

The Architecture of Educational Institutions and Its Significance for the Learning Process in the Context of the Russian Educational Tradition

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Abstract—The paper discusses the architectural features of Russian educational institutions, their functional and ideological purpose. The directions and stages of development of the Russian architectural tradition in education are highlighted. Particular attention is paid to the mindset preferences and political views of customers and managers in the field of education. The significance of Russian philanthropic patronage and its contribution to shaping the image of educational institutions is analyzed. The revaluation of the role of architecture in education throughout the 20th century is investigated. The characteristic features of buildings and structures are determined, allowing establishing the continuity of the Russian architectural tradition in education.

Keywords—architecture of educational institutions; material support of education; Russian education; motivation in learning; patronage of education

I. INTRODUCTION

The singularity of the Russian educational tradition, which absorbed many trends and directions, sometimes opposite to each other, is not only the presence of unique scientific and pedagogical schools that have made a colossal contribution to Russian education, but also in the achievements of material culture, which, at first glance, could not have a significant impact on the learning process. Speaking about the achievements of material culture, in our opinion, special attention should be paid to the architecture of educational institutions, which should be considered not only as an appendage to the scholastic institution itself, located in a building of a certain type and architectural style, but also as an informed choice of creators who want to influence on the consciousness of students and their level of motivation through the architectural features of educational buildings and structures that have not only aesthetic, but also deep semantic charge. It is necessary to understand that not every educational institution will have architectural features consciously taken into account in the construction of buildings and structures for this purpose, but educational institutions that have made a significant contribution to Russian education organized training in buildings with significant cultural value, which cannot be explained solely by large-scale cash injections, as there are many examples

proving that the high cost of the building cannot guarantee its suitability for educative goals. Obviously, elaborate architecture cannot replace literate teachers and motivated students, however, as practice shows, great educational ambitions require an integrated approach to the organization of the process and oblige concerned persons to pay attention to the architectural features of educational institutions. It is important that when studying the Russian architectural tradition in the field of education, a fundamental change in the approach to the educational process and its role in society, which occurred during the 1917 revolution in Russia, influenced both education as a whole and the architectural appearance of educational institutions. In particular: the rejection of an individual approach to the creation of educational institutions practiced in the Russian Empire, and the transition to mass construction of similar educational institutions in the USSR that had, however, its exceptions to the rule. It is worth noting that, despite the serious evolution of approaches, attention to the architectural features of educational institutions since the inception of the vocational education system has always remained at the proper level.

II. FEATURES OF THE ARCHITECTURE OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN PRE-REVOLUTIONARY RUSSIA

As mentioned above, the creation of a secular education system in the last quarter of the 18th century, in which training took place on a professional basis, was a starting point from which, as it seems, it became possible to approach the educational process in a comprehensive manner, taking into account not only the immediate needs of students, but creating a unique atmosphere of the educational process, which after a certain period of time can grow to a tradition. This tradition includes, among other things, the unique architecture of educational institutions, the existence of which was impossible within the framework of the peculiarities of religious education that prevailed prior the mentioned changes [1]. The centers of religious education characteristic of the period preceding the reign of Peter the Great were monasteries and other church centers, which assumed strict adherence to the traditions of Russian medieval church architecture, which did not select structures

built for educational purposes as a separate object within the framework of a single church (mostly monastic) complex.

Significant changes in education have traditionally been associated with the establishment of the Slavic-Greek-Latin Academy in 1687, located on the territory of the Zaikonospassky monastery. This model of the educational institution was borrowed from the newly-incorporated territories of Left-Bank Ukraine, whose population sought to preserve their religious traditions from Polish influence, establishing in 1615 the Kyiv Brotherhood School, which later became the Kiev-Mohyla Academy. Two main features that distinguished the Slavic-Greek-Latin Academy from the previous religious educational institutions in Russia should be noted. First, the academy was housed in a building specially built for it in the style of Moscow (Naryshkin) baroque, which was unusual for Russia at that time, since traditionally the process of religious education was viewed as hard work, which did not have any room for idle spirit, undoubtedly introduced by the magnificent baroque style (it is noteworthy that in the same year the Palace of Prince Golitsyn was built in Okhotnyi Ryad). The construction of the complex of buildings was sanctioned by the decree of His Holiness Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Joachim, emphasizing the high status of the institution and the importance of its foundation for the Russian elite [2]. Secondly, it is worth paying special attention to the peculiarities of the internal layout of the building: not only a three-storey academic building was erected, but also special rooms for the rector and teachers of the academy, and a special hall for holding meetings and debates [3]. Obviously, for contemporaries, the founding of the Slavic-Greek-Latin Academy was an extremely extraordinary event: the highest church authority consciously went on to “deconsecrate” the educational process, allowing the teaching of Latin in the walls of baroque buildings equipped within the Western European educational paradigm. At the same time, it was clear that the worldview of the graduate of the Academy would be far from the Old Moscow traditions, which will not least contribute to the architectural composition and unusual solutions for the organization of interiors. Based on the above, it is possible to make a firm conclusion: the architecture of Russian educational institutions initially came under Western European influence, which reached Russia through its western territories, and which for a long time determined the vector of the development of the country.

Over the next two centuries, the development of architectural traditions of the construction of educational institutions in Russia proceeded progressively, within the framework of the aforementioned Western European tradition, at the same time acquiring a number of unique features. Special attention should be paid to the Academy of Arts, the building for which was erected in 1764-1788. This structure is interesting primarily for its purpose: a special educational institution for training artists, sculptors, architects and engravers [4]. Empress Catherine the Great, commissioning in 1764 to draw up a draft of a “decent” building for the academy, approved “The Privileges and Statutes of the Imperial Academy of Three Notable Arts: Painting, Sculpture and Architecture with an Educative

School at this Academy”, which became the basis for raising the status of this educational establishments requiring buildings of the appropriate level [5]. To solve this problem, it was necessary to choose an architectural concept in which the educational process would be as effective as possible. A.F. Kokorinov, the rector of the Academy, was also an architect, under whose leadership the building was erected; he chose the composition of a monumental palace building for the project. We can say that from this moment one of the main architectural features of Russian educational institutions begins to be developed, or at least the declared desire for it: giving a palace, ceremonial appearance to educational institution, which is in a certain contradiction with the Western European tradition itself, which assumed restrained, medieval traditions architectural ensembles.

An example of a typical architectural ensemble of a pre-revolutionary Russian educational institution will be the complex of Kazan University, the main building of which was built in 1825. It is worth noting that at the beginning of the 19th century, founded in 1804, Kazan University was located in the building of the Imperial First Kazan Gymnasium, an architectural design of which deserves attention: in the design of the portico, decorative elements in the form of bas-relief images of symbols of science and art were actively used (mathematical tools with a globe and lira) [6]. These details emphasize the special attention of architects to the functional purpose of the building, the decoration of which should have prompted students to work hard. The main building of Kazan University belongs to the high style of Russian classicism, which, together with a complex of other buildings, makes it possible to call this ensemble one of the first Russian campuses, which, however, did not take root in Russia.

It must be recognized that the majority of Russian educational institutions were founded with direct state assistance and the idea of their architectural appearance was largely shaped by government officials, but there are examples of educational institutions that were founded through private initiative and architecturally embodied the ideas and dreams of customers. A striking example of such a facility will be the building of the former Rostov male gymnasium named after Alexei Leontyevich Kekin, which was built at his expense [7]. The building stands out for its large size against the background of a small provincial town. The gymnasium built in the classical style combined architectural features inherent in educational institutions built in the Russian tradition (according to the architect’s plan, the Corinthian order emphasized the strictness of the ensemble, but at the same time reminded of the high spiritual and moral significance of the educational process for a person in his formation and development, and the statues of the muses, located in the openings, were supposed to indicate the importance of music and other arts for students) and the details that are characteristic of modern at that time educational institutions (special Observatory for Astronomy studies). However, the history of the gymnasium vividly illustrates the turning point that occurred in the ideas about the image and purpose of the architectural ensemble of educational institutions for the educational process: after the

revolutionary events of 1917, the gymnasium was closed after a period of uncertainty in the building, the decorative elements of which remained because of the distant location Rostov-the-Great from the main political centers, high school was opened.

III. FEATURES OF THE ARCHITECTURE OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE SOVIET PERIOD

After the final establishment of the Soviet regime, the Bolsheviks were able to begin the practical implementation of their plans to fundamentally change the Soviet educational system, declared in their decrees, which could not but touch the architectural appearance of educational institutions [8]. In the period that lasted until the end of the 1930s, the practicality of the structures used to accommodate educational institutions was out front. A striking example is the building of the Moscow Financial Institute, raised in 1938 [9]. The typical five-storey building did not have outstanding architectural features and was a set of rooms equipped for studies. It is worth noting that the building of the institute was unique in its kind, since the majority of higher educational institutions were located in pre-revolutionary buildings. At the same time, it should be recognized that significant progress occurred in the architectural design of Soviet schools, many of which were built with great attention to detail, which undoubtedly attracted children who could receive education in comfortable conditions, which contrasted sharply with the difficult conditions of their everyday housing conditions.

After the end of the Second World War the new stage finally came in the construction of educational institutions, which can be characterized as a return to the pre-revolutionary architectural tradition with minor changes. The buildings of the Moscow Automobile and Road Construction Institute, the Moscow Power Engineering Institute and, to some extent different from them, the main building of the Moscow State University were built in the style called "Stalin's Empire" and in many ways copied the pre-revolutionary university buildings. At the same time, the decoration used monumental statues depicting Soviet people, who symbolized the workers and peasants who received education for the benefit of the general idea, which is very different from the pre-revolutionary traditions of decorative design, in which architects turned to the symbols of ancient scholarship, avoiding excessive realism [9]. After the death of Stalin in the Soviet Union, they switched to standard construction, which also affected educational institutions. Soviet secondary schools, with the exception of some interesting projects, possessed a moderate set of decorative elements: balustrades, pilasters, and bas-reliefs depicting scientists and artists. Against the background of the typical standard Soviet buildings of the Brezhnev's and Khrushchev's periods, the school buildings stood out to a certain extent, which was of great importance for the motivation of students who subconsciously defined the school as a place that differed from the usual buildings, which added it significance in the eyes of theirs.

IV. CONCLUSION

After the dissolution of the USSR, typical construction of educational institutions mostly ceased, which, on the one hand, increased the cost of their construction, but on the other hand made it possible to introduce their own unique features in the architectural appearance of each of them, allowing to single out both the functional purpose of the school and the message of its creators, who can put the essence of the knowledge gained in it in its decorative design (for example, a bias can be made on both the social and human sciences, as well as on the natural sciences and on technical ones as well). However, modern architects offer unusual solutions that, obviously, cannot fit into the Russian architectural tradition in education, which, as already mentioned, is characterized by monumentality and the penchant for the role of the architectural dominant [10,11]. It is obvious that within the framework of modern society it is impossible to follow the same architectural tradition, since excessive conservatism will alienate students from new buildings, the outdated appearance of which will not have a rational basis and will help to reduce their motivation.

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