

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 “Solmschlösschen” 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.