

Essay about
the Church of the Holy Virgin in Dubrovitsy
for the contest «Threads of Culture»

About two decades ago, this church rose to my view. I did not have to choose and think of dozens of monuments of architecture, for the reason that it has a special place in my affections. I am uncertain about when I saw it for the first time, however, it remains a special place in the life of every citizen of Podolsk.

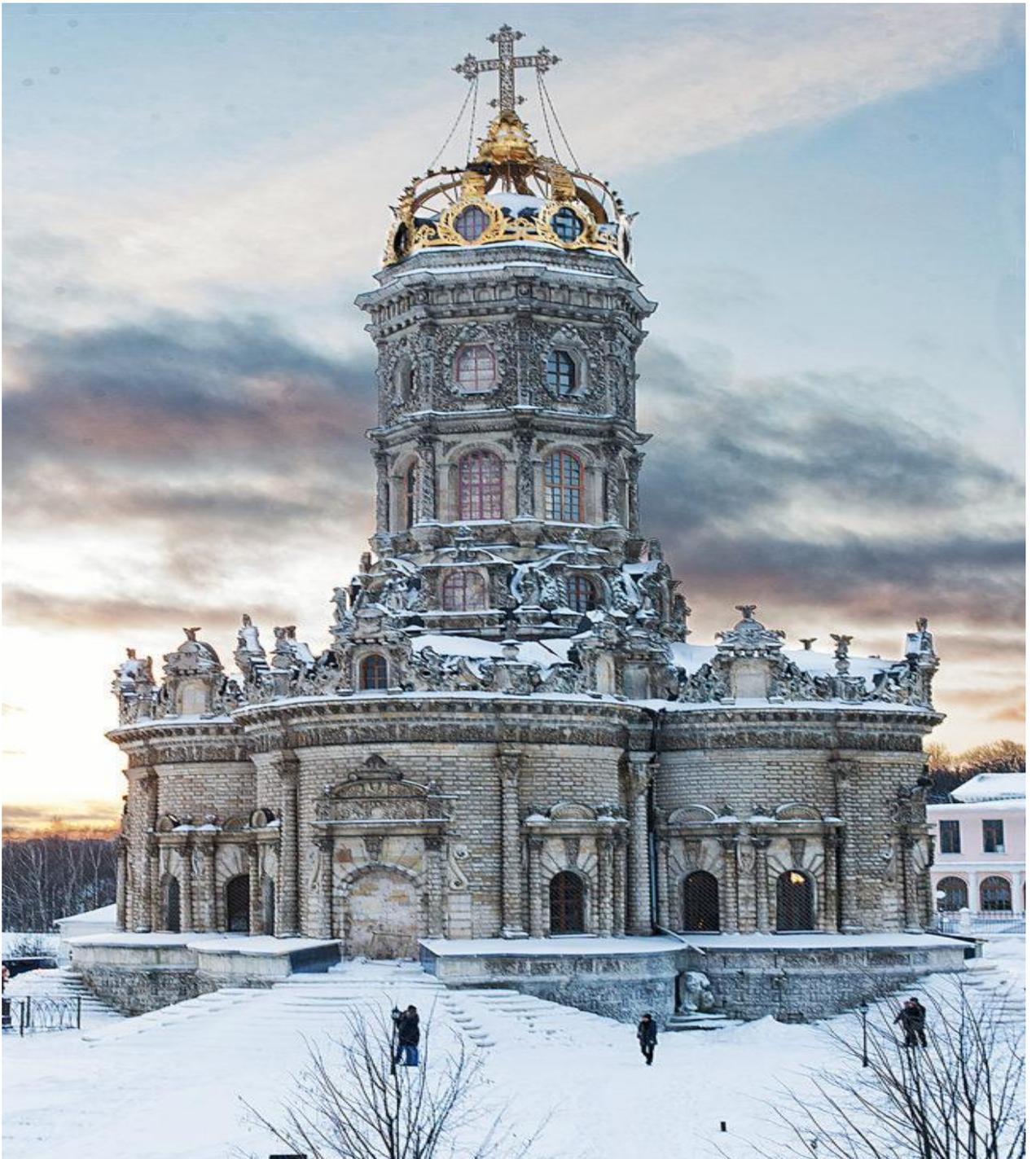
This edifice is noticeable for its beauty and, of course, for its uniqueness in that style of architecture. The church was built from the local white stone, which was used in the construction of many other historical buildings. As a result, the city began to be unofficially called among tour and museum guides “Podolsk Belokamenniy”. With the construction of this church appeared a new branch of style in architecture – “the Golitsyn Baroque”. His baroque style was an echo of Austrian and Italian architectures, what is clearly expressed in the complex stucco decoration of the church.

Most likely, the majority of people find this church beautiful because of the abundance of sculptures on it. It is worth noting that these sculptures were made and cut precisely on the building. Both inside and outside the temple is decorated with wall sculptures, among them angels, various ornaments like grapes, and the main sculpture depicting the scene of the crucifixion of Christ.

The construction work of the temple was carried out between 1690 and 1699. This church is located in Podolsk, in the village of Dubrovitsy, on the territory of the estate of the same name. It was once owned by the Golitsyns and the Potemkins. What you have to know is that it was built by Italian architects by command of Boris Golitsyn, who was the mentor of Peter the Great. It is believed that Golitsyn and the Emperor had a fight, and to smooth things over he decided to erect a memorial as a propitiatory gesture. Throughout its existence the church experienced 3 massive reconstructions as it was nearly destroyed due to rain and

wind, things too harsh for such a tender material. Moreover, in the 1930s the belfry was disassembled and the nearby bell tower was blown up. Until 1990, the church was closed to the parishioners.

As long as I remember myself, the sacred shrine has been on reconstruction and every year it loses its godlike splendor of creation. This church is momentous, as it bears not only a historical and religious significance but also is a monument of a special style of architecture of the 17th century, too unusual for these parts of Russia. It adorns the city which is disfigured by the Khrushchev buildings. Therefore, it is of great importance to cherish what we have and to preserve an image in case the church will be destroyed or completely modified.



(Photo by U. Zvedkin)

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