

UKRAINE

In its long historical development, Ukraine has always been at the epicentre of events determining the historical and political map of Europe. Since the great movements of peoples, Ukraine situated in the geographical centre of Europe, has found itself on the migratory routes of large ethnic groups, and therefore has confidently held a leading position in commercial, economic, cultural, and political relations between West and East.

This has set preconditions for Ukraine's specific character as a multi-ethnic state with influences assimilated from different cultures and an extraordinarily diverse architectural and urban heritage.

Eastern region

Ukrainian Frontier (1731-1739)

The Ukrainian frontier extends along the eastern part of Ukraine, south of Kharkiv. In the 17th-18th centuries, this region was the scene of the Government's implementation of its plan to develop, step by step, unoccupied lands adjacent to Ukraine-Turkish borders. On the basis of pilot projects, a re-settlement system involving people from other Ukrainian regions, was created there for the first time in European town-planning. This system was to become a shield to protect the metropolis against invasions by Crimean Tatars, vassals of Turkey. The system's structure was formed by lengthy chains (many hundred kilometres) of town-fortresses connected by various fortifications into linked defensive lines.

The extension of the Ukrainian frontier spanning the watershed between the Dnipro and Siversky Donets rivers is some 285 km long. This border represents a continuous moated rampart with 16 fortresses and two hundred redoubts and blockhouses mounted along it. The area of each fortress' inner court is about 1.2 ha, the perimeter of its ramparts 980 m. The fortifications were designed and their construction supervised by French fortification engineers G M de Brigny and D I de Bosquet, under the guidance of Kyiv Governor General A I Tarakanov. In building the borderline, 20,000 Cossacks and 10,000 peasants were employed under Cossack Colonel Halahan.

Today this line of border is in critical state. Saving this unique monument to the art of fortification and town-planning is one of the most urgent tasks, and presents serious organisational as well as methodological problems.

Central region

Church of the Transfiguration of the Saviour, village of Polichyntsi, Kazatyn district, Vinnytsia Region (1661)

The Church is situated at the end of the village, on a hill above a small river. This place of worship is tripartite, two-tiered, with three cupolas. The first storey is built of stone, the second tier and the drums are of brick.

The architecture of this Orthodox church is unique and represents a combination of fortifications with tripartite churches of wooden vernacular architecture. This heritage place is a very rare example of the 17th century stone church in Ukraine with well-preserved bright vernacular features of wooden architecture combined with defensive elements.



Church of the Transfiguration of the Saviour, village of Polichyntsi

The heritage place is in a critical state. It is in urgent need of help to prevent its collapse and begin conservation works, but lack of funds prevents an immediate start.

Southern region

Caravanserai in the town of Bilogorsk, Independent Republic of Crimea (1654)

The Caravanserai in Bilogorsk is a unique monument of Islamic medieval architecture in the Crimean region. It is situated in the Old Town at the crossroads of the old caravan route from Ghezlev (Evpatoria) to Kafa (Pheodosia). There were eight caravanserais at that time, but only one of them, the largest, Upper Tash-Khan, has survived to the present day. Built on a rectangular plan, the Caravanserai was a fortified building surrounded by high walls with watchtowers at the corners. The external lower part of the wall was blank, the upper part housed vertical embrasures. There were two gateways with metal gates. There were a well and a mosque in the spacious courtyard, and around its perimeter 120 rooms were arranged in two levels with semicircular tunnel vaults (*ayvans*). The lower level was for goods storage, the upper for lodging and defence.

Until the mid-1950s, the western wall survived relatively well-preserved with its inner buildings (about 42 m lengthwise, 1.5 m in thickness). Now less than 18 m of the wall survives, with a maximum height of 4.7 m. To the left of its façade there is a semicircular arch of the gateway, above which there is a rectangular window with metal grating. There are two embrasures to the right on the second level. On the side of the courtyard, three semicircular tunnel vaults have survived – a gateway and two rooms (about 4 m x 4 m), one room with a fireplace. The gateway and entrances to the rooms have been conserved, walled-up with cut Inkerman stone. A layer of deposit at the walls is no less than 1.5 m deep.

At this place, heritage conservation problems come into collision with the town's poor budget.

Western region

Castle of the Synavskys, in the town of Berezhany, the Ternopil Region (1554)

The Castle in Berezhany is an outstanding monument to the 16th–17th centuries' defence architecture in Ukraine. It was built in 1534–1554 by Russian *voivode* Mykola Synyavsky. This fortified castle was not ever conquered by enemies and its ruin is due to the World Wars, natural forces and time. The Castle began to deteriorate from the beginning of the 19th century. For a long time it was used as a barracks, then its stonework served as a source for building materials. The Castle was already in ruins before the beginning of the 20th century, and all its interiors, collections and decoration had been lost.

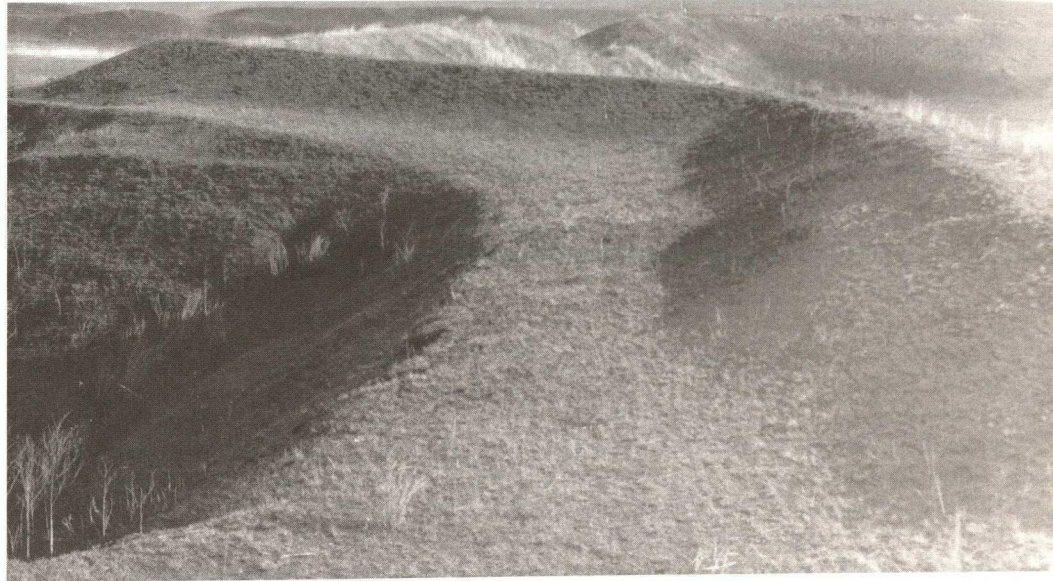
Today, only two levels of the Castle walls survive. The polygonal towers also survive two-storeys high, yet without floors. The semicircular south tower is still four-storeyed. All the towers have well-preserved embrasure systems including those with 2–3 side

passages. The buildings surrounding the Castle courtyard consist of four two-storeyed wings and a three-storeyed main palace building; all are ruined. The palace is the only building with extant fragments of a decorative Attic band with a blank arcature with key embrasures in the recesses.

The entire complex, consisting of the Castle, the Holy Trinity Catholic Chapel and remnants of the 17th century fortifications, is one of the largest and most successful castles in Ukraine. Its rich history and high significance require its immediate restoration.

The ruined state of the Castle complex has not passed unnoticed in public opinion. Attempts at saving and conserving this great structure give no way to indifference. There have been attempts to create trust funds and start-up projects, research and educational activities aimed at saving the Castle. A State Historic and Architectural Preservation Trust has been created in the town. Businesses, organisations and establishments take part in cleaning and tidying up the Castle grounds. Unfortunately, the town's financially deficient budget cannot afford urgent conservation works on the buildings which see an ever greater collapse each year.

ICOMOS Ukraine



Ukrainian frontier



Caravanserai in Bilogorsk, Independent Republic of Crimea