

English summaries

(Michael Swithinbank)

Jonas Glanzmann

Newly discovered earth-and-wood castles in the Emmental valley, canton of Bern (Switzerland)

For several years, the author has been researching the settlement history of the Emmental in the canton of Bern in Switzerland. The Emmental comprises the catchment areas of the rivers Emme and Ilfis, as well as the hilly country between the Oberaargau, the Aaretal and the Berner Oberland. Hitherto, the settlement of the area before the late Middle Ages has been only relatively little researched, and such studies of the subject as have been made have been performed ad hoc. In his work, the author links findings from research into old road systems and topography (previously hardly examined) with written sources. In the past four years, this approach has led to the discovery of five unknown castle sites in the Emmental, one of which is Chamenegg, to the east of the village of Thal in the Liechtgutgraben, which is presented in detail here. The evidence and findings largely responsible for its discovery were as follows: the important ancient road between Sumiswald and Langnau, documentary sources, historical material (in archives), names of localities, features of the terrain in the light of an analysis of the topography, an analysis of the terrain model and exploration of the landscape on foot. Drawing on all the various information, it was possible to create a model of the site. At its centre is the main castle building and the outer ward with the moat. To the south of the castle lie the two settlement areas, one to the west and the other to the east; the western area was in addition terraced. In the western area, the ground plans of three buildings are visible. Chamenegg formed part of a newly established fiefdom on a regionally important road from Sumiswald to Langnau and Trub, a fiefdom which came into being as a result of the division among heirs of a large territory (which presumably had previously formed a single whole) in the Sumiswald/Trachselwald region.

Rudolf Hertwig

Two account books of the chamberlain of Castel Rotund (Oberreichenberg) near Taufers in South Tyrol dating from 1402, and the prospects for their analysis

In recent years and decades, accounts with a background close to noble territorial rulers have increasingly been used as sources for the study of the medieval nobility and castles. Otherwise,

castles, which from the point of view of people both in the Middle Ages and now were a central phenomenon of the age, are difficult to study in sources nowadays other than by examining their architectural remains, which tend to have been repeatedly altered over time. This is particularly true if they were not owned by high-ranking territorial lords and as regards their specific function and the activities of their occupants. This essay looks at two account books that belonged to the chamberlain of Castel Rotund/Oberreichenberg in the Province of Bolzano, South Tyrol (Italy), dating from 1402. A few preliminary remarks on the history of the castle and the Schlandersberg family who occupied it are followed by a discussion of the process of drawing up the accounts, their function and the transmission of the account books. Lastly, some ideas are outlined concerning the scope for analysing the role and significance of Castel Rotund on the basis of the accounts. The two account books show that the castle was a local economic and administrative centre in the network of the fiefdom of the Schlandersberg family. The situation at Castel Rotund seems thoroughly typical for a late medieval castle belonging to the lower nobility, with reference to the staff, the intermittent presence of the lords or the fact that income was derived mainly from farming.

Michael Kirchschlager

The Blidenhaus (catapult store) – a late medieval functional building for military technology and military equipment

From the mid-13th century, towns in the German-speaking area which owned catapults (stone-hurling machines of various sizes) had large buildings in which to store them, presumably built of stone, and these were also used to store and maintain a great variety of other military equipment and weapons. The situation was probably similar outside the German-speaking area as well. Such stores were built in all large towns that had duties connected with keeping the peace ('Landfrieden') or wished to protect their political and economic interests. In addition, they required a certain economic prosperity in order to meet the high costs of building, maintaining and using catapults. As a rule, those that could do so were the imperial cities (Frankfurt, Mulhouse), cities ruled by leading ecclesiastical princes (Cologne, Mainz, Worms, Speyer) or Hanseatic cities (Hamburg, Wismar, Lübeck, Rostock etc.). In a few instances, catapults were also kept

in castles (e.g. Strahlenburg, Mühlburg, Schloss Tonndorf), and it is thought that they were kept either in barns or likewise in purpose-built structures (Landskron). Streets which have retained the name 'Blidenstrasse', and documentary references to men holding the office of catapult master may indicate that catapult stores existed in the places concerned. It may be assumed that the stores were managed and supervised by catapult masters or competent men*. Their role developed into that of the armourer. Catapult stores were located in urban castle complexes (Konstanz) or behind secure sections of city ramparts (Frankfurt, Hanseatic cities, Mulhouse, Erfurt). When catapults fell out of use in the 15th century, stores for them were left without a function. Many were repurposed (becoming cannon foundries), remained in use as arsenals (Konstanz, Frankfurt) or were demolished (Erfurt, Görlitz). Today, it is only in Konstanz that the nucleus of a catapult store is thought to have survived. Archive research and archaeological studies of buildings might yield further information about late medieval catapult stores.

Heiko Laß

Marienburg Castle – the residence of Duke Bernhard I of Sachsen-Coburg-Meiningen in Ichtershausen

Marienburg Castle in Ichtershausen was built for Duke Bernhard I of Sachsen-Coburg Meiningen and named after his first wife, Marie Hedwig of Hessen-Darmstadt. Its construction began in 1677, after an agreement among the owners assigning the right to use the site had been reached in 1676. However, Bernhard moved away to his new dukedom in 1681, with the result that, for a time, the castle remained unfinished. It was only in 1710–1715 that it was completed, following a new design. A wooden model of the open three-winged building, thought to have been made in anticipation of construction of the castle, has survived and is kept in the models room of Friedenstein Castle Foundation. It is not known whether it represents a design variant or the model on which the actual building was based. The model shows a three-storey three-winged building with a hip roof or gable roof and volute gables on the garden side. The main floor is the first floor, which is indicated by the greater height of the windows. The model can be taken apart storey by storey. In the middle, on the entrance side, connecting all the floors, is a double staircase, and on the garden side, on every floor, is a gallery affording access to the rooms. On the ground floor, to the right of the entrance, it seems that a kitchen was planned. Otherwise, the functions of the rooms cannot be determined. It is striking that in many places a large room and a small one are adjacent to each other. Possibly

one might have been a living room and the other an associated bedroom. The first floor was to have incorporated a room on a grand scale in the west wing. The other rooms were presumably living areas and function rooms. As no other equally grand apartments were included on the same floor, it may be supposed that the duke and his wife intended to live in apartments above and below each other. That was not an unusual arrangement around 1675. However, it is equally possible that the ducal couple were to occupy two apartments on the same floor, one in the main wing and the other in the east wing. The model makes it possible to discover more about the architecture of castles belonging to territorial rulers in Germany in the last third of the 17th century.

Michael Losse

Mansions, castles and palaces in Malta – an overview (Part 2)

Even after the state ruled by the Order of Malta ceased to exist in 1798, palaces and mansions were built there under British colonial rule, or existing ones were expanded either in a historicist style or – in the 1930s – in Art Deco style. This well-researched phase of Malta's architectural history has received little attention from historians outside Malta. At this stage, stately buildings were commissioned not only by long-established noble families but also by those raised into the aristocracy by the British and by the bourgeoisie. No later than 1780, the watchtower in the garden of Palazzo Dorell was converted into an artificial ruin, marking the inception of castle romanticism in Malta. In the mid-19th century at the latest, the neogothic style became established for use in religious buildings in Malta. After this, neogothic country seats, villas and town houses were built incorporating castle elements. But neoclassical and neobaroque mansions were also a feature of the period, notably Palazzo Parisio, which was lavishly redesigned for Marquis Scicluna in 1898–1906.

Openness to the castle tradition also left its influence on certain British fortifications in Malta, particularly Sliema Point Battery (built in neogothic style in 1872 and 1905), and also on public utility buildings such as the Sewage Pumping Station in Gżira (1895) and Luqa Water-Pumping Station. In addition, towards the end of the 19th century, public and social buildings incorporated castle elements, for example the Vincenzo Bugeja Technical Institute in Hamrun (1880).

Malta's postmodern buildings, which have been heavily influenced by the architect, artist and writer Prof. Richard England (*1937), in many cases incorporate elements with castle associations, such as the church and cloister complex of St Francis of Assisi in Qawra with its round towers.