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Correlation of Sacred Architecture and Painting in Western Ukraine

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Abstract. This article highlights some of the results of the scientific work conducted under the direction of the Institute of Architecture and Design of the National University "Lviv Polytechnic" together with the Department of Fine Arts and Design of Ternopil National Pedagogical University, Kremenets Regional Humanities and Pedagogics Academy, Lesia Ukrainka Eastern European National University, Department of Fine Arts. Scientists are exploring sacred arts in Western Ukraine as one of the highest achievements in the work of Ukrainian architects. In particular, the article is about the Ternopil region. The aim of the article is to cover the work of architects of the Ternopil region, correlation in their creativity of architecture and painting; the introduction into the scientific circulation of data on some temples - architectural monuments and modern churches. The territory of Western Ukraine occupies a special place in the cultural and spiritual space of the state. It is located at the crossroads of European roads, has long been noted for its multinational character and wealth of faiths. Temples of different denominations are the decoration of cities and villages and enrich their architectural landscape, and in terms of potential and value of architectural heritage, it is one of the richest regions of Ukraine. One of the spiritual symbols of the city of Ternopil is a temple built in the eighteenth century - a monument of late European Baroque architecture. The building was many times on the verge of destruction; it was burned and destroyed by wars and the communist regime, but with the declaration of independence of Ukraine the shrine was revived. Modern paintings, sculptural groups, stained glass windows and other works of sacred art have transformed the sanctuary into a city beauty, attracting visitors with its grandeur and splendor. Scientists do not often turn to the creative personality of architects. Among the renowned architects of Ukraine, who have designed projects for more than 200 temple complexes, is Ternopil artist Mykhaylo Netrybyak. He combines the work of the architect with the work of the teacher, and the creative nature of the artist is reflected in the paintings. The famous painter of Ternopil with professional architectural education is Mykhaylo Kuziv, who also combines artistic work with pedagogical activity. His works are known far beyond Ukraine and are exhibited in state and public institutions, in private collections of Ukraine and in many countries of the world. Thus, as a result of the research, the data on some contemporary architects and artists of Ternopil region were put into scientific circulation; their role in the process of revival of temple construction of Ukraine is defined; it describes some of the temples – architectural monuments and modern architectural buildings.



1. Introduction

For many centuries, the Church has shaped the spiritual world of the Ukrainian people, and sacred art is the highest achievement of its creative genius. For more than a millennium, temples in Ukraine have shaped the architectural landscape of settlements and have been invaluable monuments of national cultural heritage. During the wars, totalitarian regime and communist atheism, a large number of valuable monuments of sacred art – temple complexes, sculptures and paintings, iconostases, and other objects of interior decoration of temples were destroyed in the territory of Ukraine. The tradition of sacred art, temple building has been interrupted and forgotten for many years. However, historical circumstances have led not to the destruction but to the actualization of the spiritual potential of the region, the preservation of linguistic and cultural traditions, religiosity and national identity. With the declaration of independence of Ukraine the revival of national culture began as well as the restoration of existing and construction of new cult buildings. Today, Ukrainian sacral art is in a state of active development and search for national style.

2. Main material presentation

One of the spiritual symbols of the city of Ternopil is the former Dominican church, today the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary is a monument of late European Baroque architecture [2]. The temple was built in the eighteenth century, for its long history was at the center of all historical and political events of the region. It was burned several times, shot from canons in times of wars, during the atheist communism in the temple which is an important monument of architecture they was placed a warehouse, destroyed valuable murals, altars and other works of sacred art. Due to the conversion of the church to the City Art Gallery, the unique murals were finally destroyed in 1978 [7]. With the onset of Ukrainian independence, with the revival of spirituality in society, the cathedral was restored and began to be used to its intended purpose and is included in the list of monuments of national cultural heritage (security No. 637/1). Many highly professional Ukrainian artists, icon-painters, carvers, sculptors worked on the modern decoration of the temple: George Zhuravskyy, Valeriy Lebed, Petro Shevtsov, Ivan Halyshyn, Bohdan Panchyshyn, Ihor Zelinko, Mykhaylo Mykolaychuk, Borys Rudyy, Andriy Burbela and other well known artists [5].

The cross-cutting theme of Ukrainian icon painting and murals is the search for the intercession of the Virgin Mary. Not surprisingly, a significant place in the paintings of the Ternopil temple is given to the images Virgin Mary, the types of images of which were taken from Byzantium with the introduction of Christianity [8]. We see the image of the Virgin Mary as soon as we enter the temple. On the ceiling above the church choir balcony, Lviv artist Petro Shevtsov depicted the image of the Holy Intercession of the Virgin, which occupies a place of honor in the temple, a symbol of peace and harmony among people. In the hands of the Mother of God there is a veil – an omophorion that extends all over the earth. The Virgin is depicted surrounded by angels (Figure 1).

In the central part of the temple on the ceiling, which has a total area of 800 m², the main scenes from the life of Jesus Christ are depicted – the Transfiguration and Resurrection. The author is the artist from Kyiv George Zhuravskyy.

The most important icon of the sanctuary is the icon of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin. It was designed in neo-Baroque style by artist Valeriy Lebed. It depicts the Virgin Mary surrounded by angels, who bestows little Jesus to the world. The head of the Theotokos and the Child are surrounded by golden haloes – symbols of holiness and eternal happiness. At the feet of the Mother of God is a moon, painted with white lilies which is a symbol of purity and innocence, around the halo above her head there are twelve stars (as described in Scripture). The ray of God's Grace (Figure 2) pops out of her hands [5, 7].



Figure 1. The image of the Holy Virgin. Artist Petro Shevtsov. (photo [9])



Figure 2. Icon of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin (painted by Valeriy Lebed)
(photo - [5])

Under the image of the Virgin the icon "The Last Supper" is depicted. Unlike traditional icons, it does not focus on the betrayal of Judas. A group of Ternopil artists worked on the painting for three years. The faces of the twelve apostles are drawn from the real characters of the Ternopil clergy, artists, actors, parishioners of the cathedral. This technique has caused much criticism and discussion [5, 7].

The central entrance door separating the vestibule from the temple is made in the form of arches, filled with stained glass windows depicting the Virgin Mary and a bas-relief carving. The temple has many works of art made by contemporary Ukrainian artists: paintings with subjects of biblical scenes, stained glass windows, sculptural groups and bas-reliefs, which create powerful positive energy, spiritual comfort and peace, attracting believers and guests to the central temple of the city [5].

The process of searching for stylistic, identification, denominational and national attributes in the temple architecture was joined by modern architects of Western Ukraine [3]. Among them, a prominent place takes the famous Ternopil architect, artist, teacher Mykhaylo Netrybyak (born in 1947 in the Ternopil region) [11]. Since 1998 he is an Honored Architect of Ukraine, in 2005 he became a laureate of the State Prize of Ukraine in the field of architecture. As he is the most distinguished artist in the design of sacral structures, his works have become a significant phenomenon in the history of national culture. Among the works of the architect there are more than 200 completed projects of temple complexes [4, 6].

The lack of practice in the design and construction of church buildings in our society led to the loss of these professional skills. At that time there was no innovative building base. Architects and builders had to partially renew the knowledge and ability to build church-specific elements and structures such as arches, vaults, dome finishes, and more. The construction of the first churches was marked by a tendency to reproduce the types of temple structures that historically formed at the end of the XIX-th – beginning of the XX-th centuries, using or directly quoting the stylistic characteristics of their architectural decisions. Even religious communities did not accept the current tendencies in the architecture of sacred structures, because the construction of parish churches was most widespread [4]. Among the small temples of the architect can be called the church of St. Nicholas in the village Tsebriv of Zboriv district of Ternopil region (Figure 3). The church in plan has the form of an elongated cross, consisting of a monotonous volume and an elongated altar ending in an apse. The branches of the cross have vaulted ceilings and are connected to the central space by wide and high arches, which are at the same time elastic to the dome. Nave is covered by a dome with a flashlight on an octagonal drum. There are also many five-dome temples that follow the Byzantine architecture in the Netrybyak creative collection (Figure 3).

Since 1995, experiments with the modernist form of sacred art have become more common among architects. Modern times require new architectural ideas and design solutions. The widespread use of reinforced concrete and metal makes it possible to facilitate the main bearing structures and forms, expand the interior space of the temple, create new molding components of the church structure [4]. The architect M.Netrybyak has increasingly paid attention to the modern interpretation of the sacred completion of the sacral building, but adheres to the canonical division of the temple space.

In 1995, a competition was announced for the project of the Mary Spiritual Center in Zarvanytsya village, Terebovlya district, Ternopil region. The winner of the competition was Mykhaylo Netrybyak. In this project the genius of the architect was embodied: the modernized domes, the structural features of the cathedral, his architectonics testify to the idea of the continuity of the traditions of the Ukrainian temple building in combination with the modern forms (Fig. 4). The architectural dominance of the ensemble is the Cathedral of the Mother of God of Zarvanytsya, designed for 1500 parishioners [1]. The cathedral is a one-nave, no-post, cross-domed structure, topped with five domes. The temple has three levels: two spaces – upper and lower have access to the terraces. The height difference between the upper and lower levels is 9 meters. In the central part of the building, the system of semicircular vaults is formed by step-level structures, which gives the whole space of altitude opening and carries an octagonal heap, ending with a central dome. There are four small domes above the rooms adjacent to the inner corners of the cross. Three arms of the spatial cross are completed with apices, the entrance portion is somewhat elongated and has a planar termination. The whole structure of the cathedral impresses with its monumentality, harmony, light saturation of the interior space [4].

The complex built under Netrybyak's project also includes other temples, a tiered bell tower, a gate church, a monastery, the Cross and more. In the central square, before the entrance to the cross, is a sculptural composition with the crucifixion of Jesus Christ (sculptor R.K. Vilhushynskyy, architect M.M. Netrybyak).

Since 2008, Mykhaylo Netrybyak has been an associate professor at the Department of Fine Arts, Design and Methods of Teaching of V. Hnatiuk Ternopil National Pedagogical University. He has been sharing his rich experience with students studying design. Students love and respect the artist for his professionalism and kind heart. However, the architect has a talent not only for design but also for painting.

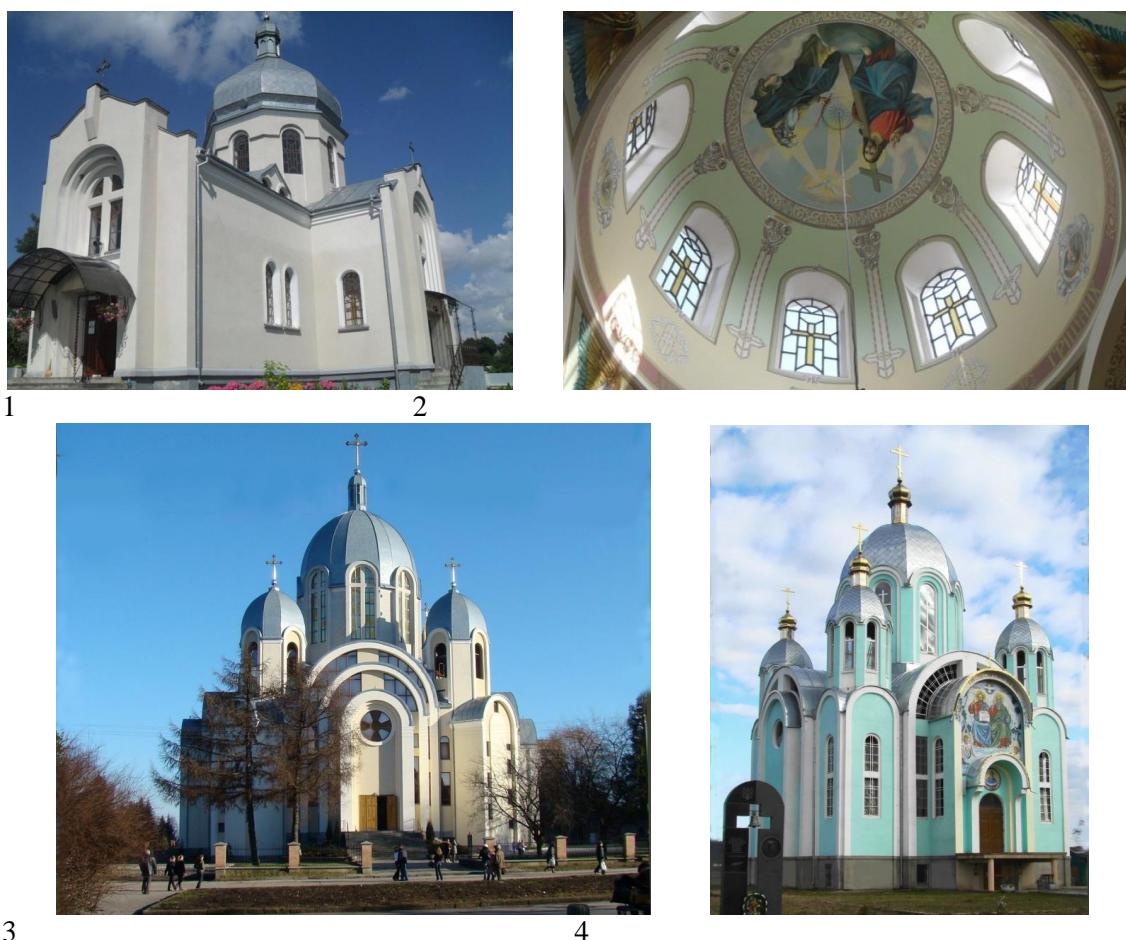


Figure 3. Temples built by architect M. Netrybyak:

1, 2 – St. Nicholas Church in the village of Tsebriv; General view and dome of the temple; 3. – Church of the Mother of God of Perpetual Help, Ternopil; 4 – St. Trinity Cathedral in Kopychynytsi, Ternopil region (photos from architect's archive)

On February 15, 2017, the fourth personal exhibition of Mykhaylo Netrybyak entitled "Souls of My Watercolor" was opened at the Ukrainian House "Peremoha", where the author presented more than 60 works. On the works painted with watercolor paints, Mykhaylo Netrybyak recreated the magical world of nature of Ukraine. The Carpathians, the exciting Black Sea and his native Podillya can be seen at the exhibition. Of course, as a true architect, he often displays in his works architectural monuments, many works with images of temples that have been built on his projects. The architect dreams of painting all his built temples in watercolors. Although the author does not consider himself a professional artist, his works are emotional, inspired, and full of warmth (Fig. 5).

Famous painter Mykhaylo Kuziv stands out among Ukrainian artists who have a professional education in architecture. His self-identification as an artist was born at a genetic level, he was born in the village of Bische, Ternopil region, a region rich in historical and artistic heritage and famous by many well-known classics O. Kulchytska, R. Kupchynskyy, L. Lepkyy and other famous names. The future artist studied at the architectural faculty of Lviv Polytechnic Institute, in a city rich in architectural masterpieces. The architect's expertise helped the artist to develop a heightened sense of spatial vision and gave him confidence in the virtuoso operation of the line for the construction of paintings [9, 12].

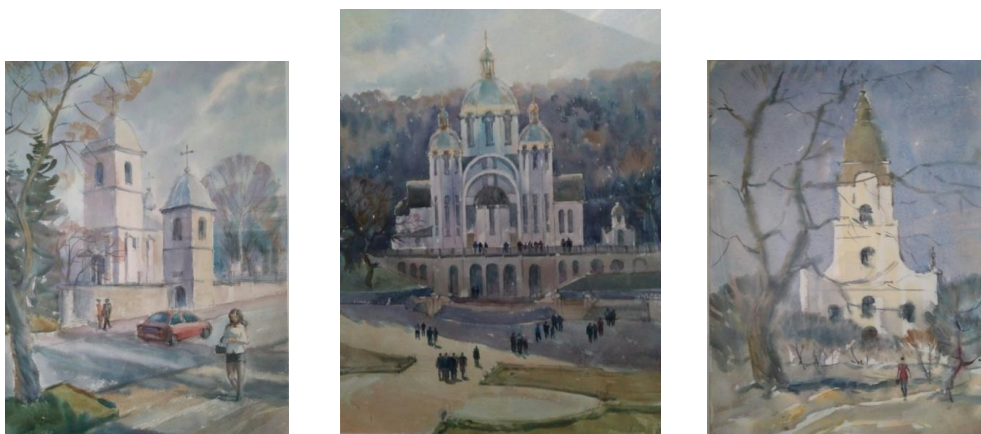


Figure 4. Watercolors of architect Mykhaylo Netrybyak (own photos)

Mykhaylo Kuziv created his first works in his student years. In 1991 he exhibited his first solo exhibition at the Berezhany Museum of Local Lore, which had more than 50 works. The vast majority of the artist's early work was done in a realistic manner, but there were canvases in which the creative pursuits of "his language" were close to surrealism, cubism, and symbolism. At adulthood, the master began to take an active approach to modernism in his manner. Recognition in the artistic circles and professionalism of the works created the basis for Kuziv's joining the Ternopil Regional Organization of the National Union of Artists of Ukraine (1995) [12, 13].

Since 2008, the artist has combined artistic work with pedagogical activity. Mykhaylo Kuziv is a lecturer at the Department of Fine Arts, Design and Methods of Teaching at the Faculty of Arts of the Ternopil National Pedagogical University named after Volodymyr Hnatiuk. Teaching youth fills the artist's creative achievements with new energy. In turn, students eagerly perceive the basics of artistic embodiment, which he eagerly shares.

Indisputable truth is that the works of the artist speak best about the creativity of the artist, and recognition is formed by the love of connoisseurs and the selection of works by art critics for prestigious exhibitions and for reputable publications. Publications with the works of the artist and his works have appeared in more than 40 editions of Ukraine and Europe. Participation in the exhibition within the framework of the art project "The Romance of Russia" in London [12], in At The Plattform Gallery, The Saab Showroom, Piccadilly street took the artist to a new international level. His works are known far beyond Ukraine, exhibited in state and public institutions, in private collections of Ukraine and in many countries of the world (Figure 6). He is a regular participant of more than 70 artistic opening days – district, regional, all-Ukrainian and international, awarded with prizes, diplomas, and a number of awards. Decree of the President of Ukraine conferred on the artist the honorary title "Honored Artist of Ukraine" on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of independence and for his personal achievements to our country (2016).

3. Conclusions

Thus, the study of sacred art in the territory of Western Ukraine suggests that by the potential and value of architectural heritage is one of the richest regions of the country. Temples of different denominations are the decoration of cities and villages and enrich their architectural landscape.

One of the spiritual symbols of the city of Ternopil is a temple built in the eighteenth century – a monument of late European Baroque architecture. The building that was on the verge of destruction was reborn and a combination of different works of sacred art turned the shrine into a city decoration.

It has been proved that in the cultural and artistic life of Ukraine the name of the great Ternopil architect Mykhaylo Netrybyak is prominent, his sacred buildings are a bright dominant in the architectural space of cities and villages.

Data on the talented Ternopil architect and painter Mykhaylo Kuziv, known far beyond Ukraine, a participant of more than 70 art regional, regional, all-Ukrainian and international open-air shows, was put into scientific circulation.



Figure 5. Painting works of architect Kuziv Mykhaylo (own photos)

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