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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SCULPTURE IN ANTANAS VIVULSKIS' ARCHITECTURAL PROJECTS

Summary. Antanas Vivulskis' (1877–1919) work in architecture is appreciated for his innovative, courageous explorations, the first manifestations of modernism in Lithuanian sacral architecture, and his influence on its further development. The article analyses Vivulskis' work, laying a deeper focus on the significance of sculpture in his not-abundant architectural projects. The research includes an iconographic and formal investigation and a comparative method. Working on his architectural projects, Vivulskis paid particular attention to sculptural solutions, striving for an integral, iconographically unified whole. In the article, attention has been drawn to the wooden porches of the Šiluva Chapel and their decoration, which have not been sufficiently studied so far. Vivulskis treated the sculptural compositions freely, seeking a distinctive unity of form and content, an expression of real, strongly sensed religious feeling. From a formal point of view, having been influenced by Rodin and Bourdelle, they gained the characteristics of impressionistic incompleteness of forms, expressiveness (sketchy models), and the elements of Romanticism, Symbolism, Art Nouveau, and the Lithuanian National style. The article contributes to a deeper understanding of Vivulskis' work from the perspective of the synthesis of architecture and sculpture.

Keywords: Antanas Vivulskis, sculpture, architecture, the Šiluva Chapel, the Vilnius Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Kraków Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

INTRODUCTION

This article¹ aims to recall the work of the prominent Lithuanian artist, the author of the architectural idea for the Šiluva Chapel, on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of its construction, commemorated in 2024, focusing on a broader insight into the significance of sculpture objects in his rather few architectural projects. The most noteworthy fields of Vivulskis' creation include monumental and small-scale architecture and sculpture; there are but a few surviving paintings and drawings. Vivulskis' work in architecture is regarded as innovative, testifying to his bold explorations, the first manifestations of modernism in Lithuanian sacral architecture, and his influence on its further development. The methods of the research, applied in the article, include an iconographic and formal investigation, and a comparative method.

In the context of researchers in respect of Vivulskis' work, the first person to mention is a renowned historian of architecture Nijolė Lukšionytė-Tolvašienė – in her book “Antanas Vivulskis (1877–1919). Tradicijų ir modernumo dermė” (“Antanas Vivulskis (1877–1919). Harmony between Tradition and Memory”)² she put forward the main facts of the artist's biography, presented a consistent analysis of the development of his work (sculpture and architecture), including a great deal of the latest material, and important insights. Recently, a book by the Polish author Krzysztof Stefański “Zmarł jak żył, na skrzydłach ... Antoni Wiwulski (1877–1919). Artysta epoki Młodej Polski” (“He died as he lived on the wings ... Antoni Wiwulski (1877–1919). Artist of the Young Poland Era”)³ has been published. This fundamental study provides a significant addition to previous research with valuable archival and iconographic material

from Polish Memory institutions and extends it by introducing new facts on the artist's biography and work. The publication is undoubtedly valuable, despite the Polish-directed nuances reflected in the title – Vivulskis is treated as a representative of the epoch of *Young Poland*.⁴ However, Vivulskis is also a Lithuanian architect. The analysis of decoration elements of the Šiluva Chapel, including sculpture, has been carried out in more detail by an art historian Skirmantė Smilingytė-Žeimienė.⁵ The article discusses the problem of the realisation of Vivulskis' ideas, reviews and evaluates from the artistic point of view the sculptures of the Mother of God created between the two World Wars, after Vivulskis' death. Previously, such authors as Antanas Sabaliauskas, Kazimieras Jasėnas, L. Špakevičius, Paulius Galaunė, Zita Žemaitytė, Vladas Drėma, Petras Rimša, and others wrote about Vivulskis and his work as well. The artist's work as a subject of constant interest was and still is being observed by Polish scientists, e.g. Franciszek Świątek, Juliusz Kłos, Edmund Małachowicz, and others, writing about his biography and work. The personality and work of Vivulskis have also been discussed on a philosophical level, from the point of view of faith, by such authors as Tomas Sakalauskas and Kęstytis Rudokas.⁶ For Vivulskis, one facet of faith, divine inspiration, was inseparable from his work, which he perceived as a secular apostolate. Creation "for him meant the materialisation of living faith",⁷ as is evidenced also by his biographers and the artist's works.

This article aims to evaluate the above-mentioned research, taking into account sketch models in clay or plaster preserved at the Lithuanian National Museum of Art (LNDM), as well as the iconographic material from the collections of the Lithuanian National Museum (LNM), the M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art (NČDM), the Museum of Šiluva, the "Aušros" Museum in Šiauliai (ŠAM), and others, to supplement and deepen the understanding of the significance of sculpture in Vivulskis' architectural projects.

Vivulskis studied architecture in Vienna from 1897. Feeling the urge to create sculptural objects

and wishing to deepen his knowledge, he continued his studies at the Paris School of Fine Arts from 1902 onwards, for six years. The Paris period is a key matter in the artist's artistic biography. He took the opportunity to travel extensively in European countries (England, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, France, Italy). The acquired knowledge and study of the world's masterpieces made him a man of extremely broad erudition. It was during the Paris period that he was commissioned to create architectural projects for the Chapels of Šiluva and Morskie Oko, and the Churches of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Kraków and Vilnius. Scholars studying Vivulskis' creation, especially Stefański, point to the importance of faith in his work. The artist's relationship with his work is reflected in his numerous correspondences with the priests Karol Lubiańiec and Kazimierz Michalkiewicz, Bishop Edward Ropp, his mother Adelajda Wiwulska, and his cousin Aniela Michałowska.⁸ Vivulskis' worldview was strongly influenced by his mother, with whom he always had a warm relationship. The artist even considered a career as a clergyman but decided to devote himself to art, stating in one of his letters very clearly: "I have set myself a goal of becoming a great artist in honour and glory of God and for the sake of my homeland."⁹ He fulfilled this promise completely.

Sculpturality was of exceptional importance in Vivulskis' architecture. According to Lukšionytė-Tolvaišienė, he was in search of "his own forms, more sculptural than architectural."¹⁰ This artistic feature is clearly manifested, and has been noticed and emphasised by many authors who wrote about Vivulskis' work. While crystallising his ideas, the artist immersed himself simultaneously in sculpture and design. In his letter to Bishop Ropp of Vilnius he wrote that he equated architecture with sculpture and painting, first and foremost seeking to express the idea that would correspond the spirit of the nation and land where a building would stand: "therefore I do not only make drawings, but I also sculpt the whole, to have an overall view that no perspective can give."¹¹ Before the First World War, models of architectural objects were a rare phenomenon not only in Lithuania but also

in Europe.¹² The artist not only viewed the whole of architectural forms, firstly implementing his ideas in sketch models, but also devised a sculptural decoration, which is seen in his designs and sculptural models. Vivulskis created the sculptural decoration of architecture himself, although other artists were destined to realise his ideas. This is true, first of all, about the Šiluva Chapel of the Apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary – the only realised architectural project that reveals not only the architectural idea but also a very detailed concept of decoration, which is also comparable to another one, accomplished in different periods. The original design of 1903 included only the initial developing idea, the basic elements of which had been preserved (Fig. 1).¹³ A sketch of the front façade illustrates that it was meant to be decorated by positioning a monumental statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary and a Child against a huge cross in the

background, only set below, as compared to the later version: standing at the foot of the cross on a pedestal with an inscription, while the pedestal was supported by the wings of sitting angels (not clearly visible, but evident regarding the further development of the idea). The symmetrically juxtaposed angel-sphinx figures in front of the façade were also envisaged in 1903.

The 1905–1906 projects feature a notably improved version (Fig. 2–3).¹⁴ The sculpture of the Virgin and Child has been envisaged instead of the crucifix, standing not on a pedestal but raised on elongated

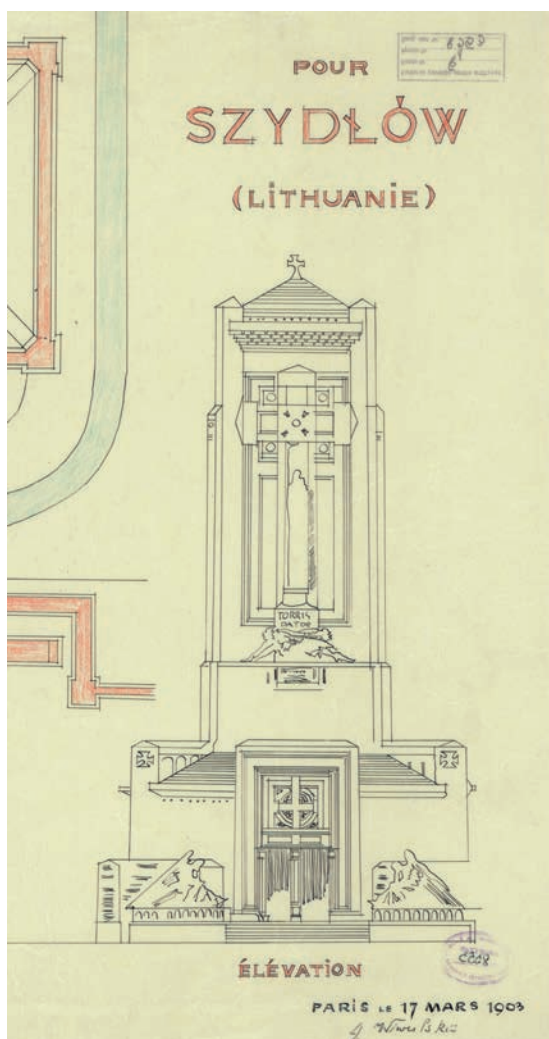


Fig. 1. Project of the Šiluva Chapel (fragment) by Antanas Vivulskis, 1903. KPD PB, f. 6, ap. 1, Nr. 8353

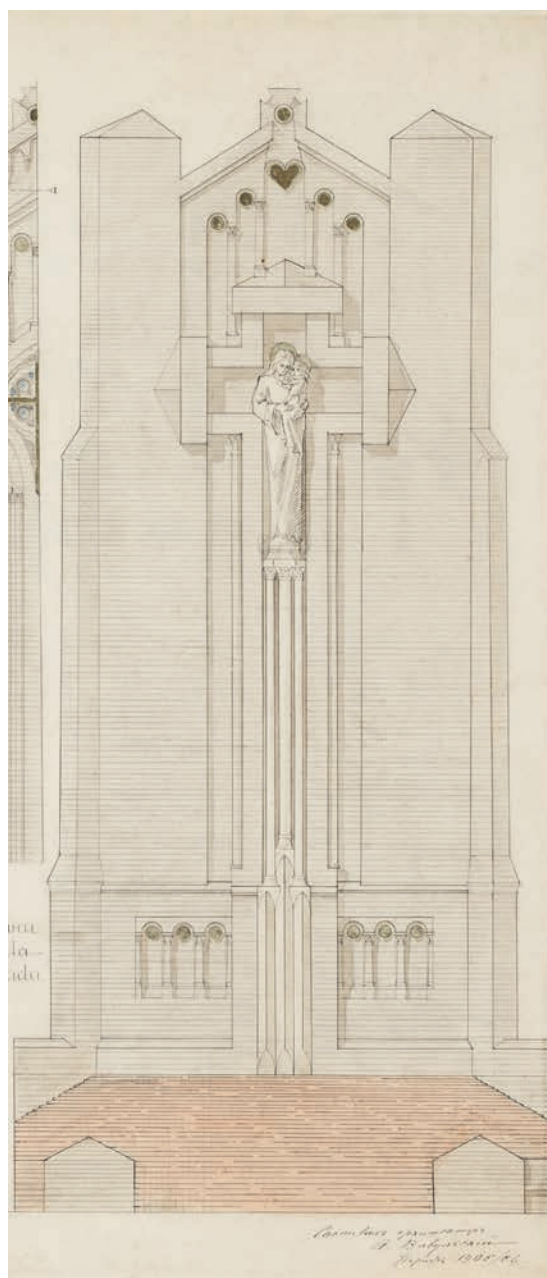


Fig. 2. Project of the Šiluva Chapel (fragment) by Vivulskis, 1905–1906. LNM, AKP 590/4

three narrow, semi-columns with capitals (a symbolism of the number 3 in Christian iconography, as a matter of fact, is always associated with the Holy Trinity). The figures of angels at the bottom were eliminated, but the idea has been transferred to the interior – on the altar of the chapel with a sculpture of the Blessed Virgin Mary standing on a tall, narrow column, supported by the hands of four angels at the bottom, which also hold graceful Art Nouveau style chandeliers with lily blossom

shapes on top (Fig. 4).¹⁵ In Christian tradition, a lily is a symbol of chastity, purity, and light, a flower of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and it is identified with a bride of “Song of Songs”: “I am a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valleys. Like a lily among thorns ...”¹⁶ Such depiction of angels supporting Mary from below and lifting her is related to the depiction of angels in Christian art of earlier epochs (Renaissance, Baroque), especially in the depictions of “The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary”, which is also an expression of the joy of the heavenly kingdom.

The interior projects of 1905–1906 show a slightly different treatment of Mary’s figure – in one of the versions, she is depicted clasping her head lovingly to the Child’s head, while in the other, she is

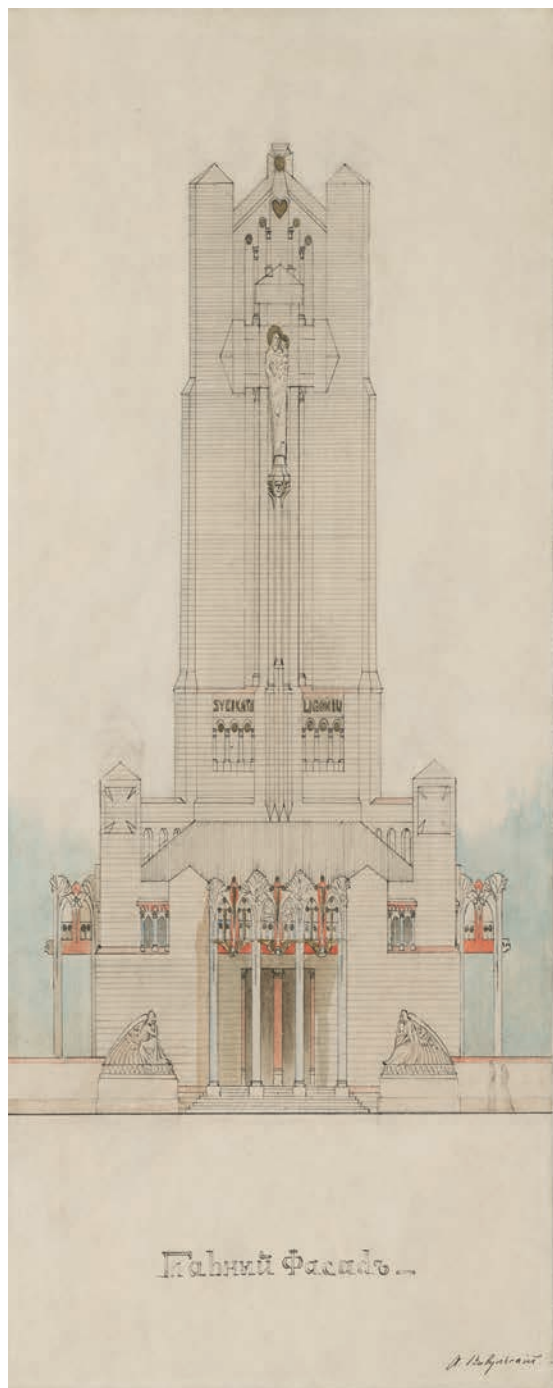


Fig. 3. Project of the Šiluva Chapel by Vivulskis, 1906. LNM, AKP 590/3

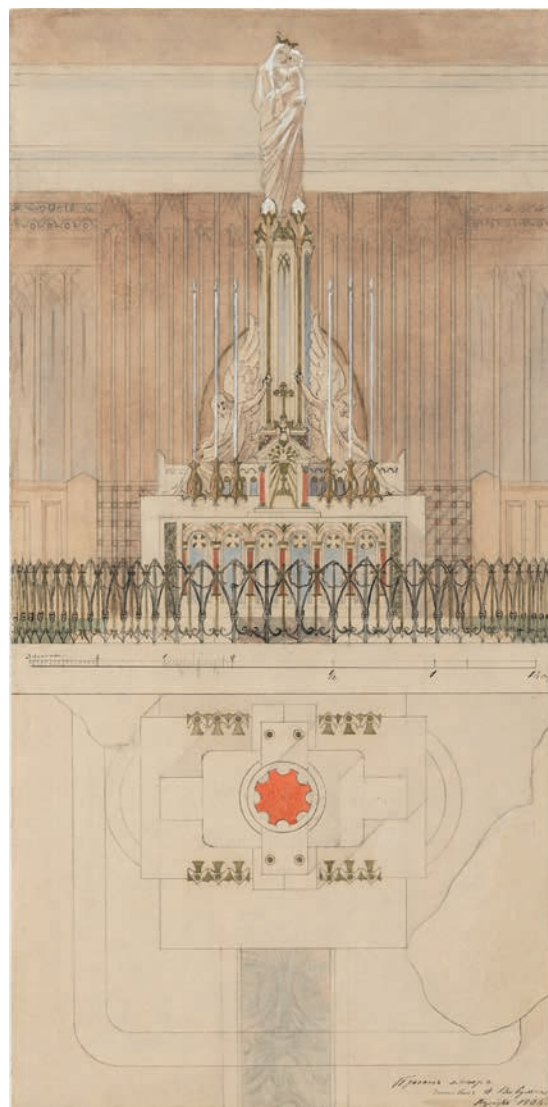


Fig. 4. Project of the interior design of the Šiluva Chapel by Vivulskis, 1906. LNM, AKP 590/7



Fig. 5. "A Leaning Seated Angel" (model of the sculpture in the Šiluva Chapel) by Vivulskis, 1st–2nd dec. of the 20th c. LNDM, S 785



Fig. 6. "A Leaning Seated Angel" (model of the sculpture in the Šiluva Chapel) by Vivulskis, 1st–2nd dec. of the 20th c. LNDM, S 846



Fig. 7. Sculpture "A Leaning Seated Angel" in front of the Šiluva Chapel, by Robertas Antinis, 1970–1998. Photo by Aušra Vasiliauskiene, 2024

depicted with her head bowed in a more reserved manner. The latter depiction implies associations with the iconographic type of the "Loving Mother of God". Smilingytė-Žeimienė rightly points out that the two Marys of the Šiluva Chapel (on the façade and the altar), as well as in the project and realised versions, do not replicate a miraculous image of Our Lady in Šiluva Basilica exactly, which is a sequel to the image of "Our Lady of the Snows" in Rome,¹⁷ even though a bas-relief on the façade has visual associations with the painting, especially the position of hands of Mary and the Child. However, the latter sculpture is more closely related to the former sculpture of the wooden Šiluva Chapel, which was moved to the Chapel of the Šiluva Basilica when the new Šiluva Chapel was built. The sculptures have been performed similarly, just as was indicated in the project, albeit in a considerably more primitive form of artistic expression. The altar sculpture and façade bas-relief are believed to have been created in the same year, i.e. in 1925. The bas-relief on the façade was performed by a local sculptor Kazys Rosenas (together with Petras Graudinas), based on Vivulskis' project. It involves the features of folk sculptural forms – rough, generalised, and stylised. The composition of the chapel altar was executed by sculptor Jonas Mrozinskis, who is criticised for the lack of originality and the resemblance to mass-produced works.¹⁸

The angelic figures in the design of the Šiluva Chapel are of basic importance, next to the Virgin Mary. The 1903 version of the project already included angel-sphinx figures. The surviving models of these sculptures show certain alterations of the figures, from an angel with a childish expression on his face to a deeply contemplative figure with expressive, dynamically unfolding wings¹⁹ (Fig. 5–6).²⁰ The sculptures were erected in the second half of the 20th century and executed by sculptors Antiniai, father and son, between 1970 and 1998. The angels are depicted in a very similar manner as in Vivulskis' project, but in a more restrained modernist style, typical of the second half of the 20th century (Fig. 7). They are kneeling, with the heads supported by their hands, bearing thoughtful facial expressions, demonstrating calm

and simultaneously firm characters. Like the Egyptian sphinxes, they guard the entrance to a sacred, magical place. Apart from symbolic, there are other links to Egypt, i.e. architectural forms and decoration. Historians of architecture note the similarity of the Chapel's form to Egyptian obelisks (of course, not only this – for example, the influence of the English Gothic,²¹ Jasėnas saw also the motifs of Lithuanian crosses, while Galaunė perceived similarities with Lithuanian bell towers, and Vivulskis expressed the idea of the “Samogitian spirit”, etc.²² A palmette motif, a characteristic element of Middle Eastern decoration, is distinguished in the decoration of the former wooden porches of the chapel (Fig. 8–9).²³ However, the palmette itself was no longer made up of stylised palm tree motifs, but of stylised decorative Lithuanian lily motifs. This is another example of Vivulskis' project, which illustrates a combination of tradition and innovation, and the search for a Lithuanian National style. No doubt, apart from a stylistic search, Vivulskis gave priority to rendering Christian iconography – the lily motif, as mentioned above, is associated with Mary's chastity and purity, while seven swords (on the front façade), set among the palmettes, are associated with the symbolism of Seven Sorrows of



Fig. 8. The Šiluva Chapel. Photo by Vincas Uždavinys, 1929. ŠAM, F-FN5170



Fig. 9. Porch of the Šiluva Chapel. Photo by Balys Buračas, 1930. NČDM, NG 18225

Virgin Mary (“The Flight into Egypt”, “The Prayer on the Mount of Olives”, “The Scourging of Jesus”, “The Crowning of Jesus by Thorns”, etc.). Interestingly, the palmette motif was repeated in the wall decor project (Fig. 10).²⁴

Between the palmettes, in the lower part of the frieze, there were heads of winged seraphs created by Rosenas. These are generalised, stylised, rather static forms, with the seraph heads situated between strictly symmetrical wings. Vivulskis’ project also features a decorative, but considerably more subtle version of angel motifs (Fig. 11). The wooden bas-reliefs of seraphs have been preserved; all of them are to be restored in the future, and several of them are on display in the Šiluva Museum. Wooden porches, designed by Vivulskis, were realised according to his project, but the realisation was criticised for the porches’ poor polychromy and incompatibility with the brick part of the chapel, although the combination of brickwork and

wood is considered by some specialists to be one of the innovations and peculiarities of the architecture of that period.²⁵ During the Soviet period, in 1957–1959, the brick porches were dismantled and new ones were built. Researchers of Šiluva and those who cherish the sacred spirit and heritage of the town rightly promote the idea of reconstructing the wooden porches in the future. In this case, past mistakes should be taken into account, i.e. by rethinking the polychromy.

Continuing a theme of angels, it is worth recalling that the chapel was meant to have 36 more sculptural figures of angels. This circumstance was also stated in a 1929 appeal by priest Povilas Katelė, who wanted the decoration of the chapel to be completed by following Vivulskis’ idea.²⁶ One of the sections of the project shows that the tower between the stained glass windows was to be adorned with monumental sculptures featuring full-figured angels with swords pointed downwards in front of

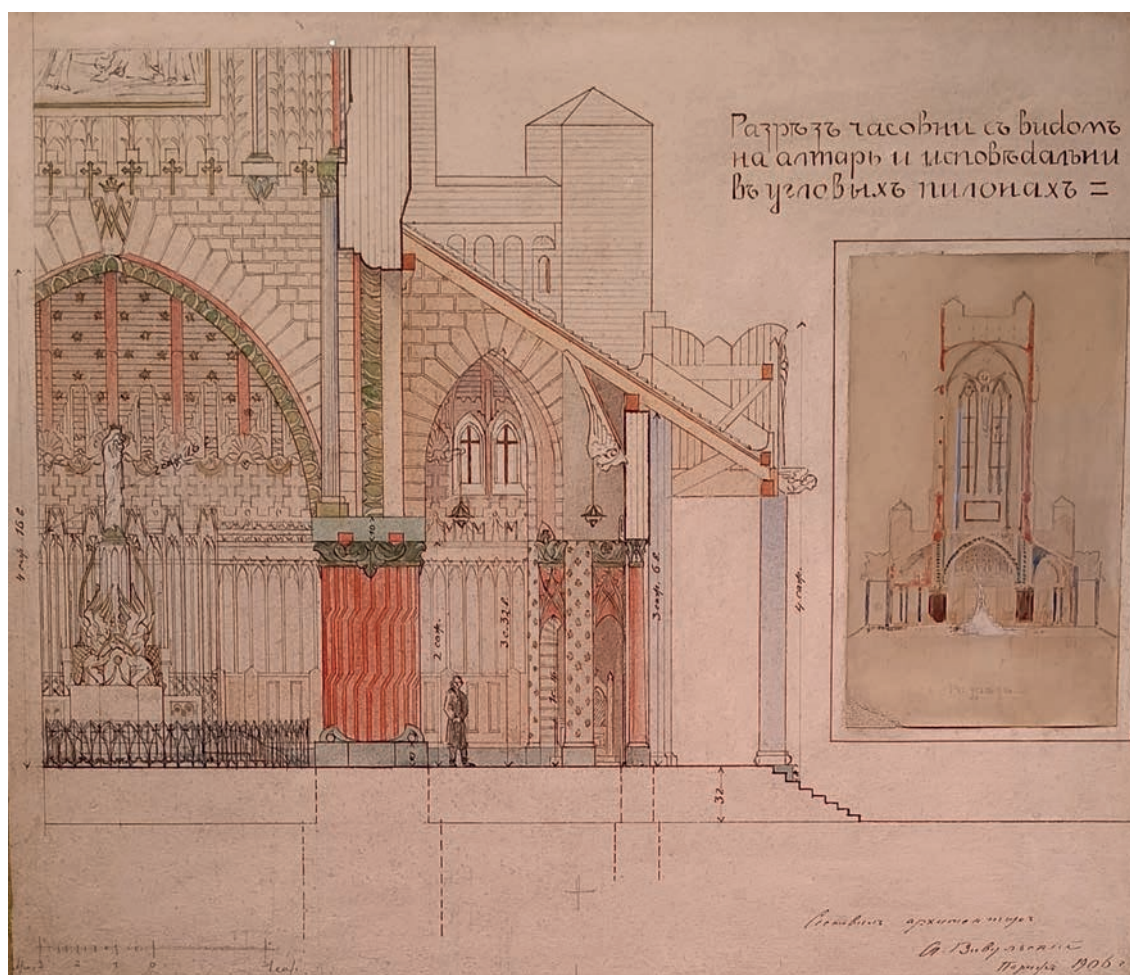


Fig. 10. Decor project of the Šiluva Chapel (fragment) by Vivulskis, 1906. The Šiluva Museum



Fig. 11. "Heads of Seraphs" by Kazys Rosenas, around 1924. Photo from the archive of the Šiluva Museum, 2024

them (Fig. 12).²⁷ A sword in Christian iconography is a symbol of justice, a representation of judgment, separating good from evil, e.g. St Michael the Archangel is depicted with a sword. The Lithuanian National Museum of Art has a clay sketch of an angel of the chapel (Fig. 13)²⁸ – just like in the project, it shows a robustly built angel, but with a less graceful and a more stocky figure, with wings expressed in height, and the position of the raised hands indicates that they must have held a sword. However, there could be only four such figures in the tower, while others, which make up a considerable number, might have been the smaller heads of seraphs or cherubs. The design features the heads and wings of such angels.

To conclude the topic of angels, the surviving project (1979) of a wall painting by Albinas Degutis should be mentioned – a composite fragment with angels. A fragment of the frame, executed in *al secco* technique, encloses the composition "The Finding of the Chest". The frame depicts a single angel holding a flag on a tall, narrow mast, with a band motif nearby, typical of old Christian art,

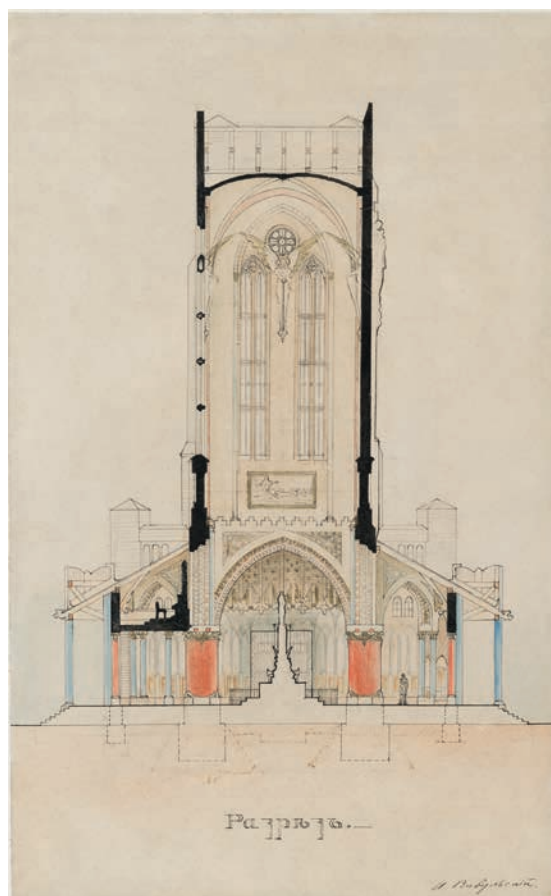


Fig. 12. Decor project of the Šiluva Chapel, a section, by Vivulskis, 1906. LNM, AKP 590/5



Fig. 13. "Angel" (model of the interior detail of the Šiluva Chapel) by Vivulskis, 1st–2nd dec. of the 20th c. LNDM, S 692

which usually contained inscriptions from the New Testament, related to the depicted storyline. According to the information report of the Pilgrim Centre of Šiluva, as stated by the author Degutis, this is the only project that was carried out at the very beginning of the interior painting of the Chapel of the Apparition during the soviet period, and later everything was created without projects using the *al secco* technique directly on the wall.²⁹ During the Soviet period, to protect artists from persecution, projects of sacred objects were either hidden, destroyed, or objects were created without them. It should be recalled that Vivulskis had also thought of pictorial wall decoration in his interior design, one of the most distinctive motifs of which were Jagiellonian double crosses.

Coming back to the sculpture, and summarising, it can be said that the iconography of the sculptural decoration of the Chapel of Our Lady of Šiluva was well thought out, focusing on the Mother of God and an abundant heavenly, i.e. angelic, entourage that surrounds her, altogether performing the functions of praise and protection. Vivulskis paid

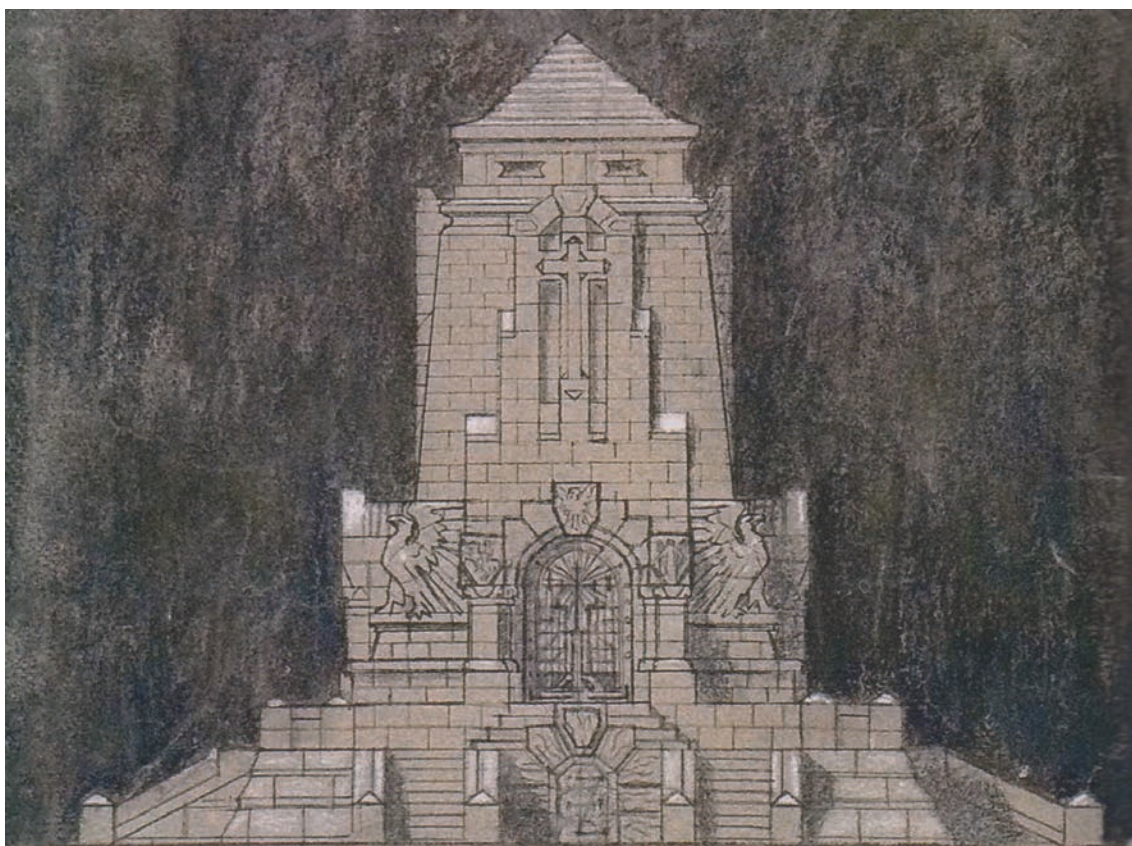


Fig. 14. Project of the Morskie Oko Chapel (fragment) by Vivulskis, 1907. Illus. from: Stefański 2024: 233

a great deal of attention to the sculpture, maintaining it as an integrated concept with architecture.

Other architectural objects did not survive, so it is difficult to talk about them. Both the Morskie Oko Chapel and the Šiluva Chapel were designed in a square shape, resembling an obelisk or a lighthouse. From a sculptural point of view, it is interesting to note that the original project of 1907 included figures of griffins (fantastic creatures with the head and wings of an eagle and the body of a lion) guarding the main entrance, which have a significant symbolic meaning: their protective function was mentioned in the myths of ancient civilisations, and in Christianity a griffin symbolises the dual nature of Jesus Christ – the heavenly (an eagle) and the earthly (a lion)³⁰ (Fig. 14). This solution was also related to the design of the Šiluva Chapel, where angel figures guarding the entrance to the sacred place were also envisaged, although not on the façade but in front of the chapel. The second project of 1911 was strongly modernised and minimised, with no historicist reminiscences, but the cross motif was strongly emphasised (Fig. 15).³¹



Fig. 15. Drawing of the Morskie Oko Chapel by Vivulskis, 1910–1911. Photograph from LMAVB RS, f. 255–464

Following the chronological order, we should discuss the Kraków Jesuit Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Its architectural concept took shape gradually. There is evidence that in the original version, Vivulskis had conceived the design of the church that would recall St Peter's boat with 12 apostle figures around the dome; however, the implementation of this solution proved to be too complex.³² The sculptural idea can be grasped from a couple of sketchy models, Vivulskis' letters, several postcards, and photographs of the competition project.³³ In a 1905 postcard to his cousin, Aniela Michałowska, he wrote: "I have integrated the mass of the sculpture into this composition. On the dome, the 4 evangelists hold a huge statue of Christ. In the masonry of the tower, on all sides, there are large crosses, whose shoulders meet at the corners"³⁴ (Fig. 16).³⁵ Lukšionytė-Tolvaišienė also commented that this decision was probably influenced by the examples of churches in France, where such domes with a huge sculpture of Christ at the top were widespread at the time. The model also shows that 4 sculptures were planned for the bottom of the dome. Interestingly, the postcard shows a group of people at the bottom of the second span of the front tower, kneeling as if carrying a heavy burden, which seems to stretch the entire length of the



Fig. 16. Photograph of Vivulskis' postcard features a model of the Kraków Jesuit Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, 1905. LMAVB RS, f. 255–464/4

central nave, from the tower to the dome. A fragment of this group can be better seen in one of the terracotta model (Fig. 17).³⁶ The details of the sculptural idea become clear in Vivulskis' letter to the priest Karol Lubianiec, in which he also wrote that the church was richly decorated with sculptures: "... angels-caryatids, the whole attic is a stylised net with fish, which is dragged by fishermen to the foot of the tower cross, the dome is surrounded by eight apostles, on the top – four evangelists, and above them is Christ, inside, below each window, in a niche, there is a statue holding a chandelier."³⁷ A monument was also planned in front of the main axis of the church. The design of the church was not realised, as the cost exceeded the estimate, and the reliability of the reinforced concrete structures was also questioned (it was built to a design by Franciszek Mączyński).

However, Vilnius was not afraid of new reinforced concrete structures in both Polish and Lithuanian sacral buildings at that time: in 1913, the construction of the Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus began in Vilnius, conceived as a magnificent monument to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The original



Fig. 17. Fragment of the model of the Kraków Jesuit Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus by Vivulskis, around 1905. LNDM, S 844

architectural idea was undoubtedly influenced by the unrealised project in Kraków. The drawings of the latter (second) project, which was intended for realisation, have not survived, but some images of the model have survived: two photographs were published in the newspaper "Świat", No 2 in 1910,³⁸ and several photographs and postcards of the models are in the Lithuanian National Museum (one postcard, probably based on the models, was published around 1913) and in the Wroblewski Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences (Fig. 18–19).³⁹ An ink sketch of the altar remained.⁴⁰ In the project, the church was notable for its unusually oriented tower, which was designed into the rear wall. An interesting image of this church is also found on the memorial plaque by Bolesław Balzwickiewicz at the Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Vilnius, dedicated to Vivulskis⁴¹ (Fig. 20). The latter shows a half-figure image of Vivulskis sitting in front of the model of the church and looking at it. This church was the artist's most important work, his last architectural vision, and it is therefore commemorated in the epitaph. The original design of the two-towered church shows that the dome was conceived in a similar way to that of the Kraków church, with Christ's figure on the top. This figure was retained in the second version of the design, which served as the basis for the construction of the church. It is a sculpture of the Sacred Heart of Jesus – a representation of the title of the church, typically depicting Christ with outstretched arms. The origins of such depiction lie in the Gospel of St Matthew: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."⁴² The sculpture,



Fig. 18. Photograph of the model of the Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Vilnius, 1910. LNM, AKP 588

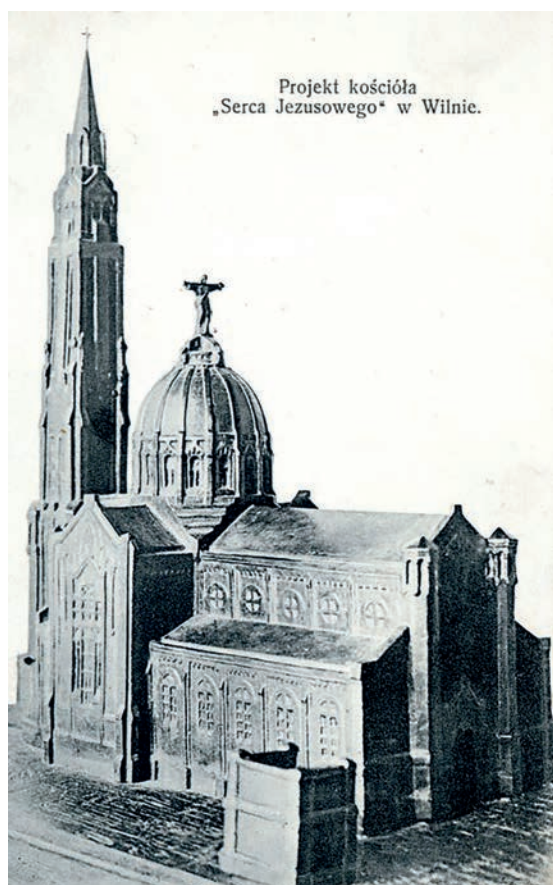


Fig. 19. Postcard with the model of the Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Vilnius. LMAVB



Fig. 20. A memorial plaque dedicated to Antanas Vivulskis in the Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Vilnius by Boleslovas Balzukevičius. Illus. from: Stefański 2024: 185

conceived for the church, was akin to that by Bertel Thorvaldsen, created in 1821 for the Cathedral of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Copenhagen,⁴³ which was treated as a model for many images of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Lithuania at that time.⁴⁴ A sculpture representing the title was also meant for the high altar. It is a long-standing tradition in church iconography to place the main iconographic emphasis so that it would be first visible to the faithful on the outside of the church, mainly on the façade, and then, inside the church, usually on the high altar. In his search for an appropriate pose of Christ's figure, Vivulskis made a model of an anatomical study of a male body, as evidenced by the surviving version in the Lithuanian National Museum of Art. Worthy of mention are sketches of several sculptural compositions created for this church: "The Prayer on the Mount of Olives" (Fig. 21),⁴⁵ three versions of "The Crucifixion" for the altar "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?" (Fig. 22–24).⁴⁶ Regarding the idea of the first mentioned sculptural composition "The Prayer on the Mount of Olives", which was to be located in front of the church, Vivulskis wrote: "It will be like a memory to be concentrated before entering the shrine, at the same time, it will be one of the most wonderful, if not the most wonderful, monuments to the idea of the Redemption."⁴⁷ In the photograph of the model (Fig. 21), a figure of Christ was conceived as lying on a globe, with one hand supporting his head and the other embracing the globe. The Lithuanian National Museum of Art has a couple of models for this sculpture. The two compositions of "The Crucifixion" depict, alongside the Crucified,



Fig. 21. "The Prayer on the Mount of Olives" (model of the sculpture) by Vivulskis, around 1905. LNDM, S 791



Fig. 22. A sketch version of "The Crucifixion" for the altar "My God, my God, why have You abandoned me?" by Vivulskis, 1916–1918. LNDM, S 852



Fig. 23. A sketch version of "The Crucifixion" for the altar "My God, my God, why have You abandoned me?" by Vivulskis, 1916–1918. LNDM, S 847

the Mother of God and St Mary Magdalene. The only difference is that in one version, the figures are placed on either side of the Crucified, in the other, both figures are positioned on one side. In the third version, the Crucified is depicted with two vagabonds. Vivulskis interpreted the canonical Christian iconography, seeking a unique solution. All the sculptural sketches reveal the expression and verve characteristic of Vivulskis' work, the impressionistic idea of which, the Baroque sensuality and symbolism, are rendered in incomplete compositions that convey feeling and religious experience rather than form. Such sculptural style was undoubtedly influenced by two Parisian artists – Auguste Rodin and Antoine Bourdelle.⁴⁸

Sadly, the Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus had never been completed because of the complexity of its construction. In the 4th decade of the 20th century, the process was continued following the project prepared by Vilnius architects. Several designs for the completion of the church, drawn up between 1930 and 1938, indicate that from the



Fig. 24. A sketch version of "The Crucifixion" for the altar "My God, my God, why have You abandoned me?" by Vivulskis, 1916–1918. LNDM, S 750

point of view of sculptural solutions, it was aimed to preserve Vivulskis' main idea, i.e. to emphasise the majestic figure of Christ on the outside of the building.

Summing up, it can be once again concluded that Vivulskis paid a great deal of attention to sculptural solutions in his architectural projects, striving for an integral, iconographically unified whole. The analysis revealed a deeper insight into the development and details of the sculptural conception of the front façade and interior of the Šiluva Chapel. The sculptural idea of the wooden porches of the chapel revealed the search for a National style, creatively interpreting the decorative elements of ancient civilisations. The analysis of the motifs shows that their decoration also emphasised the Marian iconography, but from an artistic point of view, it was too primitive in comparison with Vivulskis' idea of the design. In the projects, according to the tradition of Christian iconography, the main iconographic, most significant emphasis from the point of view of faith, was composed on the exterior of sacred buildings: in Šiluva – on the façade of the chapel, while in the Churches of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Kraków and Vilnius, it was positioned above the dome. The monumental sculpture of the Sacred Heart of Jesus was meant to invite the faithful from afar. As a rule, the high altar usually included a piece of artwork corresponding to the title of the shrine. However, Vivulskis treated sculptural compositions quite freely, seeking a distinctive unity of form and content, a real, strongly felt religious feeling. From a formal point of view, influenced by Rodin and Bourdelle, they are characteristic of an impressionistic incompleteness of forms, expressiveness (sketch models), and elements of Romanticism, Symbolism, Art Nouveau, and the Lithuanian National style. Looking to the future, it is worth reflecting on the perspective of returning old wooden porches, treated in a very distinctive way, to the Šiluva Chapel of the Apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Abbreviations

KPD PB – Heritage Protection Library of the Department of Cultural Heritage
LNM – National Museum of Lithuania
ŠAM – Šiauliai “Aušros” Museum
NČDM – M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art
LNDM – Lithuanian National Museum of Art
LMAVB RS – The Wroblewski Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, Manuscript Department

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- Project of the Šiluva Chapel by Antanas Vivulskis. 1903. KPD PB, f. 6, ap. 1, No. 8353.
- Project of the Šiluva Chapel by Vivulskis. 1906. LNM, AKP 590/3.
- Project of the Šiluva Chapel, by Vivulskis. 1905/1906. LNM, AKP 590/4.
- Decor project of the Šiluva Chapel, a section, by Vivulskis. 1906. LNM, AKP 590/5.
- Project of the interior design of the Šiluva Chapel by Vivulskis. 1906. LNM, AKP 590/7.
- Decor project of the Šiluva Chapel by Vivulskis. 1906. The Šiluva Museum.

Notes

- ¹ The publication is a part of the project “Strengthening the R&D activities of the Vytautas Kavolis Transdisciplinary Institute for Social Sciences and Humanities (SOCMTEP)”. The project has been funded by the Research Council of Lithuania and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania, Contract No S-A-UEI-23-13 (27 December 2023).
- ² Nijolė Lukšionytė-Tolvaišienė, *Antanas Vivulskis (1877–1919). Tradicijų ir modernumo dermė* (Vilnius: Vilniaus dailės akademijos leidykla, 2002).
- ³ Krzysztof Stefański, *Zmarł jak żył, na skrzydłach... Antoni Wiwulski (1877–1919). Artysta epoki Młodej Polski* (Warszawa: Polonika, 2024).
- ⁴ *Young Poland* (Pol. *Młoda Polska*) – a Polish literary and cultural movement, a form of modernism 1890–1918.
- ⁵ Skirmantė Smilingytė-Žeimienė, “Šiluvos koplyčia XX a. 3–4 dešimtmetį: puošybos vizija ir tikrovė,” *Meno istorija ir kritika. Šiluva Lietuvos kultūroje* 5(2009), 95–105.
- ⁶ Kąstytis Rudokas, *Totalinis miestas* (Kaunas: Kauno technologijos universitetas, 2023).
- ⁷ Lukšionytė-Tolvaišienė, *Antanas Vivulskis (1877–1919). Tradicijų ir modernumo dermė*, 29.
- ⁸ Stefański, “Sztuka i wiara w poglądach i twórczości Antoniego Wiwulskiego,” 215.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, 216.
- ¹⁰ Lukšionytė-Tolvaišienė, *Antanas Vivulskis (1877–1919). Tradicijų ir modernumo dermė*, 10.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, 73.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, 85.
- ¹³ Project of the Šiluva Chapel (fragment) by Antanas Vivulskis. 1903. Heritage Protection Library of the Department of Cultural Heritage (further – KPD PB), f. 6, ap. 1, Nr. 8353.
- ¹⁴ Project of the Šiluva Chapel (fragment) by Vivulskis. 1906, Lithuanian National Museum (further – LNM), AKP 590/3; Project of the Šiluva Chapel (fragment) by Vivulskis. 1905/1906, LNM, AKP 590/4.
- ¹⁵ Project of the interior decor of the Šiluva Chapel by Vivulskis. 1906, LNM, AKP 590/7.
- ¹⁶ “Song of Songs,” 2, 1–2.
- ¹⁷ Smilingytė-Žeimienė, “Šiluvos koplyčia XX a. 3–4 dešimtmetį: puošybos vizija ir tikrovė,” 98.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 104.
- ¹⁹ Lukšionytė-Tolvaišienė, *Antanas Vivulskis (1877–1919). Tradicijų ir modernumo dermė*, 61.
- ²⁰ “A Leaning Seated Angel” (models for the sculptures of the Šiluva Chapel) by Vivulskis. 1st–2nd dec. of the 20th c., Lithuanian National Museum of Art (further – LNDM), S 785, S 846.
- ²¹ Rudokas, 31.
- ²² Lukšionytė-Tolvaišienė, *Antanas Vivulskis (1877–1919). Tradicijų ir modernumo dermė*, 84.
- ²³ The Šiluva Chapel. 1929. Photograph by Vincas Uždavins. Šiauliai “Aušros” Museum (further – ŠAM), F-FN5170; Porch of the Šiluva Chapel. 1930, Photograph by Balys Buračas, M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art (further – NČDM), NG 18225.
- ²⁴ Decor project of the Šiluva Chapel by Vivulskis. 1906, The Museum of Šiluva.
- ²⁵ Lukšionytė-Tolvaišienė, “Šiluvos koplyčia – unikalus XX a. pradžios architektūros pavyzdys,” 91.

- ²⁶ Lukšionytė-Tolvaišienė, *Antanas Vivulskis (1877–1919). Tradicijų ir modernumo dermė*, 88.
- ²⁷ Decor project of the Šiluva Chapel, a section, by Vivulskis. 1906, LNM, AKP 590/5.
- ²⁸ “Angel” (sketch for the interior of the Šiluva Chapel) by Vivulskis. 1st–2nd dec. of the 20th c., LNDM, S 692.
- ²⁹ “Atnaujinant Šiluvos meno vertybes: Antano Vivulskio kūrybos išsaugojimas,” *kaunoarkivyskupija.lt*, 2021, <https://kaunoarkivyskupija.lt/index.php?id=140&ncid=2&nid=9714>.
- ³⁰ Dalia Ramonienė, ed., *Krikščioniškosios ikonografijos žodynas* (Vilnius: Vilniaus dailės akademijos leidykla, 1997), 84; Lukšionytė-Tolvaišienė, *Antanas Vivulskis (1877–1919). Tradicijų ir modernumo dermė*, 91.
- ³¹ Drawing of the Morskie Oko Chapel by Vivulskis. 1910–1911, Photograph from the Wroblewski Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, Manuscript Department (further – LMAVB RS), f. 255–464.
- ³² Lukšionytė-Tolvaišienė, *Antanas Vivulskis (1877–1919). Tradicijų ir modernumo dermė*, 94; Stefański Stefański, *Zmarł jak żył, na skrzydłach... Antoni Wiwulski (1877–1919). Artysta epoki Młodej Polski*, 246.
- ³³ The project is stored in the library of the seminary in Włocławek, published in K. Stefański’s book (Stefański, *Zmarł jak żył, na skrzydłach... Antoni Wiwulski (1877–1919). Artysta epoki Młodej Polski*, 253).
- ³⁴ Lukšionytė-Tolvaišienė, *Antanas Vivulskis (1877–1919). Tradicijų ir modernumo dermė*, 95; Stefański, *Zmarł jak żył, na skrzydłach... Antoni Wiwulski (1877–1919). Artysta epoki Młodej Polski*, 249, 253.
- ³⁵ Vivulskis’ postcard with a photograph featuring the model of the Kraków Jesuit Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. 1905, LMAVB RS, f. 255–464/4.
- ³⁶ Fragment of the model of the Kraków Jesuit Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus by Vivulskis. Circa 1905, LNDM, S 844.
- ³⁷ Stefański, *Zmarł jak żył, na skrzydłach... Antoni Wiwulski (1877–1919). Artysta epoki Młodej Polski*, 252. Translated from Polish, here and further on, by the author of this article.
- ³⁸ Sclavus, “Jeszcze o legendowym twórcy pomnika dla Władysława Jagiełły,” *Świąt* 2 (1910), 11.
- ³⁹ Photograph of the model of the Vilnius Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. 1910, LNM, AKP 588.
- ⁴⁰ Stefański, *Zmarł jak żył, na skrzydłach... Antoni Wiwulski (1877–1919). Artysta epoki Młodej Polski*, 306.
- ⁴¹ Vivulskis was buried in the Vilnius Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, but in the Soviet years (1962) his remains were reburied in the *Rasų* Cemetery in Vilnius.
- ⁴² St Matthew 11, 28.
- ⁴³ Stefański, *Zmarł jak żył, na skrzydłach... Antoni Wiwulski (1877–1919). Artysta epoki Młodej Polski*, 464.
- ⁴⁴ Smilingytė-Žeimienė, *Lietuvos bažnyčių dailė. XX amžiaus I pusė*, 86.
- ⁴⁵ “The Prayer on the Mount of Olives” by Vivulskis. Circa 1905, LNDM, S 791, S 855.
- ⁴⁶ Versions of “The Crucifixion” for the altar “My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?” by Vivulskis. 1916–1918, LNDM, S 852, S 847, S 750.
- ⁴⁷ Stefański, *Zmarł jak żył, na skrzydłach... Antoni Wiwulski (1877–1919). Artysta epoki Młodej Polski*, 285.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 520–521.

SKULPTŪROS REIKŠMĖ ANTANO VIVULSKIO ARCHITEKTŪRINIUIOSE PROJEKTUOSE

Santrauka

Antano Vivulskio (1877–1919) kūryba architektūros srityje vertinama kaip novatoriška, liudijanti drąsius ieškojimus, pirmąsias modernizmo apraiškas Lietuvos architektūroje ir įtaką tolesnei jos raidai. Straipsnyje analizuojama Vivulskio kūryba, labiau susitelkiant ties skulptūros reikšme jo negausiuose architektūriniuose projektuose. Tyrimo metodai – formalusis, ikonografinis ir lyginamasis. Vivulskis itin daug dėmesio skyrė skulptūriniams sprendimams architektūros projektuose, siekė integralios, ikonografiniu požiūriu vieningos visumos. Straipsnyje kreipiamas dėmesys ir į iki šiol menčiau tyrinėtus medinius Šiluvos koplyčios prieangius, jų dekorą. Skulptūrines kompozicijas Vivulskis traktavo laisvai, ieškodamas savitos formos ir turinio vienovės, tikro, stipriai išgyvenamo religinio jausmo išraiškos. Formaliuoju požiūriu, Rodenui ir Bourdelle'ui darant įtaką, joms būdingas impresionistinis formų neišbaigtumas, ekspresyvumas (eskiziniai modeliai), secesijos, romantizmo, simbolizmo, tautinio stiliaus elementai. Straipsniu įnešamas indėlis į gilesnį Vivulskio kūrybos pažinimą architektūros ir skulptūros sintezės aspektu.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: Antanas Vivulskis, skulptūra, architektūra, Šiluvos koplyčia, Vilniaus Švč. Jėzaus Širdies bažnyčia, Krokuvos Švč. Jėzaus Širdies bažnyčia.

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