

IDENTIFICATION

<u>Nomination</u>	:	Butrinti
<u>Location</u>	:	Region of Saranda
<u>State Party</u>	:	Albania
<u>Date</u>	:	15 May 1990

DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY

The site, on a hill next to a lake connected to the sea by a canal, has been inhabited since prehistoric times. A Greek colony was founded there in the late 7th century BC, when the city (called Buthros) was surrounded by fortifications. Roman occupation prompted the development of the city and, during the Christian era, it became the seat of a bishopric. Many religious structures were built by the Christians. From the time the Slavs came to the Balkans (7th century) until the founding of the Epirus despotate (after the taking of Constantinople by the Crusaders in 1204), the city underwent great trials. Its last era of prosperity was under Byzantine administration (Epirus). After a short period of occupation by the Venetians (late 14th century), the city under Ottoman administration was threatened by the marshes that formed around the lake, and was abandoned by the population.

This archaeological site is a veritable conservatory of major monuments in ruins from each period of the city's development. Thus, the fortifications bear testimony to the different stages of their construction from the time of the Greek colony until the Middle Ages. The most interesting ancient Greek monument is the theatre, which is fairly well preserved.

The major ruin from the paleo-Christian era is the baptistery, built inside the Roman public baths. The floor has a beautiful mosaic decoration.

The paleo-Christian basilica was rebuilt in the 9th century and the ruins are sufficiently well preserved to permit analysis of the structure (three naves with a transept, and an exterior polygonal apse).

COMMENTS

In May 1991 ICOMOS recommended that inclusion of this cultural property on the World Heritage List be deferred, to await verification of various definitions and plans relating to its protection, including the "broad visual range" of the proposed buffer zone, and the problem of water infiltration on the site.

This information was supplied by the Government of Albania and, having studied it carefully, the ICOMOS Bureau is satisfied that all the protective requirements are in place and that active steps are being taken to control

water infiltration. It therefore recommends that the site should be included on the List.

ICOMOS RECOMMENDATION

That this cultural property be included on the World Heritage List on the basis of Criterion iii.

- **Criterion iii** : The evolution of the old natural environment, which led the inhabitants to abandon Butrinti at the end of the Middle Ages, means that this archaeological site provides valuable evidence of ancient and medieval civilizations on the territory of modern Albania.

ICOMOS, October 1992

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B) ICOMOS RECOMMENDATION

That this cultural property be included on the World Heritage List on the basis of Criterion iii.

C) ICOMOS OBSERVATIONS

In May 1991 ICOMOS recommended that inclusion of this cultural property on the World Heritage List be deferred, to await verification of various definitions and plans relating to its protection, including the "broad visual range" of the proposed buffer zone, and the problem of water infiltration on the site.

This information was supplied by the Government of Albania and, having studied it carefully, the ICOMOS Bureau is satisfied that all the protective requirements are in place. It therefore recommends that the site should be included on the List.

D) BACKGROUND

The site, on a hill next to a lake connecting to the sea by a canal, has been inhabited since prehistoric times. A Greek colony was founded there in the late 7th century BC, when the city (called Buthros) was surrounded by fortifications. Roman occupation prompted the development of the city and, during the Christian era, it became the seat of a bishopric. Many religious structures were built by the Christians. From the time the Slavs came to the Balkans (7th century) until the founding of the Epirus despotate (after the taking of Constantinople by the Crusades in 1204), the city underwent great trials. The city's last era of prosperity was under Byzantine administration (Epirus). After a short period of occupation by the Venetians (late 14th century), the city under Ottoman administration was threatened by the marshes that formed around the lake, and was abandoned by the population.

This archaeological site, overgrown by vegetation and encircled by water infiltration, is a veritable conservatory of major monuments in ruins from each of the periods of the city's development. Thus, the fortifications bear testimony to the different stages of their construction from the time of the Greek colony until the Middle Ages. The most interesting ancient Greek monument is the theatre, which is fairly well preserved.

The major ruin from the paleo-Christian era is the baptistery, an ancient Roman monument adapted to the cultural needs of Christianity. The floor has a beautiful mosaic decoration.

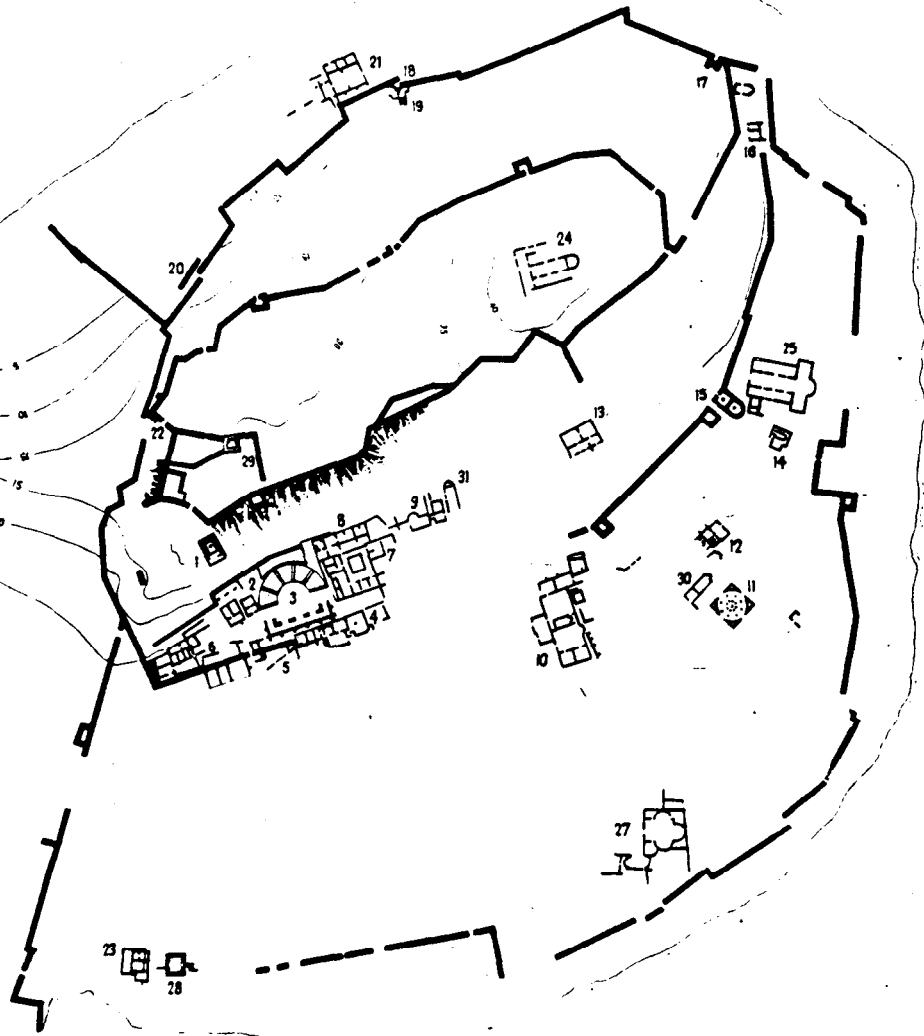
The paleo-Christian basilica was rebuilt in the 9th century and the ruins are sufficiently well preserved to permit analysis of the structure (three naves with a transept, and an exterior polygonal apse).

- **Criterion iii** : The evolution of the old town of Butrinti's natural environment, which led its inhabitants to leave the site at the end of the Middle Ages, means that this archaeological site provides valuable evidence of ancient and medieval civilizations on the territory of modern Albania.

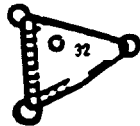
ICOMOS, April 1992

Légende

- LE TEMPLE
- LE TEMPLE D'ASCLÉPIOS
- LE THÉÂTRE
- THERMENS ROMAINS
- HABITATION
- MURS D'ENCEINTE
- PANDOMEION
- STOA
- MAGASIN ROMAIN
- GYMNASE ROMAIN
- LE BAPTISTAIRE
- THERMES ROMAINS
- BATIMENT SOCIAL
- LE NYMPHÉE
- LA PORTE À TOURS
- HABITATION ANTIQUE
- LA PORTE SKEA,
- LA PORTE DU "D'ION,
- LE PUIITS "GUNIÀ RUFINA,
- LA PORTE SEPTENTRIONALE,
- THERMEN ROMAINS
- LA PORTE OCCIDENTALE
- THERME ROMAIN
- BASILIQUE PALÉOCHRÉTIENNE
- 'A BASILIQUE PALÉOCHRÉTIENNE
- 'MPLE
- EGLISE À TROIS CONQUES
- TOUR VENÉTIENNE
- LA FORTERESSE VENÉTIENNE
- EGLISE BYZANTINE
- PUIITS ANTIQUE
- LA FORTERESSE D'ALI PACHA DE TEPELENA



Le canal de Vivat



BUTRINTI



Butrinti : plan du site / plan of the site