

**DESTRUCTION  
OF UKRAINIAN MONUMENTS OF ART  
AND CULTURE  
UNDER THE SOVIET RUSSIAN ADMINIS-  
TRATION BETWEEN 1917-1957**

By  
**VOLODYMYR SICHYNSKY**

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The great wealth of Ukraine, naturally represented by extraordinary fertility of the soil and mineral deposits on the one hand and man-made monuments of art and architecture on the other hand, together with the accumulated riches over the centuries — these things were always the cause of envy and intrusion by neighbors who frequently alleged “claims of right” to this rich land.

Russian intrusion does not merely begin with the co-called Soviet period, but reaches back into the remote past, about 800 years ago. In medieval times, when the Muscovy-Suzdal Duchy came into power, it started to attack Ukraine and Kiev, its capital as its primary target, and plundered the treasures of that land. The first major aim of such forays was Kiev and it had been launched by Prince Andrey of Muscovy-Suzdal in 1169, when not only treasures were the object of plundering but also the contents of coffins of buried princes (*Kiev Chronicle* of 1169). Similar practices continued into the most recent “modern” age. Instead of enumerating various historical facts, we shall quote the testimony of a Cambridge Professor, Edward Daniel Clarke (1769-1822) on the subject of destruction of Crimean architectural monuments by Muscovite troops. Traveling in Russia and Ukraine in 1800 E. D. Clarke had the opportunity to take a closer look at the policy of Russian administration after the occupation of the Crimea. He reported the following: “Of all nations which had been destroying heretofore this land, not one was nearly as destructive of scholarly values as Russians,” who “destroyed abjectly everything valued by enlightened nations”; and he continues: “they laid this land to waste, they felled trees, they razed houses; they ruined temples of worship and all community buildings of the natives of this land; they destroyed waterworks, robbed the populace, wrecked all monuments of antiquity, wantonly taking apart sepulchers of saints and pagans and strewing their ashes to the wind.”

About the ancient city of Kherstones with its 2500-year history and ancient monuments, E. D. Clarke wrote: "When the Russians occupied Crimea, the ruins of Kherstones were so prominent, that all the gates (in the city walls) were still erect. Soon after the Russians came they demolished these gates and carried on their favorite occupation of wrecking by tearing down, breaking, levelling and blowing up old foundations which witnessed the ancient origin of that city. They levelled open graves, wrecked temples and then hauled stones and marbles of Aktiar (bay) selling them by the cubic yard as building materials. If the Archipelago (Greece proper) were ever to fall under Russian rule, then the exquisite remnants of Ancient Greece would cease to exist. Athens would be levelled with the ground. In Kerch, after levelling about 500 houses they left about 30 poor shops among the ruins." Bakhchiserai with its magnificent palaces fared even worse. (E. D. Clarke *Travels in Russia, Tartary and Turkey*, London 1812, II Ed., London, 1839).

The destruction of monuments of architecture and art in Ukraine by Bolshevik troops dates back to the end of December 1917 and January 1918. When the Bolsheviks failed to take Kiev, Moscow sent its troops under Commissar Muraviev. The armed forces of the Ukrainian National Republic, under the command of S. Petlura, by their heroic efforts halted the overwhelming forces of Moscow units. The Russian forces not only paid no heed to priceless monuments of Ukrainian architecture, but they destroyed them on purpose, aiming their rifles and cannon at those antiquities that were about 900 years old. In the first days of February 1918, Russian military forces destroyed as their first objective the private house of Prof. M. Hrushevsky, which had been built by the architect V. Krychevsky in Ukrainian style. They also damaged with cannon shots a whole series of other architectural monuments, some of them dating back to the 11th century. Some time later, George Lukomsky, who was a pro-Soviet "art critic," accused in a superbly edited and illustrated album *Kiev* (in the Russian, German, English and French languages) the Ukrainian Army of the Ukrainian National Republic for having destroyed these monuments of Kiev... But the enclosed photos in the album of G. Lukomsky were proof of something else. It is a well-known fact that in Ukraine in ancient times, churches inevitably faced four cardinal points, whereby the altar parts always faced the East. From the pictures reproduced in the album by Lukomsky it can be clearly seen that the... breaches

in the walls and other damage appear in those Kiev structures exclusively at the northeastern and southeastern sides and thus could have resulted from the attacks of Russian Bolshevik or Russian monarchist forces (Gen. Denikin in 1920) because Ukrainian forces could never have advanced from the East. In this way some other Kiev monuments were equally destroyed, as for instance, St. Michael's, the so-called "Golden Roof Monastery," dating back to the 12th century, the Church of St. Nicholas in Pechersk dating back to the 17th century, and many other valuable monuments of architecture.

The period of so-called "militant communism," which started in 1920 has caused neglect, ruin and pillage of valuable works of art, precious objects and architectural monuments, yet its cause cannot be attributed merely to chaos, confusion and conditions of "civil war" or to the lack of discrimination by the broad masses. This chaos was largely due to the official Bolshevik trend and method of propaganda, carried out through legal channels and inspired from the top. This propaganda endeavored to introduce among the population "class hatred" and the urge to destroy the "old rotten bourgeois culture and even art" in view of creating a "new mankind" with its "new social structure." For the proletarian revolution these slogans were not quite new, as they were borrowed from ultra-nationalist and ultra-chauvinist Russian slogans diffused a hundred years ago. As far back as 1841, a well-known Russian historian divulged the idea of a fight to the death with "Westernism" and Western Europe was called a "corpse in decay," a "lewd mass of thought and impudence of knowledge", whereas the East i. e., Russia was glorified as a model state, with a "truthful and sound regime of government." Later on, a Soviet theorist of art, Prof. Theodore Schmid did not go far ahead of those ideas when proclaiming the necessity of destruction of "decomposed European lust, because only on the ruins of old — new things could thrive." Thus, the Bolsheviks destroyed innumerable palaces of the gentry and landowners who lived on the so-called "*Hetmans'* lots" and monuments of architecture. They destroyed the palaces of *Hetman* Rozumovsky in Baturyn, of *Hetman* Zavadovsky in Lalychi, in the towns Pochep, Nizhen, etc. The same fate befell the palaces on the right banks of the Dnipro and Dnister, in Podilya, Volhynia and around Kiev. The local population did not always approve of such means of "socialization," maintaining that these palaces could be useful for other purposes, as schools, concert halls, picture theaters, etc. But advancing units of the Muscovite

army which were disorganized on the German front and inflamed by the idea of spreading "class consciousness" and "Bolshevik revolution" swept through the country filling their own pockets with the loot of "the wealthy." Whatever they were unable to carry away they burned and ruined "for the sake of the Russian Revolution" and to its glory, just as their ancestors did a long time ago in the Crimea — if we recall the words of Mr. Clarke.

During the period of the so-called "New Economic Policy" (NEP) in the years 1923—1929, many architectural monuments and collections were destroyed, damaged or pilfered, while the local Bolshevik police, commissars and officials were busy with anti-religious propaganda and confiscation of church treasures. During this period many monuments of Ukrainian church and lay architecture were destroyed — among them were specimens of the so-called Ukrainian baroque style, famous for its originality and dating back to the Kozak State in the 17th and 18th centuries. There is no way of even enumerating and keeping trace of all the splendid structures that had been destroyed: in the Sloboda region (on the left bank of the Dni-pro) monuments were destroyed in the following cities: Kharkiv, Izyum, Bilhorod, Valki, Slavyanske, Bohodukhiv and Sumy. In the region of Chernihiv: Chernihiv, Nizhen, Starodub, Kozelets, Yahotyn, Pochep, Novhorod-Siversk, Konotop, Pakuli, Putyvl, Henkhiv, Baturyn and Lynbech. In the Poltava region: Poltava, Lubny, Myrhorod, Pryluky, Romny and Lyntenka. In the Steppe Ukraine: Nikopol (ecumenical church of Zaporozhe), Archives of *Zaporozhian Sich* at the ecumenical church in Novoselytsya (Novomoskovsk), Tahanrih, Sicheslav (Dnipropetrovsk). Finally innumerable churches in the Ukrainian style were destroyed in the region of the Don and Kuban.

Local religious communities were unable to support churches and contribute to repairs of church buildings because of high government taxes imposed by the Soviet administration. If despite difficulties some communities managed to collect imposed taxes, then the Soviet administration increased them immediately to such an extent that even the most persevering of the communities were unable to pay the levied amount of taxes. Wherever full taxes were not paid, churches were confiscated and transformed into warehouses. No one thought of what would happen to the building itself. According to the estimate of F. Volynsky (*Promin*, October 27, 1943) who based his figures on approximate statistics, 80% of the church buildings

were destroyed in Ukraine before World War II and other churches were transformed into clubs, cinemas, theaters, grain and army storehouses, etc. It is impossible to estimate the tremendous damage done to Ukrainian wooden monuments or architecture, which were considered the most original and best developed in all Europe. Beautiful Ukrainian wooden churches, with three and five cupolas, were, according to experts, masterpieces of wooden construction and jewels of architectural composition. The Soviet administration wrecked them all over the country, and what was left was used for fuel; the wonderful *iconostases* were chopped up and burned as well. Such were measures of the "active struggle" with "religious superstition" under the leadership and the active support of the Soviet central administration from Moscow.

Objects of art in museum and churches, collections of antiquities started to be destroyed when party members became directors and "scientific consultants" of those institutions. It is understandable that they had no sentiment for historic and artistic objects, but they knew nothing of archeology or museum values and work. Being placed as party members above the criticism of society, all these commissars of collections of museum rarities would take precious objects apart in order to remove expensive jewels, and then discarded the rest. In order to conceal their theft they melted the precious metals. Prof. M. Miller contends that in the early 1920's almost no gold or silver objects were to be found in the museums in the provinces of Ukraine. The official Soviet policy line was to destroy rare objects kept at museums, while proclaiming the destruction of the "revived bourgeois culture" and especially objects of national culture which were regarded as an aspect of "the struggle against bourgeois nationalism." Particularly in Ukraine, the Bolshevik administration endeavored to destroy all that could remind one of an ancient national culture, especially from the period of Kozak rule in the 17th and 18th centuries, in order that the youth would get no opportunity to compare the great achievements of the past with the deplorable specimens of "the new proletarian culture." They set out to destroy everything that was traditional, in order that younger generations of nations which were enslaved by Moscow would not respect the monuments of their own history, culture and art. The aim was to standardize all nations according to the one single Russian proletarian model. During the years 1930-1937 the Soviet government regularly exported and sold abroad the most valuable objects, such as pictures, jewels, furniture, china, rugs



from museums and palaces, and even handicrafts of folklore value. Prof. Miller mentions that in the Museum of Kozak Art in Dnipropetrovsk no more gold or silver objects were to be found, while even the silver covers of Holy Bibles, which were often incrustated with precious stones or insignias of *Hetmans* and high-ranking Kozaks, were missing. How the numismatic treasures were destroyed can be seen from the activity of the "Trophy Commission" at the Soviet Army Headquarters during World War II. Thus, as reported by Ch. M. in an article printed in *Svoboda* (Jersey City, 1952) entitled "Moscow Plunders Cultural Treasures," the Soviet "experts" dragged along with them huge numismatic collections of the Dresden Museum, piled them together in sacks without even a classification of the old coins. Thus the classification work of many generations of researchers and experts in numismatics was destroyed in a barbaric way.

Cemeteries and tombstones, which were always cared for in Ukraine with great devotion, also drew the attention of Soviet authorities. The administration was chiefly interested in tombs of outstanding historical personalities, which disappeared quite mysteriously. They destroyed marble plates and crosses; in many localities entire cemeteries were destroyed, while monuments were razed or carried away and the cemetery leveled to the ground. All this was done in order to destroy visible remains of the cult of ancestors, fathers, forefathers and figuratively all noble sentiments toward the native land, home country, home town. As an example of this sacrilege can be quoted the destruction of a huge cemetery in Kamianets Podilsky, an ancient town, whose cemetery had quite a number of marble plates and other tombstones. This cemetery was destroyed in the early 1930's under the pretext that it was a convenient location for an airport. The population knew very well that it was not true, as the spot was close to a river surrounded by cliffs. Being sure that living relatives would buy corpses of their kin, they fixed the price at 100 rubles per body, under the restriction that the purchasers had no right to the tombstones or monuments which were dismantled and used again for "government buildings." In the same way ancient cemeteries were destroyed in Kiev, as for instance the so-called tomb of Askold and the cemeteries of the Frolov monastery and in Shechekavytsia.

Products of handicrafts important as historical specimens of folklore art were destroyed during the period of "exclusion of objects of religious cult" in Ukrainian churches, where valuable objects of art were accumulated by the faithful of many generations, during the

period of almost a millenium! These were mostly products of the 17th and 18th centuries, the period of existence of the Kozak State. Moscow was particularly anxious to prevent the rebirth of Kozak traditions among the Ukrainian people which would unavoidably lead to the organization of armed uprising. An immense number of "excluded" church objects, mainly in precious metals, diamonds, etc. cannot even be evaluated, and their worth amounts to fantastic figures. Only a slight part of these treasures was directed to Ukrainian museums, but a very large part of them was brought to Moscow museums. The largest part of these treasures was sold abroad, and smaller and more valuable pieces simply disappeared in the pockets of Soviet commissars and officials.

M. Miller, after assembling materials from "Kompohol," an official source, which partially lists the confiscated objects from Ukrainian churches in the early 20's, for the so-called relief from hunger, gives the following picture:

From Pecherska Lavra in Kiev, famous for its treasures, more than 500 objects of gold and silver with precious stones, were confiscated, and there were 2,417 pieces of diamonds alone.

From the Saint Sophia Cathedral in Kiev, dating back to the 11th century, were confiscated two golden archbishops' mitres, studded with diamonds, each worth \$250,000, nine silver altar trays, a few platinum trays, a chandelier weighing about 13 kilograms in gold, platinum with diamonds and pearls, another chandelier in pure gold with 241 diamonds and 327 large pearls.

From the Cathedral in Novocherkask were confiscated 5 mitres, 1 golden chalice and other pieces, the gold weighing 13 kilograms and the silver 336 kilograms.

From the Cathedral in Starocherkask were confiscated the gates from the *iconostasis* and other cast objects weighing half a ton. From the church in Poltava were taken half a ton of silver objects, and from the church in Kremenchuk 400 grams of gold, 245 kilograms of silver, 78 precious stones. From the church in Bakhmut were confiscated over a hundredweight of silver, about 8 kilograms of old Ukrainian coins *hryvni* (coins from royal times). Usually, the Bolshevik officials paid attention merely to the "material" value of objects, ignoring their artistic and historical side.

After the "exclusion of objects for religious use" the same procedure was repeated in the years 1928 - 1937, and whatever remained

untouched in expropriated churches was confiscated to the very last object.

According to the official Soviet organ *Foreign Trade*, the number of objects of antiquity and art that were sold abroad amounted to:

In 1928,	49 tons in the sum of \$ 654,000	(currency in gold)
In 1929,	219 tons in the sum of \$5,573,000	" " "
In 1930,	577 tons in the sum of \$7,835,000	" " "
In 1931,	123 tons in the sum of \$3,230,000	" " "
In 1932,	74 tons in the sum of \$1,153,000	" " "
In 1933,	55 tons in the sum of \$ 846,000	" " "

(M. Miller: *Muscovite Vandalism, Novy Shlakh*, Winnipeg 1952, Nos. 102, 104).

Thus, in the course of six years 1,087 tons of rare antique objects and works of art were exported and sold abroad for the sum of \$19,321,000 dollars in gold! It is obvious that these data are not complete, as sales were carried out through diplomatic couriers through antique shops and other channels. Doubtlessly, most of these monuments were of Ukrainian origin, looted formerly by the Czarist regime and later the Soviet regime.

The collection and confiscation of valuables and art monuments was carried out by the local administration, but the hoarding and sale of these treasures was done by the central Soviet administration, at first in Petersburg (Leningrad), and then in Moscow. Nevertheless, the separate "Republics," especially the Ukrainian Republic, had no share of this!

The most painful and irrecoverable blows inflicted in Ukraine by the Soviet Russian rulers were in 1928—1939, when the most precious monuments of Ukrainian architecture from the 11th century and historical monuments were destroyed, monuments not only dear to all Ukrainian hearts, but valued as rarities of universal art. This destruction did not take place in war or revolution, not during the era of "militant communism," not during attacks of barbarian hordes, but in the era of a "peaceful construction," as Soviet propaganda put it. This destructive policy was premeditated and "planned" by Moscow leaders with the diabolical aim to destroy all evidence of once free Ukrainian life in its own independent state, all monuments of Ukrainian culture and civilization.

The main blow was directed at Kiev, the oldest cultural center of entire Eastern Europe where there were preserved valuable monuments of history, culture, science, art, and which survived from numerous attacks of Asiatic nomads, the "pogroms" of Tartars and various other wars and revolutions. In Kiev alone Bolshevik "constructors" destroyed at least 20 masterpieces of architecture, the oldest dating back to the 11th century, but most of them from the time of Ukrainian or Kozak baroque from the 17th and 18th centuries. With ruthlessness and cynicism were destroyed numerous buildings founded by the great protector of Ukrainian culture and art, *Hetman* Ivan Mazepa (1687—1709). Under the pretext of struggling against "religious superstition" and the pressure for more space for city houses for working people, the regime demolished monuments of Ukrainian statehood and Ukrainian art, in a panicky fear of rebirth of Ukrainian patriotic feeling and national consciousness.

The Desiatynna Church was the first victim of the Soviet "reconstruction" program, as it was considered the oldest building from princely times. But Bolshevik "experts" made a mistake. Formerly the building of Desiatynna Church dated back to the 10th century, but it was dismantled by the Czarist regime in the 19th century and in its place was erected in 1823 a worthless building, in the architectural sense, in a queer "Russian-Byzantine" style. And this church of the 19th century was dismantled by the Soviet administration. But other dismantled churches were real examples of valuable art and technique.

Nowadays, Soviet propaganda tries to pin this ruin of Kiev on so-called "Ukrainian" organs of government and the city council of Kiev. This line was also taken by "the Institute for Instruction of History and Culture of the USSR." In 1951 the Institute published a bulletin by B. Mykorsky entitled "Destruction of Cultural and Historical Monuments in Kiev in 1934—1936" (Munich 1951, p. 22), which attributed the destruction of Kiev monuments to the "Ukrainian Government" of the Ukrainian SSR, which in this instance enjoyed "federal rights."

Yet there exists undeniable proof that the whole planned action of destruction of Ukrainian cultural and historical monuments came from Moscow and hence came all the instructions, which were literally followed by the docile "Ukrainian Government." It is noteworthy, that the first written reports about the destruction of architectural monuments came from Moscow and were spread through the official

press. Thus the official paper *Viechernaya Moskva*, an organ of the Moscow Municipal Committee of CPSU and of the Soviet of Moscow, dated March 26, 1953, No. 70, communicated that in Kiev a "rapid growth of construction" was taking place, and that preparations were being made in Kiev for a "Central Square" which in size was to be the "tenth largest square of the world." And for that purpose the Cathedral of St. Michael was already dismantled. Yet the Soviet regime did not burden the Ukrainians with this huge vacant lot, but was going to build two big "state buildings" — headquarters of the Communist Party and of the Ukrainian Soviet Government, and between the two buildings a huge statue of Lenin. It so happened that only the government building was erected, a very awkward building (project of architect Langard), which provoked criticism even in Soviet art circles. I. Ignatkin wrote about the structure as follows: "A heavy and somewhat dry-looking aspect of a building, not quite successful, an uneven rhythm of columns, different criteria of styles of classical order and heavy proportions of the top parts... (*Kiev*), Moscow, 1948 p. 19). Before wrecking the whole complex of buildings of St. Michael's Monastery, the so-called Golden Roof Monastery, the Soviet administration explained that from bricks of that monastery housing for workers was to be constructed, under the name of Lenin-Illich Houses. But it just happened that the walls built 800 years ago were so strong and lime stuck to them so well that it was impossible to detach the bricks from the coating. That is why in October 1934 the whole building was dynamited and blown up. The other buildings of this historical monastery were destroyed during 1935.

Famous St. Michael's Monastery, the so-called Golden Roof Monastery, a monument from the beginning of the 12th century, second in size after the Cathedral of Saint Sophia, Kiev's most valuable structure — also contained buildings in the style of the Ukrainian baroque. It was known throughout the whole cultured world for its mosaics and murals made by local craftsmen. Moscow authorities appreciated these mosaics, and after their removal they were brought over to Leningrad (Hermitage Museum). It should be mentioned that despite the Stalinist terrorism of those times, Ukrainian scientists, art experts and citizens protested the destruction of the 12th century monument. Prof. Mykola Makarenko, on behalf of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, drafted a protest against the intended destruction of the monastery, and sent to Stalin a telegram with the request

to stop the wreckage. The dire result of this protest was that Prof. Makarenko and other Ukrainian scientists were banished to the East of Russia. Prof. Makarenko was taken to Kazan, and afterward to Siberia, where he died at the time of the wrecking of St. Michael's Monastery. This monastery contained numerous historic monuments and sculptures, and was also a burial place of the Princes of Kiev and other distinguished persons. After the destruction of the monastery, however, *Proletarska Pravda* published a declaration that no remains of princes were found at this monastery and that the buried princes must have been a mere invention of bourgeois nationalists — and that announcement was signed by the "Reconstruction Commission" (*How Mykhailivsky Sobor was Destroyed — Ukrainske Slovo*, Paris, 1954, No. 684). Numerous emigres who escaped overseas after World War II can attest to how the Monastery of Mykhailiv was destroyed and how Prof. Makarenko led a salvaging campaign; among other living witnesses are Prof. Kurinny of Munich, and architect O. Povstenko of Washington, D. C., who published relevant articles on this subject.

No Soviet newspaper ever reported what happened to the treasures of Mykhailivsky Sobor. Among these treasures were the following objects: a gate of the *iconostasis* weighing over 50 kilograms, workmanship of sculptor H. Petriv in 1718, a silver frame, gift of *Hetman* I. Mazepa, dating from the 17th century, a picture of Our Lady studded with 158 diamonds, a golden chandelier, silver and golden chasubles, rings, etc. (L. Forostivsky, *Kiev under Enemy Occupation*, Buenos Aires, 1952).

Two other monuments of 12th century architecture, the church of Three Saints and the church of the Holy Assumption in Kiev, were completely dismantled between 1934 and 1937 and the beautiful sculptures and artistic installations were chopped up and burned.

It is hard to evaluate the artistic worth of the three most imposing buildings of the 17th century, wherein was embodied the national Ukrainian genius of the period of Ukrainian baroque — striking with originality and technical perfection.

Buildings destroyed in 1934 were as follows:

A Brotherhood or Academy Church in Podil, built in 1690-1693. It was a kind of Ukrainian Pantheon where distinguished personalities were buried, professors and scholars of the Kiev Academy, and among them *Hetman* Sahaydachny, whom the public cherished particularly. After having dynamited these monuments — the ground

was levelled. It is not known what happened to the huge library and the museum of the monastery, which contained about 20,000 rare volumes.

The ecumenical church of St. Nicholas was built in 1690-1696 by architect Osyp Starchenko and was a donation of *Hetman* I. Mazepa. This building contained beautiful relief sculptures, in particular a huge *iconostasis* by sculptor S. Balyka.

St. George's Church belonging to the Monastery of Vydubychi, a gift of Col. M. Myklashevsky in 1696-1701, disintegrated and was transformed into a military storehouse.

Other churches of the 17th and 18th centuries, which were destroyed, are as follows:

St. Peter's and Paul's, Church of Ascension at the Frolov Monastery, dating back to 1772, a belfry of St. Cyril's Church constructed by the famous Kiev architect Ivan Barsky in 1760, the so-called "Small Nicholas" and the Church of St. Constantine. Another was the Church of Nativity in Podil from the beginning of the 19th century, which was dear to Ukrainians as it was a temporary resting place for the remains of the greatest Ukrainian poet, Taras Shevchenko, when his body was being brought from Petersburg to Kanev.

The destruction of Ukrainian historical monuments was systematically planned and it was ordered immediately after the opposition of the Ukrainian peasantry to the collectivization of farms. In reply the Moscow authorities responded with an unheard of terrorism: they organized artificial shortages of food supplies which brought about famine; they staged mass trials and mass terrorism towards patriotic and honest Ukrainian citizens, whom the Bolsheviks called "nationalists."

This devastation of the most valuable historical remains of Ukrainian culture was carried out by order from Moscow, not as a form of struggle against Christianity, but with refined cynicism and sadism of the Kremlin bosses against Ukrainians in general in order to alienate their feeling toward their glorious past, toward their culture and art, which once found free expression in a free independent state.

While in Ukraine monuments from the era of the princely period (11th through 13th centuries), and from the time of Kozak statehood (17th and 18th centuries), were being destroyed, especially objects and buildings that were donated by *Hetman* I. Mazepa, at the same time similar monuments in Moscow, as for instance churches and

landowners' palaces, were left untouched, though they also symbolized "opium for the masses", according to Communist terminology. Nowhere in Russia proper have these monuments been touched, and statues of Czar-tyrants such as Peter I, or Catherine II who were protectors of the landowning class, can be admired to this very day. All buildings and churches of the Kremlin which were mostly constructed by foreigners, were praised in the official communications as "works of genius of Russian architecture," created during the process of union of territories under the Moscow Duchy at the time of origin of the Russian national state" (*Academy of Architecture of the USSR*, "Monuments of Russian Architecture," Moscow, 1942, v. 1, p. 5). Naturally, Ukrainians are not allowed to say anything of that kind in their publications about their own art. Ukrainian authors are obliged to write about Ukrainian art only in the aspect of affiliation and influences as well as of the beneficial support by Moscow, even in regard to times when Moscow did not yet exist. Monuments of Ukrainian art and architecture are not supposed to be called Ukrainian, but merely "monuments from Ukraine" in order to stress where they belonged geographically but not nationally.

It is hard to sum up or even to list monuments of architecture that were destroyed upon the whole territory of Ukraine. We indicated above the principal towns in the region of Dnipro, where churches of great artistic value have been destroyed. Now we are going to dwell on two main centers in the West and East, where monuments of art were destroyed before World War II.

Kamyianetz Podilsky, a historically known city, founded in Roman times (Clepidava) which contained valuable monuments of architecture and art, was ruined to a great extent. In 1920 it was a headquarters of the Government of the Ukrainian National Republic and at that time in its suburbs bitter battles were fought with Russian Bolshevik gangs. In retaliation for that all permanent residents of that city were driven out by Soviet authorities and there was no one left to protect the architectural and artistic treasures. At least ten buildings of great artistic value had been destroyed in Kamyianetz during the Soviet administration. Among them were buildings of the 16th century of the so-called Byzantine Renaissance. An old ecumenical church, the Church of the Holy Trinity, was destroyed. In the baroque style from the 17th and 18th centuries a new church was transformed from a Roman Catholic Church. In the new part of the city the Church of St. Alexander was dismantled, and it was one



of more valuable buildings of our times. As to the Soviet plans to reconstruct the city, the magazine *Architecture of Soviet Ukraine*, spaciousness and vastness of projected roads and streets "changed the character of the ancient city." During World War II Kamianetz was destroyed by German Nazi bombs, but reconstruction was completely neglected by the Russians. A well-known castle in Kamianetz is in decay due to lack of care, and its 15th and 16th centuries objects have been carried away. Such outstanding buildings as the churches of the Dominican Order and the Armenian Church are in a state of ruin. Ancient city walls and towers from the 15th—17th centuries are in ruins.

In the eastern part of Ukraine, in the locality of Aksaysk an 18th century stone church contained a beautiful *iconostasis*, which has been destroyed. In towns such as Tahanrih, Rostov, Krasnodar almost all the existing churches have been destroyed. Near Rostov on the Don an Armenian church was dismantled, despite the fact that it was a valuable monument of the Empire style.

When the Russian occupied the Western parts of Ukraine after World War II, they declared proudly that after the reunion of these territories a glorious era of renaissance of culture and art would dawn and monuments of the past would be conserved and protected. Bezsonov, in the book *Architecture of Western Ukraine* (Moscow, 1946) even arrived at the curious conclusion and suggestion that the care of monuments of art in Western Ukraine should be entrusted to architects and artists of the Soviet Union (that is, Moscow) in "a form of fraternal help." After a ten-year period Western Ukraine under the Soviet Union, facts about the neglect and ruin of valuable Ukrainian monuments are reported even by the official Soviet press. Thus, in Stanislaviv many valuable monuments have been dismantled; in Troky, the manager of the collective farm sold the walls of a castle tower as building material; a big castle in Pidhoriany was dismantled; in Berezhany statues of the 16th century were destroyed and so were sculptures decorating the City Hall in Buchach. In Lutsk a huge Roman Catholic Church was dismantled. Even in Lviv, the principal city of Galicia, founded in 1252, no conservation of monuments of art and relics of antiquity was enforced. This neglect by Soviet authorities toward existing treasures of art was so apparent that Ukrainian writers and artists under the Soviet regime drafted a protest against such policy, and it was signed by the poets M.

Rylsky, V. Kassian and others in 1956 (Magazine *Radyanska Kultura*, Kiev).

Art schools, societies and institutions of Ukrainian artists, were originally founded, supported and financed by local Ukrainians and they were patronized mostly by Ukrainian artists; but immediately after the arrival of the Soviet armed forces they were suspended in their function and became subject to severe persecutions (as early as 1920). In the first place all art groups were suspended, especially societies of conservation of monuments of art and antiquity.

After the national revolution of 1917, when the Ukrainian Central *Rada* and the Ukrainian national government came into existence, one of their first steps was the foundation of a Ukrainian Academy of Art in Kiev, the highest school in rank under the auspices of the State (founded on November 22, 1917) and the Institute of Architecture, founded in 1918. When the Soviet administration was established, the name of the Academy was changed in 1924 to "Institute of Art" and besides the change of name many professors and students were executed or exiled to Siberia. Among other were the well-known painter of monuments M. Boychuk, M. Makarenko, S. Nalepinska, A. Taran, F. Ernst, I. Padalka, I. Wrona and many others.

In 1923 the Institute of Architecture was annexed to the Institute of Art, afterwards to the Institute of Construction, but actually it was liquidated. At the same time the Academy of Art in Petersburg (Leningrad) did not undergo any changes, but was left with its Faculty of Architecture as a "unique, all-Soviet school". In 1934 the Polygraphic Faculty was liquidated, one of the most vital and practical schools of the Kiev Institute. At that same time in Moscow a new Academy of Architecture was established, in place of the former Institute of Civil Engineering in Petersburg, as a research institute and a unique "all-Union highest ranking school." Only in 1938 was the Academy of Architecture established in Kiev, but merely as a research institution, not as a school of higher rank. The Academy of Kiev is run by the "Committee of Architecture of the Soviet People's Commissariat of USSR" in Moscow.

The very few editions of the Academy of Architecture are being published mostly in the Russian language and the authors are mostly of Russian nationality. The same fate befell the instruction of polygraphy, when a Polygraphic Institute, unique for the entire USSR

was established in Moscow, while a mere "secondary school" of polygraphy was opened in Kharkiv.

Soviet propaganda of today endeavors to persuade the free world that many schools of higher level have been established in Ukraine during the Soviet rule, which surpass by far the number of schools in pre-war times. Yet all these "high" schools were established on the basis of former secondary schools, especially in the fields of pedagogy, agronomy and art; as for instance the Institute of Art in Kiev, Odessa, Kharkiv, Lviv; the agronomical institutes in Kamianetz, Bila Tserkva, Uman, Poltava, Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Novocherkask; institutes of pedagogy in Vynnytsia, Zhytomyr, Odessa, Kiev, Poltava, Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk and other localities.

Even universities in Ukraine were re-named and "rebuilt" in the 1920's into "Institutes of Popular Instruction," while in Moscow all of them remained as they were heretofore, universities. Only under the heavy pressure of public opinion and of young people were the universities re-introduced in Ukraine in the 1930's. Yet the University in Kamianetz, established by the Ukrainian National Government in 1918 had never been reconverted into a university, but remained as the Educational Institute.

Programs and ideological trends of schools in Ukraine were "conformed" to the Russian pattern and the Ukrainian language was deprived of the right to be left as the language of instruction. Now in all the schools, especially technical ones, lectures are held mostly in the Russian language.

Especially at art schools of all degrees, Soviet administration was very vigilant that no special trends, even artistic new ideas, should be introduced or cultivated that differed from those existing at Russian schools. Persecutions of this kind in Ukrainian schools were first brought in 1932-1935. Uninterruptedly the Moscow administration accused Ukrainian artists of "deviations, national, formal, ideological" and of many other "injurious factions, subversion" or even of "sabotage or spying" — in order to destroy all artistic work based on national traditions, even when it was national in form only. In connection with that policy many professors of art and outstanding artists were deported or physically destroyed. Their number reaches into hundreds and there is no way of establishing even a list. At that time the two greatest schools of arts and crafts in Ukraine, one in Mezhyhirya, near Kiev, and the other in Kamyanetz in Podilya, were destroyed.

The school at Mezhyhiria was established by the Government of the Ukrainian Republic in 1918 on a site where there exists one of the best kaoline clays, and where in the past china wares were fabricated. In a very short time the school became very popular for ceramic objects in Ukrainian style which had been adapted to modern usage. Ceramics from Mezhyhiria stood in competition with the faience products of Moscow, where they produced household wares and ceramics in line with the taste of Soviet rulers. That was the reason why very soon Ukrainian ceramics were doomed as "nationalistic" and harmful for the "Soviet people," and organizers and artists of this school were deported to the North of Russia, where they soon died (Vasyl Sedlyar, Oksana Pavlenko, S. Tomakh).

The School of Art and Craft in the ancient town of Kamyianetz, which was famous for its artistic monuments, was founded in 1905 and constructed at the expense of the city and it soon became a great school with faculties of painting, sculpture, ceramics, weaving, polygraphy, lithography, etc. Even during Soviet times the school still published a whole series of lovely editions and albums from the field of Ukrainian Folk Art. That was reason enough for the Soviet administration to change it into a "Porcelain-Glass Shop" with an explicit interdiction of "artistic deviation," as it was stated in official reports.

After World War II, the all-Russian official line of the so-called "socialist realism" was introduced in all the Schools of Art in Ukraine, compulsory for all artists in order that no difference or special style be established in art in Ukraine. Whereas before World War II some aspects of Folk Art were admissible in art, at the time we talk about it became a dangerous signal of nationalist ideology and suspected Western orientation. Also in the field of architecture many Ukrainian architects were persecuted just for the reason of having utilized in their modern works ancient motifs from Ukrainian architecture. A fact unheard of in the world.

Besides, the Bolshevik never stuck to the vociferous "Marxist-Leninist" formula which proclaimed that art had to be "socialist in content, but national in form" in relation to Ukrainian art, and they persecuted bitterly every manifestation of national form when it was created by Ukrainian artists.

Conservation of monuments of antiquity did not exist at all under the Soviet rule during the first two decades of its administration, and departments of ministries of the Ukrainian National Republic

(1917 — 1920) that were created to that effect and societies of conservation of art and antiquity had been liquidated by the Russians. In the Ukrainian SSR the matter of conservation of monuments of art and architecture arose for the first time only after World War II.

It is a well-known fact that the greatest devastation of monuments of architecture during World War II took place in Ukraine. Yet the Moscow regime was in no hurry to restore these monuments in Ukraine, though such works were begun on Russian territories as early as 1946. This information is obtained from the Russian edition of the official publication, *Architecture and City Planning*, from 1950, from the article entitled "Practice of the Restoration Works." The indifference of Moscow rulers towards the restoration of monuments of art and architecture in Ukraine provoked even some comments in the Soviet press in Ukraine. Thus, there appeared several articles in the press about the lack of restoration works in Chernihiv, Kiev, Lviv and Kamianetz. In order to appease public opinion in Ukraine and abroad regarding the inadequate care of Ukrainian monuments of architecture, an article was published in the Soviet press in Ukraine in 1953 by E. Horbenko, Director of the Department of Conservation of Monuments in the Soviet Union. He started his article with an introductory declaration that "the Communist Party and the Soviet Union were protecting the conservation of historical and cultural treasures of the nations of the USSR." "Chief" Horbenko even made a survey of historical architectural monuments in Ukraine, starting with princely times, in the 11th century, but he failed to mention those monuments which were destroyed and dismantled by order of the Communist Party and the Soviet bosses from Moscow, when such valuable monuments were destroyed as the "Golden Roof Monastery" in Kiev from the 12th century, or the buildings erected by *Hetman* I. Mazepa in Kiev, and many other masterpieces of Ukrainian architecture which were swept away from the surface of earth — and had not even been mentioned, as if they had never existed. The same treatment of Ukrainian monuments of architecture is met in other Russian editions, as for instance *Monuments of Architecture in Ukraine* (Kiev, 1954), *Architecture of the USSR* (Moscow, 1951), *Architecture of Ukraine* (Moscow, 1956), in reviews of Soviet encyclopedias, etc.

What was actually done by the Soviet administration in order to preserve monuments of Ukrainian architecture? According to

statements of E. Horbenko, the following buildings were restored after World War II: the University, the Marian Palace, "a series of monuments of the Pecherska Lavra Monastery" in Kiev, the Church of St. Cyril, the Church of St. Andrew, the belfry of the Saint Sophia, and a "series of other monuments." As can be noticed from this enumeration, the buildings in question could have had a utilitarian purpose, as they were suitable for offices, dwellings, etc. and all of them were constructions of more recent times, when Ukrainian creative invention was already less apparent and Moscow's intrusion more dominating. We do not mention those "series of other monuments" as no one, not even the boss of this conservation activity, mentions any other towns in Ukraine; not one monument of Ukrainian architecture outside Kiev was actually renovated under the Soviet "sponsorship of conservation."

As far as Kiev is concerned, Soviet rulers were obliged to undertake some renovations of the most important monuments for reasons of propaganda, in view of the fact that Kiev is being visited by numerous foreign missions and tourists, who would notice the deplorable state of these monuments. Thus, in recent years restoration works were undertaken in the Saint Sophia Cathedral in Kiev and at the Pecherska Lavra in Kiev. The condition in which other monuments outside Kiev are found is indescribable and it is becoming worse every year. The lack of protection by the Soviet administration of valuable architectural monuments in Western Ukraine is noticeable in Lviv, Lutsk, Stanislaviv, Troky, Pidhoriany and Berezhan'y.

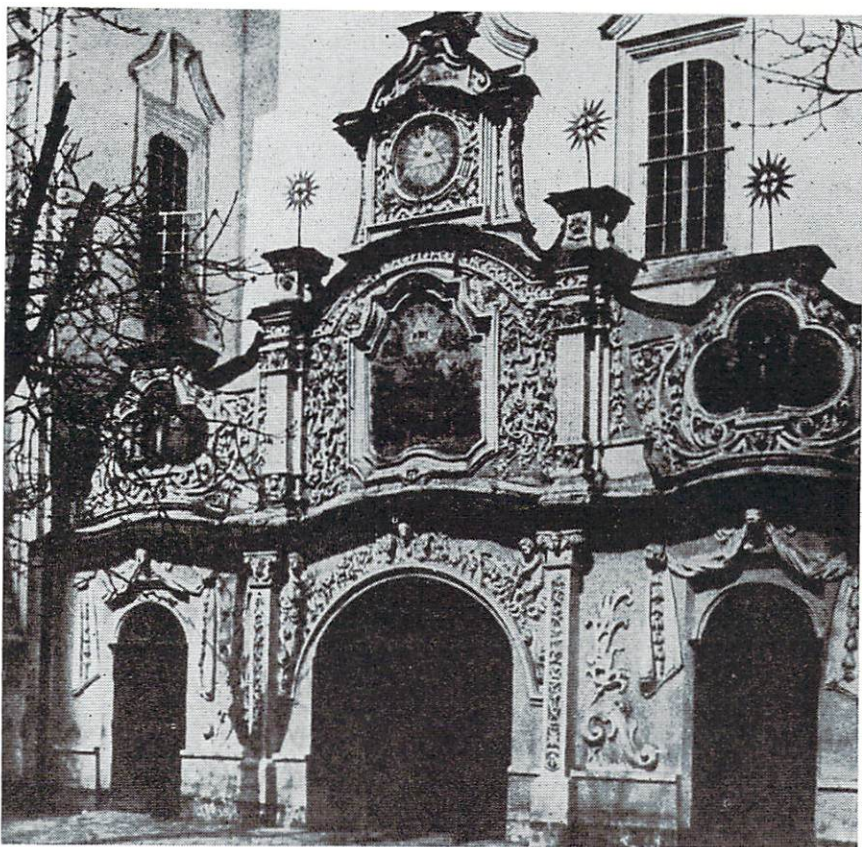
From articles published in *Soviet Culture* in 1955 and 1956, we learn as follows: Inhabitants of the town of Kamyanetz are being awakened at night by noises of falling stones of turrets and walls of the famous castle of Kamyanetz, dating back to the 15th and 16th centuries, which is collapsing due to the lack of care. In Kharkiv the Church of the Holy Assumption is in decay, though it has been converted into a storage room for haberdashery. In Pryluky, the ecumenical church from the 17th century is in ruin because its roof was removed in 1948 for "official purposes." The church in Pereyaslav and the monastery in Mhary, both of which contain exceptional monuments, are standing in ruins.

In Husyatyn, frescoes from the 17th century, were completely ruined, as the church which contains them remain without a roof.

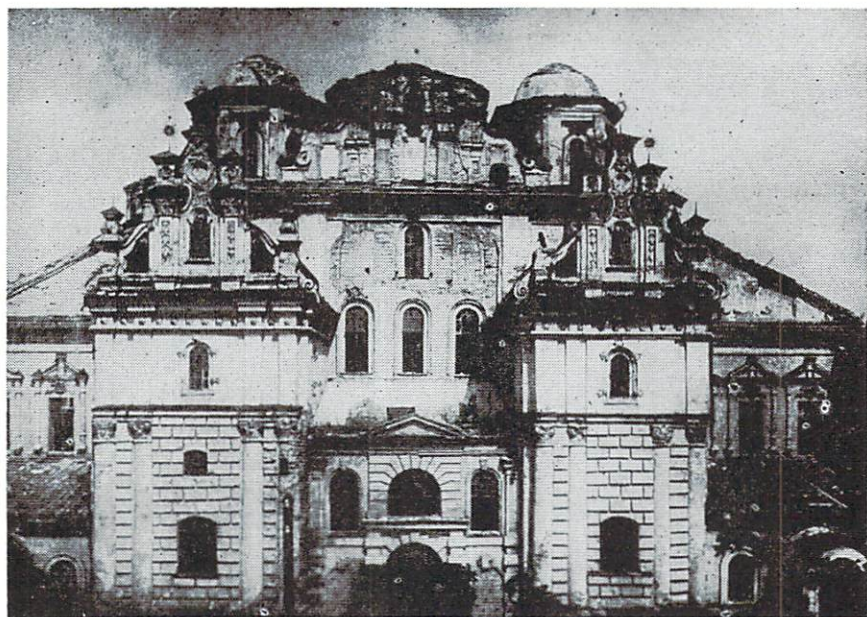
News is being spread in the Soviet press in Ukraine that the lack of interest in conservation of monuments of art and architecture is

due to the negligence of the local "Ukrainian Government." Yet with the well-known system of Soviet rule and the centralization of all financial resources in Moscow, the local administration and especially the municipalities are unable to provide for adequate conservation and renovation of valuable monuments of history and art in the necessary wide scope.

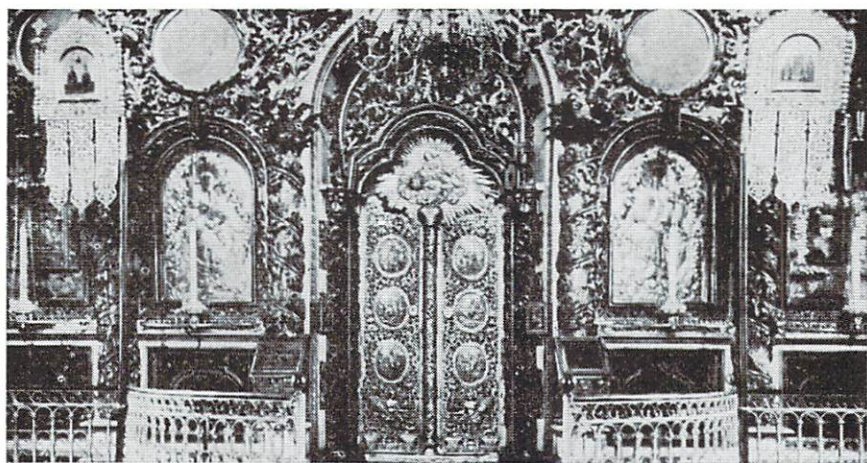
The responsibility for the destruction and neglect of valuable monuments of antiquity and art in Ukraine remains solely with the Soviet center of power — Moscow.



**The portals of the Holy Epiphany Church in Kiev, capital of Ukraine. The Church, founded by Hetman Ivan Mazepa in 1690-1693, was constructed by architect Joseph Starchenko. It was demolished in an anti-religious campaign by the Soviet Russian Government in 1937.**

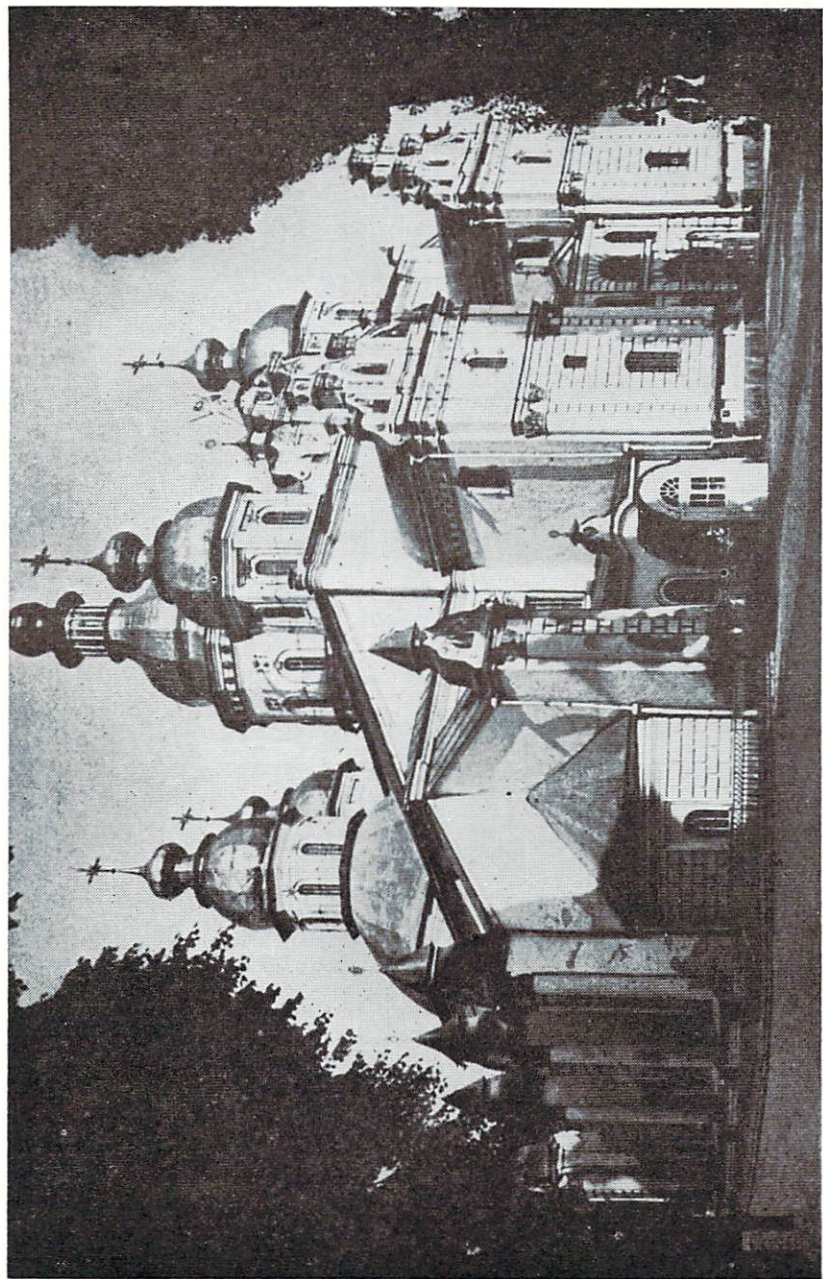


**St. Michael's Church in Kiev during its demolition by the Soviet Russian Government in 1934.**



**The Iconostasis of St. Michael's Church in Kiev. The Iconostasis was remodeled in 1718, although the Church itself was built in 1108-1113. In 1934 the Russian Communists razed the Church to the ground.**





St. Michael's Church within the gold-roofed Monastery in Kiev, dating back to 1108-1113. The picture was taken during the independent Ukrainian National Republic in 1917. The Church was demolished by the Soviet Russian Government in 1934.

