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**PROJECT SCENARIOS FOR THE REGENERATION OF SACRED SPACES****Yu.M. Poteichuk,**[j.poteichuck@gmail.com](mailto:j.poteichuck@gmail.com), ORCID: 0009-0000-5299-7373**N. Yeksarova,**[eksareva@odabe.edu.ua](mailto:eksareva@odabe.edu.ua), ORCID: 0000-0003-2493-1216*Odesa State Academy of Civil Engineering and Architecture  
Didrichson St., 4, Odessa, 65029, Ukraine*

**Abstract.** Sacred space is a unique type of architectural environment with historical (temporal), social, cultural, semantic, ritual-functional, spatial-architectural, psycho-emotional (perceptual), memorial, landscape, and ethical aspects that organize a visible and invisible multilayered system. In the course of historical development, such spaces built the spatial structure of the city and functioned as a center of socio-spatial interactions, collective memory, and identity.

Sacred territories have undergone a complex evolutionary path. Cultural, political, and social changes have led to transformations and changes in functional purpose, as well as significant destruction. Each historical stage has led to changes or the loss of sacred function, creating new semantic and architectural-spatial layers. Given the current challenges, the regeneration of sacred spaces requires a balanced approach that includes not only functional adaptation or restoration, but also a careful analysis of historical and spatial layers. A scenario-based, variable, and flexible approach is aimed at integrating a new purpose into the sacred space without losing its spiritual and semantic meanings. The choice of the project concept for the scenario is justified by a number of factors that will set the limits of permissible intervention in the sacred environment. Depending on the types of sacred spaces, their historical evolution, architectural and functional transformations, state of preservation, architectural and urban planning potential, there is a need to structure approaches to their regeneration. The study considers the following typology of project scenarios for the regeneration of sacred spaces: conservation-museum, hybrid sacred-public, adaptive-cultural, landscape-memorial.

Confirmation of the feasibility of design scenarios for the regeneration of sacred spaces predicts sustainable development, taking into account the visible and invisible layers of the architectural environment. The prospects for the development of the scenario method will provide the prerequisites for the creation of scientifically sound design solutions for the restoration of sacred space.

**Keywords:** architectural heritage, sacred space, regeneration, design scenarios.

**Relevance of the study.** The relevance of the study is determined by the dynamic development of urban structure transformations, which often leads to the complete or partial loss of sacred heritage. A significant number of spiritual centers are in a state of “ruin,” without a functional purpose, or have undergone unprofessional regeneration. This necessitates the search for a typology of sacred territories, analysis of factors that influence the formation of design scenarios, and the development of types of design scenarios for their regeneration, which will ensure integration into the modern city and respectful treatment of the multi-layered system of the sacred environment.

**Analysis of recent research sources and publications.** In current scientific practice, the regeneration of sacred spaces is fraught with a complex set of problems in the context of the

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interrelationship between the typology of sacred spaces, heritage conservation theory, and adaptive design scenarios for their use. In the context of global scientific practice, sacred objects are considered within the framework of adaptive reuse and heritage-led regeneration approaches. They are studied as a special type of architectural heritage with a particular emphasis on latent sacredness (“spirit of place,” collective memory, identity). Contemporary architectural experience demonstrates the development of variable design proposals that take into account not only material objects but also the spirit of place [1.]. A significant contribution to the methodology of historical environment regeneration was made by M. Bevez, whose work legitimized the scenario approach based on regeneration theory. These approaches make it possible to interpret regeneration as a choice between several conceptual models of development. This is the basis for using the project scenario approach in the regeneration of sacred spaces [2.].

S. Tang emphasizes the multi-layered nature of space, taking into account the spirit of place [3.]. The issue of the multidimensional system of cultural heritage values is explored by theorist Jukka Jokilehto [4.].

The normative and theoretical basis for assessing the value and authenticity of objects is formed by the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (UNESCO/ICOMOS, 2023) [5]. Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments for World Heritage (ICCROM/ICOMOS/IUCN, 2022) - documents that analyze the impact of changes on cultural heritage [6.]. In the context of scenario planning, Sad Berenji, S., & Moazen, S., explored the adaptation of sacred objects that have lost their original purpose, proposing a variety of transformations of space and modes of use [7.].

A systematic interdisciplinary approach forms the methodological basis of the study, where methods of urban analysis, phenomenological perception, and historical and cultural study of sacred space interact. Structural-morphological analysis is used to consider the influence of the sacred environment within the formation of the urban structure. Semantic analysis is used to reveal the meaning and significance of spiritual centers. The scenario approach is used to develop concepts for the regeneration of sacred spaces. The criteria for the formation of project scenarios for regeneration are analyzed, which allows us to propose a typology of project scenarios for the regeneration of sacred spaces and justify their practical applications.

**Setting goals and objectives.** To confirm the feasibility (potential) of project scenarios for the regeneration of sacred spaces as a method of forecasting sustainable development, taking into account the visible and invisible layers of the architectural environment.

To achieve this goal, the article sets out the following tasks:

- to consider the concept and types of sacred space as an object of regeneration;
- to explore the role of the scenario approach;
- analyze the factors that influence the types of project scenarios for regeneration;
- formulate a typology of project scenarios for the regeneration of sacred spaces in the context of temporal layers and their level of preservation.

**Main research material.** Sacred space is an important factor in the development of the historical and symbolic system of a city in the field of urban planning. The essence of sacredness encompasses social, organizational, cultural, educational, and architectural-spatial functions, not just religious ones. Sacred cores played an urban planning and formative role, around which the transport and planning structure, public urban spaces, and urban landscapes developed.

Sacred space builds the city's unique morphology, defines its spatial cores, visual dominants, hierarchical organization, and thematic markers. The structure of sacred environments gives the city a meaningful orientation, and the spirit of the place and cultural evolution are engraved in the material structure of space. The dichotomy of “sacred-profane” is the principle of structural

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organization of urban space. In this context, typical buildings create the backdrop of the city, while sacred cores create symbolic and spatial dominants.

The sacredness of space is distinguished by its multi-layered system. Its elements are cult complexes, places of memory, ritual routes, historical markers, and landscape, which constantly interact. Sacred centers form “threshold” sectors of the city, defining their symbolism.

In the course of the city's historical evolution, sacred centers underwent visible and often destructive changes. This led to the desacralization of the architectural environment. Using the example of sacred spaces in Odessa, we can clearly see how the development of the urban structure, demographic changes, military conflicts, and ideological processes led to the complete or partial transformation of spiritual territories. It is worth noting that during the 20th century, during World War I (1914-1918), the revolutionary events of 1905 and 1917, the civil war (1917-1920), and socio-political upheavals, sacred spaces underwent destructive changes. In many cases, they became targets of deliberate destruction with the aim of removing the sacred from the urban environment. During the period of militant materialism, religious buildings or their elements, such as crosses, bell towers, and domes, were dismantled, leading to the loss of the transcendent dimension. Religious buildings underwent even more radical destruction—sacred paintings and altars were destroyed, iconostases were dismantled, and objects of worship were burned. Temples were destroyed by controlled demolition. There was a forced re-profiling of the sacred function. Churches became clubs, sports halls, warehouses, and administrative premises. And this finally destroyed the boundary between the sacred and the profane [8].

As a result of these destructive transformations, a multi-layered system of sacred environments has formed today. In this structure of layers, we can observe fragments of preserved primary architectural forms, traces of losses, new functional layers, and layers of spiritual dimension and collective memory. Awareness of the multi-layered nature of contemporary sacred spaces prompts us to consider the main types of transformations, which differ in terms of the degree of preservation, legibility of the spatial structure, and spiritual dimension. The urban space of Odessa presents the entire spectrum of transformations: preserved or restored objects, destroyed sacred spaces with partially preserved spatial structure, lost spiritual centers without spatial and material traces, and completely destroyed ones.

Examples of preserved or restored buildings include the Transfiguration Cathedral (1808), St. Alexius Church (1886), and St. Panteleimon Church in Kuyalnik. These are sacred buildings with a restored spiritual function. Their authentic appearance has been recreated and their dominant role in the urban space has been revived. The second group of sacred spaces, destroyed but with a partially preserved spatial structure, includes the Church of the Ascension (1897), the Church of Constantine and Helena on the Great Fountain (1901), and the Church of the Entry into Jerusalem on the Tiraspol Outpost (1860). These objects show historical boundaries and the presence of planning markers. The spatial composition has been lost. The following sacred spaces can be considered completely lost (replaced): St. Michael's Cathedral on Moldavanka, Stretenska Church on Novy Bazaar, Armenian Gregorian Church, St. Clement's Church. We see a complete loss of architectural material, undetectable spatial landmarks of sacredness, and replacement with new buildings. An example of destroyed sacred spaces is the Military Cathedral of St. Stephen (1912). This is a deliberate ideological destruction of a sacred site. As a result, the city's skyline and identity are losing their distinctive features. Each architectural environment requires an individual analysis of spatial, social, cultural, and thematic factors. Therefore, the scenario approach is a relevant method for proposing options for space regeneration and requires tools for working with a multi-layered environment. Project scenarios are presented as comprehensive strategies for sustainable development of the environment, taking into account manifest and latent layers. Compared to classical approaches, scenario design is focused on modeling several options for spatial

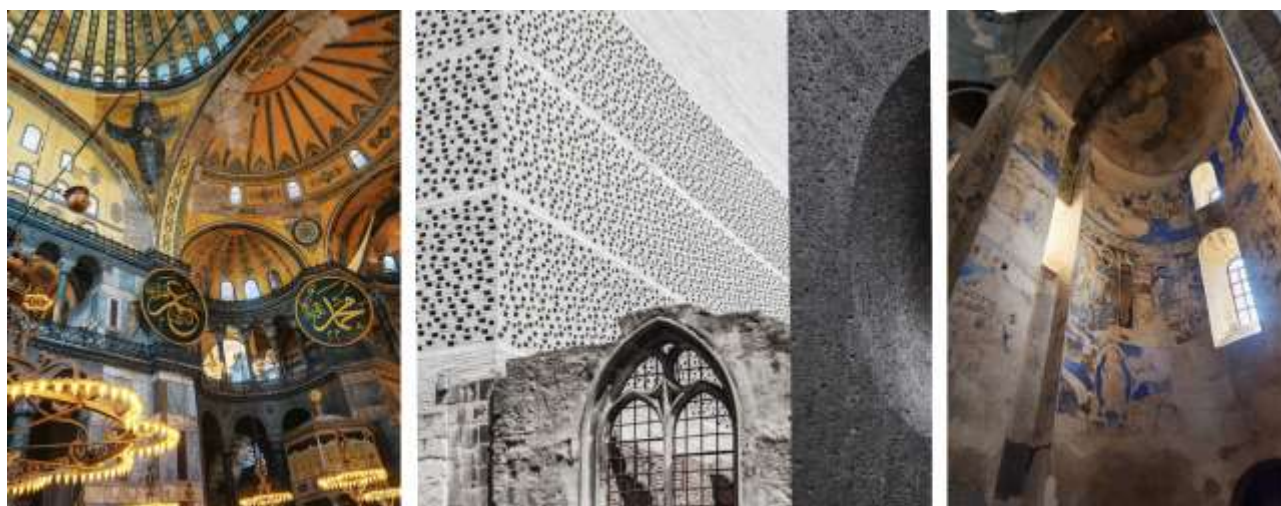
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transformation, depending on the potential, preservation, and needs of society. In the context of regeneration, design scenarios for regeneration establish strict boundaries regarding permitted interventions, the nature of reuse, and the preservation of sacredness. They are not limited to planning decisions, but also involve a semantic reading of space as a basis for forming design decisions. Thus, space is viewed as a structure that is open to further changes and reinterpretations.

Design scenarios for the regeneration of sacred spaces require an analysis of the potential of the architectural environment. The choice of regeneration concepts requires well-founded criteria that will set the limits of permissible intervention in the sacred environment. As a result of the analysis, the following factors influencing the formation of design scenarios for the regeneration of sacred environments are proposed: religious and moral restrictions, urban environment, cultural and historical potential, level of preservation of sacred use, and social needs. Religious and moral restrictions influence the choice of scenario from the point of view of confessional canons. Ignoring this criterion can lead to conflict and desacralization of the object. The urban environment is important in choosing a design scenario. The location of the object navigates functional transformations and sustainable development. If the object is surrounded by a public environment, it is advisable to use a hybrid scenario. This will ensure a strong connection with the community. A space located in peripheral or landscape areas requires a landscape-memorial concept. The cultural and historical potential of the space justifies the level of intervention in the space. Depending on the protected status of the sacred space, a range of adaptive design solutions should be proposed, taking into account respect for sacredness. For example, if it is a monument of national importance, it requires minimal architectural intervention, conservation, and preservation of its sacred function. If the object has a lower degree of protection, the variability and permissible functional transformations are expanded. The level of preservation of sacred use is one of the important criteria that influences the choice of a design scenario. Spaces that have retained or partially retain their ritual purpose require a hybrid approach, with clear zoning between the sacred and the profane. Ruins require an adaptive-cultural or landscape-memorial scenario. Social needs play an important role in the choice of design strategy. Functional transformations that respond to community demands create social relevance and spatial development in the urban environment. In other words, spaces can not only lead a ritual life, but also acquire educational and cultural functionality. A prerequisite for effective regeneration is taking into account this diversity of factors, which will ensure a balance between the sacred and the profane.

Depending on the types of sacred spaces, architectural and functional transformations, state of preservation, architectural potential, and historical evolution, there is a need to structure approaches to their regeneration. The study proposes a typology of project scenarios: conservation-museum, hybrid sacred-public, adaptive-cultural, landscape-memorial. It determines the admissibility of intervention and the path of further development. The conservation-museum scenario is an approach that is appropriate for spaces that have preserved or revived their sacred purpose. The scenario aims to preserve the original material structure and its meaning. Minimal intervention is permissible, and new functions are secondary, encouraging the study and preservation of heritage. There are a number of completed projects that demonstrate the implementation of the conservation-museum scenario. This allows for an analysis of the project interventions and the nature of the preservation.

The example of the transformation of the sacred space into the Hagia Sophia museum (Fig. 1) shows that architectural interventions were of a conservation and restoration nature. Attention was focused on preserving the authenticity and scale of the space and emphasizing the role of the domes. The interventions involved the restoration of mosaics and frescoes, taking into account the preservation of Christian and Muslim layers. This enhances the reading of the historical evolution of the monument. Tourist routes, engineering systems, and lighting are integrated and do not disturb the hierarchy of the space. [9.] An example of regeneration based on the integration of



archaeological remains into new architecture is the Kolumba Museum (Fig. 2).

Examples of conservation-museum regeneration scenarios. Fig. 1 – Hagia Sophia, Istanbul, Turkey. Fig. 2 – Kolumba Museum, Cologne, Germany. Fig. 3 – Cathedral of the Holy Cross (Agdam).

This museum is located on the site of the ruins of St. Columba's Church. In this design solution, we see not the restoration of the original structure, but the creation of a protective structure around the ruins. The remains of the church are part of the exhibition. The superstructure is clearly separated from the ruins, which allows for the interpretation of different eras. The design scenario reinforces the sacredness, but without literal reconstruction [10.]. The restored Cathedral of the Holy Cross (Fig. 3) is an example of regeneration aimed at conserving and reviving the material fabric with minimal intervention. The restoration work consisted of strengthening the structures of the building, reviving the legibility of the interior space without installing new volumes, and restoring the frescoes. The sacred character was preserved with a clear focus on reflective perception, with minimal transformations [11.]. Analysis of these examples shows that the conservation-museum scenario is based on appropriate intervention, the possibility of restoration, and preservation of the multi-layered nature of the space.

The hybrid sacred-public scenario involves the interaction of the sacred environment with new functions, provided that its identity is preserved. This concept is appropriate for objects that perform a religious function but have an active social life within the city structure. The main tools of this project scenario are structured zoning of function and space. This ensures the harmonious coexistence of the sacred and the public. This principle allows the sacred essence to be preserved, while at the same time expanding the functional use of the object. A good example of combining spiritual function with public life is St. Martin-in-the-Fields in London (Fig. 4). The facility regularly performs a religious function, and public areas open for informal communication, a

concert and music space, educational and lecture rooms, and spaces for charitable and social services complement it. The space of this facility forms a multi-level functional structure [12]. The regeneration of the Church of St. Nicholas (De Hallen) in Amsterdam (Fig. 5) combines religious function with social programs. Here, the sacred facility is a quiet center amid the active life of the city. The interaction between the sacred and the profane is evident [13]. TempPELLIAUKIO Church (Fig. 6) is a religious building, but it is also used as a concert hall. The building is designed in a granite rock and covered with a copper dome. The organic space and its acoustic properties allow it to serve as a concert hall without additional acoustic structures. In other words, the hybrid nature of its use is evident in its form [14]. The former St. Peter's Seminary (Cardross), Scotland (Fig. 7) is an



interesting example of a hybrid sacred-public scenario.

Examples of a hybrid sacred-public regeneration scenario. Fig. 4 – St Martin-in-the-Fields, London, United Kingdom. Fig. 5 – Church of St. Nicholas (De Hallen), Amsterdam, Netherlands. Fig. 6 – TempPELLIAUKIO Church, Helsinki, Finland. Fig. 7 – St Peter's Seminary, Cardross, Scotland.

It is essentially a ruin that serves as a venue for educational and cultural events. Temporary prefabricated structures, sound and light installations are used to implement this. No restoration is planned. The object is perceived as a carrier of memory [15.]. The examples of regeneration considered show that this scenario is one of the most balanced, as it is a living link between the city and the sacred space.

An adaptive-cultural scenario is used for spaces that have lost their original religious purpose. The goal is to adapt the sacred space to modern city life without destroying its sacred spatial form. Mobile and temporary structures are often used, which can change the concepts of use. The sacred space forms a multifunctional area where various activities take place, from exhibitions to performing arts. For example, the Oude Kerk (Fig. 8) is a dialogue between history and the present. It is the oldest preserved building in Amsterdam that has lost its ritual function. This space is used as a gallery. Contemporary art does not replace the sacred atmosphere but interacts with it,



emphasizing historical evolution [16.].

Examples of adaptive-cultural regeneration scenarios. Fig. 8 – Oude Kerk, Amsterdam, Netherlands. Fig. 9 – Zeitz MOCAA, Cape Town, South Africa.

Zeitz MOCAA (Fig. 9) is a former grain warehouse that functions as a museum of contemporary art. This example demonstrates the potential for regenerating environments that can acquire a sacred essence. The adaptation involved significant transformations but preserved the historical forms. The main task was to dismantle the central volume to form the vertical structure of the building. Work was carried out on the organization of natural lighting. External interventions were limited to the organization of entrances, observation decks, and engineering infrastructure. On a city scale, it functions as a “cultural temple” that combines industrial, cultural, and symbolic layers of space [17.]. The adaptive-cultural scenario shows that the loss of sacred purpose is not desecralization, but rather a transformation into modern cultural forms while preserving the spirit of the place.

A landscape-memorial regeneration scenario is appropriate when sacred buildings have been destroyed or partially preserved. It aims to reinterpret the sacred territory rather than restore its original image. The task of this concept is to create a space for silence, memory, and reflection. Architectural interventions only emphasize historical traces, the topography of the place, and symbolic markers. The ruins themselves are carriers of sacredness. Great attention is paid to the landscape. Such territories often carry a memorial meaning. Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park (Fig. 10) is an example of regeneration where destroyed objects were deliberately not restored. They serve as “unhealed wounds” for perception. The regeneration scenario focuses on the organization of space that shapes the collective experience of memory. The project includes a spatial axis of the complex that recreates the ritualized path of the visitor. Water elements of the landscape symbolize purification. Green spaces not only serve a recreational function, but are also a metaphor for hope. All objects in the park are designed in a restrained manner. They do not dominate, but support the main spatial concept. This type of space has no temple, but carries deep sacred dimensions [18.]. A radical example of the transformation of sacred space is Peter Eisenman's Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe (Fig. 11). This project lacks memorial attributes. Here, architecture is



perceived as a scenario of movement and perspective play.

Examples of landscape-memorial regeneration scenarios. Fig. 10 – Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, Hiroshima, Japan. Fig. 11 – Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, Berlin, Germany.

The composition consists of 2,000 identical concrete slabs that vary in height. This creates an unfinished, individual experience for the visitor. This is reinforced by the absence of inscriptions, ornamentation, and iconography. It also creates an absence of historical description. In the city's structure, the transition from the profane to the memorial is imperceptible. This creates a constant dialogue between the city and society [18.]. It can be emphasized that the landscape-memorial regeneration scenario creates an environment that encourages collective historical experience.

**Conclusions.** Sacred space is a multi-level structure that combines physical and intangible components: a spatial system, layers of evolution, collective memory, identity, symbolic meaning, and the “spirit of place.” The historical evolution of the urban fabric has led to transformations in spiritual environments: from fragmentary changes in the function of an object to its complete destruction. This encourages us to view them as different objects of regeneration with corresponding intervention strategies.

As a result of the study, it was analyzed that the regeneration of sacred spaces requires a thorough analysis of historical and cultural potential, the level of preservation, the urban context, religious and moral restrictions, and social needs. These factors model scenarios for the regeneration of sacred space and show possible architectural interventions in the environment.

An analysis of implemented regeneration projects shows that the choice of a regeneration scenario is not limited to the physical condition of the architectural space, but includes a study of the semantic layers of the environment. The following typology of project concepts for the regeneration of sacred spaces is proposed: conservation-museum, hybrid sacred-public, adaptive-cultural, and landscape-memorial. The scenario approach enables the integration of sacred centers into the modern structure of the city without losing the balance between the sacred and the profane.

**Prospects for further research.** Further scientific research is aimed at practical confirmation of the typology of implemented design solutions for sacred spaces and analysis of the effectiveness of the proposed regeneration concepts. The prospects for the development of the scenario method

will provide the prerequisites for the creation of scientifically sound design solutions for the regeneration of sacred space.

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### ПРОЄКТНІ СЦЕНАРІЇ РЕГЕНЕРАЦІЇ САКРАЛЬНИХ ПРОСТОРІВ

**Ю.М. Потейчук,**

[j.poteichuck@gmail.com](mailto:j.poteichuck@gmail.com), ORCID: 0009-0000-5299-7373

**Н.М. Єксарьова,**

[eksareva@odabe.edu.ua](mailto:eksareva@odabe.edu.ua), ORCID: 0000-0003-2493-1216

*Одеська державна академія будівництва та архітектури  
вул. Дідріхсона, 4, м. Одеса, 65029, Україна*

**Анотація.** Сакральний простір є унікальним типом архітектурного середовища з історичним (темпоральним), соціальним, культурним, семантичним, ритуально-функціональним, просторово-архітектурним, психоемоційним (перцептивний), меморіальним, ландшафтним, етичним аспектами, що організують видиму і невидиму багатопланову систему. В процесі історичного розвитку такі простори вибудовували просторову структуру міста та функціонували як осередок соціально-просторових взаємодій, колективної пам'яті та самобутності.

Сакральні території переживали складний шлях еволюції. Внаслідок культурних, політичних та суспільних змін відбулися трансформації та зміни функціонального призначення, значні руйнування. Кожен історичний етап призводив до змін або втрати сакральної функції створюючи нові семантичні та архітектурно-просторові нашарування. З огляду на сучасні виклики регенерація сакральних просторів вимагає зваженого підходу, який включає не тільки функціональної адаптації або реставрації, а потребує ретельного аналізу історично-просторових нашарувань. Сценарний, варіативний та гнучкий підхід спрямований на інтеграцію нового призначення в сакральний простір без втрати його духовних та смислових змістів. Вибір проектної концепції сценарію аргументується рядом факторів, які встановлять межі допустимого втручання в сакральне середовище. Залежно від типів сакральних просторів, їх історичної еволюції, архітектурних і функціональних трансформацій, стану збереження, архітектурного та містобудівного потенціалу, виникає потреба у структуруванні підходів до їх регенерації. У дослідженні розглянута наступна типологія проектних сценаріїв регенерації сакральних просторів: консерваційно-музейний, гібридний сакрально-громадський, адаптивно-культурний, ландшафтно-меморіальний.

Підтвердження доцільності проектних сценаріїв регенерації сакральних просторів прогнозує сталий розвиток з урахуванням видимих і невидимих нашарувань архітектурного середовища. Перспективи розвитку сценарного методу забезпечать передумови для створення науково-обґрунтованих проектних рішень щодо відновлення сакрального простору.

**Ключові слова:** архітектурна спадщина, сакральний простір, регенерація, сценарії проектування.

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