

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-09054-4 - The Wooden Churches of Eastern Europe: An Introductory Survey

David Buxton

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

THE WOODEN CHURCHES
OF EASTERN EUROPE

AN INTRODUCTORY SURVEY

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-09054-4 - The Wooden Churches of Eastern Europe: An Introductory Survey

David Buxton

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

THE WOODEN CHURCHES OF EASTERN EUROPE

AN INTRODUCTORY SURVEY

DAVID BUXTON

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE

LONDON NEW YORK NEW ROCHELLE

MELBOURNE SYDNEY

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-09054-4 - The Wooden Churches of Eastern Europe: An Introductory Survey
David Buxton
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi

Cambridge University Press
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521237864

© Cambridge University Press 1981

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
no reproduction of any part may take place without the written
permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 1981
This digitally printed version 2008

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-0-521-23786-4 hardback
ISBN 978-0-521-09054-4 paperback

CONTENTS

<i>Preface</i>	<i>page</i> vii
1 Introduction	i
2 Northern Russia	38
3 Ukrainian Galicia and Carpathia Churches of the Boyks and their kindred Churches of the Hutsuls Churches of the Lemks	87
4 The Ukrainian plains	148
5 Rumania, Hungary and Yugoslavia The Basic Balkan in Wallachia and the Banat The Basic Balkan in Serbia and Croatia The northern Transylvanian style Wooden belfries in Hungary The Moldavian style	189
6 Catholic churches in Poland and Czechoslovakia	269
7 Protestant churches of the margins Poland and Slovakia Finland	326
Appendix I The log cabin in North America	385
Appendix II The vanished synagogues	387
<i>Bibliography</i>	395
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	398
<i>Index</i>	400

PREFACE

The origins of this book go back more than fifty years, to the time when I used to travel in Russia as a young student. Among other experiences, well remembered from my first long journey there, were the weeks I spent in a typical small village in the northern forests. Since then, the wooden world of eastern Europe has always attracted me, but it was not until 1972, after a working life devoted to other pursuits, that I was able to revert to this dormant interest. Between 1972 and 1977 I travelled every year (with my Volkswagen 'Beetle' and a tent) in some part of the area concerned, collecting material for this study. The photographs are mostly my own, except that I have had to supplement them from other sources in the case of Soviet territory, owing to the prevailing restrictions on travel there.

Wooden architecture (including the wooden churches which are its finest flower) has been widely studied in most east European countries. Both the bibliography and the acknowledgements indicate the extent of my debt to relevant publications in many languages. But the great majority of these studies, besides being unavailable in our libraries, are of strictly limited scope, and I believe no general survey of the subject has yet been attempted. This book is intended to fill the gap. I hope it will stimulate the interest of many visitors from the west (whether architectural specialists or not) in one of the most attractive, but least known aspects of the rural scene in eastern Europe. I think, too, that devotees of the American log cabin will like to know what a remarkable evolution awaited its predecessor, the *European* log cabin.

I confess to a great love for countries not yet overpopulated or over-mechanised, where the tempo of

country life is still relatively unhurried, and where one shares the rough minor roads with horse-drawn carts, farm tractors, children on their way to school, and flocks of geese, protesting at the intrusion. Nearly always, the stranger here receives a warm welcome from ordinary people, even spontaneous hospitality that puts westerners to shame. In the majority of these countries, whatever the political complexion of their governments, I was happy to find that the foreign traveller is very free to do as he likes and seldom troubled by the authorities. But it is well to remember, in most of eastern Europe, that to be a non-native is one's greatest privilege.

Some preliminary work on this book was done while I still held a Research Fellowship at Clare Hall, Cambridge (it had been awarded on the strength of an Ethiopian project then in course of completion). Membership of the College always was, and continues to be, an agreeable and sometimes productive stimulus. I gratefully recall, also, the award of a travel grant by the British Academy for my Ukrainian journey in 1977. Many good friends in the eight countries covered by my travels, and others here in Cambridge, have helped me in various ways at various times. They must remain anonymous, except for three gentlemen whose counsel and expertise, most generously given, have greatly enhanced the value of this book. They are: Radu Crețeanu of Bucharest, Dr G. N. Logvin of Kiev, and Professor Lars Pettersson of Helsinki. I trust they will be pleased when they see the book in its final form.

Grantchester
July 1980

D. R. B.



The shaded areas are keyed to chapters 2–6 and show the main distribution of the relevant church-types.