



Drropulli Stone and Gjirokastra World Heritage in Albania

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Ancient Gjirokastra City and Dervician stone deposit, there are located next to each other, in south of Albania, at foots of eastern slope of "Wide Mountain". Building stone it is represented by micritic limestone of white, red and blue colour, formed during Palaeocene-Eocene Period. It contains fossils of rounded forms and it is known and exploited since the ancient times.

Argjirokastra, Argjiro's City, appeared since the IV-th Century BC (V.Tola, 2011). Stone City has in its centre Majestic Fortress of a big cruiser view, which is seen from long distance, from all sides of Drinos Valley. "This Majestic Monument of Albanian vigour has an astonishing elegance" has written E. Hoxha (1983). Watching Gjirokastra you will remind "Chronic in Stone", the book of Ismail Kadare, great writer, born in Gjirokastra.

All buildings here are of stone. The Large Fortress and high houses as castles are built by stone, and covered by stone tiles. The walls and minarets of religious buildings are of stone. The gates of houses and yards are of engraved stone, protected by metallic nets of artistic forms. The house's walls are built by big stone, while the walls of yards are by small stone of white colour, some times intercalated with lines of red, blue stone. The combination of different colour stone is another one artistic beauty of walls. The roads are paved by black cobblestones of flysch sandstone for protection by slips, some times combined with white limestone mosaics. Steps of houses and roads are by white stone, often reworked masterfully. "Such stones, reworked by very fine skilfully, can not be found in any other place of the World, only in Anadol!" has written on 1 665 Evliya Celepi (2003).

Buildings are of specific architecture and by good style. The accounts of the basis are done to keep "houses as castle". The walls have wood antiseismic layers. The architecture of houses, gates, angles, windows, with predomination of arc forms, with engraved stones and ornaments it is everywhere evident. The ceilings of houses there are with artistic works and ornaments of different times. Houses are of balconies with balustrades, and from characteristic windows are hanging down flowers. Architecture feature of Medieval period, there are symbolised in most of houses and in Qafa e Pazarit ("Bazaar Pass"), where are crossed all roads of the ancient City. From the Fortress below your foots there are different parts of stone City. If you like to be astonished, please, get up to the Keculla Point and watch the Stone City, Drinos Valley, and Lunxheria Mountains!

In Gjirokastra Region there are Antigonea Archaeological Park and Sofratika Amphitheatre. Gjirokastra has a very rich geoheritage and bioheritage such as: Viroi artesian spring, Skotini Cave, Cajupi Field Landscape etc. Since 1961, Gjirokastra was proclaimed Museum City under the protection, and on 2005 was included in UNESCO World Cultural Heritage.