Gutteridge, Cultural Geographies 28.

21 Malchos, Fragm. 18 (Cresci 106-107). – Pryor/Jeffreys, Dromon 13. – Perhaps, the city had been sacked and plundered already in 459: Kislinger, Oberhoheit 315. – Gutteridge, Cultural Geographies 28.



Fig. 4 Stretch of the Byzantine/Venetian city walls of Durrës (Photo D. Heher 2014).

Theodoric's interests initially shifted to the West. Even his later attempts to gain a foothold in the Balkans did not harm Byzantine Durrës²². Being the major western port of the empire, the town once again entered the focus of Constantinople's policy and fortification became a key issue. It was probably Anastasios I (r. 491-518) who furnished his birthplace Durrës with impressive brick walls, parts of which are still preserved today (fig. 4)²³.

During the Justinianic reconquest, Durrës repeatedly appears as the major gateway from the Balkans to Italy. Driven by conflicts with the Ostrogothic elite, Amalasantha, the daughter of Theodoric the Great and regent for her son Athalaric, asked Justinian I (r. 527-565) for asylum; the Emperor ordered the renovation of the most sumptuous building in the town to serve as her residence until she made her journey to Constantinople. However, the queen never arrived and one of her ships, loaded with 400 *kentenaria* of gold, which had already been anchoring in Durrës' harbour, was called back to Ravenna (534)²⁴. Durrës remained a crucial foothold for Constantinople, especially when the struggle against the Goths in Italy expanded to Dalmatia. After the Gothic conquest of Salona, the Byzantine land and sea forces gathered at Durrës before heading north to Dubrovnik and then farther to Salona²⁵. In 545 Justinian's commander-in-chief Belisar sailed

from his headquarters in Ravenna to Durrës, awaiting reinforcements from Constantinople. While the soldiers under the command of Narses took the Via Egnatia, the troops of the generals John and Isaac seem to have arrived by sea²⁶. Once again the Byzantine army had used the logistic advantages of Durrës at the crossing of important land and sea routes.

Durrës's involvement in Mediterranean networks of trade and communication in the 6th century is reflected by the patterns of imported fine ceramics²⁷. The traditional dominance of African produce (African Red Slip Ware/ARSW) was challenged by imports of Phocian Red Slip Ware (PRSW) from Asia Minor (e.g. Hayes 3C, 3E) in the second half of the 5th century. This temporary change was not only due to the Vandal conquest of North Africa (affecting exports only for a short period) but also due to the general decline of the Western Roman Empire and a subsequent orientation of Durrës to the Eastern Mediterranean. However, African fine ware kept dominating the market, especially ARSW from Northern Tunisia, where production sites had taken an upturn in the early 6th century. Consequently, the range of variants of African pottery available in Durrës reached its height between 500 and 530 (e.g. Hayes 93B, 87, 79/93, 99B, Bonifay 35, Fulford 40.4). PRSW was also still being imported (Hayes E3). In the second half of the 6th century, the number of variants

22 Gutteridge, *Cultural Geographies* 28.

23 John of Antioch, *Fragm.* 243 (Mariev 462). – Suda, s. v. *Ἀναστάσιος* (Adler I 187). – The impressive walls have repeatedly been subject to scholarly activity from the 19th c. onwards. Among the most important studies are Heuzey/Daumet, *Mission archéologique*. – Praschniker/Schober, *Forschungen* 33-37. – Ugolini, *Albania antiqua*. – Karaiskai/Çaçe, *Kalaja e Durrësit*. – Most recently

Gutteridge/Hoti/Hurst, *Walled City*. – Gutteridge/Hoti, *New Light*. – Gutteridge, *Cultural Geographies*.

24 Procopius, *De bello gothico* V 2, 28 (Haury/Wirth II 14).

25 Procopius, *De bello gothico* V 7, 26-28 (Haury/Wirth II 37).

26 Procopius, *De bello gothico* VII 13, 19 (Haury/Wirth II 352); VII 18, 1-7 (Haury/Wirth II 373-374).

27 The following after Shehi/Shkodra *Rrugia*, *Importazioni* 342-346.

decreased before fading out completely in the middle of the 7th century.

The obvious fall in imported goods coincides with the decline of Durrës in the second half of the 6th century, sharing thus the fate of most Balkan towns: in 552, an earthquake damaged parts of the city once again²⁸ and it seems that, due to the Justinianic plague, Durrës's population decreased significantly in the course of the 6th century. There is reason to believe, therefore, that already under the rule of Justinian I (r. 527-565) Durrës received a new circuit of fortifications that corresponded to the shrunken dimensions of the inhabited area²⁹. The once prosperous city took on features of a *kas-tron*-style settlement even if it perhaps preserved a higher degree of urbanism than most towns on the Balkan Peninsula³⁰.

For the period between the late 6th and the 7th century there are virtually no written sources that shed light on the development of Durrës. What is certain, however, is that by the middle of the 7th century, the world around Durrës had changed. Avars and Slavs had penetrated deep in the Balkan peninsula and as a consequence of the breakdown of the remaining Byzantine defence in the aftermath of the usurpation of Phocas in 602, only some of the coastal towns remained under Byzantine control³¹. A hoard (c. 680-90) found in the village of Vrap is the southernmost find spot of Avar silver items and testifies that the Avar-Slavic immigration reached the surroundings of Durrës. The town itself, however, seems to have been spared from destruction³². The Slavic invasion and the breakdown of Byzantine administration and defence undoubtedly meant an interruption of the Via Egnatia from c. 550 to 850/1000, thus isolating Durrës from its Balkan hinterland³³.

Durrës itself must have lost much of its urban features in these centuries. More than anything, the urban impression of the Late Roman town must have changed with the establishment of *necropoleis* in the former heart of the city from the 7th century onwards, including the areas of the *macellum* and the amphitheatre, the latter having been transformed from a public space to a residential district by then (fig. 5)³⁴. In the 7th and 8th century, Byzantine hegemony has to be considered theoretical. Similar to other peripheral areas like Dalmatia, Cyprus or Cherson, administration relied on local *archontes* who enjoyed a very high degree of autonomy. Durrës' once-prosperous port seems to have turned into an anchorage of secondary importance as ships crossed the southern Adriatic already at the height of the island of Corfu

and as the volume of traffic along the Adriatic shore also apparently diminished³⁵.

The *thema* of Dyrrhachion (c. 800-c. 1042)

The Byzantines managed to restore control over the lost parts of the Balkans only from the middle of the 8th century onwards. Step by step, the conquered territories were re-organized. The *thema* of Kephallonia was probably founded around 750 and Durrës and its surrounding territories were promoted from an archontate to a *thema* probably already around the year 800³⁶. Initially, the *thema* seems to have (theoretically) covered the old province of Praevalis and Epirus Nova³⁷. According to Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos it even extended from Antibari in the north to Valona/Vlorë in the south. The border to the *thema* of Nikopolis must have been drawn somewhere between Cape Glossa and Himare, the Acroceraunian Mountains being a logical natural boundary³⁸.

The *thema* ranks quite low, both in the Taktikon Uspenskij (842/843: 24th place) and in the Kletorologion of Philotheos (899: 27th place)³⁹. In the second half of the 9th century, Durrës seems to have primarily functioned as a local bulwark against Saracen piracy⁴⁰. However, Durrës played neither a role in the joint offense against Saracen Bari with King Louis II of Italy in 870/71, nor in the successful defence of Dubrovnik and Kotor against the Arabs, two years previously⁴¹. At least some contingents – and most likely also ships – from the *thema* of Dyrrhachion participated in the re-conquest of Calabria between 880 and 885⁴².

From a landward perspective, the situation was at least as challenging for the young *thema*. Due to the expansion of the Bulgarian Empire between the 830s and the 860s, the new province remained largely isolated from the core lands of the Balkans. The situation improved after the peace treaty with the Bulgarians in 863/864. The *Via Egnatia* had become partially viable again by the late 9th century when papal legates embarked for Italy from the port of Durrës returning from the synod in Constantinople (868/869)⁴³.

However, road connections remained unstable as the Byzantine-Bulgarian rivalry was revived under Tsar Symeon who conquered thirty strongholds in the surroundings of Durrës (894-896) but returned them in 904⁴⁴. Its harbour continued to play an important role for the Byzantine navy: according to

28 John Malalas XVII 15 (Thurn 344).

29 Shehi, Front Nord 331-332.

30 Brandes, Byzantine Cities. – Haldon, Idea.

31 Kisliger, Oberhoheit 318-319.

32 Gutteridge, Cultural Geographies 32 (with literature). The archaeological evidence corresponds well with Procopius, Wars VII 29,1 (Haury/Wirth II 423).

33 McCormick, Origins 69-73.

34 Santoro/Sassi/ Hoti, Nuova imagine 316-317.

35 Kisliger, Oberhoheit 330.

36 Kisliger, Oberhoheit 337-338. 349. – On the discussion of the dating until 2003 see Gutteridge, Cultural Geographies 33 with n. 74.

37 Ducellier, Façade 92.

38 Ducellier, Façade 92.

39 Oikonomides, Listes 49. 139.

40 Kisliger, Oberhoheit 344-345.

41 Kisliger, Oberhoheit 346.

42 George the Monk Continuatus 845 (Bekker). – Leon Grammaticus 258 (Bekker). – von Falkenhausen, Dominazione 21-22.

43 Liber Pontificalis 108 (Duchesne II 184, 27-28). – McCormick, Origins 138-147. 549-561. – Gutteridge, Cultural Geographies 32-33.

44 Stephenson, Balkan Frontier 21.

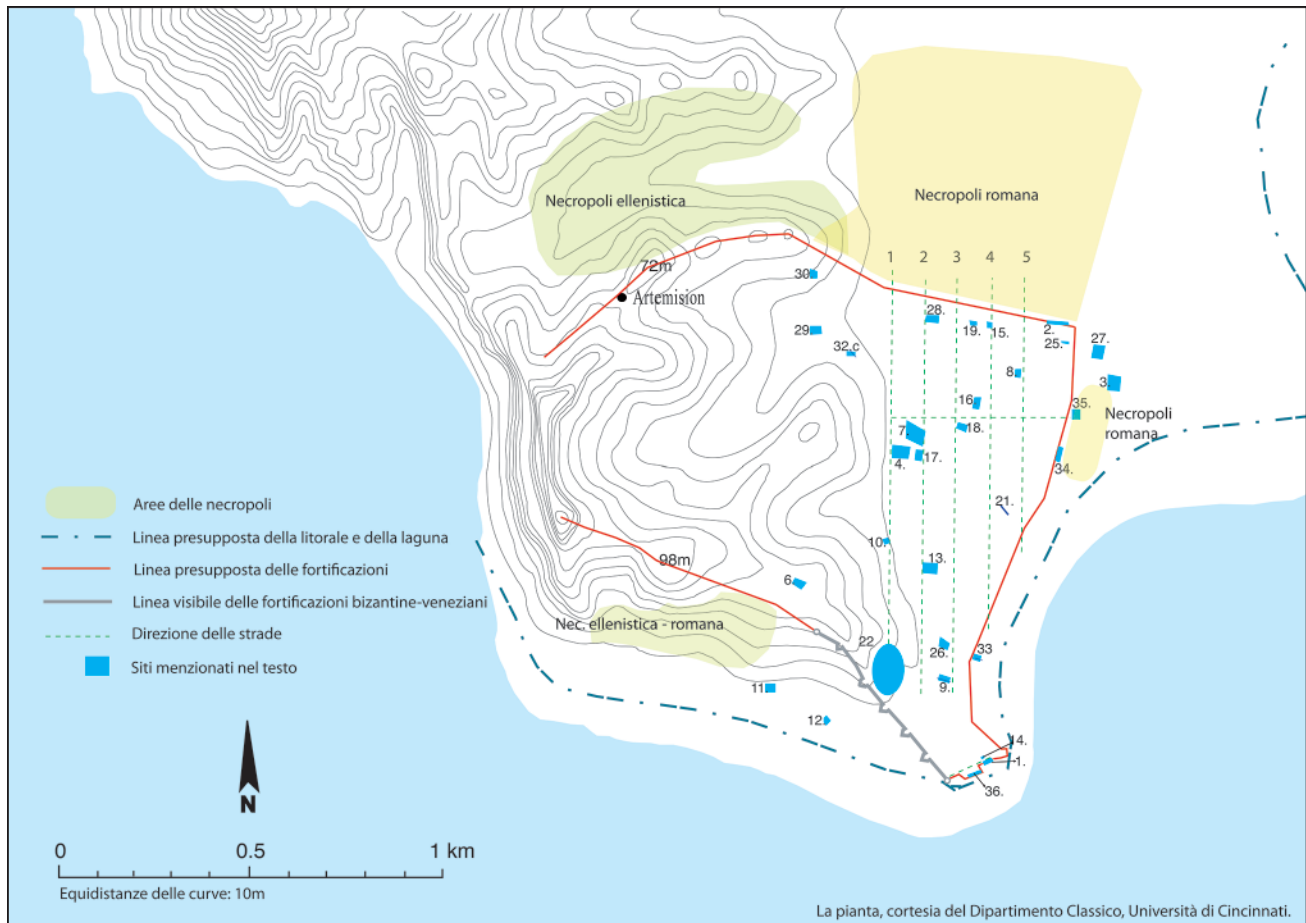


Fig. 5 Durrës' fortifications and necropoleis. – (After Shehi, Topografia 192).

an imperial document dating to 949, seven of the altogether 150 *ousiai* (crews of 108 or 110 men each) were stationed in the *themata* of Dyrrhachion and Dalmatia⁴⁵.

During the next Bulgarian uprising, Durrës fell to Tsar Samuel in 997 after his marriage with the daughter of one of the leading men of the town, John Chryselios. However, the latter changed sides quickly and handed Durrës over to Basil II in 1005⁴⁶. For Constantinople, the town had become increasingly significant, also from the perspective of church administration. Since the important bishopric of Ohrid was in the possession of Tsar Samuel, Durrës was furnished with additional suffragan bishoprics, their number increasing from four to fifteen in the early 11th century⁴⁷. The last Bulgarian resistance was crushed in 1018⁴⁸. Due to this Byzantine victory, after centuries of restricted viability, the *Via Egnatia* became once again the major artery between the Adriatic Sea and Constantinople. More than that: when Byzantine

warships once again dominated the Mediterranean in the 10th century, Durrës served as a minor naval base⁴⁹.

Yet, Byzantine hegemony over the Balkans must be considered as quite loose even after 1025. The main duty of the governors of Niš, Skopje, Dubrovnik and Durrës was to monitor the loyalties of local *zupans/archontes*⁵⁰. Collaboration with the élites was also of cardinal importance within the strong walls of Durrës itself. An inscription donated by the inhabitants of the town, which praises the *strategos* Niketas Pegonites while at the same time denigrating his incapable predecessor, is an eloquent piece of evidence for the fragile balance of powers in the aftermath of the Byzantine-Bulgarian war⁵¹. In the following decades, Dyrrachium developed into a classical thematic province with its *strategos* entitled to muster local troops⁵², and the existence of *hypostrategoï* shows conformity with the evolution of other Byzantine *themata*⁵³.

45 Constantine Porphyrogenitus, De Cerimoniis II 45 (Reiske 664-678), but see the new edition in Pryor/Jeffreys, Dromon 554 (text). – For a discussion of the term *ousia* see Pryor/Jeffreys, Dromon 255-258. – Haldon, Theory and practice 219. 221.

46 John Skylitzes 342-343 (Thurn). – Stephenson, Balkan Frontier 61. 67. – Haxhimihali, Dyrrhachium byzantin 296.

47 Darrouzès, Notitia 305 (Notitia 9, c. 42) and 330 (Notitia 10, c. 42). – Stephenson, Balkan Frontier 70.

48 Ducellier, Façade 93. – Gutteridge, Cultural Geographies 33.

49 Haldon, Theory and Practice 218. 259.

50 Stephenson, Balkan Frontier 123-125.

51 Mango, Inscription 420-444.

52 John Skylitzes 410 (Thurn).

53 Ducellier, Façade 94.

The ducate of Dyrrachium (c. 1042-1203)

Contrary to its rising importance, the *thema* of Dyrrhachion was reduced to a small stretch of coastline, while even the commander of nearby Hiericho was promoted to a *strategos*. This fragmentation reflects an overall trend in the Byzantine Empire, where large border *themata* had increasingly been divided ever since the second half of the 10th century. At the same time, these smaller units were put under larger commands led by a *katepano* or *dux*⁵⁴. In the case of the Western Balkans the *strategos* of Dyrrhachion rose to be the undoubtedly pre-eminent figure in the region, as is evident from the role of Basil Synadenos during the revolt of the Bulgar Peter Deljan in 1040⁵⁵. Durrës's development from a *thema* to a kind of new military prefecture for the Illyricum seems to have been formally completed by 1042⁵⁶. In this year Konstantinos IX (r. 1042-1055) gave orders to the *patrikios* Michael, governor of Durrës, to assemble not only his own troops but also those of the neighbouring *themata*⁵⁷, thus proving his supra-regional authority. John Skylitzes calls Michael simply an *archon* but Kekaumenos addresses the governor more precisely as a *katepano*⁵⁸. Thereafter, the governor of Durrës is mostly addressed as *dux* by our sources. A *praitor* was responsible for civil matters of administration in the ducate⁵⁹. Apart from its importance on the mainland, Durrës also played a key role in the empire's efforts to defend Byzantine possessions in Italy⁶⁰.

Due to its favourable strategic location, the ducate of Dyrrhachion played a key role in the history of the Byzantine Empire's western provinces at the end of the 11th century. The power and influence of its governors rose to such an extent that first Nikephoros Bryennios (in 1077) and then Nikephoros Basilakios (in 1078) were ready to attempt a coup d'état. More than ever, it was imperative for the emperor to secure the loyalty of the *dux* of Dyrrhachion. Nikephoros III Botaneiates (r. 1078-1081) seems to have appointed the right man for the office, since George Monomachatos refused to join a rebellion against his emperor led by Alexios Komenos. Both Norman and Byzantine sources claim that his loyalty even induced him to invite the Norman count Robert Guiscard and his Normans to take revenge on Alexios, who succeeded in seizing the throne from Nikephoros III in 1081⁶¹. Being aware

of the key strategic role of Durrës, one of the first moves of the new emperor was to put George Palaiologos, one of his closest supporters and a relative of his, in charge of this office. Also thereafter, Alexios was careful to install only his relatives as *duces* of Dyrrhachion⁶². On the whole, the men appointed did not betray Alexios' trust, with the exception of his nephew John, whom the emperor reprimanded preventatively as soon as rumour had it that John attempted to seize the crown⁶³.

The Byzantine-Norman wars

Durrës's importance increased even more when the Normans from Southern Italy began to threaten the empire's western coast⁶⁴. Already in 1066, there was a first Norman attack which was countered by Michael Maurikas, *katepano* and *vestarches* of Dyrrhachion⁶⁵. Eight years later a Norman fleet under the count Amicus of Giovinazzo took several towns of central Dalmatia for a short time⁶⁶. The well-known clash of 1081 did, therefore, not come all of a sudden. Tensions between Duke Robert Guiscard and Constantinople had been increasing since the deposition of Michael VII (r. 1071-1078), as the betrothal of Robert's son and Michael's daughter had suddenly become worthless to the Norman leader⁶⁷. Yet, the Byzantines were not prepared when Robert led his army across the Adriatic Sea in May 1081.

There has been much speculation about Robert's motives that cannot be revisited here in detail⁶⁸. Within the context of the present chapter, it is only worth mentioning that Alan Gutteridge's hypothesis that the immediate goal of Robert's ambitions was to take control of the town of Durrës itself, as from here the Byzantines could easily interfere with the affairs in Southern Italy as they had done in 1064-67 when the *dux* Perenos had supported a revolt against Robert⁶⁹. However, being the main threshold to the Balkans, Durrës would have been the logical starting point for any invasion, especially if its *dux* George Monomachatos had really been in contact with the Normans⁷⁰. In any event, the capture of Durrës was not an easy task. It was the largest city of the Illyrikon⁷¹ and its almost legendary walls were still an impressive obstacle⁷². In the northwestern corner of the innermost circuit, situated

54 Ahrweiler, Administration 52-67.

55 John Skylitzes 410 (Thurn).

56 Ahrweiler, Mer 140, n. 3. – Ducellier, Façade 95.

57 John Skylitzes 424 (Thurn).

58 Kekaumenos 71 (104 Spadaro).

59 Theophylaktos of Ochrid, Letter 4, 35 (Gautier 139). – Ducellier, Façade 97. – Frankopan, Governors 69.

60 Von Falkenhausen, Dominazione 136 with n. 236.

61 Anna Comnena I 16, 5-8 (Reinsch/Kambylis 52-53). – William of Apulia IV 215-217 (Mathieu 216). – Frankopan, Governors 72-73. – Kislinger, Vertauschte Notizen 131.

62 Frankopan, Governors 103.

63 Frankopan, Governors 88.

64 Gutteridge, Cultural Geographies 36-37. – For an overview on publications dealing with the Norman attacks see Kislinger, Vertauschte Notizen 127, n. 6.

65 Lupus Protospatharius ad a. 1066 (Pertz 59). – Stephenson, Balkan Frontier 157.

66 See below, n. 76.

67 Kislinger, Vertauschte Notizen 127, n. 4 with the essential bibliography on this topic.

68 See the publications listed by E. Kislinger, Vertauschte Notizen 128, n. 9.

69 McQueen, Relations 434-440. – von Falkenhausen, Dominazione 99.

70 Gutteridge, Cultural Geographies 38. – Kislinger, Vertauschte Notizen 131.

71 Albert of Aachen, Historia Hierosolymitana I 10, 40 (Edgington): *His subjugatis, Dyrrhachium, civitatem magnam rebus et omni virtute vivium ac militum potentissimam, divertit.* – Nikephoros Bryennios, Hyle Historias III 3 (Gautier 212).

72 The strength of the walls and towers are emphasised by various (almost) contemporary authors: Anna Comnena XIII 3, 8 (Reinsch/Kambylis 392). – Geoffrey Malaterra III 25 (Pontieri 72). – Ralph of Torte vv. 101-102 (Jenal): *Dyrrhachium cingunt: rupes, quae cincta profundis / Aequoribus caelo turribus appropriat.* – William of Apulia IV 234-235 (Mathieu 216): *Quondam fuit urbs opulenta / Magnaque praecipue tegulosis obsita muris.*

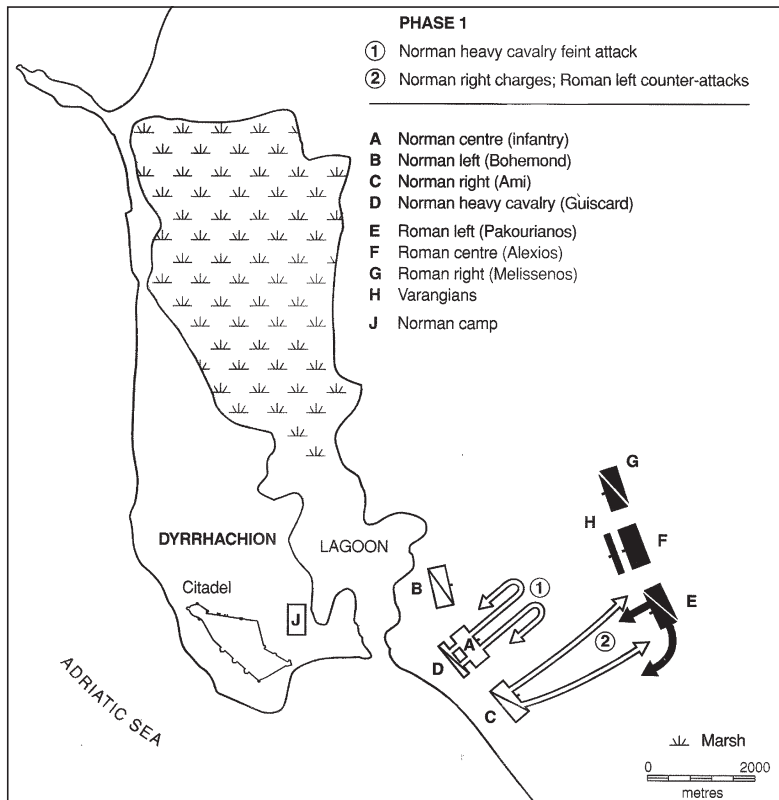


Fig. 6 The battle of Durrës. – (After Haldon, *Byzantine Wars* 136).

on higher ground than the town, the citadel (*praitorion* in Anna Komnena's text) with its four towers offered additional protection⁷³.

Robert Guiscard's fleet crossed the Adriatic Sea in May 1081, consisting of 150 vessels, if we can trust Anna Komnena's words⁷⁴. Even though parts of his fleet were lost in a tempest, Robert landed near Vlorë (Valona/Aulona) and moved along the coast towards Durrës. Obviously, there was no Byzantine navy capable of resisting the Norman invasion⁷⁵. In search of naval assistance, Alexios turned to the Venetians who shared Byzantine preoccupations with a Norman presence on both shores of the strait of Otranto⁷⁶. In exchange for military support, Venice was granted far-reaching trade concessions, which were ultimately formalized in the well-known *chrysobullos logos* of 1082⁷⁷. In hindsight, the privileges stipulated in the contract⁷⁸ were correctly seen as the »corner-stone of the Venetian colonial empire in the eastern Mediterranean«⁷⁹. However, the *chysobullon* implies that one of Venice's immediate and primary concerns must

have been to establish a foothold in Durrës, as it is the only place (apart from Constantinople) where they were granted property (see below), a fact that is also underlined by Anna Komnena⁸⁰.

The Venetians kept their word and probably by mid-August 1081 they arrived with a fleet of 14 warships and 45 other vessels to lift the siege of Durrës. Although they were able to drive back the Norman vessels to their encampment (see below), the Venetian galleys could not score a decisive victory and the siege continued⁸¹. In October, Emperor Alexios and his troops arrived on the scene. In the following pitched battle (18 October) near Arapaj, not far from the shoreline of Durrës Bay, the Byzantine army was routed and dispersed (fig. 6)⁸². Since George Palaiologos was not able to return to the town, Durrës was left without its commander to face the Norman siege. The defence of the town was entrusted to some local *archon* bearing the title of a *komēs tēs kortēs*, whereas the citadel was put under control of some Venetians⁸³.

73 Gutteridge/Hoti/Hurst, *Walled City* 402-403. – Gutteridge, *Cultural Geographies* 39-40, 47-48.

74 Anna Komnena I 16, 1 (Reinsch/Kambylis 50-51). – His son Bohemund had already landed before with his vanguard between Vlorë and Iericho and had conquered Butrint, cf. Kislinger, *Vertauschte Notizen* 29-30.

75 Ahrweiler, *Mer* 179.

76 Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice* 55-57. – Madden, *Chrysobull* 24-25. – Stephenson, *Balkan Frontier* 168. – Only a few years before Venice herself had been faced with Norman ambitions when count Amicus of Giovinazzo tried to gain control of central Dalmatia in 1074. As some of the towns had willingly accepted Amicus as their sovereign, Doge Domenico Silvio (r. 1070-1084) forced them to promise to never again let any Norman pass their gates.

77 Pozza/Ravegnani, *Trattati*, no. 2, cap. 8 (p. 40). – Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice* 57.

78 For a concise overview see Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice* 60-61. – Madden, *Chrysobull* 24.

79 Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice* 60.

80 Anna Komnena VI 5, 10 (Reinsch/Kambylis 178). Anna dates the treaty incorrectly in the year 1084. – The causal relation between the trading concessions and the siege of Durrës is remembered by John Kinnamos VI 10 (Meineke 280-281) too.

81 Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice* 57.

82 Haldon *Byzantine Wars* 183-187.

83 Anna Komnena IV 8, 4 (Reinsch/Kambylis 140). – Stephenson, *Balkan Frontier* 166. – For the *komēs tēs kortēs* see Vranousse, *Komiskortes*.

As there was no hope of relief through an imperial army, Durrës was handed over to Robert Guiscard on 21 February 1082 by a man of Italian origin. Lupus Protospatharius relates that a Venetian treacherously delivered Durrës to the Normans⁸⁴. William of Apulia and Geoffrey Malaterra provide more details⁸⁵. According to them, the traitor was Dominicus, a distinguished Venetian who did not feel sufficiently acknowledged by the leader of his compatriots, who allegedly was a son of the Doge (Domenico Selvo, r. 1070-1085). Therefore, he secretly offered Robert to deliver the town to him. When he opened the gates for the Norman soldiers, the Venetian garrison fled hastily and Robert was able to take the town. The events read a little differently in Anna Komnena, our only Byzantine source. Although drawing heavily from the account of William of Apulia⁸⁶, in her version of events, the leading men of Durrës assembled in order to discuss the terms of capitulation. Following the insistent advice of an anonymous Amalfitan, they finally decided to hand over the town to the Normans⁸⁷. Anna may have made this modification intentionally so as not to cast unfavourable light upon her father's alliance with the Venetians.

The story of the citadel being entrusted to some Italians raises the important issues of the degree of municipal autonomy and of the presence of Latins in Durrës alike. Anna's account that the leading men of Durrës met to discuss how to come to terms with the Normans is quite plausible. Given the lack of any Byzantine commander or governor⁸⁸ and with no relief army being in sight, it is only natural that a decision had to be made. It was not the first time that important local individuals put the interests of Durrës (or of their families) above those of the emperor in Constantinople. Local elites had already played a decisive role in the Byzantine-Bulgarian war around the year 1000 (see above) and, as will be shown, ties to the capital were not strong enough to rally the population to resist foreign armies - neither in 1185 nor in 1203. Furthermore, Anna remains true to her interpretation of facts by stating that after Robert Guiscard's death, Alexios not only requested the Norman garrison of Durrës to lay down their arms but also sent a letter »to the Amalfitans, the Venetians, and the other inhabitants«, offering various promises and gifts if they would support his claim to the town and open the gates. According to Anna, the »Latins« consented to do so, as they were always craving riches. It is, however, inconclusive whether Anna's account refers to the Normans or the Italians⁸⁹.

Perhaps the lack of loyalty can be partially explained by the multi-ethnic composition of Durrës's population from the late 11th century onwards. Anna Komnena's claim that the defence of the citadel was entrusted to distinguished Venetians living in Durrës (τοῖς ἐκκρίτοις Βενετικοῖς τῶν ἐκεῖσε ἀποίκων)⁹⁰ led scholars to believe that there must have been a considerable colony of merchants in the town⁹¹. Even though this may be true, it seems that this important military task was fulfilled instead by the combat-tested crews of the Venetian fleet (who had not suffered losses in the fatal battle in October 1081) rather than by merchants. According to William of Apulia, Dominicus himself may indeed have been a resident of the town⁹². However, the doge's son, who evidently was the leading figure, would have arrived with the Venetian fleet, and William clearly states that the latter only left the port of Durrës after Dominicus' betrayal⁹³. Yet, this observation does not contradict the assumption of an Italian colony. Even if Anna Komnena probably exaggerates when she claims that the majority of the population was made up of Amalfitans and Venetians⁹⁴, Durrës is the only harbour along the route from the Upper Adriatic to Constantinople where the Serenissima had demanded property from Alexios I, namely the church of St. Andrew with all its property and revenues. The building has not yet been identified or located, but its possessions comprised equipment for Alexios' warships (which was explicitly not ceded to the Venetians!): *Similiter dat et ecclesiam Sancti apostoli Andree que est in Dyrrachio, cum et ibidem existentibus imperialibus pensionalibus, preter in is repositam aphasin, que debet dari ad chelandia*⁹⁵. The church, therefore, was probably close to the port where it would be logical to expect the nucleus of a possible Venetian quarter.

It is now time to return to our line of events: while Robert Guiscard was back in Italy, another Venetian fleet sailed down to Durrës in early October 1083. They attacked the town, which was almost depopulated after a famine, and plundered it for 15 days. The citadel, however, remained in the hands of the Normans. When news reached the Venetians that a Norman army was drawing closer, they retreated from the town and built a floating platform out of their ships. As winter fell, they refrained from any further attack and limited themselves to intercepting Norman supply ships from Southern Italy. In spring 1084 they sailed to Corfu and expelled the Norman garrison. Together with Byzantine makeshift detachments under the command of the former *dux* of Dyrrhachion Michael Maurikas they suffered a devastating defeat when Robert

84 Lupus Protospatharius 61, ad a. 1082 (Pertz 61): *mense Ianuarij Robertus dux cepit civitatem Dyrrachium traditione quorundam Veneticorum*.

85 William of Apulia IV 449-505 (Mathieu 228-230). – Geoffrey Malaterra III 28 (Pontieri 74-75).

86 Frankopan, Turning Latin.

87 Anna Komnena V 1, 2 (Reinsch/Kambylis 141).

88 Paul Stephenson (Balkan Frontier 169-170) claims that the Venetian Dominicus had in fact been installed as governor of the town. Direct control would have been part of the concessions granted to Venice in order to receive naval assistance. However, Alexios later gave orders to kill a man (Dominicus?) and his entourage who had been responsible for delivering the town to the Normans,

ending thus the »brief period of Venetian domination«. However, Stephenson's hypothesis is not supported by any of the contemporary sources.

89 Anna Komnena VI 6, 4 (Reinsch/Kambylis 180).

90 Anna Komnena IV 8, 4 (Reinsch/Kambylis 140).

91 E. g. Haxhimihali, Dyrrhachium byzantin 296.

92 William of Apulia IV 449-450 (Mathieu 228): *Dirachii quidam, quem terra Venetice misit, vir praeclarus erat, nomenque Dominicus illi*.

93 William of Apulia IV 496-505 (Mathieu 230).

94 Anna Komnena V 1, 1 (Reinsch/Kambylis 141)

95 Pozza/Ravegnani, Trattati, no. 2, cap. 7 (p. 40) and the commentary (p. 32). – Tafel/Thomas, Urkunden, no. 23 (p. 52). – Ducellier, Façade 32. – Haxhimihali, Dyrrhachium byzantin 297-98.

returned with a new fleet. However, the Norman army was soon struck by an epidemic resulting in the death of the count in 1085, which not only thwarted their ambitions to occupy the Byzantine Illyrikon but also put an end to the Norman dominion over Durrës⁹⁶.

The 12th century: restoration and decline

By the end of the 11th century, Durrës had risen to be the senior military command in the western Balkans⁹⁷. From several letters from Theophylact of Ohrid to the *dux* of Dyrrhachion it is obvious that the latter's authority exceeded that of his colleague in Ohrid⁹⁸. With an increasing number of Venetian traders being engaged along the eastern shores of the Adriatic and with the *Via Egnatia* having become viable again after 1085, Durrës was without doubt an important harbour for exporting the agricultural produce of its hinterland⁹⁹. From the end of the 12th century onwards, there were Latin merchants operating the overland transportation routes from the inner Balkans. From Durrës the merchandise was shipped to Italian ports¹⁰⁰. Still, from the point of view of economy, Durrës does not seem to have played an extraordinary role within the Adriatic trade networks¹⁰¹.

For Constantinople, Durrës and its province was first and foremost considered as a bulwark against invasions from the West. The events of 1081-1085 had proved, however, that any efficient defence necessitated a strong fleet, and Alexios I indeed tried to strengthen his navy. While in 1081 there had not been any fleet that was powerful enough to offer resistance against the Normans, the situation of the Byzantine navy slowly began to improve as the appearance of the fleet of Maurikas shows¹⁰². The shipyards of Durrës seem to have become increasingly busy, too. When in 1092 Alexios I sought a man to supervise the construction of the empire's new fleet, he chose to entrust this task to his nephew John Doukas who presumably had gained experience in this field when he had been *dux* of Dyrrhachion¹⁰³. At least, we know from the *chrysoybullos logos* from 1082¹⁰⁴ that there was a magazine near the church of St. Andrew in which equipment for the imperial warships (*chelania*) was stored (see above)¹⁰⁵.

To a certain extent, Alexios' initiative to restore Byzantine sea power proved fruitful and between c. 1090 and 1105 the

core of a new fleet was re-established¹⁰⁶. In 1107 Alexios' navy had its baptism by fire. Robert Guiscard's son Bohemund was preparing for another attempt to invade Byzantine Albania. Alexios ordered the *mezas dux* Isaakios Kontostephanos to sail to Durrës. His mission was to keep the sea routes under surveillance and, if necessary, to intercept Bohemund's transport ships. Isaac even considered his fleet strong enough to attack Otranto. His assault failed, though, and he had to retreat to the vast natural harbour of Vlorë/Valona where he gathered the fleet, as he expected Bohemund to land there (as the Normans had done in 1081)¹⁰⁷. Yet, when the Norman fleet approached in close formation, the Byzantine ships immediately gave way¹⁰⁸. Bohemund's first target was again Durrës but this time the siege failed and the Norman was forced to capitulate.

Hélène Ahrweiler's assumption that by the second decade of the 12th century Durrës and Cyprus had become the empire's two main naval bases¹⁰⁹, needs to be relativized. Even if there is evidence for some activities and involvement, we cannot conclude that there were large-scale naval operations in effect: in 1169, ten ships from Durrës participated in the campaign against Damietta in Egypt¹¹⁰. Shortly afterwards a Venetian fleet attacked Euboea and Chios (1171-1172) but was routed by the Byzantine navy near Lesbos. On their way back, the decimated Venetians were attacked by naval forces from Durrës¹¹¹. It is possible that vessels from Durrës and Venice clashed again in 1173. In this year, the *sebastos* Konstantinos Doukas, governor of Dalmatia, was given the task of lifting the Venetian siege of Ancona. After several successful skirmishes he was promoted to a »*dux* of the army« (*kata laon douka*) and governor of Diokleia, Dalmatia, Split and Durrës. Konstantinos' fleet probably comprised vessels from Ragusa (Dubrovnik) and Dyrrhachion¹¹².

After the death of Manuel I Komnenos (r. 1143-1180), the Byzantine navy was once again in a miserable state. And – similar to the events of 1081 – Durrës was one of the first victims of Constantinople's loss of control over the seas: on 24th June 1185, a Norman fleet crossed the Adriatic and was able to take the town without meeting any resistance, as both Niketas Choniates and Eustathios of Thessalonica emphasize¹¹³. According to the latter, this military disaster was the fault of Andronikos I. The emperor, Eustathios complains, had installed a certain Romanos, his son-in-law-to-be, as *dux*

96 Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice* 58-59. – Anna Comnena VI 7, 1 (Reinsch/Kambylis 181). – William of Apulia V 284-336 (Mathieu 252-254). – Kislinger, *Vertauschte Notizen* 141.

97 Stephenson, *Balkan Frontier* 151-2.

98 Theophylact, *Letters* 10-12. 19. 22. 23-24. 26 (Gautier 161. 163-165. 167-169. 195. 203-205. 207. 209-211. 215-217).

99 Ducellier, *Présence latine* 214. – Ducellier, *Façade maritime* 61-62.

100 Morozzo della Rocca, *Documenti I*, no 353 (p. 347-349): in 1185 Stefano Morosini transported his goods *de suprascripta Stive [...] in Dirachio per terra et de Durachio per mare debeam ire in Venecia*. – Ducellier, *Présence latine* 215.

101 Ducellier, *Présence latine* 216.

102 Ahrweiler, *Mer* 181. – Böhm, *Flota*. – Kislinger, *Vertauschte Notizen* 141.

103 Ahrweiler, *Mer* 186. 190. – Ducellier, *Façade* 102.

104 The dating of the *chrysoybullos* has been disputed ever since but 1082 is very probable. On the discussion see Madden, *Chrysoybullos*.

105 Pozza/Ravegnani, *Trattati*, no. 2, cap. 7 (p. 40).

106 Ahrweiler, *Mer* 195.

107 Anna Comnena XII 8, 1-8 (Reinsch/Kambylis 378-381).

108 Anna Comnena XII 9, 1-2 (Reinsch/Kambylis 381).

109 Ahrweiler, *Mer* 224.

110 Niketas Choniates 160 (van Dieten). – Ahrweiler, *Mer* 264-265.

111 Kinnamos VI 10 (Meineke 284-285).

112 Ahrweiler, *Mer* 260-261, based on Montfaucon, *Palaeographia Graeca* 47.

113 Niketas Choniates 297. 317 (van Dieten). – Eustathios Thessalonices 64 (Kyriakides). – Ahrweiler, *Mer* 284-285. – Gutteridge, *Cultural Geographies* 44.

of the city. Romanos' craving for riches »brought the people of Dyrrachion from prosperity to poverty« and was therefore detrimental to their loyalty to the emperor¹¹⁴. However, Eustathios' account is very biased against Andronikos, whom he blames as being fully responsible for the breakdown of the Byzantine defence of the western frontier and the subsequent capture of Thessalonica. Yet, it seems that Andronikos had indeed taken the necessary steps to defend Durrës too late, since John Branas, the general whom the emperor had ordered to organize resistance, arrived only shortly before the Norman fleet¹¹⁵. The city then remained under the control of the Normans during the next months; after their defeat in the battle at the river Strymon, their remnant troops took to Durrës in order to embark for Italy¹¹⁶.

The last Byzantine *dux* of Dyrrhachion is mentioned in 1203 when the registers of Pope Innocence III report that the Archbishop of Trnovo was taken into custody when he wanted to embark for Italy in order to obtain an imperial coronation for his Tsar Kalojan from the pope¹¹⁷.

It is astonishing that most western chronicles do not mention that the Venetian fleet made a stop at Dyrrachium on their way from Zadar to Kerkyra in 1203¹¹⁸. Fortunately, the very reliable account of the eye-witness Geoffrey of Villehardouin tells us explicitly that the crusaders landed in the »port à Duraz« too, where they presented their candidate for the Byzantine throne, Alexios (IV), to the people¹¹⁹. Niketas Choniates's account supports this itinerary from the Byzantine point of view. Both authors imply that Dyrrachium had willingly opened the gates for the Latins, since the inhabitants are reported to have sworn fealty to the usurper without hesitating (*quant il le virent, mult volentiers et li firent fealté / Ἀλέξιος παρὰ τῶν Ἐπιδαμνιτῶν ἀνηγόρευτο*)¹²⁰. Probably, the Venetians installed a garrison in the town before continuing their crusade, which ultimately ended with the sack of Constantinople. In the *Partitio terrarum imperii Romaniae* the Venetians were allotted the province of Dyrrachium (*provincia Dirrachia*) as well as the provinces of Arbania, Kanina, and Drinopolis and also the *chartolarates* of Glavinica and Vagenetia¹²¹. The first Venetian *dux* of Durrës is mentioned in 1210¹²².

Considering the fact that already in 1185 the Norman fleet had met no resistance whatsoever, it seems that the bonds between Durrës and Constantinople were not indeed very strong. Alan Gutteridge put forward the thesis that the increasingly strong Latin element in the population of the town

(and all along the Albanian coast) had led to a cultural and political orientation towards the West rather than to the Byzantine East¹²³. Although this approach seems tempting, we simply do not have enough information about the size of the Latin colonies in Durrës. On the grounds that the Venetians did not try to be granted even more privileges and property in the town when the treaty of 1082 was renewed in 1148 and in 1187, André Ducellier cautions that the number of Venetian residents in Durrës should not be overestimated¹²⁴. On the other hand, we know that Latin clerics were influential enough to play a decisive role when the Archbishop of Trnovo was prevented from continuing his journey to Rome in 1203¹²⁵. Yet, even if the behaviour of Durrës's inhabitants in 1185 and 1203 was not necessarily motivated by their ethnic composition, it is obvious that they enjoyed a considerable degree of municipal autonomy, serving first and foremost the interests of the town and not those of the empire¹²⁶.

Landscape and the location of the harbour in Antiquity and Middle Ages

Depending on geopolitical circumstances, the role of Durrës vacillated between trading hub and naval base, between flourishing marketplace and bulwark against invasions. In any event, its importance has always been due to its location at the crossing of important trans-Adriatic and trans-Balkan routes, with its harbour(s) being the decisive factor. In the context of the present paper, it is vital to see what is known about the location and the layout of the ancient and mediaeval harbour. The interest in the topic has intensified only in the last few years and although many issues cannot be definitely solved for the moment, it is useful to revisit established theories and present current discussions.

A harbour at Capo Pali?

Immediately east of the hill-range between Capo Pali in the north and Durrës in the south, there extends a distinctive plain, which had been a lagoon (*këneta e Durrësit*) before it was made arable by drainage only from 1965 onwards (figs 6-7). The extent of this lagoon in antiquity and in mediaeval times is however disputed. Antique sources agree that the plain was covered with water and that the town of

114 Eustathios Thessalonices 64 (Kyriakides). – Transl. Melville Jones, Eustathios 65.

115 Eustathios Thessalonices 64 (Kyriakides). – Niketas Choniates 297. 317 (van Dieten).

116 Niketas Choniates 361 (van Dieten).

117 The Registers of Innocent III, Register VI, letter 142 (Hageneder et al. 233-235, esp. 235) and Register VII, letter 5 (Hageneder et al. 15-18, esp. 16).

118 Haxhimihali, Dyrrhachium byzantin 299.

119 Geoffrey of Villehardouin 111 (Faral I 112-114): *Et ensi partirent del port de Jadres, et orent bon vent, et alerent tant que il pristrent port a Duraz. Enqui rendirent cil de la ville la ville a lor seignor [scil. Alexios (IV.)], quant il le virent, mult volentiers et li firent fealté.*

120 Niketas Choniates 541 (van Dieten): *Ἐπεὶ δὲ παρεστήσαντο μὲν οἱ Λατίνοι τὰ Ἰάδαρα, τῇ δ' Ἐπιδάμνῳ προσώκειλαν καὶ βασιλεὺς Ῥωμαίων ὁ συνὼν ἐκείνοιο Ἀλέξιος παρὰ τῶν Ἐπιδαμνιτῶν ἀνηγόρευτο [...].* – Ahrweiler, *Mer* 295. – Cheynet, *Pouvoir* 139-140 (no 199).

121 Ducellier, *Façade* 98-99. – Carile, *Partitio* 220 (see also the commentary 161. 263-264).

122 Haxhimihali, Dyrrhachium byzantin 298-299.

123 Gutteridge, *Cultural Geographies* 44.

124 Ducellier, *Présence latine* 216-217.

125 See above, n. 117.

126 Stephenson, *Balkan Frontier* 186.



Fig. 7 The wall at Porto Romano. – (Photo D. Heher 2014).

Durrës was situated more or less on a peninsula: according to Thucydides (5th c. BC) and Eratosthenes (3rd c. BC) the town of Epidamnos was situated on an Isthmus or a peninsula, respectively¹²⁷. Perhaps, ships could enter from the south and/or from the north (either at Porto Romano or east of Capo Pali) in this time¹²⁸. When Dyrrhachium became the stage for the famous clash between Caesar and Pompey in 48 BC, Lucan (1st c. AD) states that the town was connected to the mainland only by a narrow strip of land¹²⁹. The eyewitness Julius Caesar speaks of two connections, probably screening the lagoon from open waters both at its northern and southern rim¹³⁰. This assumption of a lagoon is clear from the description offered by Cassius Dio (2nd/3rd c. AD), who states that Caesar, approaching the town on a narrow land-bridge (he mentions only one) between sea and marshland, had to retreat as his troops were attacked simultaneously by Pompeian land and sea forces¹³¹. It is sufficiently supported, therefore, that at least in antiquity Durrës was indeed situated on a kind of peninsula¹³².

However, archaeological investigations have evidenced Roman building activities in areas that later definitely were covered with water¹³³. More than that, in 2004 Eduard Shehi

discovered a Roman wall, which seems to have originally served to block the waters from the lagoon. At the same site, *extra muros*, he found parts of Roman canal works dating to the 1st/2nd c. AD, meaning that by this time the lagoon had silted up, at least in this area¹³⁴. Therefore, it may be wrong to reconstruct the antique lagoon on the basis of its extension in the early 20th century¹³⁵. Yet, the lagoon, even if smaller in size¹³⁶, must have constituted a key geographical feature for the town of antique and mediaeval Durrës.

The existence of a lagoon has always tempted scholars to assume that perhaps parts of it would have been suitable as a perfectly sheltered harbour. This assumption was repeatedly fuelled by a stretch of a late antique fortification preserved at Porto Romano (Portë), approximately seven km north of the old town¹³⁷. In 1919, Praschniker and Schober took notice of a wall consisting of alternating layers of brick and stone that was furnished with one gate and three towers of rectangular shape. Today, only c. 135 m of the wall are preserved up to a maximum height of 3.4 m and a width of 1.8 m (fig. 7)¹³⁸. All but one of the towers have been destroyed since the survey carried out by Praschniker and Schober, who dated the fortification to the 6th century based on similarities with the

127 Peloponnesian War I 26: ἔστι δ' ἰσθμὸς τὸ χωρίον. Stephen of Byzantium c. 91 (Billerbeck/Zubler 150), s. v. Epidamnos: πόλις Ἰλλυρίας, ἐπὶ χειρρονήσου τῆς καλουμένης Δυρραχίου.

128 Santoro/Sassi/Hoti, Nuova immagine 305.

129 Lucan, Pharsalia VI 23-25: *nam clausa profundo undique praecipiti scopulisque uomentibus aequor exiguo debet, quod non est insula, colli*. Contrary to Shehi/Shkodra-Rrugia, Front nord 326, I cannot see from the passage in the *Pharsalia* that this landbridge was necessarily in the north.

130 Caesar, Bellum civile III 58: *aditus duos quos esse angustos demonstravimus*.

131 Cassius Dio, *Historiae Romanae* XLI 50: αὐτοῦ δὲ διὰ τοῦ Δυρραχίου ὁ Καῖσαρ μεταξύ τῶν τε ἑλῶν καὶ τῆς θαλάσσης νυκτός, ὡς καὶ προδοθησομένου ὑπὸ τῶν ἀμυνομένων, πειράσας εἰσὼ μὲν τῶν στενῶν παρήλαθε. It is, however, not clear if this skirmish took place on the southern (Shehi/Shkodra-Rrugia, Front nord 326) or on the northern (Veith, *Feldzug 168-169*) isthmus. – Contrary to Santoro/Sassi/Hoti, *Faro* 80, n. 23, I do not think that Aelian, *De Natura animalium* XIV 1, refers to the lagoon of Durrës: *In mari Ionio prope Epidamnum, ubi*

et Taulantii habitant, insula est, quae Minervae appellatur, eamque piscatores incolunt; et istic lacus est, ubi scombrorum, qui ad piscatorum consuetudinem assueverunt, et mansuefacti sunt, greges aluntur.

132 Santoro/Sassi/Hoti, *Faro* 80 and Shehi/Shkodra-Rrugia, Front nord 326, think that the sources even allow to trace the gradual change from the once open waters to a lagoon between the 3rd and the 1st c. AD.

133 Myrto, Gërmime.

134 Shehi, *Topografia* 187.

135 Cabanes, *Ports d'Illyrie* 127. – Gutteridge, *Cultural Geographies*.

136 Schober, *Topographie*. – Santoro/Sassi/Hoti, *Faro* 80. – Santoro/Sassi/Hoti, *Nuova immagine* 300-301. 305.

137 Karaiskaj/Baçe, *Kalaja e Durrësit* 5-33. – Praschniker/Schober, *Forschungen* 46. – Heuzey/Daumet, *Mission archéologique*.

138 Gutteridge/Hoti/Hurst, *Walled City* 394. – Shehi/Shkodra-Rrugia, Front nord 327.

city wall (which they ascribed to Anastasios I)¹³⁹. Today, most scholars tend to agree on an earlier date between the 3rd and the middle of the 5th century¹⁴⁰. Praschniker's and Schober's interpretation of the structures as part of the outermost circuit of the city walls can today be dismissed¹⁴¹.

Already in 1876, Heuzey and Daumet had advanced the thesis that the port was originally situated within the lagoon, with its main access point at Porto Romano. A channel would have allowed vessels to proceed southwards. The town itself would have been located further to the north too, before the constant silting-up of the lagoon made the settlement shift to the south¹⁴². A similar view was expressed in 2001 by Gutteridge, Hoti and Hurst who suggested that »it [the wall] possibly formed part of a defensive circuit around a managed harbour area that was of some importance in the later Roman period. It is possible that a change in sea levels, due to climate change or local seismic activity, dried up the land around the port and made the landing of ships impossible«¹⁴³. However, it must be stressed that, after the discovery of Hellenistic structures beneath the Roman and Byzantine phases of the southern bastion of the city walls, the authors revised this hypothesis¹⁴⁴.

According to another theory, which I am inclined to follow, the fortifications at Porto Romano may have always been an isolated structure that served to block and to control the only road from Capo Pali to Dyrrachium, following the narrow path between the open sea in the west and the lagoon or marshland in the east¹⁴⁵. By 1920, when the lagoon still covered the whole plain, Durrës could indeed be approached from the northeast only via two isthmi, the first being the northern rim of the lagoon leading to the hills of Capo Pali and the second bridging the gap between the hills of Capo Pali and the area of Porto Romano (fig. 8)¹⁴⁶. This hypothesis, of course, presupposes an anchorage in the bay east of Capo Pali, and, indeed, there are at least two possible candidates in that area.

The first one is the bay behind Capo Pali and Capo Rodoni, which would have compensated for the shortcomings of the southern harbour, especially regarding the limited space and the exposure to southern winds. From a nautical viewpoint, it

would have been a logical choice¹⁴⁷. Even though, however, the bay of Capo Pali seems to have been sufficient as an anchorage, it would be wrong to imagine any sophisticated infrastructure. Moreover, the entrance to the bay was dangerous because of shallow waters around the cape itself and along the shoreline. According to a 19th-century portolan it was only possible to anchor in the northern part of the bay, and even there ships should keep a distance of about 300 feet from the shoreline¹⁴⁸. Recent underwater surveys in the immediate surroundings of the cape brought to light amphorae that date from the 4th century BC to the 1st century AD. They may hint at the fact that ships approached the beaches to the east of the cape where today there is a small Albanian naval base¹⁴⁹.

A second anchorage is mentioned in a 16th-century Greek portolan book under the name of »Porto Pale« (Λιμιόνας Πόρτο Πάλε), situated three miles NNE-ENE (*grego*, although the indication of wind directions is normally not very accurate) of Durrës¹⁵⁰, referring thus roughly to the areas east (see above) or west of the cape itself. A survey brought to light archaeological material from the area immediately southwest of Capo Pali proving not necessarily an anchorage but at least evidence of some activity¹⁵¹. However, as this stretch of coastline offers hardly any protection, ships would have approached it only in cases of emergency to seek protection from northern winds. At times, manoeuvres ended in disaster: a Byzantine shipwreck (5th/first half of 6th century) was discovered about two km southwest of the cape¹⁵² and in 1097 the crusader Hugh I, Count of Vermandois, was also shipwrecked »on the shore midway between Durrës and Capo Pali« (κατὰ τὴν μεσαίχμιον παραλίαν τοῦ τε Δυρραχίου καὶ τόπου τινὸς καλουμένου Πάλους) after having embarked from the port of Bari. Byzantine guardsmen watched the scene and took the count to Durrës¹⁵³. The Latin sources withhold the accident and report instead that Hugh was taken into custody by the Byzantines after he had disembarked¹⁵⁴. In any event, it is interesting that the Byzantine Dux of Dyrrachion had the coastline guarded by watchmen, which only makes sense if he expected that arriving ships could anchor somewhere north of his city¹⁵⁵.

139 Praschniker/Schober, *Forschungen* 46. – Followed by Santoro, *Urbanistica* 177.

140 3rd c.: Davis et al., *Survey* 55, n. 26. – Early 4th c.: Gutteridge/Hoti/Hurst, *Walled City* 394. – 4th c.: Gilkes, *Guide* 163. – 4th/mid 5thc.: Shehi/Shkodra-Rrugia, *Front Nord* 328.

141 Praschniker/Schober, *Forschungen* 46. – Shehi/Shkodra-Rrugia, *Front nord*.

142 Heuzey/Daumet, *Mission archeologique* 349-351. – Their view was accepted by Hammond, *Via Egnatia* 127-128, 193.

143 Gutteridge/Hoti/Hurst, *Walled City* 394. – the same assumption in Fasolo, *Via Egnatia* 136.

144 Gutteridge/Hoti, *New Light* 367-368. – Santoro/Sassi/Hoti, *Nuova immagine* 300-301. – Santoro/Sassi/Hoti, *Faro* 80, n. 23.

145 Ducellier, *Façade* 26. – Shehi/Shkodra-Rrugia, *Front Nord* 328.

146 Veith, *Feldzug* 169.

147 See also Santoro/Sassi/Hoti, *Faro* 81. – Santoro/Sassi/Hoti, *Nuova immagine* 305.

148 Portolano Marieni 457-458.

149 Volpe/Leone/Turchiano, *Progetto Liburna* 2010, I 15-17.

150 Delatte, *Portulans* I 25. Other *portolani* name the cape, but not an anchorage: Delatte, *Portulans* III 202 (τὸ κάβο Πάλη). 264 (τὸ κάβο ντὲ Πάλη). – Kretschmer, *Portulane* 372 (Chauo delli pali). 249 (Chauo di Pali). 503 (Li Pali).

151 Volpe/Leone/Turchiano, *Progetto Liburna* 15-17.

152 Volpe/Leone/Turchiano, *Progetto Liburna* 15-17. – Disantarsa, *Progetto Liburna* 15-16.

153 Anna Comnena X 7, 4-5 (Reinsch/Kambylis 302-303).

154 *Historia Nicaena* 144. – Hugh of Lerchenfeld V (382-383). – Benedict of Accoltis IV (551). – Li *estoire de Jerusalem* V (627).

155 Ducellier, *Façade* 26, argues that this incident shows that the walls at Porto Romano were still in use as a fortification at that time, but there is no proof for this assumption.

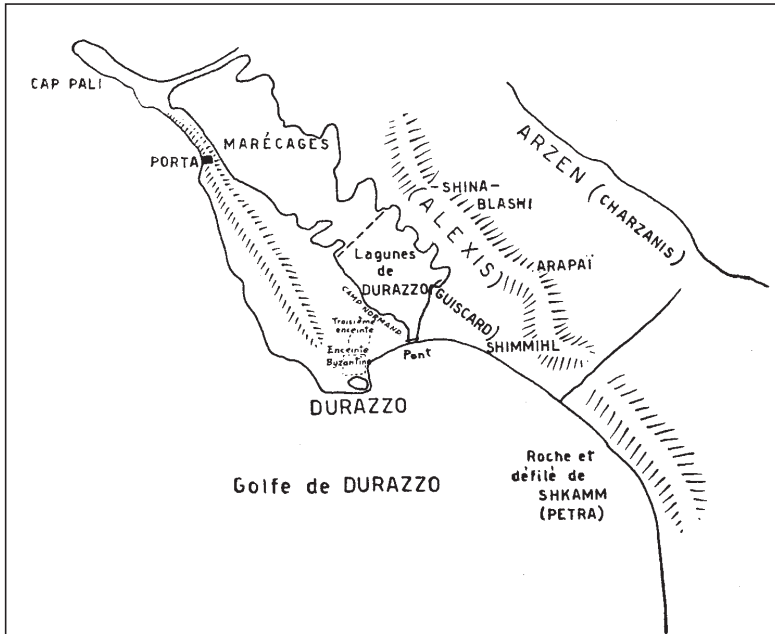


Fig. 8 Hypothetical extension of the lagoon in 1081. – (After Mathieu's edition of William of Apulia).

The harbour in Durrës Bay

If the assumption of Durrës's main harbour lying near Porto Romano can be dismissed, we have to look for it further south, with the modern-day port serving as a logical starting point. According to an Italian 19th-century portolan, the whole bay of Durrës, stretching from the town in a south-eastern direction to Capo Lagi (Kepi i Lagjit), was »the best and safest anchor bay of Albania in every season, capable to shelter a big fleet«¹⁵⁶. Earlier portolans similarly appreciated the harbour's quality¹⁵⁷.

Praschniker and Schober were, therefore, probably right in assuming that Durrës' harbour has always been in the bay that extends southeast of the town¹⁵⁸ and most scholars have come to accept this view¹⁵⁹. Although this assumption is very probable, one must consider that the natural conditions of this bay are not perfect. The hill range in the west only provides protection from winds coming from the northwest to north. Anna Komnena reports that when the Normans wanted to invade the Illyricum in 1107, they could not go directly to Durrës because of the strong southern winds but instead had to disembark in the bay of Valona more than 100km south of Durrës¹⁶⁰.

Durrës Bay as a whole is open to most winds from the east. Today, long moles resolve this problem. We do not know if the ancient and mediaeval harbour had similar constructions too. What we do know, from a portolan from the end of the 15th century, is that protection against currents was provided by shallows that extended almost 5km from

the cape in a southeastern direction (exactly the location of the modern moles today) and that these shallows formed the port (*e quella secha fa porto*)¹⁶¹. The very same shallows are mentioned in a portolan from 1845¹⁶². Yet, entering the harbour was not an easy task, as virtually all sailors' handbooks warn about the shallows in front of the town¹⁶³. Another mediaeval portolan even states that the port of Durrës must be approached via a channel, probably referring to the narrow straits between the shallows (*Durazzo e buon porto et entراس per canale*)¹⁶⁴.

Additionally, until it was completely reworked and deepened under Italian guidance between 1928 and 1932, the harbour had suffered from its relatively shallow depth¹⁶⁵. At the end of the 19th century, two wooden jetties, each 50m in length, compensated for this shortcoming; larger ships had to lie in the roads anyway. On occasion of a brief visit to Durrës in May 1877, Sir Arthur J. Evans described the situation as follows: »Then we passed the promontory of Cape Pali, which, jutting out into the Adriatic, offers a welcome bulwark against the force of the boreal gales, and is the northern arm of the bay which forms the harbour of Durazzo. In this bay the steamer anchored, but some way from the shore, as the harbour has to a great extent been allowed to silt up, and no attempt to improve or in any way secure it has been made by the Turkish authorities [...] [O]ne lands on the cranky wooden pier and makes one's way into the narrow streets through a gloomy sea-gate.«¹⁶⁶ Even if ancient and early mediaeval vessels had less draught than modern ships, one must imagine a similar solution for these

156 Portolano Marieni 458.

157 Delatte, *Portulans II* 202 (πόρτο καλό). – Kretschmer, *Portulane* 313 (*buono porto*).

158 Praschniker/Schober, *Forschungen* 46.

159 Gutteridge/Hoti, *New Light* 367. – Santoro/Sassi/Hoti, *Faro* 80.

160 Anna Komnena XIII 7, 2 (Reinsch/Kambylis 404).

161 Kretschmer, *Portulane* 504.

162 Portolano Marieni 458.

163 Kretschmer, *Portulane* 249. 367-368. 503. – Delatte, *Portulans III* 265.

164 Kretschmer, *Portulane* 313.

165 Santoro/Sassi/Hoti, *Nuova Immagine* 305.

166 Evans, *Illyrian letters* 133 (no 13).

centuries, although possible material traces would have been destroyed during the massive renovation under Italian guidance between 1928 and 1932¹⁶⁷.

However, recent archaeological investigations can perhaps aid in locating the ancient harbour near the modern port area. Between May and August 2007, excavations in Rruga H. Troplini brought to light some architectural structures, which were identified as parts of the ancient port area (figs 9-10)¹⁶⁸. The main argument for this interpretation was the discovery of a building with a circular floor plan (dm: 8m) at the western edge of the excavation area (L). Due to adverse conditions, the archaeologists did not get deep enough to determine its foundations but they were able to document the masonry being preserved to a height of 1.60m, which is five layers of ashlar. Despite the difficult stratigraphic situation, the building can be clearly associated with the Hellenistic stratum (end of 4th - beginning of 3rd century BC). Based on comparison with a similar structure on the island of Thasos, and dismissing alternative interpretations as a tower of the defensive system or as the basis of a monument, Sara Santoro addressed the circular building as one of presumably several lighthouses of the antique harbour¹⁶⁹. She additionally conjectures that a semi-circular structure recently discovered in the substructures of the Ottoman Palace of the Governor¹⁷⁰ was part of a sea gate of the Hellenistic town wall, as the Ottoman sea gate was only 20m northeast of it¹⁷¹.

Under Roman rule, Durrës flourished and its harbour was one of the most frequented ones in the Adriatic Sea, although for military purposes priority was given rather to the excellent natural port of Oricum¹⁷². From an economic viewpoint, however, Durrës harbour was without rival. In his *Menaechmi*, the playwright Plautus († 184 BC) set a literary monument of the hustle and bustle in this vibrant marketplace (vv. 258-264). Cicero's letters (Ad Fam. XIV 1) testify the presence of Roman businessmen in the town and Catullus' dubious appraisal of Dyrrachium as the »tavern of the Adriatic Sea« (36, 15) points to the very profane side effects of a vivid harbour environment. Again, however, there is the question of its location. If we accept the interpretation of the circular structure in Rruga H. Troplini as the lighthouse of the Hellenistic harbour, one might conclude that it remained in use in Roman times (figs 9-10). In the middle of the circular structure a new, rectangular platform was erected in a very crude *opus caementitium*, whose only purpose was to support the round tower from within. Fragments of pottery allow the dating of this building phase to the 1st century AD, probably within the

context of the town's promotion to *colonia* in 30 AD. The surrounding structures show construction phases that can be dated to the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD. Most importantly, on the opposite edge of the excavated area, a sequence of four rectangular buildings (B, C, D, E) was discovered, each measuring 5.50-5.85m in length and 1.85-3.55m in width. The masonry suggests a later dating than the circular structure, probably the 1st century BC¹⁷³. The buildings were interpreted as warehouses. The southernmost »warehouse« was flanked by a street or jetty (F), whose surface was made of mortar and gravel. To the west of this stretch of pavement, several other structures of unknown purpose were built anew in the 5th, maybe even early 6th century. If the assumption of a Hellenistic harbour in the vicinity of Rruga H. Troplini is correct, it seems that it would have remained active at least until the end of the 5th century, even partially until the early 6th century¹⁷⁴.

However, there is no evidence for any activity in the area in the Byzantine period. Santoro assumes that probably already in the course of the 6th century the coastline shifted southwards. She hypothetically localizes this new harbour area in front of the southern bastion of the city walls. There, a stretch of the city wall was discovered in the substructures of the Palace of the Ottoman Governors in 2001 and, almost perpendicular to it, five narrow walls (fig. 11). Gutteridge, Hoti and Hurst associated the latter with the cellars of the Palace of the Ottoman governors (18th c.)¹⁷⁵. Santoro, on the other hand, claims that they are of early Byzantine origin. As these walls point outwards from the walled town to the sea, she addresses them as shipsheds (*navalia*) for small and medium-sized vessels¹⁷⁶. Yet, the very exposed location works against this interpretation. In any event, due to the topography of Durrës Bay, it is almost certain that the harbour remained in the area southeast of the town. As Durrës reached its nadir in terms of urbanity in the following centuries and as trade and traffic doubtless declined, we should not assume any sophisticated infrastructure anyway. The bay itself and perhaps some wooden piers probably were sufficient to handle the amount of traffic in the Byzantine era (as they also were sufficient in later centuries).

Another anchorage?

In April 1097 Robert, Duke of Normandy, and Stephen, Count of Blois, set out from the port of Bari in order to join the other

167 Santoro/Sassi/Hoti, Faro 80-81. – For some arguments in favour of long wooden piers in the Roman harbour see Deniaux, Recherches.

168 The following after Santoro/Sassi/Hoti, Faro 72. 77-79. – Santoro/Sassi/Hoti, Nuova Immagine 306-311. – Santoro, Porto 216-229.

169 Santoro/Sassi/Hoti, Faro 71-79. – Santoro, Porto 226.

170 Gutteridge/Hoti/Hurst, Walled City 408-409.

171 Santoro/Sassi/Hoti, Faro 76-77 with n. 10. – Santoro/Sassi/Hoti, Nuova Immagine 309 with n. 38.

172 Cabanes, Ports d'Illyrie. – Santoro/Sassi/Hoti, Nuova Immagine 306. – Santoro/Sassi/Hoti, Faro 81. The latter mention one exceptional case in 171 BC

when a Roman fleet united with some seventy Illyrian vessels. However, Livius XLII 48, 6-8, does not explicitly state that all of them anchored in the harbour of Durrës.

173 Santoro/Sassi/Hoti, Nuova Immagine 307. In an earlier publication (Faro) the authors attributed had proposed an earlier dating in the last quarter of the 2nd c. BC.

174 Santoro, Porto 225. – Santoro/Sassi/Hoti, Faro 72-74.

175 Gutteridge/Hoti/Hurst, Walled City 408-409.

176 Santoro/Sassi/Hoti, Faro 75. – Santoro/Sassi/Hoti, Nuova Immagine 308. 310 with fig 8.

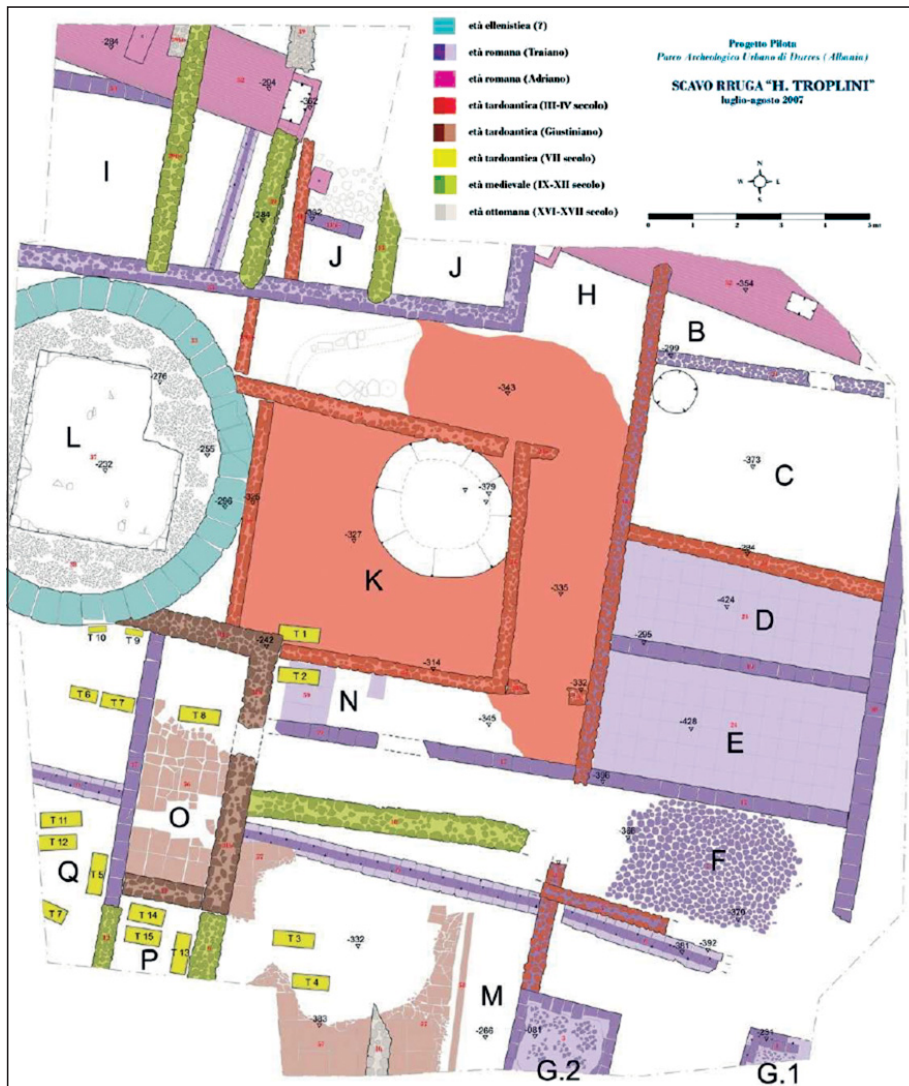


Fig. 9 The excavations in Ruga Troplini. – (After Santoro/Sassi/Hoti, Nuova immagine 308).

leaders of the First Crusade in Constantinople. They crossed the Adriatic and landed at Durrës where their fleet rode at anchor in two different ports (*duo portus classem illam susceperunt*)¹⁷⁷. It is possible, of course, that the chronicler of the event refers to the southern harbour in Durrës Bay and to the northern anchorage in the bay between Capo Pali and Capo Rodoni (see above). However, it is also conceivable that there was another anchorage southeast of the town. In order to evaluate the possibilities of this second harbour, one has to examine the topographical circumstances first.

For our understanding of the maritime geography of Durrës, it is vital to reconstruct the first encounter of the Norman and the Venetian fleet in 1081. The events are reported in detail primarily by three authors. Anna Komnena provides the

Byzantine point of view, whereas William of Apulia and Geoffrey Malaterra side with Robert Guiscard. Their accounts are relatively consistent when dealing with geographical details. On the basis of these three key texts, a hypothetical reconstruction of the southern outlet of the lagoon can be attempted.

William of Apulia relates that the first encounter of the Venetian and the Norman fleet led to a battle, from which the latter retreated to the harbour (*ad portum*). Three days running the Venetians kept attacking the harbour. Ragusan crews that were allied with the Normans shot arrows at the Venetians but did not leave the harbour, which was protected by the nearby army camp. Robert realized that he should have brought along bigger and heavier ships to resist the Venetians more successfully¹⁷⁸.

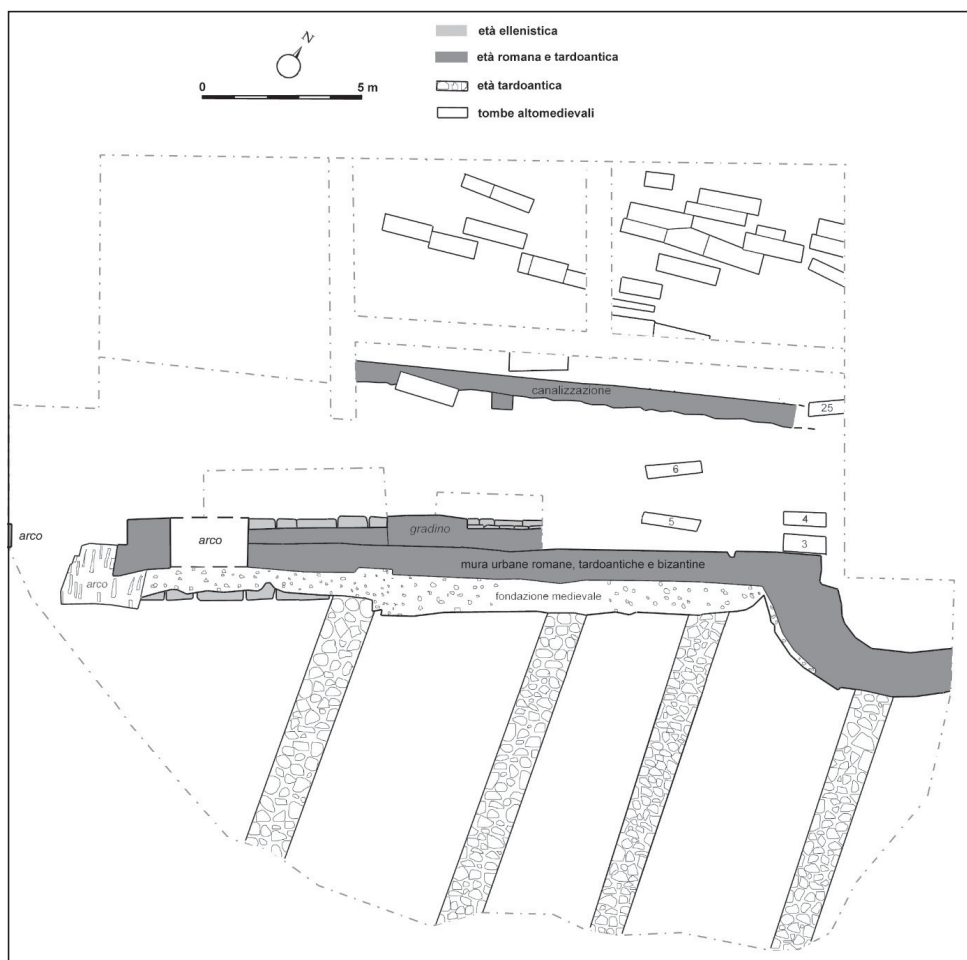
177 Gesta Francorum IV (493): *Deo praeduce atque gubernatore, quarto die juxta Dyrrachium prosperis velis applicuerunt; duo portus classem illam susceperunt, et ante urbem omnes convenerunt, et ibi castrametati sunt.* – The starting point is mentioned only in the Annals of Pöhlde (191): *Cumque per tres dies fluctibus in altis; jam vento deficiente, detineremur, quarto die prope urbem Durachium, decem, ut aestimo, milliaribus interstantibus, terram adepti sumus; duo tamen portus classem nostram susceperunt.*

178 William of Apulia IV 295-307 (Mathieu 220): *Ad portum fugitiva redit, sic pugna remansit. / Ter redeunte die gens multa Venetica portum / Appetit, et naves Roberti Marte lacescit. / Gens comitata ducem cum Dalmaticis Ragusea / Telorum crebris consternit iactibus aequor; / Non tamen a portu procul audent ducere naves. / Castrorum dederat tutum vicinia portum. / Funiibus incisus quasdam violenter ab ipso / Littore propulsas vi turba Venetica ducit.*

Fig. 10 The excavations in Rruga Troplini (A) and the substructures (shipsheds?) of the Governor's Palace (B). – (© Google Earth, Image © 2017 CNES / Airbus, markings by author).



Fig. 11 The substructures of the Governor's Palace. – (After Santoro/Sassi/Hoti, Nuova immagine 310).



Geoffrey Malaterra gives yet some other pieces of information: The Norman fleet was unprepared when the Venetian ships arrived and immediately gave way. The Venetians

could enter Durrës's harbour (*in portum Duracensem*) without further resistance. In the night, they engaged the Norman fleet in battle and sank one ship by the use of Greek fire.

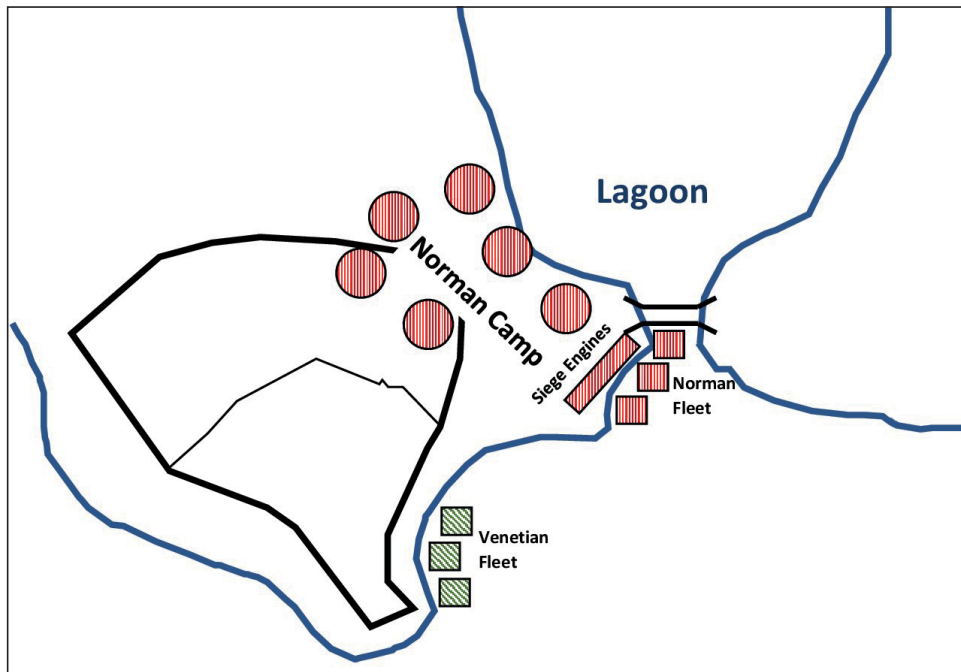


Fig. 12 Hypothetical reconstruction of the shoreline in 1081, based on literary sources. – (Graphic D. Heher 2017).

When the Venetians lost one of their ships themselves, they retreated to the town's port (*ipsi in portum urbis, unde exierant, regrediuntur*)¹⁷⁹.

Although writing some decades after the events, Anna Komnena had first-hand sources at her disposal. Among them, there was presumably also a (lost) Greek translation of William of Apulia's *Gesta Roberti*, which she probably replenished with eye-witness accounts provided by her father and her uncle, George Palaiologos¹⁸⁰. Yet, her account is often prone to inaccuracies, especially concerning the chronology of events. In the present context it is important to mention that the incidents described in *Alexias* IV 3, 1-3 are mistakenly attributed to the year 1081 instead of 1083/4, as Ewald Kislinger has convincingly showed¹⁸¹. Following his reconstruction of events, Anna's account contains the following information: The Venetians saw the Norman fleet when arriving at Cape Pali. They decided that an attack was pointless as siege machines protected the enemy's ships. The next day, the Norman fleet attacked but was repelled by the Venetians who in turn pursued the beaten enemy back to the coast and

even further towards Robert's camp. The Byzantine garrison watched the Norman retreat from the walls of the city and made a sally¹⁸².

What can we glean about the topography through these three texts? Anna Komnena writes that when the Venetian fleet arrived »at the location called Pallia« (εις τόπον Παλλία καλούμενον), the sailors lost heart as soon as they saw Robert's navy, which was protected by siege engines¹⁸³. At first sight, this passage seems to imply that the Norman ships moored in the bay of Capo Pali, but from Anna's subsequent account it is clear that they must have anchored in the harbour or bay southeast of the city. For the Norman navy it would have been a logical choice as they approached Durrës from the south and obviously there was not a single Byzantine warship to defend the harbour. Lying at anchor south of the city, the Norman ships also backed the southern flank of Robert's camp, which he had pitched within the circuit of the Late Antique city walls. Anna probably refers to the outermost circuit, which protected an area that had been depopulated since the 6th century¹⁸⁴. To the northwest, the camp was

179 Geoffrey Malaterra III 26 (Pontieri 72-73): *Sed Venetiani nostris, ad se venientibus, arma potius quam deditionem ostentantes, dum magno impetu versus ipsos grassantur, nostris, quia improvide processerant, certamen declinantibus, ipsi in portum Duracensem ad ignominiam damnumque nostrorum impune applicant. Sicque facultatem liberam urbem ingrediendi habentes, vicissim nautae urbicensibus et urbicenses nautis consulantur; invicemque per totam diem consilium captantes, plus minus a medietate noctis transacta, sub pallore lunae armantur; navibus que litore citius amotis, buccinis concrepando, nostris certamen offerre progrediuntur: quibus nostri, certatum occurrentes, acerrime utrimque congregitur. Sed illi artificiose ignem, quem graecum appellant, qui nec aqua extinguitur, occultis fistularum meatibus sub undis perflantes, quandam navem de nostris, quam cattum nominant, dolose inter ipsas liquidi aequoris undas comburunt. Sed nostri, dolo cognito, facto impetu, aliam navem de suis non minoris pretii penitus in mare submergunt. Sicque, damno contra damnum composito, pari ultione facilius fertur, nostris*

itaque exhorrescentibus dolum ipsorum, ipsis autem strenuitatem nostrorum, certamen utrimque diremptum quievit. Ipsi in portum urbis, unde exierant, regrediuntur; nostri vero ubi primum applicuerant, persistunt.

180 Frankopan, Turning Latin.

181 Kislinger, Vertauschte Notizen.

182 Anna Komnena IV 1, 1-2, 6 (Reinsch/Kambylis 120-124).

183 Anna Komnena IV 2, 3 (Reinsch/Kambylis 123): τηρικαῖτα τοῖνον στόλον εὐτρεπίσαντες διὰ παντοῦ εἶδους πλοίων τὸν πρὸς τὸ Δυρράχιον ἀπόπλου ἐποιούνο σὺν εὐταξίᾳ πολλῇ καὶ πολλὰς κελύθους διανηξάμενοι κατέλαβον τὸ ἐπ' ὄνοματι τῆς ὑπεραμύμου Θεοτόκου πάλαι ἀνοικοδομηθὲν τέμενος εἰς τόπον Παλλία καλούμενον ἀπέχοντα τῆς παρεμβολῆς τοῦ Ῥομπέρτου ἕξωθεν τοῦ Δυρραχίου κειμένης ὡσεὶ σταδίου ὀκτωκαίδεκα. θεασάμενοι δὲ τὸ ναυτικὸν τοῦ Ῥομπέρτου ἐκείθεν τῆς πόλεως Δυρραχίου παντοῖω εἶδει πολεμικῶν ὀργάνων περιπεφραγμένον ἀπεδειλίσαν πρὸς τὸν πόλεμον.

184 Shehi/Shkodra-Rrugia, Front Nord 332.

skirted by salt marshes (figs 6. 12)¹⁸⁵, and somewhere to the southeast there was a bridge, which the Normans destroyed after they had left to engage Alexios' army in battle¹⁸⁶. The bridge probably crossed the outlet of the lagoon, which consequently must have bordered the Norman camp to the east.

Thus, the location and the surroundings of Robert's camp east of the town are quite clear but where did the Norman and Venetian ships anchor? All three authors agree on the fact that the Venetian fleet had only been able to force back the Norman ships without gaining any noteworthy victory. However, it remains unclear where the latter withdrew. The town's proper harbour, which presumably was just southeast of the city walls, was controlled by the Venetians: Malaterra explicitly states that the Venetians had withdrawn *in portum urbis* and when Alexios arrived in October, George Palaiologos was thus easily able to board a (Venetian?) warship in order to meet his emperor¹⁸⁷. Additionally, it is improbable that the Norman ships anchored directly beneath the battlements where they would have been an easy target for the projectiles of the town's garrison. As Robert's fleet obviously consisted of rather light ships, it would be tempting to assume that the Norman ships retreated into the shallow waters of the lagoon,

were it not for the bridge which would have blocked the access to it from the south. What solutions remain? Perhaps the ancient shoreline offered a recess just south of the bridge that was large enough to shelter the Norman ships but, admittedly, this assumption is entirely hypothetical (fig. 12).

Conclusion

Throughout most of its Byzantine history, Durrës can be seen an important gateway between the East and the West in many aspects. Strategically, it was at first a major foothold for Byzantine campaigns against Ostrogothic Italy and later the Normans' preferred gateway to invade Byzantine territories. Economically, it was an important hub between the Adriatic Sea and the inner Balkans for most of its mediaeval history. Culturally, it was for centuries one of the few coastal outposts under Byzantine influence and gradually became an ethnic melting pot with a strong Italian element. Durrës' mediaeval harbour still poses many challenging questions to scholars, but its far-reaching effects on the town's development and character are beyond the shadow of a doubt.

Bibliography

Sources

Albert of Aachen: Albert of Aachen, *Historia Hierosolymitana*. History of the Journey to Jerusalem. Ed. S. B. Edgington (Oxford 2007).

Annae Comnenae Alexias: Annae Comnenae Alexias. Ed. D. R. Reinsch / A. Kambylis. CFHB 40 (Berlin, New York 2001).

Annals of Pöhlde: Theodori Palidensis Narratio Profectionis Godefridi Ducis ad Jerusalem 1096-1119. In: RHC Occ. V (Paris 1895) 187-198.

Benedict of Accolti: Benedicti de Accoltis Aretini praefatio in historiam Historia Godefridi ad clarissimum et praestantissimum virum Petrum Medicem. In: RHC Occ V (Paris 1895) 529-620.

Constantine Porphyrogenitus, De Cerimoniis: Constantini Porphyrogeniti imperatoris de cerimoniis aulae byzantinae libri duo. Ed. J. Reiske (Bonn 1829).

Delatte, Portulans: A. Delatte, *Les Portulans Grecs*. Bibliothèque de la Faculté de Philosophie et Lettres de l'Université de Liège 107 (Paris 1947).

Eustathios Thessalonices: Eustazio di Tessalonica, *La espugnazione di Tessalonica*. Ed. S. Kyriakides (Testo critico, introduzione, annotazioni) / B. Lavagnini (Proemio) / V. Rotolo (Versione italiana). Istituto Siciliano di Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici. Testi e Monumenti 5 (Palermo 1961).

Evans, Illyrian Letters: A. J. Evans, *Illyrian Letters*. A revised selection of correspondence from the Illyrian provinces of Bosnia, Herzegovina,

Montenegro, Albania, Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia, addressed to the »Manchester Guardian« during the year 1877 (London 1878, reprint Cambridge et al. 2013).

Geoffrey of Villehardouin: Villehardouin, *La Conquête de Constantinople*, I-II. Ed. / transl. E. Faral (Paris 1961).

George the Monk Continuatus: Georgii Monachi Vitae Recentiorum Imperatorum. In: Theophanes continuatus, Ioannes Cameniata, Symeon Magister, Georgius Monachus. Ed. I. Bekker. CSHB 30 (Bonn 1838) 763-924.

Gesta Francorum: Gesta Francorum expugnantium Iherusalem. In: RHC Occ. III (Paris 1866) 487-543.

Historia Nicaena vel Antiochena: Balduini III Hierosolymatini Latinorum regis quarti historia Nicaena vel Antiochena necnon Hierosolymitana. In: RHC Occ V (Paris 1895) 139-185.

Hugh of Lerchenfeld: Anonymi, ut videtur Hugonis de Lerchenfeld, Ratisponensis Canonici, breviarium passagii in Terram Sanctam. In: RHC V (Paris 1895) 380-384.

John of Antioch: Ioannis Antiocheni fragmenta quae supersunt omnia. Ed. S. Mariev. CFHB 47 (Berlin, New York 2008).

185 Alexios planned to launch a surprise attack against the Norman camp by sending his Turkish mercenaries through these salt marshes (διὰ τῶν ἀλυκῶν): Anna Comnena IV 6, 1 (Reinsch/Kambylis 131-132).

186 Anna Comnena IV 6, 1 (Reinsch/Kambylis 132). – William of Apulia IV 378-380 (Mathieu 224).

187 Anna Comnena IV 5, 2 (Reinsch/Kambylis 129): ἀποσταλέντα δὲ τοῦτον θεασάμενος πηγκαῦτα φοιτᾷ πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα μετὰ πολεμικῶν νηῶν.

- John Kinnamos: Ioannis Cinnami epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum. Ed. A. Meineke. CSHB 26 (Bonn 1836).
- John Malalas: Ioannis Malalae Chronographia. Ed. H. Thurn. CFHB 35 (Berlin, New York 2000).
- John Skylitzes: Ioannis Scylitzae synopsis historiarum. Ed. H. Thurn. CFHB 5 (Berlin 1973).
- Kekaumenos: Cecaumeno, Raccomandazioni e consigli di un galantuomo (Strategikon). Ed. M. D. Spadaro (Alessandria 1998).
- Leon Grammaticus: Leonis Grammatici Chronographia. Accedit Eustathii de capta Thessalonice liber. Ed. I. Bekker. CSHB 34 (Bonn 1842).
- Lib. Pont.: Le Liber Pontificalis, I-II. Ed. L. Duchesne (Paris 1886-1892, reprint 1981).
- Li estoire de Jerusalem: Li estoire de Jerusalem et d'Antioche. In: RHC Occ V (Paris 1895) 623-648.
- Lupus Protospatharius: Lupus: Lupi protospatarii Annales. In: Annales et Chronica Aevi Salici. Ed. G. H. Pertz. MGH Scriptorum [in Folio] 5 (Hannover 1844) 52-63.
- Malchos: Malco di Filadelfia, Frammenti. Testo critico, introduzione, traduzione e commentario. Ed. L. R. Cresci. Byzantina et Neo-hellenica Neapolitana 9 (Naples 1982).
- Geoffrey Malaterra: Goffredus Malaterra, De Rebus Gestis Rogerii Calabriae et Siciliae Comitis et Roberti Guiscardi Ducis Fratris Eius Auctore Gaufrido Malaterra. Ed. E. Pontieri. Rerum Italicarum Scriptorum 5/1 (Bologna 1927-1928).
- Melville Jones, Eustathios: Eustathios of Thessaloniki, The Capture of Thessaloniki. A Translation with Introduction and Commentary by J. R. Melville Jones. Australian Association for Byzantine Studies. Byzantina Australiensia 8 (Canberra 1988).
- Morozzo della Rocca/Lombardo: Documenti: R. Morozzo della Rocca / A. Lombardo, Documenti del Commercio veneziano nei secoli XI-XIII (Roma 1940).
- Nikephoros Bryennios: Nicephori Bryennii Historiarum libri quattuor. Nicéphore Bryennios, Histoire. Ed. P. Gautier. CFHB 9 (Bruxelles 1976).
- Niketas Choniates: Nicetae Choniatae Historia, I praefationem et textum continens. Ed. J. A. van Dielen. CFHB 11/1 (Berlin, New York 1975).
- Portolano Marieni: G. Marieni, Portolano del Mare Adriatico (Milan 1830).
- Pozza/Ravegnani, Trattati: M. Pozza / G. Ravegnani, I trattati con Bisanzio 992-1198. Pacta Veneta 4 (Venezia 1993).
- Procopius, Wars: Procopii Caesariensis Opera Omnia, Vol. II. De Bellis Libri V-VIII. Ed. J. Haury / G. Wirth (Leipzig 1963).
- Ralph of Torte: A. Jenal, Der Kampf um Durazzo 1107/07 mit dem Gedicht des Tortarius [Inaugural-Dissertation zur Erlangung der Doktorwürde Univ. Freiburg, München 1916].
- Stephen of Byzantium: Stephani Byzantini Ethnica, II: Δ-I. Ed. M. Billenbeck / Ch. Zubler. CFHB 43/2 (Berlin, New York 2011).
- Suda: Suidae Lexicon, I-V. Ed. A. Adler (Stuttgart 1928-1935, reprint 1971).
- Tafel/Thomas, Urkunden: F. Tafel / G. M. Thomas, Urkunden zur älteren Handels- und Staatsgeschichte der Republik Venedig mit besonderer Beziehung auf Byzanz und die Levante vom neunten bis zum Ende des fünfzehnten Jahrhunderts I: 814-1205. Fontes Rerum Austriacarum 12 (Wien 1856).
- Theophylaktos of Ochrid, Letters: Theophylacti Achridensis epistulae. Ed. P. Gautier. CFHB 16/2 (Salonika 1986).
- The Registers of Innocent III: Die Register Innocenz' III. 6. Band. 6. Pontifikaljahr, 1203/04. Ed. O. Hageneder / J. C. Moore / A. Sommerlechner / Ch. Egger / H. Weigl. Publikationen des hist. Instituts beim österr. Kulturinstitut in Rom, II. Abt., 1. Reihe (Wien 1995). – Die Register Innocenz' III. 7. Band. 7. Pontifikaljahr, 1204/05. Ed. O. Hageneder / A. Sommerlechner / H. Weigl / Ch. Egger / R. Muraier. Publikationen des hist. Instituts beim österr. Kulturinstitut in Rom, II. Abt., 1. Reihe (Wien 1997).
- William of Apulia: Guillaume de Pouille, La Geste de Robert Guiscard. Ed. M. Mathieu avec une préface de H. Grégoire. Istituto Siciliano di Studi Bizantini e Neellenici, Testi e Monumenti. Testi 4 (Palermo 1961).

References

- Ahrweiler, Administration: H. Glykatzis-Ahrweiler, Recherches sur l'administration de l'empire byzantine aux IX^e-XI^e siècles. École française d'Athènes, Bulletin de correspondance hellénique 84/1 (Paris 1960).
- Mer: H. Ahrweiler, Byzance et la mer. La marine de guerre, la politique et les institutions maritimes de Byzance aux VII^e-XV^e siècles. Bibliothèque Byzantine, Études 5 (Paris 1966).
- Böhm, Flota: M. Böhm, Flota i polityka morska Aleksego I Komnena. Kryzys bizantyńskiej floty wojennej w XI wieku i jego przezwyciężenie przez Aleksego I Komnena (The Fleet and Naval Policy of Alexios I Komnenos) (Cracow 2012).
- Brandes, Byzantine Cities: W. Brandes, Byzantine Cities in the seventh and eighth Centuries - Different Sources, different Histories? In: G. P. Brogiolo / B. Ward-Perkins (eds), The Idea and Ideal of the Town between Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages. Transformation of the Roman World 4 (Leyden, Boston, Cologne 1999) 25-51.
- Carile, Partitio: A. Carile, Partitio terrarum imperii Romaniae. Studi Veneziani 7, 1965, 125-305.
- Ceka/Zeqo, Kërkime nënujore: N. Ceka / M. Zeqo, Kërkime nënujore në vijën bregdetare dhe ujrat e brendëshme të vendit tone (Übersetzung, Übersetzung, Übersetzung). Monumentet 28, 1984, 127-140.
- Cheyne, Pouvoir: J.-C. Cheynet, Pouvoir et contestations à Byzance (963-1210). Byzantina Sorbonensia 9 (Paris 1990).
- Darrouzès, Notitiae: J. Darrouzès, Notitiae episcopatum ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae. Texte critique, introduction et notes. Géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin I. (Paris 1981).
- Davis et al., Survey: J. L. Davis / A. Hoti / I. Pojani / S. R. Stocker / A. D. Wolpert / Ph. E. Acheson / J. W. Hayes, The Durrës Regional Archaeological Project. Archaeological Survey in the Territory of Epidamnus/Dyrrachium in Albania. Hesperia 72, 2003, 41-119.

- Deniaux, Recherches: E. Deniaux, Recherches sur les activités du port de Dyrrachium à l'époque romaine: Fabri tignuarii et saccarii. In: D. Beranger-Auserve (ed.), *Épire, Illyrie, Macédoine ... Mélanges offerts au Professeur Pierre Cabanes*. Collection ERGA, Recherches sur l'Antiquité 10 (Clermont-Ferrand 2007) 70-79.
- Disantarosa, Progetto Liburna: G. Disantarosa, Progetto Liburna. *Archeologia subacquea in Albania (campagna 2010), Parte II. L'archeologo subacqueo* 52 (18/1), 2012, 12-17.
- Ducellier, Façade maritime: A. Ducellier, La Façade Maritime de l'Albanie au Moyen Age. Durazzo et Valona du XI^e au XV^e siècle. *École Pratique des Hautes Études, VI^e section. Documents et Recherches* 13 (Salonika 1981).
- Ducellier, Presence latine: A. Ducellier, La présence latine sur les côtes albanaises du XI^e au XIII^e siècle: modalités et conséquences. In: *Eupsychia. Mélanges offerts à Hélène Ahrweiler I = Byzantina Sorbonensia* 16 (Paris 1998) 209-223.
- von Falkenhausen, Dominazione: V. von Falkenhausen, La dominazione bizantina nell'Italia meridionale dal IX al XI secolo (Bari 1978).
- Fasolo, Via Egnatia: M. Fasolo, La via Egnatia I. Da Apollonia e Dyrrachium ad Herakleia Lynkestidos (Roma 2005).
- Frankopan, Governors: The Imperial Governors of Dyrrachion in the Reign of Alexios I Komnenos. *BMGS* 26, 2002, 65-103.
- Turning Latin: P. Frankopan, Turning Latin into Greek. *Anna Komnene and the Gesta Roberti Wiscardi*. *Journal of Medieval History* 39/1, 2013, 80-99.
- Gilkes, Guide: O. Gilkes, *Albania: an Archaeological Guide* (London 2013).
- Gutteridge, Cultural Geographies: A. Gutteridge, Cultural Geographies and »The Ambition of Latin Europe«: The City of Durres and its Fortifications. *Archeologia Medievale* 30, 2003, 19-65.
- Gutteridge/Hoti, New Light: A. Gutteridge / A. Hoti, The Walled Town of Dyrrachium (Durres): New Light on the Early Defences. *JRA* 16, 2003, 367-379.
- Gutteridge/Hoti/Hurst, Walled Town: A. Gutteridge / A. Hoti / H. R. Hurst, The walled town of Dyrrachium (Durres): Settlement and Dynamics. *JRA* 14, 2001, 391-410.
- Haldon, Byzantine Wars: J. Haldon, *The Byzantine Wars* (Stroud 2000).
- Idea: J. Haldon, The Idea of the Town in the Byzantine Empire. In: G. P. Brogiolo / B. Ward-Perkins (eds), *The Idea and Ideal of the Town Between Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Leyden, Boston, Cologne 1999) 1-23.
- Theory and Practice: Haldon, Theory and Practice in Tenth-Century Military Administration. Chapters II, 44 and 45 of the *Book of Ceremonies*. *TM* 13, 2000, 201-235.
- Hammond, Via Egnatia: N. G. L. Hammond, The Western Part of the via Egnatia. *The Journal of Roman Studies* 64, 1974, 185-194.
- Haxhimihali, Dyrrhachium byzantin: M. Haxhimihali, Hommes, cultures et territoire dans le Dyrrhachium byzantine. In: *New Directions in Albanian Archaeology. Studies presented to Muzafer Korkuti*. International Centre for Albanian Archaeology Monograph Series 1 (Tirana 2006) 294-302.
- Heuzey/Daumet, Mission archéologique: L. Heuzey / M. Daumet, *Mission archéologique de Macédoine* (Paris 1867).
- Karaiskai/Baçe, Kalaja e Durrësit: G. Karaiskaj / A. Baçe, Kalaja e Durrësit dhe Fortifikimet Përreth në Antikitetin e Vonë. *Monumentet* 9, 1975, 5-33.
- Kislinger, Oberhoheit: E. Kislinger, Dyrrhachion und die Küsten von Epirus und Dalmatien im frühen Mittelalter. *Beobachtungen zur Entwicklung der byzantinischen Oberhoheit*. *Millennium* 8, 2011, 313-352.
- Randlage: E. Kislinger, Sizilien zwischen Vandalen und Römischer Reich im 5. Jahrhundert: Eine Insel in zentraler Randlage. *Millennium* 11, 2014, 237-259.
- Vertauschte Notizen: E. Kislinger, Vertauschte Notizen. *Anna Komnene und die Chronologie der byzantinisch-normannischen Auseinandersetzung 1081-1085*. *JÖB* 59, 2009, 127-145.
- Kretschmer, Portulane: K. Kretschmer, Die italienischen Portolane des Mittelalters. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Kartographie und Nautik. *Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Meereskunde und des Geographischen Instituts an der Universität Berlin* 13 (Berlin 1909).
- Kulikowski, Marcellinus: Marcellinus »of Dalmatia« and the Dissolution of the Fifth-Century Empire. *Byzantion* 72, 2002, 177-191.
- Madden, Chrysobull: T. F. Madden, The Chrysobull of Alexius I Comnenus to the Venetians: the Date and the Debate. *Journal of Medieval History* 28, 2002, 23-41.
- Mango, Inscription: C. Mango, A Byzantine inscription relating to Dyrrhachium. *Archäologischer Anzeiger* 3, 1966, 410-414.
- McCormick, Origins: M. McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy. Communications and Commerce, A.D. 300-900* (Cambridge 2001).
- McQueen, Relations: W. McQueen, Relations between the Normans and Byzantium 1071-1112. *Byzantion* 50, 1986, 427-476.
- Metalla/Vyshka/Nexhipi, Performance Measurement: O. Metalla / E. Vyshka / O. Nexhipi, Performance Measurement: the Case of Durres Port. *European Journal of Business, Economics and Accountancy* 4/6, 2016, 1-9.
- Montfaucon, Palaeographia Graeca: B. de Montfaucon, *Palaeographia Graeca* (Paris 1708).
- Myrto, Gërmime: H. Myrto, Gërmime të vitit 1984 në kënetën e Durrësit, Iliria (Übersetzung, Übersetzung, Übersetzung), 2, 1984, 267-268.
- Ohme, Concilium Quinisextum: H. Ohme, Das Concilium Quinisextum und seine Bischofsliste. *Studien zum Konstantinopeler Konzil von 692. Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte* 56 (Berlin, New York 1990).
- Oikonomides, Listes: N. Oikonomides, Les listes de préséance byzantines des IX^e et X^e siècles (Paris 1972).
- Picard/Gjongekaj, Drachmes: O. Picard / S. Gjongekaj, Drachmes d'Apollonia et de Dyrrachion dans les Balkans. *Studia Albanica* 1, 2005, 139-154.
- Praschniker/Schober, Forschungen: C. Praschniker / A. Schober, *Archäologische Forschungen in Albanien und Montenegro* (Wien 1919).
- Prigent, Notes: V. Prigent, Notes sur l'évolution de l'administration byzantine en Adriatique (VII^e-IX^e siècle). *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome, Moyen Age* 120-122, 2008, 393-417.
- Pryor/Jeffreys, Dromon: J. H. Pryor / E. M. Jeffreys, The Age of the Dromon. The Byzantine Navy ca 500-1204. With an appendix transl. form the Arabic of Muhammad Ibn Mankali by A. Shboul. *The Medieval Mediterranean. Peoples, Economies and Cultures, 400-1500* 62 (Leiden, Boston 2006).

- Santoro, Epidamnos: S. Santoro, Epidamnos, Dyrrachium, Dyrrachion: trasformazioni urbanistiche e culturali di un porto fra Oriente e Occidente. *Bollettino die Archeologia on line*, Volume speciale C/C 11/4, 1/2010, 23-36.
- Nascita: S. Santoro, Epidamnos/Dyrrachion: Nascita e sviluppo della città fra VII e VI sec A.C. In: G. de Marinis et al. (eds), *I processi formative ed evolutivi della città in area adriatica*. BAR International Series 2419 (Oxford 2012) 9-22.
- Porto: S. Santoro, Fra il porto e la città. Le installazioni marittime di Epidamnos/Dyrrachium. In: R. Bedon (ed.), *Macella, Tabernae, Portus. Les structures matérielles de l'économie en Gaule romaine et dans les régions voisines = Caesarodunum 43-44* (Limoges 2009-2010) 207-233.
- Urbanistica: S. Santoro, Lo stato degli studi sull'urbanistica di Epidamnos-Dyrrachium. In: M. Buora / S. Santoro (eds), *Progetto Durrës. L'indagine sui beni culturali albanesi dell'antichità e del medioevo: tradizioni di studio a confronto (= Antichità Altoadriatiche 53)*. 236-251 (Trieste 2003) 149-208.
- Santoro/Sassi, Aree suburbane: S. Santoro / B. Sassi, Fra terra, mare, colline e lagune: le aree suburbane di Dyrrachium (Durrës, Albania). In: *Las Áreas Suburbanas en la ciudad histórica. Topografía, usos, función. Monografías de Arqueología Cordobesa 18* (Cordoba 2010) 35-51.
- Santoro/Sassi/Hoti, Faro: S. Santoro / B. Sassi / A. Hoti, ... Ex Continente Visi ... Un probabile faro nel porto antico di Durazzo (Albania). In: *Torre de Hércules: Finis Terrae Lux. Simposio sobre los faros romanos y la navegación occidental en la antigüedad a Coruña 2008 (= Brigantium 20)* (Coruña 2009) 69-83.
- Nuova immagine: S. Santoro / B. Sassi / A. Hoti, Una nuova immagine dell'urbanistica di Epidamnos-Dyrrachium dagli scavi e dalle ricerche del dipartimento di archeologia e della missione archeologica italiana di Durrës. In: J.-L. Lamboley / M. P. Castiglioni (eds), *L'Illyrie méridionale et l'Épire dans l'antiquité, Actes du V^e colloque international de Grenoble (8-11 octobre 2008)*, Vol. 5 (Paris 2011) 299-324.
- Schober, Topographie: A. Schober, Zur Topographie von Dyrrachium. *JÖAI* 23/2, 1926, 231-240.
- Shehi, Topografia: E. Shehi, Contributo per la topografia di Dyrrachium (III secolo a.C. -IV secolo d.C.). *Journal of Ancient Topography* 17, 2007, 159-208.
- Shehi/Shkodra Rrugia, Front nord: E. Shehi / B. Shkodra-Rrugia, Le front nord des fortifications de Dyrrhachium. Données nouvelles et hypothèses. In: J.-L. Lamboley / M. P. Castiglioni (eds), *L'Illyrie méridionale et l'Épire dans l'antiquité, Actes du V^e colloque international de Grenoble (8-11 octobre 2008)*, Vol. 5 (Paris 2011) 325-336.
- Importazioni: E. Shehi / B. Shkodra Rrugia, Importazioni di ceramica fine con vernice rossa da Durazzo (II sec. a.C. -VII sec. d.C.): lo stato delle ricerche. In: C. S. Fiorello (ed.), *Ceramica Romana nella Puglia adriatica* (Bari 2012) 335-360.
- Stephenson, Balkan Frontier: P. Stephenson, *Byzantium's Balkan Frontier. A Political Study of the Northern Balkans, 900-1204* (Cambridge 2000).
- Ugolini, Albania antiqua: L. Ugolini, *Albania antiqua I* (Roma 1927).
- Volpe/Leone/Turchiano, Progetto Liburna: G. Volpe / D. Leone / M. Turchiano, Progetto Liburna. *Archeologia subacquea in Albania (campagna 2010)*, Parte I. *L'archeologo subacqueo* 51 (17/3), 2011, 14-19.
- Vranousse, Komiskortres: E. Vranousse, *Κομισκόρτης ὁ ἐξ Ἀρβάνων. Σχόλια εἰς χωρίον τῆς Ἄννης Κομνηνῆς* (Ioannina 1962).