THE ARCHITECTURAL COMPLEX OF BUKOVOYNIAN METropolITAN’S RESIDENCE
Chernivtsi is one of the most picturesque cities of Ukraine. Much of its appeal is marvellous integrity and unity residing in the cities that undergo growth and rise up as if out of nowhere owing to the efforts of many generations of architects who have skilfully embodied the spirit of times.

The city is extremely scenic. Despite a considerable relief divergence the layout of Chernivtsi unfolds into a great variety of terrain.

Ancient, meandering, cut with steep turns, streets stretch upwards from the Prut River. On the gentle slope they form a dense street network cut with the thoroughfare leading to the Central Square.

Inheriting common traditions the experts in construction created the integral ensemble. A generation of Bukovynian, Austrian and Czech architects found Chernivtsi to be a great stimulus for applying Western experience. They revealed peculiar self-expression which had little in common with classical canons. Such were Josef Hlavka, Josef Gregor, Ervin Muller, Hubert Hessner, Gustav Fritsch, Josef Lerner, Adam Appenzeller and other well-known architects and sculptors.

The best architectural ensembles of Chernivtsi were created by the genius of those masters. In 2008 our City will celebrate its 600th anniversary. The Residence of Bukovynian Metropolitans built in 1864-1882, houses one of the oldest universities in Europe, Chernivtsi Yuriy Fedkovych National University.

The Residence is the spirit of Bukovyna. It is the synergy of styles and cultures of peoples inhabiting this land. It brings to mind a medieval stronghold or Alcazar in Granada, Spain, bearing the features of Byzantine and Romanesque architecture. Its display of traditional Bukovynian ornamental patterns on the roofs, adorned with coloured glazed tiles, immediately catches you eye. You can’t help admiring the ceiling frescos of the assembly halls which unmistakably remind you of Hutsul carved jewel boxes.

The Metropolitan Residence, an exquisite masterpiece, a pearl of Chernivtsi bird’s-eye view, was designed and constructed by Josef Hlavka (1831-1908), a famous Czech architect and patron of art.

J. Hlavka favoured Chernivtsi with a magnum opus of the European art of the second half of XIXc. The architect initiated the construction of
about 150 buildings in various parts of Europe, including his creations in Prague (the maternity hospital and his own fairy-tale castle). The Armenian Church in Chernivtsi is also one of Josef Hlavka’s masterworks.

The construction of the Residence influenced the place names. „The Road to the Episcopal Residence”, leading from the Market Square to the Bishop’s Edifice, appeared on the maps and in the documents of that time. Later its name was changed to „Episcopal Street” (Bischofsgasse), and the hill behind the Residence, known earlier as Domnyk or Panska Gora, started to be called the Episcopal Hill. It was formally registered as Habsburgs’ Hill in 1882.

In 1794, at the request of the local Orthodox aristocracy, the Austrian administration authorized the construction of the Central Cathedral and a full-fledged Episcopal Residence. It took 50 years to complete them though.

It was Bishop Yevhen Hakman who was the first to convince the authorities to permit the construction of a new spacious residence. In 1860 the archbishop became the head of the construction committee, and three years later on August 20, 1863, Kaiser issued an edict approving of the plan.

On July 6(18), 1864, the day after the consecration of a newly-built Cathedral, Bishop Yevhen Hakman laid a cornerstone into the foundation of St. Ivan of Suceava Chapel on the place of the old residence.

The construction lasted with some intervals up to 1882.

It was the biggest construction project of the empire. It cost enormous amount of money then – 1,750,000 guldens. The Bukovynian Orthodox Religious Foundation (gr.-or. Religionsfondes) covered most of the construction expenses. The Ministry of Religion and Education was also of considerable support contributing 300,000 florins annually since the mid-1870s.

For the most part Josef Hlavka supervised the construction of the main buildings of the Residence himself, but in 1872 a serious disease compelled him to resign after almost ten years of selfless toil.

On January 23, 1873, Kaiser’s decree created a metropolis in Bukovyna, and the Bishop in this ecclesiastic province was consecrated the Archbishop and the Metropolitan. Since then the Building has been called the Residence of Metropolitans or the Metropolitan Residence.

The whole ensemble attracts visitors with its unusual look resembling a medieval castle. High brick walls are decorated with ceramics and carved stone. Straight towers, butt-ends and pointed ledges are trimmed with high merlons. Steep slopes of the roof are decked with the ornament of white, green, blue and brown glazed tiles. All of them give an impression of eternity, sublimity and festivity. They seem to unite things impossible to join: Stars of David adorn the dome of … the psalmist school. The spire of the Metropolitan Church is crowned with a unique three-dimensional cross pointing to the west for the Catholic, and to the east for the Orthodox. Tolerance can create genuine masterpieces.

The ensemble of the Metropolitan Residence consists of three monumental buildings. The Metropolitan building is in the centre, at the remote end of the central lane which encompasses the Metropolitan Palace with its residential and administrative quarters. Along with two side paths of the seminary and the monastery the central lane forms a peculiar Baroque ceremonial courtyard. When constructing a two-storied building of the Residence Josef Hlavka used the model of the Museum of Arms in Vienna Armoury built in 1850-1856. Thus the facades of the buildings have much in common.
The composition is extremely plain and efficient. The courtyard is encircled with the buildings from three sides. In the centre one can see the Metropolitan Palace with the main entrance and the domed Chapel of St Ivan of Suceava on the left. The most imposing premises are the enormous vestibule with heavy columns, and on the first floor there is a 20-metre high Synodal Hall (nowadays the Marble Hall) with an adjoining gallery.

On the left there is the seminary building with the Synodal church in the middle. On the right there is an austere building with a clock tower. Once it housed a Psalmist school, an Icon-painting School, a Museum and a Guest House.

The huge volume of construction works demanded a high quality of materials. Hence a number of stone quarries were opened and new brickworks were built. Mined in the Carpathians and in the Dniester basin alabaster, marble, and coral calculus were widely used to decorate facades and interior. By the way, J. Hlavka made a decorative vase (valued at 700 golden guldens) from locally mined alabaster and sent it to the world art exhibition in Paris in 1878.

The architect made extensive use of iron that saved the building during Bucharest earthquake of 1977. The building stood the test several times and not a crack was ever seen on its walls.

The architect himself did not see his creation completed. Not long before the construction was finished Josef Hlavka started ailing having shattered his health with arduous labour and constant lack of sleep. He went home and spent a few years in a wheelchair. Though it did not destroy his love of architecture, and he organized a Charity Foundation which still provides talented students of architecture in the Czech Republic with some substantial support.

The ensemble of the Residence would not be perfect without the public garden in front and the park behind the main building. It is walled in and has a magnificent gate. The ensemble itself and the neighbouring property were finally put in order in 1878.

The Residence is a typical example of the so-called „brick style” which was very popular in Western European architecture in the period of Eclecticism. It incorporated the most progressive and realistic trends of that time. Karl Schinckel and his followers did a lot for its development.

Nevertheless, it is not the only aspect residing in the building. There are others reflecting the acuteness of the national issues in the empire of Austria-Hungary. The roof decoration bears specific ornamental patterns. The roof tiling create multi-coloured variegated ornaments resembling Hutsul tapisies (lizhnyks), Easter egg (pysankas) patterns and the design of Bukovynian runners (rushnyks).

It is rather difficult to see stylistic background that inspired J. Hlavka while designing the gates, because one can find the combination of motives of Western Middle Ages and a hint at Eastern exotics. Although the presence of Eastern architectural motives in the composition of the gates of Residence can seem somehow unexpected, the answer to this problem is to be found in the architecture of Venice. Similar motives reflect the historical fate of this town - a European „sea gate” to Moslim countries. It explains the peculiarity of architectural design of the gate of the Metropolitan Residence in Chernivtsi: there is Oriental plot in its image, perceived with the help Venice experience.

As the embodiment of the Orthodox Church, the Residence symbolizes the dialogue and cooperation between nations and cultures. This architectural masterpiece was built owing to Bishop Yevhen Hakman's initiative, a Ukrainian from a village in Bukovyna, who promoted the theological education in Rumanian as the language of instruction, but, in general, facilitated the growth of Orthodoxy. But it was Joseph Glavka, Czech and Catholic, who made Y. Hakman's dreams come true.
There are spacious quarters for living and working of the Metropolitan in the Residence. There are also lavishly decorated halls, where distinguished guests would be received and diocesan meetings would take place. The Metropolitan chancellery and consistory were also located here. The blueprints of the facade of the principal building made by J. Hlavka himself are kept in Administrative Archives of Vienna.

The Marble hall (once known as the Synodal hall) is the most admirable among the rooms of the main building adorned with marble and columns. It is similar to modern luxurious halls with decorative or genre painting. The gallery (balconies) arches rest on 11 alabaster columns; between the arches the walls were decorated with fresco paintings and mosaics.

Decorated with alabaster walls are covered with frescos depicting famous personalities of Early Middle Ages (“Conversion of Equal to Apostles Emperor Konstantyn”); prominent events in the history of Bukovyna and local Orthodox church (“The Celebration of Bukovyna Oath 1777”, “Translation of the Relics of St Ivan from Trapezund to Suceava at the Beginning of XV c.”, “The Foundation of Religious Fund in 1786”), and also the portraits of all Bukovynian bishops, archbishops and metropolitans painted by a Czech professor K. Skovoroda. Marvellous wooden ceiling with rich ornament, marble corridors, dome-shaped ceilings are equally impressive.

The main halls were to be decorated with the portraits of Austrian monarchs and Moldavian governors of province. A Bukovynian painter E. Buchevskyi started creating the paintings. Unfortunately, E. Buchevskyi died, but E. Maksymovych continued his work. He painted the portraits of Bukovynian metropolitans Arkadiy Chuperkovich and Volodymyr Repta.
The Marble Hall (former Synodal Hall)
The newly renovated ceiling decorations and small structural details on the vaults, pilasters, friezes and capitals are as enchanting and captivating as they were a century ago.

Two big chandeliers in the Synodal hall: 120 candles each, four chandeliers: 32 candles each, 36 girandoles: 3 candles each, 4 girandole with 1 candle each and all of the oil lamps were designed by two engineers from Vienna: I. Mashutka and F. Shmoranz.

The Chapel of St. Ivan of Suceava had a specific role since it was the first building of the Residence and the Metropolitan home church. Metropolitan Sylvester Morariu-Andriyevych consecrated it in 1882.

The interior furniture was of special importance. In 1879-1880 an architect F. Kshenzarskiy designed stylish furniture for metropolitan’s apartments and other rooms. Illuminating equipment was designed by architects I. Mashutka and F. Shmoranz and made by a craftsman from Vienna: W. Hillar.

A fire destroyed a lot of paintings, but, fortunately, it spared the Conference hall of the Holy Synod (nowadays the Red Hall). It is a peculiar, extraordinary beautiful wooden ‘jewel box’, whose wall painting resembles a sophisticated trimming with red Chinese silk. It seems the ceiling is a wonderful collection of pysankas. And the floor is red beech, oak and green lime parquet.

As the legend says the enormous Venetian mirrors can rejuvenate each looking at them and give each man absolution. Mirrors are indeed precious, Venetian, it’s so easy to prove that: just put a candle or a lighter in front of a chandelier. If you look attentively, instead of one light, you may see five: that is the exact number of silver layers on the mirror.
The Seminary Building
The right wing of the residential ensemble (to the left of the main entrance) is the seat of the theological seminary and the College of Orthodox theology. (By the way, nowadays our University is the only one in Ukraine in which there is a College of Philosophy and Theology. The graduates majoring in “Theology” receive the same diploma as the graduates of Kyiv Academy of Theology obtaining higher secular education at the same time).

The historical building of the Seminary encircles the Seminary church of Three Hierarchs. The first stone to the foundation of the temple was laid by archbishop Y. Hakman on April 3 (15), 1867. The church is known for its amazing acoustics.

The side ledges of the Seminary building are topped with German “tongs”. But in the centre there is a huge Byzantine quinquecuspidate dome that creates a romantic and elated image of the building, universal by its nature, with an orthodox temple standing next to the classrooms and lecture-halls.

In the courtyard of the Seminary building one may notice the motives borrowed from western European Romanesque style of 11th-12th centuries.

The arrangement of mosaics on the windows above the entrance was carefully thought of: on a sunny day one may observe an exciting light phenomenon – the sunrays moving gradually, light up the faces of the apostles, Mother of God, Jesus Christ and the Crucifix.

Several experts worked on the trimming of this temple. Anna Hoffman, the sculptor, made mouldings for 12 capitals of the tower. The Seminary church was painted by the artist from Vienna K. Jobst and a Bukovynian painter E. Buchevskiy. K. Jobst, who worked on the painting of the Residence in 1877-1880, made tempera paintings on the most prominent Biblical plots: the Nativity, the Resurrection and the Ascension. E. Buchevskiy embellished the interior of the temple with wonderful decorative ornaments.
The Church of Three Hierarchs
Since the Temple of Three Hierarchs was a metropolitan church, Metropolitan Sylvester Morariu-Andriyevych consecrated it to God on July 15 (27), 1882, and named after outstanding Christian theologians, the Fathers of the Church and Ecumenical Hierarchs: St Basil the Great, John Chrysostom and Gregory the Divine.

Though the church was closed during the Soviet period, the administration of the university managed to save magnificent murals and the iconostasis for us to see them now in their immaculate beauty.

Nowadays the students of the Faculty of Philosophy and Theology along with their professors and tutors revive the church services. Wedding ceremonies as well as christening are quite frequent in this church.
Fragments of the Church of Three Hierarchs interior
Guest House
To the right of the main entrance there is the building called the presbytery. A Psalmist school, a Museum, Visitors’ Chambers and a Candle Shop (founded in 1929) were on the premises.

The main attraction of the presbytery is its tiled roof with traditional ornamental patterns of Bukovyna.

The gracious tower on top of the building is also worth mentioning primarily because of its crown decorated with the Stars of David. The researchers assume that the architect intended to emphasize old biblical tradition common for both Judaism and Christianity.
Arboretum
There is also an arboretum on the territory of the Residence. It is encircled with a 3-metre (10 feet) high stone wall and covers an area of 5 hectares (12.5 acres). The biggest part of the arboretum is a landscape. Rare species of trees are mingled with the native ones: maples, oaks, lime-trees and hornbeams. They build up a solid defensive line all around the park. This line is supposed to provide the total isolation of the park thus creating the atmosphere of serenity.

The park entrance completes the regular part of the ensemble with its buildings and the garden. In the middle there is a monument to J. Hlavka built in 1937 by sculptor A. Severyn. A fir-tree, the same age as the park itself, grows near the monument. Next to it there are two ponds with fountains.

Behind the facade is the park. A path leads to a small pond with weeping willows, Soularcis magnolia and catalpas. It is one of the most picturesque nooks. From there the paths disperse. The park, with an asymmetric tree planting and glades, has preserved some elements of ornamen-
tal design: artificial hills, garden benches, a large stone grotto and sculptures. One of the park wonders is a „three-legged“ apple-tree. Its crown had been an understock for two grafts from neighbouring trees that formed together such a botanic wonder.

The ensemble of the Bukovynian Metropolitan Residence is undoubtedly one of the most impressive works of art in European architecture. It dates back to the second half of XIX c. and is considered the core of the architectural heritage of Chernivtsi.

This unsurpassed complex is noted for its combination of styles, use of national motifs in roof decoration, in particular its colour spectrum, and its pristine authentic look. After World War II the Residence was restored twice, in 1944-1945 and in 1955.

In Europe the Metropolitan residence ensemble is certainly one of a kind.
This marvellous architectural ensemble, which is the visiting card of Chernivtsi, is that very place where one of the oldest classical universities of Ukraine – Chernivtsi National University named after Yuriy Fedkovych is situated.

The gala opening of Chernivtsi University with awarding it the name of the emperor Franz Josef took place in the building of the teachers' seminary (nowadays – Building 1). The first head of the University was Kostyantyn Tomaschuk.

At the beginning the University composed of three faculties: the Faculty of Law, Philosophy, and Theology. In 1877 the Botanical gardens were laid for the needs of the University; the Pharmaceutical division of Philosophic Faculty, Departments of Zoology, Botany, Mineralogy and Physics were opened. The Department of Ukrainian language headed by professors G. Onyshkevych, O. Kaluzhnyatsky, K. Gankevych, since 1885 till 1919 – by professor S. Smal-Stotsky was created at the Philosophic Faculty.


In October 1920 the inauguration of the Head of the University Y. Nistor with the assistance of King Ferdinand I took place. The reorganization of the university in 1923 led to the division of Philosophic Faculty into the Faculty of Natural Sciences and the Philosophic-Philologic Faculty. The building of the scientific library was erected (but not finished).

Since the time of incorporation of North Bukovyna into the URSR on August 13, 1940 sovnarkom of the URSR took the decision to reorganize Chernivtsi University into the state one with the Ukrainian language of teaching. The first Head of the Ukrainian University was Zakhar Shul'ga.

During the war Chernivtsi State University was evacuated to Kuibyshev city. At the same time on the basis of University the Polytechnic opened and Theological Department was renewed by Rumanian authorities in Chernivtsi. After the liberation of Bukovyna on October 10, 1944 Chernivtsi University started its activity anew.

In post-war years the University scientific potential gradually increased. The number of Departments and specialities grew. In 70-80s of the 20th century there appeared the Departments of Economics and Technical Engineering.

The gain of Ukrainian independence fostered the strengthening of mathematical and technical bases, of academic stuff and expansion of scientific trends. In 1990 the Pedagogical Faculty was established and the Faculty of Law was restored, and in 1992 the Faculty of Philosophy and Theology was founded. The University also has the Military Department.

In 2004 the Faculties of Computer Sciences and of Fine and Applied Arts (Vyzhnytsa) were established. It has been planned to found the Faculty of Architecture and Construction, the necessity of which is called forth by the urgent need in specialists in this field.

The international connections of the University are being developed. Nowadays they are established with 31 educational and scientific institutions in 17 countries of the world and with more than 20 international funds and organizations in Canada, USA, Austria, Germany, Romania, Moldova, Poland, China, Russia, Spain, France and others.

In 1992 with the aim of broad involvement of scientists to the elaboration of the fundamental problems in the sphere of social studies and natural sciences concerning Bukovyna as a cultural and historical community the research centre of Bukovyna studies was created.

In 2005 the only centre of Canadian studies in Ukraine was opened. Its activity contributes to deepening of mutual understanding between the nations, their convergence.

The scientific library of the University plays an important role in educational process and in the development of scientific research.

By January 1, 2006 the library funds has counted more than 2,600 million volumes, among which more than 1,3 million volumes of scientific and more than 200 thousand – of educational literature.

Annually up to 25 thousand of volumes are received, among which more than 18 thousand are in Ukrainian language.

Nowadays about 20 thousand of full-time, part-time and external students study at the fifteen departments of the University getting bachelor's, specialist's and master's degrees in 73 specialities.

The academic staff of the University amounts to more than 1,000 people, more than 100 of whom are Doctors of Philosophy and Science and about 500 are Candidates of Science, associate professors. The University has the 4th academic accreditation level. 8 Academic Councils in doctoral theses defence work here. The University is a member of International University Association “Phi Beta Delna” (USA).