



## The architectural image of the Church of St. Charles Borromeo in Pinsk

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### ABSTRACT:

The architecture of buildings in the Baroque style is considered in the context of European socio-cultural ties, artistic and aesthetic views of the 17th-18th centuries. Issues of volumetric-spatial composition and artistic directions of stylistics of cult objects are considered, the issues of peculiarities of the organization of the plan, form-formation and structure of cult buildings are touched upon. The aim of the study was to systematize and generalize historical information about the Church of St. Charles Borromeo in Pinsk, identify special compositional techniques and interpretations of the Baroque style, establish artistic and aesthetic relationships with style objects in the context of a single polycultural space of the period under consideration. A stylistic relationship has been established between the architectural image of the Karl Boromeo church, erected in Pinsk in 1770-1782, with the architecture of the European Baroque. The side pavilions of Karlskirche in Vienna were the prototype of the Bartholomite temple in Pinsk, which was erected later and much more modest in scale and set of compositional elements. During the Baroque period, various religious buildings were erected, the architectural appearance of which was formed in the course of rethinking by regional architects of already existing significant European objects. The architectural composition of the buildings of the Catholic Church depended on the founding priests, who sought to conform to progressive ideas and uniformity within religious societies.

### KEYWORDS:

baroque architecture; hall church; architectural composition

## 1. Introduction

The dominant artistic trend in the 17th-18th centuries in the Belarusian lands was baroque. During this period, the Belarusian lands were part of the European state of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, which since 1569 was in the Sejm Union of Lublin as part of the federal Commonwealth. It included many lands of present-day Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine and had ethnic heterogeneity. The cultural space of a multi-ethnic state was formed under the interaction of socio-economic, political factors, based on traditional cultural values and religious diversity.

European architects brought new baroque stylistic ideas to the culture of Belarus, which were used by regional builders on a traditional basis from existing shaping techniques. The Church of St. Charles Borromeo in Pinsk is a vivid example of the local interpretation of Baroque architecture, the composition of which is an echo of European artistic trends of the Baroque.

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## 2. Discussion

Today, there are a number of major art criticism studies devoted to the architecture of the baroque period of the 17th-18th centuries in the field of religious architecture on the territory of present-day Belarus [1-3]. The main issues raised by art critics and historians relate to the periodization of style objects, the history of the construction of religious buildings, the activities of funders, the description of general planning schemes for organizing the temple space, where there is very little analytics of the architectural composition and shaping of style objects. It should be foreseen that in a thorough study of the architecture of Baroque objects that historical graphic materials, including drawings in archives, are extremely rare, and the drawings of contemporaries and engravings of cities have a certain artistic conventionality of the image. In the absence of design drawings, the source for conclusions can be modern photographs of surviving monuments with historical information about the object, which contains historical dates about restructuring and reconstruction and the use of the analogy method.

German, Austrian, Italian features of the Baroque style were embodied in religious buildings throughout the territory of the Commonwealth. The influence of Italian architecture on local traditions of architecture is noted by Polish, Lithuanian, German researchers of architecture of the Baroque era: E. Pashenda, I. Vaishvilayte, B. Borngesser and others. In the 18th century on the territory of present-day Belarus (in Grodno, in the Vitebsk province of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania) in the framework of the Baroque style, an Italian by birth Joseph Fontana (III) (1700 (?) - after 1755) worked [4]. His objects in the late Baroque period are distinguished by a clear influence of Italian architecture. Variation of baroque architecture in the late period from the 2nd floor. The 18th century in local temple architecture is referred to as the "Vilna baroque". Geographically, the name is associated with a number of objects built in Vilna during the design practice of the architect from Swidnica (now a city in the Lower Silesian Voivodeship of Poland) Jan Krzysztof Glaubitz (Polish Jan Krzysztof Glaubitz, 1700-1767) [4].

The Catholic Church in the 17th-18th centuries on the territory of present-day Belarus carried out large-scale construction, many churches and monasteries of monastic orders were erected, there were also objects of associations of the white clergy, such as bartholometes.

The Association of Bartholometes – "The Institute of Clerics Living in the Commune" (lat. Institutum Clericorum Saecularium in Communi Viventium) was founded in Bavaria in 1640 by the priest Bartholomeus Holzhauser. The commune of society, in which only diocesan priests (white clergy) were accepted, did not allow women and its members did not take monastic vows, but in its structure resembled monastic congregations. The goal of the Bartholometes was pastoral, missionary work and the training of future priests, which led to the opening of several seminaries. In the second half of the 17th century, their activities spread to other European countries, as well as to the Commonwealth.

In the Commonwealth, the Bartholometes had several objects, including the Basilica of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Wengrow and the Catholic Church of St. Charles Borromeo in Pinsk. The temple in Węgrów was rebuilt after a fire in 1703 during the Great Northern War by the Italian-born architect Carlo Seroni in the Baroque style. The Church of St. Charles Borromeo in Pinsk was built in stone only at the end of the 18th century and belongs to the late Baroque period, inspired by the ideas of the Austrian Baroque.

A striking example of Austrian Baroque and a church dedicated to Carlo Borromeo is the Karlskirche (German: Karlskirche) in Austria. The church was built according to a vow to build a temple given by Emperor Charles VI of Habsburg at the height of the plague in 1713. The votive church was built in honor of the deliverer from the plague, Saint Carlo Borromeo. The frieze of the central portico is decorated with the inscription: "Vota mea reddam in conspectu timentium deum" (Psalm XXI, 26: "I will repay my vows before those who fear Him"). In 1959 Karlskirche came under the control of the Prelates of the Holy Cross and the Cause of God (Prälatur vom Heiligen Kreuz und Opus Dei).

The winner of the competition in 1715 for the architectural solution of the building was the founder and leading architect of the Austrian (Habsburg) Baroque architect Johann Bernhard

Fischer von Erlach (German: Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach, 1656-1723), who worked in Italy for a long time. The style of Fischer von Erlach is distinguished by the pomposity and expression inherent in the national character of the architecture of the Austrians and the creative influence of the representative of the mature Roman Baroque Francesco Borromini (Italian Francesco Borromini, 1599-1667). The construction of the temple began in 1716 and was completed after the death of the architect in 1737 by his son Joseph Emmanuel Fischer von Erlach the Younger (Fig. 1).



**Fig. 1.** Karlskirche in the southern part of Karlsplatz, in Vienna (photo from open sources) [5]

The architectural composition of the building contains diverse historical models. On the main facade of the building there is an antique portico with 6 columns of the Corinthian order, flanked by two triumphant 33 meters high columns in the central part. Like the Roman column of Trajan, the columns of the Karlskirche are hollow inside and girded on the outside with spiral reliefs, which in the Viennese church depict scenes from the life of St. Charles Borromeo. The building is crowned with a large dome, which, unlike the well-known Roman prototype (the dome of St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican), is oval in plan and elongated in depth along the central axis of the building. The dome in the spatial composition of the Karlskirche building plays the role of a dominant and compositional core, as well as the dome in the Basilica of St. Agnes (Italian: Sant'Agnese in Agone) on Navona Square in Rome. The dome of the Karlskirche as well as the dome of the titular church of St. Agnes of Rome forms an oval in plan. The three-dimensional composition of the Roman church is determined by the plan of the architect Francesco Borromini to recreate the geometry of the plan in the form of a symmetrical Greek cross and two towers flanking the main facade. Such a solution was envisaged in an earlier project of the church, carried out by the architects Girolamo and Carlo Rainaldi. In the Roman church, the arms of the cross on four sides form the main entrance, the altar on the opposite side and two chapels located on the sides of the central axis of the building. The appearance of two towers in the composition of the main facade can be traced from the Romanesque-Gothic tradition. There is an opinion of the British art theorist Anthony Blunt (born Anthony Frederick Blunt) that the two-tower compositions of the main facade of the Baroque churches are an architectural image inspired by the towers of the Basilica of St. Agnes [6] (Fig. 2).

The iconography of the paired triumphal columns is considered in the context of the Habsburgs' claims to the Spanish crown and world domination. According to one version, two columns of the Karlskirche go back to two pillars – Boaz and Yachin, which, according to the Bible, stood in the vestibule of the First Temple in Jerusalem – the Temple of Solomon [8].



**Fig. 2.** Basilica of St. Agnes in Piazza Navona in Rome (photo from open sources) [7]

The reliefs of the Karlskirche columns were performed by sculptors I.B. Mader, J.K. Shletterer, I.B. Straub. The tympanum of the pediment is decorated with a high relief "Cessation of the Plague by Saint Carlo Borromeo" by sculptor J. Stanetti. In the interior, the surface of the dome was painted by the Austrian Baroque painter Johann Michael Rottmayr on the theme of Apotheosis. The sculptural composition of the main altar "The Ascension of St. Charles to Heaven" was made by Ferdinand Maximilian Brokoff.

The symmetrical composition of the main façade with complicated forms, the doubling of forms is inherent not only in Karlskirche, but in many buildings of baroque architecture. In the side pavilions, along with echoes of oriental forms, there are Renaissance proportions based on simple modular relationships, the balance of masses.

The only surviving building on the territory of modern Belarus, erected in the 17th century for the Bartholomete society, is the Church of St. Charles Borromeo in Pinsk. Initially, a wooden church was erected in the Pinsk suburb of Karolin for the Catholic parish, founded in 1695 by the great Lithuanian marshal Jan Karol Dolsky. The construction of a stone temple in the Baroque style at the expense of the Bartholometes was carried out from 1770 to 1782. The illumination of the temple in the name of St. Charles Borromeo took place in 1784. At the end of the 18th century, a period of decline began for the Bartholomete society. In 1836, after the death of the last rector Isidor Kontonovich, the temple did not function, then in the 2nd half. XIX was transferred to the Orthodox Church and re-consecrated in the name of the Holy Trinity.

In 1912 it became a branch church of the Pinsk Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary. After the war, the church was not active for long, then the services in it were stopped, the building was transferred to a civil department. After the restoration in 2013, the building houses a concert hall of stone music (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3. Church of St. Charles Borromeo in Pinsk (photo from open sources) [9]

The Church of St. Charles Borromeo in Pinsk is stylistically Baroque and is a single-nave building (hall church) with a transept. The building is without a sanctuary expressed in volume, with sacristy located behind the main altar of the nave. The main volume, covered with a gable roof, adjoins a two-tier baroque bell tower, completed with a tent with curved plastic edges and a small faceted dome. The main facade is decorated with pilasters, niches, and is divided into two tiers by profile cornices. The side walls are cut through with small arched openings and separated by shoulder blades. The belfry at the entrance has a symmetrical axial composition. The façade plane of the bell tower is cut through with arched window openings in the lower tier, and a circular shape in the upper tier. The window in the upper tier is decorated with sandrik. Between the tiers there is a decorative triangular pediment. A distinctive feature of the building is the powerful construction of the walls, which in some places are more than two meters. The interior space of the hall is covered with cross vaults. There were five altars in the church: the main one, fenced off by a wooden balustrade from the prayer hall, the side ones – St. Charles Borromeo, the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Barbara, St. Peter. The main altar was a composition with a portico of six columns, which were painted with gold and silver stripes, creating a spiral pattern. The interior was decorated with wooden carvings. The now lost portrait of Jan Karol Dolski was kept in the plebanium.

At the church, there was a residential building for priests, a dining room, a kitchen, a granary, a bakery, a barn, a stable, a barn and other outbuildings that have not survived to this day.

### 3. Conclusions

Baroque style architecture was formed in the context of the system of Western European cultural tradition. At the same time, the spread of the Baroque style was promoted by the Catholic Church, which asserted its position through strong architectural images of temple architecture. Baroque is based on the existing tradition of building places of worship and does not copy well-known examples of Italian or Austrian architecture. Local architecture is an example of the artistic and stylistic interpretation of the Baroque, which is based on regional building conditions, but at the same time formed in the context of a common European culture.

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## Obraz architektoniczny kościoła św. Karola Boromeusza w Pińsku

### STRESZCZENIE:

Architektura budynków w stylu barokowym rozpatrywana jest w kontekście europejskich więzi społeczno-kulturowych, poglądów artystycznych i estetycznych XVII i XVIII wieku. Rozważane są zagadnienia kompozycji objętościowo-przestrzennej i kierunków artystycznych stylistyki obiektów kultu, poruszane są kwestie specyficznej organizacji planu, formowania i struktury obiektów kultowych. Celem pracy było usystematyzowanie i uogólnienie informacji historycznych o kościele św. Karola Boromeusza w Pińsku, identyfikacja specjalnych technik kompozycyjnych i interpretacji stylu barokowego, ustalenie relacji artystycznych i estetycznych z obiektami stylowymi w kontekście jednej przestrzeni wielokulturowej badanego okresu. Nawiązano stylistyczny związek obrazu architektonicznego kościoła św. Karola Boromeusza, wzniesionego w Pińsku w latach 1770-1782, z architekturą zachodnioeuropejskiego baroku. Pawilony boczne Karlskirche w Wiedniu były pierwowzorem wzniesionej później i znacznie skromniejszej w skali i zestawie elementów kompozycyjnych świątyni bartłomickiej w Pińsku. W okresie baroku powstawały różne budowle sakralne, których wygląd architektoniczny ukształtował się w wyniku przemyślenia przez architektów regionalnych istniejących już znaczących obiektów europejskich. Kompozycja architektoniczna budynków Kościoła katolickiego zależała od księży założycieli, którzy starali się dostosować do postępowych idei i jednolitości w społecznościach religijnych.

### SŁOWA KLUCZOWE:

architektura baroku; kościół halowy; kompozycja architektoniczna