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OLD RED DEVONIAN SANDSTONES IN THE ARCHITECTURE OF LVIV: KEY HISTORICAL STAGES AND APPLICATION FEATURES

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This study identifies the principal stages and characteristics of the use of old red devonian sandstones within the architectural environment of Lviv. It has been established that in the 16th–18th centuries, owing to complex logistics and the specific physico-mechanical properties of the rock, its application was limited and strictly pragmatic – serving primarily to reinforce architectural elements subjected to maximum mechanical load (such as stair flights and thresholds). The combination of red-coloured sandstone with light local limestone is examined, whereby the former provided a durable load-bearing base and protection of structures from moisture and contamination, while the latter served as the principal material for wall construction and the execution of carved decorative elements. Particular attention is devoted to the turn of the 19th–20th centuries, when the advent of railway transport and the transition to industrial-scale extraction transformed red-coloured sandstone into a primary material for the realisation of architectural concepts. The stone became the basis of polychromatic façades and subsequently functioned as a protective cladding layer for reinforced concrete structures of modernism. In the memorial stonework of Lychakiv Necropolis of this period, it became a widespread—and in some cases predominant—material for monolithic crosses, stelae, and funerary structures, demonstrating the exceptional durability of carved forms and inscriptions. During the Soviet period, the dominant trend was a transition to the industrial production of paving slabs and cladding elements. Despite the standardisation of products, the widespread use of this material in public spaces contributed to the preservation of the natural stone texture within the urban environment and established Terebovlia sandstone as an integral component of Lviv's architectural identity. It is demonstrated that the evolution of the use of red-coloured sandstones from Devonian deposits progressed from a localised engineering solution to a large-scale architectural strategy, in which the key determining factors were the physico-mechanical properties, logistical accessibility, and decorative potential of the material.

Key words: architecture of Lviv, building stone, Terebovlia sandstone, building stone deposit, Old Red Sandstone.

Problem Statement. Red-coloured sandstones of Devonian age, known as the "Terebovlia sandstone" or the Old Red Sandstone, are characterised by a long history of use in the architecture of Lviv. Stone material was sourced from the quarries of the villages of Zastinoche and Budaniv near Terebovlia, which serve as reference sites both in terms of the geological structure of their sections and from the perspective of the historical continuity of quarrying activity [4]. Since the princely era, these centres have functioned as the principal sources



of building stone for the construction of fortresses and defensive structures surrounding strategically important sites that formed the protective belt of the region. The flourishing of Lviv's architecture in the 18th century, driven by post-war reconstruction, active patronage by the nobility, and the incorporation of Western European experience, marked the beginning of the widespread use of red-coloured Devonian sandstones by master architects [6]. Despite the evolution of technological approaches to processing methods, scales of application, and volumes of extraction across different historical periods, the use of red-coloured sandstone in the city's construction practice has remained an enduring historical tradition.

Notwithstanding the existence of a number of studies devoted to the use of this material within Western Podillia, its role in the architecture of Lviv remains insufficiently explored.

Analysis of Research and Publications. The performance properties of building stone are determined by a complex of physico-mechanical parameters, among which the key indicators include compressive strength (under varying moisture conditions), wear resistance, and toughness, as well as characteristics of density, porosity, and resistance to abrasion and cyclic freezing. The construction suitability of Lower Devonian red-coloured sandstones is determined by their high physico-mechanical properties, namely strength, frost resistance, and low water absorption. From a lithological perspective, these are homogeneous, massive quartz-mica, very fine- to fine-grained rocks with a broad colour spectrum (ranging from grey to brownish-red) which, at a bulk density of 2.3-2.5 g/cm³, demonstrate a significant range of compressive strength (430-1800 kg/cm²). These sandstones were quarried in the southern regions of Ternopil Oblast, in the vicinity of the towns of Terebovlia, Chortkiv, Buchach, and Zalishchyky [8].

The earliest written evidence of the systematic exploitation of red-coloured sandstone deposits is recorded in the Terebovlia municipal records of 1430, where the Zastinoche quarry is mentioned as an active site of stone extraction [4]. In subsequent historical periods-particularly during Austrian and Polish administration-the quarries were under the direct jurisdiction of the Terebovlia city magistrate, indicating their considerable economic importance for the urban economy and local governance. Evidence of the high level of organisation in extraction activities is provided by the building of the quarry's administrative office, which has been preserved in the centre of the village of Zastinoche to the present day and constitutes a notable historical and cultural asset as a monument of the region's industrial administration [4].

The use of red-coloured sandstone of Terebovlia origin in construction practice encompasses three defining historical periods:

– Fortification period (the princely era – 17th century). The application of red-coloured sandstone in defensive construction covers a considerable chronological span. This rock, either used exclusively or in combination with other stone materials, was employed in the construction of fortifications across a number of castle complexes in the region. The walls of Terebovlia Castle, erected in the 1630s, represent the most thoroughly studied example; however, there are grounds to suggest that this material had already been used in the construction of the castle church of the Old Rus' castle of the 9th-10th centuries, as well as the stone fortress of 1360 [5]. Other notable sites include: Budaniv Castle (early 17th century) [1]; Mykulyntsi Castle (construction initiated in 1550); the castle in Pidzamochok (ruins of a structure dating to 1600); the castle in Zolotyi Potik (early 17th century); and Yazlovets Castle-a defensive-residential complex (castle and palace) dating from the 14th to 17th centuries [7]. Constructed from local sandstone, the walls of these fortifications withstood numerous sieges and military trials; however, not all have survived to the present day, as some complexes have suffered significant deterioration due to neglect and human indifference.

– Industrial expansion (Austro-Hungarian period). In the 18th century, the quarries were owned by the community of the town of Terebovlia; extraction was organised along guild lines,

while the principal demand was generated by the Church and the nobility. In the 19th century, the exploitation of "Terebovlia sandstone" acquired a systematic character: the defensive paradigm gave way to the era of industrial capitalism and monumental architecture. An analysis of extractive activities during this period indicates the transformation of the Zastinoche and Budaniv quarries from local sources of building material into a major export hub of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, with stone being supplied to Kraków and Vienna. A telling indicator of the administrative scale of operations at that time is the quarry office building in the village of Zastinoche: this institution functioned as a dispatch centre, cash office, and technical control point; each block was marked, and the quality of the stone was assessed in accordance with imperial standards [4].

– Period of architectural modernism (20th century – present). Sandstone became an architectural "face" of Ternopil and Lviv. Its application extended to façade cladding, the production of monumental sculpture and memorial stonework, as well as the paving of streets and pavements, demonstrating a high suitability for fine processing. The transition from 19th-century eclecticism to early 20th-century modernism and functionalism marked a true triumph for this material. Whereas previously the stone had often been concealed beneath plaster or used primarily for ornate decoration, modernism brought it to the forefront as a self-sufficient aesthetic element. Sandstone was widely employed in the cladding of banks, postal institutions, and government buildings, symbolising reliability and stability. Notably, while in the 18th century it had been regarded as a "cheap substitute for marble", in the 20th century it attained the status of an elite material, emphasising local identity and the prestige of architectural objects [3].

Aim of the Study. The present study aims to trace the patterns and evolution of the use of red-coloured Devonian sandstones in the architectural structures of Lviv across different historical periods.

Given that this research lies at the intersection of geology, history, and architecture, a comprehensive interdisciplinary approach has been employed, encompassing three groups of methods. Geological methods include macroscopic analysis—namely, the study of the textural and structural features of sandstones based on field investigations of samples from both deposits and architectural objects. Historical and archival methods were implemented through a retrospective approach aimed at reconstructing the evolution of extraction practices. Architectural-typological methods involved *in situ* examination of objects in order to analyse the characteristics of stone use and its state of preservation within the historic fabric of Lviv.

Presentation of the Main Material. In the 13th–17th centuries, construction in Lviv relied exclusively on the local raw material base. The transportation of heavy Terebovlia sandstone over distances exceeding 100 km was considered economically and technically impractical, which determined the dominance of local lithologies in the construction practice of the city during this period.

Terebovlia sandstone appeared in Lviv's architecture significantly later than local stone materials, serving as evidence of both technological pragmatism and a degree of luxury that became feasible only after the stabilisation of logistical routes and the recognition of a critical need for materials with high abrasion resistance. In the 1730s, the architectural milieu of Lviv entered a phase of late Baroque flourishing, driven by post-war stabilisation and reconstruction under conditions of intensive patronage by magnate families. The socio-economic recovery of the city following a period of military devastation created favourable conditions for the creative expansion of European masters. Intense competition in the leading capitals of Europe encouraged a younger generation of architects, sculptors, and artists to seek new arenas for professional realisation, with Lviv emerging as a significant centre of attraction. The large-scale construction of both sacred and secular buildings not only transformed the urban space but also stimulated

the development of local schools of sculptural arts and monumental painting. During this period, local limestone remained the dominant building material for wall construction. By contrast, red-coloured sandstone from Devonian deposits was used in an extremely pragmatic and selective manner-exclusively in those structural components where high resistance to mechanical wear was required. The mineralogical composition and structural characteristics of this rock determine its hardness, which is an order of magnitude greater than that of limestone. In buildings with heavy foot traffic-such as churches and guild houses-limestone stair treads would have been subject to significant abrasion over several decades of use. Consequently, the functional zones of sandstone application were stair flights and portal thresholds, i.e., elements subjected to maximum mechanical load. The use of this rock in these structural positions constituted a purely engineering solution dictated by the objective physico-mechanical properties of the material.

In the period under study, the technology of large-scale sawing of hard sandstone was not yet available; instead, the method of "wedge splitting" was employed. In a monolithic rock mass, a series of indentations ("slots") were carved using chisels, into which dry wooden wedges were driven and subsequently moistened. The expansion of the wood under the influence of moisture generated a directed fracture along the plane of least resistance. Stair treads and thresholds were shaped directly at the quarry using heavy stonemasons' hammers and punches, primarily in order to reduce the weight of the block prior to transportation. Thus, a semi-finished product with a technological allowance for final polishing was delivered to Lviv, where the surface treatment was completed at the installation site.

According to measurements of historical structures-particularly historic townhouses on Market Square (Rynok Square) – thresholds and lower stair treads are characterised by a thickness ranging from 20 to 35 cm, which ensures their structural stability. The working surfaces were treated using the technique of point dressing (bush-hammering), which produced a rough texture preventing slipping under the damp conditions typical of Lviv's streets. The morphology of these elements is marked by laconic simplicity-predominantly rectangular forms with minimal chamfering-explained by the exceptional hardness of the rock and the limited capabilities of stonemasonry tools of the time. In ecclesiastical architecture, the rounded configuration of steps functioned as an additional element of sculptural expression, signifying the elite character and special purpose of the building.

The logistical component exerted a significant influence on the economics of material use: the cost of transporting a single massive threshold from the Terebovlia region to Lviv could equal the extraction cost of 10-15 comparable blocks of local limestone. Stone was ordered well in advance-often a year prior to the planned construction-and transportation was typically scheduled for the winter season ("winter road"), when the frozen ground could bear the considerable weight of loaded carts without the risk of their becoming bogged down.

The white limestone of the Lviv outskirts-soft and inherently porous-served as the principal material for wall construction and the execution of fine decorative carving. Red sandstone, by contrast, hard and ferruginous in composition, marked zones of maximum mechanical load. This functional differentiation generated a distinctive architectural effect: red sandstone in thresholds, stair flights, and plinth zones formed a "grounded", heavy base of the structure, visually anchoring it within the urban space. In contrast, the lighter limestone blocks of the upper tiers appeared more elevated and upward-oriented, creating a sense of vertical dynamism.

With the development of the Baroque and subsequently Classicism, the combination of red sandstone with white limestone evolved into a deliberate architectural device. The reddish, brownish, and occasionally terracotta hues of the sandstone entered into a natural harmony with the yellowish-white tonality of the limestone, producing the effect of a warm, vibrant façade even under the characteristically overcast conditions of Lviv's climate.

Notably, the temporal factor further enriched this chromatic dialogue: limestone gradually acquires a dark grey patina, while sandstone, under prolonged exposure to atmospheric moisture, develops a deep cherry tone. Over the decades, the initial sharp contrast between white and red diminished, giving way to a more restrained yet significantly more refined and expressive chromatic relationship-evidence of the authentic ageing of materials and an integral component of the city's architectural patina.

Within the framework of this study, modelling of the material's chromatic transformations was conducted on a case-study object-the portal of the Church of the Most Holy Eucharist (Dominican Cathedral) of the 18th century in Lviv. A visual reconstruction of the probable original colouring of the stone at the time of the building's construction was carried out and compared with its present state of preservation (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1. Portal of the Church of the Most Holy Eucharist in Lviv: (a) present condition; (b) reconstruction of the probable original colouring of the stone

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, Terebovlia sandstone transcended its purely utilitarian function and evolved into a principal medium for conveying architectural ideas, stylistic expression, and the emotional image of a structure. This qualitative transformation was driven by three interrelated factors: the inauguration of the railway link to Terebovlia in 1896, which reconfigured the logistics of stone supply; the spread of a preference for exposed masonry in Neo-style architecture; and the transition to industrial-scale extraction in the quarries of Zastinoche and Budaniv. During this period, architects turned to red sandstone as a material capable of articulating ideas of historical continuity and monumental solidity. Instead of the traditional practice of plastering and painting surfaces, façades were composed through the juxtaposition of naturally coloured materials-Terebovlia red sandstone in combination with yellow brick or white limestone created an effect of "natural painting" (polychromy), where chromatic expressiveness was achieved through the inherent texture and tonality of the stone itself. A vivid example is the building of the Scientific

and Technical Library of Lviv Polytechnic National University, constructed in the early 20th century in the Neoclassical style.

The advent of reinforced concrete fundamentally altered the structural role of stone: sandstone lost its function as a load-bearing material, yet retained-and indeed reinforced-its significance as a protective cladding element. Thin sandstone slabs served as an effective barrier against atmospheric moisture for concrete structures, while simultaneously imparting to the "cold" and impersonal modernist building the appearance of a costly, durable architectural object with a distinct material identity.

From the mid-19th century onwards, under conditions of Austrian modernisation of Lviv, an urgent demand arose for a durable material for paving pedestrian walkways, as local limestone proved incapable of withstanding the intensive abrasive loads of urban foot traffic. The industrial scale of extraction in the quarries of the Terebovlia region enabled the serial production of slab materials in standardised formats. The most common dimensions were 60×60 cm, 80×80 cm, and large-format modules of 100×120 cm. The thickness of the elements ranged from 8 to 15 cm, ensuring exceptional structural stability under dynamic loads. To prevent slipping, the working surface of the slabs was treated using techniques of scoring or rough dressing, producing a characteristic microrelief-a rough texture that persisted for decades of intensive use despite the gradual surface wear of the stone.

The Soviet period (1944-1991) was marked by industrial standardisation in the use of Terebovlia sandstone. Whereas in the modernist era it had retained an elite status, during the Soviet period it was transformed into a strategic raw material for mass construction and ideological monumentalism. The material was widely used for paving urban walkways, and the majority of park staircases, parapets, and retaining walls in Lviv constructed during the 1950s-1970s were executed in Terebovlia stone, owing to its low cost and high durability. A distinct sphere of application was memorial monumentalism: sandstone served as the material for monuments to liberating soldiers and Soviet memorial complexes, where its massiveness and natural texture contributed to an image of endurance and "eternal memory". In the 1970s-1980s, the rock was also extensively employed for the interior cladding of vestibules in cinemas, hotels, railway stations, and cultural centres.

In essence, the Soviet period desecralised "Terebovlia sandstone", rendering it a widely accessible and mass-used material. However, this very circumstance enabled it to retain its role as the principal building stone of the region, preventing concrete from completely displacing the natural stone texture from the urban environment.

The memorial sculpture of Lychakiv Necropolis represents the highest artistic expression of the potential of red-coloured Devonian sandstone [2]. Here, stone from the quarries of Zastinoche and Budaniv transcended its purely constructional function and acquired the status of a bearer of historical memory. The high monolithic character and homogeneity of the blocks of red-coloured sandstone from Devonian deposits enabled the production of massive crosses from a single piece of stone-without joints or connections-testifying both to the technological maturity of the stonemasonry craft and to the exceptional physico-mechanical properties of the rock (Fig. 2a). A distinct group of memorial forms in this material comprises funerary stelae-vertically oriented stone slabs with relief decoration or epitaphs (Fig. 2b). The necropolis abounds in monumental tombs in which sandstone serves as the principal structural material: large dressed ashlar blocks from Zastinoche formed the load-bearing basis of burial vaults, ensuring the geometric stability of the structures over decades (Fig. 2c). Owing to the fine-grained structure of the rock, inscriptions on sandstone could be carved significantly deeper and more precisely than on limestone, retaining legibility even after prolonged atmospheric weathering.



a



b



c

Fig. 2. The memorial sculpture of Lychakiv Necropolis

The use of red sandstone in memorial stonework established a distinctive visual rhythm within the necropolis. The rich reddish tone of the stone was perceived as restrained and monumental, and was therefore traditionally selected for the burials of military figures, political leaders, and members of the clergy. "Terebovlia sandstone" endowed Lychakiv Necropolis with the structural durability that has enabled the ensemble to survive to the present day. Its role in

this context did not lie in the imitation of living forms through sculptural means, but rather in the affirmation of eternity through the steadfastness of the material itself.

Conclusions and Recommendations. The evolution of the use of red-coloured Devonian sandstones in the architecture of Lviv represents a consistent trajectory of transformation—from a purely pragmatic "technical" material to a leading aesthetic accent of the modern city. At the initial stage, the high cost of logistics and the difficulty of processing hard rock limited its application to stair flights and portal thresholds—structural elements subjected to maximum mechanical load. With the introduction of railway connections and the mechanisation of quarrying, red-coloured sandstones became an accessible mass material, marking their "emergence onto façades" within urban development. By the early 20th century, the rock had firmly established itself as a means of artistic expression of texture and colour in architectural compositions. In parallel, it secured its place in the memorial stonework of Lychakiv Necropolis as an ideal material for monolithic crosses, stelae, and funerary structures, demonstrating the exceptional durability of carved forms and inscriptions. The Soviet period was characterised by a transition to the mass production of cladding slabs and paving elements for public spaces which, despite the standardisation and desacralisation of the material, enabled the preservation of the natural stone texture within the urban environment and consolidated Terebovlia sandstone as an integral component of Lviv's architectural identity.

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ЧЕРВОНОКОЛІРНІ ПІСКОВИКИ ДЕВОНСЬКИХ ВІДКЛАДІВ В АРХІТЕКТУРІ ЛЬВОВА: ОСНОВНІ ЕТАПИ ТА ОСОБЛИВОСТІ ВИКОРИСТАННЯ

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У роботі виділено основні етапи та особливості використання червоноколірних пісковиків девонських відкладів в архітектурному середовищі Львова. Встановлено, що в XVI–XVIII ст. через складну логістику та специфічні фізико-механічні властивості породи її застосування було обмеженим і суто прагматичним – камінь слугував для зміцнення архітектурних елементів з максимальним механічним навантаженням (сходи, пороги). Досліджено поєднання червоноколірного пісковика та світлого місцевого вапняка, де перший забезпечував міцну несучу основу та захист споруд від вологи й забруднень, тоді як другий був матеріалом для зведення стін і виконання різьблених декоративних елементів. Особливу увагу приділено зламу XIX–XX ст., коли поява залізниці та перехід до промислового видобутку зробили червоноколірний пісковик головним матеріалом для втілення архітектурних концепцій. Камінь став основою поліхромних фасадів, а згодом – захисним екраном для залізобетонних конструкцій модернізму. В меморіальній пластиці Личаківського некрополя цього періоду – це поширений, а інколи і головний, матеріал для монолітних хрестів, стел і надгробних споруд, що демонструє виняткову довговічність різьблених форм і написів. У радянський період домінував перехід до індустріального виготовлення плит мощення та облицювання. Незважаючи на уніфікацію виробів, широке впровадження цього матеріалу в громадських просторах дозволило зберегти природну кам'яну фактуру у міському середовищі та утвердити теребовлянський пісковик як невід'ємний елемент архітектурної ідентичності Львова. Доведено, що еволюція застосування червоноколірних пісковиків девонських відкладів пройшла шлях від локального інженерного рішення до масштабної архітектурної стратегії, де ключовими факторами виступали фізико-механічні властивості, доступність логістики та декоративний потенціал породи.

Ключові слова: архітектура Львова, будівельний камінь, теребовлянський пісковик, родовище, Old Red Sandstone.

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