

## Church of the Holy Virgin Monastery

Country or territory:

ALBANIA

Name of organisation

compiling the information:

Albanian Autocephalous Orthodox  
Church/  
Foundation "Love spirit"/  
Cultural Heritage Cell

Contact name:

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CHURCH OF THE HOLY VIRGIN  
MONASTERY,  
Goranxi, Dropulli region

Inventory reference number(s):

453

Building type(s):

Architectural monument, church

Main date(s):

1600

Current use(s):

occasional religious use

Significance:

The monastery is one of the most interesting in the Dropulli region. The church was built in 1600 and its characteristic architectural and decoration features, such as the elegant stone arches, the anthropomorphic and zoomorphic high relief, could be a subject of studies in post Byzantine art and architecture. Scholars expressed the opinion that the church shows strong western influence.

The church consists of a nave, narthex and exonarthex. The interior is characterized by a particular proportion of elements with predominance of vertical axes, and by highly elaborated architectural elements, in particular capitals and gates. The church is built in stone laid in regular courses. The masonry surface is decorated by drum and apse. The high belfry with two niches in the bottom and three in the upper part is part of the western wall.

Categories of significance:

Of outstanding national importance

Because of its artistic and architectural values, and evidence of Western influence, the church is of outstanding national importance.

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Categories of ownership or interest:

The interest is related to artistic and religious values.

Documentation and bibliographic references:

Documentation

Available in the Institute of Monuments of Culture and in the archives of the Albanian Autocephalous Orthodox Church.

Bibliography

1. P. Thomo; *Post byzantine churches in Albania*
2. Meksi; *Post byzantine architecture in Albania*

Condition:

Bad: deterioration of structure and roof covering.

Risk:

The deterioration of roof covering will cause the presence of humidity in the church, threatening the frescoes.

Condition risk:

Slow decay, no solution agreed up on.

Technical assessments and costing:

The technical assessments and costings have not been prepared.

Ownership:

The church is a State property, until the legal recognition of the Orthodox Albanian Church's ownership by the Law on Ownership (not yet prepared and implemented).

Occupation:

Occasionally used for religious celebrations.

Management:

The Institute of Monuments of Culture through the Local Directorate of Monuments of Gjirokastra, is responsible for management, administration of funds and supervision of restoration works.

Summary:

The monastery is one of the most interesting in the Dropulli region. The church was built in 1600 and its characteristic architectural and decoration features, such as elegant stone arches, anthropomorphic and zoomorphic high relief, are of interest for post Byzantine art and architecture studies. The structure and roof of the monument are deteriorated.

The priority level for intervention is *high*.

Sign. and date:

Arch. Gentian Stratoberdha

10.03.2004