

Canadio-Byzantina

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St Saviour in Chora (Kariye Camii) the last judgement (14th century); the church, having been a museum, is now being reconverted to a mosque

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ARTICLES AND REVIEWS

Archaeological Research of Baturyn in 2020

Despite the pandemic, this past summer, archaeologists conducted annual excavations in the town of Baturyn, Chernihiv province, Ukraine. This Canada-Ukraine project is sponsored by the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies (CIUS) at the University of Alberta, the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies (PIMS) at the University of Toronto, and the Ucrainica Research Institute in Toronto. The Ukrainian Studies Fund in New York also supports the historical and archaeological investigation of early modern Baturyn.

In 2001, then the director of CIUS Prof. Zenon Kohut founded and subsequently directed the Baturyn project; since 2014 he has been its academic adviser. The project's executive director Dr Volodymyr Mezentsev (CIUS) and the late Prof. Martin Dimnik (1941-2020), the former president of PIMS and an eminent historian of the medieval Chernihiv Principality, have participated in this research and the dissemination of its findings. Seventy-five students and scholars from the Chernihiv College National University, the Hlukhiv Lyceum, and the Institute of Archaeology at the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine in Kyiv, as well as many volunteers, took part in the 2020 excavations. Archaeologist Yurii Sytyi of the Chernihiv College National University leads the Baturyn archaeological expedition.

Archaeological studies have established that medieval Baturyn arose in the 11th century as a frontier stronghold of the Chernihiv Principality of Rus'. In 1239, it was destroyed by the Mongols, who razed the remaining settlement in 1275. During the 14th and 15th centuries, the Chernihiv land was incorporated into the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and in 1618-48 belonged to the Polish Kingdom. In 1625, King of Poland Sigismund III Vasa rebuilt and fortified Baturyn on its original site. One view suggests that the town was named in honour of the Polish King Stephen V Báthory.

After the first destruction of Baturyn by invading Russian troops in 1632, Polish royal officials and magnates restored the town and transformed it into an important military, administrative, and commercial centre near the border with Muscovy. Archaeological finds of many silver and billon Polish, Lithuanian,

Livonian, Swedish, and Swiss coins, as well as imported goods attest to Western connections of 17th-century Baturyn.



Fig.1 a, b. Polish silvered bronze belt, 1610-30s. Baturyn Museum of Archaeology. Photo by A. Konopatsky.

The costly silver-and-bronze belt, discovered near the site of its former fortress in 1997, might have belonged to a local Polish governor or an officer of the garrison (fig.1). The clasp bears the relief triumphal motif of a mounted knight or king in armour, which was widely used in Polish elite art during the 1610-30s.



During the 1648-54 national liberation war, Polish rule over central Ukraine was overthrown and the Cossack state, or Hetmanate, was founded, albeit under the suzerainty of the Russian Tsar. Between 1669 and 1708, Baturyn was its capital and the main seat of the Cossack rulers, or

hetmans (fig.2). The town flourished under the powerful and enlightened Hetman Ivan Mazepa (1687-1709), who had been brought up and educated in Poland and Western Europe. In alliance with the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Swedish Empire, Mazepa resisted militarily Moscow's growing authority over central Ukraine and proclaimed the Cossack Hetmanate an independent



Fig.2. Panoramic view of Baturyn before its destruction in 1708. Hypothetical reconstruction by O. Bondar, 2020.

principality. However, in 1708, Russian Tsar Peter I quelled Mazepa's revolt and devastated and burned the insurgent Baturyn to the ground.

Hetman Kyrylo Rozumovsky (1750-64) reconstructed the town as the capital of the Cossack polity on the eve of its abolition and merging by the Russian Empire in 1764. Until Rozumovsky's death in 1803, Baturyn experienced its last urban revival, but subsequently fell into decay.

Prior to 1700, in Baturyn's southern suburb of Honcharivka, Mazepa commissioned his principal residence, which was looted and burned by the Muscovite forces in 1708. In central or Cossack Ukraine, it was the earliest known fortified palatial complex with regular layout designed according to contemporaneous Western models of the so-called *palazzo in fortezza*. The remnants of its ramparts, bastions, a stately three-story masonry baroque palace, a wooden court church, and the dwellings of guards, servants, and guests have been excavated by our expedition since 1995. The results were presented in *Canadio-Byzantina* 22-31 (2011-19).

From 2018 to 2020, archaeologists continued excavating the debris of the early 18th-century brick vaulted corridor west of the Mazepa palace site. By last summer, seven metres of this underground passageway with seventeen descending steps had been unearthed, but its eastern end has yet to be reached. The lowest step was uncovered about 5 m below ground level. Conjecturally, this tunnel led to the neighbouring brick basement (8.5 by 6.5 m in size) of a destroyed and hitherto unidentified building. Further archaeological

investigations of the remnants of this corridor and adjacent structures should allow us to determine their full dimensions, ground plans, and specific purposes within Mazepa's manor.

The 24-year excavations at Baturyn have enriched its Museum of Archaeology with one of the largest collections of architectural and decorative ceramics in Ukraine. It includes over 8,500 ceramic stove tiles from the 17th and 18th centuries and their fragments, representing 353 various ornamental types and subtypes. Nearly 30 kinds of these plaques were applied for revetting the heating stoves in the Honcharivka palace (figs.4-6).



Fig.3. Reconstruction of the early 18th-century tiled heating stove at the residence of Judge General Vasyl Kochubei in Baturyn. Photo by V. Mezentsev.

The 2018-20 excavations of the underground tunnel and around it yielded many fragments of fine ceramic tiles. In fact, they did not originate from the stoves of its ruined superstructure, but, instead, from those in Mazepa's burnt palace, which stood 19 m to the east. These tiles are decorated with masterful floral or, sometimes, geometric relief patterns in the Ukrainian baroque style. More expensive plaques have polychromatic glazing.

The technology of glazed ceramics was introduced to Kyivan Rus' from Constantinople in the late 10th century. Rus'-Ukraine adapted the designs of brick stoves faced with terracotta and glazed tiles and their ornamentations from Central Europe, particularly from



Fig.4. Fragments of the polychrome glazed ceramic stove tiles with floral ornaments. 2009 excavations of the remnants of Mazepa's palace in Honcharivka, the suburb of Baturyn. Photo by V. Mezentsev.

Poland and Lithuania, during the late medieval and early modern eras. They were commonly used for heating and embellishing the interiors of Ukrainian residential houses at that time (fig.3). Assimilating these Byzantine traditions and Western influences, Ukrainian artisans created their own, distinctive baroque style of decorative stove tiles in the 17th and 18th centuries (figs.3-9).

Employing computer photo collage and graphic techniques, researchers have prepared hypothetical reconstructions of three types of the broken multicoloured glazed ceramic cornice stove tiles found in the tunnel and

nearby in 2019 (figs.5, 6). Two tiles feature a combination of ornate flower baroque motifs and stylized elements of classical and early modern architectural adornments. The upper part of one plaque resembles an entablature frieze with alternating rosettes of two kinds separated by curved triglyphs. Another tile has a row of flower-like rosettes on the top and a line of acanthus leaves below (fig.6).



Fig.5. Broken multicoloured glazed ceramic cornice stove plaques, discovered in the debris of the corridor at Mazepa's manor in Honcharivka in 2019. Photo by Yu. Sytyi, computer photo collage by S. Dmytrienko, 2020.

Various types of massive circular flower-like polychrome glazed ceramic rosettes were placed in sequences along the friezes of entablatures of the Honcharivka palace, as well as numerous 17th and 18th -century churches, belfries, and monastic buildings in Kyiv. This decorative method was transplanted from Italian

Renaissance architecture to Kyiv in the 1630-40s. From there, it spread to early modern ecclesiastical masonry structures in central Ukraine.

Researchers believe that Mazepa invited the best tile-makers from Kyiv to finish his palace in Honcharivka. They adorned its entablatures' friezes with rows of ceramic rosettes in keeping with this popular Kyivan fashion and could also replicate the rosette motif in the compositions of cornice stove tiles, supplementing them with stylized triglyphs and leaves from classical tradition (fig.6). Among the numerous 17th-18th -century stove tiles fashioned by local Baturyn craftsmen, such ornaments are unknown. Therefore, the recreated plaques from the revetments of stoves in Mazepa's richly embellished main residence in Baturyn reflect the mastery of the leading Kyivan artisans of architectural majolica of the 1690s (figs.4-6).

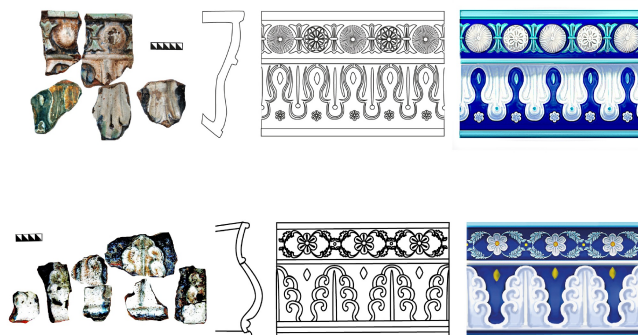


Fig.6 a, b. Polychrome glazed ceramic cornice stove tiles, found during the corridor excavations in 2019. Photos by Yu. Sytyi, hypothetical reconstructions, computer photo collages, and graphics by S. Dmytriienko, 2020.

In 2017-20, in the northwestern suburb of Baturyn, the expedition continued excavating remnants of the residence of Pylyp Orlyk, the Hetmanate's chancellor general. After Mazepa died, Orlyk succeeded him as the hetman in exile (1710-42) and wrote the first Ukrainian Constitution in 1710.



Fig.7. Fragment of the terracotta frieze stove tile. 2020 excavations of the remnants of Orlyk's home in Baturyn. Photo by Yu. Sytyi, graphic by S. Dmytriienko.

Investigation has shown that in 1707-08 Orlyk constructed and decorated his home and its heating stoves, modelling on those in Lithuania, his motherland. It was a spacious one-story house made of logs with several rooms and no cellar. Orlyk's dwelling was burned down during the Muscovite sack of Baturyn in 1708.

Archaeologists have unearthed the foundations of two ruined solid brick heating stoves, each of them nearly 2 by 2 m in size. Probably their lateral façades, as well as the interior walls of Orlyk's home, were whitewashed. From 2018 to 2020, many fragments of the ceramic revetment tiles were discovered around these stove foundations. The square plaques are approximately 30 by 30 cm in size and 1.2 cm thick. They are larger than the regular square stove tiles used in 17th-18th-century Baturyn and elsewhere in Ukraine. Tiles excavated at the site of Orlyk's residence are predominantly ornamented with plant relief designs in the Ukrainian baroque style.

The costlier plaques have multicoloured or monochrome glazing. The cheaper terracotta tiles devoid of any enamel, and some are lime washed.

This past summer, a sizeable part of a rectangular terracotta plaque, 18 cm wide and perhaps about 30 cm long, was found at this site. It was a detail of a horizontal band dividing the stove's sections. This tile features a classical motif of stylized acanthus leaves (figs.3, 7).

Among the stove tiles unearthed at the site of Orlyk's home, there are number of fragments with unique elaborate relief compositions of his and Mazepa's coats of arms. Several of them have polychrome glazes or are lime washed, and some have terracotta surfaces. Computer photo collage and colour graphic

reconstructions of the assemblages of fragmented and burnt glazed ceramic plaques bearing Orlyk's and Mazepa's arms, 1707-08, together with their descriptions and analyses, were published in *Canadio-Byzantina* 30 (January 2019), p.12, fig.3; and 31 (January 2020), pp.13-14, fig.5.

In this current issue, I present our hypothetical reconstruction of a fragment of the upper façade of one ruined stove from the Orlyk residence (fig.8). It features a central recreated square multicoloured glazed tile with his heraldic emblem in relief against a background of square terracotta plaques with flower relief patterns. In the physical and graphic reconstructions of early modern Ukrainian heating stoves, including those in Baturyn, as a rule only a single square heraldic tile was affixed to the middle of frontal and lateral walls. Analogous compositions are known on the 17th-century tiled stoves from Orlyk's homeland-the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

Investigators have posited that it was accomplished local Baturyn tile-makers who faced the stoves at his home in 1707-08. Stove plaques collected there are considered to be the best known examples of ceramic and heraldic arts created in Mazepa's capital on the eve of its fall. Their technical and artistic qualities are similar to the high standards of early 18th-century Kyivan earthenware.

From 2017 to 2020, in the southeastern edge of the hetman capital, the expedition excavated remnants of a timber dwelling of the early 18th century. It could belong to a well-to-do Cossack who served as a gunner at the artillery arsenal of Mazepa's fortified villa in neighbouring Honcharivka.



Fig.9. Massive glazed ceramic cornice stove plaques with plant designs in relief. Excavations of the remnants of an early 18th-century Cossack dwelling at the southern periphery of Baturyn in 2020. Photo by Yu. Sytyi, graphic by S. Dmytriienko.

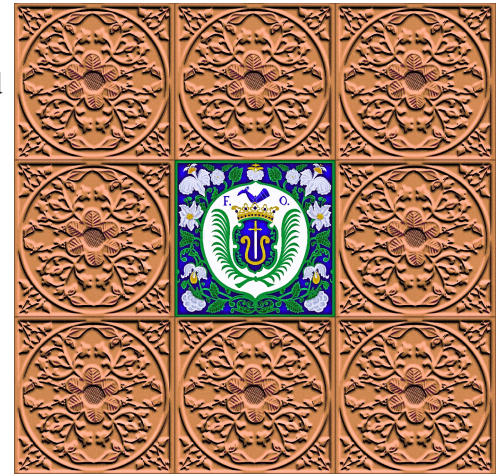


Fig.8. Fragment of the upper façade of the heating stove at Orlyk's residence, featuring the glazed ceramic plaque with his coat of arms surrounded by terracotta tiles bearing flower relief patterns. Hypothetical reconstruction by V. Mezentsev and S. Dmytriienko, computer graphic by S. Dmytriienko, 2020.

This house had a ground floor and a basement furnished with an ordinary heating stove made of clay and adobe bricks. Many broken ceramic stove tiles and two massive intact cornice plaques of local manufacture have been unearthed there (fig.9). They are green-glazed and bear imposing Ukrainian baroque plant relief patterns. Their decoration is more modest when compared to that of the stove plaques from the residences of the hetman and his chancellor described above (cf. figs.4-9). This dwelling, like the adjacent neighbourhood inhabited by craftsmen and tradespeople, was burned during the Russian attack on Baturyn in 1708.

Thus, recent archaeological research of Baturyn testifies to the vibrancy of its ceramic craft during the late 17th and early 18th centuries. From the 1690s onwards, skilled Kyivan tile-makers worked in Baturyn and likely advanced the local production. Early 18th-century ornamental and heraldic stove tiles fashioned for the elite residences in Mazepa's capital are comparable to the quality architectural majolica of Kyiv and represent valuable pieces of Ukrainian baroque ceramic art.

The total destruction of Baturyn by the army of Tsar Peter I in 1708 disrupted its economic and cultural development for half a century. After this onslaught, the local manufacturing of stove tiles with relief images in the Ukrainian baroque style never recovered in Baturyn. In the second part of the 18th century, during the town's revival under Hetman Rozumovsky, the stoves and fireplaces at his palaces and administrative buildings were embellished by flat ceramic plaques with glazed drawings in the Dutch style imported from Holland or Russia. Researchers of Baturyn plan to resume excavations there when the pandemic quarantine will be over.

Volodymyr Mezentsev