

## English summaries

(Michael Swithinbank)

### **Werner Meyer: Castles as a focus of economic activity by the nobility**

In order fully to understand the phenomenon of castles, one should not only consider such aspects as architecture, archaeological features or constitutional status, which have been researched thoroughly in the past. It is necessary to abandon obsolete misconceptions, for example concerning their strategic functions or their role in the customs associated with chivalry and courtly society. If all the sources and vestiges are studied without preconceptions, it becomes clear that castles were the focus of manorially organised economic activity, whose scale might vary widely but which was essentially based on farming. The land farmed directly from the castle comprised a self-contained business, whose antecedents no doubt lay in the lordly manor (*curtis*) of the early Middle Ages and which was mainly concerned with livestock farming. In addition to farming, various crafts were pursued within castle precincts, evidence of which is provided primarily by archaeological finds and research. The lord's property also incorporated a great many, wide-ranging usufructs, including the right to revenue from customs duties, judicial powers, hunting and fishing rights, mining rights and authority over subjects who were required to pay levies. In its totality, this property – whether in the form of fiefs or freeholds – may be regarded as a seigniorship (*dominium*). The lord, a member of the nobility, thus proves to have been not so much a cavalry fighter (*miles*) as an entrepreneur with many different irons in the fire who was responsible for his property and the wellbeing of his – broadly defined – dependents. He claimed the right to defend his property and revenue using armed force. The phenomena associated with knightly culture, such as jousting, were located not at castles but in towns and at court.

### **Hans-Werner Peine/Kim Wegener: The imposing facade of the Holsterburg near Warburg (North Rhine-Westphalia)**

Since 2010 the Archaeology Section of the Landschaftsverband Westfalen-Lippe (LWL) has been conducting a large-scale research project on and around the Holsterburg near Warburg. During the 2016 season, large sections of the octagonal external walls were exposed in preparation for a 3D laser scan, which will provide vital material for use in the planned virtual reconstruction of the complex. In 2018, the reconstruction will be displayed as part of the ECHY federal exhibition in the Gropius Building in Berlin.

The Holthusen family's castle was no simple edifice: on the contrary, thanks to its form and design, it remains to this day among the foremost medieval castles. The quality of the surviving archaeological remains is due to the fact that, after the Holsterburg was destroyed in 1294, a mound was erected over the site, as a result of which the remains were preserved.

Even today, the octagonal structure, which is untypical of most castles, and the imposing facade of large, well smoothed ashlar, with high-quality grouting and indeed trowel lines between them, is representative of a bold medieval residential and military architecture, indicative of the self-image, interest in status and position of the lords. In addition to the unusual form of the building, this is also emphasised by the quality of the construction, which at the minimum suggests that it must have been erected by well organised professionals under the direction of a good master builder, drawing on the services of skilled stone-cutters and masons. The disadvantages inherent in the low-lying location of the Holsterburg in comparison with the hilltop castles in the area of the River Diemel were very effectively compensated for by the castle's imposing appearance. Although the castle was relatively small, its mode of construction will have made it exceptionally expensive to build. Clearly, the lords of Berkule spared no cost or effort in their desire to stress their powerful position in the Diemel area by means of an outstanding building.

**Jacky Koch:  
Landisperch castrum sculteti de columbaria. The origins of Hohlandsberg Castle (Château du Haut-Landsbourg) near Colmar, Alsace (1279 to 1281)**

Hohlandsberg Castle is a landmark of Alsatian castle architecture in the countryside around Colmar. It is known to have been built from 1279 and then destroyed for the first time two years later. This first construction project gave the Sheriff of Colmar, Siegfried von Gundolsheim, a private residence, which his lord had permitted him to build, as provided for by medieval law. The archaeological research of the past 20 years has shown that this first structure, sited on the highest point, was set on fire towards the end of the 13th century, which confirms that it had been completed before it was besieged. However, stratigraphic surveys of the upper castle also show that this initial structure remained unused for nearly a century after the conflict. The new, larger complex of fortifications that we see today did not at first incorporate it. This raises questions, as the site originally built upon was the highest point in the whole complex.

**Ludger Fischer:  
Schloss Oefte in Essen – a masterpiece by the architect Ferdinand Schorbach from Hanover**

Around 1900, the romanticisation of castles, and restoration work on them, provided lucrative employment for architects. Before, simultaneously with and after Bodo Ebhardt – the founder of the German Burgenvereinigung – architects such as Eugène Viollet-le-Duc and Ernst Stahl worked in this field. Another of them was the architect Ferdinand Schorbach from Hanover (born 1846 in Kassel, died 1912 in Munich). He had studied under Georg Gottlob Ungewitter, and from 1862 he was employed by the architectural firm of Edwin Oppler in Hanover. Schorbach built or rebuilt numerous castles, mostly along historicist lines in the Neo-Renaissance, Neo-Gothic, Neoclassical and Neo-Baroque styles. In so doing, he followed in the footsteps of the founder of the Hanover school of architecture, Conrad Wilhelm Hase (1818 – 1902), who had also been taught by Edwin Oppler. His works include a “very peculiar building”, the “Solmsschlösschen” in Wiesbaden, built between 1890 and 1892 for Prince Albrecht of Solms-Braunfels, and the “Garvensburg”, also called “Burg Züschen”, built between 1895 and 1898 for the

manufacturer Garvens in Züschen near Fritzlar. From 1883 to 1884 Schorbach reconstructed the castle of Neugattersleben in Saxony-Anhalt in the Renaissance style. For Crown Prince Ernst August of Hanover, Duke of Cumberland, he designed Cumberland Castle near Gmunden in Austria from 1882 to 1886. For Count Günther von der Schulenburg (1865 to 1939), Schorbach gave Castle Oefte in Essen a medieval appearance. The blueprints have recently been discovered in Hanover's City Archives.

**Hermann Wirth:  
Criticism of methods of practical treatment of castles and châteaux, and criticism of their restoration**

Of the five sets of methods of preserving historic monuments – conservation, restoration, rehabilitation (i.e. preservation with alteration), relocation and copying (a sixth, reconstruction, does not deserve to be regarded as a separate category) – copying is discussed in detail, taking the châteaux in Berlin and Potsdam as examples, while relocation is merely touched upon, because total relocation is not an option for the treatment of castles and châteaux. Partial relocation was undertaken on the Lobumirski or Brühl Palace in Warsaw for traffic-related reasons: its corps de logis was lifted off its foundations and moved from its original position on rails. Rehabilitation involves copying, restoration and even conservation accompanied by alterations for which there are no historical models. It is made clear that the attempted reproduction of historic buildings, with the aspiration to produce a true copy, as in the case of the Marksburg on the Japanese island of Miyako-jima and the idealised 12th/13th century castle, Guédelon, currently being built in Burgundy, has nothing to do with the conservation of old buildings, although it can certainly serve a useful function in the revival of historical building techniques.

Rebuilding projects, often claimed to produce ‘reconstructions’, at sites that have been studied by archaeologists, are subject to speculative uncertainties and are permissible only on condition that all the finds have been preserved in a museum's repository and all the remains have been documented in exhaustive detail.

Whatever method is used, it is inevitable that some alteration will be made to historic buildings, but care must be taken to ensure that their identity is preserved. To avoid making any alteration whatsoever would mean allowing the site to die, no matter how gloriously.