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## Influence of Social and Political Factors on the Architecture of Wooden Temples in Western Ukraine from the end of the 18-th by the Beginning of the 20-th Century

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# Influence of Social and Political Factors on the Architecture of Wooden Temples in Western Ukraine from the end of the 18-th by the Beginning of the 20-th Century

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**Abstract.** The purpose of the scientific work is to highlight the influence of social and political factors on the territory of Western Ukraine, which have changed the architecture of authentic Ukrainian temples and gave it new features. To achieve the goal, empirical theoretical methods of research and generalization were used: natural surveys, comparative analysis, classification and generalization were conducted. The authors surveyed temples built or reconstructed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in cities and villages on the territory of Western Ukraine. The architectural and artistic level of authentic temples is extremely high, some of the unique Ukrainian wooden churches of the Carpathian region are listed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Researchers have proved that a certain canon has been developed in the architecture of wooden temples for centuries, as well as national features and own building culture. The topic of the research is relevant, because sacral architecture has an exceptional historical, cultural and artistic value, and the relation to architectural monuments is one of the important indicators of the culture of the nation. Scientists prove that even during the absence of Ukrainian statehood, Ukrainian sacral architecture, having undergone a difficult path of development, has managed to revive and preserve national features in architecture that best identify Ukrainians as a nation. The theme of the research remains relevant, since sacral architecture has an exceptional historical, cultural and artistic value, and the relation to architectural monuments is one of the important indicators of the culture of the nation. Historical events in the country and in the world changed the course of the development of the architecture of sacred complexes: on the ethnic Ukrainian territory, which was part of the Austrian and Russian empires, new types of churches of the "Terezian" and "Synodal" style were distributed.

## 1. Introduction

Ukraine is rich in wooden religious buildings, with about 3,000 such buildings on its ethnic lands. Most of them are in the western part of the country. Authentic wooden churches are the spiritual and cultural heritage of the nation, unique monuments of architecture and urban planning, and most of them reflect the national traits of the people. Sixteen historically valuable and unique Ukrainian wooden churches, eight of which are in the territory of modern Poland and eight in Ukraine, on June 21, 2013 at the 37th session of the World Heritage Committee were listed on the UNESCO World Heritage List [1]. Despite the loss of a certain number of wooden temples in the difficult modern



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period of the history of the state, Ukraine is still the leader in Europe in terms of the number of wooden architecture monuments, as well as their architectural and artistic level [2]. To preserve and appreciate its own building culture, a national identical architecture is extremely important. After the Independence in Ukraine, without such an understanding, many churches have been built according to models of other nations that most Ukrainians perceive as their own culture. At the same time, it is known that wooden architecture monuments lose their authenticity, historical and artistic value in cases of changes in the volume-spatial structure; changes in traditional materials and constructions; disturbance of the historical environment.

The purpose of the scientific work is to highlight the influence of social and political factors on the territory of Western Ukraine, which have changed the architecture of authentic Ukrainian temples and gave it new features. To achieve the goal, empirical theoretical methods of research and generalization were used: natural surveys, comparative analysis, classification and generalization were conducted.

With the independence of Ukraine there was a revival of sacred construction throughout the country. The Ukrainian style of wooden and stone temples, its own building culture was explored by scholars historians, art historians, architects such as: Dovhannyuk I., Vechersky V.[3, 4], Slobodian V.[5], Mohitich I.[6], Logvin G.N.[2,7] Taras Y.[8,9], Bevz M.[1] and others. Scientists prove that even during the absence of Ukrainian statehood, Ukrainian sacral architecture, having undergone a difficult path of development, has managed to revive and preserve national features in architecture that best identify Ukrainians as a nation.

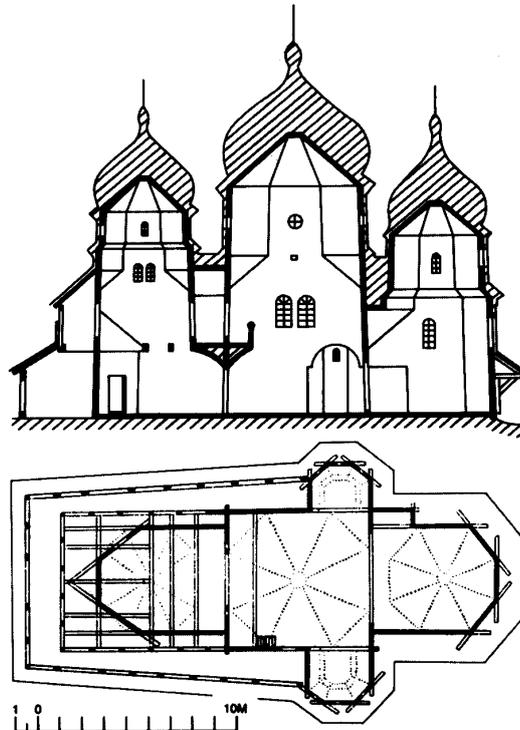
## **2. Presenting main material**

Prototypes of the architecture of the Ukrainian wooden church were the Byzantine and Armenian temples, transferred to Ukrainian lands along with the adoption of Christianity. For ages, the architecture of the wooden temples of Ukraine has been changing, improving, developing a certain canon [6].

One of the best monuments of Ukrainian wooden architecture, which is included in the UNESCO world heritage list, is St. George's Church in Drohobych, built in the late 15-th early 16-th centuries (Figure 1). The church is three-chambered, crowned with three tops on eight-sided appendages. The main house has a square shape and side ledges – conchae, “babinets”. (The western part of the wooden church is located in front of the prayer room) and antechurch – polyhedral. Wide ledge – “opasannya” are made in the form of a gallery - arcades. The iconostasis, painted in 1659, was made by the icon painter Stefan from the village of Medik near Przemysl, is well preserved [8,9,12]. The walls are painted at different times - the oldest paintings were made in 1656-1659, later - in 1714. In Drohobych there is another old wooden church - the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (1613) with the bell tower (1661), entered into the state register of the national cultural heritage with the security number 377.1 and 377.2 [2,7]. The church is three-chambered, with two tops, over the babinets. A chapel that has an access to the open outdoor upper gallery was built in 1661, arcade called “pidsinnya” is arranged below and surrounds the babinets. Wide opasannya on the figured brackets surrounds the altar and nave, crocheted with a quadrangular pyramidal top (Figure 2). The church has well-preserved paintings in the altar part. The bell tower is built not far from the church, square in the plan with an open gallery on the upper tier, covered with a stitch roof.

Analyzing the large number of preserved monuments of wooden architecture, we can see that the typical wooden Ukrainian church consisted of three parts - frame buildings located along the axis from the west to the east. Entrance is located in the western part of the church – babinets, the largest central space - the nave, in the eastern part there is an altar, separated in the Orthodox and Greek Catholic churches by the altar partition, and later by the iconostasis. Often, each chamber ended with a dome, tent or other form of roofing, and the central nave was covered by the highest peaks. The roofs of the church were not separated from the inner space, which made it stretch vertically. A characteristic

structural and decorative element of the Ukrainian wooden church is the opasannya or arcade - the pidsinnya that more or less stand beyond the walls and protect it and parishioners from the rain. The bell tower was built square in plan; it was also tiered and stood alone. Sometimes, in small villages simpler churches of "home type" were built [8,11].

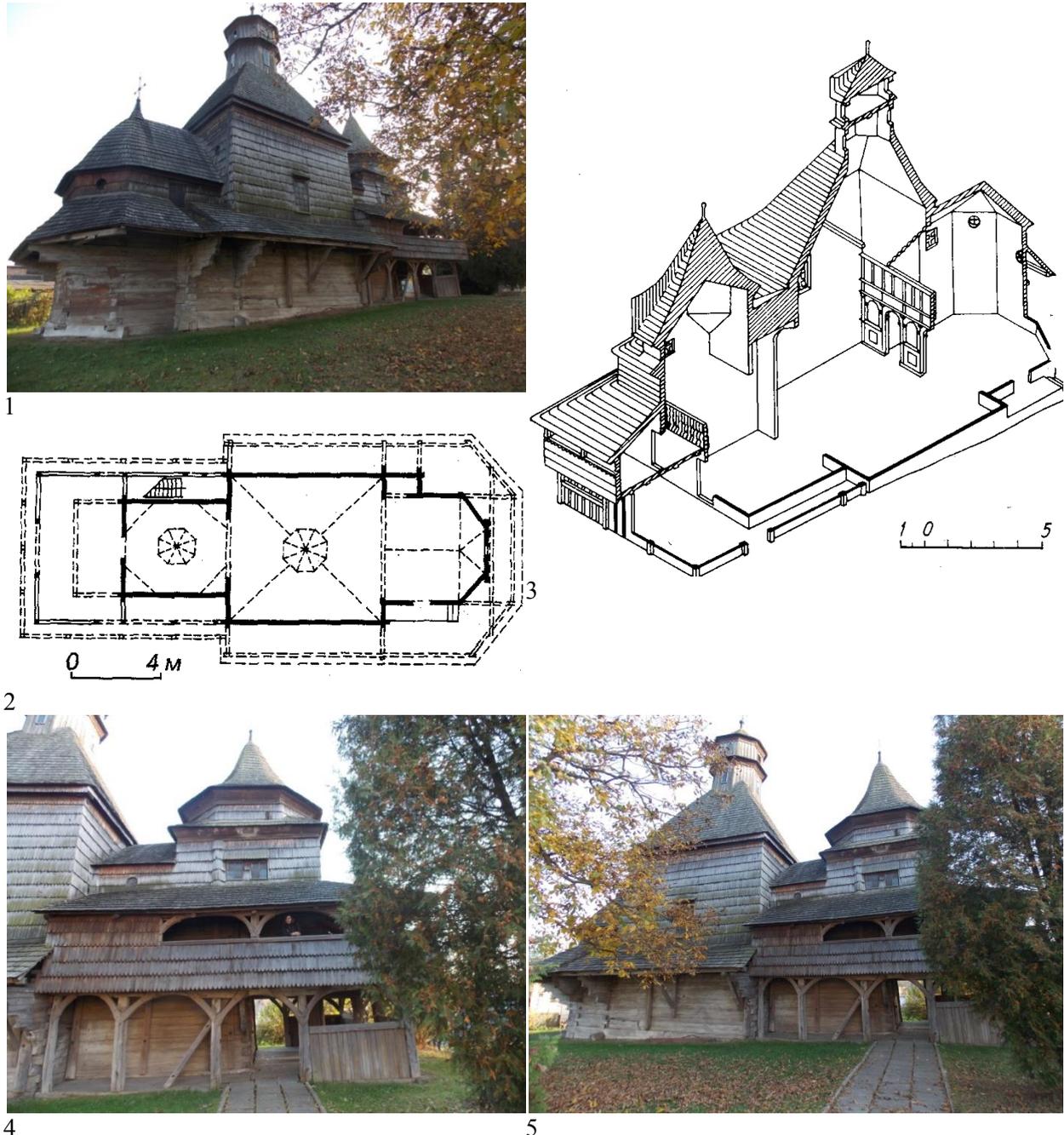


**Figure 1.** St. George's Church in Drohobych: 1 longitudinal section and plan (available at:[10])

Historical events in the country and in the world have changed the course of development of the architecture of the sacred complexes, including the influence of the style of the wooden churches of Western Ukraine. In 1699 the land of Transcarpathia, in 1772 - Galicia, part of Volhynia, Podillya, and in 1774 - Bukovyna became part of the Austrian Empire, which in 1867 became dualistic and was called Austria-Hungary. The Western-Ukrainian lands annexed to the empire have undergone significant reformist influence. The church became subordinate to the state, all national, different in culture and in church building was denied. Instead of authentic temple buildings, typical projects of churches of the "Terezian style" were distributed in honor of Empress Maria Theresa. An irrevocable loan was provided for rebuilding the old and building new churches, but dictating their demands for architecture [3,4,9].

An example of such a church is the wooden church of the Holy Spirit in the village of Huklyvyy, Volovets district of the Transcarpathian region, built in the 18-th century. The church has three chambers of various sizes that are covered with a double-edged roof, which masks the three-partial structure. The central nave and the altar part are covered with a vault, the babynets is covered with a flat ceiling and crowned with a square turret with a baroque apex. On all sides, the church is surrounded by a broad spearhead - "opasannya" on figured brackets and carved columns. In this style, the wooden church of St Anne was built in 1792 in the village of Bukivtsevo; the wooden church of St. Nicholas in the city of Chernivtsi was built in 1748; in the village of Verkhnyi Turi in the Turkivsky district in 1890 a Teresian type building was created - the Church of St. Panteleimon and a number of other temples. As we can see, the volume-planning decision has changed - the church is covered with a single roof, which masks the three-partial structure, a bell tower (usually fake, decorative) appears above the babynets with a flat roof, instead of high-altitude opening of spaces the

nave and the altar are covered with a vault. Even the small churches of the "home type" necessarily covered with the vault.



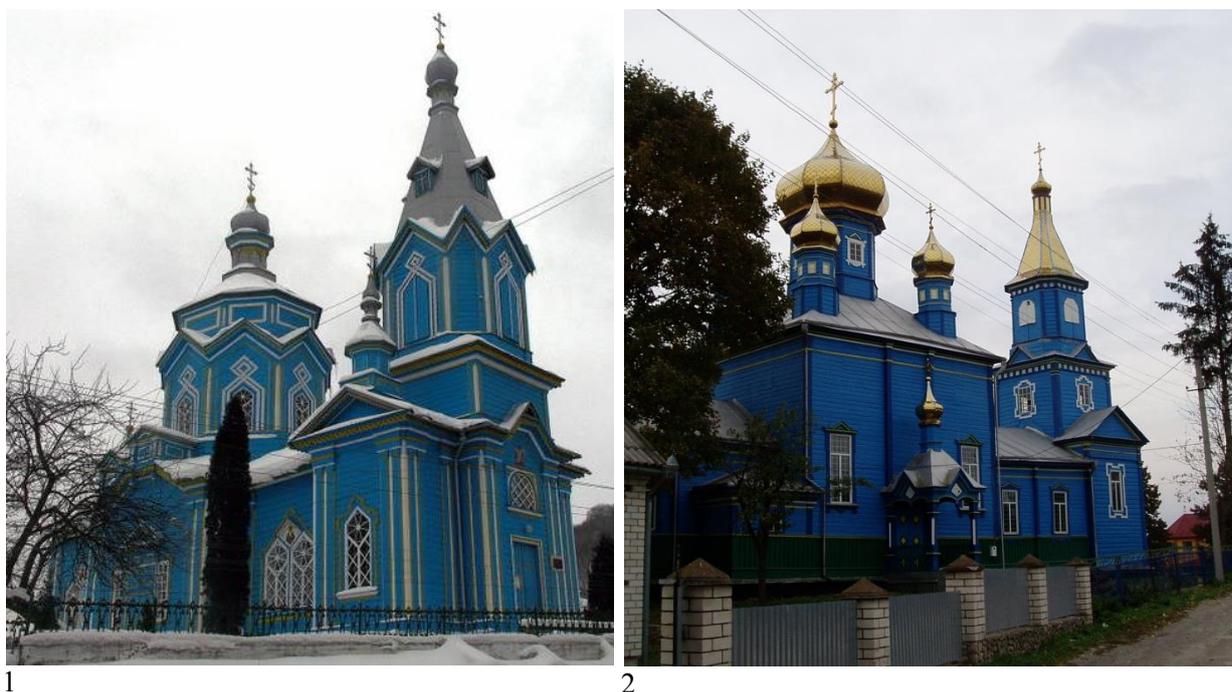
**Figure 2.** Church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross in Drohobych

(1, 4, 5 - personal photos of the author):

1 - view from the south-east side, 2 - the plan; 3 - axonometric section (available at [13]); 4 – the gallery over the banynets; 5 – view from the south side.

After the third division of Poland in 1795, the Western Volhynia became part of the Russian Empire. The Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church, understanding the importance of sacred architecture in the life of the Ukrainian people, after 1830, banned the construction of Ukrainian

temples in a national style [6, 14]. To spread the Russian imperial culture, they ordered and offered to write icons, print books, and build new types of temples "in the Russian-eparchial style", which had Orthodox-Russian features of architecture. According to the synods in Volhynia, a large number of wooden churches were built, all old temples were rebuilt – opasannyyas were removed, bell tower were arranged above the babynets' or attached to it, changed the shape of the dome and the tower, changed the grunts of the walls horizontally, which was technologically unjustified. They obliged to paint the walls with oil paint. Thus, even older churches received a new look, the authentic features were kept only in temples in those villages where there was no money for rebuilding. An example of a wooden church on the territory of Volhynia, built in 1887 according to a typical eparchial project, is the Krestovozdvizhenska church in Kremenets (Figure 3).



**Figure 3.** Church of the Diocesan type in the territory of Western Ukraine (personal photos of the author):

1 - Krestovozdvizhenska church in the city of Kremenets; 2 - The Holy Trinity church in the urban-type settlement Vyshnivets

The building is multifaceted, cross-shaped in plan, single-nave, with the two –tiered bell tower attached to the babynets' and a bulb on a high light drum above the central volume. In the shrine's shapes dominates the endings with sharp edges. The church has three entrance portals, openwork windows decorated with figured welts, walls decorated with pilasters, carved friezes with a high tent roof. The cubic apse is covered with a two-stroke roof that ends with a stitched apex on a square solid drum [14].

The typical church of the Synodal type is the wooden church of the Holy Trinity in the urban-type settlement Vyshnivets, rebuilt in 1892. This is a typical example of pseudo-Russian architecture. The length of the temple is 33 meters. It consists of four different rectangular perimeters: a porch, a babynets with a three-tier bell tower under a high tent-shaped roof, a nave and an apse. The main entrance to the temple is in the porch, there are also side doors in the nave. The babynets and the altar are lower than the nave. It is known that the temple was created by the master Omelyanovsky. The outer decoration of the temple consists of pilasters of the Doric order, triangular pediments, decorative heads on high drums, casing mouldings - accents of window openings. The church is painted with a bright blue color with contrasting white elements. [15].

Many types of wooden church building of Synodal type in Russian national style have been preserved in Ukraine. Synodal influence was reflected not only in new buildings, but also aggressively intervened in the architecture of ancient churches. Having analyzed and surveyed wooden churches built or restored in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in cities and villages on the territory of Western Ukraine, we see that most of them changed the volumetric-spatial structure, began to use non-typical materials and artistic and decorative touches. Violence over the church managed not only to physically destroy numerous examples of Ukrainian sacral architecture, but also to shed them from the memory of Ukrainians. Asked how the architecture of the national shrine looked or should look like, today many residents portray the image of a Russian or Catholic church without any realization that it is a shrine of other nations [16].

As you can see, in the architecture of wooden churches all the national features, different in culture and church building was denied, on the ethnic Ukrainian territory that was part of the Austrian and Russian empires. Instead of authentic temple buildings, typical projects of the churches of the "Terezian" and "Synodal" style were distributed. On the territory of Volhynia there are very few three-chambered temples, from the memory of Ukrainians, the image of the national sacral building was eroded and replaced by the image of the Russian church, which for some time became considered "national".

### 3. Results and discussions

1. The article describes and gives examples of ancient wooden Ukrainian temples, their characteristic features are determined.
2. The social and political reasons that have changed the architecture of authentic churches and gave them new features were researched.
3. New temples of the Teresian and Synod types, which were formed as a result of the reformist influence of the Austro-Hungarian and Russian empires, were described.
4. It has been proven that the revival of temple construction in Ukraine should take place through the revival of authentic construction culture.

### 4. Conclusions

The theme of the research remains relevant, since sacral architecture has an exceptional historical, cultural and artistic value, and the relation to architectural monuments is one of the important indicators of the culture of the nation. The research helps to make an objective picture of the historical existence of the Ukrainian people, shows sacred architecture in the context of European dimension, and establishes the connection between the past and the present. It is an integral part of the formation of the identity of the nation.

Research results can be used for further research on architecture history and memorial saving activities; when compiling textbooks and manuals; will be used in the educational process in the preparation of designers and architects.

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