
English summaries

Cornelia Thielmann

Half-timbering from the late Middle Ages and early modern era at Bürresheim Castle in the East Eifel

As Bürresheim Castle was occupied continuously until the first half of the 20th century, its half-timbering, dating from approximately 1490 to 1530, has been extremely well preserved. Thanks to architectural documentation and analysis, it has proved possible to flesh out the building's architectural history, particularly with regard to modifications of the interior, and datings obtained from other sources have also been either corrected or confirmed. The datings have been obtained from both written and pictorial sources and by means of dendrochronology. The focus was on the interior construction of the late Gothic Great Hall and the addition of an extra storey to the Romanesque keep in the early modern era. Features of the half-timbering at Bürresheim Castle are described, and consideration is given to the conditions (construction methods and intended use) under which it was executed. It has been possible to show that half-timbering – in addition to the use of stone – was an important construction technique not only for private and prestigious structures but also for military purposes. The essay makes use of findings presented in the author's master's thesis, which describes the most recent architectural research that has been performed concerning the castle.

It is very rare for half-timbering to be preserved at castles. Like other wooden components, it has a far shorter life than stone in the Central European climate. Where it does survive, that is most commonly the case where wooden components have been preserved around anchor beams, structural members and window and door lintels. In order for entire half-timbered walls to survive for several centuries, however, what is primarily required is a roof over them. Accordingly, ruins – and in the 19th century nearly all castles were in ruins, while even now the same is true of the majority – are unlikely still to include half-timbering. In ruins, beam supports indicate that half-timbered walls used to exist; in rare cases, there is evidence of whole half-timbered upper storeys above massive substructures. However, as far larger numbers of them are still preserved today, it may be assumed that castles which are now in ruins also featured them. Stately homes which came into being as conversions of earlier castles with a military function tend more frequently to incorporate preserved half-timbering. Bürresheim Castle, near Mayen in the East Eifel – formerly a multiple-occupancy castle comprising two parts, which was built on a spur of rock in the 12th century – is a particularly fruitful site for research into half-timbering in castles. Here, half-timbered structures have been preserved from contexts indicating various uses, dating from the 15th, 16th, 17th and 20th centuries.

Tanja Kilzer

The architectural history of Hohenwerfen fortress in the Salzburg region from the Early Middle Ages until the Thirty Years' War

Hohenwerfen fortress in the Salzburg region, which, since it was developed for purposes of tourism in 1987, has also been known as 'Erlebnisburg Hohenwerfen' (Hohenwerfen adventure castle), is now among the most popular tourist destinations in the region. Standing on a prominent, 155-metre pillar of rock, high above the little town of Werfen, it is one of the most conspicuous places in the Salzach valley in the northern Pongau, being visible from far away in the Alpine landscape.

During its history, stretching back more than a thousand years, closely linked to the history of the Salzburg region and the Holy Roman Empire, it played a part in the Investiture Crisis, the Peasants' War, the Thirty Years' War and the witch hunts, and survived both the Napoleonic Wars and the period of National Socialism. Its fabric has been modified and extended a number of times over the centuries. In the course of more than 500 years, a small castle was expanded into a mighty fortress, which was intended to assist in the defence of the city of Salzburg, some 40 km away.

The essay focuses on the architectural history of the complex and the modifications made to it between the High Middle Ages and the Thirty Years' War so as to convert the initial structure into a late medieval/early modern-era fortress.

In addition, it seeks to demonstrate the close connection between the history of the Salzburg region and, locally, of Werfen, and the architectural development of the fortress.

Markus Sausen

An architectural gem where once there was only a ruin? – The reconstruction of the Wildburg at Treis from 1957 to 1997

Treis forms part of the municipality of Treis-Karden in the rural district of Cochem-Zell in Rhineland-Palatinate. Around a kilometre south of it lie the two castles associated with Treis, namely Treis Castle and the Wildburg, originally known as the Wildenburg. Whereas Treis Castle, viewed from the west, at first sight appears to be a small, very dilapidated ruin, of which indeed very little is now visible apart from the almost fully preserved keep, the Wildburg as seen from the same direction is an imposing complex. However, the good state of preservation of the Wildburg is not due to its having withstood the passage of time better than Treis Castle. There was a period when it, like its neighbour, Treis Castle, was in ruins. Unlike the latter, however, the Wildburg was rebuilt in the second half of the 20th century. The essay presented here is the first to describe the reconstruction. An account is also given of research into the castle to date, because just recently the previous description of the foundation of the castles at Treis has been refuted. As an aid to comprehension, the castle is also described in detail. The description covers not only the current state of the building following its reconstruction but also what remained of the old fabric before that work was undertaken, as this sheds light on the architectural interventions between those stages. Particular attention is paid to the Great Hall, as the research has revealed many previously unknown modifications that had been made to it.