

THE TRADITIONS OF ACADEMISM IN MONUMENTAL AND DECORATIVE ART OF ODESA ORTHODOX TEMPLES

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Abstract. Since the 1990s the scientists' interest in the Christian art of Ukraine has been increasing. This suggests the need to study the architecture and decoration of the southern region orthodox temples. As it is known Odesa was built according to the classical urban planning system. The architecture of a significant number of orthodox churches in the city refers to the corresponding style. An artistic analysis of the interiors monumental and decorative art of the Transfiguration Cathedral and the Holy Assumption Cathedral upper churches, St. Dimitry of Rostov, the Holy Martyrs Adrian and Natalia temples determined that one of the leading stylistic trends is academism in which the spiritual content is conveyed in convincing images of the material world.

The connection of the Transfiguration Cathedral with the Empire style European architecture and the mediated influence of the Renaissance architecture have been shown. The style of the interior murals of Odesa cathedrals corresponds to academicism and early Art Nouveau, in particular the murals of St. Vladimir's Cathedral in Kyiv in which the canonical Kyivan Rus times iconography is combined with the Renaissance volumetric-plastic depictive language.

An ensemble of academic monumental art, the late 19th century iconostasis as well as the middle 20th century paintings have been preserved in St. Dimitry temple space due to the fact that it has never been closed. The temple original murals iconography and academic style corresponds to the art trends of the time of its construction (1887). The artistic decoration of the Holy Martyrs Adrian and Natalia temple created in the early 2000s is an interpretation and continuation of the second half 19th century religious painting tradition.

The drawn parallels with the world Christian painting artworks make it possible to identify characteristic features, trace trends and predict the further development of church art in the region.

Keywords: monumental and decorative art, orthodox temples, cathedrals, Odesa, mural painting, icon painting, iconostasis, academism.

Introduction. Since the 1990s there has been a restoration of parochial life in Ukraine, an active revival of church erection and icon painting. Odesa has a unique orthodox churches art foundation and development history which begins in 1794. Odesa acquired the status of a cathedral city in 1837. The Odesa region has seven monasteries and more than 440 parishes nowadays. The study of the academic style churches decoration reveals a number of problems and issues including the formation of the architectural environment features, the creation of an integral ensemble of murals in accordance with the canon. The need for a detailed study of the orthodox churches monumental and decorative art in synthesis with the architectural environment constitutes the topic relevance.

Analysis of recent researches and publications. The artistic heritage of Ukrainian temples has been studied in the scientific works by Y. Aseev, I. Svetsitsky, P. Zholtovsky, L. Milyaeva, V. Ovsyichuk, D. Stepovik. The researches by V. Lichkovakh are devoted to the general problems of Ukraine sacred art [1]. The contradiction between the Byzantine and academic arts on the example of Kyiv St. Vladimir's Cathedral paintings by V. Vasnetsov is investigated in the monograph and articles by O. Tarasenko [2]. Different regions of Ukraine

Christian art is covered in contemporary fundamental works by R. Kosiv [3], S. Olyanina [4], A. Chuiko, I. Dundyak, V. Mazur, A. Simonova, T. Paniok.

Purpose and objectives. The purpose of the research is to identify the artistic features of Odesa orthodox churches academic style decoration. Achieving the goal involved solving such problems as determining the study of the theoretical and methodological foundations; the study of the historiography; analysis of the decoration of the Transfiguration Cathedral, Holy Assumption Cathedral, St. Dimitry of Rostov, Holy martyrs Adrian and Natalia parish churches academic tradition peculiarities.

The methodology. The study of Odesa temples murals from the end of the 19th century to the present is based on the application of a scientific methods complex the leading of which is the comparative method.

The research results. A gradual transition from Byzantine-style icon painting to academic sacred painting was observed in the Russian Empire from the 17th century. The images of saints acquired the concreteness and tangibility of the three-dimensional material world, approaching the samples of European art. According to L. Uspensky there was a disappearance of the orthodox understanding of the image. There was a switch from the inner, spiritual idea to the outer plane which was expressed in narrative, predilection for embellishment and detailing [5]. The 18th century religious painting was mainly characterized by Italian art samples imitation [6, p. 38]. Since the beginning of the 19th century the interest in the Old Russian icon aesthetics has been renewed. Ancient images canonical iconography foundations were combined with the actual principles of art. The painting of St. Vladimir's Cathedral in Kyiv created by V. Vasnetsov in 1885–1896 became the leading example of the monumental and decorative churches art. The modern design of Odesa orthodox churches is characterized by an appeal to the sacred painting of the 19th and early 20th centuries academic style and Art Nouveau samples.

The architectural design of the *Transfiguration Cathedral* in Odesa corresponds to late classicism (Empire style). The temple was erected by the European architects including V. Vanrezant, F. Frapolli, J. Torricelli, F. Morandi, L. Menzione. The general construction features as well as particular elements (including the ciborium) of the Cathedral indicate the influence of Renaissance art traditions. The internal space character has the common features with the interior of St. Charles Church at the four fountains in Rome.

It is known that at the beginning of the 20th century only the central domes and pendentives of the temple were artistically decorated. To reproduce the lost monumental compositions during the cathedral reconstruction the preserved descriptions and photographs from the personal archive of O. Chumak were used [7,p.282]. The cathedral altar, ceiling vault and the central nave walls, medium and small domes, northern and southern walls have been painted for the first time by Pochaev icon painters in the academic style (2010s–2021). The murals of Christ the Saviour and St. Isaac of Dalmatia Cathedrals, easel artworks by the 19th century masters O. Ivanov, K. Bloch served as the examples of monumental decoration.

The monumental composition «The Transfiguration of the Lord» in the central altar has common features with the canvas by the Danish artist C. Bloch «The Transfiguration of Jesus» (1872). The multi-figured painting «Carrying the Cross» is compositionally close to the engraving by G. Doré «Jesus gets to the top of Golgotha» (1874). Such iconography is in the murals of the St. Job of Pochaev gallery of the Holy Dormition Lavra. The analogue of the mural «The Burial of Christ» on the northern wall of the central altar is the artwork by C. Bloch (1873).

The mural «Myrrh-Bearing women at the Holy Tomb» in the southern altar is visually close to the painting by M. Koshelev (1896) from the Passion Cycle in the Alexander Court of the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society. An analogue of the monumental artwork «Christ's Appearance to Mary Magdalene after the Resurrection» is the painting by O. Ivanov (1835). The composition «The assurances of Thomas» is composed of a fragment of a triptych by the modern painter D. Khomyakov; the emotionally filled kneeling image of the apostle Thomas is based on

the artwork by C. Bloch. The composition «Supper at Emmaus» has common features with the eponymous woodcut (1867) by professor of the Academy of Arts in Dresden K. Shengerr. The paintings «The ascension of the Lord» on the eastern wall of the southern altar, «The descent of the Holy Spirit on the apostles» in the northern apse were created following the example of the monumental painting of the pendentives of Christ the Savior Cathedral. The depictions of cherubs on the background of golden smalt picturesque imitation in the upper part of the murals of the altars are stylistically reminiscent of the painting of St. Vladimir's Cathedral arches. Ornamented bands around the figurative compositions of the altar serve to structure the decoration, reinforcing its connection with architecture.

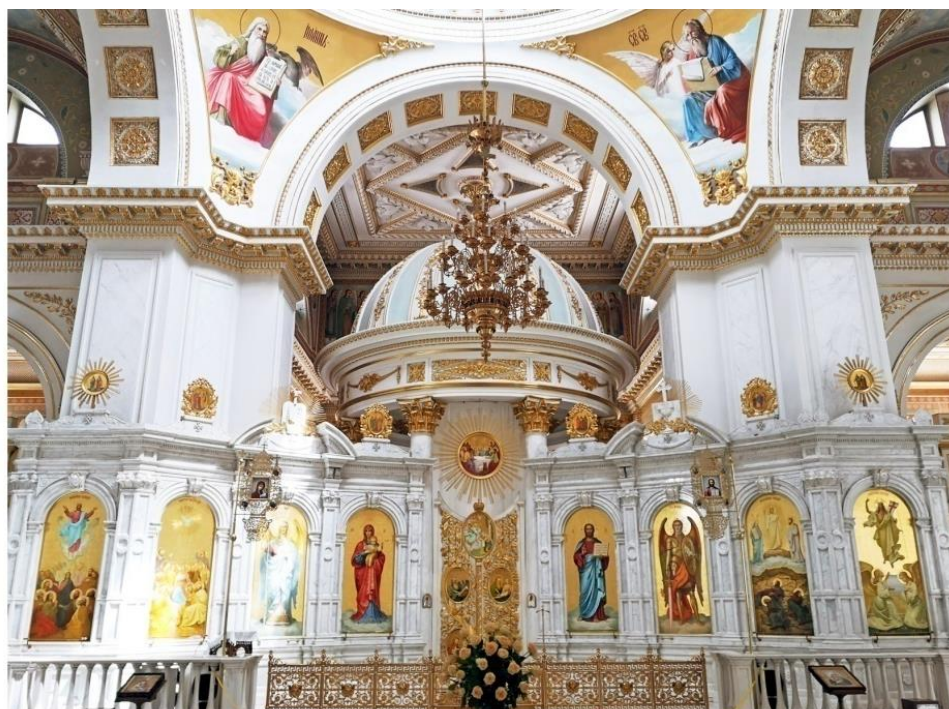


Fig. 1. The central altar. Upper temple, the Transfiguration Cathedral, Odesa

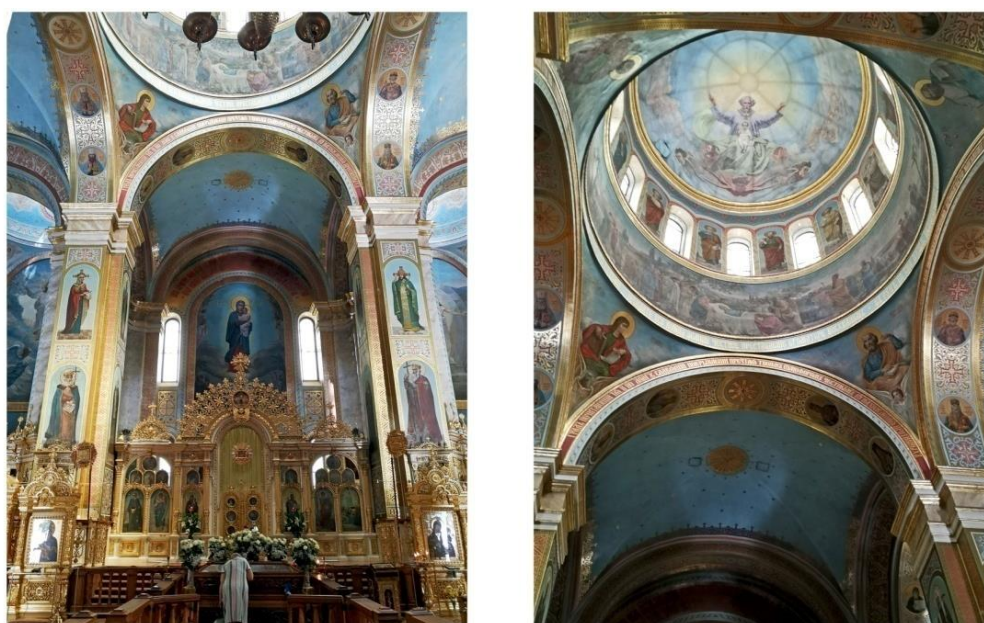


Fig. 2. Upper temple of the Holy Assumption Cathedral, Odesa

The project of the central iconostasis reconstructed in 2009–2010 reproduces the original one made in 1887–1889 (Fig.1). The images of the central iconostasis in the academic style were painted by Georgy Zhuravsky (born in 1948, Nikolaev). For participation in the restoration of the Cathedral the master acquired the laureate title of the State Prize of Ukraine (2010).

The construction and consecration of the *Holy Assumption Cathedral* in Odesa was completed in 1869. The upper church of the Cathedral designed for 5,000 people has a five-domed, four-pillar structure. The decoration of the upper temple was created in the second half of the 20th and early 21st centuries (Fig. 2). Particular attention is drawn to the large-scale painting in the apse «The Virgin Mary with the Child» depicted by I. Kostrov in the 1950s. The composition is close to the mural in the apse of St. Vladimir Cathedral basing on the iconography of Orans from St. Sophia of Kyiv Cathedral (the first half of the 11th century) and the «Sistine Madonna» (1513) by Raffaello Sanzio [2]. Behind the side aisles iconostasis are the paintings of the Christological cycle «Resurrection» and «Ascension». The composition «The Resurrection of Christ» is based on the artworks by M. Nesterov (1890s) for St. Vladimir's Cathedral altar and the mosaic of the southern icon case of The Church of the Saviour on Spilled Blood. The Ascension scene resembles the painting of Christ the Saviour Cathedral southeast pendentive. In the images of the Transfiguration and Resurrection the iconography similar to the «Transfiguration» by Raffaello (1516–1520) and to the lost fresco «The Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ» by M. Vasiliev (second half of the 19th century) is used.

The painting of the under-dome space is based on O. Markov's composition «The New Testament Trinity» (1861–1866) in the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour. In the multi-figured panoramic composition «The Dormition of the Theotokos» in the drum of the dome (1950s, I. Kostrov) the interpretation of the sacred event as a historical scene can be observed. This expresses the artist's commitment to the traditions of sacred art of the 19th century. The murals on the Gospel subjects between the narrow semi-circular windows of the western part of the nave were created according to the examples of monumental compositions by V. Vasnetsov and V. Kotarbinsky in St. Vladimir Cathedral.

The upper church iconostases were made of wood in 1948–1956 according to the sketches by I. Kostrov. The images of the altar barriers were painted by M. Potapov in 1953–1956 on canvas [8]. The balanced composition and moderate volumes of the iconostasis carved decor correspond to late classicism (Empire style). The icons were painted with oil paints on canvases what contributed to the three-dimensional modelling of shapes typical for academism.

The Church of St. Dimitry of Rostov is located at the Second Christian cemetery. This is the only orthodox temple in Odesa that has never been closed. St. Dimitry church was built in 1885–1887 according to the project by the diocesan architect Y. Dmitrenko (1858–1918). The temple murals were painted by I. Kuznetsov in 1959. According to the monograph of metropolitan Sergei (Petrov) written in 1970 some icons, crosses, vessels and books from the time of the temple consecration preserved [9, p. 150–152]. St. Dimitry Church with five domes has a cruciform plan with a semicircular apse. In the picture taken around 1970 in the conch of the apse the painting can be seen which has not been preserved. The Lord Pantocrator surrounded by heavenly forces on the clouds background was depicted. It is known that several icons in the altar were painted by archpriest Andrei Burdin [10, p.177].

The dome is an image of Heaven. In the centre of it there is a sculptural symbolic image of the Holy Spirit in the shape of a soaring white dove. Angels in the clouds are painted between the ribs of the dome. The images feature correspond to the second half of the 19th century religious painting which was influenced by the Western European Catholic tradition. The base of the dome drum is decorated with a panoramic composition embodying the idea of praising The Lord. The crowned Christ Pantocrator is depicted in royal robe and surrounded by heavenly powers on light blue background with clouds. The image of the Lord refers to the iconography «The Saviour on

the Throne» or «Manuel Saviour». The six-winged angel at the foot of the throne is painted by analogy with a fragment of the composition by O. Markov «New Testament Trinity».

The pendentives are painted with the images of evangelists with tetramorphs. Their postures and facial expressions convey a state of self-deepening. According to E. Trubetskoy, «With their whole being they express the mood of a person who looks but does not see because he is completely immersed in hearing and in recording what he have heard» [11, p.57]. John the Evangelist is depicted with a pathetic gesture and a gaze of wide-open eyes. The picturesque volumes in the paintings are modelled with large confident brush strokes.

In the transept of the temple there are a small number of paintings on the subjects of the Gospel. Lunette «Nativity of Christ» from the south above the iconostasis was created on the basis of the composition by V. Vereshchagin (1835–1909). In the southern aisle above the iconostasis there is a lunette «Descent from the Cross». The iconography of the central group of figures corresponds to the eponymous artwork by V. Vereshchagin created for the altar of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in the late 1870s. In the northern part of the transept there is a painting «Young Jesus in the Temple» based on a painting (1881) by the German historical painter and illustrator Heinrich Ferdinand Hoffmann. The artwork is made in the technique of oil painting on coarse-grained canvas. An analogue of the multi-figure composition «Carrying the Cross» in the southern part of the transept is an engraving by G. Doré (1877). On the walls of the western part of the nave there are images of the St. Prince Vladimir and St. Princess Olga painted on the example of the icons of St. Vladimir's Cathedral main iconostasis (V. Vasnetsov, 1885–1893).

The academic style mural around the portal depicts the Ascension of the Lord. The influence of the Renaissance artworks iconography is observed: «The Transfiguration of the Lord» (1516–1520) by Raffaello, «The Ascension» (1533) by Vincenzo da PAVIO (Romano) in the central altar of the Martorana Church in Palermo, religious paintings by Andrea Mantegna, Antonio de Lancares, Rembrandt. The eponymous 18th century icon and the artwork by K. Lebedev (1888) have a similar composition.

The three-tiered wooden iconostasis was made at the end of the 19th century. According to the peculiarities of the Synodal period (1721–1917) church art the system of icon arrangement formed in the 13th–15th centuries was violated. High professional level icons were painted in the 19th century in academicism style with oil paints on medium-grained canvases. The unity of the divine and the human in the images of the saints is conveyed through the calmness of their faces and the static postures. The aesthetics of icon painting is close to Western European religious art which is typical for the Synodal period when sacred depictions were created not by icon painters but by secular artists.

The holy martyrs Adrian and Natalia temple (1897–1899) in Odesa was erected by a Greek philanthropist, state councillor M. Mavrokordato (1850–1935). The foundation of the church was made in 1897; the consecration in the name of Saints Matthew and Eugenia was held in 1899. In the 1960s, the temple was closed; the museum of atheism was placed in the building, later a dining room. In the late 1980s the church in an extreme decline state was transferred to the Odesa diocese. On December 22, 1989 a consecration in the name of the holy martyrs Adrian and Natalia took place [12, p. 206].

The author of the architectural project is unknown. There is an assumption that it could be the architect L. Prokopovich or L. Vlodek whose name is in the most documents. One-storey one-dome (dome diameter – 6 m) church was built in the Byzantine style. The chamber church (60 m²) plan has the shape of a Greek cross. The orientation of the altar to the southeast, towards Constantinople, is a characteristic feature. This may be related to M. Mavrokordato who was a Greek settler and honoured the legacy of the Byzantine Empire.

The depictive program of murals was created in 2000 by archimandrite Alexei (Groha) together with V. Borisov and R. Antonov. The figurative compositions were painted by D. and V.

Homitsky. Ornamental decor was designed by R. Antonov and I. Terekhov. The analogies of Adrian and Natalia temple murals are predominately the monumental paintings from St. Vladimir's Cathedral in Kyiv.

The spouses-martyrs Adrian and Natalia in whose honour the church is consecrated are prayed for the creation of a pious family. This idea is expressed through the lunette composition of the western wall «The Wedding at Cana» which according to the allegorical interpretation means the consecration of marriage by the Lord. The composition is characterized by the liveliness of the action and detail transmission. The image of tiles and steps in the foreground enhances the linear perspective effect. On the wall to the left of the entrance there is an image «Mary's Visit to Elizabeth» which facilitates praying for the birth of children. Other monumental compositions in the western part of the nave are based on the artworks by classicism style artists Julius von Karolsfeld (1852–1860), V. Nesterenko.

On the ledges of the northern and southern arches there are images of Princess Olga and Prince Vladimir. Their features correspond to the artworks by V. Vasnetsov who conveyed the strength of the spirit of the saints. The influence of the lyrical landscape and the refined colour of M. Nesterov's paintings are noticeable in the background solution. The mural in the transept is based on the composition by W. Bouguereau «Salve Regina» (1900). This artwork belongs to the salon academism direction where special attention is paid to volumetric plastic modelling of shapes. The modern five-tiered iconostasis (c. 2012) has a carved wooden base. Icons are painted in the academic style with light and bright colours.

Conclusion. The usage of the academic style which conveys the spiritual idea through convincing images of the three dimensional world in icon painting makes the theological content more accessible to a wide range of believers. This is especially evident when compared with icons of Byzantine style with their characteristic two-dimensional highly stylised shapes; an abundance of symbols; the transformed by the divine energy space. The pictorial language of the Byzantine and Old Russian icons requires special knowledge and training of the viewer for the correct perception of the depth of the content. At the same time, the ideal forms created by the art of classicism and academism are capable of conveying the timeless sublime ideas that fill Christian doctrine.

The academism style has been widespread in the monumental and decorative art of Odesa orthodox temples since the 19th century till nowadays. The examples are the murals of the Transfiguration Cathedral and the Holy Assumption Cathedral upper churches. The studied monumental paintings are based on samples of early Art Nouveau murals as well. They combine the Byzantine iconography with the academic persuasiveness of the image. The leading sample of the monumental and decorative design of Odesa cathedrals are the murals of St. Vladimir temple in Kyiv.

The academic style of the original mural and icon painting of St. Dimitry of Rostov church meets the art trends of the time of its construction (1887). Volumetric modelling of pictorial shapes, the transfer of three-dimensional space indicates the connection with Renaissance and academicism art. The Gospel plots are based on the easel artworks by G. Doré, V. Vereshchagin, G. Hoffmann. The artistic expressiveness of the architectural frame design of the iconostasis corresponds to the trends of the Synodal period; the icons are painted in the best traditions of academicism and early Art Nouveau style.

The painting of Holy Martyrs Adrian and Natalia temple created in the early 2000s reflects the theme of pious marriage for which people usually pray to the holy spouses. The stylistics of the murals painted in early 2000s corresponds to the art of the time when the temple was built (1899). The monumental and decorative art of the church was made according to the samples of painting of the late 19th – early 20th centuries of the academic direction and Art Nouveau among others by V. Vasnetsov, M. Nesterov, V. Bouguereau, V. Vereshchagin.

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**ТРАДИЦІЇ АКАДЕМІЗМУ В МОНУМЕНТАЛЬНО-ДЕКОРАТИВНОМУ
МИСТЕЦТВІ ПРАВОСЛАВНИХ ХРАМІВ ОДЕСИ**

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Анотація. З 1990-х років спостерігається зростання інтересу вчених до християнського мистецтва України. Це передбачає необхідність дослідження архітектури та художнього оформлення православних церков південного регіону. Як відомо, Одеса зводилася за класичною містобудівною системою. У відповідному стилі виконано архітектуру значної кількості православних храмів міста. Мистецтвознавчий аналіз монументально-декоративного оформлення інтер'єрів верхніх храмів Спасо-Преображенського та Свято-Успенського кафедральних соборів, Свято-Димитрівської церкви, храму святих мучеників Адріана та Наталії визначив, що одним з провідних стилістичних напрямів є академізм, в якому духовний зміст передано у переконливих образах матеріального тривимірного світу.

У статті показано зв'язок Спасо-Преображенського собору з європейською архітектурою ампіру, виявлено опосередкований вплив архітектури Ренесансу. Стилїстика розписів інтер'єрів кафедральних соборів Одеси відповідає академізму та ранньому модерну, зокрема розпису Свято-Володимирського собору, в якому канонічну

іконографію часів Київської Русі поєднано з об'ємно-пластичною мовою мистецтва Ренесансу.

Завдяки тому, що Свято-Димитрівський храм ніколи не зазнавав закриття, у його просторі зберігся ансамбль академічного монументального мистецтва, іконостас кінця XIX століття, а також живопис середини XX століття. Академічна стилістика оригінального стінопису та іконопису храму відповідає тенденціям мистецтва часу його зведення (1887). Художнє оформлення храму святих мучеників Адріана та Наталії, створене на початку 2000-х років, є інтерпретацією і продовженням традиції релігійного живопису другої половини XIX століття.

Ключові слова: монументально-декоративне мистецтво, православні храми, собори, Одеса, настінний живопис, іконопис, іконостас, академізм.