

DESIGN OF ARCHITECTURAL ENVIRONMENT

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**THE SPIRITUAL RETREAT CENTERS –
INNOVATIVE APPROACH
IN THE FIELD OF RELIGIOUS TOURISM:
ARCHITECTURAL AND URBAN PLANNING ASPECTS**

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Abstract. The article contributes to the phenomenon of religious tourism which has gained an increasing popularity throughout the world and caused the emergence of a new type of religious institution – the spiritual retreat centre, which, being a valuable multifunctional social structure, needs deep investigation and further recommendations on the choice of the territory for its location in the planning structure of cities and in the general network of such institutions. The article sheds light on the typology and the basic urban planning principles of their formation in the case of Western Ukraine, as the territory of largest spread of the Greek Catholic Church.

Key words: spiritual retreat centre, religious tourism, urban planning principles, architectural organization.

Problem statement

The rapid pace of development in all spheres of modern society requires a quick response to the complex philosophical and sociological questions of the modernity. Moral and spiritual values, while remaining intact, must be adequate in form to the requirements of the times. Gaining independence by Ukraine has significantly influenced the activation of the spiritual life of society and the revival of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. As a result, the construction of new temples and monasteries, centres of spiritual education has accelerated. The rapid development of the spiritual life of society has led to the need in the new type of institution – the spiritual retreat centre, able to combine many functions, to provide a proper spiritual and educational environment that would satisfy the needs of the parishioners, pilgrims and tourists, and contribute to the formation of deep religious consciousness and spirituality.

However, the development of religious tourism infrastructure in Ukraine is at a very low level. Most sacred sites and potential territories for the construction of spiritual retreat centres are isolated and are not organized properly for the needs of tourists and pilgrims, which significantly reduces their spiritual potential, social and consumer value. And this in turn caused the neglect and destructive status of valuable historical sacred objects. As a consequence, most of these sites were outside the field of view of tourists due to the

number of objective reasons – the lack of organized transport entrance, the loss of historical significance of the site and the lack of recreational areas nearby. Thus the formation of the innovative spiritual institutions at the crossroads of tourist routes is intended to save this situation. This will not only promote the development of religious-tourist infrastructure, attract new tourist flows, but also will fill the content of religious tourism with new spiritual and educational sense.

On this basis, it is necessary to develop theoretical base and give practical recommendations on the design and choice of the territory for the construction of spiritual retreat centres, which at this stage embody the spiritual development of society and is a new perspective direction in the development of sacral architecture.

Analysis of recent research and publications

Recently the phenomena of religious tourism and pilgrimage being one of the least investigated areas in tourism research has gained an increasing popularity and interest among researchers. According to the views of a number of scientists the concept of “religious tourism” can be interpreted, as a mixed combination of secular tourism and pilgrimage (Tan, 2018 pp. 283–309). The motivations of a great number of religious tourists are not limited to visiting temples and sacred sites but also can be expanded to participating in religious activities, worship and other acts, typical for pilgrims (Marine-Roig, 2015, pp. 25–37). Nowadays the original meaning of pilgrimage has changed and got some typical tourism features like use of accommodation infrastructure, transportation, participation in different tourist attractions (Giuşca, 2018, pp. 225–238).

In order to understand the current state, challenges and opportunities of religious tourism in Ukraine a deep review of Ukrainian scientists works in this field should be conducted, taking into account a number of aspects such as the historical-cultural and religious dimension, economic, architectural and other aspects. The study of Ukrainian pilgrimage, the general state of religious tourism and the problems of its development are being undertaken by such scholars as T. Bozhuk (2013, pp. 70–74), O. Shablii (2001, pp. 28), V. Shykerynets (2012, pp. 241–246) and others.

Ukrainian scientist V.V. Shykerynets (2012, pp. 241–246) has clarified the relevance of the use and preservation of historical and cultural heritage as a resource base for religious tourism. He also identifies the religious tourism as a powerful condition of territorial development and prosperity.

Particular attention should be paid to the use of territories with valuable historical, cultural and sacral meaning. In particular, the problems of territorial sacral systems were studied by O. Shablii (2001, pp. 28–32), who substantiated their structure consisting of a functional nucleus; a set of religious infrastructure institutions and enterprises; a set of institutions and enterprises that perform peripheral functions at the core of the system; set of institutions for management of religious life and activity. Russian researcher T. Hristov uses the term “religious tourism industry” to mean “an aggregate of hotels and other accommodation facilities, transportation facilities, catering facilities, various religious sites, and organizations providing tour services and interpreting services”. In the structure of religious tourism, he distinguishes four sectors: “Accommodation”, “Food”, “Transport” and “Religious sites” (Bozhuk, 2013, pp. 70–74).

The investigation of the architectural-urban context of the development of religious tourism is of particular relevance in this study. There are currently very few scientific works devoted to the complex study of the architecture of the spiritual retreat centres and, in particular, the urban features of their formation. A thorough study of architecture of the spiritual and educational centres was carried out by O. Barantseva (2014). The author determines the main factors for the formation of a new architectural object - the spiritual centre and the principles of its formation in urban environment. The principles of zoning and peculiarities of composition of the territory of spiritual centres and functional composition of the premises of these structures are revealed in her research (Barantseva, 2014, pp. 98–114).

The main principles of arrangement of temple complexes in the structure of settlements, as well as features of their location and compositional role in modern urban planning conditions are presented in the scientific work of Yu. Saratovskaya (2000).

A comprehensive study of the issues of architectural-planning and town-planning organization of spiritual retreat centres are presented in the author's dissertation (Holubchak, 2018, pp. 168–189).

However, there is lack of comprehensive consideration of the current state of religious tourism in Ukraine in the scientific literature, in particular in the context of infrastructure, architectural and urban planning aspects, which creates an urgent need for such research.

Objective of the article

The paper aims to make the assessment of the religious tourism potential in Ukraine and to provide a model for its development by creating network of spiritual retreat centers as key attracting points on the tourist routes in the general system of spiritual, cultural and leisure establishments, which will definitely lead to the expansion and improvement of the existing religious and tourist infrastructure.

The goals of the study can be achieved by the following steps:

- The analytical overview of the world experience of architectural and urban planning organization of the religious tourism;
- the analysis of the current state of the religious tourism in Ukraine, defining the main opportunities and challenges;
- the formation of the number of principles and recommendations on the development of spiritual retreat centers network on the territory of Western Ukraine.

The main achievements presented in the paper are based on author's personal experience, who has participated in a number of pilgrimages and religious activities as well as designed a number of spiritual retreat centers in Ukraine.

Results and discussions

The 21st century – the era of spiritual revival and the time of mass pilgrimages to Ukrainian shrines, opens up new opportunities for the formation of moral values, historical and cultural traditions. Against the background of religious-spiritual indifference and moral degradation of society, the need for close unity of man and church life is becoming more urgent. Having a high level of trust among Ukrainians, at the present stage, the Church is an important component of Ukrainian society. Therefore, religious tourism is currently one of the most popular types of tourism in Ukraine. Travels through sacred heritage sites and valuable holy territories possess powerful communication and educational features.

Thus the formation of proper religious-tourist infrastructure, which takes into account innovative foreign approach and standards, is gaining significant meaning. The present stage of the development of sacral architecture is characterized not only by the need to preserve and restore existing temples and monastery complexes, but also by the need to saturate them with new social functions that go beyond worship. Accordingly, the structure of modern temples is changing as well, which envisages the expansion of the nomenclature of social, spiritual and educational purposes. The existing buildings of temples and monasteries are being reconstructed and upgraded to expand their range of activities.

To this end, the need for the creation of new sacral objects – spiritual retreat centers, which aim to widen the range of religious, cultural, educational and recreational activities of the church, in order to meet the new needs of modern society and thus to raise the level of religious tourism industry – is becoming increasingly urgent. These buildings are represented in their wide typology – parish and spiritual centers, small retreat houses and huge pilgrimage complexes. Therefore, there is a need to form a whole network of such centers in the structure of each settlement.

However, the significant problems of the material base of religious tourism in Ukraine, lack of profound academic research in this area as well as the need to identify the main trends in the design of the studied objects, their functional and urban planning features causes the need to consider in detail the world experience.

The popularity and necessity of spiritual retreat centers for modern society is confirmed by many years of successful experience of functioning of these structures in the countries of Europe and America.

One of the first ideas to create a multifunctional church was supported by the American architect Frank Lloyd Wright in his project of the Uniate church complex in Madison, USA (1951), which has become an important architectural and urban planning innovation (Fig. 1). The temple complex, apart from liturgical premises, houses a Sunday school classes, banquet hall. In 2008, at the request of the Madison Uniate Community, the TKWA Architectural Bureau completed a modernized expansion of the church complex caused by the mass flow of tourists and the growth of the church community (Archdaily, 2019). The new building contains a large hall for 500 people, administrative premises, dining room, hall for choral singing. The modern addition completely reflects the idea of Wright's organic architecture and in conjunction with the existing church creates a single whole that harmoniously coexists with the environment. Gradually, the integration of various social functions in cult buildings has become widespread in world practice.

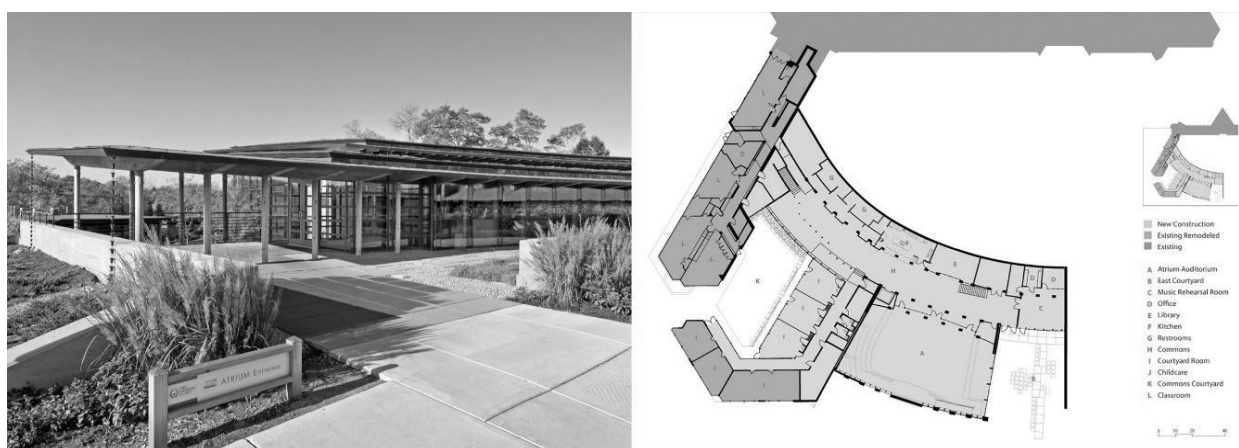


Fig. 1. The project of the Uniate church complex in Madison, USA.

Source: Archdaily, 2019

Another modern example is the project of architect Renzo Piano – a pilgrimage center and monastery in Ronchamp, on the territory of the modernist church designed by Le Corbusier (Fig. 2). The project illustrates an attempt to turn a small pilgrimage center into a powerful tourist destination. Due to the increasing number of visitors to Ronchamp, there is an urgent need for a proper organized area around the church for the needs of pilgrims and establishing a monastery for local nuns (Dezeen, 2019). The complex provides twelve cells with a winter garden for nuns, public places for pilgrims, oratories and rooms for meetings and accommodation for visitors.

The tendency of building spiritual retreat centers is gaining popularity in Ukraine during the last few decades. The good example of a modern pilgrimage center, being at the final stages of construction, is the Goshiv Pilgrim House in Ivano-Frankivsk region. The original architectural proposal designed by O. Mykulyak project reminds the ancient monastic settlements carved in the rocks. The functional planning of the building is designed to meet all the needs of visitors and to realize the social functions of the church. The two-storied pilgrimage center will house living rooms, administrative premises for the clergy, conference rooms and recreational facilities.

Thus the main condition of the formation of the spiritual retreat centers and religious-tourist routes in Ukraine is powerful historical and cultural potential. The priority is given to temples, monasteries, chapels and other places of preservation of miraculous icons, healing springs, relics of saints or other valuable relics, which are of particular attention and interest among pilgrims and religious

scholars. The sculptural and art works of religious subjects, as well as the unique sacral architecture are of particular value.



Fig. 2. The pilgrimage center and monastery in Ronchamp, (architect – Renzo Piano). Source: Dezeen, 2019

However, the analysis of the current state of the spiritual retreat centers network has revealed a number of significant shortcomings:

1. Shortage or complete absence of establishments of this type in potentially important places (territories of pilgrimage centers, key points of religious-tourist routes, etc.) and low-developed infrastructure.
2. Uneven and disproportionate distribution of the spiritual retreat centers in the structure of the region.
3. Absence of general urban planning concept for creation of the network of spiritual retreat centers in the territory of Western Ukraine.

Therefore there is a raising need in proper urban planning strategies for creating a network of spiritual retreat centers throughout the Western part of the country.

The territory of Western Ukraine, with its thousands of priceless monuments of temple architecture and valuable sacral art, is one of the most perspective for the development of the religious tourism industry. The level of spirituality and religiosity of local inhabitants occupies the leading position in Ukraine.

In general, according to the sociological surveys of the Razumkov Center (RISU, 2019), the indicators of the religiosity level of the population of Western Ukraine are significantly higher than those of the rest of the territory. The level of religiosity has a distinct regional character: the number of respondents who consider themselves to be believers varies from 91 % of residents of the Western Ukraine to 56 % – residents of the Eastern Ukraine. The formation of the governing structures of the Church is almost over (Fig. 3).

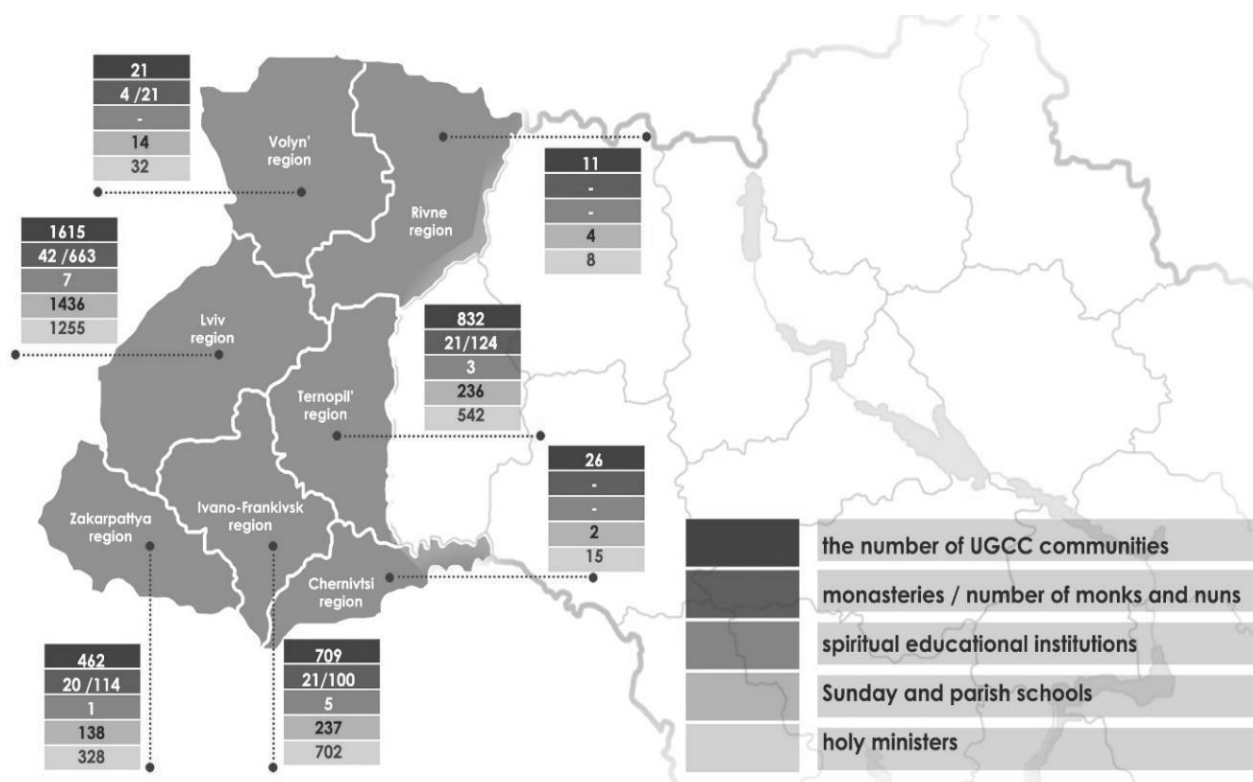


Fig. 3. Network of religious organizations of the UGCC in the territory of Western Ukraine, as of January 1, 2019 (Source: own elaboration based on: Religious organizations in Ukraine (2019))

As of the beginning of 2019, there are 3394 UGCC religious communities registered. Believers are tutored by 350 spiritual centers and administrations, and clergy are taught in 17 spiritual schools. Monastic life is reviving – as of 2019, 102 monasteries of the UGCC operate in Ukraine (RISU, 2019). In addition, there are 2002 Sunday schools and catechism centers for parishes.

Thus, the statistics show that the institutionalized network of denominational-church organizations serving the religious needs of believers has already been established. Besides the regions of Western Ukraine have an inexhaustible amount of sacred resources, which is a great foundation for the development and prosperity of the spiritual and religious tourism sphere. However, the network of institutions dedicated to the implementation of all social processes of the Church – educational, leisure, recreational – remains underdeveloped. Therefore, the question of feasibility of establishing a regular network of UGCC spiritual retreat centers in the Western region of Ukraine is very urgent. That is why a significant reform of the network of tourist sites and infrastructure of sacral structures should be done, involving their potential and the richness of available landscape and recreational resources, and relying on a rich and successful experience of functioning of this type of structures abroad.

There are a number of factors that in one way or another affect the choice of territory for the construction of the building, and which actually determine the potential of it:

1. The decision of the UGCC's administrative and territorial structures (archdiocese) on the expediency of the construction of the spiritual retreat centers, due to their importance not only for the parishioners, but also for the clergy and monks with a purpose of deepening their spiritual education, conducting theological conferences, church meetings.
2. Architectural and urban planning – the structure of the settlement, the relationship with the network of institutions of this type, the required shape and area of the site, capacity and size of the structure.

3. Natural-ecological – ecological condition and comfort of the territory (clean air, satisfactory sanitary and hygiene standards and insolation).
4. Historical-architectural and sacral context (the availability of a certain resource base for the formation of an institution; the sacral core of the territory – a temple, monastery, miraculous source or icon).
5. Landscape-geomorphological – the form of existing relief, the presence of water (rivers, springs, lakes) and natural (mountains, valleys, forest plantations) components.
6. Engineering communications – the availability of access or the possibility of laying important engineering communications (water, gas, electricity, telephone and Internet communications).

When choosing the potential location, the presence of the sacral nucleus, or the possibility of creating it on the territory should be taken into account. Therefore, in order to formulate recommendations for the improvement of the system and design of specific types of spiritual retreat centers on the territory of Western Ukraine, it is important to dwell on the study of the current state of the sacral-spiritual infrastructure and architectural typology of spiritual centers, as well as to identify its features, advantages and disadvantages. With this aim the cartographic presentations for existing situation has been made. The cities of Western Ukraine with their significant religious and tourist potential provide all the necessary conditions for the creation of a whole network of such religious and spiritual centers in different corners of the region and at various sacred institutions. An analysis of the territories with significant potential for the formation of spiritual retreat centers is presented in Fig. 4. These schemes indicate the territorial distribution of the most significant shrines in Western Ukraine – monasteries, pilgrimage centers with miraculous icons, especially valuable masonry and wooden temples. Particular attention should be paid to: the distribution of these objects on the territory of Western Ukraine, their pedestrian accessibility, the scale of new construction in order to form a network of spiritual retreat centers throughout the territory of Western Ukraine.

Thus, the territory of Western Ukraine has an inexhaustible amount of sacral resources, which forms a favorable foundation for the development and prosperity of the religious tourism sphere.

Based on this analysis, the proposals of establishing the spiritual retreat centers network in the Western Ukraine have been made (Fig. 5) The scheme shows three variants of perspective location of spiritual retreat centers by three types – parish centers, retreat centers and pilgrimage centers.

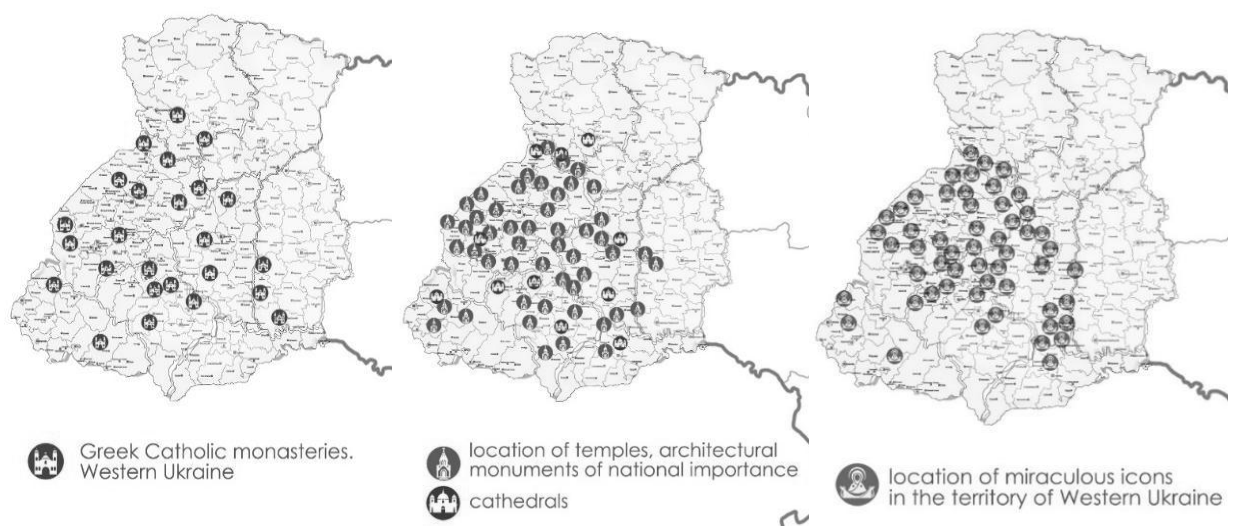


Fig. 4. Map of the shrines of Western Ukraine. Monasteries Temples, Miraculous Icons, UGCC.
(Source: own elaboration based on: Interactive map of UGCC (2019))

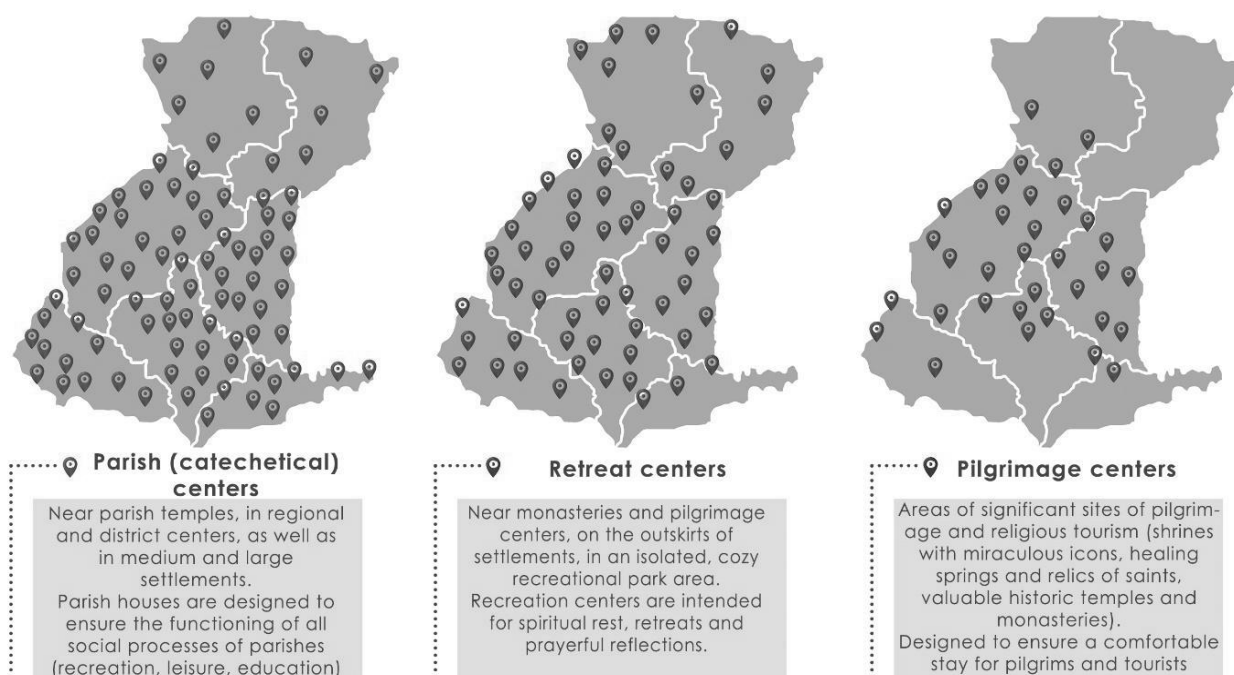


Fig. 6. Perspective locations of the three types of spiritual retreat centers (on the example of the Western Ukraine regions). Source: own elaboration

Thus, the urban factor is decisive in the formation and development of the network of spiritual retreat centers and their location in the city structure, which depends on several important prerequisites:

- the type of settlement, its planning structure, density and demographic composition of the population. When selecting the territory for the spiritual retreat centers, as well as forming their network, it is important to predict their location at important functional nodes (at the intersection of tourist routes, recreational territories or in important functional structures of cities);
- the presence of a sacred institution (temple, monastery);
- convenient transportation and pedestrian accessibility and the possibility of further development of the territory (Holubchak, 2018, pp. 118–120).

In addition, we can define the following principles that underlie the creation of a network of spiritual retreat centers:

- compliance – the objects are located in accordance with the concentration of sacral-tourist resources;
- selectivity – the network is formed on the basis of historical, architectural and sacred heritage;
- specializations – spiritual retreat centers are considered in the system of sacral-tourist routes with the involvement of cultural and spiritual traditions of the territory;
- stages – the gradual filling of the territory with spiritual content (Fedorova, 1998, pp. 123–124).

All of the above proves the invaluable potential of the study area, which should be actively used in the formation of a network of spiritual retreat centers.

Conclusions

Therefore, at the heart of the formation of spiritual retreat centers and the development of the religious-tourism industry in Ukraine is its rich spiritual, cultural and historical patrimony, which is presented by majestic architectural ensembles, archaeological monuments, historical rural and urban areas, religious art values and traditional features of each region.

The profound analysis of the sacral heritage of Western Ukraine has allowed to establish the main rationalization directions of its use:

- carrying out preservation and restoration measures for the sacred objects;

- preserving traditions and attracting the attention of the young generation through holding religious festivals;
- enrichment of the attractive program of pilgrim tourism with a wide range of cultural activities and traditional crafts;
- development and implementation of state programs for the development of pilgrim tourism in the studied region;
- organization of advertising campaign and worldwide promotion of the Western Ukraine regions as important spiritual centers.

The territory of Western Ukraine with its significant religious and tourist potential provides all the necessary conditions for the creation of a whole network of such religious and spiritual centers at various sacred institutions, which will become a powerful dash in raising the sphere of religious tourism to the new level. The functioning of such establishments will fill the content of the religious-tourist branch in Ukraine with a new spiritual and educational sense. Spiritual retreat centers, which have been successfully functioning for decades at well-known pilgrimage centers and parishes in the world, could become the key to our nation's spiritual revival.

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**ДУХОВНІ-РЕКОЛЕКЦІЙНІ ЦЕНТРИ –
ІННОВАЦІЙНИЙ ПІДХІД
У СФЕРІ РЕЛІГІЙНОГО ТУРИЗМУ:
АРХІТЕКТУРНО-МІСТОБУДІВНІ АСПЕКТИ**

Анотація. У дослідженні висвітлено феномен релігійного туризму, який набув особливої популярності у всьому світі та спричинив появу сакральної інституції нового типу – духовного реколекційного центру, який, будучи важливою багатофункціональною соціальною структурою, потребує глибокого дослідження та подальших рекомендацій щодо вибору території для проєктування та його розташування у планувальній структурі міст та в загальній мережі закладів такого типу. Теоретичним підґрунтям для сформованих рекомендацій є ґрунтовний аналіз світової та вітчизняної практики архітектурно-містобудівної організації релігійного туризму.

У статті висвітлено типологію та основні містобудівні принципи їхню формування на прикладі Західної України, як території найбільшого поширення греко-католицької церкви. Дослідження має на меті здійснити оцінку релігійно-туристичного потенціалу Західної України та сформувати модель його розвитку шляхом створення мережі духовно-реколекційних центрів як ключових пунктів на перетинах туристичних маршрутів у загальній системі духовних, культурних та дозвілєвих закладів, що, безумовно, призведе до розширення та вдосконалення існуючої релігійно-туристичної інфраструктури. Основні досягнення, представлені в роботі, засновані на особистому досвіді авторки, яка неодноразово брала участь у низці паломницьких та релігійних заходів, а також є автором низки проєктів духовних реколекційних центрів в Україні.

Ключові слова: духовно-реколекційний центр, релігійний туризм, містобудівні принципи, архітектурна організація.