

УДК 72.03

Features of Window Decorations of Wooden Houses in Krasnoyarsk at the end of XIX – the Beginning of XX Century

**Olga N. Bliankinshtein^{a*},
Maria E. Merkulova^a and Maria M. Merkulova^b**

^a *Siberian Federal University*

82 Svobodny, Krasnoyarsk, 660041 Russia,

^b *Saint-Petersburg State University of Architecture
and Civil Engineering,*

2-nd Krasnoarmeiskaya St. 4, St. Petersburg, 190005 Russia¹

Received 15.03.2012, received in revised form 25.03.2012, accepted 2.04.2012

The article is devoted to the window casings which are one of the main elements in decoration of timber facades in residential buildings in Krasnoyarsk. The window casing is an important functional and structural element of the facade; it peculiarized and gave an individual shape to every house with its variety of artistic treatments. The study is based on a long-term experience of studying Krasnoyarsk wooden architecture, including on-site investigations such as photofixation and measurements. The article dwells upon specific examples of component parts and ways of decorating window casings. A classification of window castings has been worked out and shown, the main attention is paid to the upper crowning part. The sources of decorative sculpture forms have also been identified. Considerable attention is paid to the process of interaction between national and professional style of architecture, in which architecture styles like baroque, classicism, art nouveau (modernism) found their reflection in the forms and decoration of the window casings.

Keywords: wooden architecture, window, window casing, house decoration, carving, Baroque, Classicism, Art Nouveau (Modernism), Krasnoyarsk.

Introduction

The evolution of architecture and the artistic treatment of window frames in wooden house building in Siberia is associated with the process of its development. During the initial development of Siberia, people from almost all the regions of the country brought with them building and the artistic traditions of the Russian North, the Volga

region and central Russian regions. The stream of migrants to Siberia in the late XIX – early XX century, in connection with the construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway and the Stolypin agrarian reform, brought the tradition of the construction of European Russia, having been formed under the influence of architectural styles of baroque, classicism and modernism.

* Corresponding author E-mail address: olga_bon23@mail.ru

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A lot of studies and monographs are devoted to wood architecture, wood carving, and in particular, to architectural carvings.

The researcher of wooden architecture in Western and Eastern Siberia, E.A. Ashchepkov, has introduced a large amount of material on the peasant folk architecture in Western and Eastern Siberia in scientific turn and has presented a classification of types of houses and their decoration. While describing the design techniques for windows, E. Ashchepkov singled out the main groups of window casings according to the nature of the composite solutions and noted that “all the attention of the builder is focused on decorating the upper part of the window casing and on creating a peculiar eye-catching silhouette tops” (Ashchepkov 1953: 146-152)

The decor of wooden architecture of cities in Siberia in the late XIX – early XX centuries is considered in the article, B.I. Ogly. The author emphasizes the uniqueness of the wooden development in old centers and historical cities “... in Tobolsk, Tyumen, Tomsk, Irkutsk, Krasnoyarsk, Barnaul and other cities, professional trade artels of carpenters, carvers and decorators are being formed, who produce their own individual way of making buildings and decorating them, representing an mixture of official trends in native architecture with Russian folk architecture and unique local traditions” (Ogly 1999: 29).

Zavarihin writes about peculiarities of a wood carving in Tyumen houses, which successfully and originally use ‘motives that had been originated in different places and at different times’ (Zavarihin, 1981). The forms and methods of decoration of houses are well-presented in the album of N.H. Shayhtdinova called “Decorative wood – carving in Tyumen” (Shayhtdinova, 1984).

The article E. Kirichenko (Kirichenko 1987: 143) is also devoted to wooden architecture of

Tomsk. The author fairly considers a wooden residential building of Russian city of the second half of XIX – early XX century as a unique artistic phenomenon and notes a wooden building in the Russian town was formed by the interaction of style (urban professional) architecture and folk (peasant) architecture.

E.I. Kirichenko considers carving to be the most expressive and elegant part of a wooden house but “window casting is key element which is the most active and masterfully developed one among all the richness and diversity of decorative elements” (Kirichenko 1997: 241). Scientists are still showing a great research interest in architecture of Siberian wooden houses. In the last decade, a number of scientific works have appeared that explore typological, architectural and artistic aspects of the historical wooden residential development of cities in Tyumen, Tomsk, Irkutsk (Kozlova-Afanasieva 2004, Kulikova 2006, Erg 2008, Shishkanov 2011).

Attention is paid to architectural wooden carving of Krasnoyarsk in a number of publications and research works (Cherepanov 1986, Lozhkina 1998, Merkulova 2005). A great value have photo illustrations and sketches, having fixed objects that haven’t survived and are no longer available today, which are presented in the album “Wooden lace of Krasnoyarsk”. Full-scale survey of wooden houses in Krasnoyarsk in late XIX – early XX century with photographic images and the measurement of window casings were taken by authors in 2001 – 2011.

Typology of window casings of wooden houses in Krasnoyarsk

All the window casings of wooden houses in Krasnoyarsk are built on the basis of one the general scheme (Fig. 1a). A simple window casing consists of a frieze, vertical lateral boards and a window ledge. In a more complex version

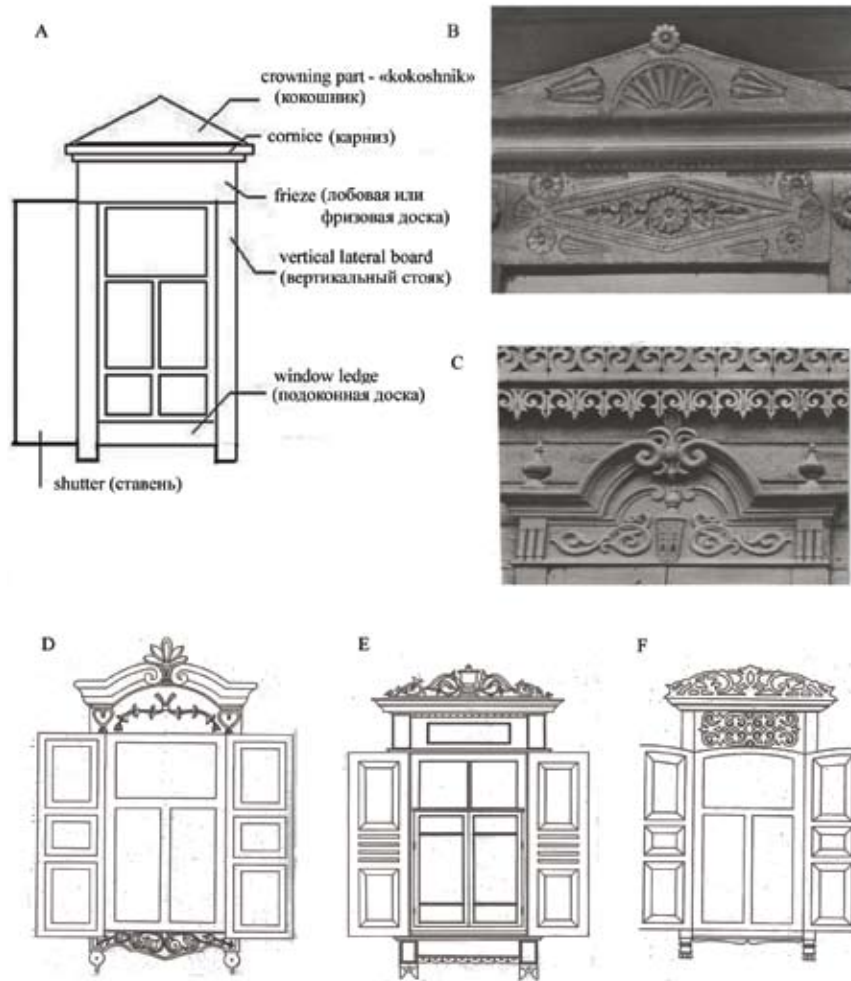


Fig. 1 Window casings and the types of carving in their design: **A**) a scheme of the window casing ; **B**) a dumb carving (Kochnev's house, 1848, the house has not survived); **C**) a three-dimensional carving (the house has not survived); **D**) a three-dimensional carving (17Gorky Street); **E**) a fretwork carving 106 A. Lebedeva street); **F**) a fretwork carving (51 Markovski street)

of upper part of the window casing, there is a cornice and crowning part (kokoshnik), and the overall composition of the window is completed with shutters. The construction of window casing with kokoshniks does not differ from the usual one; only the top of the cornice is added, carved in a peculiar way to create an interesting silhouette of the upper part of the window.

There are different kinds of carving used in window casings: dumb, three-dimensional, fretwork and appliqué carving. Each of them has its own peculiarities.

Dumb carving was performed on a whole “dumb” board. A shallow relief image was cut out or hollowed out with cutting tools and chisels. Chiaroscuro and a drastic contrast between a background and a relief give expressiveness to dumb carving. The examples of window casings in the dumb carving technique are window casings on Kochnev's house which was built on Malokachinskay street in 1848 (contemporary A. Lebedeva street). Two-storeyed wooden house had a three-part plan of a peasant type. Windows of the second floor were decorated with window

casing that had a classical form. The frieze of a window carving was accomplished with a profiled cornice, surmounted by kokoshnik in the form of a triangular pediment. Strict classical forms were softened with folk ornaments such as suns-rosette and floral motifs (Fig.1b). Solar motif, made in the dumb carving technique, decorate the strict window casings of a house with an attic storey, built in 1881 on the estate of a retired Cossack I. Potylitsyn (61 Lebedeva street).

Three-dimensional carving reminds a sculptural decoration, in its application the result is visible effect on the wooden architecture of plastic stone architecture (Fig. 1 c, d). Most often, this type of carving was used to decorate the upper part of the window casing and it gave it picturesque and plasticity.

Fretwork appeared in the decoration of wooden buildings with the advent of new jig saws and a drill. A through drawing was sawed on the thin boards, which were used for decoration of kokoshniks and window ledge boards. Applique carving was made of elements of fretwork ornament laid on the flat background of the decorating object. In decoration the same window carving, a combination of fretwork and applique carving is often found (Fig.1 e, f).

Subtle elegance of the lines, some fancifulness and mannerism are typical for the ornament, made in the technique of fretwork carving. At the end of the nineteenth century fretwork becomes dominant in the decoration of wooden houses.

Sometimes chiseled details were used in decorating the window casings made on a lathe (Fig. 1c). Chiseled details were installed on the cornice, sometimes they were sawed and divided in two and fixed at the front of vertical lateral board and frieze.

In Table 1 we can trace the characteristic of elements of the window casings that framed the windows of wooden houses in Krasnoyarsk. Twenty five window casing, presented in the

table, are divided into two groups, depending on the upper part of the window casing, which is the most important in compositional terms.






















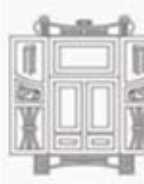


The upper frame of the window was completed by dividing it into two or three parts. The most simple is a two-part top of the window casing, where upper front board a was completed with a horizontal or sawed profiled cornice (shown in Table 1, table cells 1 – 4). The upper front board can have triangular or semicircular upper part (table cells 5 – 8)

The frieze in the window casing is either not decorated at all or was decorated with a cut or hollowed ornament that had a sun motif (window cell 1) or applique details with a diverse ornament (window cell 2 – 3).

A more complicated is the two-part window casing with a shaped cornice, which simultaneously plays the role of kokoshnik. This window cornice is usually done with a sculptural relief carving and had an arc-shaped ending along its all length or in its central part. Most often baroque motifs are present in these window casings: two counter-volutes, linked with a trefoil, cinquefoil, or as a rosette in shell form (window cells 9 – 12). The upper part of the window casings (window cells 14-17) consists of a frieze and kokoshnik, which seemed to have merged into a single composition, that was solved in the Art Nouveau style; Kokoshnik (window cell 14) is completed with upper curved contour of the upper and decorated with fretwork ornaments and applique details of geometrical shape.

The other group consists of the upper part of the window casing with its division into three parts – a, frieze, cornice and kokoshnik. Of all the variety of these windows a subgroup – kokoshniks with a characteristic figure shape can be singled out (window cells 18 – 21) and the subgroup with fretwork kokoshniks (windows cells 22-24). Kokoshniks in the form of a triangular pediment is completed window casing № 25.

Table 1. Window casting of residential wooden houses in Krasnoyarsk

A window where upper part of window casing is divided into 2 parts				A window where upper part of window casing is divided into 3 parts	
1 Upper front board (frieze) which has horizontal or arched shape 2.Cornice	Upper front board (frieze) which has triangular or semicircular shape 2. Cornice	1. Upper front board (frieze) 2. Cornice with a figured sculptural shape	1 Upper front board (frieze) 2.Crowning part (kokoshnik)	1. Upper front board (frieze) 2.Cornice 3.Crowning part (kokoshnik) with remarkable figure shape	1 Upper front board (frieze) 2. Cornice 3.Crowning part (kokoshnik) carved by using a saw 22-24; Triangular pediment shape – 25
 1	 5	 9	 14	 18	 22
 2	 6	 10	 15	 19	 23
 3	 7	 11	 16	 20	 24
 4	 8	 12	 17	 21	 25

Interaction of the urban professional and peasant folk architecture

Styles that have their origin in the stone architecture found their reflection in the forms and decoration of the window casings of wooden houses.

Architecture of the city that has wooden houses is always closely linked with folk traditions; the first half of the XIX century was under the influence of classicism and its models.

During this period, as a window of stone and wooden houses were decorated with window



Jakovlev 's house (14 Mira street, 1820)



Mjasnikov's house on the Blagoveshchenskay street (the middle 19 century, the house has not survived)



Fig. 2. Shapes of window casings, formed under the influence of the “typical” projects of the Classicism

casings, which were accomplished with the straight profiled window stools or small triangular pediments. Classical in origin, window casings were used even later. Sometimes, in accordance with the tastes of the time they were decorated with ornamental motifs made in the lading carving technique (Fig. 2).

In the second half of XIX century the state renounced the regulation of the urban image, and following the typical project was no longer required. A new trend in architecture, eclecticism, succeeded classicism, which made it possible to appeal to the architectural styles of different eras. The architecture of the stone buildings-making it possible to play as a three-dimensional, and the plastic arts and style attributes of the prototype.

In the architecture of the town of wooden houses, which was based on traditional carcass design, the element that made it possible in a

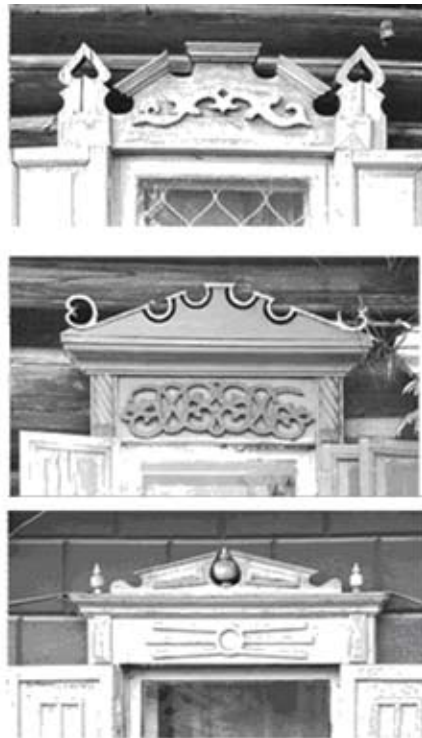
single composite scheme to diversify its form was the window casing.

By changing the shape of the components, choosing for their decoration those or other methods of decorative carving and ornamental motifs, window casing could be given different stylistic coloring. In the carved decoration of the facades of the wooden houses of Krasnoyarsk of the second half of XIX – early XX century such elements were used, the prototypes of which can be traced in the medieval architecture, the architecture of the Baroque, Art Nouveau.

In the decoration of the stone temples of the XVII century, that refer to the “Naryshkin” or “Stroganov” Baroque, expressive elements of the facade decoration were white stone window casings and carved parapets of complex shapes. Window casings with kokoshniks with innovative features that have a similar hard-defined shape,



Church of the Intercession at Fili (1693 - 1694)



Window casings of wooden houses of Krasnoyarsk of the beginning XX century

Fig 3. Interpretation of the decorative forms of stone architecture at the end of XVII century which can be traced in the window casings of wooden houses in Krasnoyarsk at the end of XIX – beginning of XX century

frame by the windows of many houses in Krasnoyarsk (Fig. 3).

In the design of window casings of wooden houses expressive baroque forms of the of the XVIII century were widely used. Stone civil and church architecture of that time had a characteristic shape of window casings as a volutes, a separated element of which was in the form of a carved trefoil or cinquefoil. Applique carved details such as molded decor, commonly used in the architecture of the Baroque, accomplish the decoration.

The Winter Palace in St. Petersburg (architect Rastrelli, 1754 – 1762), a remarkable monument of baroque architecture, has window casings with the upper part in the form of two opposing volutes.

“Rastrelli baroque” had an impact on the architecture of the Siberian temples of the XVIII century. Epiphany Cathedral in Yeniseisk, the window of which are framed with the window casings with topped volutes belongs to the “Siberian baroque”. The details, borrowed from the palace and temple architecture, and reproduced in wood, are appropriate even in the decoration of the modest homes of ordinary citizens in the suburbs and two-storey apartment buildings in the city center. Stucco Baroque decoration had carved applique elements that were placed on the window ledge and the window ledge (Fig. 4).

Along with the forms of the window casings, which have a classic and baroque origin, in the wooden architecture of the Krasnoyarsk there can be found window casings with a characteristic

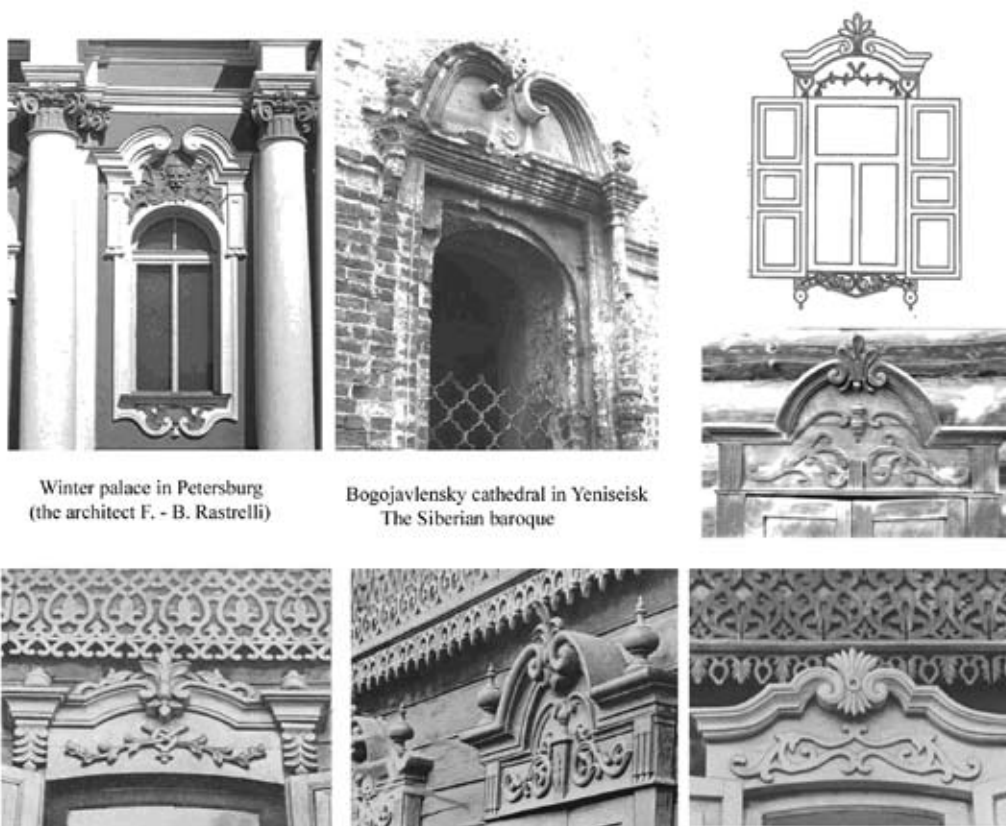


Fig. 4. Baroque motifs in the design of casings of wooden houses in Krasnoyarsk

for the modern portrayal of detail that had clearly been made under the influence of professional stone and wooden architecture (Fig. 5). Carving-in-dept and relief carving was substituted with fretwork carving with complex floral ornaments.

V.A. Sokolovsky, an creator of many buildings in the Art Nouveau style in Krasnoyarsk, which also include wooden mansions and apartment buildings. In developing the facade decoration the architect used the specific characteristic of Art Nouveau decorative techniques. In this case window casings acquired a complex curved shape which was sometimes complemented with pro pyl carvings exquisite in its shape.

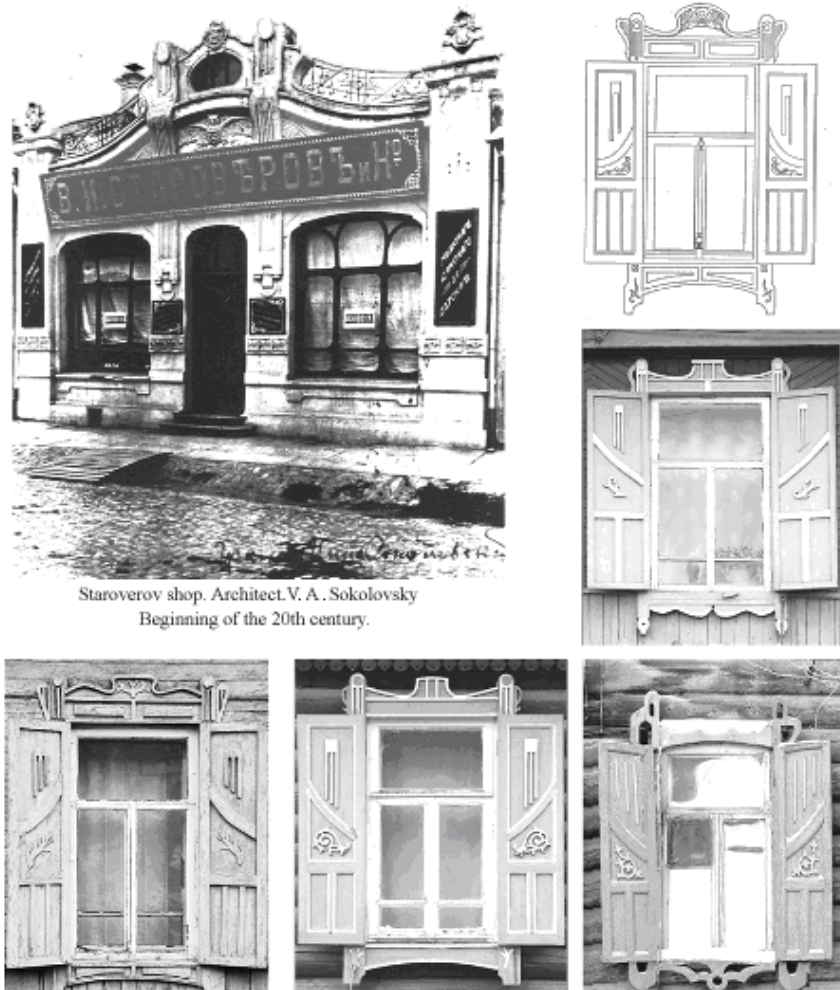
Forms developed by a professional architect, in a rather simplified form, were used in the window casing of popular wooded. These frames differ in intricate contours upper parts, sometimes

with elements of fretwork and lading elements of the carved floral ornament on the shutters (Fig. 5).

Conclusion

A lot of the extant pieces of wooden architecture are sights of the city; they give it such features as individuality and identity. The majority of the wooden houses with their various decorations was created and built by unknown craftsmen and carpenters.

The peculiarity of the mass wooden architecture is developed within centuries techniques of national architecture in conjunction with decorative motifs taken from professional architecture. Window casting has become the main element in the composition of the facade of a simple wooden house, which



Staroverov shop. Architect V. A. Sokolovsky
Beginning of the 20th century.

Fig. 5. Decorative Art Nouveau style in the design of window casings of wooden houses in Krasnoyarsk

reflected the “great” architectural styles. A window casing was, in fact, the link between the wooden architecture that is a traditional national one and rock architecture that is a city one in its nature.

Structural basis of a window casing has remained unchanged, but the shape of the corbel arch and a technically varied figure carving on the

frieze made it possible to give its image a feature of a particular style. By combining national traditions and stylistic innovations of urban professional architecture in the construction of wooden buildings, national craftsmen created a various facade decoration that brought identity to individual houses and aesthetic completeness to a city building as a whole.

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Особенности оформления окон деревянных жилых домов Красноярска конца XIX— начала XX века

О.Н. Блянкинштейн^а,

М.Е. Меркулова^а, М.М. Меркулова^б

^а *Сибирский федеральный университет,
Россия 660041, Красноярск, пр. Свободный, 82*

^б *Санкт-Петербургский государственный
архитектурно-строительный университет,
Россия 190005, Санкт-Петербург, 2-я Красноармейская, 4*

Статья посвящена наличникам окон – одному из главных элементов в системе декора фасадов деревянных жилых домов Красноярска. Оконный наличник – важный функциональный и конструктивный элемент фасада, благодаря разнообразной художественной трактовке придавал индивидуальность облику каждого дома. Исследование основывается на многолетнем опыте изучения деревянной архитектуры г. Красноярска, в том числе на натурных обследованиях: фотофиксации, обмерах. В статье на конкретных примерах рассмотрены составные части и способы декорирования наличников, разработана классификация

наличников в зависимости от композиции основной – венчающей части. Обозначены источники форм декоративной пластики. Значительное внимание уделено процессу взаимодействия народной и профессиональной стиливой архитектуры, в ходе которого в формах и декоре оконных наличников нашли отражение такие архитектурные стили, как барокко, классицизм, модерн.

Ключевые слова: деревянное зодчество, окно, наличник, домовый декор, резьба, барокко, классицизм, модерн, Красноярск.
