

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRADITIONAL AND  
CONTEMPORARY ELEMENTS IN THE ARCHITECTURE  
OF ORTHODOX CHURCHES AT THE TURN  
OF THE MILLENNIUM**

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**Abstract.** *The paper will present the contemporary practice of church architecture in Bulgarian, Romanian, Russian and Greek orthodox churches, at the end of the XX and the beginning of the XXI century, and analyse the relationship of traditional and contemporary elements, with the aim of determining main trends and development tendencies. Free development of sacred architecture was interrupted by long reigns of authorities opposed to Orthodox Christianity. After the downfall of Communist regimes, conditions were created for the unobstructed construction of sacred buildings in all Orthodox countries, while the issue of traditional church architecture re-emerged as important. Further development of Orthodox church architecture may be affected by some issues raised in relation to the structure and form of liturgy, regarding the internal organisation of the temple. The freedom of architectural creation is strongly supported by the richness of forms created throughout history. Traditionalist approaches to the architectural shaping of churches are dominant even nowadays, tradition being understood and interpreted individually. At the same time, efforts to introduce contemporary architectural expression into church architecture have been increasing and gaining strength.*

**Key words:** *church architecture, Orthodox Christianity, traditional, contemporary.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The attitude towards tradition in architecture was radicalised in the time of the so-called heroic modernism, with traditional architectural elements being almost entirely

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expelled from the mainstream architectural design during the reign of the International style. Such an approach was challenged and changed in the postmodern period, whereas nowadays there co-exist different individual practices and poetics, ranging from mimesis to outright rejection of traditional elements. This is particularly noticeable in Christian sacred architecture, especially in the case of Orthodox churches. This paper will address the relationship between traditional and contemporary elements in the architecture of Orthodox Church temples at the turn of the XXI century, save for those that belong to the Serbian Orthodox Church. The paper will look into and elaborate on practices of Orthodox churches in our immediate vicinity, both spatial and historical – namely Orthodox churches in Bulgaria, Greece and Romania, as well as into the practice of the largest Orthodox church, i.e. Russian Orthodox Church. Bulgarian, Greek and Romanian examples have been selected due to spatial proximity and historical intertwinement on one hand, and quite noticeable direct impact of the Byzantine heritage on the other, which is somewhat differently evident in the Russian example. Russian examples are significant given that its Orthodox community is undisputedly the largest one nowadays. The paper will provide an overview of the current state of affairs and most important characteristics, as well as contributing factors. It aims to determine and showcase the main trends and tendencies of development, so that further research could establish and examine possible analogies with the state of affairs in the architecture of Serbian Orthodox temples.

## 2. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Church architecture in Orthodox Christianity is characterised even nowadays by significantly different trends and features when compared to Western Christianity. Free development of sacred architecture was impeded in the east since as early as the XIII century by the long reigns of authorities opposed to Christianity either from religious or ideological reasons. Just as the first three centuries of Christianity were not filled by incessant persecution, neither were religious life and construction of churches entirely eradicated in periods which East European, Caucasian and Balkan<sup>1</sup> Orthodox Christians spent under the rule of Mongols, Turks, Persians and Austrians, and later on, Communist regimes. Still, extremely unfavourable living conditions, poverty and endless struggle for survival<sup>2</sup> worked towards the gradual pupation of religiousness into its inherited forms. Impacts from western architecture, as well as from some church trends, were felt in Russia since the times of Peter the Great, and in the Balkans also from the XVIII century, primarily under the influence of the Habsburg Monarchy. The nineteenth century brought national liberation and emancipation, and the pan-European romanticism climate of the day was particularly conducive to return to the view from which the middle Ages were thought to be the peak of the ascent before the loss of freedom. As such sentiment extended into the first half of the last century, there was no room for the modern architecture concepts to penetrate the church architecture in Orthodox countries. In the aftermath of WWII, only Greece managed to evade the Communist overturn, while in

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<sup>1</sup> Middle East and African Orthodox communities are not taken into consideration.

<sup>2</sup> This particularly relates to Serbian, Bulgarian, Romanian and Georgian Orthodox Christians. Greek areas faced somewhat better conditions, and once the Mongol reign was ended, Russia became the only Orthodox country that was free over a longer period of time, until the October Revolution.

other countries, the development of the church architecture halted again until the 1990s, and became the subject matter of the history of architecture studies, practically moving from the domain of architectural design into the area of protection of cultural monuments. Once Communist regimes started falling in 1989, conditions were created for the unobstructed construction of sacred buildings in East European countries as well, while the issue of traditional church architecture re-emerged as important.

### 3. BULGARIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

During the time of Communism, of nearly 6,000 churches, monasteries and parakleses in Bulgaria, several hundred were abandoned and destroyed (Tuleshkov 2002: 51). As of 1989, construction activity in the area of church architecture started gradually picking up, yet results were unsatisfactory, and were ascribed to unprepared architects and insufficient knowledge of the then new planning programme, as well as to the failure to grasp the difference between construction tradition and church canons (ibid: 52). This problem may be taken as the main characteristic of the climate in Orthodox countries nowadays.

BOC Statute (Ustav na BPC 2009) delegates the task of construction and ornamentation of temples and parakleses in the "Eastern Orthodox style" to the holy Synod; the episcopal metropolitan ought to give his blessing for the construction or reconstruction of churches, parakleses and monasteries, and ensure that they are reconstructed and ornamented in the "Orthodox Church style", whereas the Eparchy Council approves basic designs of new temples and controls that the architecture of the temples is in the "Eastern Orthodox style". Although the Statute uses both "Eastern Orthodox" and "Orthodox Church" style, without elaborating on their features, it is clear that these provisions formally give absolute primacy to traditionalist architecture.

The majority of newly constructed churches were designed in a traditionalist, historicist spirit, with elements of postmodern stylisation. The presented examples of designs and constructed buildings show a tendency towards stylisation and simplification of traditional forms (see Fig. 1), while retaining the basic composition.



**Fig. 1** St. Cyril and Methodius Church in Lovech (2014) – architect Ts. Kovacheva  
(Source: <https://nglas.wordpress.com>)

In search of a contemporary expression, some unusual compositions of hypertrophic geometrical forms were created (Fig. 2), but there have also been fine examples of combining contemporary and stylised traditional elements (see Fig. 3).



**Fig. 2** Church of St. Vissarion in Smolyan (2006) – architects A. Todorov and N. Bechev  
(Source: <http://www.pravoslavieto.com>)



**Fig. 3** Church of St. Mina in Sofia (1996) – architects B. Atanasov, G. Berberov and D. Donchev (Source: <http://www.hramove.bg>)

The specific situation stemming from the split in the Bulgarian church, which started in the 90s, exerted somewhat its effect on the church architecture; some of the buildings of the schismatic, i.e. the so-called Alternative Synod illustrate efforts to find a new, more modern architectural expression (see Fig. 3 & 4).



**Fig. 4** St. Petka Church in the village of Rupite (1994) – architects B. Tomalevski and L. Lozanov (Source: <https://bg.wikipedia.org>)

The contemporary Bulgarian church architecture is characterised by the extreme heterogeneity of architectural expressions and various architectural planning approaches to tradition. This obstacle could be overcome with the establishing of more clear criteria by the BOC and educating architects in the area of the church architecture history and relation between architecture and liturgy, including its functional requirements (see Enchev 2010). A large step forward was the publishing of the manual for Orthodox Church architecture<sup>3</sup> in 2002, which addresses the key issues and provides some recommendations for architectural planning of Orthodox temples.

#### 4. ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

A somewhat similar situation is also evident in Romania where, over the last two decades, Augustin Ioan, a devoted researcher of church architecture, came to prominence: an architect who, apart from architectural planning, is engaged in theory and philosophy of architecture and the phenomenon of sacred space per se. Under the Communist regime, only a minor number of churches were constructed in Romania, with no new elements in their design (Ioan, 2001), and during the restoration of Bucharest which was commissioned by Ceaușescu in the 80s, several dozen temples were destroyed. As of 1990, construction of churches started flourishing, with over two thousand of new buildings erected in the first fifteen years after the revolution. However, Ioan states that despite the high volume of construction, there is no serious dialogue about the new sacred architecture (ibid).

Pursuant to the Statute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, the Holy Synod, from the dogmatic, liturgical and canonical standpoint, supervises the works of architecture, painting, sculpture and other forms of Orthodox church art and takes the appropriate measures in case of deviations (Statutul BOR 2008).

<sup>3</sup> *Наръчник за православно храмово строителство* [*Narachnik za pravoslavno hramovo stroitelstvo*], edited by Н. Тулешков [N. Tuleshkov] et al. София [Sofia]: Архитектурно издателство "АРХ&АРТ" [Arhitekturno izdatelstvo "ARH&ART"], 2002 [in Bulgarian]

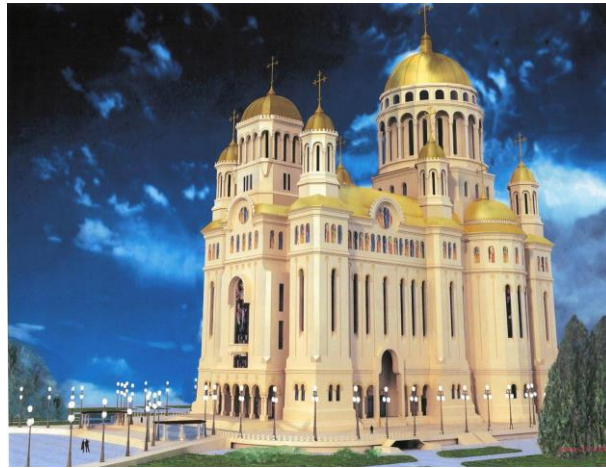
Initially, there were some architectural competitions, but it was at the very first one, in 1991, for the project of the Church of the Martyr Heroes at the Cemetery of Heroes of the 1989 Revolution, that the gap between contemporary efforts of some architects and conservative endeavours of the clergy, supported by a part of the professional public became apparent, their attitudes having remained bitterly opposed (Ioan 2001; Mihali 2004). After that, competitions left the aegis of professional associations of architects, and have declined in numbers, with awarded design solutions often not being executed.

Citing that Romania is the only country without a patriarchal church, 2002 saw a competition for the project of Romanian People's Salvation Cathedral (Catedrala Mantuirii Neamului). Results of the competition and the final selection of architectural design to be constructed may serve to illustrate the current situation in the church architecture of the Romanian Orthodox Church. The first place in the competition went to a team led by architect Ioan (see Fig. 5), with its modernised, simplified and stylised solution, resting on the interpretation of the Byzantine tradition (Ioan 2004), which is a combination of the single nave longitudinal and central type, yet this solution, under the strong pressure of a part of the clergy and the Patriarch himself, was eventually discarded (*ibid*).



**Fig. 5** Romanian People's Salvation Cathedral in Bucharest, competition design – architect A. Ioan et al. (Source: <http://www.artmargins.com>)

After the change in the initially selected location (Ioan 2006), the project of architect Bratiloveanu – an ornamental, hybrid, historicist design – was selected, thus missing the opportunity to take a new turn in sacred architecture. Construction started in 2007, according to a somewhat modified design, where the central plan was replaced with a combined plan, by emphasising the longitudinal axis (see Fig. 6). According to the Romanian Patriarch, the style of the cathedral should attest to the role of Romanian Orthodox Church as a bridge between the West and the East (Corlăţan 2009). The architectural solution for this cathedral is the result of efforts to express not only the theological symbols, but to use the very building to make a cultural, political and ideological symbol and represent the new spirit and the role of church in society. Its remarkable size is connected to the fact that it lies in the immediate vicinity of the gargantuan complex of the Palace of the Parliament from the times of Ceauşescu.



**Fig. 6** Romanian People's Salvation Cathedral, under construction – architect G. Bratiloveanu (Source: <http://byzantinearch.blogspot.ro>)

The church of Saints Constantine and Helen in the city of Urziceni, designed by architect Ioan (see Fig. 7) is an example of simplified stylisation of traditional forms.



**Fig. 7** St. Constantine and Helen Church, Urziceni (1996) – architect A. Ioan (Source: <https://www.descoperimlumeaimpreuna.ro>)

The step towards a modern architectural expression was made with the design for the church of the Romanian Orthodox community in the city of Alcalá de Henares in Spain, whose construction started in 2009, by Manadelucru architects. The church is composed of a simple, single nave, with the apse and side conches, placed within a small parochial complex, and designed using contemporary architectural language (see Fig. 8).



**Fig. 8** Church in Alcalá de Henares, under construction – Manadelucru architects  
(Source: <http://www.anuala.ro/>)

Among the constructed temples, it is the new church of St. John Chrysostom in Alba Iulia, by architect D. Ștefan, that stands out with its contemporary design. It is shaped as a slightly deformed, softened, cube with curvy walls of entirely smooth surfaces, without secondary decorations. The pronounced horizontal axis of the roof, separated from the bulk of the wall, with a barely visibly dome, as well as the unusual solution for the western façade, with the dominant icon of Christ, makes this building an entirely unique example of the contemporary Orthodox Church architecture.



**Fig. 9** Church in Alba Iulia (2015.) – architect D. Ștefan (Source: <http://adevarul.ro>)

## 5. RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

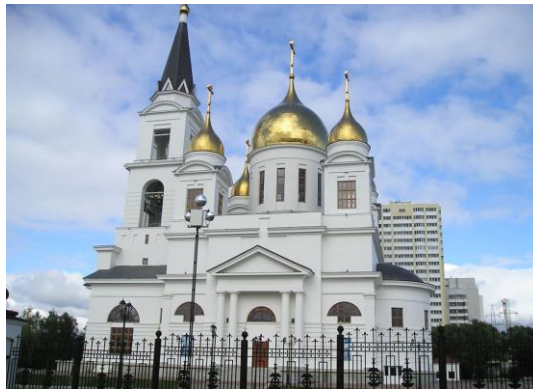
During the Communist era, the church suffered the most in the USSR relative to other Orthodox countries, while many structures were demolished or repurposed, especially monastery churches and complexes. As a rule, the churches which were proclaimed as



cultural monuments were preserved. Religious life started recovering in the 1980s, first through restoration and revival of preserved sacred structures; later, especially in the last decade of the previous century, through incipient construction of replica churches where destroyed temples had stood, along with the construction of brand new churches (Ilarion 2010).

Early this century, extensive instructions for designers in three volumes<sup>4</sup> were published by the Moscow Patriarchate, containing an overview of historical development and ideas, analysis of spatial and programme requirements, depictions of structures, and guidelines for planning; a special set of rules was also adopted which regulate the designing of Orthodox temples and complexes<sup>5</sup>. The proposed solutions are completely rooted in the Russian Orthodox tradition and also allow designers to choose a modern architectural expression when planning. The standpoint of the church hierarchy can be seen in the words of then Patriarch Alexy II, who believed that modern architecture needs to combine new forms and styles with traditional ones (Kesler 2003: 33).

The most significant sacred structure built in Russia after the fall of Communism was not based on a new design, but is actually the reconstructed Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in Moscow, which was demolished in 1931 in order to be replaced by the planned Palace of the Soviets; however, it was never built, and instead, one of the largest open air swimming pools in the world was built in its location. In 2000, the construction of a large complex was completed which, in addition to a faithful copy of the destroyed church, included a lot of additional elements, among which is another church in the underground section, whose surface area is many times larger than the surface area of the temple itself (see Sidorov 2000).



**Fig. 10** Saints Cyril and Methodius Church in Samara (2004) – architects V. Pastushenko and V. Samogorov (Source: <https://rpconline.ru>)

As regards the construction of new temples, stylistic copies of old temples are absolutely predominant (see Fig. 10), most frequently in traditional Russian style of

<sup>4</sup> *Православные храмы. В трех томах. [Pravoslavnye hramy. V treh tomah]* Москва [Moscow]: Архитектурно-художественный центр Московской Патриархии АХЦ "АРХХРАМ" [Arhitekturno-hudozhestveniy] centr Moskovskoj Patriarii АНЦ "АРННРАМ", 2003 [in Russian]

<sup>5</sup> SP 31-103-99.

construction, including wooden churches, but also in the Byzantine, Baroque, classical or electric spirit.

Construction is often haphazard, characterised by the use of traditional architectural elements without understanding their meaning, the context in which they were created or used, adequate proportions, all of which can result in bizarre forms of architectural kitsch (see Fig. 11), which is a subject of great controversy.



**Fig. 11** Church of the Holy Trinity in Moscow (2004) – architects V. Kolosnicin and others  
(Source: <http://s.photosight.ru>)

There are also some atypical solutions, which indicate the possible directions for the exploration of new architectural expressions of church architecture, such as the Church of Saint Prince Vladimir, within a spiritual centre, at the location of an earlier constructivist building (see Fig. 12).



**Fig. 12** Church of Saint Prince Vladimir in Uralmash, Yekaterinburg (2005)  
(Source: <http://orthodox.etel.ru>)

According to the Statute of the Russian Orthodox Church (Ustav RPC 2013), the construction and reconstruction of churches, houses of worship and chapels, as well as

ensuring that their external appearance and internal arrangement are in line with the Orthodox Church tradition, are the responsibility of eparchial bishops.

The first architectural competition was announced not long before the change of the regime, in 1989. It concerned the designing of a memorial church dedicated to the Christianisation of Russians, and one of its requirements was the observance of best traditions of Russian church architecture (Burnett [2005(?): 2). The competition envisaged the expansion of the temple layout, with two side chapels, classic organisation of the sanctuary and numerous accompanying elements in the lower level, such as that which would later be built below the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour. In his overview, Burnett stated that the majority of competing works relied on the traditional Byzantine or Russian solutions, including some attempts to discover new forms, and the competition exposed the range of complexity and problems which arise during the reconstruction of Orthodox sacred architecture (ibid: 4-6), for which no satisfying solution has been found to this day.



**Fig. 13** Church in Paris, design – architect J-M. Wilmotte  
(Source: <http://www.wilmotte.com>)

An international competition for a spiritual centre and Russian church in Paris was announced in 2010. The requirements (Cahier des charges 2010) explicitly expressed the view that it was desirable that both traditional and modern elements were included, requiring a design in "traditional Orthodox forms" while attempting at the same time to include a certain modern sensibility, in order for the structure to be harmonised with the spirit of representative projects on the banks of the Seine. Another requirement was that the church must correspond to Russian Orthodox churches, and also fit in with the surrounding traditional Parisian architecture. Despite a degree of internal contradiction, the terms of reference formulated in this manner still clearly favoured the use of traditional elements. The awarded design of architect Manuel Núñez Yanowsky was rejected by the administration of the City of Paris, and instead, the second place design by architect Jean-Michel Wilmotte was selected for construction (see Fig. 13), as more modern, visually restrained and appropriate for the location near the Eiffel Tower. It is characterised by a strikingly modern and refined visual language, while its primary link to

Russian tradition are the recognisable bulbous domes, composition and visually rich materiality.

In recent times, the archaic appearance of contemporary church architecture is increasingly called into question, which is in line with the determination of Patriarch Kirill that the church should preach Orthodox ideals in modern conditions and in that way help answer the complex issues of modernity (Lipich and Hrul' 2009). So, for instance, protoiereus Andrei Yurevich (Андрей Юревич), reminding of some breakthrough proposals from the 1989 competition, underscores the necessity to move away from traditional forms, since form is not important in church architecture, but rather the organisation of liturgical space<sup>6</sup>.

## 6. GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCHES

The extent of research of modern Greek sacred architecture is limited by the language barrier, as the vast majority of sources are available only in the Greek language, which makes searching difficult; however, all information gathered, as well as a personal insight into the situation, point to the fact that the state is similar to that in other Orthodox countries. While in the previous century Greece did not experience a break in continuity in construction, modern forms did not break into church architecture (see Fig. 14). In their research, architects Barbas (Μπαρμπας) and Tsaggalas (Τσαγγαλας), reached the conclusion that only ten modern church designs were published in Greek architectural publications over a span of over four decades (see Barbas, Tsaggalas 2003).



**Fig. 14** Panagia Dexia Church in Thessaloniki (1956)  
(Source: <http://www.escapegreece.com>)

One of rare examples of the modern approach in Greece is the Chapel of Saint George, built in the army base of Greek special forces on the Kavouri peninsula (Καβουρι) in Vouliagmeni, according to the design of the architect Sakellarios (Σακελλαριος) (see Fig.

<sup>6</sup> Round table discussion "Modern church architecture – issues of cooperation between the Church, society and the state" (Milovidov 2012).

15). This is a simple, single nave structure with a bell tower, with completely smooth and white walls, in the spirit of Aegean architecture.



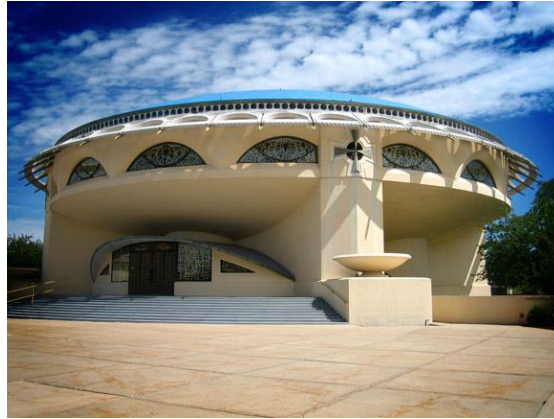
**Fig. 15** Chapel of Saint George, Kavouri, Vouliagmeni (1950) – architect P. Sakellarios  
(Source: <http://www.culture2000.tee.gr>)



**Fig. 16** Saint Paul's Church in Chambesy – architect G. Lavas  
(Source: <https://www.unilu.ch>)

The Greek Orthodox community is made up of Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa, and Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem, along with Orthodox churches of Cyprus, Greece and, conditionally, Albania. There are numerous examples of modern churches outside of Greece, among which the Saint Paul's Church in Chambesy, Switzerland should be mentioned. It was built in 1971, designed for the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople by George Lavas (Λαββας), and uses the traditional basilica plan with the narthex and baptistry in the west, and the sanctuary with a proscomidia and diaconicon without any visual obstacles, while it uses modern forms aligned with the terrain (see Fig. 16). The architect Lavas is also known for

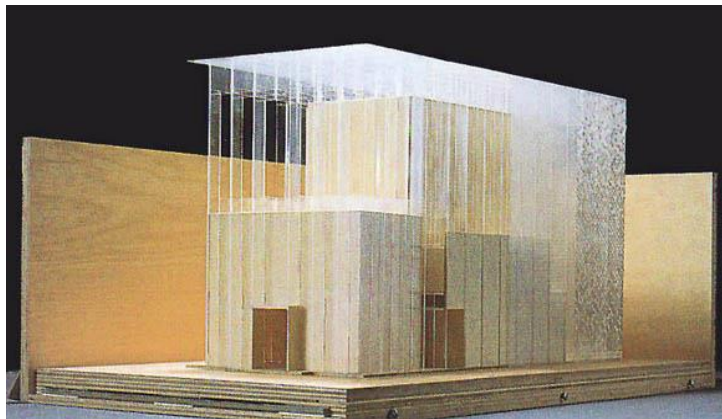
his theoretical dealing with issues of modern church architecture, and is consistent in striving to further its restoration, to abandon the Neo-Byzantine historicism and formalism and accept modern architectural principles (Mikelakis 2010).



**Fig. 17** Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church in Milwaukee – F. L. Wright  
(Source: <http://villageofjoy.com/>)

Wright's church in Milwaukee (see Fig. 17) is an unusual exception in Orthodox church planning, for two reasons: both because of its bizarre form and because of the fact that it was designed by an extremely renowned non-Orthodox architect.

The design of Herzog & de Meuron which won second place in the 1989 competition for the Greek church in Zurich, represents one of rare new designs of world-renowned authors (see Fig. 18). They proposed the form of a house within a house, without a dome, with translucent walls made of thin marble panels containing reproductions of old icons, which was not accepted by the church.



**Fig. 18** Church in Zurich, competition design (1989) – Herzog & de Meuron  
(Source: <https://www.herzogdemeuron.com>)

The design by architect Ferrier won first place and was the one which was eventually realized. It was also non-traditional, but contained a dome, in the spirit of non-historicist postmodernism, but it was not as architecturally radical. The most recent example is the design by Santiago Calatrava for the new Greek church in New York at the location of the previous church, destroyed in the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001.

## 7. CONCLUDING REMARKS

With the advent of modernism in the XX century, a serious crisis of ideas, along with a discrepancy between modern architectural concepts and church building occurred, which was particularly pronounced within Orthodox Christianity. The development of church architecture in Russia ceased with the October Revolution; many churches were either destroyed or repurposed, which also happened in Bulgaria and Romania after World War II. In other Orthodox countries, the traditionalist and historicist approach, as well as a desire to return to old forms, became completely dominant in church design, due to a strong influence of the Byzantine tradition and attempts to establish the continuity interrupted by the Ottoman and Communist rule. This was further reinforced by the character of modern architecture which has led to the abolishment of symbolic content, which are of extraordinary significance for religious awareness and cognition (Manić et al. 2013).

From the analysed examples, several common characteristics can be identified:

- Traditionalist and historicist approach to architectural planning of churches remains predominant to this day;
- Church hierarchy strives to implement rules which require planning in "traditional" or "Orthodox styles", which are layman's terms not used in architectural theory and history;
- Tradition is understood and interpreted arbitrarily, depending on individual authorial poetics, which yields wildly varying results, from professional copies of medieval templates, through eclectic compilations and anachronous postmodern stylisations, to hybrid kitsch architecture;
- The terms of building tradition and church building rules – canons – are not clearly delineated;
- Attempts to introduce modern architectural expression in church building are increasingly common and strong, especially in Greek, Russian and Romanian Orthodox world.

Due to the scope of the paper, this overview could not include modern construction practices of all Orthodox churches. It is particularly interesting to analyse the experiences of Poland, Georgia, North America and Australia. Churches built for Orthodox Christians in the diaspora, and for new Orthodox communities, particularly in North America, may be an interesting indicator of possibilities and mistakes in the further development of Orthodox sacred architecture.

Further development of Orthodox church architecture may be influenced by some of the issues regarding the structure and form of liturgy. This relates primarily to elements of internal arrangement, such as the shape and position of the ambo and templon and the

issue of church singing and the area used for this purpose<sup>7</sup>. All these issues relate to the internal organisation and the method of functioning of the temple.

The freedom of architectural creativity is strongly underpinned by the wealth of forms created throughout history which, despite the differences in style, are still equally used for religious service.

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<sup>7</sup> In Orthodox Church, there is no liturgical movement of the kind that exists in Western Christianity, although it is being considered; still, this problem has not yet been sufficiently studied (see Vukašinović 2001: 113). The religious group of Franciscans of the Byzantine Rite, which formed the brotherhood of the New Skete monastery and was admitted in the Orthodox Church of America, is one of the most active proponents of the liturgical movement in the Orthodox world today (see Vukašinović 2001: 134-147). While their temple has no iconostasis, it has a templon which is reminiscent of those in early Christianity and does not represent a visual obstacle in front of the sanctuary.



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## **ODNOS TRADICIONALNIH I SAVREMENIH ELEMENATA U ARHITEKTURI PRAVOSLAVNIH CRKAVA NA RAZMEDI MILENIJUMA**

*U radu se prikazuje savremena praksa crkvenog graditeljstva Bugarske, Rumunske, Ruske i Grčke pravoslavne crkve, s kraja XX i početka XXI veka, i analizira odnos tradicionalnih i savremenih elemenata, s ciljem utvrđivanja osnovnih pravaca i tendencija razvoja. Slobodan razvoj sakralnog graditeljstva prekidan je dugim periodima vladavine pravoslavlju nenaklonjenih vlasti. Posle pada komunističkih režima stvaraju se uslovi za nesmetanu izgradnju sakralnih objekata u svim pravoslavnim zemljama; istovremeno, ponovo se aktuelizuje pitanje odnosa prema tradicionalnoj crkvenoj arhitekturi. Na dalji razvoj pravoslavnog crkvenog graditeljstva mogu imati uticaja neka od pitanja koja se postavljaju u vezi sa strukturom i formom liturgije, koja se tiču unutrašnje organizacije hrama. Slobodu arhitektonskog stvaralaštva snažno podupire bogatstvo oblika nastalih kroz istoriju. Tradicionalistički pristupi arhitektonskom oblikovanju crkava i danas su najprisutniji, a tradicija se shvata i interpretira proizvoljno. U isto vreme, pokušaji uvođenja savremenog arhitektonskog izraza u crkveno graditeljstvo su sve češći i snažniji.*

*Ključne reči: crkvena arhitektura, pravoslavno hrišćanstvo, tradicionalno, savremeno.*