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## Search of Authenticity in Sacral Architecture in the Territory of Western Ukraine

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**Abstract.** With the proclamation of the Ukrainian independence, the revival of national culture, the restoration of existing and the construction of new religious buildings began. The process of active construction of temples continues today, so the search of national features in temple construction is extremely relevant. The purpose of the research is to analyze the creations of Western Ukrainian architects, who, from the late 19th and early 21st centuries, made stylistic searches for national identity in sacral architecture, taking into account the latest trends in European construction. The process of transition from the tendency of reproduction of historically developed forms and images of the late 19th and early 20th centuries to modern experiments in the sacral architecture of the 21st century is shown for the first time. The data about modern architects and new most significant temples constructed by their projects was introduced in the scientific field. The work was performed within the framework of the scientific project "Art of Ternopil region" of the Department of Fine Arts and Design of Ternopil V. Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University; research coordinator of the project is professor of Lviv Polytechnic National University B. Cherkes. Analyzing the history of the development of the sacral architecture of modern Ukraine, we see that historical events in the country and in the world in the late 19th and early 20th centuries on the territory of Eastern Galicia have led to the national and social uplift and the search for a national identity in the construction of temples. It was established that architects took, as the basis the structure of the Byzantine temple, which corresponded to the traditions of the Ukrainian church ceremony and the Galician authentic architecture. It is proved that in the first stage of the creativity of architects, one of the main form developing principles was stylization of folk art, eclecticism, and the treatment of historical prototypes. An important source for imitation in their work was the Baroque architecture of the Cossack era, the search for the Ukrainian temple identity in modern realia at that time was a further direction for the development. Experimenting with different historical styles, architects declared a new Ukrainian sacral style, the planning and stylistic schemes of which are relevant nowadays. With the advent of the Soviet regime in Western Ukraine in 1939, church construction was prohibited and lots of temples were destroyed. A new stage in the construction and restoration of churches began in 1990. The first temple buildings of this period affected the tendency to recreate the forms and images that were historically formed till 1939 using the stylistic characteristics of their architectural decisions, and experiments with the modernism form in sacral art began after 1995. The results of the study contribute to our knowledge on the history of the Ukrainian architecture; they can



be used for further research, textbooks and manuals; they will be used in the educational process in the preparation of designers and architects, in memorabilia activity.

## 1. Introduction

Temple construction has the ability to reflect the ideas and outlook of society, the history of its development, periods of decline and prosperity of the state. Western Ukraine is extremely rich in sacral sights, which are important for the culture of Ukraine and the world. Despite the difficult historical circumstances, language and cultural traditions, religiosity, and national identity are preserved in the region. In the mid-19th and early 20th centuries, historical processes in Western Ukraine led to a national and social upsurge: the growth of the national consciousness of the Ukrainian population, the search for their identity in the multinational Austro-Hungarian Empire, the revival of their native language, the splash of church constructing; the search for their own national forms in sacral architecture. The prominent Ukrainian architects who worked in this period, among which there are Lev and Ivan Levinsky, Silvester Gavryshkevych, Vasyl and Evgeniy Nahirnyy, Roman Hrytsay, Alexander Lushpinsky, Yakiv Rudnytsky and others, with their hard work, declared a new Ukrainian sacral style and deserved a good memory. Today, their churches are the decorations of cities and villages in the Ukrainian ethnic territory, volumetric-planning schemes are relevant today and they have become the basis for finding authentic forms in modern temple-building.

The theme of sacral architecture attracted the attention of researchers, both local and foreign. In publications by architects, art historians, ethnographers, historians, journalists, we see issues related to the history of the development of sacral complexes [1-5], their planning solution [6-8], stylistic searches in sacral architecture [9, 10], the study of issues of national identity temples [7, 9, 10], etc. M. Kolomiets [11] has devoted his research to the issue of national and regional peculiarities of the development of architecture of Ukraine. The creativity of Ukrainian architects, who worked at the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries, was covered by a well-known Ukrainian historian, scholar, researcher of sacral architecture V. Slobodyan [12-15]. The professional activity of the architects, father and son, Nahorny was researched by scientists V. Proskuryakov, V. Stoyanovsky, Kh. Lev, N. Fillevych, V. Slobodian and others [16-19]. However, the sequence of transition from the new Ukrainian sacral style of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, which became a prototype for the creative searches of modern architects of a new modern style in sacral architecture, has not been fully explored, which makes the relevance of this study.

## 2. Presenting main material

One of the first architects who started a new stage in the revival of national church architecture is Ukrainian architect and public figure Vasyl Nahirnyy. Vasyl Nahirnyy was born in January 1848 near Lviv, where he obtained architectural education at the Technical Academy of Lviv (1870-1871) and at the Federal Polytechnic School of Switzerland in Zurich (1871-1875). After graduating from the Faculty of Civil Engineering, V. Nahirnyy worked at the design bureau of Professor Stadler in Zurich, later in the construction government in Winterthur, in a bureau of a private architect and four years in the construction government of Switzerland [13].

Vasyl Nahirnyy began designing sacral architecture (churches, chapels, parohial homes, iconostases) in 1882 after moving to Lviv. Today there are about 222 church projects created by him, among them 20 - not implemented. Most of the temples are in Lviv region (122), in Ivano-Frankivsk region - 30, in Ternopil region - 21, in Pidkarpattya and Malopolska voivodeships in the territory of modern Poland - 27, in the region of Suceava (Romania) - 1 and Chernivtsi region - 1. The architect

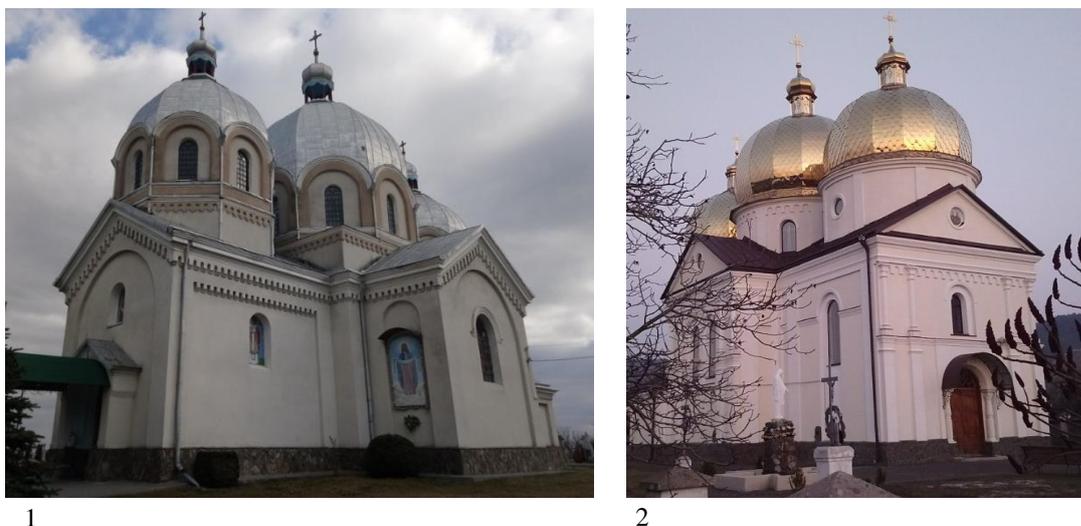
designed churches of stone and wooden, emphasizing the original forms that fit each material [13]. Caring for the preservation of the traditions of the church ceremony, the architect took the cross-vault structure of the Byzantine temple type with the elements of classicism, compact in planning. Taking into consideration the modest economic potential of the Ukrainian population, the churches of V. Nahirnyy were impeccable with their simplicity and engineering and technical qualities and demanded little cost. The most valuable works in the creative work of the architect are the village churches, which make up the majority of his works [19].

An example of such a building is the Church of St. Archangel Michael in the village of Zavaliv, Pidhaytsi district of the Ternopil region (1887) built in the eastern Byzantine forms. The building of the church having cross-shaped pattern with octagonal nave, a rectangular altar, babinets and sided shoulders, big dome with a roof lantern. Above the nave a helmet vault with lantern and onion dome is situated. The lateral sides are covered with double-pitch roof, walls are tiled, decorated with arcaded frieze (Figure 1). The main entrance in the western wall is highlighted by a portal with a balcony [19].



**Figure 1.** the Church of St. Archangle Michael in the village of Zavaliv. Architect V. Nahirnyy (copyrighted photos)

Another type of churches by Vasyl Nahirnyy is tri-domed churches that combine the traditional tripartition space and the cross-shaped plan (Figure 2). The appearance in Galicia of brick five-domed churches is due to the architect. Analyzing the sacral buildings by Vasyl Nahirnyy, we see that despite the similarity and homogeneity of the temples, each of them has its own peculiarities - a different pattern of arcaded frieze, the difference in the partitioning of walls with a pilasters, they differ in the form of vault, the presence or absence of a lantern, portico, various forms of drums (octopus - in Byzantine type buildings, and round, built in the style of classicism). The plans of the buildings are also different. Despite the general cross-plan, some churches are built in the form of an equilateral cross, others - with shorter sides, somewhere they are rounded. As we can see, the architect Vasyl Nahirnyy made an attempt to create an original image of the Ukrainian Galician church, combining different styles in one building, based on Byzantine style. This style corresponded to the traditions of the Ukrainian church rite, the Galician authentic architecture, but took into account the modern requirements of that time.

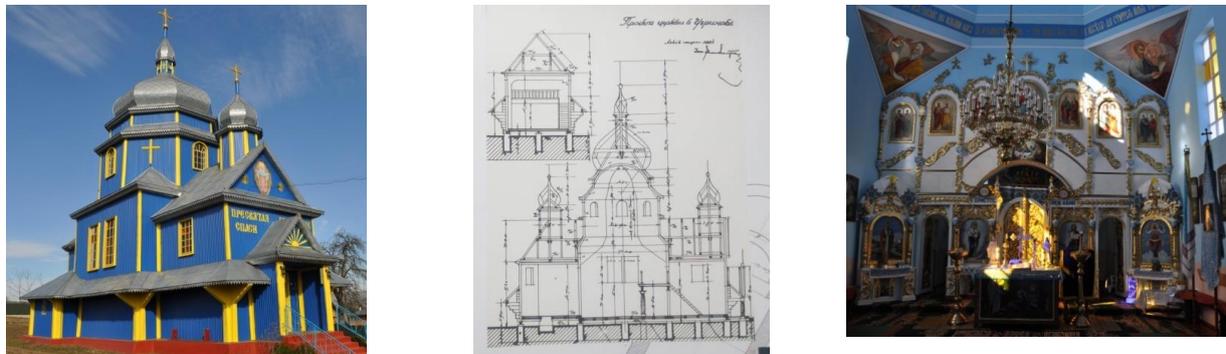


**Figure 2.** Three-domed temples by V. Nahirnyy: 1 – church in the village of Mykolayiv; 2 – church in the village of Krasne (copyrighted photos)

The son of Vasyl Nahirnyy - Yevhen (1885-1951) continued and developed the work on the creation of the architecture of the modern Ukrainian church. He designed about 500 objects, including about 200 brick and wooden churches, in which the author continued the traditions of Galician folk construction. Researchers of sacral architecture consider Yevhen Nahirnyy to be more interesting and progressive architect than his father. He was more diverse in forms, followed the new European directions more closely, but remained true to the old Ukrainian traditions [18]. Yevhen Nahirnyy got his education at the Lviv Polytechnic School, graduating from the Faculty of Architecture in 1912. He started his architectural activity at the design and construction bureau of his father. He was a co-organizer of the Union of Architects of Ukraine, and supervised the section on the protection of architectural monuments in the Lviv Regional Committee, worked as a lecturer at the Polytechnic Institute and the Lviv State Institute of Applied and Decorative Arts [18]. The study shows that Y. Nahirnyy created small-scale churches, designed for 200-300 parishioners. Financing of the construction of temples was often carried out only at the expense of the meager donations of the peasants, which predetermined the puritanism of the image of buildings, small in size with laconic decorations [15]. The basis of the majority of his design decisions was laid on the type of cross-vault temple. A separate small group of masonry churches consisted of tripartial churches, tetraconchos and rotunda churches. Researchers of Y. Nahirnyy's work distinguish the following stylistic directions of his architecture: neoclassicism, classicist modernism, neo-Byzantineism, neo-Russian tendencies in architecture, Ukrainian neo baroque, Ukrainian modernism, and baroque architecture of the Cossack era was an important source for imitation in his work. [17]. Among the projects of the architect there is the wooden church of the Intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the village of Uhryniv, Pidhaytsi district of the Ternopil region. Tripartitional, one-domed Galician type building was built on a high stone foundation in modern forms. The onion dome on an octagonal lantern tower placed above the central log building, over the entrance (the babynets) and the altar - lanterns with onion endings. Around the church a wide ledge "opasannya" is arranged, the walls are covered with vertical boards. In the upper tier of the walls large rectangular windows are cut, the drum window has an arch ending (Figure 3). The chorus is arranged in a babynets near the western wall, the nave space is uncovered up to the dome's zenith [19].

Analyzing the temple architecture of Yevhen Nahirnyy, one can distinguish two stages of formation in his work. For the first stage (up to 1914 and the interwar period), eclecticism, appeal to historical images is characteristic. At the second stage, eclecticism is not so pronounced, the author in

his contemporary realities is looking for a Ukrainian temple identity. So Y. Nahirnyy works mostly in two directions - in the style of the Ukrainian modernism and the Ukrainian neo baroque; he combines the features of the national heritage with the world property; he connects folk with the international, traditional with the newest.



1

2

3

**Figure 3.** The church of the Intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the village of Uhryniv.  
Architect Y. Nahirnyy  
(1, 3 - copyrighted photos, 2 – photo [18])

The development of a modern school of sacral architecture was also influenced by the famous Galician architect Lev Levynskyy (1876 - 1940) [15]. The artist studied at the Lviv Polytechnic School from 1897 to 1903, later worked in the architectural and design bureau of his uncle Ivan Levynskyy. The architect adhered to the principles of modernism, and also used techniques and forms of Ukrainian folk architecture [2, p.354.]. Levynskyy's specialization was the design of stone and wooden temples; he is the author of more than 50 projects (12 not implemented) churches in the territory of Eastern Galicia and in the territory of modern Poland [15]. The author always took into account local traditions, creating a new scheme of the church, entering the temple in the environment. According to his project in Ternopil region a stone church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in village Verbiv was built in 1938-1939 [6] (Figure 4).

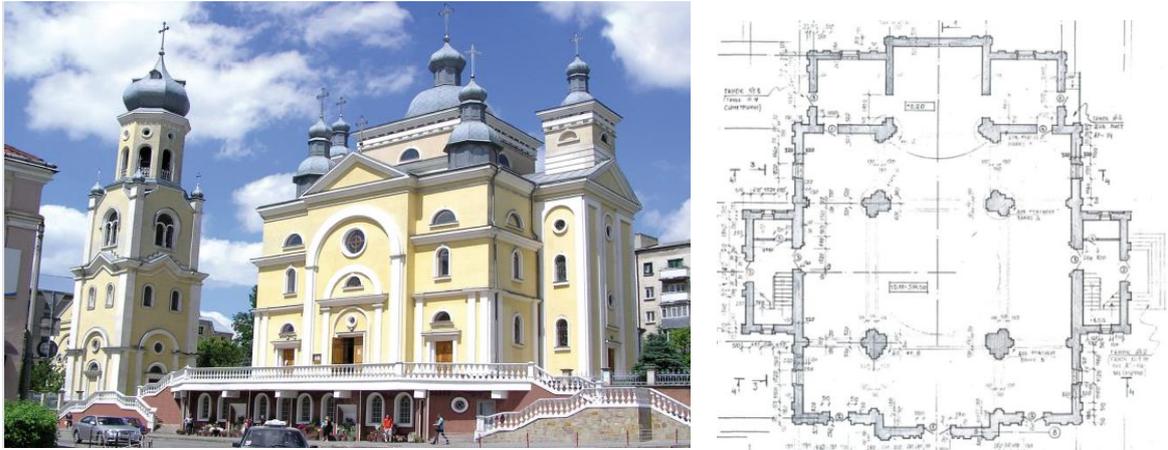


**Figure 4.** The Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Architect L. Levynskyy  
(copyrighted photos)

Another representative of the Lviv architectural school is Alexander Lushpynskyy (1878 - 1943/1944), who also used stylized techniques of folk wooden architecture in his work and was a leading master of Ukrainian secession. O. Lushpynskyy most often worked for the Ukrainian communities of Eastern Galicia, having made for them a number of projects of Ukrainian churches and public buildings [2, p.373.].

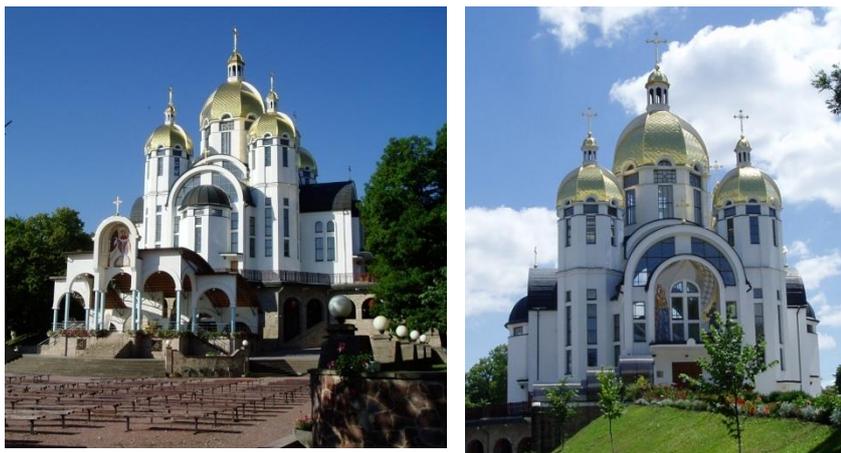
Analyzing the work of Galician architects who worked at the turn of the 19th and early 20th centuries, we see that in sacral architecture, stylization for folk art was one of the main formative principles that began the era of eclecticism and historicism. The transition from historicism to modernism, the search for contemporary Ukrainian artistic style chronologically coincided with the growth of the national consciousness of the people. At the competition, announced by metropolitan A. Sheptytsky, projects of churches in the "new" style were presented. This style is a re-thinking and a combination of the traditions of Byzantine and local centuries-old experience, taking into account the latest trends in European construction [18, 19]. Any experiments in sacral architecture, as well as church construction in general, were interrupted with the advent of Soviet regime in Western Ukraine in 1939 and the accession of these territories to the USSR. A new stage in the construction of temples came only with the proclamation of the Ukrainian independence. The search for a modern national style in architecture continued. Most modern Western Ukrainian architects are directly relevant to the design and construction of new temples and the restoration and rebuilding of the old ones. The most intensive temple construction in the region was conducted during 1990-2000; in many cities of Ukraine, as in other post-Soviet countries, there was a need for the revival of spiritual shrines, symbols of national identity that were destroyed in an extremely dramatic totalitarian period [10]. Such a sign for the city of Ternopil was the ancient church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Monastyrsk), whose history dates back to 1636. It is known that in 1836 a stone temple in the Empire style was built on the site of an ancient wooden church. In 1962, the temple, and with it the Renaissance bell tower, the original stairs symbolizing the cross road, the chapel was destroyed by an explosive, one of the oldest cemeteries of the city was also destroyed [5, p. 133-139.]. Architect Mykhaylo Kychko, studying the ancient photographs of Ternopil, exploring archival materials, created a project of the church complex, taking into account new urban conditions. The church is located on excavated foundations, reproduces the lost as much as possible. The architect changed the proportions of the temple somewhat, increasing it in height and creating a second tier with choruses and a place for believers, because the small volume of the church, limited by the existing foundation, could no longer satisfy the modern needs of the believers (Figure 5).

The construction of temples in the post-Soviet period required architects, designers, builders to collect lost knowledge and skills in sacral construction, while the low technological level complicated the task [7]. The construction of the first churches in Western Ukraine marked the tendency to reproduce the types of temple buildings that historically were formed at the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries, using either direct citation of the stylistic characteristics of their architectural decisions. Religious communities did not perceive contemporary trends in the architecture of sacral buildings, since the construction of parish churches became the most widespread, and chapels in small settlements [9]. After 1995, architects began to experiment with modernist forms in sacral art. In 1995, a competition was announced for the project of the Marian spiritual center in the village of Zarvanytsya, Ternopil region. The winner of the competition was Mykhaylo Netrybyak - Member of the National Union of Architects of Ukraine since 1983, patron of the State Prize in Architecture, Honored Architect of Ukraine (1998), winner of the State Prize in Architecture.



**Figure 5.** Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Ternopil. Architect M.Kychko (copyrighted photos)

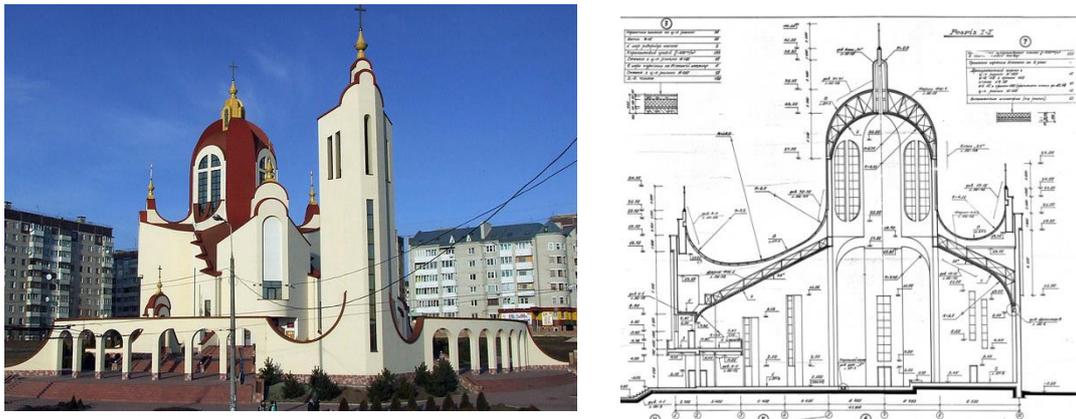
In this project the genius of the architect embodied: the modernized forms of the temple, the structural features of the cathedral, its architectonics testify to the idea of continuity of the traditions of Ukrainian temple building in conjunction with the forms of modernism [7]. The whole ensemble is skillfully integrated into the natural landscape, is a harmonious unity of architectural structures, free landscapes, terraces, works of art. The main building of the ensemble is the the Zarvanytsia Cathedral of Mother of God (Figure 6). The cathedral is a single-nave cross-dome structure without columns, crowned with five vaults. The size of the cathedral is compact, the facades are divided by vertical ramps, which pass into the arches, which provides a building of dynamism. The step-tier arrangement of the vaults arranges the dynamic growth of mass to the center and ends with a large dome. The structure of the cathedral impresses with its monumentality, and at the same time, harmonious with the lightness of the masses, proportional perfection and brightness of the interior space [9].



**Figure 6.** Zarvanytsya Cathedral of Mother of God in the village Zarvanytsya (copyrighted photos)

New times require new architectural ideas and constructive solutions in the construction of temples. The widespread use of reinforced concrete and metal made it possible for contemporary architects to facilitate the basic bearing structures and shapes, expand the interior space, and create new form

developing components of the temples. In the big cities, where the community and priests are more progressive, it was possible to build interesting temples and depart from the images of past epochs. Among architects-modernists, in whose work sacred architecture plays an important role, there is the Ternopil architect Serhiy Hora, a member of the National Union of Architects of Ukraine since 1992. Awarded with the Golden Medal of the Pope of Rome (2001), the diploma of the laureate of the All-Ukrainian festival "Architecture and Design" of the National Union of Architects of Ukraine (2007), diploma of the laureate of the regional prize named after. Georg Pinsel (2009). The most significant work of the master is the modern church of St. Peter the Apostle in the city of Ternopil (Figure 7) [7].



**Figure 7.** The church of St. Peter the Apostle in the city of Ternopil. Architect S. Hora (copyrighted photos)

Ternopil church of St. Peter is part of a single monastic complex, attracts the attention of scholars of sacral architecture with modern forms, the plasticity of the facades, an open arcade that separates the church from the traffic roads. The absence of stucco decoration is due to the fact that the temple belongs to the Greek-Catholic Franciscans, who relate to a progressive but ascetic order. Despite the modern look of the temple, it has laid the traditional system of planning the church: in terms of the temple is reminiscent of the Latin cross, a high raised central dome of the temple and the bell tower are on the main axis of the complex. The original engineering solution of the designer Y. Ziemels with the use of metal trusses allowed to create an extensive space completely free of support.

### 3. Results and discussions

1. It was shown that the architects who started the process of creating the architecture of the modern Ukrainian church are distinguished, and have systematized their creative heritage. It has been established that architects took the structure of the Byzantine temple with its cross-shaped structure as the basis, which corresponded to the traditions of the Ukrainian church ceremony and the Galician authentic architecture.

2. It has been proved that in the first stage of the creativity of architects, one of the main form developing principles was stylization of folk art, eclecticism, and the treatment of historical prototypes. An important source for imitation in their work was the Baroque architecture of the Cossack era, which was expressed in the compactness of plans, using the principle of multi-facade of the building and in decorations.

3. It has been established that the further direction of the development of sacral buildings was the search for Ukrainian temple identity in contemporary realia. Experimenting with such styles as

neoclassicism, classicist modernism, neo-Byzantine style, Ukrainian neo-baroque, Ukrainian modernism, architects with their hard work declared a new Ukrainian sacral style, the planning and stylistic schemes of which are relevant nowadays. Unfortunately, with the advent of Soviet regime in Western Ukraine in 1939, church construction was prohibited, lots of temples were destroyed. A new stage in the construction of temples, their rebuilding, restoration came only with the proclamation of the Ukrainian independence.

4. It has been investigated that the most intensive temple constructing in Western Ukraine was conducted during 1990-2000. It has been established that the first temple buildings on the territory of Eastern Galicia during this period affected the tendency to recreate the forms and images that historically were formed at the end of 19th - the beginning of the 20th century, using direct citation of the stylistic characteristics of their architectural decisions. Experiments with the modernist form in sacral art began after 1995. New architectural ideas and constructive solutions in the construction of temples allowed the recognition of Western Ukrainian architects at the state level, their work is important for the culture and art of the state.

#### 4. Conclusions

Having analyzed the history of the development of the sacral architecture of modern Ukraine, we see that historical events in the country and in the world in the late 19th and early 20th centuries on the territory of Eastern Galicia led to a national and social upsurge, a burst of church constructing and a search for national identity in the construction of temples. The search for a national style continues with the new requirements of the 21st century.

The research results contribute our knowledge to the history of Ukrainian architecture; they can be used for further research, textbooks and manuals; they will be used in the educational process in the preparation of designers and architects, in memorial saving activity.

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