

# National Tendency in Church Building in the South of Russia from the Middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> to the Beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries

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**Abstract:** The study is dedicated to the church architecture of South of Russia in the 19th and early 20th centuries. South Russia represents one of the most multi-ethnic and culturally and religiously complex regions of Russia. National character thus occupies a central tendency of its church architecture. Through exploring the evolution of Orthodox church construction in the 19th to early 20th centuries, the study presents evidence of how the national expression in church architecture of South Russia developed. Both preserved and lost churches within the administrative boundaries of the Southern Federal District are considered in the study. The study builds on the theoretical basis of in-depth research on the topic, including in articles and monographs by: Borisova E. A., Kirichenko E. I., Prutsyn O. I., Slavina T. A., Shenkov A. S., Lisovsky V. The study expands existing scholarship through a detailed description of religious objects and focuses on "style" and influences. The investigation of influences on the national tendency of the church architecture of South Russia in the chosen period contributes additional material to the understanding of a difficult period in the history of Russian architecture. The question of national tendencies in architecture has received renewed interest from architects, primarily from those who work in the domain of church architecture. This makes the study's contribution timely. Research methodology included the analysis of theoretical works and archival material. The study includes historical and contemporary illustrations collected by the author during field trips around the region

**Keywords:** Component, Formatting, Style, Styling, Insert South Russia, National Tendency, Architecture, Orthodox Church

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## 1. Introduction

This article traces the evolution of orthodox church building in one of the largest regions of Russia from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> to the early 20th century to show the development of the language of national tendency in Russian church architecture. Both preserved and lost monuments within the administrative boundaries of the Southern Federal region are included in the analysis and are grouped according to "style" and influences.

Of the large number of churches, only a small portion remains today. The largest portion of churches that were destroyed between the 1920s and the 1980s were built in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> to early 20th centuries. A negative attitude towards churches built in this period prevailed among critics. National tendency was perceived by critics primarily through the prism

of ideological assessment and was directed not only at the views of architects, but also at the artistic merits of their constructions. The historical context was disregarded in the study of architecture during this period. In the earliest publications devoted to the subject of national tendencies in architecture, national tendency was considered a symbol of the "reactionary ruling class of Russia" [1], and "the artistic decline of capitalist architecture" [2].

K. A. Ton, the founder and ideologist of the "Russian style", was criticized particularly sharply and received an unfair appraisal. Contemporaries referred to the Russian style by the name "tonovsky". "Ancient Russian architecture is revived in churches with golden domes, and under the hand of a skilled artist gets an original Russian character, "tonovsky" [3]. In Soviet art studies the style was given epithets such as

“chauvinistic”, “reactionary”, and “unprincipled”. Similar evaluations of Russian architecture can be clearly seen in art history publications of the 1970s. The architecture of the period of eclecticism was not regarded as an independent phenomenon. E. I. Kirichenko was likely the first scholar who approached the study of national tendency in Russian architecture [4-7]. Only at the end of the 1980s, almost 125 years after the first publication devoted to K. A. Ton [8], T. A. Slavina [9] wrote a monograph about him. Negative attitudes to eclecticism and Ton’s work are no longer found in the literature.

All scholars of Russian architecture of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries focused their attention on the analysis of churches primarily in St. Petersburg. Moreover, research was concerned with the same body of monuments. Churches of Central Russia were occasionally mentioned, however churches in remote provinces, including the South of Russia, were neglected. Selected publications devoted to the architecture of this region have appeared only recently and primarily concern the architecture of the Lower Don and Pridonny regions. In addition, little attention has been given to religious architecture, while an in-depth analysis of specific monuments has been lacking altogether. Some existing works contain inaccuracies, while many documents and projects have not been included. Church buildings in the Lower Volga region have been fully described only in one monograph “Religious architecture of the Volgograd region” written by the author of this article [10].

Churches of national character and style were erected all over Russia. The wide spread of religious buildings of national character was related to the growth of national consciousness. “A church constructed in the national-medieval spirit, remaining a religious building, correlates with a set of concepts expressed by the phrase “a church of the nation”. Nation turned into a concept that is absolute in its meaning and value and was likened to the sacred values of the Middle Ages; the spirit and moral ideas of the people are associated with it. A church constructed in a national style thus becomes a symbol of a nation, its national culture, its historical uniqueness and significance” [11].

A high level of church construction is evident not only in provincial and regional towns, but also in villages. The projects of the capital masters completed in the South of Russia by K. A. Ton, I. I. Gornostaev, I. I. Kosyakov, V. A. Pokrovskii and others influenced provincial architecture.

Some scholars consider that the architects working in the provinces lacked professionalism. However, this is not entirely fair. Most of the famous architects working in Saratov province were graduates from the main architectural schools of Russia in Moscow and St. Petersburg. These included: I. I. Gotgard, A. M. Salko, M. N. Grudistov, YU. N. Terlikov and others. They and the leading architects of the Region of the Don Army, A. A. Yashchenko, I. I. Fomin, P. S. Studenikin graduated from the St. Petersburg Academy of Arts with high distinction.

Talented local architects working on so-called “pattern” projects also manifested their skills in urban development.

They adapted the projects to local circumstances taking into account the architectural environment, climate and landscape conditions.

The religious architecture of the South of Russia is represented by all variations of national tendency and spread between the 1830s and 1910s.

The stages of national tendency were defined by several scholars: T. A. Slavina, B. M. Kirikov, E. A. Borisova, E. I. Kirichenko, V. Lisovsky [11], N. V. Bitsadze [12], I. Blokhina [13]. We adopt the stages of national tendency as defined by the “History of Russian architecture”.

## 2. Review

Using examples of specific monuments, we examine how the compositional and content system in church building of this region is implemented; which characteristic types of volume-spatial construction of churches are present in each separate period of the architecture of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries; and which shapes and styles are directly connected with the question of heritage.

The national tendency of the pre-reform period (1830-1860) is referred to as the “Russian-Byzantine” or “tonovsky” style. K. A. Ton represented an official aspect of the “Russian style”, which corresponded to Uvarov’s doctrine of “orthodoxy, autocracy, nationality”. E. I. Kirichenko defines it as an academic doctrine [12, 14]. The analysis of churches constructed by K. A. Ton indicates that he did not refer directly to Byzantine prototypes, but to Moscow churches from the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. In them he saw the embodiment of the idea of continuity from Constantinople. In Ton’s opinion, “the Byzantine style akin to the elements of our nation formed our church architecture” [13, 15].

Cathedrals were built in all the big towns of South of Russia according to Ton’s designs. One of the first church built here by Ton was the Church of Epiphany (1836) on Sennaya Square in Saratov. A talented provincial architect, G. V. Petrov took part in this work. He was an architect of classicism who created a number of projects in this style with great skill. In the 1830s and 1840s, local masters tended to deviate from strict forms of classicism in both provincial and capital cities.

K. A. Ton also designed churches for the Caucasus diocese. In 1843, the Kazan Cathedral was built in Stavropol. The hill which crowns the Stavropol plateau is now occupied by the Cathedral, which bears the name, the Holy Kazan Mother of God. Typical of K. A. Ton’s architecture, the cathedral stands as if on a cloud, overlooking the whole town and visible from afar. It is built from local, rather porous stone. The view of the town from the square on which the cathedral is situated is picturesque.

In the 1840s and 1850s a number of monumental churches similar in architecture to early Ton churches were also built in the Caucasian diocese financed by the well-to-do peasantry. The Ascension Church in the village of Praskoveya was not inferior in size to the Kazan Cathedral in Stavropol and was painted by “Moscow artists according to the taste and

abundance of the region” (Figure 1).



**Figure 1.** Kazan Cathedral (1843 – 1847). Stavropol: a) photos of the early XX c., b) restored in 2004 – 2012, c) St. Nicholas Church in the rich village of Petrovskoye. Photo 2018.

At the end of the 1850s, St. Nicholas Church in the rich village of Petrovskoye was considered the best in the Caucasus (Figure 2). Its architecture is close to the Vvedensky Cathedral built by Ton in the Semyonovsky regiment in St. Petersburg, however “its finishing is much rougher: the dimensions of this church were extraordinary, and by the mutual harmony of its parts it is superior to the Stavropol Cathedral”.



**Figure 2.** a) The Sorrowful Church in Pyatigorsk. Restored in 1991, b) Vvedensky Church (1837–1842). Architect K. A. Ton. Photo of the early XX c.

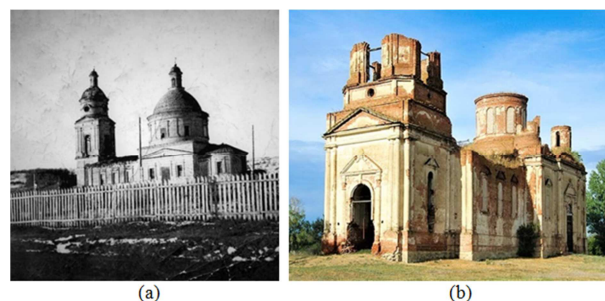
The Sorrowful Church in Pyatigorsk is also considered to be in the “tonovsky” style. It replaced an existing wooden church by order of Emperor Nikolai Pavlovich. By order of the Emperor the funds for construction were collected throughout Russia. 50,000 rubles in silver were collected and by 1858 the construction reached the dome. However, cracks appeared in the walls and the church was dismantled to the foundation. Thanks to Bishop Ignatius funds were found, the project was continued and “a two-aisle vast cathedral crowned with a dome was brought to completion and consecrated at the end of the fast of Apostle Philip.”

The Cathedral of the Nativity of the Virgin (1854-1860) in Rostov-on-Don was closely patterned on a scheme of K. A. Ton’s Vvedensky Cathedral in St Petersburg (Figure 3). The cathedral has an absolutely symmetrical plan in the form of an equilateral cross, well-defined, clear volume in common with the Vvedensky Cathedral. The volume composition is dominated by a huge bulbous dome and small side domes placed at the corners of the main volume. The artistic image is created by keeled zakomars, perspective portals and semi-columns borrowed from ancient patterns.



**Figure 3.** a) Cathedral of the Nativity of the Virgin (1854-1860). Rostov-on-Don. Architects K. A. Ton, A. S., Kutevov. Photo 2013, b), c) Church of the Epiphany. Perekovskaya (1853-1856). Architect F. A. Fomin.

The building of churches in the “Russian style” in the South of Russia began in earnest in the 1850s, when the album with K. A. Ton’s “pattern” designs was brought to all the provincial towns (14). The influence of Ton’s projects can be traced in the work of the leading church architect of the Region of the Don Army, I. I. Fomin. While designing the Church of the Epiphany in the village of Perekovskaya in the Volgograd region (1853-1856), F. A. Fomin took as an example the type of cathedral cross-domed church of the Church of St. Catherine in Tsarskoye Selo (1832-1840). The Church in the village of Perekovskaya was erected in memory of the War of 1812. The five-domed, four columned church, on a high white-stone plinth, cruciform in plan, has a semicircular high apse and a three-tiered bell-tower completed with a four-sided hipped roof. The plastic motifs of Ton-style constructions are repeated in the plat bands. The façade décor is inspired by ancient Russian patterns (large kokoshniki, blind arcades on the drums, bunches of semi-columns). Basing his composition on early Ton churches, F. A. Fomin introduced a bell tower into the volume composition, while not breaking the compactness of the whole composition and the centrality of Ton’s project plans. I. I. Fomin slightly lengthened the western branch of the cross and placed a bell tower above it. Inside, he divided the bell tower into two rooms: the side church of the Nativity of the Virgin and the bell tower itself. A similar phenomenon is rather rarely seen in Russian architecture. The Church of the Nativity of the Virgin is distinguished by an expressive internal space. The interiors of the side church and the church itself are connected by such a wide arch that their spaces almost merge.



**Figure 4.** Church of the Intercession (1864). Tishanskaya. Architect F. A. Fomin. a) Photo from the archive., b) Photo by the author. 2017.

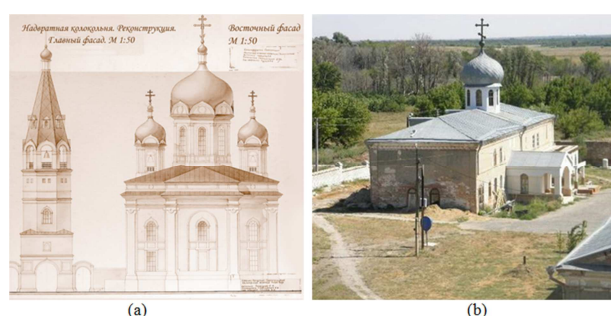
The composition of the Church of Epiphany in the village of Perekovskaya was repeated on two more occasions – in the Church of the Intercession (1864) in the village of



Tishanskaya. (Figure 4) and in the Holy Cross Church (1885) in the village of Berezovskaya of the Volgograd region.

There is no doubt that the design of the Church of Intercession was also completed by I. I. Fomin. However, in this case, while fully preserving the volume of the core of the Church of Epiphany in the village of Perekopskaya, he deviates from the centrality of its plan and places on one axis the actual church and a refectory, that is, he turns to the type of a church “in a ship shape”.

In designing the project for the Trinity Cathedral in the Kamenno-Brodsky nunnery of Kamyshevsky uyezd, Saratov's provincial architect, I. I. Gotgart also followed Ton's patterns. The project was approved by the construction committee of the Saratov province in 1876, but implemented only in 1895 (Figure 5).



**Figure 5.** Trinity Cathedral, Kamenno-Brodsky nunnery. a) Archive photo, b) Modern look.

In the archived design drawings [14, 16], the church was originally presented with five hip-roofs, but an amendment was made in the same drawings – the hip-roofs were replaced by bell towers. Most likely, this was a requirement of the Saratov consistory, because the church initially adhered to the “sacred five domed form”. Church building certificates issued for the construction of churches in the 17<sup>th</sup> century show that it was forbidden to build a hipped roof over the church itself because it did not correspond with “the church rank”.

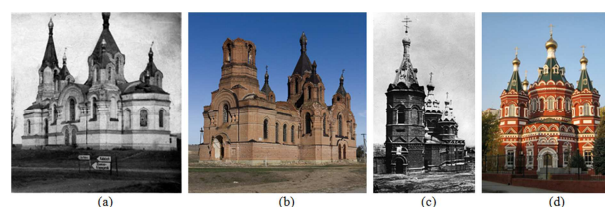
In its composition, the Trinity Church is five-headed, two-light, four-column, with a rectangular altar and western porch. The central head and belfry towers at the corners are placed on the octagonal drums. This is a technique often found in churches of classicism. In the façade décor, along with stylized ancient Russian elements (keel-shaped frames of arched windows, keel-shaped kokoshniki at the base of the dome), classical elements are also found (panels, framing of portals).

It should be noted that churches were built in the South of Russia according to Ton's “pattern” projects throughout the whole second part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but none of them compositionally repeated the others. Although the use of a five-domed crowning and appropriate façade décor of the type found in old Russian churches is common to them all, they differed in the pattern of plans and the nature of volumes. Preserving the characteristic features of K. A. Ton's designs of the 1830-40s, such as geometricity of the main volume, symmetry, clear divisions horizontally and vertically, churches designed by local architects differed in the scale and

variety of their décor.

The hip-roof churches from the second Ton's album were built much more rarely in the South of Russia. Here, the leading element in the architectural composition became the hipped roof meant to “reflect in design the belief and preferences maturing in public opinion by removing from the new buildings associations with “the Byzantine ambitions of autocracy” [15, 17]. T. A. Slavina refers to K. A. Ton's hip-roof churches as the new tonovsky style.

In his hip-roof churches, K. A. Ton uses the type “in a ship shape”. This, traditional in ancient Russian architectural design, was laid in the composition of the plan in his hip-roof Church of St. Mirone in St. Petersburg. The same thing we observe in the hip-roof churches in the Volgograd region: St Nicolas Church in the village of Golubinskaya (1886-1891) and the Kazan Cathedral (1896-1899, 1904) in Tsaritsyn (Volgograd) (Figure 6).



**Figure 6.** St Nicolas Church, Golubinskaya (1886-1891): a) Photo 1942, b) Photo by the author 2018, Kazan Cathedral, Tsaritsyn (1896-1899, 1904): c) Photo 1932, d) After the restoration. Photo 2019.

St. Nicolas Church in the village of Golubinskaya is an interesting example of a hip-roof church in the region. It is a massive cube with beveled corners on a high plinth, with a pentahedral apse, a refectory in three axes and a bell tower with a high hipped roof in a candle shape. The church is crowned by a five-hip-roof group of tower-like volumes, and the walls are completed by keel-shaped zakomars.

The plasticity of the three-dimensional space is emphasized by the décor inspired by the ancient Russian architecture of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The interior space of the church is impressive. The central part of the high light interior is formed by massive pylons united by spring arches, on which the main octagon rests. The abundance of light in the church is enhanced by the windows on the corner octagons.

From the 1860-70s the leading style was the democratic variant of “the Russian” style. As L. N. Benoit noted, “no palaces or imperial theatres were built during the reign of Alexander III; they were only repaired and maintained; but temples of God appeared in abundance, especially on the outskirts...” [16, 18]. Architects of this variant of the “Russian” style tried to move away from the official tonovsky style. They were based on the architectural patterns of pre-Petrine time.

The analysis of the selected monuments of religious architecture in the South of Russia reveal that décor had become shallow, barrel-shaped columns and other themes similar to the architecture of the 17<sup>th</sup> century had been introduced. The character of silhouettes in the endings started

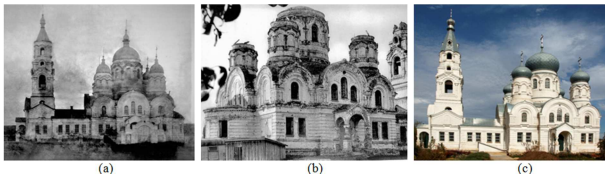
to change. Window trims and portal plat bands became especially varied.

Plat bands and window trims turned out to be the most common element to be borrowed from the pre-Petrine architecture and one of the most meaningful moments of architects' creativity.

"Ethnic identity is perceived through décor. There appears a need for semantically significant national elements. Kokoshniki, small weights ... and hipped roofs have become such elements" [17, 19].

"Fear of emptiness", blank surface, a desire to fill it with decorative elements became the basic principle of shaping for the "Russian" style, as well as for eclecticism on the whole.

The leading architect of the Saratov province, A. M. Salko worked a lot on the design of churches of the second variant of the "Russian" style. Among his works we should note the Church of Michael the Archangel (1890-1896) in the former settlement Yertzovka (Pichuga) in the Volgograd region (Figure 7).



**Figure 7.** Church of Michael the Archangel (1890-1896). Yertzovka (Pichuga). Architect A. M. Salko a) photos of the early XX c., b) photo 1989, c) photo 2018.

The five-domed church in Yertzovka, with the vaulting roofing, is a monument in which one can find several prototypes: classicism (a ribbon rust at the corners and on the apse), Moscow-Yaroslavl (the décor, the perspective arches and porches), and Byzantine (the high built-in windows). In the composition of this church, the window is given a dominant place. Into the structure of the façades, the architect placed different windows: rectangular on the first story and high arched on the upper one, which practically fill the whole plane of the fencing. A similar thing can be observed in his church in the settlement of Kotovo (1903), where besides the arched and rectangular windows there are large two-arched windows with a small weight in the middle. Here the attention to the window characteristics of the eclectic style manifests itself.

Despite the focus on multiple sources, the features of the ancient Russian architecture of the 17<sup>th</sup> century prevail in A. M. Salko's Church of Michael the Archangel. The architecture is particularly distinguished by a carefully executed décor of shaped bricks and immaculate masonry.

The same can be said about the décor of the Church of Peter and Paul (the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century) in the working settlement Danilovka in the Volgograd region.

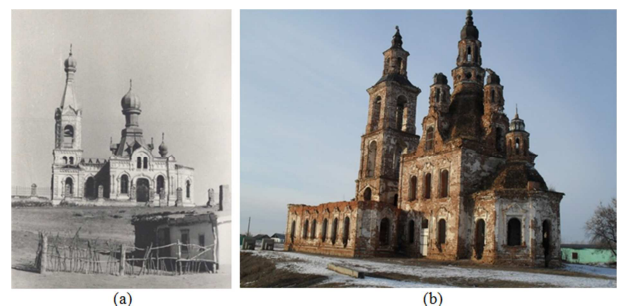
In Lower Volga region, the "brick" style was widely used, an original modification used not only in residential and public buildings, but also in religious architecture. However, this is a separate topic that has not yet been explored in the architectural science.

The trends of the "Russian" style were even more fully manifested in the Ascension Church (1905-1915) in Tsaritsyn (Volgograd). Initially, according to the project, the Church of the Holy Cross was to be built here. The design by D. I. Grimm was chosen for that purpose. Adjustments were made by the architect of the Saratov province, YU. Terlikov. A stone church was to be erected on the site of a wooden one. A decision was made not to demolish the wooden church, so YU. Terlikov rejected the internal pillars provided for by Grimm's design and used reinforced arches to cover the large space.

D. I. Grimm is known in the history of architecture as the creator of the "Byzantine" style. However, in the project plans of the Ascension Church, the features of the "Russian" style are clearly visible. The prototypes of pre-Petrine architecture prevail over Byzantine ones. The large volume of the five-domed church was crowned by a dome on the high drum and four small domes at the corners. The architect gave the bell tower the features of multi-tiered compositions of the 17<sup>th</sup> century belfries. Eleven small domes located on the buttresses and apses add decorativeness. The façade composition is enriched by various decorative elements (a curb, keel-shaped kokoshniki).

The three-altar Peter and Paul Cathedral (1895-1899) in Alexandrovsk-Grushevsky (Shakhty town) in the Rostov region, five-domed, with a high hipped belfry, built in a "ship shape", is characterized by a picturesque composition and rich décor where the keel-shaped kokoshniki occupy the leading place.

Among the churches in the "Russian" style in the South of Russia, one should denote the Church of the Three Saints in the village of Bolshoi Mogoi (1910) of the Astrakhan region. The church is interesting by its rich décor (a curb, keel-shaped kokoshniki, plat bands and window trims) and beautiful brickwork (Figure 8).



**Figure 8.** Church of the Three Saints (1910). Bolshoi Mogoi: a) Archive photo, b) Modern look.

The analysis of churches of the democratic variant of the "Russian" style indicates that its evolution is connected with the increasing use of decoration on the façades. This trend, typical for eclecticism, fully manifested itself in the church building of the South of Russia. Alongside this, churches with a more modest décor with large elements can also be found. This feature distinguishes St. Nicholas Church in the settlement Kalmytsky Bazar (1900) in Kalmykia. In this church, the décor is centered on a wide octagonal drum in the form of keel-shaped kokoshniki in each face.

Another variant of national tendency, “neo-Byzantine”, did not spread as wide as the “Russian” style. Unlike the “Russian-Byzantine” and the “Russian” styles, the style which appeared in the 1860s was an independent one and is therefore quite rightly called “neo-Byzantine”. The “tonovsky” style in its provincial and metropolitan samples could exist only at the initial stage of the “Byzantine style” development, while Byzantine and ancient Russian originals were still poorly studied and were unknown to a wide range of architects” [18] [20].

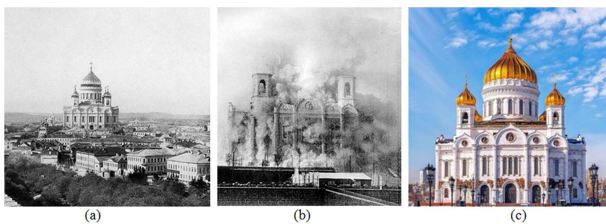
The architects that worked in the “neo-Byzantine style” focused on Byzantine prototypes and reproduced the schemas of basilica and cross-domed churches. They copied decorative elements, primarily those of the medieval churches of Armenia, Georgia and the Balkans.

Only orthodox churches were erected in the “neo-Byzantine style”, other types of buildings were not constructed in this style.

One of the first architects who turned to the study of Byzantine architecture, primarily in its Armenian and Georgian variants, was G. G. Gagarin. He travelled over the Caucasus a lot, studying its architectural monuments. It is possible that the Church of Ascension in the town of Alagir (North Ossetia) was built according to his design. Here a number of elements specific to the architecture of Armenia, Georgia and ancient Russia are observed. They include the completion of the church with steep gable roofs, sharp gables over the protruding branches of the cross, the rich development of the lower part of the core and apses by many arched rods, the composition and architectural details of the portals.

The architects of the “Russian-Byzantine” style followed the designs from K. A. Ton’s album and based their style on the book “Monuments of the “Byzantine architecture” of Georgia and Armenia”, by D. I. Grimm, published in 1859.

The theme of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in Moscow by K. A. Ton was followed and further developed by architects all over Russia (Figure 9).



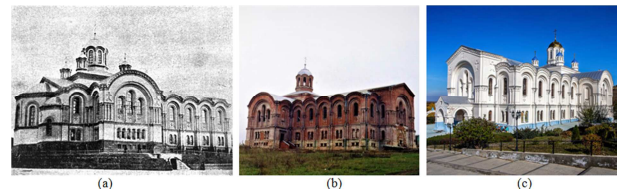
**Figure 9.** Cathedral of Christ the Saviour (1843-1883). Moscow. Architect K. A. Ton: a) Photo XX c., b) Destroyed, c) Restored. Photo 2018.

The same happened with the constructions of architects who designed in the “neo-Byzantine” style. They also developed the theme of St. Vladimir’s Church in Kherson (1859-1879) by D. I. Grimm, chiefly because it was built according to the type of a three-nave basilica and became a symbol and visible confirmation of spiritual, cultural and political continuity that existed between Constantinople and Moscow, the justification of claims to the full and unbroken

inheritance of the greatness of the “second Rome” [19] [21].

In the architectural heritage of the South of Russia there are outstanding monuments of religious architecture of the “neo-Byzantine” style, distinguished by high skill and level of performance. They were built according to the projects of distinguished experts in Byzantine architecture, the famous and talented architects – academics, I. I. Gornostaev, A. A. Yashchenko, the creator of the grand naval cathedral in Kronstadt (1903-1913), V. A. Kosyakov.

The Kazan Cathedral (1875-1885) in the Ust-Medveditskiy Preobrazhenskiy nunnery is a wonderful monument, which is “the pride of all the Don land” (Figure 10).



**Figure 10.** Kazan Cathedral (1875-1885). Ust-Medveditskiy Preobrazhenskiy nunnery. Architects Gornostaev I. I., Yashchenko A. A.: a) photos of the early XX c., b) Photo 1993, c) After restoration. Photo. 2013.

The construction of the cathedral was conducted after the project of I. I. Gornostaev, who had developed it for the cathedral of Nikilo-Babaevsky monastery. The cathedral was founded in 1875 after the death of I. I. Gornostaev. All the work was supervised by architect, A. A. Yashchenko [20, 22].

The most reliable reproduction of all the details from Byzantine sources, the impressive interior with white stone columns, the carved capitals, which were copied from Byzantine models, the labyrinthine caves, the entrance to which is a manhole from the lower church, all these elements make up valuable qualities of the Kazan Cathedral in the Ust-Medveditskiy nunnery.

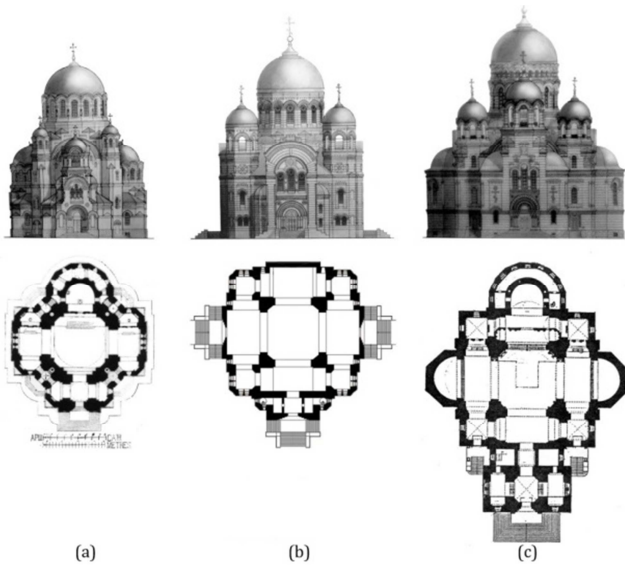
The shape of domes, the partitioning of facades, the two-part and three-part windows, the bundles of the semi-columns at the corners of the façade on the second floor, the thin semi columns on the drums, the cross inserts correspond to the techniques of Byzantine architecture. A curb and battlements are also used in the décor.

In the plan of the refectory, I. I. Gornostaev follows the schema of a three-nave basilica. The churches built according to the designs of A. A. Yashchenko are among the best examples of the “neo-Byzantine style” in the South of Russia.

One of his first constructions was Alexander Nevsky Cathedral in Rostov-on-Don (1891). The architect skillfully used the composition and decorative elements of Balkan architecture. The stylistic solution of the five-domed cathedral is characterized by severity and preciseness in details “drawing”.

The desire to get as close as possible to Byzantine prototype forms is seen in two grand churches by A. A. Yashchenko, the Voznesensky Military Cathedral in Novochoerkassk (1893-1904) and Alexander Nevsky Cathedral in Tsaritsyn (1901-1918). Architects I. P. Zlobin participated in realizing Yashchenko’s in Novochoerkassk and YU. N. Terlikov in Tsaritsyn (Figure 11).





**Figure 11.** a) Kazan Cathedral (1888-1894). Orenburg, b) Alexander Nevsky Cathedral (1891). Rostov-on-Don., c) Voznesensky Military Cathedral (1893-1904). Novocherkassk. Architect A. A. Yashchenko.

There are a number of publications about the Military Cathedral in Novocherkassk. However, there is no similar evidence about A. A. Yashchenko's second masterpiece, "the second sun of the Don", which was forgotten after its destruction in 1932.

Alexander Nevsky Cathedral in Tsaritsyn was based on the design of A. A. Yashchenko for the Kazan Cathedral in Orenburg. It is slightly smaller in scale than the Military Cathedral, but in many ways repeats its composition. The impressive helmet-shaped dome rises on the arcades-windows, while the side domes rest on similar windows. The main western façade is emphasized by the portal and belfry tower. The composition of the building is complicated by the system of large and small domes on the facades. As in the Cathedral in Novocherkassk Byzantine, decoration is also carefully followed here.

The search for new architectural forms which refer to Russian-Byzantine traditions is reflected in the Alexander Nevsky Church in Novocherkassk. It was founded in 1892 below the market square almost simultaneously with the Ascension cathedral according to the project of the civil engineer, N. E. Anokhin. The church has an interesting volume composition with an original two-light apse. Despite the stylistic affinity with the Ascension cathedral it is less picturesque and its decoration is not rich.

The creation of the most prominent representative of the "neo-Byzantine" style by St. Petersburg's architect V. A. Kosyakov - St. Vladimir's Cathedral in Astrakhan (1895-1904) - is imbued with the spirit of Byzantine architecture.

Churches in "Russian" and "neo-Byzantine styles in the South of Russia, as well as in other provinces, were built until 1917.

By this time in the capital cities, art nouveau and "neo-Russian" styles had manifested themselves. However, modernist style practically did not touch religious building.

### 3. Conclusion

The monuments we have considered indicate a general trend in the evolution of church building in the South of Russia from the "Russian-Byzantine" or "tonovsky" style, which resembles ancient Russian monuments, to the "neo-Byzantine" style with its use and precise citation of details of Byzantine architecture.

The selected monuments of church building in the South of Russia from mid-19<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries provide additional material for understanding a difficult period in the history of Russian architecture.

Today, a significant number of new churches are being constructed. Repairs and restoration of architectural monuments are also underway. Unfortunately, new churches are not always of high quality. This problem needs a modern approach, which "requires deep comprehension of the creative work of ancient masters, study of patterns of development of national traits, definition of regional principles of the architecture of historical sites and their local features" [21, 23].

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