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ANTONI SULIMA POPIEL – A STUDENT AND A TEACHER

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Abstract. *The article outlines creative and educational activity of Antoni Popiel, a Lviv Polytechnic professor, as well as the role of artists, who influenced on the creative work of a young sculptor. Some aspects of artistic and designer works of the architecture professor have been considered.*

Keywords: Antoni Popiel, Edmund von Hellmer, educational activity, Leonard Marconi, periods of studies, representatives of the art schools, Vladyslav Luchkevych, Walery Gadowski.

Introduction

The personality of Antoni Popiel arouses a considerable interest not only in Ukraine, but far behind its borders, and his name has forever taken its place in the history of formation of the Lviv School of Architecture. Creative work of the leading sculptor, rich experience in design and decoration of buildings became the source of inspiration for artists in the 20th and 21st centuries. Creative development of teachers who influenced on formation of personality of a young sculptor has also been analyzed.

Analysis of Recent Research Works

Such Polish specialized publications as “Notes of society art critics in Krakow” [1], “Diary of opening of monuments Tadeusz Kostiuszko and Kazymezha Pulavskoho” [2] (1910), article in the periodical “Our region” [3] give short biographical information about Antoni Popiel.

Ukrainian specialized publications, such as “Architecture of Galicia XIX–XX cen.” [4], “Meeting with Lviv” [5], “Architecture of Lviv. Time and styles XIII–XXI cen.”) [6], “History of Lviv” [7] and some others, consider his personality only in the context of architectural monuments. Today, scientific surveys about creative, scientific-theoretical, educational activity of the prominent sculptor Antoni Popiel are very limited.

The aim of work is studies of creative, educational heritage of Antoni Popiel in the field of design. The article becomes beginning of anthology about teachers-artists of Lviv architectural school.

The early period of creativity

Antoni Popiel (fig. 1) was born on June 13, 1865 in the city of Shchakova, near the border of Silesia and Western Galicia [3]. He spent his childhood in the city of Brody [8].



Fig. 1. Antoni Popiel

At the age of 18 he quitted grammar school in Brody and moved to Krakow where in 1882 he entered the school of fine arts. His teachers were the famous Polish professors and sculptors, in particular professor Walery Gadowski, Vladyslav Luchkevych. Since 1885 he had studied in the Vienna Academy of Arts, where for three years he was taught by professor Hellmer and professor Otto Koenig, the head of the Austrian Museum of Arts. He was also taught by Augusto Passaglii, Antonio Mancini, Augusto Rivalty in Florence. Antoni Popiel was strongly influenced by prevalent Austrian and Italian “neo-baroque academism” [8].

Antoni Popiel – a Student Krakow Period of Studies

At the first stage of Antoni Popiel's education, famous teachers of the Krakow Academy of Arts influenced to some extent on formation of the personality of the young artist and on his creative work, as well as educated love to art and sculpture.

Walery Gadomski was a Polish sculptor. He was born in 1833 in Krakow. He finished the Krakow School of Arts and, concurrently, graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna in the class of Franz Bauer. From 1876 through 1889 he taught sculpture in the Krakow School of Arts and took active part in the artistic life of the city. In 1877 he was awarded the title of professor, but his teaching ended in 1887, when he went blind because of a disease [9].

Walery Gadomski imparted his knowledge and skills to many students, including such famous sculptors as Stanislaw Lewandowski, Antoni Madejski, Antoni Popiel, and others [9].

He created numerous gypsum, terra-cotta, marble sculptures, as well as busts and medallions throughout his life. Among his notable works one can mention the sculpture to Artur Grottger in the Dominican Church in Lviv (1876–1880) (fig. 2) [9].



Fig. 2. Sculpture to Artur Grottger in the Dominican Church

Vladyslav Luchkevych (fig. 3) was a Polish artist, teacher, economist, historian, museum expert and restorer. He was born in 1828 in Krakow [10].



Fig. 3. Vladyslav Luchkevych

In 1843 he entered the Jagiellonian University and was a student at the Department of Philosophy and History. In two years he graduated from the university. From 1839 to 1847 Vladyslav Luchkevych studied drawing and painting in the Krakow School of Arts [10].

In 1846 he received a scholarship to study in Dresden and Berlin. In 1849–1850 he studied in the School of Arts in Paris, where he underwent theoretical and practical training. On his return to Krakow in 1850 he became keen on painting, the basis of his plots were religious figures, historic events, portraits. In 1877 he gained the title of professor and since 1895 he was elected as a principle of that school. For half a century of teaching in the school of arts he gave lectures almost on all subjects, among which there were Styles in Art and Architecture, History of Poland, Modelling, Drawing, Aesthetics, Laws of Harmony, Laws of Contrast Colours and others.

For 44 years of educational work Vladyslav Luchkevych taught several generations of Polish artists and sculptors, including Jan Matejko, Andrzej Grabowski, Jacek Malczewski, Antoni Popiel etc. He made his students interested, he liked to influence their thoughts, tastes and educated love to art. His educational influence was not limited to the walls of the school; he gave many private classes, lectures in museums, as well as speeches in Warsaw, Krakow and Lviv [10].

Vienna Period of Studies

Educational work of famous Austrian sculptors of the Vienna School of Arts, where Antoni Popiel studied, contributed to formation of an individual plastic language that had much in common with the stylistics of Vienna academism.

Edmund von Hellmer was an Austrian sculptor, born in Vienna in 1850. He studied in the Vienna Polytechnic University at the Department of Architecture. In parallel to his studies, he received the first lessons on art from his uncle Joseph Schonfeld. After the first semester, Edmund von Hellmer quitted the Architecture Department. In 1866 he entered the Vienna Academy of Arts, where he studied sculpture. At the age of 19 he already participated in the International Exhibition of Modern Art in Munich, where he exhibited his sculptures and received awards and a scholarship to study in Italy for two years. In 1870 he came back to Vienna and worked as a sculptor. Since 1882 he taught in the Vienna Academy of Arts. In 1887 he was awarded the title of professor. Edmund von Hellmer was among the founders of Vienna Secession [11].

Since 1901, he headed the department of sculpture, and in 1902 became the rector of the academy. Such well-known sculptors as Anton Hanak, Karl Bitter, Joseph Bok and Antoni Popiel are listed among his students [11].

During his life he created plenty of sculptures, allegoric figures that were the part of buildings and ensembles. He is also the author of numerous gravestones of the Vienna Central Cemetery.

The monument to A. Mozart in Vienna (1921) became extremely popular (fig. 4) [11].



Fig. 4. The monument to A. Mozart in Vienna

Lviv Period of Studies

After moving to Lviv, Antoni Popiel's teacher became a prominent sculptor Leonard Marconi, who managed to pass on theoretical knowledge and rich experience in design, as well as attracted the young sculptor to cooperation.

Leonard Marconi (fig. 5) was born on October 6, 1835 in Warsaw, where he finished grammar school.



Fig. 5. Leonard Marconi

He was one of the most productive Lviv sculptors of the second half of the 19th century, the master of ornamental finishing of buildings. He belonged to the dynasty of sculptors, painters and architects of Italian origin [12].

Leonard Marconi was a professor of the Lviv Polytechnic University, a lecturer in Drawing and Modelling, as well as the Honorary Member of "Pantheon" Academy in Rome. He was a teacher, in whose studio many Lviv sculptors started their artistic career [13]. Literature connected with the name of Leonard Marconi, mentions him as a teacher of prominent Lviv sculptors, such as Antoni Popiel, Petro Herasymovych, a painter and a sculptor Mykhailo Sozanskyi [14].

In 1880 in Lviv, Leonard Marconi received an official permit to perform sculptures. Since that time he actively worked in the fields of carving, modelling, casting, restoration of sculptures and ornamentation. In one of the Polytechnic's buildings he had a big studio. He engaged in cooperation not only Lviv sculptors, but also craftsmen from other towns. He created a big number of sculptures, mostly for architectural structures of Lviv and other cities. The works of Leonard Marconi, who was brought up in the traditions of classic Italian sculpture, stylistically corresponded to neo-renaissance sculptures that appeared in that period in rather big numbers [12].

In 1874–1877 allegoric sculptures of Engineering, Architecture and Mechanics were created on the attic, and the staircase (fig. 6), the auditorium and the library of the Lviv Polytechnic University were decorated [14].



Fig. 6. Staircase of the Lviv Polytechnic main building

In 1880 neo-renaissance reliefs of the façade and interior of the former Lviv Polytechnic Chemical Laboratory at 9 St. Yurii Square were performed.

In 1890–1891 the group of sculptures *Savings* on the façade of the Savings Bank at 15 Svoboda Avenue (now Lviv Museum of Ethnography and Crafts) were made. The entrance hall of the museum is decorated with reliefs by Marconi [14].

In the late 1890s he started working on sculptures for the Great City Theater, but did not manage to finish. He died in 1899. In 1901, sculptures of George Hotel in Lviv were created by Antoni Popiel according to the Marconi's models [15].

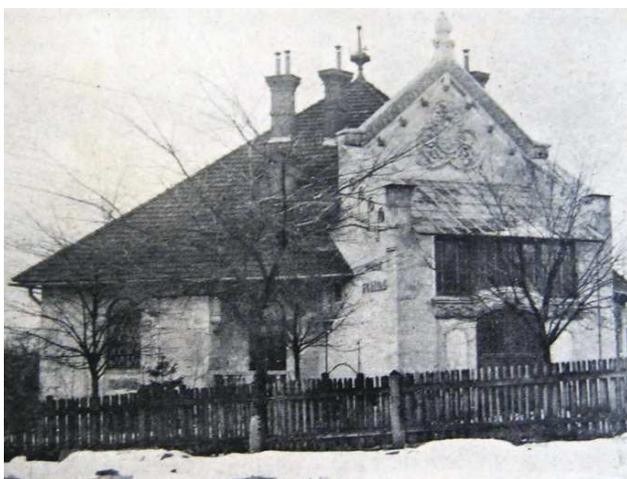


Fig. 7. "Sulima" villa

Antoni Popiel – a Teacher

In 1888 Antoni Popiel moved to Lviv, and since 1892 he worked as an assistant lecturer at the Department of Drawing and Modelling of the Lviv Polytechnic University, which was then headed by Leonard Marconi [16].

Since 1899, upon the death of Leonard Marconi, Antoni Popiel took over his subjects, teaching modelling. In 1905–1906 academic years, as an already associate professor of the Department, Antoni Popiel held Modelling Course I at the Construction Department (2 hours a week in winter and 3 hours a week in summer semester) and Modelling Course II at the Geometry Department (4 hours a week in both half-year periods). The Modelling Museum was also arranged in the Polytechnic School headed by Antoni Sulima Popiel. The same academic year he joined the bunch of professors [16].

In 1907–1908 he held again two Modelling Courses as an associate professor with the title of Professor Extraordinaire. Tadeush Blotnytskyy was appointed his assistant. Both modelling courses he conducted at the Construction Department. In the regular staff of the Polytechnic School Antoni Popiel is mentioned as a sculptor, modelling professor, who lived in Issakovych Str. in "Sulima" villa [14].

In 1902 Antoni Popiel constructed a villa (fig. 7, 8) for himself at 6 Issakovych Str. (now, 8 Horbachevskyy Str.) according to the W. Hodovsky's design. In 1930s it was reconstructed [8].

Among landmark Lviv buildings of the early 20th century, the construction and decoration of which involved many artists, became the Great City Theatre (1895–1900).



Fig. 8. Emblem Sulima

He created “Joys and Miseries of Life”, an allegoric ten-figured composition on the 4.2×20 m size fronton with figures being almost three meters high, and allegoric figure representing Tragedy (fig. 9) in the right niche of the main facade of the theatre.



Fig. 9. Allegoric figure of Tragedy

Antoni Popiel holds one of the leading places in sculptured decoration of this building [8].

He also took part in decoration of the Lviv Railway Station (1902–1904).

One can trace the elements of both neo-styles of the 19th century and modernism of the early 20th century in his works. When participating in decoration of many reputable Lviv buildings, he cooperated not only with architects, but also with other Lviv sculptors.

For instance, the architect and constructor Edmund Zhuhovych erected the building of the Industrial museum following the design of Leonard Marconi in 1898–1904. Primarily, this building was decorated with sculptures by Petro Viitovych and Antoni Popiel [8].

A significant place in the creative work of the sculptor was given to monumental plastic art. His most renowned work in this genre became the monument to Adam Mitskevych (1904) in Lviv (fig. 10) [8].

At the competition of monuments that was held in 1898, the project of the Lviv Polytechnic professor, a well-known sculptor Antoni Popiel won the first place among 20 other projects that were presented in the Arts Palace in the Exhibition area.

The monument to the Polish poet Kornel Ujejski in front of the main entrance to the former city casino was unveiled in 1901. Antoni Popiel was also the author of the monument to the writer Joseph Korzeniowski in Brody (Lviv Region).



Fig. 10. The monument to Adam Mitskevych

Portrait plastic art was closely connected with monumental plastic art in the creative work of the sculptor. He sculpted a lot of portrait busts, which is certified by catalogues of art exhibitions, publications in periodicals, inventorial materials of museums, Lviv Art Gallery in particular. In 1901 he was elected by the city community as the honourable member of the Committee on construction of St. Elizabeth Church in Lviv in 1901 [14].

Conclusions

Work of prominent sculptor Antoni Popiel enriched the architectural inheritance of not only Lviv but also other cities of Ukraine and abroad. Antoni Popiel made a considerable contribution to Lviv face formation as the author of monumental sculptures that are the part of ensembles or buildings, and as the author of the monument to Adam Mitskevych in Lviv.

He was a student of the representatives of the Krakow School, such as Walery Gadomski, Vladyslav Luchkevych, representatives of the Vienna School Edmund von Hellmer and Otto Kyonig. Leonard Marconi was also a teacher of Antoni Popiel during his studies in Lviv, who managed to pass on theoretical knowledge and rich experience in design, and attracted the young sculptor to cooperation. Later Antoni Popiel, as a teacher of Lviv Polytechnic School, and from 1907 is a professor, conducts a design course. During the study shares with his students skills in design, sculptural decoration of buildings and monumental plastic.

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