Influence of traditions and innovation on church architecture

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Abstract. The article deals with the problem of the interconnection between the traditions and new searches for the Orthodox church image in architecture, the importance of their relations in the modern world. The opinions of professional architects on the problem of modern church architecture are rather different. Some believe that today the traditions must be continued. Others welcome innovations and experiments in the spirit of the modern architecture of secular buildings and reject the tradition as outdated and inconsistent with the spirit of modernity. Over the centuries, the ideas of a striking aesthetic novelty arose more than once. The architects, designing new churches, search for architectural forms that, according to contemporaries, bring us closer to our past and revive our national identity. The preservation of the sacral factor in the architectural search for the church novelty without excessive extravagance remains an inviolable condition of church architecture.

1. Introduction
The current state of the Orthodox church architecture in Russia cannot be considered satisfactory, as we have lost the correct guidelines for searching for architectural solutions of modern churches and the criteria for evaluating the past experience, which is often used under the pretence of following a tradition. Many people replace the necessary knowledge of the Orthodox church-building traditions with the reproduction of "samples", stylization, wherein the tradition is understood as any period of the national church construction. The national identity is generally expressed in the copying of traditional techniques, forms, elements of the outdoor church decoration [1].

Such researchers as abbot Alexander (A.N. Fedorov), S.Ya. Kuznetsov, I.L. Buseva-Davydova, A.V. Bertash, M.P. Kudryavtsev and T.N. Kudryavtseva, A.G. Sukhanova, A.S. Schenkov, A.E. Ukhnalev [2] study the problems of church architecture of the end of the 20th - beginning of the 21st centuries from the scientific point of view. The problem fundamentally concerns the interconnection of modernity, spirituality and significance of the historical heritage in the world reflected in the forms of art.

Innovation in church architecture inextricably linked with the problem of determining its spiritual and aesthetic criteria is becoming more and more relevant. Theological and ecclesiastical definitions of a Christian church as "the house of God," "the image of heaven on earth," etc., are known, but they do not convey any specific aesthetic prescriptions [3-6]. Experienced church builders warn against an excessive extravagance when determining the architectural image of a church of the 21st century. Architects never abnegated creativity. Thus, the author of one of the works offered an avant-garde project of a glass church (Figure 1). Another variant also has non-traditional forms (Figure 2), and
there are many similar brave projects. You can experiment with non-traditional forms, but it is hardly necessary to go into extravagance and bewilder and shock the consumers.

The examples of Western religious architecture created by famous architects based on the modern technologies and artistic views once again show that the number of believers does not increase because of the appearance of the temple. "It neither led to the revival of the true Christian art, unfortunately, the state of modern art, including in Russia, actually reflects the spiritual state of the modern individual," said Pyotr Kondratiev, rector of Sodeistvie Institute [7].

Figure 1. Modern project.  Figure 2. Project with non traditional forms with an excessive extravagance.

2. Main part

It is necessary to recognize that any, even the most innovative church image, should be based on its mystical prototype, that the searches for something new must be based on several unshakable architectural principles. They have been present in the Orthodox culture for one and a half millennia already and are reduced to the following if formulated in the most general form:

- a church building is self-contained and cannot be separated from the sky;
- the "sacral church design" should be preserved: the traditional location of the cross and the dome (or another top), the entrance gate, the eastward-oriented altar, pulpit, iconostasis;
- the church proportions and volumes should remain harmonious at any decisions, the inner and outer spaces should complement each other, the parts cannot conflict with the whole, the inner space should be hierarchically organized from the top down: from the under-cupola area to the floor;
- the architectonics of the church building, its acoustics, construction technology, materials used, their texture, color, etc. should correspond to the liturgical purpose of the church;
- the church image should be organically (even according to the aesthetic contrast principle) consistent with the totality of church arts - from icon painting, frescoes and church decoration to chanting, garments of the priesthood and the plastic drawing of divine services.

In Russian church architecture there has been and still remains a powerful renewal potential. Over the centuries, the ideas of an amazing aesthetic novelty repeatedly arose in it. Using the modern language, they can be called "explosive", "avant-garde". It was the case with the appearance of far from Byzantine architectural samples of a multi-cupola and tent-roofed style - Russian "wooden Gothics" in Kiev Rus [3].
It was the case with the creation of the pillared churches, the Nikon five, Moscow baroque basilicas, church palaces of the era of classicism, and finally the bright "church synthesis" - plastic arts, artistic techniques, materials - in the mainstream of Russian modernity.

Over the centuries, style canons have changed more than once in church architecture; before the revolution, there was a rapid renewal of construction technologies. Everything was stopped and for a long time pulled away from the development of world and national architecture by the "Soviet" time. In the national history of the XIX–XX centuries, there was already an attempt to return to the origin of the Orthodox church organization, which in the middle of the XIX century led to the appearance of the Russian-Byzantine style, and at the beginning of the XX century - the "neo-Russian" style [1,8].

However, these were the same "styles", only based not on the Western European, but on Byzantine and Old Russian samples. In spite of the general positive direction of such a turn to historical roots, the result was imitative works, the architectural solution of which was determined by the level of knowing the "samples" and the degree of professionalism in their interpretation [1].

The created architectural church image should be congruent with a sufficiently defined framework depicted by the sacral factor. It leaves a vast field for the search for artistic church construction means. This field is noticeably narrowed if we take into account the "historical factor". It is connected with the fact that the means of the architectural embodiment of the sacral idea have been nourished during long historical periods. Those things were accepted for reproduction and propagation that were approved by the collective church consciousness and checked by time. Such an approach is related to the properties of the so-called canonical art, it is a manifestation of the Christian orientation toward the conciliar consciousness that distinguishes and protects those principles of life and art that best of all correspond to the experience of church life [9,10].

![Figure 3. Church of the Holy Great Martyr George the Victory-Bearer.](image)

Each creative initiative based on the experience of an individual creator should be checked by this conciliar canonical consciousness. Conciliar consciousness can take rather decisive innovations, but time is always needed to "check" them. Therefore, the primary criterion is the canon, the historical precedent. Hence, there is such a devotion to historical, traditional architectural forms in the church art
[11]. We can exemplify it by a modern church project executed by A. Anisimov's architectural workshop, which passed the canonical consciousness check and became almost a standard project (Figure 3, 4) [12].

![Figure 4. The Church of the Holy Martyrs Faith (Vera), Hope (Nadezhda), Love (Lyubov) and their mother Sophia.](image)

3. Conclusion
In modern practice, similar to the XIX century, we see the same picture of the attempts to reproduce "samples" from the whole variety of diverse heritage without penetrating into the essence, into the "spirit" of the designed church, to which the modern architect-church builder is generally not related or lacks sufficient education for this purpose [13].

It is absolutely evident that modern church architecture cannot be separated from architecture in general, from its rapid development both in Russia and in the world. But at the same time, it is necessary to take into account what Andrei Ikonnikov wrote in the book "The Artistic Language of Architecture": "... the gap between the rate of material progress and the spiritual development of an individual can be filled only by turning to the powerful strata of the culture of the past, using them to build the future "[14].

Nowadays, Russian architecture needs a new church synthesis - an artistic concept related to the creative development of the past and a breakthrough to the latest technologies, materials, to the new expressiveness of architecture [1,3].

Modern church builders should be focused on the return to the original church art criteria - the solution of the Church tasks using specific means of church architecture. When building a church, it is
necessary to organize a full-scale church complex that provides all the modern multi-faceted activities of the Church: liturgical, social, educational, missionary [13,15]. The most important criterion for evaluating church architecture should be to what extent its architecture serves to express the meaning laid in it by God [1]. The interest in a truly modern church architecture requires to rethink all the professional tools - from the choice of materials and construction technologies, to the development of a new plastic language and the creation of an updated church image. It should attract by the beauty and energy of a living religious art. There can be no revolution in church architecture. There should be a gradual evolution taking into account the traditions and the functional purpose [16].

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