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THE WELL-KNOWN ARCHITECT ALEXANDER IOSIFOVICH BERNARDAZZI (1831–1907) (ON THE OCCASION OF THE 190TH ANNIVERSARY)

On July 1st we will mark a significant anniversary: 190 years of the well-known architect Alexander Iosifovich Bernardazzi (1831–1907). Alexander Iosifovich became famous for the creation of various historical monuments in Ukrainian cities such as Odessa and Fastov and villages in Bessarabia, including Chișinău, as well as the buildings of the Mutual Credit Society and the Orthodox Church in Warsaw of the Polish Republic.

Alexander Bernardazzi was born in 1831 in the city of Pyatigorsk of the Caucasus region. It's known that he originated from the architectural dynasty, which was from the so-called picturesque places of Pambio, belonging to the Tessine canton of Switzerland. It is located near the city of Lugano, situated on the border with Italy. The engineer I. Bubis [1], based on data collected in Switzerland, St. Petersburg, Pyatigorsk and Chișinău, compiled a small family tree. According to his research, the coat of arms of the city of Lugano of the Bernardazzi fam-

ily is kept in the heraldic institute. The family was headed by Carlo Domenico Antonio. There is no documentary evidence, that he was an architect, but, most likely, architecture was close to him, since it was he who welcomed the desire to choose an architectural profession from his four sons: Vincenzo, Giuseppe, Antonio and Giovanni. Also, Carlo Domenico Antonio Bernardazzi saw the prospects for the manifestation of the creativity of his sons in St. Petersburg, a city that quickly began to build up as the Russian capital in the XIX century. In 1816, Vincenzo arrived in St. Petersburg, where Emperor Alexander I appointed him a specialist in stone structures. Then two of his brothers came to this city: Giuseppe and Giovanni. Giuseppe (Joseph) is the father of Alexander Iosifovich Bernardazzi. From childhood, Giuseppe was attracted to the study of art objects. Having received home education, after studying at the Royal Academy in Milan, in 1819, he and his brother Giovanni arrived



Alexandru Bernardazzi.

in St. Petersburg and, together with Vincenzo, took part in the construction of the famous St. Isaac's Cathedral. In 1821 Antonio joined them. Alexander I highly appreciated the merits of Giuseppe Bernardazzi, who managed not only to replace his older brother Vincenzo, who left for Switzerland, but also to surpass him in skill and talent, which manifested itself precisely during the construction of St. Isaac's Cathedral. By the way, Vincenzo Bernardazzi's son Giuseppe (1816–1891) also continued his architectural traditions. He arrived in St. Petersburg for work related to the decoration of the Winter Palace. As for Giuseppe Bernardazzi, after three years of work, he was appointed a member of the Public Works Commission. Then he and his brother Jovani were sent to the Caucasus with the goal of developing and improving the sources of mineral waters and building resorts there. It was they who became the founders of the city of Goryachev-odsk (Piatigorsk). According to the State Archives of the Stavropol Territory: Bernardazzi Ivan Karlovich (Giovanni) was awarded “for

excellent work and diligence in work on August 7, 1828, the rank of the XIV grade” [1, p. 11]. And “Bernardazzi Joseph Karlovich (Giuseppe) was an architect, graduated from the Milan Academy, in architectural class and is listed as an architect in the office of His Imperial Majesty, on August 7, 1828, for excellent work and diligence in service, was awarded the rank of XII class, with seniority from the day length of service February 24, 1830 for drawing up plans for state buildings of the city of Piatigorsk was awarded the rank of the X class” [1, p. 11]. In this city, Alexander Bernardazzi was born to Giuseppe (Joseph), whose 190th anniversary we celebrate on July 1 of this 2021. He spent his childhood in the family of architects, his father Giuseppe and his brother, uncle Alexander Giovanni, and it is in this environment where he received his initial architectural knowledge. At the age of 12 he entered the St. Petersburg Construction School, from which he graduated with honors in 1850 and was sent to the Bessarabian Construction and Road Commission. The earliest archival documents demonstrate the beginning of the career as an architect of Alexander Bernardazzi in Bessarabia and his activity in Chisinau.

According to the service record (Formular list) for 1872 [2] Alexander Bernardazzi was the Evangelist-Lutheran and his children: Adelaida-Ecaterina, Alexander-Iosif and Sofia were the same religion. But his first wife Kristina Runovskaia was Catholic.

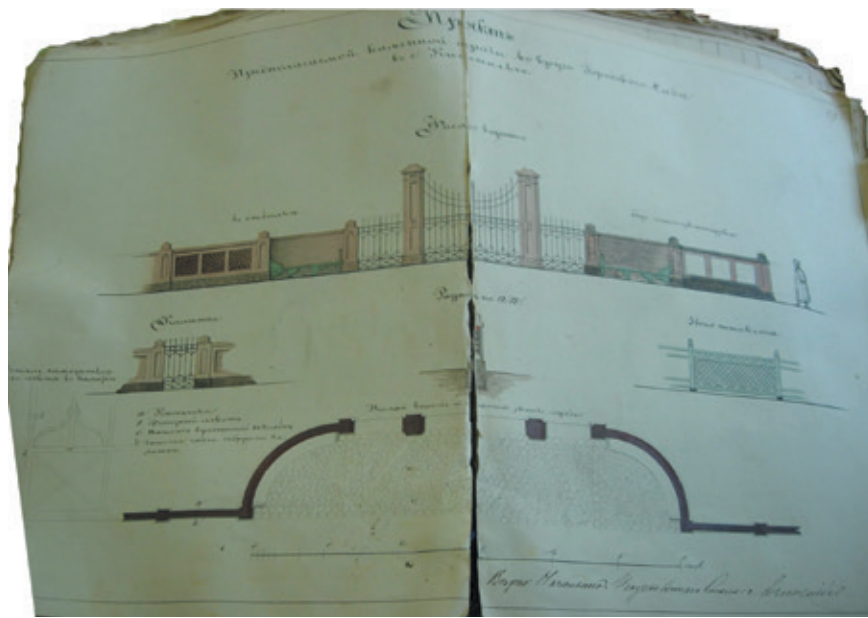
We succeeded in finding the earliest information, telling about this period of creative work of this architect. Archival documents provide evidence of the beginning of the architectural career of Bernardazzi, when the Bessarabia's Road and Construction commission appointed him as the technician for



Drawing of cast-iron fence of the public garden, prepared by architect A. Bernardazzi.

river. In Chişinău he built triumphal arches and gates before the arrival of Emperor Alexander the Second and Empress Maria Fedorovna. Architect Bernardazzi participated in the decoration of the castle for the reception of the Emperor Alexander the Second” [5, p. 98-101] in Bendery and some others in Bessarabia. In the second half of the XIX century thanks to Alexander Bernardazzi, the highlight of the Chişinău public Garden was created (today, it is the well-known park of Stefan cel Mare). According to archival documents, in the period from 1837 to 1841, this public garden was surrounded by a wooden lattice on three sides [6]. This provided evidence of the beautification of the urban garden, which was especially done in the 30s of the XIX century, namely: “decorating flower beds, greenhouses, and pavilions in Chinese style, seesaws and carousel. During nice summer evenings many citizens flocked there to enjoy the pleasures of nature and climate, granted by fertile southern sky” [7, p. 190]. This is what Bessarabian newspapers wrote about the public garden in

Chişinău: “One of the attractions of the public garden underlining its artistic expression and originality, even in those years, were the small architectural forms. Located at the beginning of the parkways and in their intersections, they secured the symmetrically radial layout of the garden, forming open spaces which performed the role of passive recreation areas” [8, p. 234]. The merit of architect Bernardazzi was that it was he, who took active part in paving many streets in Chişinău and proposed to replace the construction of a stone fence by a firmer grid, made of cast-iron. At the same time, he reintroduced and made the calculations and estimates, according to which the cost of cast-iron fence differed from the stone one by a modest amount. It could be more expensive only by 1850 rubles. In September 1861, His Excellency the Bessarabian Governor M. Fanton de Verrayon, carefully examined all the benefits of cast-iron fences, proposed by the architect Bernardazzi. He understood that “such a fence, with the exception of painting it at certain times, would



Project of stone fence for the public garden of Chişinău made in 1861.

not require any other repairs, whereas the stone wall must be repeated each year; therefore, for nearly the same initial costs, for one or the other type of fence, there will be a significant savings with the cast-iron grate” [9, p. 75-75 inv.]. And, of course, the governor wrote to the Chişinău city council that “the latter fence deserves unconditional preference over all kinds of fences” [9, p. 75-75 inv.], agreeing with Bernardazzi about the “advantages of durability and elegance of the cast-iron fence” [9, p. 75-75 inv.]. Fanton de Verrayon proposed for the Chişinău City Duma to enter an additional amount of 1850 rubles for the cast-iron fence into the expenses record for 1862, as well as he presented all calculations of architect Bernardazzi” [9, p. 76 inv.]. “On the territory of the urban garden a land was allotted for the construction of children’s playground. It was planned to set up a seesaw, carousel and swinging bar” [1, p. 64]. All drawings for the planned children area of the public garden were prepared by Bernardazzi, too. On the 29th of October, 1862 from

the correspondence of the Bessarabian Governor Fanton de Verrayon, it became clear how the progress of casting the gate and the lattice itself was made, which was supposed to be completed by April of 1863. All lattice consisted of 461 links (its height was 1 arshin 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ vershok). It weighed 3,335 pounds and had a stretch of 494 sazhen 1 arshin [7]. The total cost of the cast-iron grate, on the stone basement, around the public garden was “9816 rubles 15 kopecks” [7, p. 119] as was recorded in the Kishinev City Council expenses for the external beautification of the city for 1862. On September of 1863 Alexander Bernardazzi appealed to the City Head of Dmitry Minkov asking of “uninterrupted supervision” [9, p. 194], which was necessary for laying the foundation and filling the posts around the public garden. The chief architects had other duties, and he could not be constantly there and supervise all actions so he proposed “to choose someone of the freelance technicians and trustworthy masters for the aforesaid needs” [9, p. 194 inv.]. Bernardazzi even gave

practical advice concentrating on the filling of the fence, namely: “small slots for the spikes of the lattice must be hollowed before the laying down of limestone...” [9, p. 195]. Thus, he cared not only about the beauty, but also the strength and quality of construction [9, p. 191]. Thus, in the public garden all parts of the cast-iron fence were brought to Chişinău in 1863, but “their installation was completed only in the late 60s” [7, p. 191] of the XIX century. The elegant cast-iron lattice of architect Alexander Bernardazzi played the role of a reliable fence and adorned Chişinău’s city garden for many years. Today, in the park of Stefan cel Mare, we can see the fence, which was restored, according to the pattern of the author Alexander Bernardazzi, in the beginning of the 80s of the XX century.

Architect Bernardazzi still used metal bars for the decoration of his buildings, including those in Chişinău. For example, in 1893, the Greek church of St. Panteleimon was built in

Chişinău according to his design. Today it is located at the corner of the Vlaicu Pircalab and 31 August 1989 Streets. The metal fence with an openwork drawing and Orthodox crosses successfully emphasizes the Byzantine style of this church. “Particularly impressive is the corner solution of the main facade with its entrance, as well as the layout of some volumes of parts of the building” [1, p. 45]. This was built in 1895 in Chişinău. The Chapel Church girls’ school also decorates our city today. “The onion-shaped domes, crowning the facades, turrets, color combinations with decorative cast-iron lattices – all these features underline the monumental character of the building” [1, p. 44]. The Bessarabian Provincial Gazette in 1875 published the so-called “Address”, according to which the Kishinev City Council, on the 1st of December of 1875, taking into account the 25 years of activity of Alexander Bernardazzi for the benefit of the City of Chisinau, decided to express the gratitude of



The detail of children’s carousel in the public garden made by architect A. Bernardazzi.

the entire city and petition for conferring the title of Honorary citizen of Chişinău, as well as a reward in the amount of 1500 rubles. They expressed regret that, due to the scarcity of resources, the city treasury couldn't assign a larger sum, which would correspond to at the least part of the merits of the architect who faithfully and selflessly served the city for so many years, putting his energy, knowledge and abilities; and that even in those cases where some people believed that Bernardazzi was easily carried away as an artist, they recognized that the motives of this architect "were extremely unselfish and beautiful, and finally, there was not a single voice, – to object" [10]. This appeal was signed by the so-called "obedient servants" as Chişinău Mayor Clement Shumansky and several speakers of the City Duma.

Alexander Bernardazzi rebuilt Chişinău as a European city at the professional level for 22 years, setting the tone for the advanced architectural standards. Besides that, Alexander Iosifovich was elected to be an honorary member of the Bessarabian branch of the Imperial Russian Engineering Society for his great creative contribution to the development of the city of Chişinău. And even after his departure to Odessa in 1878, Alexander Bernardazzi continued to participate in designing social and civil buildings in the Bessarabia province. All his subsequent Chişinău monumental buildings in their style, shape, fine quality became the beautiful models of European architecture.

Thus, Alexander Bernardazzi was become the author of many buildings in Bessarabia, including elegant palaces, mansions, churches, parks, and others. He can rightly be called the most brilliant master, whose talent and

endowments are embodied today in many architectural monuments, including those of the Republic of Moldova. This author completes the pleiad of Bessarabian architects of the first half of the XIX century and his name opens up a really new period in Bessarabia. "A typical idealist, in the strict sense of this word, if we take idealism as an unfaltering faith in the self-sufficient dignity of a human being and the ultimate triumph of the eternal principles of life such as love, goodness, and beauty" [11].

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Renumitul arhitect Alexandru Bernardazzi (1831–1907)

(cu ocazia aniversării a 190 de ani de la naștere)

Rezumat. Anul acesta se împlinesc 190 de ani de la nașterea renumitului arhitect elvețian, italian de origine – Alexandru Bernardazzi, vestit pentru crearea construcțiilor istorice în Basarabia, în Ucraina și chiar în Polonia. Documentele de arhivă reflectă începutul carierei sale de arhitect. În anul 1853, Comitetul de Construcție din Basarabia l-a numit pe Bernardazi ajutor de arhitect în calitate de tehnician pentru amenajarea orașelor Akkerman și Bender, construcția podurilor și drumurilor în ținuturile Akkerman și Bender. Alexandru Bernardazi a fost arhitect al orașului Chișinău între anii 1856–1878, înlocuindu-l în această funcție pe Luka Zaușkeici. A construit în Basarabia școala parohiei luterane, gara, biserica greacă, conacul lui Manuc Bey ș.a. S-a ocupa și de amenajarea urbană: pavarea străzilor, construcția de împrejmuire din fontă din parcul Chișinăului. Chiar și după plecarea sa în Odessa în a doua jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea, arhitectul continuă să participe la proiectarea edificiilor din Basarabia. Articolul publică pentru prima dată lista creațiilor lui Alexandru Bernardazzi, alcătuită în 1875.

Cuvinte-cheie: Alexandru Bernardazzi, arhitectură, monument de arhitectură, grădina publică, gard din fontă.

The well-known architect Alexander Iosifovich

Bernardazzi (1831–1907) (on the occasion of the 190th anniversary)

Summary. This year marks the 190th birthday of the well-known architect A. I. Bernardazzi who is known for creating various historic buildings in Bessarabia, Ukraine and even Poland. Archival documents inform us about the beginning of the architectural career of Bernardazzi, when he was appointed as the technician for the arrangement of towns Akkerman and Bendery in 1853 and also for building some bridges and causeways in those districts. Alexander Bernardazzi executed his duty as chief municipal architect from 1856 to 1878, replacing another Chișinău's architect Luca Zaushkevich. He participated in the design and construction of many buildings in Bessarabia such as School of Lutheran parish, Greek Church, the Passenger's Building South-Western Railway, the Palace of Prince Manuk Bey in Gancheshty and etc. Bernardazzi took active part in paving many streets in Chișinău and created the cast-iron rail in the city garden. After arriving in Odessa in 1878, Alexander Bernardazzi continued to design many stately and imposing buildings in Bessarabia, which became the best examples of European architecture. In this article the service record of the architect Bernardazzi for 1875 was presented in the first time.

Keywords: Alexander Bernardazzi, architecture, architectural monument, public city garden, the cast-iron rail.