



Historical and Cultural Potentials in the Area of Durres in the Function of Its Sustainable Development

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Received: July 31, 2021

Revised: March 13, 2022

Accepted: March 17, 2022

Keywords:

Historical tourism;
Cultural tourism;
Sustainable development;
Archaeological sites

Abstract: Today, in general, all over the world, there is more and more talk about the economic growth of developed and developing countries. One of the successful branches that have contributed to the economic growth of these countries is tourism.

Albania is a country with an ancient history reflected in its rich cultural heritage with national and international values. To date, the preservation of its values has been associated with the preservation of national identity, pride, and wealth, while the integration into regional development policies is seen as a good opportunity not only for the preservation of cultural heritage but also for its real contribution to the sustainable economic and social development of the country.

Based on the historical and ethnocultural study of Albania in general, and the city of Durres in particular, there is a need for a scientific study oriented to this economic, historical, and cultural attraction, useful and profitable for the regional economy in particular and with a direct impact on the Albanian economy in general.

This study highlights the instruments and the way of studying the tourist areas to turn them into important economic centers for the region itself and the national economy.

The problem can be posed in this way: Today in Albania there is a need for serious studies on sustainable development, especially in the field of tourism, studies which have not been lacking, but which should be specifically oriented towards a more concise than generalized form, studies that focus on medium or long-term solutions for the development of tourism, mainly historical and cultural, as an important direction for the economic and social development of the country.

There are natural resources, human resources, capital, and entrepreneurship initiatives that need to be recognized, valued, oriented, and promoted to increase investment in regional and national tourism. But there is also a significant lack of knowledge on the instruments to be used by these entrepreneurs to be part of success rather than failure, as has happened in some cases for those who have dared to invest in this important sector of the economy and national culture.

In the framework of this study, tourism is considered important for sustainable development in the city of Durres. The diversity of cultural monuments, cultural traditions, and traditional hospitality, constitute a strong attraction for domestic and foreign tourists.

The aim of this study is the presentation of the tourist potential for the sustainable development of the Durres region, to serve its promotion, as well as the establishment of the relevant tourist infrastructure that will strongly influence the increase of tourists' interest to visit and create an image for a more attractive and long-term destination.



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1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism has the potential to transform the society and culture of a country. Tourism is often the catalyst for significant economic and social changes, the context for intercultural exchange, and scene for the manifestation of cultures and traditions. Thus, from the development of tourism, local economies are strengthened as a result of the increase of direct investments or in the supporting sectors, the widening of employment opportunities as well as the intensification of the cash flow and circulation. Tourism is rightly considered by the Albanian government as a strategic sector that is followed with special attention in the development programs of the country and the design of its image. In this context, tourism has become part of the government-subsidized promotional messages on prestigious channels such as CNN, which, among other things, promote, in addition to tourism development, the attraction of foreign investment and the country's image around the world.

When we talk about tourism we must keep in mind that tourism activity is very diverse, as are its impacts on the economic, cultural, and social development of a country or local community. However, in this paper, we will focus on historical and cultural tourism, mainly in the district of Durres, the opportunities that exist, as well as their use for its economic development. The city has a great potential for the development of tourism and other supporting sectors through the combination of coastal tourism with cultural and historical. Such a combination would extend the tourist activity throughout the year and would significantly contribute to the increase of tourism revenues and the economic and social development of the district. Such a reality is still lacking in Durres as a result of the lack of adequate logistical infrastructure and sufficient information at the institutional level, which is mainly related to the insufficient organization of information offices, which should take more responsibility for processing, presentation, and circulation of data about the cultural and historical values of the district.

This paper is based on a survey that has identified the interest for tourism different from that of the coastal beach offered in Durres, as well as to what extent the existing tourist infrastructure and local and central public institutions are ready to develop it. The use of surveying in the field of tourism is a scientific method used in many countries with consolidated tourism such as France, Italy, Spain, Greece, etc. Its importance lies in the rapid collection of information, especially in areas of activity that know about their dynamism. Based on these premises, the survey is thought to serve the needs of this paper which aims at a general and rapid observation of the problems of the development of cultural and historical tourism in the Durres city.

The paper is organized into three parts. The first part of this paper is given a definition and meaning of cultural and historical tourism in general. The second part presents the cultural and historical destinations of tourism offered to domestic and foreign vacationers and interprets the data on the level of development of tourism in Durres. The paper concludes with some reflections and recommendations for changing the state of tourism in the Durres area.

2. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to highlight the tourism potential of the Durres area and the role that cultural tourism can play in the sustainable development of this region. The study aims to:

1. To identify the values and tourist, economic, and cultural potentials in the area of Durres in the function of its sustainable socio-economic development.

2. Evaluate cultural attractions through tourist attendance and the benefits derived from them.
3. To analyze those attractive elements for foreign visitors in the territory that are used, as well as the expectations of socio-economic benefits of the community, from the presence of cultural attractions in their territory.
4. Identify current problems of tourism and cultural heritage management, related to the preservation of its values and tourism use.
5. Analyze every technological opportunity, through the creation of extensive information on cultural heritage monuments, tourist spots, and destinations for tourists and the promotion of their values and potentials.

The central problem that we try to answer in this study is this: What development potentials does tourism in the Durres area offer and how can they be integrated?

3. METHODOLOGY

For the realization of this study, a series of methods have been used such as that research, statistical method, method of surveys, method of direct field observations, and cartographic methods.

The research methods used include all existing literature on sustainable development and tourism development in the Durres area: various studies and publications of local and foreign sociologists, archaeologists, and researchers related to tourism and cultural heritage of the Durres region, national and international projects undertaken in the framework of the development of cultural tourism in the area and their management, strategic plans of socio-economic development of Durres region, statistical summaries conducted by national and international organizations (UNWTO, ATLAS, UN, GTZ, SNV) on the development of tourism, the number of tourists, revenues provided by tourism, etc.

The method of surveys and interviews is one of the basic methods of this study, used to obtain primary quantitative and qualitative data. It was conducted through the design and implementation of surveys of 300 (three hundred) questionnaires for three target groups: foreign tourists 70 (seventy), local community 150 (one hundred and fifty), and a tourist site 80 (eighty) questionnaires. Through the use of this method, it is intended to highlight the importance of the development of cultural tourism in the socio-economic development of the local community. Also, the questions contained in the questionnaires aimed to find out the opinion of tourists on the cultural offer and tourist services in the visited area. The survey also highlighted the problems faced by tourist facilities from a socio-economic perspective. The statistical method is used to show statistical data on the number of tourists, accommodation units, income from tourist activities, etc. This method was also used during the implementation of the questionnaires in cases when the questions were of a quantitative nature (collection of quantitative information on revenues, expenditures, etc.).

The comparison method is used to compare statistical data during the analysis of surveys. This method has also been used in the chronological comparison of the development of tourism during two different periods (before the '90s and after 1990 until today).

4. OVERVIEW OF THE CITY OF DURRES

4.1. Geographical features

The city of Durres lies on the Adriatic Sea with a coastal length of about 30 miles. It is located only 39 km away from the capital, Tirana. To the east and northeast, it is bordered by the district of Tirana and to the south by the district of Kavaja. Durres is the most important node of sea, road, and rail transport in the country. The height above sea level goes up to two meters. The western coast of the province is bathed by the waters of the Adriatic Sea (Qiriazi Perikli, 2001). The city of Durres occupies an area of 46.1 km² and represents 10.67% of the area of the district. Old Durres city and its new part, together with the beach area from Porto Romano to Kavaja Rock lie in the form of an arch along the Adriatic coast, occupying most of the sea bay of Durres. In the territory of Durres grow plants of Mediterranean flora: juniper, laurel, cypress, olive, and coastal pine. Durres is very rich in fruit trees such as peaches, figs, cherries, plums, etc. Durres is also known for waterfowl. Marine fauna is quite diverse (Municipality of Durres Official site).

The waters of Bisht-Palle represent a habitat for ducks, corals, and seagulls that spend the winter here.

4.2. Climatic Conditions and Demographics

Durres is characterized by its typically Mediterranean climate with hot and dry summers and mild and wet winters. Average annual temperatures vary from + 25 ° C in July to + 10 ° C in January. The amount of precipitation fluctuates around 1000 mm per year. The long solar radiation during the year is one of the biggest natural resources of the city. 200 sunny days a year, of which over half with a temperature above 20 ° C, make Durres one of the hottest centers in the Mediterranean. The average air temperature reaches + 18 ° C, while that of water is 22 ° C. The Adriatic Sea is one of the natural resources of the city of Durres. The Adriatic waters are blue and clear. Salinity fluctuates from 30 to 36% (Doka Dhimiter; Draçi Bilal, 2009).

Today, the city of Durres has over 290,697 inhabitants, thus being the second city in terms of population after the capital of Albania. After the '90s, years of long and difficult transition that the country was going through, Durres became the second city in the country to attract the largest population, mainly from the remote areas of Albania. In addition to internal migration, Durres is also the city that has recognized first and foremost, more than anyone else, the massive external emigration of the population. Today, almost every family in Durres has a person who works abroad, who has invested in their country, especially in sectors such as trade, services, construction, etc. (Qiriazi Perikli, 2001).

Durres today is the most important port city of Albania. In the southern part is its beach more than 10 km long. During the summer period in Durres, more than 150,000 tourists come to the beach of the Adriatic Sea. The monuments of the ancient city have stood the test of time and are still in good condition today. Durres is an interesting destination for historical tourism.

Traces of the ancient metropolis are found everywhere in Durres and this small piece of land still preserves a part of our history and the old world. Only 30 minutes away from the capital, its coast has traditionally been the second home of the tyrants, while in recent years it has become a favorite resort even for Albanians outside the borders of Albania.

It is tedious and with various problems, in fact all the mess created by the investments made during these transition years on this coast, but logic makes us hope that all this investment made will bear fruit maybe in a few years (Doka Dhimiter, 2005).

Almost unbearable and unsatisfactory is the contrast between which this city lives: the ancient ruins between the buildings of the socialist system, the Italian architecture of some streets and buildings, dozens of palaces and new buildings (beautiful and ugly), sandy beaches, filled with tourists, garbage and partitions separating those who now own a strip of sand and sea.

4.3. History of Durres

The city, described 2070 years ago by the Romans as the “tavern of the Adriatic” is today not only the oldest city inhabited without interruption and the largest port of the country but also the largest tourist destination in Albania. It has survived for centuries to the present day. It is an important port, administrative, economic, commercial, political center, etc., for centuries, and has always been present in the history of the Mediterranean Basin, especially in the Adriatic Sea. Visiting museums, facilities, and monuments, as well as the city itself and its immediate surroundings best reflect the historical, archaeological, ethnographic, natural, and urban values (Durres Municipality, Official Website).

A history of about 3 thousand years testifies to the continuity of the city to this day. The origins of the city are Illyrian, a period from which derives the first name of the city was Epidamn and later Dyrrhachium, but the founding date of this city is considered the year 627 BC when the Greek settlers from Corfu settled. In 313 BC the city was taken over by one of the leaders of the Illyrian kingdom Glaukia, while a few years later in 283 BC it passed under the rule of King Monum. King Monun would be the first king to receive the first coins of this city which shows the early commercial development of the ancient city of Durres. This was a strong reason that in 229 BC this city agreed with Rome, which was one of the superpowers of ancient times. In the 4th century, the city experienced a great economic boom, which brought a flourishing of life and large constructions of the city as a fortification wall, etc. Durrah was considered by Rome as a strategic point and was used as a point of support against the kings of Macedonia. For this reason, the Romans who had both control and strategic and economic interests built the Egnatia road which started from Durres and went east to Constantinople (Milan Shuflaj, translation 2004).

In the I-III century AD, Durres had significant development and became the main commercial center and the main port of the eastern Adriatic coast. At the same time, one of the most famous centers of the ancient city was built, but also of today, such as the amphitheater. Durres Amphitheater is the largest and most important, not only in Albania but also in the Balkans. This work of architectural, artistic, and historical value was built during the reign of Emperor Trajan. The amphitheater has an elliptical shape with a diameter of 136 meters and a height of about 20 m. The amphitheater was discovered by excavations carried out during the 1966 expedition led by Vangjel Toci.

It was declared a Cultural Monument in 1973, with the letter of the Ministry of Education and Culture no. 1886, dated 10.06.1973. The city of Durres has been known for a short time during the period 1914-1920 and is the capital of the Albanian state under the rule of Prince Vid, which tells us about its importance today. Today, the city of Durres is the most important port and tourist center of the country and the second most important city in all directions after the capital of the country, Tirana (Xhaferri Manjola; Tase Mirela, 2020).

5. GENERAL INFORMATION ON CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL TOURISM

First of all, it is appropriate to clarify the concept of cultural and historical tourism. In most cases, cultural and historical tourism is understood as the motivated travel of tourists by the culture and history of a particular region or country in general and in particular by art, monuments, and the most important archaeological sites.

Cultural and historical tourism is focused on visiting traditional communities which have social practices, special art forms, various customs and traditions, monuments, and archaeological spaces, which marks the difference from other forms of tourism. For some others, more than a motivated journey, cultural and archaeological tourism is an interaction between people, places, and cultural and archaeological heritage.

Cultural and archaeological tourism means the use of assets in urban areas, historic cities, or large cities and their cultural institutions such as museums, theaters, or concert halls. It also means tourism in rural areas, including the organization of cultural festivals and the presentation of tradition in these areas.

For Hilary du Cros, Bob McKercher, cultural tourism includes four elements: tourism, the use of cultural heritage assets, the consumption of experience and products, and the tourist (2002: 6). Combining these factors both authors give this definition “cultural tourism is a tourist activity in which cultural heritage assets are presented for consumption by the tourist” (McKercher and du Cros, 2002: 9). Thus cultural and historical tourism, in addition to an entertainment activity, include the transformation into a “product” of cultural traditions and values. Such an approach of cultural and historical tourism has been taken into account in the design of the survey that has been conducted for this paper.

It should be borne in mind that the commercialization of cultural and historical heritage assets as part of tourism activity makes it “classified nowadays between two idealized extremes: either as deeply positive or as profoundly negative” (Doja, 2007). The negative view of the development of cultural and historical tourism brings to attention the dependence created by the cash flows of tourists, the erosion of cultural and historical values after their commercialization and indiscriminate use, and the concern of the local community regarding the use of living resources.

The positive attitude of such a “transformation” means increasing local income and employment as well as re-evaluating and increasing the visibility of monuments and cultural and historical areas, but also their maintenance and protection in the context of tourism commercialization. This is the perspective that will be extensively addressed in this paper.

Cultural and historical tourism has begun to become popular in recent years in Europe. Thus, depending on the source or destination, it is estimated that 35 to 70 percent of tourists are considered cultural tourists (Antolovic, 1999). Studies show that cultural tourists spend more than ordinary tourists, so it is thought that it has a greater impact on the economic development of the locality in particular and the country in general.

Cultural and historical tourism began to be distinguished as a special service in the early 70s when some scholars noticed that a category of tourists traveled to visit and understand the cultural heritage and historical monuments. In 1976, the International Scientific Committee for

Cultural Tourism - the International Council on Monuments and Spaces (ICOMOS) - adopted the Cultural Tourism Charter. The main purpose of such an enterprise was to draw attention to the existence of historical and cultural values by helping to create a different image of cities, protecting culture and maintaining archaeological monuments, opening the perspective for the development of tourism and economy through the creation of connections through the intensity of holidays and cultural tourism. Such a combination encourages the expansion of tourism throughout the year, the development of services and other support activities (handicrafts, transport, agriculture, construction, etc.), and encourages the development of policies aimed at respecting the privacy of locals and the preservation of monuments, archaeological sites and cultural values exposed by potential damage (Tase Mirela; Xhaferri Manjola 2021).

6. DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURAL TOURISM IN DURRES

In terms of cultural tourism, Albania has many cultural heritage assets with national and international values, which have already aroused the interest of visitors, especially international ones, e.g. Butrint National Park, (UNESCO World Heritage Site). Other destinations in Albania are Amphitheater in Durres, Dajti National Park, Thethi, Voskopoja, and many other cultural, natural, and historical beauties. Regarding the development of cultural tourism in the region of Durres, it is rich and diverse, where the first beginnings are quite early.

If we were to refer to different definitions of tourism and its origins in Albania, and mainly in Durres, we would rightly ask the question: Did Durres constitute the center of civilization in antiquity, and does it remain an attractive and entertaining place for those who visited it? As mentioned above, the city of Durres, described 2070 years ago by the Romans as the "Adriatic tavern" is today not only the oldest inhabited city and the largest port in the country but also the largest tourist destination in Albania. This is shown by the large number of tourists who visit Durres throughout the year (Tase Mirela; Xhaferri Manjola, 2019).

In addition to the significant socio-economic development, the presence of cultural objects very important for the time is the organization of trade fairs and the celebration of numerous religious holidays, which brought to the city many travelers and visitors from the surrounding countries, as well as the farthest north, east and south. The presence of the sea and the fact of being the most important port city in antiquity, the Middle Ages and today, is an indication of the frequent movements of people, coming and going for commercial purposes or with interest to visit the city. Scholars testify that the social and cultural life here was distinguished for a high level of development at all times. The main types of cultural tourism that are applied in Albania, mainly in the Durres area, are listed in the Table 1:

Unlike previous periods, in the years 1945-1990, Albania under the socialist system implemented the country's isolation policies, preventing the arrival of foreign tourists and relying only on the views of social tourism, tourism for all, and at the expense of the pact. This type of tourism would be controlled and administered by the state, both in accommodation structures and in various services.

In addition to hotels, workers' camps, and pioneer camps, there were accommodation facilities in the tourist areas of the country. In the years 1960-1990 the city of Durres was the most frequented tourist destination mainly for holidays (annual leave). After the 1990s, tourism in the Durres area had a great deal of vitality, mainly maritime tourism, while a little later, cultural

and historical tourism began to spread, where today we are talking about this type of tourism that makes the city of Durres and the surrounding provinces very attractive and visitable by tourists all year round with an increasing number, mainly foreign ones (Hoti Afrim, 2006).

The rich cultural heritage of the Durres area has enabled the development of one of the most frequented types of tourism in the world today, the cultural and historical one. The interest in knowing the history, culture, traditions, and customs pushes more and more tourists, both local and foreign, to visit this geographical space. Based on the analysis of the potential of cultural heritage and the interest that this potential presents for the tourist attraction, we conclude that cultural tourism can be considered as a priority for the development of tourism in Durres (Doja. A, 2007).

Table 1. Types of cultural tourism

Types of cultural tourism	Typical places/activities of interest
Heritage tourism	Visits to castles Palaces and ground floor houses Archaeological sites Monuments Architecture Museum Religious site
Art tourism	Visits to theaters Concerts Gallery Festivals Carnivals and events Literary site
Creative tourism	Photography Painting Cooking Craftsmanship Language learning
Urban cultural tourism	Historic cities Art and heritage attractions Shops Night life
Rural cultural tourism	The village Farm or agritourism Ecomuseums Cultural landscapes National parks Trails
Indigenous cultural tourism	Ecotourism Visits to cultural centers Arts and crafts Cultural performances Festivals
Popular cultural tourism	Parks and attractions Complex shops Sporting events Media and film events

Source: Authors

6.1. The impact of cultural tourism on socio-economic development in Durres

The socio-economic development of Durres is closely related to the natural and human resources it possesses. Currently, the features of an agricultural-industrial economic development, thanks to the numerous assets, not only natural but also cultural ones, have given opportunities for the development of the natural and cultural tourism industry. From the surveys conducted with the three target groups (foreign tourists, community, and tourist units) it is noticed that the interest in the development of tourism in Durres is high. The cultural potentials contained in the study space are quite attractive to all visitors, but especially to foreign tourists coming to the area. Compared to a year ago the number of foreign tourists has increased, some of them have even visited the city more than once (Xhaferri Manjola, 2018).

From the surveys conducted with this target group (as expressed by the analysis of the questionnaire), the main motivation for foreign tourists to visit the city of Durres is maritime and especially cultural and historical, specifically to get acquainted with the objects of material culture, as well as traditions and other elements of spiritual culture. The results show that 81% in the overall assessment are satisfied with the geographical-cultural offer and with some of its elements such as churches, museums, traditional architecture, local cuisine, hospitality, etc. The problems identified regarding the lack of infrastructure, both road, and tourism (hotel services, lack of tourist information, guides, maps, souvenir shops, etc,) should be considered.

From the surveys conducted with the local community (residents of the most visited tourist areas), it results that they are very interested in the development of tourism. Residents know the cultural potentials that are located in their area and the importance they present for the development of tourism. The declared monthly income is not very high and only a small percentage of the 17% have tourism activity as the main source of income.

Given the fact that respondents have a high level of education (79% with university and secondary education) about 91% view the development of tourism with great interest, considering it as an important economic resource for their families.

The surveys conducted with tourism units show the direct impact of tourism development on increasing their economic income. A good number of them said that during the peak of the tourist season, their income increases 2 times more than during the other period of the year (74% of respondents) while there are respondents who say that during this period their income is 5-fold. This shows that the presence of the tourist brings considerable income to the area, especially from foreign tourists. Given the fact that tourism is an important economic resource, tourism units consider it important to promote the cultural potential of the city and that relevant actors need to do more in this regard.

Also, the surveyed units have expressed that they provide basic and qualified services for tourists such as heating, room service, breakfast included in the hotel price, foreign exchange, etc., but few entertainment activities, excursions, guides in the area, practicing various sports, etc. However, from the point of view of tourists, the level of services provided is worth improving. For this reason, tourism units should invest more in improving the quality of service and carrying out activities to their requirements.

Based on these surveys it turns out that the development of cultural tourism is an important source of employment for the community of the area. In this regard, the cooperation of the public sector with the private sector in the field of investments, in the field of tourism infrastructure (an increase of accommodation capacities), soft loans for the category of the population that wants to invest in the field of tourism should be strengthened, and also the restoration of cultural monuments, in the promotion of vocational education in professions related to handicrafts and cultural traditions of the area, etc. These will promote the development of tourism and the entire socio-economic development of the county, providing opportunities to return residents to their country of origin and to invest in capacity-building accommodation or other tourism services.

On the one hand, tourists express the desire and curiosity to know the area and on the other hand, the local population and tourist units are very interested in the development of tourism in their area. Investments in the restoration of cultural monuments are seen as important for the preservation and improvement of the current situation, as well as for a dignified presentation of its values. They can also be considered as an opportunity for the employment of the community to increase its income and well-being.

7. CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL POTENTIALS OF THE CITY OF DURRES, IMPORTANT TOURIST DESTINATIONS TO VISIT

In addition to sunbathing tourism, the city of Durres is of great importance for cultural tourism-oriented towards all the historical and cultural wealth that this city offers.

Durres metropolis of Antiquity

Most of the cultural tourism in the city of Durres is occupied by the archeological one, although during the tourist season the various cultural activities are not left behind.

It is important to see this city in its complexity because that way you can enjoy what it really offers. The most important and numerous archeological discoveries in Albania are certainly located in Durres and it is probably worth using the city for archeological or cultural tourism rather than for its beach. You can spend a few days visiting the ruins, mosaics, churches, and mosques in this city. Some of the places to visit are:

Amphitheater

The Roman amphitheater and the Byzantine wall that surrounds the western part of the city of Durres are the best pieces of evidence that prove its antiquity.

It was built in the early 2nd century AD during the reign of Emperor Trajan. In size, it can be compared to the amphitheater of Pola or Pompeii. It has the shape of an ellipse and a capacity of 15-20 thousand spectators, a fact that proves the large population of ancient Dyrrah. The amphitheater has an elliptical shape with a diameter of 136 meters and a height of about 20 m, built with rows of bricks connected with mortar (Andrea Zh, 1971, 42).

This amphitheater has Roman architecture and was built in the center of the city, while 2/3 of its surface rests on the hill. The 2700-year-old amphitheater stands among the 30 discovered amphitheaters of the ancient world. During these years a series of projects aims to realize the

full discovery of the building and the collaboration with the University of Parma is expected to finally shape in the future the entire visible geography of the Amphitheater. Inside it are galleries, very interesting to visit especially for the mosaics and the special construction technique. It was declared a Cultural Monument in 1973.

City Water Supply

This work is thought to have been built during the same period in which the Amphitheater was built. The water supply was of great importance for the city because it made possible its water supply and for the time it was a very advanced project. This project was about 15 km long and enabled the collection of water from the river Erzen and its delivery to the city of Durres.

The beauty of Durres

The beauty of Durres is a mosaic that was discovered in the neighborhood "Varosh" in 1916 by the Austrian archaeologist Praschnicher and belongs to the IV century BC. The face in the mosaic of the Beauty of Durres is thought to represent one of the Auras, Eilethyan, the goddess who accompanied women in childbirth in a healthy way, a gift that both Aphrodite and Artemis had.

The surface of the mosaic has the shape of an ellipse in diameter; the largest 5.1 m and the smallest 3 m. In the center is a very special figure of a woman, with a monumental posture, yellow hair, small bangs sticking out like a crown, and above them is a spiral diadem in black color. The special and very delicate workmanship, especially the angelic face of the woman, has made this mosaic very famous, turning it into one of the symbols of the ancient city (Anamali, S; Adhami, S, 1974).

The contours of the nose, chin, eyes, and mouth are clearly visible through the black and gray lines. The mosaic has very special workmanship: it is built of small multicolored natural pebbles placed on a layer of mortar and is one of the oldest examples of this way of making art, discovered in our time. This mosaic is exhibited in the National Historical Museum in Tirana.

The Hippocampus Mosaic and the Orpheus Mosaic

This mosaic was discovered in 1947. It is made of black and white pebbles and consists of mythological scenes, where the main figures are the Hippocampus, Eros with the Dolphin, and Triton with open wings. It belongs to a luxurious building, of the Roman period, which dates back to the first century AD.

The Orpheus mosaic was discovered in 1988, with Orpheus at its center. It is thought that this mosaic belongs to the period of the 3rd century AD.

National Commercial Bank

The building is located on one of the main streets of the city opposite the port. The building is evidenced not only by the workmanship and architecture but also by the decorations drawn on its front. Above the front of this building stands a sculpture of an Illyrian girl, thought to be Queen Teuta, a fact not confirmed by historians.

The mosques of Durres

The two most important are the Great Mosque and the Small Faith Mosque. The Great Mosque was built in 1932-1938, mainly by the city's merchants, and is the second-largest mosque in the Balkans. During the socialist cultural revolutions, this mosque was damaged but after the 90s it was reconstructed again, taking on its former appearance: today religious rites are performed here by many Albanian Muslims. Among other things, a mosque is a place for learning about Muslim culture and religion. While the Small Mosque is much older, it was built about 500 years ago by Sultan Fatih II. Old documents show that the mosque was built on an old Byzantine church and is one of the most important historical and cultural monuments of the city (Anamali, S; Adhami, S, 1974).

City Churches

The Catholic Church "St. Lucia", belongs to the year 1907. It is a church of Romanesque type, restored and functional.

The Orthodox Church "St. George", belongs to the late nineteenth century, restored and functional. The Orthodox Church "St. Asti and St. Paul", built-in 2001, functional. These churches, in addition to the Durres believers, are also visited by foreign tourists during different periods of the year.

Archaeological Museum and Ethnographic Museum

With the opening of the new Archaeological Museum in Durres, another place with time parameters is offered for the visits of many tourists interested in getting to know the city better.

The Archaeological Museum and the Ethnographic Museum are very interesting to visit. The first is a modern building and holds within 18000 archeological objects of the basic fund exhibited, objects belonging to different historical periods. This museum has in its interior: the exhibition hall, the library, the archive, the study sector, and the lecture hall.

The Ethnographic Museum has a completely different look: the building is made of stone and the feeling of familiarity when entering is immediate. This museum consists of two floors, where the first serves as a warehouse while the second exhibits relics and historical objects (Hoti Afrim, 2006).

The traditional Albanian courtyard and decorations make you feel like you are in an old Albanian house, often the Museum staff sit in the shade of the stairs and look like the brides of the house. The atmosphere is created by the works of tradition located very naturally in the 5 rooms on the second floor of the museum.

The holy tomb and the mosaic above (Discovery of Salih Hidri)

One of the most important underground discoveries of the ancient city of Durres is the mosaic in the basilica of St. Michael, a discovery by archaeologist Salih Hidri. The work is a decorative plastic sculpture, measuring 66x29 - and is a very fine work of art. According to Hydri, the mosaic has a Christian religious theme: at its center are the figures of two shepherds, one with a

stick in his hand and the other with a rope, who symbolize the church and its care for the faithful. Figures of dogs and cattle are placed next to them.

The three horses (white, black, and gray) symbolize the three horses of the apocalypse. The mosaic has not only a decorative function for the Basilica, as a tomb has been discovered beneath it; the bones found to show that a woman and a man are buried there. It is thought that the tomb belonged to people very well-known and respected, by the inhabitants and the church.

Therefore, this place was considered sacred. The oldest walls of the Basilica belong to the period of Justinian (6th century) and from that time until today, the hills of St. Michael, are considered a holy place.

Tombs have also been found there, which means that even during the Ottoman occupation this place functioned as a shrine, while today in the narrow window of the old tomb the people of the area light candles. This aspect highlights the fact that in no other country has religious heritage ever disappeared but simply been transformed.

Byzantine fortifications

These walls were built in the time of Emperor Anastasius I (491-518), originating from the senatorial families of Dyrrah. The fortifications which would serve to protect the city were built with brick and mortar, a characteristic construction of this period, where on bricks and seals of this empire, as well as state workshops, are parasites. The siege was made with a triple crown, a linear length of 3.5 km, a wall height of 12 m, and a width, as noted by the Byzantine historian A. Komnena. The other emperor of Illyrian origin, Justinian (527-565) also undertook works of a defensive character, as it is known, Porteza, or Porto Romano, north of the city.

Venetian Tower

Torra is located at the end of the trade route opposite the entrance of the port, in a very favorable position to be identified and visited by tourists. The characteristic construction of the 15th century is a round tower, built with limestone blocks, which include architectural parts of earlier periods, such as the limestone block with the figure of Hermes, in the function of protectors of traders. The Upper Castle is also from this period, here too around tower. In addition to its cultural values, a very pleasant bar has been built inside it, where antiquity and modernity meet, a place highly sought after by foreign tourists who, with the Venetian tower, have the first contact with the tourist facilities that the city of Durres offers.

Byzantine Forum (Macellum)

The forum is located behind the Palace of Culture "A. Moisiu". This work belongs to the last period of the 5th century AD and is known by the citizens of Durrës as Rotonda. Together with the Public Terms of the Roman period, under the foundations of the Palace of Culture, he created an ensemble, an "archaeological island", in the center of the city. All this archeological ensemble has invaluable value for the city of Durres both in terms of history and culture and in terms of tourism.

Turkish wall

Built by the Turkish invaders, turning the city, after 1501, into a military garrison. Along this wall, the Clock Tower is built, and inside the “Kala Neighborhood”, the Medieval Hammam is built, and outside it, in the “Varosh Neighborhood”, the Tophane Well.

Karl Topia Tower

Such is the residence of Prince Karl Topia, who gave political autonomy to the city of Durrës. He called himself “Prince of Arberia”, Venice called him “Lord of Arberia in the coastal areas of Durres”, and the Pope, in 1374, recognized the title, “Great Count of Arberia”. This tower is closely associated with important historical sites, where the fate of the Albanian State has sometimes depended.

“Aleksandër Moisiu” Museum House

It was inaugurated in September 1982. The actor of Albanian origin A. Moisiu spent his childhood here, in the years 1884-1889, where he completed his primary school years. In two rooms his family and artistic biography based on authentic documents are displayed on stands; while in the second room are presented works of art by local creators for the figure of the great actor.

War Relics Hall - It was first inaugurated in 1969. It is located on the second floor above the Funeral Complex of Martyrs of the former District of Durres, martyrs of the Second World War (1939-1944); next to them have buried the remains of the martyrs of the Movement Patriotic of the beginning of the twentieth century. The trophy weapons of the Second World War, and personal objects of the martyrs are exhibited in the Hall of Relics.

8. CURRENT SITUATION OF TOURISM IN DURRES

The development of tourism in the district of Durres is a priority and at the same time a necessity for the economic, cultural, and social development of the district. However, the development of traditional beach tourism alone is not enough for sustainable, effective, and promising development of the district. This is since it extends mainly during the summer season and the tourist is simply a spender of infrastructure and services offered in the beach area and generates income that for the most part serves to repay the basic and correct investments in the beach area. While the beach area is functional and preferred, it requires many other investments in infrastructure, services and facilities, and entertainment activities.

Based on this general comparison of expenditures with revenues from the beach area, it is clear that more needs to be done to increase the level of revenue generation and consequently investments that will increase the attractiveness of the beach area in Durres. This vicious circle does not seem to leave much room for substantial changes in the current state of tourism development on the beach of Durres.

Meanwhile, the combination of ordinary tourism with cultural and historical tourism in Durres opens perspectives for economic and social development through the extension of tourism throughout the year, development of services, and other support activities such as handicrafts, transport, agriculture, construction, museology, etc. Moreover, from the studies that have been

done, it is accepted that the cultural tourist spends more than the ordinary tourist. On the other hand, this combination draws attention to the existence of historical and cultural values by helping to create a different image of the city of Durres, the protection of cultural and historical monuments, and their maintenance. Such a combination is not something new, as in 1976 the Charter for Cultural Tourism was adopted by ICOMOS and in Europe, it has begun to become popular in recent decades. It remains to take advantage of the best experience of other countries and adapt it to the conditions of Durres.

There is a lot of talk about making cultural tourism a priority for the development of tourism in Albania in general and in Durres in particular, but it is important to create a clear idea of where we are in its development. From an organized survey it results that in practice we are very far from the development of cultural tourism in the district of Durres, due to many reasons which were identified.

Surveying is a two-pronged approach. On the one hand, he simultaneously tests the desire of the local tourist for a combination of beach tourism with the historical and cultural one and the knowledge and information he has about the existence of cultural and historical values in the district of Durres. These two pieces of information are important in assessing the existence of the initial premise for combining types of tourism. On the other hand, the survey highlights the preparation of hotels or tourist agencies in the city of Durres to provide various information and services in support of the development of cultural and historical tourism.

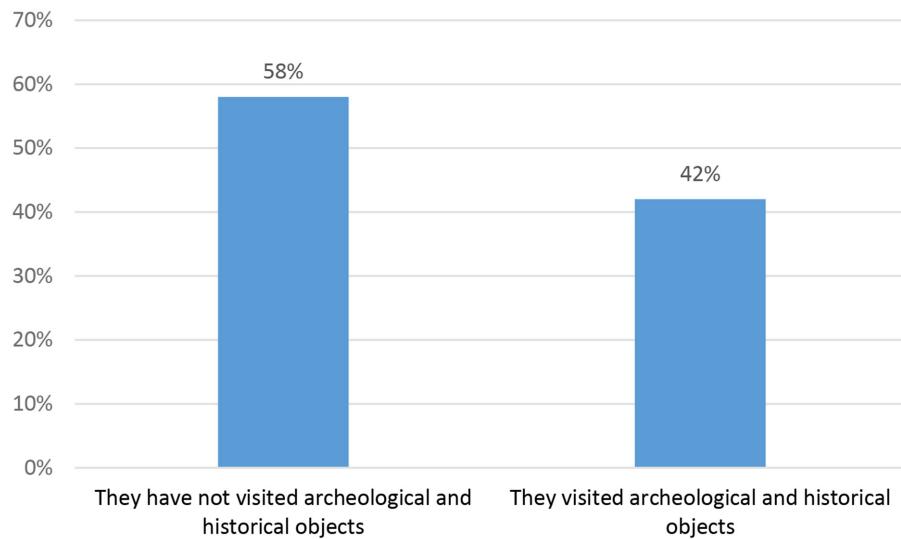
Questionnaires were prepared for the survey that indirectly collects information on the interest of vacationers in cultural and historical tourism as well as on the tourist offer of hotels and tourist agencies.

In the first approach, a sample of 150 random citizens in the cities of Durres and Tirana interviewed 70 foreign tourists. As for the second approach, 80 hotels and tourist agencies in the area of the city of Durres and the Beach have been contacted directly. For the study, a list of the most important archeological, historical objects and museums in the city of Durres has been extracted from the online archeological guide of the city of Durres and publications prepared in the city of Durres in cooperation with specialized institutions inside and outside the country.

A list of cultural activities that usually take place in the city of Durres throughout the year, has been developed with reference to data from the Municipality of Durres and district NGOs. After conducting surveys, another important element is the statistical processing of data and the extraction of important indicators that have an impact on the development of cultural and historical tourism. Based on the size of the survey, it is clear that the study aims to present in general terms the level of the problems of cultural and historical tourism development in Durres and the calculation of analytical economic indicators. Of course, after identification of the situation, it would be interesting to organize a more detailed and analytical study for each element of the tourist activity in the district of Durres, but the work remains modest in its objectives. Graphic and interpreted survey data are presented below.

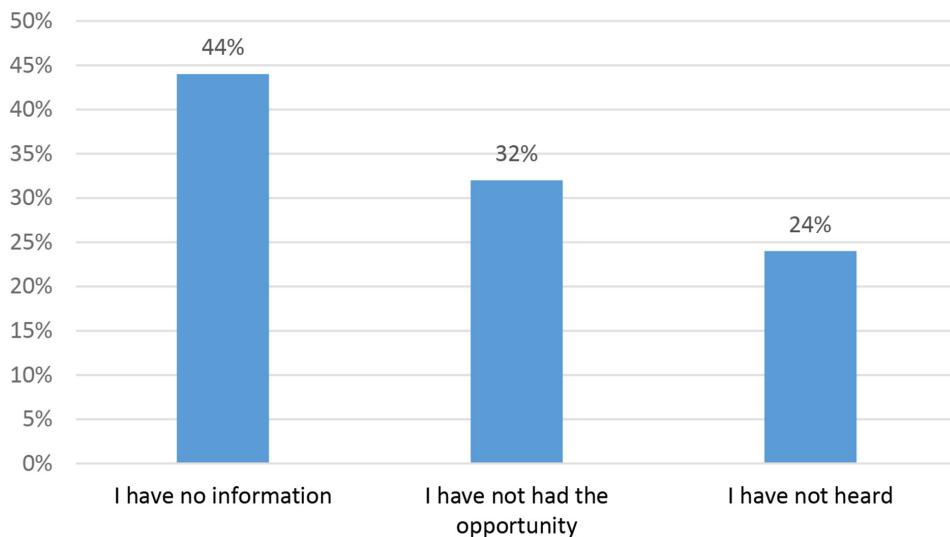
The survey shows that of the local tourists who have been to the beach of Durres, many of the tourists have not visited archeological, historical, or museum objects. Thus, 58 percent of tourists have not made any visit to archaeological, historical, or museum sites in the district of Durres. While 42 percent have visited various archaeological, historical, and cultural sites. Among the visited

facilities are the Roman Amphitheater, the Villa of King Zog, the Archaeological Museum, the Church of St. Anthony, and the Catholic one, the remains of Skanderbeg Castle, the great mosque, etc. While some visitors have extensive knowledge of the mosaic riches, objects of Roman and Byzantine heritage with which Durrës is very rich and which are also valued internationally.



Graph 1. An overview of archeological and historical sites that tourists have visited (or not)

Source: Own research

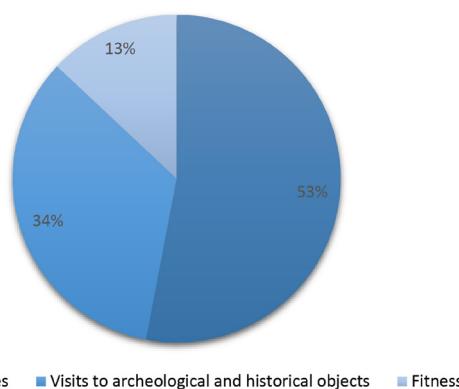
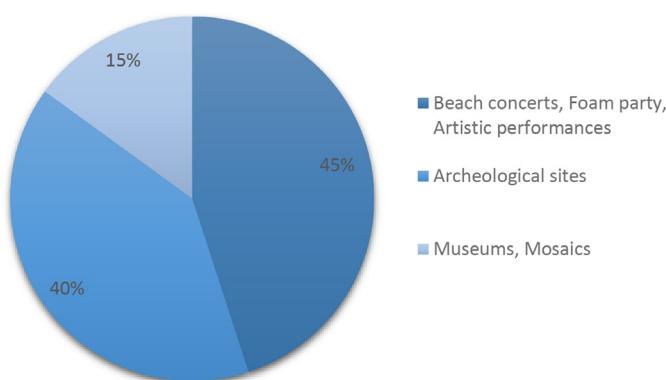
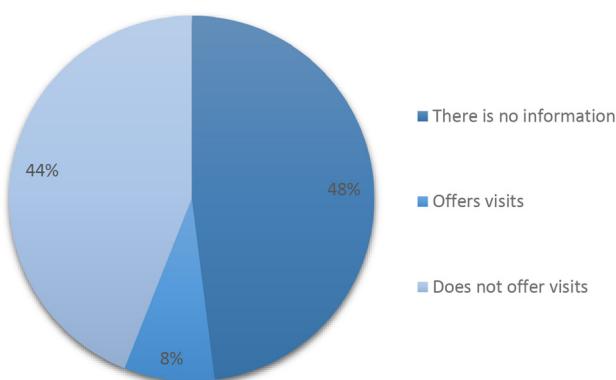


Graph 2. Information on historical, archaeological sites and cultural activities

Source: Own research

The reason for such a situation of ignorance and visits to these facilities is attributed to the lack of information in 44 percent of cases and ignorance in 32 percent of cases, while 24 percent of respondents have not heard about these facilities.

Graphs 1 and 2 provide a very general overview of the level of development of archaeological and historical tourism in the district of Durres. Graph 3 shows that the interest of domestic tourists to combine beach holidays with cultural activities is desired by 53 percent of tourists, while 34 percent of them want visits to archeological sites.

**Graph 3.** Potential of activities associated with the beach**Source:** Own research**Graph 4.** Preferences for attending cultural activities**Source:** Own research**Graph 5.** Hotel offers to visits the archeological and historical sites**Source:** Own research

Certainly, the preference of tourists to pursue cultural activities while on vacation in Durres or not are different for different activities.

Graph 4 gives an overview of these preferences. Preferences for attending cultural activities are more in favor of Sea Concerts, party foam, artistic performances, etc. While the desire of local tourists is not lacking to take part in cultural activities and visits to historical areas, while spending holidays by the sea, it remains to be seen what are the alternatives offered to fulfill these desires by direct operators such as hotels and travel agencies, and information offices near the municipality and other public institutions in the district and beyond.

From the conversations with some of the hotels and agencies that operate in the city and on the beach of Durres, it results that for the most part those of medium size do not offer packages for tourist visits to the historical areas of the city while providing non-specialized information. Small units do not have even the slightest information about the historical and cultural areas of the district.

Exceptions are large hotels with more than 100 beds, such as the Adriatic which offers information, although not specialized, and the opportunity to visit these areas.

Graph 5 gives a more concise overview of the situation. The results are almost the same for hotels offering cultural activities.

While hotels offer few other services besides those of hotel and restaurant bars, tourists' demand for information on cultural and historical sites in the city and district of Durres is sensitive. Thus, the survey data show that 48 percent of respondents do not have information about archaeological and historical sites, while 44 percent of them have requested information, and only 8 percent of respondents have no interest in the information. Hotel interviews highlight many problems related to the reasons for the missing offer for packages of visits to cultural activities or archeological sites. We can mention the lack of information and specialized guides and maps of Durres district, souvenirs that refer to cultural, historical, and archeological heritage, specialized public transport services that facilitate free access to these objects or activities, and information on the schedule of activities cultural or visits to archaeological sites. On the other hand, it remains to be seen how available, attractive, and easily visitable are the historical and archaeological sites as well as what are the services offered on-site. From personal observation, the situation leaves much to be desired. However, another more specialized survey should be done to identify in more detail the situation and problems that hinder the development of cultural and historical tourism in the district of Durres.

9. CONCLUSION

Based on the evidence of cultural and historical heritages, we conclude that the district of Durres has significant potentials for material and spiritual cultural heritage, to integrate them into its socio-economic development. Monuments of material culture are represented by prehistoric settlements, mounds, castles, dwellings, Christian and Muslim religious sites, etc., along with rich elements of spiritual culture (folklore, crafts, traditions, customs, festivals, way of life, etc.), in addition to values in preserving national, regional and local identity, constitute an important potential for the development of cultural tourism in this district. Through diverse attractions, celebrations, and traditional gastronomy, Durres can provide significant economic, social, and cultural benefits from attracting tourists to the destination.

Although the development of tourism is in its infancy, the integration of cultural heritage into socio-economic development can be considered a very good opportunity for the sustainable development of the area. The diversity of cultural, urban, and rural tourism has led to an increase in the number of visitors, especially foreign ones, from year to year, which has led to the increase and improvement of the supporting infrastructure of tourist accommodation and food services, as well as other complementary services.

The impact and positive expectation of the development of tourism-related to cultural heritage have been expressed during surveys conducted with the community of the area, according to

which it is an important source of income for their families. The surveyed business units that provide tourism services also expressed the same.

While on the one hand, the interest of foreign tourists in the potentials of cultural heritage is growing, on the other hand, these objects are facing many problems, such as damage caused by the natural time factor and the human one.

The presence of different categories of cultural objects that have resisted time, evidence of a civilized development of the whole district, already raises the need for preservation, while the tendency to replace it with new constructions is quite threatening.

The management of cultural heritage sites today, in addition to the purpose of preservation and conservation should also aim to increase its quality as a tourist product.

From the results of the study, we conclude that there is still much to do; the growing demands for the development of cultural, archaeological, and historical tourism match in quantity and quality with the tourist attraction. Some recommendations can be made that would lead to a quick improvement of the situation.

There is a need to register and create an easily accessible electronic database, regularly updated, which should be made available to hotels, tour operators, tourists to historical sites, Theme Parks and Clubs, Coastal Ecosystems, Virgin Nature, Cultural Activities, etc.

For such an enterprise to be successful, in addition to an action combined with the division of tasks and responsibilities between public and private institutions in the local and wider framework, a thorough study is needed with the participation of all stakeholders.

It is also necessary to create the Albanian “Brand”, which includes the city of Durres with its features. Durres must choose what kind of tourism it will develop, the mass or the elite, based on the orientation to adapt and the necessary infrastructure.

For this city is very important and necessary the construction of the electric train and the connection of this network with neighboring countries, thus ensuring a faster and safer transport, which would affect the growth of tourists throughout the year.

There is a need in the future for more effective cooperation of all factors involved in the tourism sector, which, although growing, requires more effort in the future.

Cultural tourism should not be based simply on the promotion of various objects of antiquity but also on the conduct of as many cultural activities with the participation of all regional countries, in order to integrate even more their cultural cooperation.

It is necessary to establish offices for tourist services since there is a need for further development of tourism. In this regard, adequate tourism infrastructure is required, both in the public and private sectors.

From what we presented above, the district of Durres with its constituent areas can be considered as a developing tourist destination. In this perspective, the image of the destination, as a

result of the promotion of tourism products, is generally positive, but this image needs to be further strengthened, through the preservation of cultural heritage, coordination of the public and private sector, and real promotion of tourism products.

Cultural tourism, considered as a concrete alternative for development, can be studied more widely and in-depth, coordinating with such development experiences from neighboring countries or beyond.

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