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*Sculptural décor of façades of Lviv tenement houses  
of the Renaissance period (on the example of Scholtz-Wolfowitz  
tenement house No. 23 in Market Square in the city of Lviv)*

The medieval Lviv, located in the crossroads of trade routes, was open to the influence of the new traditions. The Renaissance period comes to the city, lying in the ruins of destructive fire of 1527. Gothic Lviv suddenly passes away in the past, and the Renaissance in its bright understanding of this word comes to the city. New forms were brought to the architecture of Lviv by Italian craftsmen, educated in the Renaissance traditions of their country. These are mostly the natives of northern Italian regions. Ordinary artisans-architects have quickly assimilated in the new conditions, being affected by the local traditions. Those among them who were non-ordinary personalities left their inimitable monuments of Renaissance architecture to us. Buildings, constructed at that period, attract us by harmony of shapes and by refinement of stone carvings. Sculptural décor, which acquires expressive exemplariness and which is vested a certain symbolic and philosophical content during the Renaissance epoch, plays a special role in the formation of a peculiar architectural image of the buildings.

The present article is dedicated to revealing a symbolic and philosophical meaning of sculptural décor on the façades of Lviv Renaissance houses on the example of Scholtz-Wolfowitz tenement stone No. 23 in Market Square in Lviv.

It should be noted there was late Renaissance, which came to Lviv. Its chronological frames for the monuments of Lviv may be conventionally limited by the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and one third of the 17<sup>th</sup> century [1, p. 43]. Arriving at the local ground, this style is affected by certain autochthonous influences. The distinguished order system of the Italian Renaissance is often combined with the traditions of the local national culture. The ensemble of Assumption Church is a bright example of such



Fig. 1. Façade of Assumption Church

a combination (Fig. 1). Pavlo Rymlyanyn (Paolo Domini-  
ci Romanus), a well-known creator of numerous Lviv  
monuments of Renaissance, combines the west basilica  
plan with the local architectural traditions in this monu-  
ment. He puts three cupolas, the most significant element  
of Ukrainian sacral architecture, on the longitudinal axis  
of the building (Fig. 2). This technique was obviously ap-

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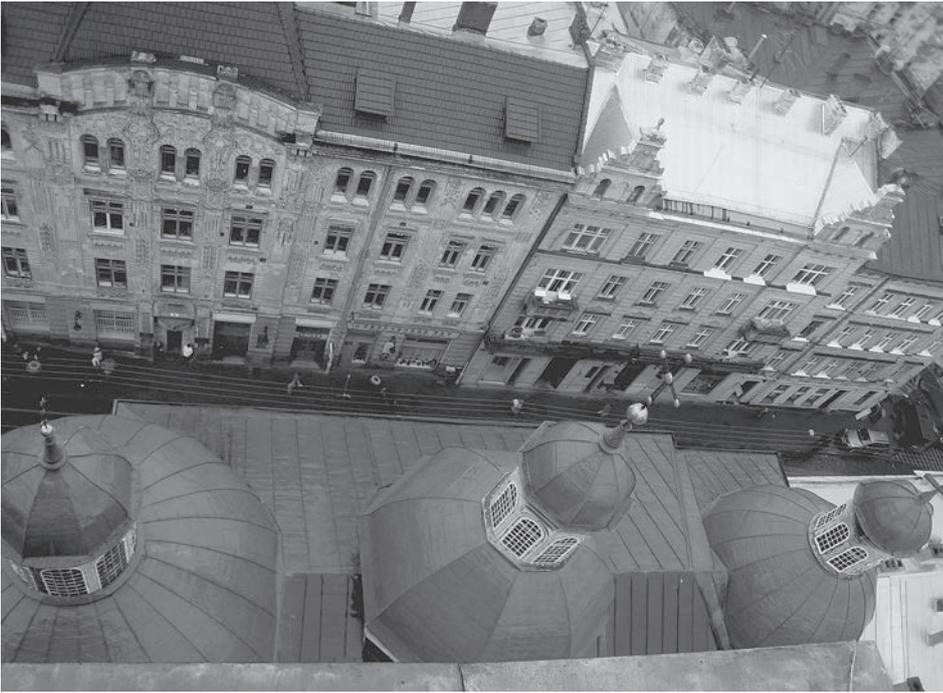


Fig. 2. Cupolas of Assumption Church



Fig. 3. Bandinelli Palace, Market Square No. 2



Fig. 4. Black house, Market Square No. 4

plied in order to please the customer, because the church was built at the expense of the Assumption Brotherhood of the Ukrainian community of the city. Such influences can be traced not only at the level of architect's creative design, but in the process of performance of decorative works as well. Local craftsmen have obviously perceived

classical shapes of order patterns, brought from the West, in their own way, they often performed them not quite exactly, in their own manner, or added traditional national motives, which used to be more clear for them. Such details can be seen among the wealth of stone carvings on the façades of the Assumption Church and the Chapel of



Fig. 5. Scholtz-Wolfowitz house, Market Square No. 23



Fig. 6. Hepner house, Market Square No. 28

Three Saints from the same ensemble. Thus, the reliefs of saints on the church frieze are carved in the style of the eastern icons, and the branches of viburnum, being the national symbol of the Ukrainians which can be seen in the floral ornaments. Many other sacral structures are built at that period apart from the Assumption Church, Church of the Bernardine (project by Bernardine architect Avelides, architects Pavlo Rymlyanyn, Amvrosiy Prykhylnyy, Andriy Bemer from Wroclaw), Church of Poor Clares (Pavlo Rymlyanyn (?), Benedictine Church and Monastery (Pavlo Rymlyanyn), hospital and Church of Lazarus (Pavlo Rymlyanyn, Amvrosiy Prykhylnyy), Boim Chapel (Andriy Bemer) and Campiano Chapel (Pavlo Rymlyanyn?), near the Latin Cathedral, are among them. In the composition of the said structures the influences of the national traditions are not so evident, because they were built mainly for monastic communities, which came from the west.

Besides sacral buildings, many residential houses were constructed in the city, ruined by the fire. If the development of Market Square along with the City Hall structure had not changed after the first third of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, today we would see one more integral ensemble of the Renaissance architecture. Residential houses, however, are exposed to greater changes than sacral ones due to frequent reconstructions and adjustments, connected with change of residents and a new vogue of decoration of the interiors or façades. Among numerous Renaissance houses, built in the medieval city at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> – beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, only several houses in Mar-

ket Square have survived without any essential changes, which marks the traits of the style. Their façades attract us by their composition perfection and craftsmanship of décor performance. These are house No. 2, known as Bandinelli palace (Fig. 3) and the Black house (No. 4) (Fig. 4) on the east side of the square. Scholtz - Wolfowitz house (No. 23) (Fig. 5) and Hepner house (No. 28), (Fig. 6) located on the west side. Façade of the house No. 14, faced with rusticated stone, which architects were Pavlo Rymlyanyn and Pavlo Shchaslyvyy [2, s. 32], working on the order of Venetian Consul Antonio Massari, is distinguished among the buildings on the southern side. The façade, however, has been reconstructed several times, and there are only rusticated stones and the sculpture of a winged lion above the main entrance, which tell us about its original character. The remaining houses were either built in a later time period, or reconstructed in a manner which reminds us of only some elements of the style.

From the point of view of composition, the façades of all the houses are interpreted differently, though they belong to one style. The Black house and house No. 14 are entirely faced with rusticated stone, door portals and window frames distinguishing between them. Façades of the houses No. 2 and No. 28 have a pronounced horizontal division of the façade and well-developed window frames, which are ended by pediments. In the compositional decoration of the house No. 23, horizontal division, traditional for the Renaissance style, is supplemented by an order system with application of pillars of the Ionic and the Corinthian orders.



Fig. 7. Scholtz-Wolfowitz house.  
Aedicula which sculptural group "Baptism"

With this free interpretation of antique order in compositional solution of the façades, the Renaissance buildings of Lviv still have some common traits, expressed in a wealth of stone carving, decoration with stone sculpture and subjection of sculptural décor to a greater or lesser extent to a certain philosophical idea. If in the Assumption Church we see the effect of cultural and national traditions upon the style, than the worldview and aesthetic



Fig. 8. Scholtz-Wolfowitz house.  
Cartouche under the second floor windows

taste of an owner have a greater influence on the character of residential houses.

Market Square façade of Scholtz-Wolfowitz house (No. 23) is the most interesting from this point of view. The house has a construction of the pit and attic, lost as a result of numerous reconstructions, but the decoration at the level of the second and the third floors survived almost unchanged. The façade impresses by a great wealth of sculptural décor and the craftsmanship of its performance. In order to understand better the philosophical idea of pattern of the façade, one should know something about the house owner, because it was he, who, being an educated and creative person of the Renaissance day, determined this image of the house.

Scholtz-Wolfowitz is known to be the native of Silesia. In the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century he comes to Lviv, then gets married with a daughter of Lviv patrician Melchior Gase. The bride gets as a dowry an angular house in Market Square, which side façade faces the Latin Cathedral. In 1570 Jan Scholtz-Wolfowitz buys the entire



Fig. 9. Scholtz-Wolfowitz house.  
Mascaron of lion in the second floor  
pilasters' pedestals



Fig. 10. Scholtz-Wolfowitz house.  
Sculptural portrait in the right corner  
of the aedicule



Fig. 11. Scholtz-Wolfowitz house.  
Portrait of a young lady in the third floor  
pilasters' pedestals



Fig. 12. Scholtz-Wolfowitz house.  
Portrait of a young man in the third floor  
pilasters' pedestals



Fig. 13. Scholtz-Wolfowitz house.  
Young man in a beret in the left corner  
of the aedicule

house, located on the partsel, and commences its reconstruction and decoration of the façades, which has lasted until his death in 1605. Jan Zaremba, student of Herman Van Gute, sculptor of Dutch origin, for whom the Scholtz-Wolfowitz family was the patron of arts, is considered to be the author of sculptural Renaissance décor. The historical sources testify that after the craftsman's death (1596) there were no more orders for sculptural studio on part of Jan Scholtz-Wolfowitz. In 1595 the Scholtz-Wolfowitz family was granted baronage title de Wolfowitz from the emperor Rudolf II [3]. After this event, the owners, probably, could afford to decorate the façades of the house with sculptural portraits of their family representatives.

Aedicula, arranged on the third floor level, is a sculptural dominant. (Fig. 7) Sculptural group "Baptism" is placed in its niche. Such subjects of sculptural composition are not accidental, because the house owner's name was Jan (Johann). Therefore, it is natural, that the plot of the most significant event in his patron's life is chosen by the owner to decorate his house corner. The base with Jesus and John standing is decorated on one side by the Gase family coat of arms and on the other – by the Scholtz-Wolfowitz family coat of arms. Underneath, on the base ledge, there is a reclining statue of a woman with the attributes of Belief. The sculptural group is well perceived from both, the Market Square and Halytska Street, which once led from Halytska gateway to the city. The house owner makes it clear with the help of the sculptural décor, that his family has a strong protection, and he confirms his belief in the patronage of his patron. The entire sculptural décor of the façade is subjected to a certain philosophical meaning. (It should be defined more precisely that here we speak of the façade from the market square side because in the 16–17<sup>th</sup> centuries the house was not decorated from the Cathedral square.)

On the level of the second floor, under the windows, cartouches are built into the masonry of the walls with inscriptions carved in the stone in Latin: "THE NAME

OF THE LORD IS A STRONG TOWER" (Proverbs, 18) (Fig. 8); "WHOEVER TRUSTS IN THE LORD IS KEPT SAFE" (Proverbs, 29); "A WISE MAN FEARS THE LORD AND SHUNS EVIL", (Proverbs, 14) [4, pp. 53–57]. Stern lions near the cartouches look menacingly onto the square from the pilasters' pedestals (Fig. 9). Such decor symbolically protects tenants of the house from evil intentions and actions from outside.



Fig. 14. Scholtz-Wolfowitz house. Sculpture of God the Father  
on the pediments above outermost windows of the third floor

On the level of the third floor mascarons are mounted to the pilasters' pedestals. The sculptural portraits impress with the depth of representation of character of each figure, perfect execution and detailed finishing of details of the garments. A portrait of Lviv patrician, probably Melchior Gase, is placed on the aedicule pedestal on the right from the family coat of arms (Fig. 10) and further on a portrait of a young lady (Fig. 11), probably his daughter, spouse of Jan Scholz-Wolfowitz. Next portrait – a portrait of a young man; it is, probably, one of the representatives of the patrician family (Fig. 12). The outermost portrait



Fig. 15. Scholtz-Wolfowitz house.  
Façade on the Cathedral Square

mask was lost due to the leaking drainpipe and restored, evidently, in 1890; it has not preserved its characteristic portrait features. Of some interest is the mask placed in the left corner of the aedicule (Fig. 13). This is a perfect portrait of a young man in a beret. Is it not the owner of the house himself (?), an educated, vigorous and creative man. On pediments above outermost windows of the third floor there are high reliefs of the angels, half-length sculpture of God the Father (Fig. 14) who stretches arms over the façade as if protecting and blessing all residents of the house and, probably, those who walks in the square by the façade. There are two more mascarons placed high above under the eaves. They take up the field on the right and left of the console on the corner of the house. These are faces of a man and a woman that have no portrait features. What do they symbolize, almost indistinguishable at such height, those masks? May be just a man and a woman, yin and yang, the two fundamental energies of the universe from which life on earth begins... The frozen in stone façade tells us in the language of symbols expressed in sculpture that residents of this house are merited people who live by the Lord's laws, who can defend themselves from envy and encroachment of outside world and rest in the Lord's mercy. Unfortunately, the Scholz-Wolfowitz's house has lost completely the initial pattern of the ground floor, the entrance to the house, whose decoration was of a considerable importance in forming philosophical and aesthetic image of the house, has not been preserved either. To form the idea of the characteristic features of decoration of the ground floors of buildings of this period it shall be necessary to examine other buildings in the market square. Only the Black house (1588–1589) has completely retained its character, while the rest of the façades have only fragments of the initial pattern; these are predominantly the entrance stone portals. The doors and the windows of the Black house have lavishly decorated with

stone carving portals. Cartouche with the owner's coat of arms is affixed above the entrance arch and further above there is the sculpture of Virgin Mary with the Child Jesus, above the windows and corbels of the pilasters of the first floor there are sculptures of the patron saints. The façade acquired its sculptural decor in 1675–1677, but it does not spoil its general character.

The central portal of the house No. 28 is decorated with figures of angels that embrace the entrance arch with their wings with the pediment above it supported by lions-mascarons. The figure of the winged lion with an opened book – the symbol of Venice – is placed above the stone portal of the house No. 14 that belonged to the Venetian consul and merchant Antonio Massari.

These examples show that the decor of Renaissance façades on the level of the first floor often carried direct information about the house owner, his social status or origin. The portals were ornately decorated and the decor combined symbols of earthly and heavenly protection.

Proceeding from the analysis carried out, a certain pattern emerges after which the decor is located on the façade of Scholz-Wolfowitz's house:

1 – (ground floor level) lost. It could symbolize wealth of the owner, combine symbols of earthly and heavenly protection.

2 – (second floor level) – decor shows attitude of the house owner to earthly life, symbolizes his self-reliance.

3 – (third floor level) – decor symbolizes hopes of the house owner for the Lord's protection of himself and his family.

It should be noted that such a pattern is not established or mandatory as the sculptural decor, similarly to the rest of adornment, is formed freely on every façade observing general style features and a certain philosophical idea only.

Façade of the house is of interest also because of the fact that it underwent substantial restoration works in the

end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. David Schwarzwald bought the house in 1888 and immediately began its reconstruction. A row of shop windows in the ground floor with the mezzanine over some of the first floor rooms appeared and reconstruction works were carried out on the outbuilding. Two balconies on the second floor level from the Cathedral square side were added as well. The pushing owner wanted to dismantle the aedicule with the sculptures and offered it to the city. But, instead, he was forced to restore the façade on the Market square side preserving its authentic decor, while the façade on the Cathedral square side received stucco molding of braces and pilasters similar to those on the Market square side (Fig. 15) on the decision of the city council and the conservatives lodge commission. To preserve the character of the façade, lion-mascarons were attached to the molded bases of pilasters of the second floor, but their material and the manner of execution differed from their analogs on the Market square side. These are molded masks cast in molds. The cartouches under the windows also differ, for they are molded too and not as delicately as the rest. The letters of the text are embedded in the convex surface, while letters of the front façade cartouches are embossed. The inscriptions are different, and although these are also proverbs, there is no reference to the source in the lower right corner. To avoid repetition of the inscriptions on the main façade, they were borrowed from the house No. 28 whose façade was also decorated with aphorisms. Also interesting is the extension of the portrait row located on the pilasters' pedestals on the level of the third floor. The mascarons there are also molded pieces. One face is a copy of the alabaster portrait located on the same façade under the aedicule. The other face (Fig. 16) is of interest because it has evident portrait features but does not look like any of the other existing mascarons and by its features the face of the person differs considerably from the other portraits of members of the patrician family. It is possible that restorers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century made a portrait of one of their colleagues, for Lviv has never been short of people with a good sense of humor. Some molded pediments with angels are located under the windows.

Returning to the main façade, it should be noted that this is the only market place building where aside from such traditional material for the stone decor as limestone alabaster is used as well [6]. The cartouches with proverbs and portrait mascarons are made of alabaster. The entire stone decor of the façade was painted as it was the custom of that time [7]. Even now one can discern remnants of polychromy on the limestone figures with a naked eye.

Unfortunately, the sculpture had not been restored at the time of the façade restoration. The sculptural composition "Epiphany" that is the connoting and architectural



Fig. 16. Scholtz-Wolfowitz house.  
Sculptural portrait in the façade  
on the Cathedral Square

accentuation of the façade, lost a part of Jesus' leg and has a look that does not decorate the restored façade. The reclining figure of "Faith" located under the pediment is open to snow and rain and has already lost its once refined features. Now it reminds of a chunk of stone of an indefinite shape washed by the rain and is out of tune with the façade. Comparing the present day state of the sculpture with its photograph in the book by V.S. Wujcyk "State historical-architectural preserve in Lviv", published in 1991, it is easy to understand, that because of the irreversible processes it will soon become impossible to restore it. The delicate alabaster portraits that stayed on the façade for over 400 years and are in a dangerous state, continue to be ruined by the adverse atmospheric elements. The problem lies not only in methods of their restoration. The question arises whether it is necessary to let the originals stay on the façade. Portraits of such delicate workmanship should give aesthetic delight to the museum visitors. Nobody can see their fine features on the level of the third floor of the façade. It will probably be absolutely justified to install on the façade their finely made copies and display the originals in the museum after their restoration.

The Renaissance period left for us in inheritance the monuments whose façades are valuable not only for their artistic decor, but filled with philosophical content which gives us an opportunity to understand better the epoch, its world outlook, cultural and moral values. Opening of this stratum of national cultural heritage requires further detailed studies and well-balanced steps for their restoration and preservation.

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***Wystrój rzeźbiarski fasad lwowskich kamienic doby renesansu  
(na przykładzie kamienicy Szolc-Wolfowiczów – Rynek 23 we Lwowie)***

Warunki rozwoju średniowiecznego Lwowa sprzyjały poszerzeniu tradycji Renesansu w jego kulturze i w budownictwie. Na klasyczne formy i metody, przyniesione przez włoskich architektów, wpływ wywarły miejscowe tradycje. Wskutek tego architektura Lwowa doby odrodzenia nabyła specyficznych cech. Dla wystroju architektonicznego fasad charakterystyczna stała się dość swobodna interpretacja reguł klasycznych, a także nasycenie delikatną rzeźbą i stosowanie polichromii. Jednak szczególnie ciekawe jest traktowanie wystroju rzeźbiarskiego, stosowa-

nie którego często było podporządkowane nie tylko funkcji estetycznej, lecz także idei symbolicznej, oraz nabierało treści filozoficznej. Wystrój plastyczny stał się ilustracyjny i często charakteryzował światopogląd właściciela kamienicy. Rzeźbiarze wyróżniający się wysokim mistrzostwem i kulturą wykonania byli często zatrudniani przez znanych projektantów. Wystrój rzeźbiarski fasad stał się wartością architektoniczną, artystyczną i historyczną i wymaga obecnie szczególnego podejścia do jego badania i ochrony.

**Key words:** Lviv, tenement houses, renaissance period

**Słowa kluczowe:** Lwów, kamienice, renesans