

Press Release

Eternal Butrint: A UNESCO World Heritage Site in Albania

Richard Hodges

Foreword by Lord Rothschild

Located at the heart of the Mediterranean, the site of Butrint is a microcosm of the rhythms of Mediterranean life over three thousand years. Few UNESCO World Heritage Sites now command such scientific interest; few are more richly documented. Set in a marshy landscape between an inland lagoon and the busy straits separating Corfu from Albania, Butrint boasts well-preserved and photogenic remains of most periods. The site has been occupied since at least the 8th century BC, although Virgil recounts how the Trojan exile, Aeneas, landed here before sailing to found Rome. Subsequent travellers have all recognized something elegiac about its beauty. This book charts the history of Butrint, using the archaeological remains and environmental sequence to paint a complex but grand picture worthy of the 'corrupting sea'. It is a picture which can be illustrated with the exceptional paintings by Grand Tourists like Edward Lear, the magnificent photographs of Luigi Ugolini, the recently discovered archives of the communist period, and the rich documentation of the Butrint Foundation's mission. The book concludes by analysing how tourists are bringing economic hope to Albania as they discover the myth of Aeneas in its unspoilt Homeric landscape.

Published by General Penne, UK, priced at £42.