

Halyna IVASHKIV

## Construction earthenware in Western Ukraine: continuity of ethnographical tradition (based on the examples of bricks)

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### Rezumat

#### Ceramica de construcții în Ucraina de Vest: continuitatea tradiției etnografice (exemplul cărămizii)

În articolul de față sunt relevate caracteristicile cărămizii ca unul dintre principalele tipuri de ceramică de construcție din secolele XIV–XX de pe teritoriul Ucrainei de Vest. Pe teritoriul regiunii, în special la Lviv, construcțiile din cărămidă au început în a doua jumătate a secolului al XIV-lea, când au fost ridicate zidurile orașului, precum și trei catedrale principale – Latină, Armeană și a Sfântului Gheorghe. Printre descoperirile rare se numără o cărămidă cu un motiv al unei cruci de tip „grecesc”, descoperită de arheologi în partea centrală a Lvivului. În secolele XV–XVIII, în zidurile de apărare, clădirile mănăstirilor și castelelor se folosea aceeași cărămidă „paliceatka”, al cărei nume provine de la metoda de fabricare – pe partea largă a acesteia se reliefa cu degetele fâșii înguste (Lviv, Jovkva). Mai rar am întâlnit cărămizi cu urme ale tălpii de copil sau adult sau ale labei câinelui (Lviv, Kopicinți). Cărămizile din secolul al XIX-lea, produse industrial, conțineau inițiale chirilice sau latine în relief și gravate cu numele proprietarilor întreprinderilor, anul și locul producției. Din cărămidă de la fabrica de ceramică a lui Ivan Levinsky din Lviv au fost construite Teatrul de Operă și Balet, gara, precum și diverse clădiri din oraș, în special, în zona Kastelivka. În acel moment, fabricile de cărămidă lucrau în Boikovșcina, Pocuția, Podilia de Vest și Volânia. Folosind exemple din muzee și colecții private, precum și înregistrările din expedițiile întreprinse de autor, se urmărește evoluția formei cărămizilor și a denumirilor de pe acestea.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** Ucraina de Vest, plintă, cărămidă „paliceatka”, efigie, formă și ornament a cărămizii.

### Резюме

#### Строительная керамика в Западной Украине: преемственность этнографической традиции (на материале кирпича)

В статье рассмотрены особенности кирпича как одного из основных видов строительной керамики XIV–XX вв. в Западной Украине. На территории края, в частности во Львове, кирпичное строительство началось во второй половине XIV в., когда были возведены городские стены, а также три основных собора – Латинский, Армянский и Святого Юрия. Среди редких находок – кирпич с мотивом креста «греческого» типа, обнаруженный археологами в центральной части Львова. В XV–XVIII вв. в оборонительных сооружениях, зданиях монастырей и замков был распространен кирпич-«пальчатка», название которого происходит от способа его изготовления – на широкой стороне пальцами делали узкие рельефные полоски (Львов, Жов-

ква). Реже попадался кирпич с отпечатками стопы ребенка или взрослого человека, собачьей лапы (Львов, Копычинцы). На кирпичах XIX в., которые производились промышленно, содержались кириллические или латинские инициалы, иногда фамилии владельцев предприятий, год и место производства. Именно во Львове были построены театр оперы и балета, железнодорожный вокзал и другие городские здания, в частности в районе Кастеливки. В это время кирпичные заводы работали на Бойковщине, в Волини, Покутье, Западном Подолье. На примерах из музеев и частных коллекций, экспедиционных записей автора прослежена эволюция формы кирпича и обозначений на нем.

**Ключевые слова:** Западная Украина, плинфа, кирпич-«пальчатка», клеймо, форма и отделка кирпича.

### Summary

#### Construction earthenware in Western Ukraine: continuity of ethnographical tradition (based on the examples of bricks)

The article highlights the specificity of the brick as one of major types of construction material in the XIV–XX c. in Western Ukraine. On the territory of the region, namely in Lviv, the brick has been used in construction since the second half of the XIV c. when city walls and three main cathedrals were built (in particular, we mean the Roman-Catholic, the Armenian and St. George's Cathedrals). Among the rare findings, there is a brick with a scratched motif of a Greek-type cross that was excavated by archaeologists in the center of Lviv. In the XVI–XVIII c., constructors used a widespread type of brick called “paltsivka”, the name of which originates from the method of its production, i. e., on one of the wider sides of the brick craftsmen made “gutters” with their fingers (Lviv, Zhovkva). This type of bricks was used in building fortifications, monasteries and castles. There are rare samples of bricks with imprints of a child's or an adult's foot or a dog's paw (Lviv, Kopychyntsi). Bricks of the 19th century, which were produced industrially, contained embossed and engraved Cyrillic or Latin initials, sometimes surnames of enterprise owners, the year and place of production. Bricks from Ivan Levynskyi's factory were used to build Lviv Opera and Ballet Theater, the railway station and later other buildings in the city, namely in the district of Kastelivka. At that time, brickworks functioned in Boikivshchyna, Pokuttia, Western Podillia and Volyn. Using the example of items from museums and private collections, as well as the author's own expedition notes, the article has traced the evolution of brick shapes and the inscriptions on them.

**Key words:** Western Ukraine, plinth-shaped bricks, “paltsivka”, stamps, brick shape and decoration.

Ukrainian earthenware, in particular the brick that was used in constructing and decorating buildings, or for any other purpose, has not been sufficiently studied in ethnology and art criticism. Meanwhile, the brick is not only the main construction material, but it has interesting shapes. Apart from that, bricks became an element of décor in princely times buildings, from “brick” Gothic to Neo-Gothic of the late XIX – early XX c. The given article will analyze the bricks found on the territory of Western Ukraine, i.e. the ethnographical regions of Opillia, Podillia, Boikivshchyna and Volyn. We will examine the main stages in brick production, evolution of its shape and décor from the XIV to the XX c.

The brick in Ukraine has been used since ancient Rus. Back then, there were two types of bricks, namely thin square bricks (since the X c.) and thick bar-like bricks (since the XIII c.), which were similar in size to modern-day bricks. While constructing buildings, particularly churches, people mostly used plinth-shaped bricks in dozens of sizes, but sometimes such bricks were combined with bar-like bricks. Thus, the engineers of the Church of the Tithes in Kyiv (late X c.) used 17 variants of square and profiled bricks, those building St. Cyril's Church in Kyiv – 25 variants, etc. (Кошовий 1988: 30). Three-, quarter-, half- and figure-shaped bricks were less frequent. Churches in Chernihiv, Pereiaslav, Halych, Hlukhiv, Putyvl and other cities were constructed with plinth-shaped bricks of various sizes as well as bar-like bricks. Since the late X c. till the 1240s about 250 monumental brick buildings were constructed on the territory of ancient Rus (Кошовий 1988: 69). On plinth-shaped bricks, we can see inscriptions or stamps that are regarded as princely signs.

Randomly joined signs sometimes formed a “light” pattern with rounded shapes and a low relief. Among geometrical shapes, one can come across motifs of crosses, triangles, and squares. On some bricks we can see a trident, one of Christ's monograms that resembles the letter “ж”, an eagle, birds', dogs', adults' and children's footprints. Since relief signs decorated the ends of the brick, we can suppose that they were meant to be visible in the interior or exterior arrangement of the bricks in the building.

In the second half of the XIV c., bar-like (rectangular) bricks, which were more comfortable to make and use, started to be produced in Western Ukraine and in the whole country. We know many

names of such bricks, like “zholobkova”, “zholobchata”, “palchata” or “paltsivka”. The name originates from its production method, i. e. on one of the wider sides of the brick craftsmen made “gutters” with their fingers (thus, there were narrow hand-length relief stripes and imprints of four or five fingers after taking away the unnecessary clay). Such bricks were discovered in ancient sacred buildings, as well as in castles in Western Ukraine.

The first brick buildings in Lviv, one of the oldest cities of Western Ukraine, appeared in the second half of the XIV c. when the city walls, the Roman-Catholic, the Armenian and St. George's Cathedrals were built. Therefore, the owner of the brickworks Mr. Doring constructed the walls and the Armenian Cathedral, and we can read about this fact in city books of 1382–1389 (Кісь 1968: 106-107, 111). It is said that in 1389, Dominican monks bought a brickworks from the bricklayer Mr. Niczka (Kowalczyk 1927: 15). The church made of “paltsivka” bricks up to 10 cm thick (this refers to the Gothic period) was the predecessor of St. George Cathedral in Lviv (LHM exposition).

The XIV c. rectangular brick (9x28x9.5 cm) with the motif of a Greek-type cross is unique. It was found during archaeological excavations in the centre of Lviv. The image of a Christian symbol proves the use of bricks in building the church (Uratowane 2016: 32) (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1. A brick. XIV c. Lviv. LHM

In the early XVI c. “paltsivka” bricks were used in constructing the so-called “Prussian” wall in the Bernardine monastery in Lviv (a few of such bricks are kept in MEC). The demand for bricklayers and bricks increased after a big fire in Lviv in 1527, a lot of communal, monastery-based and private enterprises were competing against each other (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2. A “paltsivka” brick. XVI c. Lviv. MEC

Brick production reached a very high level in the XVII c. This construction material was widely used in building fortifications, churches, Roman Catholic churches, monasteries and castles. For example, the Zholkiewski castle in Lviv region was built from “paltsivka” bricks (MZCZ). Similar vertical relief stripes can be found on the bricks from the castles in other places in Ukraine, like Baturyn (SCCR “HC”) and Hlukhiv (AMNR “H”).

In the XIX c., small workshops functioned in Pokuttia and Boikivshchyna, particularly in Tysmenytsia (AEIASU. F. 1, c. 738, sh. 54a), Rohatyn – the brick has inscriptions “ROGATYN” (RMLL; AEIASU. F. 1, c. 679, sh. 34), Sniatyn and Dolyna (AEIASU. F. 1, c. 474, sh. 7).

During a long period of time, manufacturing bricks has been regarded as a very time-consuming process, since it presupposed digging clay and preparing it for work, shaping the bricks, drying them in the open air and burning. Bricks were manufactured in wooden molds (frames), dried for 10–14 days and then burnt in the furnace.

Brick manufacture with the help of a tape press and special burning furnaces started only in the XIX c. This is when the so-called brick standard 27x12 cm appeared. In the XIX c. there were many brickworks in Halychyna (271 brickworks) (Przełąd 1911: 172), their customers included monasteries, military buildings (citadels) and city halls.

Brick production in Lviv in the mid XIX c. increased due to construction of the fortification complex, i. e. the citadel in times of Austro-Hungarian empire (the first bricks had an inscription “VXX”). In order to manufacture such amounts, a couple of brickworks operated in Snopkiv district. In the late XIX – early XX c. under the Polish administration, there were nearly 25 private enterprises of brick production in Lviv. Since about mid-1880s, the brick has been marked with special stamps which were both a kind of guarantee for the quality of the product and its advertisement (the stamps

had Latin letters, because German and then Polish were mostly spoken on the territory). First there appeared relief (opaque) stamps, and then scratched ones. The stamps had a relief because the letters were carved at the bottom of a wooden mold, and in time the craftsmen had to redo them. Scratched stamps were made with the help of metal plates, which was much more convenient.

Every brickworks owner tried to turn his own trademark on the brick into a piece of art, which included rectangular, square or figure-shaped spaces in the middle of the brick, and special attention was paid to scratched or relief inscriptions. These were one-, two-, three- or four-letter initials (“B”, “BN”, “DD”, “DR”, “IP”, “SR”, “RP”, “WL”, “R. W. Z.”, “M. I. S.”), owners’ surnames (“REISS”, “PEZEI”, “SKRIE”, “M. GRUGER”, “KNOSEF”, “NEUWOHNER”, “MASCHLER”, “RAMSAY”, “BANK HIPOT”, “MORECKI”, “MALANICZ” “NARGULIES”, “POLTURAK”) or districts of the city (“HOŁOSKO”, “POPÓWKA”, “KULPARKÓW”, “SNOPKOW”) (Spigel 1910: 552). Bricks with the stamps “REISS” and “NEUWOHNER” are the most frequent ones. The first stamp is associated with the brickworks of three brothers, the second one with the brickwork’s owner Berl Neuwohner. On one of the bricks, there is not only the owner’s surname, but also the location where it was manufactured – “REISS/BIELOSKO” (O. Volkov’s private collection).

One of Lviv brick-making enterprises is associated with the name of a famous architect, entrepreneur and the owner of a ceramic factory, Professor of Lviv Polytechnic University Ivan Levynskyi. The bricks made at his enterprise bore the inscriptions “J. L. i SP”, “JAN LEWINSKI”, “J. LEWINSKI and SP”. This brick was used in constructing Lviv Opera House in 1897–1900, the railway station in 1901–1904 and later other buildings in the city, namely in the district of Kastelivka (Fig. 3).

As it was mentioned before, many brickworks were located in modern-day Snopkivska street, not far from considerable deposits of clay. The stamp “KNOSEF” points to the surname of one of the brickworks owners from the district of Kulparkiv, namely Herman Knosef and another owner Moses Oberhandt.



Fig. 3. A brick. Late XIX – early XX c. Lviv. Ivan Levynskyi Factory. MEC

In the district of New Lviv, there was a brick-making enterprise belonging to Mykola Kratskiy (the stamp “KRASYCZYN”), in Syhnyvka – the enterprise of an outstanding architect Mauritiy Silberstein (the stamp “SYGNIOWKA”), and one more enterprise was located in modern-day Sakharov Street (the stamps “WL” or “WULKA”) etc.

There is a unique stamp with the coat of arms of the Potocki earls. On the surface of the brick, we can see a scratched seven-ended cross in the center. Less frequently we can find bricks with one, two or three oval-shaped stamps on the same surface, signifying the owner’s surname, the shape of a beetle, inscriptions “1875?” and “40” or the motif of a twist on the background of an oval (P. Vashchuk’s collection, Lviv). These are rectangular, or rarely square-shaped (20.5x20.5x4.5 cm) bricks, for instance with the initials “J. K” (MEC) (Fig. 4, 5).

Such a number of brickworks did not satisfy all the needs, and magazines wrote about the lack of bricks (Rolle 1911: 24). Therefore, in 1910 the City Council of Lviv initiated the construction of brickworks that could produce five million bricks a year.

Brickworks functioned in Boikivshchyna and Pokuttia, namely Hołobutów (the stamp “HOŁOBUTÓW”), Nyzhankovychi, Bolekhiv (AEI ASU. F. 1, c. 474, sh. 5a), Tlumach, Voinyliv, Kolomyia (the stamp “RAMLERÓWKA”) (Баран, Олійник 2016: 243-244).

In the 1920s, brick workshops existed in Pokuttia and Hutsulshchyna, namely in Hannusivka, Kosiv, Voinyliv, Kolomyia (the stamp “Cegielnia Sławce”), Sniatyn, and Kutu (Księga 1929: 1489, 1496, 1545). In the 1930s, there were two brickworks in Kutu, while in 1939, there were three brickworks in Kolomyia (Баран, Олійник 2016: 243).

In the 1930s, the brick measured 28x15x6.3 cm was produced by Maria Tsapovych (1897–1947), a resident of the village of Holovetske (Boikivsh-



Fig. 4. A brick. XIX c. Lviv. MEC

chyna). She used a wooden mold (47x19x7.5 cm) for the production (AEI ASU. F. 1, c. 475, sh. 20; Івашків 2021: 17).

In the XIX c., bricks were produced in Western Podillia region, which can be proven by the wooden mold (62x21x13 cm; TRMLL). There were brickworks in Ternopil (the stamps “TARNOPOL”; “OCHS”; TRMLL), and other cities of the region like Berezovytsia (the stamp “BEREZOWIZA”), Berezhan, Kremenets (a brick with the relief inscription “1888” was discovered, KCMLL), Hrymayliv, Borshchiv, Kopychyntsi, Zaluzhzhia, Zbarazh (the stamp “KRUH ZBARAZ”, the collection of A. Nedilskyi), Ostriv, Terebovlia, Buchach (the stamp “FIOL/BUCZACZ”), Bila, Skalat, Skala-nad-Zbruchem (the stamp “SKAŁA”), and Zahrebellia (the stamp “ZAGROBELLA”; TRMLL).

In the early XX c., Kostiantyn Ieliiv and Mykola Moskaliuk (the stamps “K. Є”; “Є. K.”; “K”) owned two brickworks in Kopychyntsi. Supposedly, an image of a Ukrainian trident on the brick from these enterprises can be linked with the name of K. Ieliiv, who, as villagers remember, was a Ukrainian patriot. The countess Klymentyna Tyshkevych (the stamp “KT”) owned a brick manufacture in Sataniv (Полюхович 2015).

In 1878, there were 52 brickworks in Volyn province (Городецький 1901: 32) – some of them produced counterfeit bricks of various European companies (the inscriptions “LONDON”, “PARIS”). Local craftsmen often made spelling mistakes in their inscriptions which actually proved the artisanal method of production.

Therefore, the given article explores various aspects of a type of construction earthenware of Western Ukraine, i. e. the brick which was used in

constructing military objects, sacral and residential buildings. The largest number of brickworks was located in



Fig. 5. A brick. XIX c. Lviv. P. Vashchuk's collection

Western Podillia, Pokuttia and Volyn regions, as well as Lviv. Decorative features of the brick have been traced through the prism of artistic specificity of the shape and decorative value. On the basis of numerous examples from museums and private collections, as well as the author's own expedition materials, the evolution of shape-forming peculiarities of the brick and inscriptions on them have been traced.

In the XIV–XVII cc., the rectangular-shaped brick called “paltsivka” was most widely used. It had vertical finger-made relief stripes that appeared while the remnants of clay were taken away, and such a relief structure was rather helpful in brick-laying, as the cement spread on the surface more smoothly.

Since the XIX c., we can trace a variety of stamps on the bricks of the region. Firstly, these were relief signs (imprints at the bottom of wooden boxes), later they changed to scratched ones (imprints from metal matrices). There could have been various locations of the signs – in the middle of the surface of the brick there might have been from one to several letters, surnames of enterprise owners, as well as the districts of the city or the year when the brick was produced and when the building was constructed. The signs were found on rectangular, sometimes figure-shaped relief surfaces, but later on pressed shapes with scratched inscriptions prevailed. Sometimes, we can come across oval shapes with text signs, images of insects or beetles, series of manufacture, etc. We consider the bricks with motifs of crosses and relief twisted branches to be unique.

### List of abbreviations

AEI ASU – Archive of the Ethnology Institute of the Academy of Sciences of Ukraine.

SCCR “HC” – State Historical and Cultural Reserve “Hetman’s Capital”.

KCMLL – Kremenets Communal Museum of Local Lore.

LHM – Lviv History Museum.

AMNR “H” – Archeology Museum of the National Reserve “Hlukhiv”.

MEC – Museum of Ethnography and Crafts at the Ethnology Institute of the Academy of Sciences of Ukraine.

MZCZ – Medieval Zholkiewski castle in Zhovkva.

RMLL – Rohatyn Museum of Local Lore.

TRMLL – Ternopil Regional Museum of Local Lore.

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**Galina Ivaşkiv** (Lviv, Ucraina). Doctor în studiul artelor, Institutul Studiului Artelor, Academia Națională de Științe a Ucrainei.

**Галина Иваşкив** (Львов, Украина). Доктор искусствоведения, Институт народоведения, Национальная Академия наук Украины.

**Halyna Ivashkiv** (Lviv, Ukraine). PhD in Arts, Institute of Ethnology, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine.

**E-mail:** halia\_503@ukr.net

**ORCID:** 0000-0003-2359-6735