

## The Church of Saint Stephan

Country or territory:

ALBANIA

Name of organisation  
compiling the information:

Institute of Monuments of Culture

Contact name:

prof. Gjerak Karaiskaj

email address:

imk@albmail.com



**Church of Saint Stephan, Shkodra**

Name and address of building(s) or site:

THE CHURCH OF SAINT  
STEPHAN, Shkodra

Inventory reference number(s):

Building type(s):

Architectural monument, church

Main date(s):

12<sup>th</sup> century

Current use(s):

open to public

Significance:

The church of Saint Stephan is situated in the fortress of Scutari (Shkodra) and it is preserved up to the roof. It consists of the main nave, which ends in a rectangular apse. Both roman and gothic architectural styles are used. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, when the church began functioning as a mosque, the construction was subjected to alterations. A minaret and a lateral gallery were built.

Categories of significance:

Of outstanding national importance

Because of its location in Scutari, one of the most important cities in northern Albania with rich cultural heritage, such as the castle of Rozafa, this church is of national interest.

Categories of ownership or interest:

Both Muslim and Orthodox communities want to use the church for their own purposes (the monument was used in the past both as a church and mosque). Presently, the monument is a State property and the Institute of Monuments has prepared a draft restoration project and proposed that the monument be used as a museum instead of using it for religious purposes.

Documentation and bibliographic references:

Full documentation is available in the archives of the Institute of Monuments of Culture.

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Condition:

Bad: The perimeter walls, especially on the west side, show signs of structural problems. A rescue intervention had been carried out in 1987-88, but it did not ensure the stability of the structure for the future. There is a need for interventions on the roof, the walls and gothic architectural elements as well as the archaeological remains.

Risk:

The risk is mainly related to lack of funds. There is also a risk of damage or destruction because of seismicity.

Condition risk:

Slow decay. Solution not implemented due to lack of funds.

Technical assessments and costing:

A preliminary draft restoration project has been prepared. The implementation cost is estimated approximately at 200 000 USD.

Ownership:

The church is State property.

Occupation:

Open to public.

Management:

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

Summary:

Because of its location in Scutari, one of the most important cities in northern Albania with rich cultural heritage, such as the castle of Rozafa, this church is of national interest. Interventions are needed to stabilize the wall structure, repair the roof and prevent damage from seismicity. A draft restoration project has been prepared but has not been implemented due to lack of funds.

The level of priority is *high*.

Sign. and date:

prof. Gjerak Karaiskaj  
10.03.2004.