

PRESERVATION OF NATIONAL TRADITIONS OF UKRAINIAN ARCHITECTURE DURING THE RECONSTRUCTION OF DESTROYED CITIES AND VILLAGES IN THE POST-WAR PERIOD

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Abstract

The article explores the preservation of national traditions in Ukrainian architecture amid the challenges of post-war reconstruction. It delves into the historical evolution of architectural styles emphasizing the distinct national attributes that have shaped Ukraine's cultural identity. The study employs a comprehensive methodology involving qualitative and quantitative research methods examining case studies and architectural analyses to uncover strategies for integrating traditional elements. The article underscores the interplay between architectural revival, cultural continuity and collective identity tracing the trajectory from the emergence of Ukrainian architectural modern to the complexities of the Soviet era. Through the lens of contemporary architects like Serhii Makhno who blend modern design with cultural heritage the article demonstrates how the harmonious fusion of tradition and innovation is reshaping Ukraine's architectural landscape. Ultimately, the preservation of national traditions during post-war reconstruction emerges as a crucial canvas for honoring Ukraine's rich architectural heritage.

Keywords: Ukraine; National traditions in architecture; Mazanka; Ukrainian architectural modern; Reconstruction; Post-war period

Introduction

Conflict frequently involves a combination of different goals while the act of occupying territory embodies a singular central purpose of the subjugation of the populace identity under occupation [1]. In the aftermath of the devastating events of war the reconstruction of destroyed cities and villages takes on a significant role not only in rebuilding physical structures but also in safeguarding the cultural identity and heritage of a nation. This article delves into a crucial aspect of this recovery process – the preservation of national traditions in Ukrainian architecture. As the post-war period presents an opportunity for renewal and rebuilding it also presents a challenge to maintain the authenticity and historical essence of architectural practices that have defined the nation's cultural landscape. This exploration investigates the strategies, challenges and successes of integrating traditional Ukrainian architectural elements into the reconstruction efforts, ultimately aiming to strike a balance between modern necessities and the preservation of the country's rich architectural heritage. By examining the endeavors to uphold these traditions amidst the pressing demands of reconstruction we gain insights into the intricate interplay between architectural revival, cultural continuity and the forging of a collective identity.

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It is worth mentioning scientists who contributed to the study of national traditions in architecture. H. Horyna, I. Krypiakievych, S. Pavliuk and R. Kyrchiv studied Ukrainian culture, theoretical developments on the subject of national characteristics in architecture are described in works by A. Marder, S. Khan-Mahomedov, V. Khait and Yu. Yaralov. Moreover, there are studies delving into the architecture of Ukraine's past and Ukrainian national features conducted by scholars such as M. Kolomiets, V. Chepelyk, O. Chepelyk, V. Yasiievych and others.

Considerable efforts were made in study of regional Ukrainian features by A. Dmytrenko. Studies of Ukrainian vernacular architecture was carried out by P. Yurchenko and V. Samoilovych. A significant contribution to the study of the category of identity in Ukrainian theory architecture was made by B. Cherkes.

There are articles that are worth mentioning that have become the significant theoretical basis and inspiration for conducting this research. The studies of Poltava region feature the emergence and development of the Ukrainian architectural style as an exemplary case of preservation of national traditions [2-4]. The study [5] of preservation methods of museum heritage objects as well as the study [6] of the deterioration and degradation problems of cultural heritage emphasized the importance of preserving national traditions in architecture. There are also publications aimed to study the problems of revitalization of industrial districts in large Ukrainian historical cities [7], national traditions of Ukrainian modernism [8], influence of the Ukrainian landscape on the formation of Ukrainian architecture [9].

Methods

The methodology employed in this study aims to comprehensively analyze national traditions of Ukrainian architecture from the beginning of the 20th century to the present days. To achieve this task a multi-faceted approach encompassing both qualitative and quantitative research methods has been adopted. A thorough literature review was conducted to establish a foundational understanding of Ukrainian architecture's historical evolution and its distinctive features. Historical documents, architectural treatises, scholarly articles and archival materials were meticulously examined to trace the transition of architectural styles and the preservation of national traditions during different historical stages.

Multiple case studies were analyzed to extract valuable insights into the methods of preservation of national architectural traditions. Detailed examinations of architectural plans, building designs and urban layouts were carried out to identify the specific features that could be taken into consideration during post-war reconstruction. Case studies were selected from different regions to capture regional variations in preservation approaches.

Architectural analysis involved a close examination of preserved buildings, both residential and public, to identify distinctive architectural features, materials, ornamentation and design elements that reflect Ukrainian cultural identity. The analysis aimed to recognize the traditional motifs and techniques that can be considered during reconstruction process.

A comprehensive collection of visual documentation including photographs, sketches, and architectural drawings was assembled to support the analysis and to visually showcase the incorporation of national elements in Ukrainian architecture.

The data collected through various research methods were interpreted and synthesized to develop a holistic narrative of how national architectural traditions were preserved, adapted or transformed during the development of Ukrainian statehood. The findings were examined in the context of broader cultural, social and political influences.

By employing this comprehensive methodology this study aims to shed light on the strategies and approaches that can be considered to preserve the essence of Ukrainian architecture during the reconstruction of destroyed cities and villages in the post-war period.

Results and discussion

In order to start discussing what strategies to adopt in the preservation of Ukrainian traditions in architecture it is necessary to first distinguish and then analyze these traditions. Hence, it is necessary to analyze the historical evolution of establishing Ukrainian national traditions in architecture.

Within the realm of architecture, a parallel journey unfolded alongside the revival of historical architectural styles from the late 18th to the early 20th centuries. This journey involved the pursuit of distinctive “national” architectural styles. Among these styles we can mention the French Neo-Renaissance, Tudor Gothic, German Renaissance, Ukrainian Baroque and eventually the incorporation of folk architectural traditions. To illustrate the latter one can, point to instance such as the "Ukrainian architectural modern" or the "Ukrainian architectural style" [10].

Modern

As indicated by architectural theorists "modern" in Ukraine is an artistic movement that revolutionized the application of global architectural styles by incorporating distinctive national attributes. Analysis of the modernism history in Ukraine, which persisted for forty years (1903-1941) according to the viewpoint of the eminent architect-theorist V. Chepelyk, revealed an overarching trend. This trend can be defined as a quest for originality based on the development of local traditions and their reinterpretation in line with the demands of that era. It involves the creation of new forms that amalgamate national and international features [11].

It is worth noting that at that time architecture had its own regional features within the borders of one country. For example, “wooden Art Nouveau” was distinctive in Chernihiv whereas it was unusual for the Dnipro region and Left-bank Ukraine [12]. Moreover, the creative legacy of artists from the western part of Ukraine was uniquely individual and expressive leading to the emergence of an autonomous trend known as Lviv Secession [13]. However, specific characteristics of Secession of the central part of Ukraine also have intrinsic features. For instance, In Kyiv Secession buildings, the order system underwent modernization through hypertrophy, altered proportions, and capital decoration or through enriching the order with elements of modernized Eclecticism. In Kharkiv Secession buildings, the order system was often evident in subtly pronounced pilasters (late classicized Modern style) or infused with Secession elements such as water lilies or human figures [14].

Ukrainian cities in the early 20th century followed their unique trajectory of development. Due to the delayed onset of the construction boom compared to other parts of the USSR the typical urban landscape in Ukrainian cities distinguished itself not just from Western Europe or the USA but also from the major cities of the Russian Empire. For instance, residential structures built in the latter half of the 19th century in Kharkiv retained a modest architectural scale and intricate building details imparting a provincial ambiance. Unlike European cities with continuous street facades Ukrainian cities preserved wide open spaces, squares, passageways and more. Often, buildings were positioned at a distance from the main roads. The space between a building and the street was enclosed, adorned with trees and shrubs. Gaps between houses often persisted resulting in irregular patches like empty plots, small gardens and ravines. The urban landscape often retained rural qualities [15]. In the late 19th century, there was a gradual shift from urban mansions, which traditionally dominated housing in the central areas of Ukrainian cities, to a new residential model—the tenement house. By the early 20th century, mid-rise tenement houses became the predominant housing type in the central regions of major Ukrainian cities like Kyiv, Lviv, Kharkiv and Odesa. In smaller cities, the central housing landscape comprised a mix of mansions and high-density development featuring 2–4-story tenement houses [16].

The demand for fresh traditions and ideas within the Ukrainian capital spurred the growth of a national romantic architectural style and a quest for distinctive national identity. This architectural style's defining traits were reflected in the treatment of roofs – frequently exhibiting

high-pitched, four-sloped designs sometimes with gables reminiscent of traditional house rooftops. Furthermore, features like mansards and pseudo-mansards, tower-like projections on facades culminating in pear-shaped domes or cupolas and the use of trapezoidal pediments all consistently highlighted the building's alignment with Ukrainian architectural heritage. Notably, structures such as towers, entrances, balconies, bay windows, and loggias were characterized by rectangular, rounded or polygonal shapes, significantly amplifying the architectural impact [11]. In this period the emergence of a new style that absorbed Ukrainian traditions in architecture began - Ukrainian architectural modern.

Ukrainian architectural style

The initial and particularly notable manifestation of Ukrainian architectural modern was exhibited through the construction of the Poltava Provincial Zemstvo building (now Poltava Local Lore Museum) (Fig. 1). Erected from 1903 to 1908, it was envisioned by V. Krychevskyi and internally adorned by S. Vasylykivskyi and M. Samokysh [17].



Fig. 1. Modern appearance of Poltava Provincial Zemstvo building (now Poltava Local Lore Museum)
(Photo by Ivan Bykov)

The nature of Ukrainian architectural modern differs significantly from the structures of Scandinavian "Northern" Art Nouveau. The fundamental distinction lies in the fact that Ukrainian modern embraced and modernized the forms of wooden architecture, whereas Scandinavian "Northern" Art Nouveau focused on forms in stone. In the context of "Northern" Art Nouveau, these forms derive from trapezoidal shapes found in mansard windows. Conversely, in Ukrainian architectural style the forms find their origins in the trapezoidal gables of historic wooden churches intricately embellished with woodcarvings [18].

Ukrainian modern is based on the folk traditions of vernacular Ukrainian house and church construction, the achievements of Ukrainian professional architecture and baroque style [19]. Among main morphological features of Ukrainian style are hexagonal (also trapezoidal) door and window openings (Fig. 2), openings with semi-elliptical lintels, hipped roofs and roofs with gables, covered galleries and twisted columns of unusual form. Two characteristics from this list – roofs with gables and twisted columns – bring this style closer to the "Cossack" Baroque, a style prevalent in the 18th century on Ukrainian lands [20].

Engaging in the project of Poltava Provincial Zemstvo building V. Krychevskyi recognized the insufficiency of available academic and artistic resources. Consequently, he embarked on expeditions throughout the Poltava region during which he produced numerous sketches, recorded observations, collected items for his personal collection and formulated designs for specific exterior components. In his artistic pursuit he expanded the façade by

introducing two symmetrical projections flanking the central entrance incorporating a portal. Employing a contrast between the warm brick walls and the vibrant high green mottled roof in his color scheme he adeptly highlighted the building's folk origins in its design. Moreover, he pioneered the application of multicolored majolica to embellish various designer features of the façade. To enhance the interior space the architect integrated ceramic elements and woodcarvings. He meticulously attended to the design of each window and door, forged metalwork, stained glass, staircase railings, and ceiling beams (Fig. 2) [21].



Fig. 2. Interiors of Poltava Provincial Zemstvo building

Furthermore, the interior spaces of the building evoke a sense of continuity with Ukraine's architectural history. Ceramic elements on building facades played a crucial role in shaping national architectural styles during the transition from the 19th to the 20th century. They emerged as key focal points, enhancing both the exteriors and interiors of structures designed for diverse functional uses [22]. Ornate frescoes, intricate ceiling decorations, and hand-painted murals reflected themes and motifs drawn from Ukrainian folklore and history. These artistic expressions transformed the building into a living repository of the nation's cultural narrative.

20-30s of the 20th century

The most vibrant demonstration of shaping national identity through architectural tools is evident in the progression of architectural styles of central public spaces. Notably, this phenomenon is pronounced during the decades spanning the 1920s to 1930s as well as the post-World War II era from 1945 through the late 1980s. Throughout these periods governmental and party edifices in former socialist nations, specifically including Ukraine, emerged as pivotal elements in this journey of identity formation [10]. Furthermore, the aesthetic representation of specific public structures constructed during the 1920s and 1930s within Ukrainian territories under the jurisdiction of external powers reflected the imperial essence of colonial ideologies originating from the governing metropolises [23].

During the 1930s there was a growing frequency in the emergence of studies focused on the decorative embellishment of architecture with folk motifs [24]. In the 1930s the utilization of baroque elements on Khreshchatyk's facades came to represent the nation's identity aiding its authentic post-war reconciliation. The incorporation of traditional Ukrainian ornamentation and the subtle yet identifiable symbols of Ukrainian Baroque (Fig. 3) played a role in helping the nation, initially forcefully divided and then coerced into unity, to reconnect with its inherent heritage through the prominent architectural features of the capital's central avenue. This duality served the interests of both the Ukrainian people and paradoxically the Moscow authorities. Consequently, in this initial phase while attempts to establish an identity weren't exactly endorsed, they were also not forbidden [25]. A notable instance is the evolution of architectural trends in the Soviet Union. During the 1920s, Soviet architecture aligned with the international modernism movement. However, in the early 1930s, there was a shift in stylistic direction influenced by official directives toward Soviet neoclassicism, often colloquially referred to as

"Stalin's Empire style." Following World War II, this style further developed into a neo-Empire style [27].



Complex of buildings No. 13/2 (with a steeple) and 17

Ceramic relief tiles (No. 17)

Attic windows of house No. 17 with baroque gables

Fig. 3. Façade elements of buildings with Ukrainian Baroque features on Khreshchatyk Street.

Project authors: O. Vlasov, A. Dobrovolskyi, B. Pryimak, O. Malynovskyi [34]

The vibrant and diverse mosaic compositions that embellish the arched ceilings and subsequently the interiors of the "Khreshchatyk" metro station are rooted in the legacy of "Ukrainian monumentalism." This artistic tradition closely linked to Mykhailo Boychuk's school was a distinctive and extraordinary facet of global culture until it was abruptly halted in the late 1930s. These mosaics serve as an expression of the nation's revitalization and a desire to revive an artistic heritage where monumental painting and adorning facades played a paramount role [25].

In the 20s and 30s Ukrainian architecture saw the emergence of modernist efforts to redefine residential settlement designs. Concurrently with the revival of classic architectural styles a robust movement around understanding regional identity gained widespread traction within Ukrainian society involving numerous research organizations. This movement was triggered by urban planning policies targeting worker settlements and the spread of housing into rural regions with the goal of addressing modernist concerns related to efficient housing provision. During this era research pursuits shifted towards topics such as formulating theories for populating new cities, analyzing the demands of contemporary lifestyles and discovering ways to fulfill these requisites [24].

It's important to highlight that there are diverse regional architectural characteristics that exist within a single nation. For example, the distinctive compositional strategies seen in the public architecture of Western Ukraine include the clear definition of building silhouettes, the uniqueness of their artistic interpretations and their discernibility amid the surrounding mass construction. The formation of residential buildings (Fig. 4) highlights their seamless integration into historical contexts showcasing the wall's structural framework, alignment of facades along urban guidelines, accentuation of floors through horizontal wall projections, incorporation of rounded elements in corner buildings, angular balconies and cornices. Furthermore, the utilization of personalized approaches is evident in the design of entryways, balcony enclosures, and staircases [23].



1932, St. Belvederska, 2

1933, St. Halytska, 1

1936, St. Hetman Mazepa, 2

1935, St. Nezalezhnosti, 43

Fig. 4. Examples of residential buildings of Ivano-Frankivsk (Western Ukraine) [33]

Ukrainian rural house (the “hata”) and Ukrainian villages

Prominent scholars from the beginning of the 20th century, including V. Sichynskyi, D. Scherbakivskyi, M. Zubrytskyi, M. Rusov, M. Biliashivskyi, D. Diachenko, Yu. Pavlovych, M. Sumtsov, V. Babenko, S. Taranushenko and others delved into the Ukrainian traditional house as a product of the people's architectural creativity in their scientific works [24]. The distinctiveness of the Ukrainian villages was accentuated by the layout of individual homesteads. These homesteads featured white houses with thatched roofs, vibrant hollyhocks beneath windows, clay pots adorning walls and the presence of cherry, pear and apple trees. The harmonious arrangement of doors and windows, the proportional balance between wall height and width as well as the external embellishments collectively contributed to an aesthetically appealing façade for the houses. Additionally, the overall comfort of the homestead was augmented by the strategic positioning of key structures such as a well, storage room, barn and other functional buildings. The woven wicker fence served to unify the entire courtyard into a cohesive ensemble. The quintessential form of traditional housing throughout Ukraine is the “hata” which, by international classification, falls into the category of the “Breithausbau” or “wide rural dwelling house” [26]. The establishment of folk architecture as well as the nature and arrangement of residential structures were significantly influenced by the surrounding natural conditions. Distinct folk housing patterns emerged in each landscape. Although there are shared elements in homes across Ukraine, each region is characterized by its own unique features that best suited the geographical and climatic factors such as topography, building materials, precipitation and other environmental factors. Typologically housing designs can be grouped into several focal points: Podillia, Polissia, Southern Ukraine, Central Dnipro Region, and Sloboda Ukraine. Similarly, the Carpathian region is subdivided into Boikivshchyna, Lemkivshchyna, Hutsulshchyna and Transcarpathia [17].

From the onset of Russia's extensive invasion numerous rural houses across Ukraine have suffered varying degrees of damage with many being extensively ruined. Due to such circumstances many different private and public organizations started their own projects for the reconstruction of villages and cities. One of the key objectives of RE:Ukraine Villages is to safeguard the distinctive and natural essence of Ukrainian villages preventing it from being overshadowed by standardized urban development [28].

Leveraging digital architectural strategies, the balbek bureau team has crafted a design framework to rejuvenate the affected regions. The team's discoveries and observations have been consolidated into an easily accessible online platform (

Fig. 5), offering homeowners a valuable resource to promptly make informed choices and commence the restoration process [28].



Fig. 5. Photos of different variations of the traditional decoration of window frames of Ukrainian rural houses made during expedition of the balbek bureau team [28]

During the expeditions around Ukrainian villages the group of architects noticed many patterns and was impressed by the variety of décor. Sometimes the difference between villages located not far away was very bright (6) [28].

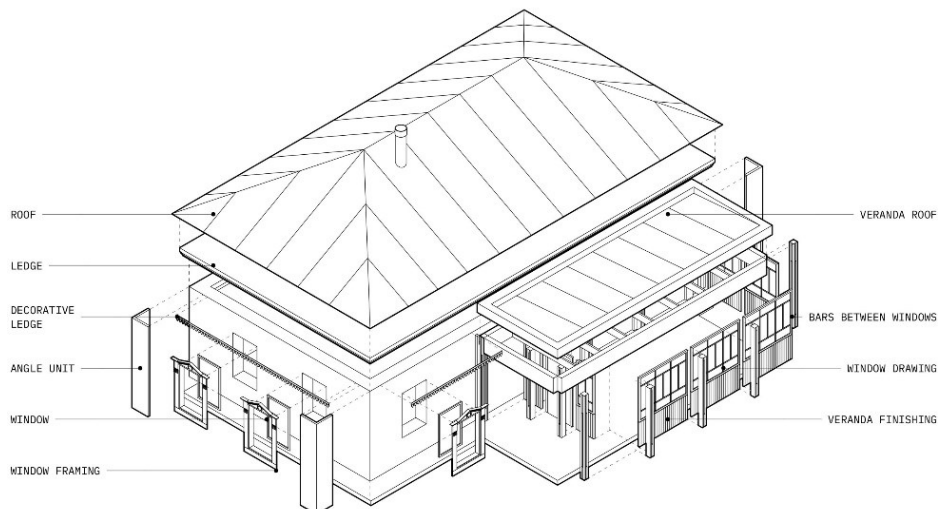


Fig. 6. Characteristic design features of a Ukrainian village house which can be easily assembled using online platform RE:Ukraine Villages [28]

Period of mass housing

During the times of the Soviet Union, starting in 1955, a number of official documents were issued that confirmed the transition to the industrial method of construction and eliminated the so-called “excesses in architecture” that were inherent in previous years and centuries including Stalinist architecture. The adopted vector of industrialization in construction was argued by the fact that façade decoration, expensive finishing materials, complex architectural forms were economically unjustified. On the other hand, it was necessary to overcome the housing crisis and provide people with housing. The solution was the construction of housing from standardized elements produced at the factory.

Factory production was economically profitable but it narrowed the field of architectural methods for architects in creating architectural identity. The architecture was completely utilitarian and the architectural expressiveness was dictated by the technical specifics of panel construction. Since in the case of a panel house the external panels were already delivered as ready-made elements with the necessary heat-conducting characteristics and had a smooth uniform surface there were no need in further insulation and plastering from a financial point of view. In particular, that is why on the facades we can clearly see each panel and the places where they are connected to each other. Thus, it can be said that it was the modularity of the structural elements (panels) that set such a recognizable “panel” metric of the facade of a typical “khrushchovka”. In spite of the numerous series and designs the variety of facades was composed of two types of embellishment: tiles and plaster [29]. Unfortunately, a clear and understandable idea of utilitarianism and a critical approach to economy in the decision of facades did not play into the hands of the aesthetic qualities of serial panel construction in architecture. The approved method of panel construction, unification and reduction of the specifications of structural and architectural elements to a minimum significantly limited the ability of architects in creative methods. Therefore, due to the lack of architectural methods to achieve architectural expressiveness, individuality and uniqueness in architecture, artistic techniques come: mosaic and supergraphics.

In addition to the limitations dictated by the factory method of production there were also specific limitations dictated by Communist ideology where Ukrainian national characteristics

were belittled and ridiculed. In such circumstances it was very difficult for Ukrainian architects to introduce national motifs into Soviet architecture. But despite this one can see the attempts of architects to integrate some Ukrainian motifs in the design of the 80s series developed on the territory of Ukraine. Among such series one can single out the series of “KT”, “KTU” and “APPS”. A distinctive element in these series is the design of the facades of stairwells. There are special panels of stairwells made or decorated in the form of geometric ornaments. By copying the module of special panels an interesting pattern is formed on the facade in the form of a vertical decorated strip. We can also notice floral elements in the patterns. What is characteristic of Ukrainian traditions is the depiction of floral elements in fine art, monumental art. In general, a similar structure of the facade, thanks to its modularity, is very similar to the geometric ornaments of the Ukrainian “vyshyvka” (name for the Ukrainian embroidery used to decorate clothes and towels) (Fig. 7). In general, the theme of tiles and ornaments or even the overall color scheme of facades is highly prevalent in the architecture of the 80’s [29].



Fig. 7. Facades of mass housing series on the left [32] and a fragment of traditional Ukrainian embroidery

Current situation

In Ukrainian culture since the 1980s the dominance of postmodernism and its inclination to challenge rationalism and established classical values is evident. A distinctive trait that has become emblematic of contemporary architecture is the abandonment of localized designs in favor of a more cosmopolitan and less region-specific approach. This shift has had adverse effects on Ukraine's architectural heritage. This period has seen the rapid evolution of contemporary styles like high-tech, low-tech, and cyber-tech. Structures built in these styles reflect traits of ambiguity, incompleteness, and fragmentation, often embracing deconstruction and collage. Interestingly, there is also a noticeable departure from traditional Ukrainian architectural canons within these structures. As a consequence of the rapid development of these aforementioned architectural styles, a significant imperative has emerged – the need to define a unique identity and position within the broader scope of global cultural development [30].

Among present-day architects who have initiated the revival of specific Ukrainian traits in their architectural designs, a complex task has arisen: determining their perspective on the past and its heritage. This challenge arises from the fact that tradition encompasses the collective culmination of a nation's architectural, artistic and creative evolution – a compilation of achievements, skills and the underlying ideological essence that shapes the entirety of the national architectural history [30].

Serhii Makhno, a prominent Ukrainian architect and designer, is known for his distinctive approach that intertwines modern design with Ukrainian cultural heritage and traditions. His work reflects a fusion of contemporary aesthetics and a deep-rooted connection to Ukrainian architectural legacy. Makhno's architectural projects often incorporate elements inspired by rural Ukrainian architecture, traditional crafts and folklore. This approach is particularly evident in his

use of materials and textures that evoke a sense of authenticity and nostalgia. Through his designs Makhno aims to celebrate the unique character of Ukrainian culture while infusing it with a contemporary sensibility. Makhno's projects often feature intricate woodwork, patterns and traditional motifs all of which pay homage to Ukrainian craftsmanship. His architectural designs exhibit a harmony between nature and built environment echoing the agrarian traditions of Ukraine. The use of natural materials and earthy tones creates a sense of connection to the land and a sense of timelessness.

One of the characteristic methods used by the author in his practice is the plastering of the walls with clay in interior or exterior which is then covered with lime whitewash. A similar design tool refers to the Ukrainian traditional house made of clay known as “mazanka” (Fig. 8).



Ukrainian mazanka. Museum of Folk Architecture and Ethnography in Pyrohiv (Photo by Maksym Kozlenko)



Interior of Ukrainian house of Left-bank regions of Ukraine in the South . Fragment of the illustration of a postcard made by the candidate of historical sciences, architect Tamara Kosmina and artist Zinaida Vasina. The set was called "Ukrainian People's Housing" and was released in 1986).

Fig. 8. Exterior (left) and interior (right) of the Ukrainian mazanka

The use of ceramics in the interior decoration, as well as the modern reinterpretation of the Ukrainian stove and wooden furniture imitates the interiors of the Ukrainian house in a modern manner. An important attribute of a Ukrainian house is a reed roof, which found its modern design expression in the Shkrub house project (

Fig. 9).



Fig. 9. Shkrub house created by MAKHNO studio (photo by Serhii Kadulin)

During the post war period there is an issue of reconstruction or total new construction of buildings. Accordingly, the question of approach arises to the design and preservation methods of architectural traditions of the destroyed cities and villages. As an example, we can take into account the approach applied by Ukrainian architectural studio Drozdov & Partners in the design of residential building with office and retail space in Kharkiv city, Ukraine (Fig. 10).

The specific area of the city boasts a unique mid-rise urban scale that was established during the early 20th century. In terms of the masterplan the building itself slightly exceeded the existing scale. This inspired the concept of a two-part composition encompassing the main volume and a “superstructure/extension” that was set back from the red line. The primary brick volume was followed by a “wooden” layer using reclaimed old bricks sourced from a demolished building on a nearby street as the foundational material for the project. Interestingly, these old bricks precisely sufficed for constructing the main brick volume of the new building thereby transmitting historical significance and cultural essence to the new structure [31].



Exterior of the building

Fragment of the facade.

Brick and window pattern reflect historical and cultural traditions of the context where the building is constructed

Fig. 10. Exterior of the building designed by Drozdov & Partners (photos retrieved from [31])

Brick, “wooden” panels and enameled glass evoke the architectural lexicon of the Kharkiv region reminiscent of wooden verandahs, extensions and wrought detailing. Through the thoughtful composition and intricate details, the building harmonizes seamlessly with its surroundings. Additionally, architects successfully established an engaging dialogue with a much older neighboring building sharing similarities with the new structure while retaining its distinctive traits. The project exemplifies the concept of “cultural retrofitting” potentially serving as a foundational principle for zoning regulations that dictate the proportional use of old and new materials in construction. This approach not only respects the historical context but also paves the way for a harmonious blend of tradition and innovation [31].

Conclusions

Ukraine has its own national traditions in architecture that developed over centuries. Throughout Ukrainian history the formation of national traditions in architecture took place in difficult circumstances caused by the constant change of the ruling power which imposed its own ideology and accordingly suppressed the development of Ukrainian culture. Currently the issue of preserving the historical and cultural identity of Ukrainian cities and villages is particularly urgent because of the destruction caused by the war in Ukraine.

On the basis of the presented material the main national traditions in Ukrainian architecture can be determined. For many centuries architects and artists turned to the origins of Ukrainian culture which is characterized by ornamentation, the use of natural materials, craftsmanship. National motifs were reflected in the design of facades and interiors. Architects often referred to the proportions of the Ukrainian vernacular architecture especially Ukrainian “hata” and “mazanka” adopting characteristic elements in their projects. Ornamentation was expressed in the facade or interior decoration as well as in relief often with floristic motifs that reflected the multifaceted nature of Ukrainian lands. A special relationship is observed in the placement of buildings in the design of Ukrainian cities and villages where special attention is paid to organic coexistence of buildings with nature which is a reminiscent with the arrangement

of Ukrainian houses in traditional Ukrainian villages. In addition to national original traditions in architecture there are regional features in architecture that were dictated by the specifics of the location especially by natural and political aspects.

The Soviet period of mass construction almost eliminated any architectural means for architects to express national traditions. So, attempts to express at least some elements of Ukrainian identity took place through supergraphics or mosaics but all under the dominant Soviet motif. Mass typical Soviet housing deprived the residential areas of Ukrainian cities of their identity. Only in the 80s series geometric ornamentation on the facades began to appear that added a bit of variety to “faceless” urban landscapes but did not significantly affect the situation due to their typicality.

Based on the information of the conducted research several suggestions can be distinguished in the preservation of national traditions during the post-war period. The first approach can be characterized as one where in the design of buildings is incorporated some universal Ukrainian national motifs. The second approach involves taking into account the specific cultural, historical and regional features of the reconstructed territories. And the design should be based on this analysis. The authors believe that the second approach is the correct path in design because it involves taking into account all aspects of reconstructed area thus suggesting specific propositions that reflect the identity of this area.

In summary, the reconstruction of destroyed cities and villages after war serves as a canvas for preserving Ukraine's architectural heritage. The integration of traditional elements, whether through historical references, ornamentation or materials forms a bridge between the past and the future. As the nation forges its path forward the delicate harmony between preserving national traditions and embracing innovation will continue to shape the architectural landscape reflecting the enduring spirit of Ukraine's cultural identity.

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