



Problems of preserving and restoring Baroque heritage: the church in Dubrovo and the monastery in Boruny

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ABSTRACT:

The article is devoted to the buildings of churches and monasteries built in the Minsk region in the Baroque style, which have survived to this day in a destroyed state. The peculiarities of the formation of the architecture of towns are studied, issues of the preservation and restoration of destroyed objects are considered. The architecture of buildings in Dubrovo and Boruny, which were built according to the spatial and compositional principles of constructing religious objects at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries, is studied. The stylistic features of each object, formed taking into account the place and time of construction, have been identified. Today there are many Baroque buildings in small towns that are in a dilapidated state. Some of them have been given the status of historical and cultural value and are under state protection. The status of a number of objects has not been determined and causes a number of problems for the local administration during the urban planning transformation of already populated areas. There are many questions when reconstructing an existing building in which historical architectural objects of religious and functional purposes have been erected. The transfer to the use of religious communities of buildings that used to be churches, but were in ruins for a long time, is associated with a large volume of research and restoration work. This makes it necessary to take them into account, compile a historical certificate and consider measures for the reconstruction of surviving buildings. The theoretical basis for the further practice of restoring such heritage sites is historical research and the analysis of architecture.

KEYWORDS:

Baroque architecture; spatial and compositional principles of construction; restoration of religious objects

1. Introduction

The article studies two objects that require reconstruction measures. One of them is the Church of the Ascension of the Virgin Mary in Dubrovo, which has been in ruins for many years. The second, which survives to this day, is the Church of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul and the monastery building in Boruny. The church is currently operational, but the monastery building requires serious restoration measures.

Currently, there are many scientific works on the issue of restoring lost objects of the Christian Church and their reconstruction. There are well-known publications by domestic and foreign architects and art historians on studies of the architecture of buildings erected on the territory of Belarus in the period from the 18th to the 19th centuries.

When writing the article, the scientific works of architectural theorists and art historians, restorers A.N. Kulagin, E.V. Mikhailovsky, V.F. Morozov, Yu.V. Chanturia and others were analyzed

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[1-6]. The work on the conservation of architectural monuments by Richard Fawcett and the design concepts of Dmitry Bubnovsky are considered [9, 10].

In the article, when analyzing the historic buildings, the main sources used were modern photographs of the ruins taken by the author.

During the construction of religious buildings of the Baroque and Classical periods, the Belarusian lands were part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and from 1795 they became part of the Russian Empire. This affected the formation of special spatial-compositional and stylistic principles for constructing religious objects.

2. Discussion

The ruins of the Church of the Ascension of the Virgin Mary are located in the village of Dubrovo, Minsk region. The church is currently abandoned.

The village of Dubrovo was first mentioned in the 1st half of the 15th century, when the settlement was part of the Zaslavsky principality. The mention of Dubrovo in 1453 is associated with the construction of the church by the Glebovich gentry. In 1625, the Glebovichs, having a family estate in Dubrovo, became the founders of the monastery of the Bernardine monastic order. The village of Dubrovo was the center of the parish, and from the 2nd half of the 17th century it passed to the Sapiehas. By the mid-18th century, Dubrovo became a town in the Minsk Voivodeship of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. After the division of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the town became the property of the Minsk governor Adam Khmara³.

He initiated the construction of a new church building, built in 1796-1805. In the underground part of the church is the burial place of Adam Khmara and other representatives of the family. Presumably the author of the church project is the Italian architect Carlo Spampani⁴. The estates of Carlo Spampani formed the composition of a large noble court, widespread in Lithuania. In his projects, the architect applied classicist principles and compositional solutions that appeared under the influence of the creative heritage of Andrea Palladio (triglyph, friezes, triangular pediments, Doric order columns)⁵.

Based on the surviving ruins of the church, one can assume its spatial and compositional organization. The church was a rectangular building with a rectangular apse and two lowered sacristies on the sides of the apse. The building stands on a high plinth, with five steps visible in front of the entrance.

The main facade was horizontally three-part with a central part protruding the length of the brick and ended with a semi-circular pediment (Fig. 1). The tympanum of the pediment along the vertical axis is decorated with a semicircular decorative niche, and above it is a round niche. The pediment retains decoration in the form of finely profiled flat niches with a circular pattern made using the sgraffito technique. Above the entrance, there is a circular shape (not preserved, only a trace remains on the wall), framed by pilasters of the Doric order, there is a round window along the central axis. There are no other windows on the main facade. The main facade up to the profiled cornice is decorated with wide protruding stripes that do not affect the Doric pilasters. The side facades are decorated with six arcaded windows called biforium; each facade has three such windows (Fig. 2).

³ Adam Mikhail Stanislav Khmara (December 20, 1720 – June 9, 1805) – statesman of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the last governor of Minsk (1784-1793). Khmara acted as the organizer of his farm; by 1780 he built the estate with a library, archive and hospital [7].

⁴ Carlo Spampani (1750, Rome, Italy – 05/2/1783, Rozhanka) – Italian architect of the Palladian school, designed in Belarusian lands, is one of the architects of early classicism. He began his career as an architect in Vilna, where he worked on orders from the Jesuit Order, and also taught at the Vilna Academy. He participated in the construction of several estates (in 1777-1779, the house of Albrecht Radziwill in Annapol, in 1779-1781, the Kozzelov estate complex in Benitsy, 1779-1783, an estate with a park in Radzivilimonty near Nesvizh) [8].

⁵ Pediment is a triangular completion of the facade of a building, bounded by roof slopes and a cornice. Frieze is an architectural element of the decorative decoration of a building in the form of a strip or ribbon. Triglyph is a frieze element of the Doric order in the form of a stone slab with three cutouts. Architectural order is an architectural composition consisting of vertical and horizontal elements that have their own proportions and are used in a certain order.



Fig. 1. Church of the Ascension of the Virgin Mary in Dubrovo. The main facade of the church (photo by N. Kalasoškaja)



Fig. 2. Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary in Dubrovo. Fragment of the facade (photo by N. Kalasoškaja)

The window consists of two openings of a semicircular outline, separated by a column with a faceted capital and placed in a niche with a semicircular outline.

The side facades, in the part corresponding to the narthex in the interior, contain window openings: round, above – rectangular with a semi-circular seal. The ends of the openings are decorated with a finely profiled double cornice with an arched outline. On the side facades, the decoration of the window partitions in the form of wide longitudinal stripes has been preserved (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3. Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary in Dubrovo. Fragment of the side facade (photo by N. Kalasoŭskaja)

Inside, the space of the hall was divided into naves by six round columns, three on each side. At the entrance, inside the general volume of the building, a vestibule was installed that is the same as the width of the facade.

In the apse section, flat niches and openings with a circular finish were preserved; there was also a round window, which is now bricked up, but the lattice has been preserved. The church was built of brick, some of the plaster has been preserved. On fragments of walls where masonry was exposed, it is clear that some openings were modified or blocked (Fig. 3).

After the divisions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth at the end of the 18th century, the church in Dubrovo was given to the Orthodox Church and in 1868 rebuilt according to Orthodox canons. In 1921-1939 Dubrovo was on Polish territory, and the church building was transferred to the Catholic Church. In the 1980s, there was a fire in the church and the building has not been reconstructed since. Near the church there is a plebania and a manor and park complex with outbuildings from the late 19th century, including a brewery, which has been preserved.

Today, the Church of the Ascension of the Virgin Mary in Dubrovo is in a dilapidated state. The question of the long-term fate of this object remains open. Its restoration requires serious material investments.

117 kilometers from Minsk is the town of Boruny, famous for the Church of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, which is located there (Fig. 4). The church building, in its existing form, is from the end of the 18th century, when in 1747-1753 it was built according to the design of the architect Alexander Asikevich. The church was built in the Baroque style. The church is a three-nave basilica with a long altar apse and two symmetrical chapels.



Fig. 4. Church of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul in Boruny.
Main facade (photo by N. Kalasoškaja)

The facade of the church is asymmetrical with a complex outline and is adjacent to a multi-tiered tower. The tower is not placed in line with the facade. The central nave of the church has a risalit on the facade and is completed with an attic pediment. The facade planes have a curvature, which is accentuated by a wide profiled cornice. The decor uses stylized volutes.

The use of two-color plaster made it possible to highlight the decor in white against the background of pinkish-terracotta walls: pilasters, cornices, window frames. The interior has a cylindrical vault in the central nave, and cross vaults in the side naves. The interior decor has features of the Rococo style. Under the church there is a crypt-burial vault. The church is currently operational.

The monastery building was built in 1778-1793. The monastery building is not functioning. The building is two-story and has a T-shaped layout. The facades are rhythmically divided by rectangular window openings, decorated with pilasters with bases, but without capitals. The building is surrounded by a profile cornice. The premises are covered with cylindrical vaults (Fig. 5).

Unlike the church in Dubrovo, the church in Boruny has survived. In 1833, the building was transferred to the Orthodox Church; in 1845, a theological school was located in the monastery building. In the 19th century, during perestroika, the monastery building acquired features of the classicist style. The church in Boruny was returned to the Catholic Church in 1922 and services were held there.

The church and monastery occupy a block in the development of a small settlement. The church is operational, but the monastery building is not in use today and requires repairs.



Fig. 5. The facade of the monastery building and a fragment of the facade of the Church of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul in Boruny (photo by N. Kalasoŭskaja)

Reconstruction of such sites is a complex task, as it requires a set of necessary measures to achieve, including versatile survey activities. The main task is to restore the authentic historical parts of the architectural monument, taking into account its past and the authenticity of the materials. Therefore, work at such facilities must be carried out with scientific justification.

Theoretical sources determined the preservation strategies and prospects for the uses discussed in the article, including for the needs of the Church [9, 10]. The priority is to use such objects for their original religious purpose and for the needs of the Church. At the same time, one of the main criteria that determines further reconstructive measures of the building is to ensure its unconditional long-term safety.

For the investment attractiveness of such objects, a set of measures can be developed, including the inclusion of the object in a list of tourist sites.

The question regarding the ruins that have survived to this day is more complex. If these dilapidated churches are not scheduled to be restored to their original form in the near future, then their conservation is necessary. Restoration includes a number of questions about the authentic appearance of a pre-existing object and the use of authentic materials and technologies.

3. Conclusions

The development of towns and small settlements has its own characteristics of the formation of public spaces, which are determined by a number of factors, including economic and religious. The architecture of the period under review reflected the pan-European trends of the Baroque style and the classicism style that replaced it.

In small towns and rural settlements, stone religious buildings dominated the low wooden buildings surrounding them.

Today there are many heritage sites that are in a dilapidated state, such as, for example, the Church of the Ascension of the Virgin Mary in Dubrovo. Some objects of religious architecture have survived to this day and are functioning, but also need repair or restoration work, such as the Church of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul and the monastery building in Boruny.

The functioning of such facilities poses a whole range of issues for the local administration. It is necessary to carry out comprehensive large-scale work to restore architectural monuments, giving them the status of historical and cultural value protected by the state.

The scientific justification of a restoration project with the possible restoration of the original appearance of objects requires the preparation of a historical certificate, an analysis of the existing condition with photographic recording, measurements, and archaeological research.

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Problemy zachowania i restauracji dziedzictwa barokowego: kościoł w Dubrowie i klasztor w Borunach

STRESZCZENIE:

Artykuł poświęcony jest budynkom kościołów i klasztorów wzniesionych w stylu barokowym, które przetrwały do dziś w stanie zniszczonym. Omówiono cechy charakterystyczne kształtowania się architektury miast, analizowano zagadnienia konserwacji i restauracji zniszczonych obiektów. Dokonano analizy architektury budynków, które powstały według zasad przestrzennych i kompozycyjnych wznoszenia obiektów sakralnych na przełomie XVIII i XIX wieku. Zidentyfikowano cechy stylistyczne każdego obiektu, ukształtowane z uwzględnieniem miejsca i czasu powstania. Obecnie w małych miasteczkach, które są w opłakanym stanie, znajduje się wiele barokowych budynków. Część z nich uzyskała status wartości historycznej i kulturalnej i znajduje się pod ochroną państwa. Stan szeregu obiektów nie został ustalony, co powoduje wiele problemów dla administracji samorządowej podczas przekształceń urbanistycznych obszarów już zamieszkałych. Przy rekonstrukcji istniejącego budynku o przeznaczeniu sakralnym i użytkowym pojawia się wiele wątpliwości. Przekazanie do użytku wspólnotom wyznaniowym budynków będących niegdyś kościołami, lecz przez długi czas popadających w ruinę, wiąże się z dużym nakładem prac badawczych i restauratorskich. Powoduje to konieczność uwzględnienia ich, sporządzenia świadectwa historycznego, podjęcia działań w zakresie rekonstrukcji zachowanych budynków. Podstawą teoretyczną dalszej praktyki restauratorskiej tego typu obiektów są badania historyczne i analiza architektury.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE:

architektura baroku; przestrzenne i kompozycyjne zasady budownictwa; restauracja obiektów sakralnych