

Collecting, Designing, and Inhabiting World History in Imperial Kyiv

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This monographic dissertation will examine the Khanenko Mansion, designed and built in Kyiv around 1887-1890 as the residence of philanthropists and art collectors Bohdan and Varvara Khanenko. The Khanenkos sponsored the establishment of Ukraine's first art museum, known as the National Art Museum of Ukraine today, and financially supported the Russian art pavilion in Venice. But more, their private residence became a museum in its own right. Counting over 25,000 items—among them, European painting, sculpture, and applied arts; the art of from the Middle East, South-, and East Asia; the art of ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome; Russian and Ukrainian icons; Ukrainian folk art; European and Eastern weaponry; unique monuments and archaeological objects—this private collection is one of Ukraine's largest today.

It was housed in the lavishly decorated mansion built in an eclectic style that fuses Ukrainian and European stylistic elements.

Despite the collection's importance, its founders, the Khanenko couple, remain largely unknown in art and cultural history of Ukraine and the Russian Empire. My dissertation will address this gap by conducting a systematic study of the Khanenko family's collection, their mansion, and the cultural legacy that they, alongside the related Tereshchenko family, bestowed upon the city of Kyiv. It will examine how Khanenko's collecting and building activity shaped both the image of world history as seen from Kyiv and the concept of Ukrainian culture as a part of world culture. Analyzing the mansion as both a private residence and a public building, my research will scrutinize the stylistic choices made during the design of the mansion and its interiors to understand the Khanenko collection's and home's role in shaping an image of world history as it was conceived and curated from Kyiv.

To understand the incentives in formation of Khanenko collection, decoration of the mansion and interior program as a statement about social and political role of the museum and about the place of Kyiv in world history I will situate them in their imperial Russian und European context. I will contextualize the Khanenko mansion within the broader framework of nineteenth-century historicism in architecture, explore how the Khanenko mansion and its interiors merged the

stylistic program of historicism with the emerging concept of the national public museum, in whose creation the Khanenkos participated.

Second to understand the formation of the concept of museum in turn-of-the-century Kyiv will focus on the complex process of the transformation of private space into public space. I will demonstrate, seen through this lens, the Khanenko collection can be analyzed as a tool for interpreting cultural and historical values embedded within material artifacts and design techniques.

Finally, I will analyze this space as a *Gesamtkunstwerk* that included architecture, interior design, furniture, as well as collected and curated objects as a manifestation of aesthetic, cultural and political concepts of the time, including, most importantly, those of nation and style.