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# VISUAL RHETORIC OF PROTESTANT ARCHITECTURE (ON THE EXAMPLE OF ADVENTIST CHURCHES IN KIEV)

By Petro Kotliarov

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## Annotation

The article examines the features of the architecture of prayer houses of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ukraine from the end of the 19th century to the present day. An attempt was made to explain the phenomenon of the development of Gothic elements in the construction of houses of worship in the late 20th - early 21st centuries, a chronological period that coincided with the collapse of the Soviet Union and Ukraine's independence. The connection and role of architecture with the dogmatic foundations of the doctrine of the SDA church have been established. The study partially refers to the methodological approaches proposed by Erwin Panofsky in his work "Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism".

The architecture of houses of worship largely depended on the political system and religious climate in the state. It is indicated that until 1917, before the Bolshevik coup, new Protestant movements, including the Seventh Day Adventist Church, had almost no opportunity to build houses of prayer and were persecuted, since there was a specific system of state-confessional relations in the Russian Empire.

After the Bolshevik coup of 1917, the position of those churches that were based on the teachings brought from Western Europe and the United States succumbed to exceptional obstruction, and their clergy were repressed. Therefore, all the existing houses of worship had the appearance of barracks, not standing out among residential and industrial buildings. This situation largely persisted until the collapse of the USSR.

Based on the analysis of the architectural features of the three main church buildings in the city of Kyiv, it is demonstrated that with the acquisition of Ukraine's Independence, architects, during the reconstruction and construction of houses of worship, are turning to borrow Gothic elements. This appeal is due to the fact that in their image, Gothic buildings, along with aesthetics, are able to embody important theological ideas and serve as visual preaching. The Seventh-day Adventist Church is open in its activities and is oriented towards the evangelization of society, and therefore it is important for it not only to declare its dogma but also to show an organic connection with the early history of the Christian church. Together with the high aesthetic content, the Gothic appearance of the buildings allowed the new churches to become attractive spiritual centers and important architectural dominants of the city.

**Keywords:** architecture, meetinghouse, Seventh-day Adventists, visual rhetoric.

A new page in the history of the Seventh Day Adventist Christian Church of Ukraine has been opened since the early 1990s. After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the proclamation of Ukraine's independence, Christians gained real freedom of religion, including the right to assembly and freedom to preach. Already the first months showed that the existing houses of worship are not able to accommodate all the members since at this time the rapid growth of the church took place. Buildings of the Soviet type, even outwardly not reminiscent of churches, in their functional qualities and aesthetics did not meet the challenges of the time. But the construction of new prayer houses was fraught with a number of serious problems: lack of finance; lack of experience in the construction of church buildings; lack of materials and the poverty of their range. But an equally important question was how should the new temple look from the outside and inside? Continue the Soviet tradition and hide the church behind a barrack-like appearance? Use the architectural traditions of the local Orthodox Church, or turn to the architectural styles of the Anglo-American world?

In this work, using the example of the churches of Kyiv, we will trace the development of the architecture of prayer houses of the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Ukraine at the end of the 20th - beginning 21st centuries. Against the background of specific historical events, we will try to explain the phenomenon of the popularity of the Gothic tradition. In our research, we partially relied on the methodological approaches developed by Erwin Panofsky, the greatest authority in the field of iconology, medieval art, Renaissance, and Baroque. This is primarily about the principles outlined in his classic work *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism*. Note that this is a fairly criticized work since it is based on an attempt to find a certain general mental attitude that unites Gothic art (material forms) and scholasticism (not material). But, as E. Panofsky points out, a scholar should try to find internal correspondences between externally different phenomena. And for this, the researcher himself applied the principle of "parallelism," correlating the art of the Gothic, including architectural structures, with scholasticism. We are faced with a more modest task, to trace the connection and role of architecture with the dogmatic foundations of the doctrine of the SDA church. Consider especially the attempt to use architecture as a transponder of the fundamental doctrines of the church and its role in visual preaching. Another important task of this article is to reveal the features of the architecture of SDA churches in the context of historical collisions, to trace how the architectural appearance of the church depended on the features of the socio-political development of the country.

The first attempts to build their own building refers to the beginning of the spread of Adventist teachings on the territory of Ukraine. Among the first followers of the new teaching was Theophil Arsentievich Babienko (1850-1943), a resident of the small town of Tarashcha (Kyiv region). As an assistant to a local Orthodox priest, he read the Bible on his own, which ultimately led to a break with the Orthodox Church. By that time, a fairly large group of "Brothers Studying the Bible" had organized around T. Babienko and the idea of building a church building arose. Funds were raised, but it was necessary to obtain permission to build a prayer house from the authorities. Such a problem was not in the competence of the local authorities; therefore, it was necessary to apply for the opening of a new church in Kyiv, which after the territorial reforms of 1796 was a provincial city. Theophil Babienko was elected as a delegate to resolve this issue. During the trip, he was arrested with the accusation "for spreading heresies"<sup>1</sup> and exiled to the North Caucasus. It was in exile, not far from Stavropol, that he met Konrad Laubgan and in 1890 was baptized in the Adventist Church.<sup>2</sup>

Here it is necessary to make a small digression in order to explain the unsuccessful fulfillment of the mission entrusted to T. Babienko. In the 19th century the Russian Empire, of which present-day Ukraine was a part, there was a special system of state-confessional relations, in which, as it were, four hierarchical levels were supposed. The dominant level of the specific confessional structure was occupied by the Orthodox Church. The second position was occupied by the so-called "recognized tolerant" religions. These included Catholics, Protestants (Lutherans and Calvinists), Jews, as well as Muslims and Buddhists. On the third rung of the hierarchy were the "tolerant unrecognized," represented mainly by the Old Believers. Below all, on the fourth rank, were the "unrecognized intolerant,"<sup>3</sup> which included the new religious movements, including Adventists, called *Subbotniks*.<sup>4</sup> The attitude towards the "unrecognized intolerant" worsened with the accession of Nicholas I (1825-1855), when in October 1830 the State Council approved measures against "harmful sects"

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<sup>1</sup> М. Жукалюк, *Крізь бурі, шторми, лихоліття* (Київ: Джерело життя, 2009), 42. [M. Zhukalyuk. Through storms, storms, calamities. Kyiv: Source of life].

<sup>2</sup> Д. Юнак, *Історія Церкви християн АСД в Росії: В 2-х т.*, vol. 1 (Заокский: Источник жизни, 2002), 20. [D. Yunak. History of the Church of the Christians of the SDA in Russia: In 2 vols. Vol. 1. Zaoksky: The source of life].

<sup>3</sup> "Основы политики Российского государства в сфере свободы совести и вероисповедания (концепция) // Вопросы религии и религиоведения," *Государство, религия, церковь* 4, no. 1 (2009): 183–84. ["Fundamentals of the policy of the Russian state in the field of freedom of conscience and religion (concept) // Questions of religion and religious studies." State, religion, church].

<sup>4</sup> С. Дударёнок and М. Сердюк, *История протестантских церквей Приморского края (XIX-XX вв.)*. (Владивосток: Издательство Дальневосточного университета, 2014), 12. [S. Dudarenok and M. Serdyuk. History of Protestant Churches in Primorsky Krai (XIX-XX centuries). Vladivostok: Far Eastern University Publishing House].

and *subbotniks*. For suspicion of spreading heresy and speaking out against the official church, the guilty were brought to trial and either sent to serve in the Caucasian corps or "those incapable of service and women" were sent into exile in the Transcaucasian provinces.<sup>5</sup> Repressive and punitive measures against various "foreign" religions especially intensified in 1880, when Konstanin Pobedonostsev became the chief prosecutor of the Synod.<sup>6</sup> According to researcher Mitrofanov, he was "a staunch opponent of Western culture, rationalism and the ideals of the Enlightenment, a defender of the patriarchal" popular "faith based on church rites and traditions."<sup>7</sup> Despite the fact that he was a well-known lawyer, well-educated, and with broad literary interests, Pobedonostsev considered "... the indisputable ideal of state Orthodoxy, and all foreign religions - the worst enemy of the fatherland."<sup>8</sup> Taking advantage of his special closeness to Emperor Alexander III, Ober-Prosecutor Pobedonostsev received the broadest powers, which gave him the opportunity "to start implementing the cherished idea: to break the back of Russian Baptism and Stundism."<sup>9</sup> In line with this idea, a seemingly very tolerant document was published in May 1883: "The opinion of the State Council on granting the schismatics of all religions the right to worship." It said that all kinds of new believers, who were called "schismatics" in the document, should not be persecuted. However, the document contained an extremely insidious norm. Article 10 of the "Opinion" stated that persons who "fulfill the requirements of the schismatics are not subject to persecution for this, except for those cases when they are found guilty of spreading their delusions among the Orthodox..."<sup>10</sup> It was enough only to suspect "spreading their delusions" and the person could be convicted and exiled.

The situation was no better after the Bolshevik coup of 1917. Already in July 1918, the Fifth All-Russian Congress of Soviets adopted the first Soviet Constitution, which limited the rights of the circle of persons who "do not elect and cannot be elected." Clergy and active members of the church fell into this category of the so-called disenfranchised. There were

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<sup>5</sup> Дмитрий Фролов, "К вопросу о правовом положении духовных христиан молокан в Российской империи," *Вестник Тамбовского университета. Серия: Гуманитарные науки* 25, no. 184 (2020): 129–35. [Dmitry Frolov. "To the question of the legal status of spiritual Christians Molokans in the Russian Empire." *Bulletin of the Tambov University. Series: Humanities*].

<sup>6</sup> Chief Prosecutor is a special secular official appointed by the Tsar to the Synod, the supreme body of the church-state governing body of the church.

<sup>7</sup> Л. Митрохин, *Бaptизм: история и современность* (Санкт-Петербург: Издательство Русского Христианского гуманитарного института, 1997), 241. [L. Mitrokhin. *Baptism: history and modernity*. St. Petersburg: Publishing House of the Russian Christian Humanitarian Institute].

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Яков Духонченко, et al., *История евангельских христиан-баптистов в СССР*. (Москва: Издание Всесоюзного Совета Евангельских Христиан-Баптистов, 1989), 97. [Yakov Dukhonchenko Alexey Vychkov, Pavel Savchenko, and Artur Mitskevich. *History of Evangelical Christians-Baptists in the USSR*. Moscow: Publication of the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists].

about 20% of the population of such citizens, impaired in their rights.<sup>11</sup> It was the disenfranchised, under the conditions of the so-called "revolutionary legality," who became the first victims of "proletarian vigilance," and the trials over them were carried out quickly and without "petty-bourgeois hesitation."<sup>12</sup> The position of the church worsened even more in 1929 when the XIV All-Russian Congress of Soviets of the RSFSR removed from the fourth article of the Constitution the provision on freedom of religious and anti-religious propaganda and a decision was made to resolutely fight against two main enemies: "... with all kinds of churches and religions ..."<sup>13</sup> Churches originating from the countries of the so-called "capitalist camp" were subjected to exceptional obstruction. For example, M. Galaktionov in 1930 wrote about Adventists: "This new religion has been hammered together, Seventh Day Adventists, in American style... For Adventists, the 'end of the world'<sup>14</sup> preaching is the centerpiece of the whole system of fooling. ... Adventist leaders are engaged in sabotage, espionage ... ..Adventist ideology plays a counter-revolutionary role."<sup>15</sup> A similar situation and attitude towards Protestant churches, with minor changes, existed until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. It is quite clear that in such conditions, when the authorities categorically opposed the construction of houses of worship in general, it was not necessary to talk about the construction of aesthetic church buildings, especially with religious visual rhetoric expressed in architecture. Therefore, the situation developed that in the city of Kyiv, with a population of several million and having more than five hundred members of the SDA church, there was only one prayer house. The prayer house of this church, geographically closest to the city of Kyiv, was located 120 kilometers away in the city of Boguslav.

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<sup>11</sup> В. Кириллова, *Книга памяти* (Екатеринбург: УИФ "Наука," 1994), 24. [V. Kirillova. Book of memory. Yekaterinburg: UIF "Science"].

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> XIV Всероссийский съезд Советов РСФСР. *Бюллетень*, vol. 12 (Москва, 1929), 24 [XIV All-Russian Congress of Soviets of the RSFSR. Bulletin]. Цит. по: А. Слезин, "Антирелигиозное наступление советского государства в 1927 -1929 гг.," *Социодинамика*, no. 5 (2013): 125–89, [https://nbpublish.com/library\\_read\\_article.php?id=615](https://nbpublish.com/library_read_article.php?id=615). [A. Slezin. "Anti-religious offensive of the Soviet state in 1927 -1929." Sociodynamics].

<sup>14</sup> М. Галактионов, *Классовый враг под сектантской личиной* (Москва, 1930), 21. [M. Galaktionov. Class enemy under the sectarian guise. Moscow].

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 32.



**Andrei Zotovich Borshchevsky at his house, where the service was held.  
Ternovka village, Krizhopol district. 1930s.**

Meeting houses are a costly endeavor that requires a large investment of money. Buildings should stand out for their appearance, serve as an architectural dominant of an urban or rural landscape and, at the same time, carry certain and easily readable information about the religious trend. The peculiarities of the doctrine of the SDA church, adhering to the biblical requirements of the Ten Commandments (Exodus, ch. 20), preaches the observance of the Sabbath.<sup>16</sup> The observance of the Sabbath involves refusing to work from sunset on Friday until sunset on Saturday. For church members, this was a difficult test, since "many lost their jobs for keeping the Sabbath and fell into the ranks of violators of the recently adopted (1961) law on parasites."<sup>17</sup> Trying to keep the Sabbath and not fall under the law on parasites, church members agreed to the most difficult and low-paid jobs, which, in turn, led to a situation where the poverty of the church members did not allow them to have adequate funds for large projects. For these reasons, it was quite common for church members to use their homes as houses of prayer.



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<sup>16</sup> Еллен Уайт, *Велика боротьба* (Київ: Джерело життя, 2006), 408-409. [Ellen White. *Great struggle*. Kyiv: Source of life].

<sup>17</sup> Евгений Зайцев, *История Церкви АСД* (Заокский: Источник жизни, 2008), 487. [Eugene Zaitsev. *History of the SDA Church*. Zaoksky: The Source of Life].

**Prayer house in the village of Kleban, Vinnytsia region, 1950 House of Sister  
Nina Bobik.**

We made this digression in order to outline the system of religious intolerance in the Russian Empire in the second half of the 19th century, as well as its successor, the Soviet Union, in order to show the very impossibility for those who stood at the lowest rung of a specific cult and social hierarchy to obtain permission for the construction of a prayer house. However, since the beginning of the collapse of the Soviet Union, Protestant churches, including the Seventh-day Adventist Church, have been able to openly profess their views, as well as the right to build their own houses of worship. In focusing on just a few houses of worship that are representative of the modern sacred architecture of the SDA Church, let's take the church of the city of Kyiv, located for many years on Yamskaya Street, 70. It is still considered the central and one of the largest churches in Ukraine.



**Prayer house of the SDA church in Kyiv, 1953 at Yamskaya, 70**

The modern building was built on the site of an old barn acquired in the late 1940s. Not wanting to create a positive image of the church, the authorities allowed buying a barn on Yamskaya Street, which had a dubious reputation since pre-revolutionary times. Here was the so-called "red light" area, so colorfully described by the famous writer A. I. Kuprin in the novel "The Pit."<sup>18</sup> A little further away is the Baikove cemetery. To this day, the church building is sandwiched between industrial enterprises on the front side, and the backside faces the small river Lybid, turned into a sewer. The history of the street, the outskirts, and

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<sup>18</sup> А. Куприн and А. Яма, *Собрание сочинений в 6 т.*, vol. 5 (Москва: Гослитиздат, 1958). [A. Kuprin and A. Yama. Collected Works in 6 Vol. 5. Moscow: Goslitizdat].



the neighborhood with the cemetery, obviously, in the opinion of the authorities, should have repelled potential believers as much as possible.

Since the legislation prohibited church organizations from owning land, the property was registered to Nikolai Repik, a member of the church. Already in 1953, the construction of a new prayer house began on the site of the old shed. The construction was completed under the pastorate of D. K. Kolbach, who headed the Kyiv community in 1955.<sup>19</sup> The peculiarities of architecture speak rather of the poverty of church members and the prohibition of the authorities on any, including visual propaganda.



#### **Prayer house of the ASD church, Yamskaya st. 70 in 1974**

Despite the prohibitions, the church grew and by 1974, after several reconstructions, it was the largest prayer house in Ukraine. The church was a rectangular building with a side veranda. The facade, like the building as a whole, was not at all associated with the church.

Only after the proclamation of independence of Ukraine (1991) did the churches receive the right to build buildings in accordance with their ideas about the tasks of architecture as visual preaching. In 1994, the construction of a new prayer house began on the site of the old church at Yamskaya 70. The new building was built in the neo-Gothic style.

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<sup>19</sup> Н. Жукалюк, *Вспоминайте наставников ваших*. (Киев: Джерело життя, 1999), 333. [N. Zhukalyuk. Remember your mentors. Kiev: The source of life],



**Prayer house, Kyiv, Yamskaya street 70. Start of construction 1994**

Since this type of church, striving to preserve the resemblance to the Gothic and borrowed from the Christian Catholic Middle Ages, became in many ways decisive in the construction of Adventist churches in Ukraine, we will try to explain its popularity. At one time Erwin Panofsky noted that "Early Scholasticism was born at the same time and in the same environment in which the Early Gothic architecture was born, embodied in the Church of Saint-Denis abbot Suger."<sup>20</sup> And then he continues that the period of high scholasticism begins in the 12th century and reaches its climax in the 13th century. In the same period, magnificent examples of High Gothic architecture were erected in Chartres and Soissons. At the same time, the creativity of such philosophers of High Scholasticism as Alexander of Hales, Albert the Great, William of Auvergne, St. Boniface, and St. Thomas Aquinas, reached its peak.<sup>21</sup> Note that humanists, like the reformers of the 16th century, categorically opposed scholasticism. Moreover, in the 16th century the notorious Albigensian crusade (also called the Qatari crusade) (1209-1229), initiated by Pope Innocent III (1198-1216), took place.

For quite a long time, the Protestants of the USA and England, especially those who are usually attributed to the Low Church, turned to the Renaissance and Classical styles when

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<sup>20</sup> Эрвин Панофский, *Перспектива как символическая форма. Готическая архитектура и схоластика*. (Санкт-Петербург: Азбука-Классика, 2004), 218. [Erwin Panofsky. *Perspective as a symbolic form. Gothic architecture and scholasticism*. St. Petersburg: Azbuka-Classica].

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

building churches. However, from the second half of the 19th century, another tendency can be seen, to which the modern researcher Jeanne Halgren Kilde drew attention, saying that the interest of Protestant churches in the revival of Gothic architecture is a mystery.<sup>22</sup> After all, the Gothic church, with its division into a nave for the laity and an altar for the clergy, contradicted the ideas of the Protestants about the structure of the church and worship. Likewise, the rich decor of the Gothic was in conflict with the modest classical aesthetics previously associated with Protestantism.<sup>23</sup>

However, in this case, with regard to Ukrainian realities, we fully share the opinion of Panofsky, who declares that "In its image, the cathedral of High Gothic sought to embody all Christian knowledge - *theological* [highlighted by us - P.K.], natural science and history."<sup>24</sup>

The embodiment of theology and its representation to the outside world becomes one of the important tasks of architects in the construction of new churches of the SDA church. Having gained freedom after many years of almost clandestine existence, the church immediately launched an active preaching work. For effective preaching, it was necessary not only to declare their theological foundations but also to show the connection between the SDA church and the long history of the Christian church. In church building, Gothic served as a symbol of the continuity of the doctrine and an important component of general evangelism, fulfilling the mission of visual preaching. George Duby in his famous work dedicated to the Middle Ages very accurately formulated the functions and tasks of Gothic architecture: "Light, the search for God, who took a human form, clarity of thought, logic..."

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New architectural structures attracted a lot of attention already during the construction phase. It is pertinent to note that if at the time of the collapse of the Soviet Union there were more than 270 congregations of this church on the territory of Ukraine, then in 2000 there were already 784, and the number of members of the SDA Church increased during this period from 16,000 to 60,000 people.

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<sup>22</sup> Kilde Jeanne Halgren, *When Church Became Theatre: The Transformation of Evangelical Architecture and Worship in Nineteenth-Century America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 56.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, 57.

<sup>24</sup> Эрвин Панофский, *Перспектива как символическая форма. Готическая архитектура и схоластика*. (Санкт-Петербург: Азбука-Классика, 2004), 251 [Erwin Panofsky. *Perspective as a symbolic form. Gothic architecture and scholasticism*. St. Petersburg: Azbuka-Classica].

<sup>25</sup> Ж. Дюби, *Время соборов. Искусство и общество 980–1420 годов*, trans. М. Рожнова and О. Иванова (Москва, 2002), 152. [J. Duby. *Time of Cathedrals. Art and Society 980-1420.*]

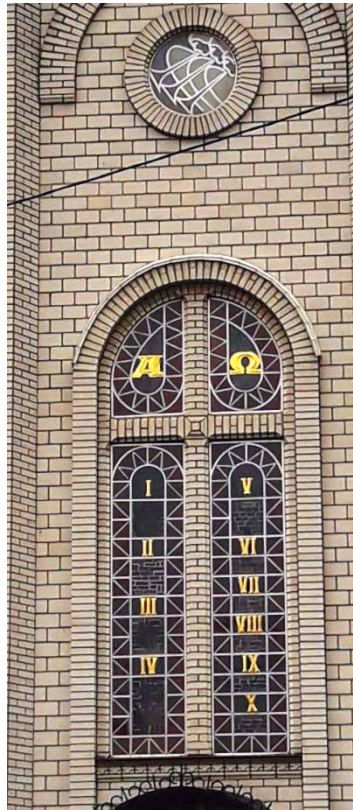


**Prayer House of the First Community. Kyiv, Yamskaya, 70. Beginning of reconstruction (1994). The photo shows the old facade and the construction of new walls.**

The first of the reconstructed in the neo-Gothic style was the Church of the First Kyiv Community on Yamskaya Street, 70. Its walls are made of local white sand-lime bricks. The choice of this inexpensive material was determined not so much by an attempt to implement certain ideas, as by the scarcity of building materials at that time. However, church architects managed to implement a significant program with rather modest means. It is noteworthy that what Erwin Panofsky called “art for art” in the understanding of modern aesthetics is absent here, but there is “visual logic”<sup>26</sup> and visual preaching. The author's intention was to show the most important dogmatic foundations of the church and the relationship between the Old and New Testaments, which is an important element of the SDA theology. The building is crowned with a spire flanked by four pinnacle towers pointing to the four evangelists. The middle spire, the taller one, is decorated with a cross and symbolizes Christ. There are three windows on the central facade - a reference to the Divine Trinity.

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<sup>26</sup> Эрвин Панофский, *Перспектива как символическая форма. Готическая архитектура и схоластика*. (Санкт-Петербург: Азбука-Классика, 2004), 270 [Erwin Panofsky. *Perspective as a symbolic form. Gothic architecture and scholasticism*. St. Petersburg: Azbuka-Classic].



### **The central window of the main facade. Kyiv, Yamskaya, 70**

The central window is larger and is divided by a cross into two parts, which, in turn, are made in the form of the tablets of Moses. The tablets on the façade take center stage, as an important dogmatic foundation of the church is the full observance of the Ten Commandments, including Sabbath observance. Above the Decalogue are two letters of the Greek alphabet "Α" and "Ω" indicating that Seventh-day Adventists believe in Christ as the Creator and the beginning of the beginnings, who created the world, but He is also the Judge who will complete earthly history. No less important symbolism is carried by the image of three trumpeting angels located in a rosette above the central window. Recall that the doctrine of the three angels' message is one of the central in Adventism and is associated with the prophecy of Revelation ch. 14, which tells about three angels' warning of events before the end of the world. Note that this prophecy, in fact, triggered the Adventist movement in America.



### **Left-bank spiritual center of Seventh-day Adventists, Kyiv, 2002**

The largest building of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, located in Kyiv on the left bank of the Dnipro River, is no less representative. This church building dates back to the time of the independence of Ukraine. The construction of the temple on Yamskaya Street and the construction of the Left Bank Spiritual Center are less than 10 years apart (completion of construction in 2002). It is located in a picturesque park and constitutes the sophisticated dominant of the entire area. Side ramps with openwork railings lead to the central entrance of the church, which further enhances the sophistication of the temple. The left-bank spiritual center partially repeats the neo-Gothic architecture of the church on Yamskaya street, 70, but is more decorated, colorful, and festive. Above the altar part, there is a spire topped with a cross. Its aspiration upward is emphasized by many bright red pinnacle towers.

The altar part is decorated with stained-glass windows. In the external Gothic ornamentation, powerful supporting elements are used, decorated with decorative pseudo-window openings. For the religious identification of the temple, on the frontal exposition repeating the outline of the organ, instead of the Tablets of Moses, as we saw in the previous temple, the modern emblem of the church is located. An open Bible, a threefold flame (referring to the main doctrine of Adventism about the three angels' messages), and a cross lying on the Bible.





### **Main facade. Left-bank Spiritual Center**

Note that such architecture, size, the color of buildings, symbols, and especially crosses during the Soviet Union were never used in Protestant architecture for the reasons listed above. However, the aesthetics and, most importantly, the pronounced visual rhetoric and the associative connection of the appearance of the new church with Christian history led to the fact that the Kyiv temple building became a model for other churches in many cities of Ukraine.



**Temple on Podil. Kyiv, st. Lukyanovskaya st. 9 b. Completion of construction 2008. On the left is the church building, on the right, is the administrative building.**

This became the third church in Kyiv in terms of the number and time of construction on the Lukyanovskaya street 9 b. It is also called the Temple in Podil. Like the two previous ones, it was built in the neo-Gothic style. The church is conveniently located at the picturesque foot of the Schekavitsa mountain. The construction of the complex of structures began in 1994 with the reconstruction of an old (1912) stone structure. Today the renovated building houses the offices of the Union Conference. The construction of the church itself began in 2007, and its opening took place on November 7, 2008. This is a fairly spacious structure, with two tiers of choirs, lancet windows, and high Gothic spiers. This church also has ornamental stained-glass windows. Significant attention was paid to the lighting during the design. By compressing the walls and increasing the area of the elongated windows, one of the most important features of the Gothic was achieved, the fullness of light. This created a bright room where everyone can clearly see the preacher and his associates. The lectern and the hall are equally well lit both in the daytime and in the evening. High lancet windows placed around the perimeter do not focus on the overhead light, as sometimes they go almost from the floor itself. This feature, as it were, denies the medieval idea of abbot Suger about the special sacred role of light pouring from above and in the first place puts utility, uniform illumination along the vertical and horizontal of the temple. The Gothic aesthetics of light, which was theologically substantiated in the era of the abbot Sugeria, is transformed into a specific interpretation of the lighting of a prayer house in the architecture of the 21st century.

In general, the Temple on Podil became a logical continuation of the already established architecture of prayer houses of the Church of the SDA in Kyiv. Its interior and uniformity of illumination fully fulfill their function, creating a feeling of an atmosphere of unity among believers. In turn, the external appearance by means of architecture and plastics translates the most important dogmatic ideas that sound from behind the church pulpit.





**The interior of the Temple on Podil. Kyiv, Lukyanovskaya street 9 b.**

Summing up, it should be said that since the formation of the first Seventh-day Adventist communities in Ukraine, the church faced a number of problems that directly influenced the architectural appearance of its houses of worship. Already in 1830, a repressive tsarist decree against "harmful sects" was issued, which provided for various punishments for religious agitation, including exile. The persecution of new religious movements intensified especially after 1880 when there was pressure from both the secular authorities and the church authorities. Under the prevailing conditions, the construction of the simplest prayer houses turned out to be very problematic and, as in the case of T. Babienko, even the very attempt to obtain permits for the construction could end in imprisonment or exile.

The position of the church in Soviet times was not better either. The Bolshevik regime saw in religion an immediate threat to its existence, which resulted in a fierce anti-religious struggle. Those churches that arose and penetrated into the Soviet Union from the United States and Western Europe found themselves in a particularly difficult situation. Therefore, it was possible to acquire houses and rebuild them for churches only in rare moments of weakening of the anti-religious struggle. At the same time, architectural delights were not allowed and any elements that could indicate the building as a church were strictly prohibited.

The gaining of independence by Ukraine allowed SDA Christians not only to freely profess their religious views but also to build houses of prayer. It was found that the use of medieval architectural traditions took place in line with the general return of the Protestant churches in the United States and Western Europe to the revival of Gothic architecture as the

one that, in the language of architecture and plastics, allows most fully to embody the main dogmas of the doctrine. Attention was also drawn to the fact that the light in Adventist temples is distributed more evenly, due to the fact that the windows of the pointed arches are located as low as possible to the floor surface.

It should also be noted that the symbol of the cross began to be used in the exteriors and interiors of new churches, which was not observed at all earlier.

In general, the use of understandable religious symbols, a reference to Gothic architecture, emphasizes the continuity of the SDA church and fulfills the mission of visual preaching. The visual rhetoric of the temples, combined with high aesthetic content, allowed them to become not only attractive spiritual centers of the city but also important architectural dominants of the city.

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