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INFLUENCE OF IVAN LEVYNSKY ON THE ARCHITECTURE OF SECESSIVE LVIV

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Abstract. If you analyze the city's architecture at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, you will be surprised by how many public and residential buildings were constructed, and often designed, by Levynsky company. Levynsky was a respected philanthropist, an active member of cultural and technical societies, among others, of the Polytechnic School Society, the Society of Workers and Industrialists, and a participant in Ukrainian social life—for instance, an activist for the Prosvita Society.

Key words: Ivan Levynsky, secession, design and construction, installation, materials and hygienic standards, city's architecture, Levynsky's company..

Problem statement

Today, the outstanding Lviv architect, construction, industrialist, and teacher Ivan Levynsky is no longer a mystery. There are many books and articles, documentaries about him, there have been exhibitions dedicated to his work, not far from the Polytechnic there is even a street in his name. When traveling in Lviv since the time of I. Levynsky, you everywhere feel his visible and invisible presence In every corner of the city, he left a memory in the form of buildings designed and built by his bureau (on Bohomolets St., Pavlova St., Kotlyarevsky St., Chuprynka St., etc.). There are also houses designed by other architects, and Levynsky was involved in their construction (Opera House, Train Station, etc.). Many more objects could not have appeared without Levynsky's participation, because for their construction used materials, manufactured at his factory. To honor the memory of this great architect, it is necessary to collect and describe the objects in Lviv that appeared in his participation, it would help understand the scope of its activities.

Analysis of recent research and publications

In today's Ukraine a lot has been written about Ivan Levynsky and the research conducted mostly reveals this man's great personality. The most famous researchers of this architect's activity are Oles Noga, Igor Zhuk, and Yuri Biryulev. However, no scholar, who writes works in the field of history and theory of architecture of

Lviv and Galicia of the late XIX – early XX centuries, can overlook the work of Ivan Levynsky. Therefore, Bohdan Cherkas, Viktor Proskuryakov, Svitlana Linda, Violetta Radomska, Tatiana Klymenyuk, and others, mention the great architect in their numerous publications. However, the catalog of objects designed and built by the Levynsky Bureau no one has not yet published.

Objective of the article

The purpose of the publication is to determine the significance of Ivan Levynsky's persona for the architecture of Lviv in the early twentieth century and a description of the most important objects of Lviv secession, that were designed in his office. Their history is not only a statement of the successful activity of one of the most famous architectural workshops of the city but also a kind of a business card of the abundance of respected residents of Lviv, who in their daily life did not want not concede to European fashion trends.

Results and discussions

The rise of comprehensive design and construction companies was a natural consequence of the evolving industry, technological advances, and a demand for experts in various fields of civil engineering: construction, installation, materials, and hygienic standards. Already at the beginning of the 20th century, the building industry required not only the efforts of architects who would tackle solid geometry, functionality and the artistic aspects of a structure, but also engineers responsible for the technical side. Alfred Kamienobrodzki was one of the first people in Lviv to apply a teamwork strategy to the building trade. He started a comprehensive design and construction company but it was Ivan Levynsky who made a fortune and earned wide recognition. If you analyze the city's architecture at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, you will be surprised by how many public and residential buildings were constructed, and often designed, by Levynsky's company. Taking into account the scale of his work, you might expect him to have had a strong body, but born in Dolin to a Ukrainian father and a Bavarian mother, Ivan Levynsky was short, stooped, and later even hunched. However, as his biographers assure – his physical flaws were compensated by extraordinary energy, mellow character, and a sense of humor. I. Levynsky had a difficult childhood. At the age of seven he lost his father; it was then that his family moved to Stryj, where Ivan completed four grades of primary school. He attended a Realschule in Lviv and later on was accepted to study at the Technical Academy (O. Noha, 2009, s. 10), which he graduated in 1874 cum laude and remained at the Engineering Department.

His entrepreneur's career started in 1880 when he was commissioned to prepare the Kastelivka hill for construction. There, close to what is now 58 General Chuprynka Street, Ivan Levynsky set up a store with building materials. Gradually he transitioned to manufacturing and selling his own products. In 1888 he founded the Ivan Levynsky Tiled Stove Factory. Over the years, a small plant transformed into a gigantic consortium made up of numerous companies, which in their best years employed around 1000 workers. Levynsky's firms designed, built, and supervised constructions, manufactured bricks, ceramics, gypsum, concrete, artificial stone, stained glass, and many other building articles.

I. Levynsky was a respected philanthropist, an active member of cultural and technical societies, among others, of the Polytechnic School Society, the Society of Workers and Industrialists, and a participant in Ukrainian social life – for instance, an activist for the Prosvita Society. What is more, he supported the creation of vocational schools and arranged the first manufacturing industry exhibitions in Lviv in 1892 and 1894. He juggled these responsibilities with his academic job at the Polytechnic School all until 1919, when he was expelled from the university after the Polish-Ukrainian war, despite the protests of the Polish faculty. This probably accelerated his death and eventually drove his great company, devastated during the First World War, into bankruptcy. He is also remembered as the creator of "Lviv's Art Nouveau".

Among many works carrying Levynsky's company logo there is no scarcity in creations whose authors were his partners. While discussing them, we shall probe more deeply into their authorship basing on the stylistic analysis, rather than just being satisfied with the general information "Ivan Levynsky's designer office." At different stages, Levynsky's collaborators were Lviv's well-known architects: Alfred Zachariewicz at the beginning of his career, and Tadeusz Obmiński, Lviv's greatest architect of Art Nouveau elevations

(I. Žuk, 1991, s. 181–183.). The people permanently employed in his office were Leon Levynsky, Ivan Levynsky's godson who worked there for almost twenty years (I. Zhuk, 2010, s. 102), and Aleksander Lushpynsky, one of the most talented National architecture designers at the time.

One of the first major accomplishments of the Ivan Levynsky Bureau in the secessionist style was the construction of the "Zatyshok" housing ensemble (Rondo A. Asnyk (today Bohomolets St.)), which received extremely praiseworthy reviews in the professional press of the time.

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The direction of former Adama Asnyka Street, named after a poet, was designed in such a way that it would connect Franko Street and Klonowicza Street. Once the construction was over, it became one of the most amazing architectural complexes in the Art Nouveau Lviv. The main concept for drafting the street was a curve so characteristic for Art Nouveau. The project was based on a dynamic undulating line of the buildings, thanks to which the otherwise straight street transformed into a deep rectangular-shaped cove. Tenement houses erected on both sides of that cove were fanned out, surrounding a patch of green and creating the so-called Asnyka Roundabout, in the center of which the poet's statue was to be located (I. Mel'nyk, 2008, p. 325). Today the roundabout's name disappeared from the city's toponymy.

Nearly all of the street's fifteen buildings were raised almost simultaneously from the moment the Magistrate approved of the plan in 1904. Intense construction work lasted for about three years and in 1908 Asnyka Street was fully inhabited. Numerous architects and constructors collaborated in that project, whose leader was Ivan Levynskiy – his design and construction company planned out the new street's layout and developed Asnyka Roundabout. Aside from Levynsky, Tadeusz Obmiński, Jan Schulz, Kazimierz Rzczycki, Kazimierz Teodorowicz, Juliusz Cybulski, Henryk Salwer and Salomon Rimer were involved in the construction, most of whom were employed by Levynskiy's office.

One of the most stylish tenement houses №3 in this area is located in Asnyka Roundabout. Its first owners and residents were Jan and Maria Papée. Jan Papée was a dermatologist, a medical professor. He came from a French family who settled in Lviv at the beginning of the 19th century. The married couple commissioned the design and construction to Ivan Levynsky's company and in June 1906 they got permission to take residence in the tenement house ((DALO) fond 2, description 1, case 123).

Its semi-circular quoin dominates the building's bulk flanked by the fragments of a brick attic, which adds stylized wings to the whole structure. The house's decoration is governed by a clear detail: straight sections, an arch, and geometrical figures. The round shape of the quoin is repeated on three main axes of the façade in circles outlined above the rectangular windows. Higher, the circles disperse across the wall, as if they were ripples on water, dressing the house's front in flower crowns (Fig. 1).

The tenement house under number 4 was built by the Elster and Topf Company (owned by Izrael Elster, Salomon Elster, and Leon Topf) ((DALO) fond 2, description 1, case 124). Lviv's famous photographers Oskar Wilczer and Maurycy Fruchtman moved in when the building was completed, including the back premises, in the fall of 1906. There were at least two artistic workshops and photography studios of Helios and Rubens here (I. Lemko, Volodymyr Mykhalyk, Heorhiy Behlyarov, 2009, p. 215). Also, it held an editorial office to an ongoing "Address Index of the Royal and Capital City of Lviv".

A simple symmetric façade is traditionally divided into three levels and three verticals. The composition's load rests on side axes with developed peaks. It is dominated by a female mask: a face with a faint smile surrounded by malleably sculpted curls floating down the elevation and intermingling with chestnut branches. The elevation is rounded off with a floral maiolica frieze – flat stains of aquamarine, milky white, and tawny maroon – manufactured in Ivan Levynskiy's ceramics factory. The higher floors are more decorated than the lower ones – elaborate ornamentation of the upper part is a consequent feature of all Lviv's Art Nouveau architecture.

Ivan Levynsky built one of the tenement houses No. 5 in Asnyka Roundabout for his own purposes (I. Zhuk, 2010, p. 88). The house's cubic capacity was not large but it distinguished itself with a graceful contour. Unlike other buildings in the roundabout which were two-floored, Levynsky's had three floors. However, thanks to decreasing the height of individual levels, the house did not break the building line, only slightly rising above the adjacent structures.



Fig. 1. Jan and Maria Papée's tenement house, 3 Bohomolca (Asnyka) Street, 1905–1906
I. Levynsky's office. (Foto Yu. Bohdanova)

Horizontal bossage across the whole building unifies the segments of the elevation. Two centrally located balconies accentuate the main axis of the house. The lower balcony, which is bulky, rectangular, and made of stone, according to the archival project, was supposed to include the JL monogram, indicating the owner. The upper balcony is a half-ellipse with a sharp contour of the metal laced balustrade. Aquamarine ceramic rectangular sections of the frieze fulfill the role of colorful insets. Today the gable is dilapidated but it used to be topped with three pinnacles rounding off the whole composition. Even though Levynskyi's company produced a variety of architectural decorative details, the elevation of his own tenement house is surprisingly modest.

An opulent tenement house № 6 owned by Leon Stauber has a traditional symmetrical plan with the high arch of the centrally-located gate and oval avant-corpses on the sides. It is covered in bossage, which together with hefty corbels of the balconies, adds to its massiveness. Beautiful Art Nouveau elements and loans from various historic styles are intermingled here. Tadeusz Obmiński's subtle taste, evident in his numerous façades which are excellent in terms of harmonious composition, must have been confronted here with the wishes of the investor, who requested a more embellished frame of the building. Hence, we have here decorative moldings and stuccos manufactured in Teobald Orkasiewicz's sculpture studio, which cover the building's whole elevation ((DALO) fond 2, description 1, case 126). The love of plants and flowers, which is characteristic for the period, as well as a close-knit relationship with the history of the old styles – from Mannerism through Baroque to Classicism – surface in the compositional design of the sculpted decoration (Fig. 2).

Henryk Gottlieb Haszłakiewicz's tenement house No. 7, with a slightly asymmetrical elevation, represents a curious combination of Art Nouveau and romantic stylization corresponding to the architecture of little Medieval castles. The initial design from 1905 had two sharp triangular pediments, but eventually, oval curves of semicircular gables took their place. The house's corner, conclave bulk itself, conforming to the plan of the whole complex around Asnyka Roundabout, is quite interesting. The central part of the building is cut from top to bottom by arching niches of triangular porches.



Fig. 2. Leon Stauber's tenement house, 6 Bohomolca (Asnyka) Street, 1905–1906.
I. Levynsky's office (Foto Yu. Bohdanova)

This is the fourth structure erected here by the Elster and Topf Company. It was built a year later than others because the original owner of the land, Klementyna Witośławska née Bohdan, had not sold the plot to the company until 1906 ((DALO) fond 2, description 1, case 128).

The tenement house No. 8, completed in 1907, is an example of mature Art Nouveau, although with a touch of old-fashioned style due to the quite cumbrous ground floor covered in bossage, which somewhat played the role of a socle to the higher floors' Art Nouveau artistry. Here, the top elevation is no longer bound by the old rigor – it becomes the only flat space clasped on top with a rim of a blue frieze. Long, ring garlands cascade down between the windows, where pilasters used to be located. The garlands were a universal metaphor for infinity or reminded about the cycle of life and were the favorite motif of the new style. They also encircle the angles of the windows and ignoring classic divisions, the geometrical snails of the corbels crawl down the wall across the horizontal line of the main cornice. The elevation repeats the symmetrical composition, typical in the Roundabout, with the side avant-corpses slightly raised. A subtle openwork guardrail-attic, which has not survived until today, decorated the roof of the building. It was a delicate metal rod supported on the sides with stone cantilevers.

Another cour d'honneur, the second so-called roundabout can be found in today's Doncowa Street. It is a complex of four tenement houses under numbers 8, 8a, 10, 10a, whose first recorded owner was Maria Bardach. Their façades are laid out in such a way that they encircle the inner hollowed area of the roundabout. The plastic expression of this joint concave elevation was achieved through emerging accents: gables and balconies, which lent the whole structure a homogenous style.

The adjacent houses under numbers 12 and 14, designed by the same team a year later, represent a similar geometrical form. In Maria Badach's residence, the gables and details are dominated by round shapes and arches, while numbers 12 and 14 are more angular, polyhedral, and cubist.

The author of these four houses was probably Tadeusz Obmiński. This surprisingly prolific architect, who was only 32 at the time, worked intensely on his projects while holding a position at the Civil Engineering Faculty of the Polytechnic School. Only in 1906, as a private architect, he designed nearly all of the finest well-known examples of Lviv's Art Nouveau. It is possible that in many cases he only provided the drafts for elevations. At this point in the architecture sector, the functions started to be subdivided, and allotment and narrowing down of architects' specialization was widely practiced in Levynskyi's office. Coherent decorative themes that were developed on the façade continued inside the entrance hall, without abrupt changes.

The ornamental design of the elevation was entirely based on geometrical motifs, using rivets, knots, and flat surfaces, and even if naturalistic accents were added, they were connected to the forest, wood as the product, the aesthetics of a sawmill and industrial reproduction of simple forms. It was not coincidental that the square appeared here as a decorative element. It became almost a module, the basic form of Viennese mature Art Nouveau—from Klimt's mosaic golden flakes through the cubist bulk of Joseph Olbrich's Secession Building in Vienna to the gold plates of Otto Wagner's Steinhof Church (1903–1907). The clarity of the geometric form, universal symbolism, and abstract content made the square into a basic decorative module, which soon spread to the north-east. It took roots in Moravia, becoming a distinctive feature for Brno, Olomuniec, and Ostrawa. It also became popular in the cities of Galicia.

Another example of Art Nouveau architecture is four profitmaking tenement houses raised within one year in the newly formed Akademika Pavlova Street, next to the existing Konyskiego Street. Part of the complex – the houses at numbers 1 and 3 – is located one side of the street, and the other part – houses at numbers 2 and 4 – vis-à-vis the other side.

Elsters' tenement houses (numbers 1 and 3) represent a clear two-tract layout. More glamorous rooms face the street, and they correspond to the smaller utility spaces (among them kitchens, bathrooms, and toilets) located at the back. The houses combined a traditional plan with elements of modern technology. Reinforced concrete trusses were used in the construction ((DALO), fond 2, description 2, case 2253 (1 Doncowa Street), case 2255 (3 Doncowa Street)). These two tenement houses were given different elevations while their interior layout was identical. Each of them has its closed composition and a unique iconographic style, which in both cases is full of optimism and joie de vivre. Unfortunately, both structures have been declining, and without the crowning sections, they are painfully incomplete. Originally, they had opulent attics, pinnacles, and flowing ribbons of the attic wall that connected them. Surviving stucco decorations indicate the elevation's past abundance and splendor. Closer to the edge, the smooth surface transforms into enormous leaves or seafoam. Girls' masks with flowing hair and a slight smile look down at the passersby. These smiles – juxtaposed with crumbling stuccos, cracked layers of shoddy plaster, brick's red gaping from between the crevices – take on an ironic, timeless meaning, a deeper expression than any architect from a hundred years ago could ever have assumed or predicted. Still charming, though not easy to see are small, ceramic panneaux which constitute a characteristic feature of all the houses belonging to the complex. In each house flowers, blossom and fruit ripen on this panneaux, as if they were flowerbeds in the garden. Composed of four-tile fragments, they are set along the line of the frieze under the cornice's eaves; the ones with cherries under number 1, with water lilies under number 3. It was the chestnut, however, which became the leading motif of the houses under numbers 4 and 2, as well as many other Art Nouveau elevations (Fig. 3).

While the discussed complex of four tenement houses in Akademika Pavlova Street was underway, Levynsky's company was constructing one of Lviv's Art Nouveau key buildings: the edifice of Dniester Insurance Company. This circumstance probably influenced the use of similar solutions, especially decorations, both in the tenement houses and Dniester building (A. Dorosh, 1992). The metal elements – fences and grilles – in all the buildings were produced by the same team of ironworkers. In both cases large spaces of ceramic panneaux were used, and the concept of surface decoration is identical.



Fig. 3. Residential house, 2 Akademik Pavlov Street, 1905–1906.
I. Levynsky's office (Foto Yu. Bohdanova)

All of the whimsy and decorativeness was concentrated only on the façade. Inside these tenement houses, starting already with the staircase, we see rationalism and minimalism, simplicity, and a functional layout of individual apartments. The task of the front elevations was to make an impression on the passersby, while the purchaser and resident were offered relatively comfortable living conditions at a reasonable price. On the other hand, such elevation was becoming an “advertisement post” for its creators, thanks to which developers could exhibit their offer, a wide variety of finishing and decorative materials.

In the shape it is today, this Jan Stromenger's tenement house 4 Hryhorenki and Mencyńskoho Street can serve as a good example of Lviv's Art Nouveau (Fig. 4). The fact that it got its present look thanks to an exhaustive conversion is even more interesting. In 1885 the police barracks stood in Sejmowy Square. When the police got new quarters, the barracks were completely rebuilt so they could fulfill a different function. The previous back-premises were knocked down and the shape of the courtyard was altered. A new tenement house was raised where the front building used to stand. It included part of the old walls and clearly made use of the functional elements from the earlier structure. The vestibule located on the main axis of the old house and two staircases on both sides of the building were kept but their shape was modified. One of them became the main staircase and was given an impressive oval line. Bathrooms were designed and corrections were made to the room layout (J. Lewicki, 2005, p. 256).



Fig. 4. Jan Stromenger's tenement house, 4 Hryhorenki Street, 1906–1907.
I. Levynsky's office, architect: T. Obmiński (Foto Yu. Bohdanova)

Most changes were done to the building's elevations. The representative façade facing the square was given a decorative vestibule, embellished with rustication and a balcony with an ornamental concrete balustrade. Also, the front elevation, which used to be crowned with helmet-shaped domes (today lost), was accentuated by two avant-corpses with variously profiled windows. The side elevation from the side of Mencyńskoho Street was analogically designed. Its axis was made up of the upper avant-corps with an enormous profiled window on the highest story, topped with a decorative attic. An important part of the elevation is ceramic panneaux embedded in panels between the windows of the second and third floors.

Higher stories held apartments, while the ground floor, right after the tenement house was completed, was taken up by Stromenger Department Store. Not only modernity and high quality of the construction but also the prestigious location in the square, a representative part of the parliament-government district, ensured appropriate magnitude to the whole undertaking of the new owner to Jan Stromenger's estate.

In the design of the new façade, Tadeusz Obmiński combined motifs distinctive for the Historicism architecture, such as the academic division of the elevation and its symmetrical avant-corpses, with typical Art Nouveau elements in the form of irregularly-shaped windows, their flowing frames, plant-inspired stuccos, a metal lattice of the balconies and the grille of the main entrance gate which unfortunately no longer remains. Within the Art Nouveau decoration, a marriage between biomorphic elements and geometrical forms, characteristic for Obmiński's work, is visible.

This couple of Aleksander and Józef Elster's tenement houses 14–16 Lewyckoho Street, like the structures discussed earlier in Akademia Pawłowa Street, belonged to brothers Aleksander and Józef Elster. Ivan Levynskyi's company was in charge of the construction. The buildings were probably designed by Tadeusz Obmiński – or at least he drafted their common representative façade. If projects originated in big design offices, it was infrequent at that time to have them signed with personal signatures, hence the difficulty to ascertain the authorship. Usually documents were marked with references indicating only the company and its owner.

The houses were designed as one complex with bilateral symmetry, yielding to a light curve of the street so that the central raised avant-corps with the rounded gable could be located exactly on the bent.

The complex façade is made up of two bodies, and three tall avant-corpses separating them: the central and side ones, on the corners. The verticals of the avant-corpses accentuate the side axes and the center of all structures belonging to Elsters' complex. These vertical parts, slightly protruding from the face of the elevation, topped with rounded triangular gables, were used as a space for the Art Nouveau decoration. Here stacked balconies with whimsical balustrades were located, while round windows in the shape of the letter Ω open the top of the building to the world.

A splash of Historicism is present here – the lower part is decorated with rustication, while the higher walls reveal a more sublime texture, all the way to the openwork of top balustrades – however, the complex is still an example of Lviv's classic Art Nouveau with an indispensable set of architectural details and a wide range of embellishments. We can find here forest motifs (pine twigs and oak leaves), various plaits (knotted ropes and tied rings), draperies of fabrics which wrap around the stone balcony guardrails, as well as the balconies on the third floor, which are ironwork artistry – both their handrails and the cantilevers forged from a rod rectangular at the base.

Identical tall metal-forged gates lead to two staircases. The person entering was welcomed by chestnut tree palmettes set in geometrical grilles manufactured by Michał Stefaniwski. Their beauty is buried today under layers of paint (Fig. 5).



Fig. 5. Jan Stromenger's tenement house, 4 Hryhorenki Street, 1906–1907.
I. Levynsky's office, architect: T. Obmiński. (Foto Yu. Bohdanova)

Despite the small size of the Edmund Riedl's tenement house 70 Łyczakiwska Street, the architect managed to shape its bulk interestingly, using an asymmetrical layout. With a bay protruding from it, the side avant-corps springs above the height of the elevation. The bay is crowned with a stepped gable, containing a small round window in the center, typical for Tadeusz Obmiński's work. The gable was copiously embellished with naturalistic sculpture and wrapped in chestnut leaves. The avant-corps was covered with a helmet-shaped roof, towering over the rest of the street's buildings. The roof is topped with a delicate lace of the metal attic. The house belonging to Edmund Riedl, a clerk at the Lviv's Magistrate, stands out thanks to one more detail – ceramic panneaux between the floors, depicting Art Nouveau's outline of flowers and wild rose fruit against a

light background. T. Obmiński, probably the author of the whole tenement house, was known and respected for his drawing skills. He designed the panneaux, while they were made in Ivan Levynsky's factory by a ceramist Mykhailo Lukianovych.

Conclusions

In its heyday (1903–1913) Levynsky's corporation resembled a monopoly on Lviv's construction market. It could take in one hundred orders at once, carrying out the construction of enormous buildings such as the railway station or the savings bank. The years of prosperity for Levynsky's corporation coincided with the development of Art Nouveau in Lviv, and Levynsky himself is considered the leader of this style. He earned this title, firstly, as the manufacturer of numerous Art Nouveau decorative elements, which we can see today on the façades and in the interiors of Lviv's tenement houses. Secondly- Levynsky's company was invaluable as the center for staff training. His Cracow colleague, Franciszek Mączyński, characterized him as an experienced practician and entrepreneur under whose care a new generation of engineers studied, matured, and worked. "You might say – he wrote – that there is no young architect in Lviv who hasn't passed through professor Levynsky's office (F. Mączyński, 1908, p. 95)."

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ВПЛИВ ІВАНА ЛЕВИНСЬКОГО НА АРХІТЕКТУРУ СЕЦЕСІЙНОГО ЛЬВОВА

Анотація. Виникнення комплексних проектно-будівельних виробництв стало наслідком розвитку галузі і спричинило великий попит на експертів у різних сферах цивільного будівництва. Одним із перших інженерів у Львові, що спробували всебічно підійти до надання архітектурно-будівельних послуг, був Іван Левинський, який завдяки грамотно організованій командній роботі отримав великий успіх і заслужив широке визнання. Якщо проаналізувати архітектуру міста на межі XIX і XX століть, можна побачити, яку велику кількість громадських та житлових будинків було

зведено, а часто й спроектовано підприємством Івана Левинського. У сучасній Україні про нього видано багато публікацій, а проведені дослідження виявляють насамперед непересічні обдарування цього чоловіка.

Кар'єра І. Левинського – підприємця почалася в 1880 році, після успішного закінчення Технічної академії, коли він отримав замовлення підготувати до будівництва територію Кастелівки. Там, на сучасній вулиці Генерала Чупринки, 58, І. Левинський створив магазин із будівельними матеріалами. Поступово він перейшов до виготовлення та продажу власної продукції. З роками маленька фабрика перетворилася на гігантський консорціум, який складався з численних компаній. У часи найбільшого розквіту тут працювало близько 1000 робітників. Фірма Левинського проєктувала, будувала, провадила будівельний нагляд, виготовляла цеглу, кераміку, гіпс, бетон, штучний камінь, кольорове скло та багато інших будівельних виробів.

Іван Левинський був шанованим меценатом, постійним членом культурних та технічних товариств – Політехнічного товариства, товариства робітників та промисловців, а також активним учасником українського суспільного життя – дійсним членом Товариства “Просвіта”. Він сприяв створенню фахових шкіл і організації перших промислових виставок у Львові у 1892 та 1894 роках. Плідну практичну діяльність І. Левинському вдалося поєднувати з викладанням у Львівській політехніці аж до 1919 р., коли він був висланий зі Львова, а потім звільнений з роботи. Це, ймовірно, прискорило його смерть і призвело до банкрутства його велике підприємство, початково знищене під час Першої світової війни. Іван Левинський також є широко відомим як творець українського модерну в архітектурі.

У свій розквіт (1903–1913 рр.) корпорація І. Левинського була монополістом на ринку будівництва у Львові. Тут могли працювати одночасно із сотнею замовлень, здійснюючи будівництво таких величезних об'єктів, як залізничний вокзал чи Галицька ошадна каса. Роки процвітання корпорації Левинського збіглися з розвитком сецесії у Львові, а самого І. Левинського вважають головним архітектором цього стилю. Він заслужив це звання, по-перше, як виробник численних декоративних елементів, які можна побачити сьогодні на фасадах та в інтер'єрах львівських кам'яниць. По-друге, неможливо переоцінити значення фірми Івана Левинського як осередку підготовки молодих кадрів.

Ключові слова: Іван Левинський, сецесія, проєктування та будівництво, монтаж, матеріали та гігієнічні норми, архітектура міста, компанія Левинського.