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DOI <https://doi.org/10.32689/maup.philol.2024.2.13>**Svitlana PANCHENKO**PhD in Cultural Studies, Associate professor, Doctoral student, Institute of Journalism, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, dolga100@ukr.net

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**RELIGIOUS LANDSCAPE OF TRANSCARPATHIA
ON THE EXAMPLE OF SACRED SITES
IN THE SOCIO-COMMUNICATION DIMENSION**

The article is devoted to the study of the peculiarities of the multi-confessional heritage of Transcarpathia, on the example of sacred objects. The author analyses the linguistic diversity in this region, which is reflected in the objects of sacred heritage, focusing on symbols, signs, inscriptions on icons, prayers, and prayer books. The relevance of the study lies in the description and analysis of sacred inscriptions, signs, symbols, and codes in Transcarpathia, which testify to intercultural traditions, social and communication ties between nations and cultures, and the importance of tolerant interfaith relations.

The author analyses the religious landscape of Transcarpathia in terms of the multilingualism of finds (icons, inscriptions, signs, symbols) and the multid denominational nature of the sacred heritage. The purpose of the article is to study the history of the origin of the sacred heritage in this region through the preserved inscriptions, prayers, inscriptions on icons, commemorative plates, and prayer books. The author researches sacred objects in order to immerse oneself in the culture of Transcarpathia through prayers, inscriptions, and psalms and to explore the social and communication ties of this multi-confessional region.

The results of the study can be useful for scholars, teachers, and students studying multiconfessionalism, the religious and linguistic landscape of Transcarpathia through sacred objects, field research, and research expeditions.

Key words: socio-communication dimension, religious landscape, sacred objects, multiconfessionalism.

Світлана Панченко. РЕЛІГІЙНИЙ ЛАНДШАФТ ЗАКАРПАТТЯ НА ПРИКЛАДІ САКРАЛЬНИХ ОБ'ЄКТІВ У СОЦІАЛЬНОКОМУНІКАЦІЙНОМУ ВИМІРІ

Стаття присвячена дослідженню особливостям багатоконфесійної спадщини Закарпаття, на прикладі сакральних об'єктів. Автор проаналізувала лінгвістичне різноманіття у цьому регіоні, які відображені в об'єктах сакральної спадщини, зосередила увагу на символах, знаках, написах на іконах, молитвах, молитвословах. Актуальність дослідження полягає в описі, аналізі сакральних написів, знаків, символів, кодів на Закарпатті, що свідчить про міжкультурні традиції, соціальнокомунікаційні зв'язки між націями, культурами, важливість толерантних міжконфесійних відносин.

Автор розглядає релігійний ландшафт Закарпаття з точки зору багатомовних знахідок (ікон, написів, знаків, символів), багатоконфесійної сакральної спадщини. Мета статті полягає у вивченні історії походження сакральної спадщини в цій області завдяки збереженим написам, молитвам, написам на іконах, пам'ятних табличках, молитвословам. Автор досліджує сакральні об'єкти із метою зануритись через молитви, написи, псалми в культуру Закарпаття і дослідити соціальнокомунікаційні зв'язки цього багатоконфесійного краю.

Результати дослідження можуть бути корисні для науковців, викладачів, студентів, які вивчають поліконфесійність, релігійний і лінгвістичний ландшафт Закарпаття через сакральні об'єкти, завдяки польовим дослідженням і науково-дослідним експедиціям.

Ключові слова: соціальнокомунікаційний вимір, релігійний ландшафт, сакральні об'єкти, поліконфесійність.

Problem relevance. Transcarpathia is a multi-confessional region. Different nationalities live here, and this is reflected in religious life. In one town or village, services are conducted in Ukrainian, Hungarian, Slovak, and German, and this is because it happened historically. The main and native population is Ukrainians (80.5%). There are also Hungarians (12.1%), Romanians (2.6%), Russians (2.5%), Gypsies (1.1%),

Slovaks (0.5%), Germans (0.3%), and more than 30 nationalities.

Transcarpathia is one of the smallest regions of Ukraine after Chernivtsi region. Transcarpathia is a border area and borders on such countries. The total length of Transcarpathian borders is 460 km (33.4 km with Poland, 98.5 km with Slovakia, 130 km with Hungary, and 205.4 km with Romania). To the north and north-east,

Transcarpathia borders Lviv (85 km) and Ivano-Frankivsk (180 km) regions [12; 19; 24].

The entire historical path of Transcarpathia – from ancient times to the present day – can be divided into several periods:

- Ancient times, which chronologically extends to the IX century;
- Feudal times – from the IX century to the middle of the XIX century;
- Until 1918, Transcarpathia was part of Hungary and Austria-Hungary;
- The period of capitalist development (second half of the XIX – early XX centuries) – the period between the two world wars, when Transcarpathia was part of Czechoslovakia;
- The Hungarian occupation of 1939–1944;
- Transcarpathian Ukraine (1944–1945);
- The post-war period, when Transcarpathia joined Ukraine [12].

Analysis of recent research and publications. Using the example of this article, I would like to draw attention to the objects of sacred attraction in Transcarpathia, because this region has a multi-confessional feature and, accordingly, high scientific interest, and is also one of the safest for conducting field research during the war. The author studied the scientific literature on religious issues in Transcarpathia, a multi-confessional region, sacred heritage and sacred landscapes [1; 4; 5; 20].

The author used the method of field expeditionary research, as well as the «face-to-face» method. The field expeditionary research was preceded by a thorough study of the literature on the study area [3; 6; 7; 20], materials of previous scientific research [12; 13; 20], maps, photos, videos [16; 21; 22; 25]. Field expeditionary research was defined as a qualitative method of data collection aimed at observing, interacting with, and understanding people when they are in their usual environment. The face-to-face method was used to collect quantitative data, during which the interviewer communicated directly with the respondent according to a strictly structured plan and pre-formulated questions. Personal interviews were conducted on the territory of sacred places: the territories of churches, monasteries, cemeteries, during the liturgy or after services with respondents [15; 16; 17].

The purpose of the article is to study the history of the origin of the sacred heritage of Transcarpathia through the preserved inscriptions, prayers, inscriptions on icons, commemorative plates, and prayer books. Due to the sacred heritage, we can study the social and communication ties of this region through such

objects as churches, monasteries, cemeteries, chapels, church bell towers, icons, pilgrimage sites, and preserve the value of cultural heritage during the war.

The main material of research. Transcarpathia is a multi-confessional region, and often in one village or town there are various signs in German, Czech, Hungarian, Slovak and Hebrew, as it has happened historically (especially in cemeteries, monasteries, and churches).



Fig. 1. The map of Transcarpathia in Ukraine

URL: https://uk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Міста_Закарпатської_області

I propose to consider the influence of different cultures on the formation of the multisacred heritage of Transcarpathia on the example of churches, icons, sacred heritage, and cemeteries [20; 21; 22].

Reformed church in Vyshkove village, 1281



Photo 1. The main entrance to the Reformed Church, 1281

The first mention of the Reformed Church in the village of Vyshkovo, Transcarpathian region, dates back to 1281, but there is debate about the exact date of the church's foundation, so we often find it in sources of the XIII–XIV centuries; it is the first church in the Transcarpathian region built of stone and is a unique monument of Gothic architecture.

The church was a fortress and had a defensive character. During the restoration, valuable ancient frescoes of the XIV century «The Last Supper» and «The Kiss of Judas» were discovered. The church received its present appearance in 1789 after a major renovation. Next to the church is an eighteenth-century wooden bell tower covered with shingles [15; 16; 17].

In 1524, the Vyshkiv church, its parishioners, and its priest converted from the Catholic Church to Lutheranism, and in 1556 they became Calvinists.

In 1880, a neo-Gothic-style organ with twelve versions was made by the master Sandor Orszag in Budapest. It is still in operation, recently restored. The church yard is very well landscaped. Some of the vegetation species planted here are listed in the Red Book, and many rare trees grow here. There is a large sun clock on one of the walls of the church (outside). The community has about 1500 people.

The fortification wall along its entire length is very well preserved. Only Khust Castle can boast of a similar defensive wall for the whole of Transcarpathia. To this day, services are organized in the church according to the Reformed rite in Hungarian [1; 2; 3].



Photo 2. In 1524 the Vyshkiv church with its parishioners and priest converted from the Catholic Church to Lutheranism, and in 1556, they converted to Calvinism. You can see the reflection of this event on the sign with the inscription [1; 23]



Photo 3. In the central part of the church there is an inscription in Hungarian, words from the Gospel



Photo 4. Expressions from the Gospel in Hungarian

Be patient, too, and keep your hearts close, for the coming of the Lord is at hand (James 5:8); He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches (Book of Revelation 3:6); Look, I am standing at the door and knocking. Whoever hears my voice and opens the door, I will go in to him, eat with him, and he with me (Book of Revelation 3:20)



Photo 5. Frescoes of the XIV century. Fragments of murals «Kiss of Judas»

Signs at the entrance to the village in Ukrainian and German «Königsfeld»



Photo 7. Signage at the entrance to the village in Ukrainian and German

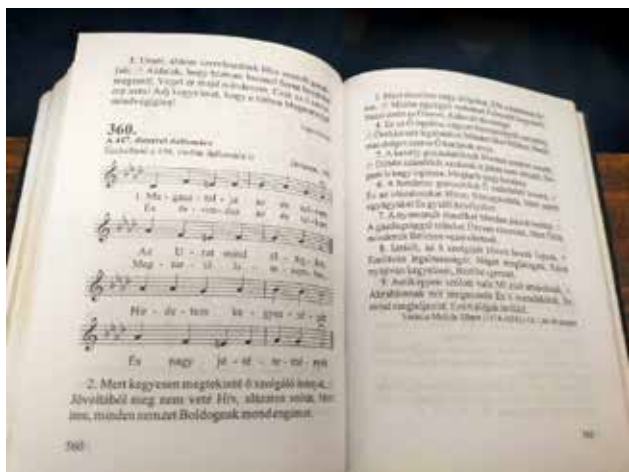


Photo 6. The Psalms in Hungarian. Psalm 360 with notes and words

Catholic Church of St. Mary Magdalene, the village of Ust Chorna (нім. Königsfeld), 1890

In the village of Ust-Chorna (formerly Königsfeld), which was founded by immigrants from Upper Austria, the 19th-century Catholic Church of St. Mary Magdalene attracts with its unique atmosphere. There are many rarities inside the church. One of them is a unique organ.

The Catholic Church of St. Mary Magdalene in Ust-Chorna was built in the late 19th century. According to local ethnographer Borys Spir, the church was built by the first settlers from Upper Austria, who were sent to the outskirts of the Austro-Hungarian Empire to explore the surrounding forests. Traditionally, the first things people built in a new place were government buildings and a church. The church was built in 1890 in the Gothic style. The Church of St. Mary Magdalene became a center of not only religious but also cultural life and family meetings. Traditionally, after Sunday services, the faithful would go to a joint dinner. Nowadays, Greek and Roman Catholics of Ust-Chorna gather for services in the church [9; 11; 14; 16].

In 1960, the church was reconstructed, the altars were replaced, the cauldron was removed, and the main altar was divided into two parts. But in general, the original interior has been preserved. The only thing that needs to be renovated is the roof. The church attracts not only believers, but also tourists and guests from Austria, who gladly join the festive masses. Services are held in Ukrainian and German. There are many rarities inside the church. The 1894 organ is the decoration and voice of the church. It was made by Orszag Sandor, an organist from Budapest. For about 15 years, a



Photo 8. A view of the church from the street and the inside of the church with a view of the organ



Photo 10. An ancient plaque with the name of the village

URL: <https://fenixslovo.com/2021/02/04/село-німецька-мокра-цо-на-тячівщині-з/>

Roman Catholic Church of St. John of Nepomutsky, Nimetska Mokra village, 1778

local carpenter and musician, Viktor Kolchar, has been playing it [5; 9; 11].

Niemetska Mokra is a village in the Tyachiv district of Transcarpathian, Ukraine. Neighboring villages: Ruska Mokra and Kolochava. The village has 550 inhabitants and 179 households.

The only preserved sample of folk wooden construction of the Transcarpathian Germans is the church of St. Ioan Nepomukskyi (1780).

Services were held in German. In 1780, the church already had branches in villages «Ruska-Mokra», «Ust-Chorna», «Brustury» and «Dubove». Since there were almost no Germans left, the church passed to the Greek Catholic community. The Church continues to commemorate St. John of Nepomutskyi, and the



Photo 9. The inscription at the entrance to the village is in Ukrainian and German



Photo 11. The modern appearance of the church, changed, covered with metal instead of shingles, the original appearance has not been saved [2; 4]



Photo 12. The wooden church of St. John of Nepomuk in the village of Nimetska Mokra in 1934

URL: <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=1658289077604452&set=a.596759963757374>



Photo 13. Inscriptions under the organ in German and Ukrainian: «Sing to God», «Praise his name»



Photo 14. Stop three Jesus falls under the cross for the first time. Signature in German

temple feast in the village is held on St. George. In 1997, through the efforts of the students of a school in Upper Austria, a new wooden bell tower was brought to the village and installed. The church is the only surviving wooden church of the Transcarpathian Germans [5; 9; 21].

The only surviving example of folk wooden construction by the Transcarpathian Germans is the church of St John of Nepomuk (1778–1780) in Nimetska Mokra. The first 20 families of German settlers arrived here in 1775. According to legend, the Roman Catholic wooden church was built between 1778 and 1780. After the Second World War, all Germans were deported to Siberia. The church was closed for a long time. In 1989, the building was taken over and renovated by the Greek Catholic community. The interior is well restored, but the roof, unfortunately, is covered with metal. The church is not listed in the monument protection registers. Until 1986, a wooden bell tower stood nearby. The bell tower was abandoned and served as a warehouse for a shop, and in 1986 it was deconstructed [2; 8; 15].



Photo 15. Fragment of the third stop from personal archives

Lost churches of Transcarpathia in the village of «Deutsch-Mokra»

The question of the lost churches of Transcarpathia is interesting and unstudied, in particular, there is such a church in the village of Niemetska Mokre.

Every year, the village of Deutsch-Mokra is visited by its generations from Austria and Germany. In 2016, as a result of decommunisation in Ukraine, the village was returned to its historical name, Deutsch-Mokra [9; 11].

Bell tower of the Roman Catholic church (1924)



Photo of the 1920s. N. G. Kozauer. Die Karpaten-Ukraine zwischen den beiden Weltkriegen. Esslingen am Neckar. 1979, il. 46

URL: <https://crptarchitect.org/church/nimeczka-mokra-selo/>

Strukivska church in Yasinia village, 1824



Photo 16. Church in the village of Yasinia under the protection of UNESCO

Church of the Ascension (Strukivska) in the urban village of Yasinia located in the east of the Transcarpathia is one of these old and amazing churches. It was built in 1824, this church, together with other wooden churches of the Carpathians, is included in the UNESCO World Heritage List. Near the church there is an old cemetery and a belfry built in 1813 [3; 10; 12].

Today, on the site of the chapel stands a one-story wooden baptismal church, built in 1824, which is also called «Strukivska». The temple has become a business card of the village and its



Photo 17. A sign certifying that the church is a UNESCO World Heritage Site [3]



Photo 18. Carpathian wooden architecture route [7; 10]



Photo 19. The 11-metre-high spruce bell tower from 1811–1813. Present view [15]

decoration, it is included in the list of wooden temples of Ukraine submitted for inclusion in the UNESCO World Heritage List. An equally perfect bell tower has been preserved next to it, which is perhaps older than the church, because it was moved here from another part of the village in 1895. And when it was built – it is not known exactly, researchers assume that it was in 1811 [7; 10; 24].

This bell tower is also one of the most perfect pieces of Transcarpathian sacred architecture.



Photo 20. Carving at the entrance to the bell tower.

The symbols of Jesus Christ and the date of construction of the Strukiv bell tower are inscribed in 1813 [7; 10]

It was moved from another village church that burned down. You can see the new shingles for the restoration, the work of local carpenters.



Photo 22. Icon of the Savior from the wooden Hutsul Church of the Ascension of the Lord. The inscription is in the Old Slavic language



Photo 21. Icon of the Savior of the 19th century, not restored. The inscription is in the Old Slavic language

Conclusions and Recommendations.

Transcarpathia is quite colourful in terms of multi-confessionalism, traditions and multicultural diversity. Therefore, video and photo documentation of cultural sacred heritage in a particular region is very important, especially during the war in Ukraine, as cultural heritage can be destroyed or damaged at any time.

In Transcarpathia, there are two unique churches that are on the UNESCO World Heritage List as incredibly valuable sites of the Carpathian region of international importance. These are the ensemble of the 1813-1824 architectural monument of the Church of the Ascension (Strukivska) in the village of Yasinia, Rakhiv district, and the ensemble of the 1745 architectural monument of the Church of St Michael the Archangel in the village of Uzhok, Velykyi Bereznyi district [3; 7; 8; 10].

Therefore, it is clear that the influence of each country and culture that Transcarpathia was part of was reflected in the customs, traditions, sacred heritage, and places of memory. It is important to remember history, preserve it, and pass it on to the next generations, and of course, this is reflected in the language, dialects, and local

customs. Therefore, the article contains up-to-date information and has prospects in the study of sacred heritage, linguistic variety of the region, and linguistic local history [18; 19; 21; 22].

This theme has prospects for development, since such findings, symbols, sacred signs, codes, memorial plaques, and tablets have historical, cultural, and linguistic roots that shape common history of our countries. To my

mind, when we study codes, signs, signatures of icons, memorial signs, we have to be very tolerant and treat history, rituals, customs with great respect as periods of people's lives, as a memory that will never be repeated. That is why photos, interviews, recordings, notes, and fieldwork are essential in this kind of preservation of cultural heritage and world memory.

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