

STAGES OF RESTORATION OF MEDIEVAL ARCHITECTURAL MONUMENTS. LATVIAN EXPERIENCE

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Abstract. The purpose of the article is to provide a focused overview of the evolution of measures taken to protect Latvia's medieval architectural heritage as a value of material culture, from the restoration of the functionality of utilitarian architectural objects to the complex implementation of scientific methodological and technological techniques for the preservation of the original substance through conservation, restoration and partial restoration. In European society, both approaches to the preservation of architecture have always coexisted: both practical and aesthetic, with the latter partially appraising the artistic value in addition to its utilitarian function. The scope and attitude of their application have been dictated by rational considerations. It was only the academically educated European society of the Age of Enlightenment and the 19th century came to understand the importance of historical, symbolic, emotional and aesthetic values of architecture, laying the foundations for the theory and practice of architectural heritage preservation. In the experience of preservation of medieval architecture in Latvia, there have been both ups and downs of a prudent attitude, caused by either political cataclysms or a revisionist attitude. Taking care of the preservation of their cultural heritage, since the second half of the 18th century, the Baltic German community in Latvia have been trying to discover and nurture the evidence related to their immigration to the Baltics. This was done with encyclopaedic historical research and also with early archaeological and architectural research methods. A hundred years ago, the protection of Latvia's cultural heritage developed as a science-and-research-based system, but due to insufficient resources, it did not become comprehensive. After the Second World War, cultural heritage preservation was dictated by a politicized approach and ideological motives. The re-establishment of Latvia's independence in 1991 could provide support for a modern scientific, methodological and theoretical basis as well as appropriate technical and professional realization of the conservation and restoration of medieval architectural monuments.

Keywords: restoration, conservation, architecture, the Middle Ages, cultural monument

1. Formation of value consciousness

Mission work in the late 12th and early 13th centuries was unthinkable without the subjugation of territories and peoples, as had been the case since Charlemagne's efforts to establish a Frankish state as the core of European Christian identity. Subjugated and Christianized by the bishops with the help of the Sword Brothers and the Teutonic Order, Livonia had to become a safe trade bridge for Hanseatic merchants and craftsmen between Mecklenburg, Westphalia, also the port cities of Northern Europe and the principalities of Smolensk, Polotsk and Novgorod, beyond which the trade routes extended further to Kiev, Baghdad, Kabul and even Beijing [18]. With the first decades of the conquest and Christianization of Livonia, knowledge of masonry architecture and skills in the construction of typologically different buildings and structures reached also Livonia. By dividing the conquered lands into administrative territories along the overland trade routes and on the banks of the most important rivers, both the Teutonic Order and the bishops organized the construction of military defence structures. The same happened inland as well, where both feudal lords established the so-called "table manors" or leased lands to their vassals to manage the territory and secure the market. Stone castles were also built in the centres of these economic units for production and tax collection, which in the cultural landscape of the Baltics still largely bear witness to the consequences of the colonization policy.

In the 13th and 14th centuries, following the European model, towns of a certain administrative and legal status developed at the ports and the intersections of trade routes. Their architectural image was determined by such typological features as the presence of a fortified defensive wall (Riga, Valmiera, Cēsis, Limbaži), town halls, guild houses and public buildings, churches and monasteries, hospitals and asylums, residential buildings and warehouses. In the eight oldest medieval cities of Latvia – members of the Hanseatic Trade League (Riga, Straupe, Valmiera, Limbaži, Cēsis, Koknese, Kuldīga, Ventspils) – only a limited number of medieval architecture have survived to this day because of political and economic consequences. The attitude towards a functionally

usable building, or vice versa – a building of merely historical interest – has been different at different times, with a pragmatic, or a romantic approach prevailing, disregarding the content of the term "restoration".

For example, after the conquest of Vidzeme in the last decade of the 16th century, the officials of the Polish king carried out an inventory of the most important medieval fortresses to be reflected in "metrics". The purpose of this stock-taking was the assessment of the defence structures in the conquered territory according to their suitability for military purposes and the calculations of the budget required for repairs or reconstructions. However, the attitude towards the fortresses that were not included in the strategy of the Polish defence doctrine and could serve the enemy as a shield in an attack was depreciatory. Christian Kelch, pastor of St. John's Church in Järve, Estonia, in his chronicle "Liefländische Historia" described the Polish king Sigismund August's attitude towards fortresses in the following way: *"weil auch die Vielheit der Schlösser und festen Häuser in Liefland zur Krieger Zeit dem Lande mehr schädlich als nützlich, zumahlen der Moscoviter (als welcher Lieflandes gefährlichster Nachbar) ein solcher Feind, der zwar leicht aus dem Felde zu schlagen, wann er aber, wie letzt geschehen, ein Hauß und Vestung nach dem andern einbekäme, übel wieder auszutreiben wäre. Als begehrten Königliche Majestät, daß alle die von Adel ihre Schlösser und feste Häuser schleiffen, und nur den innern Stock zum Wohnhause behalten, und selbigen mit einen hölzernen Stackete verwahren solten. Und damit sie so viel weniger Ursache haben sollten, sich dessen zu weigern, wollten Königliche Majestät an etlichen ihren eigenen Schlössern hierzu den Anfang machen"* [19].

During the Swedish rule, an official was appointed to Vidzeme (Livland) as the executive of the State Antiquary, whose duties included creating lists of rare and artistically valuable objects, recording historical inscriptions, ornaments and texts on tombstones. Already during the lifetime of Gustavus Adolphus, the Swedish administration had entrusted this work to Martin Aschaneus, and at the end of the 17th century,

to Christoff Zeigner, the Riga Dom School professor [29]. In the modern sense, restoration as a method of preserving the functionality, architectonic and artistic elements of an architectural monument is a concept whose content, although fixed in many internationally accepted documents, including the charter adopted in Venice in 1964, is constantly developing and goes hand in hand with the maintenance, preservation and conservation tasks [28]. Ever since the Age of Enlightenment, the increased attention of the intellectual society to the architectural heritage has brought about a change of opinions about the loss of the functionality, material and visual value of the architectural object, as well as about the means and techniques for preservation of these qualities. Modern restoration theory has evaluated both the medieval, Renaissance and Baroque approaches to the practice of preserving architectural heritage, the main being to ensure the functioning of buildings by supplementing the lost parts in the forms and materials of their time.

2. Renovation as protection and origin of restoration

Until the beginning of the 20th century, talking about restoration in its traditional modern sense concerning the protection of Latvian cultural heritage is impossible because architects and builders did not have binding methodological as well as legislation-based documents on the sequence and technical performance of the tasks. In the late Enlightenment period, an important step in understanding the protection of cultural monuments was the first law on the protection of monuments issued by Tsar Nicholas I on December 31, 1826: an order for the enforcement of police institutions in all provinces to list ancient buildings and describe their condition without damaging them. Since the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the information and pictures of the medieval construction monuments recorded in the manuscripts and printed works of J.C. Brotze, co-rector of the Riga Imperial Lyceum, and of Philip Kerber, pastor of the Wendau parish, display efforts to educate the public to treat the evidence of the past with care.

In the mid-nineteenth century, the Baltics experienced rapid industrial growth, which demanded sacrificing a large part of the historical architectural heritage, mainly in the cities. The Baltic German community in leading political and administrative positions, remained interested in economic development although some of the landed gentry and intelligentsia, united around the Society for the Research of History and Antiquity (*Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Altertumskunde*), founded in 1834, perceived in this "progress" both unwelcome tendencies of Russification and a threat to their own culture. While congratulating the plans for the demolition of Riga's ramparts and modernization of the city, the Society-allied landlords and architects drew attention to the demolition of medieval buildings that revealed the architectural fragments of the bishop's castle in the foundations and brick walls of the earlier Mūku, Mazā and Lielā Biskapa streets, and evidence for the hypothesis of the location of the oldest Town Hall in the building details of No. 4 Tirgoņu Street [33].

In 1884, the research and restoration of the Riga Dom Church was put forward as a particularly important task for the protection of cultural heritage. The nineteenth-century fondness of Eclecticism also introduced a romanticized and intuitive approach to restoration among Riga's historians and architects, whose representatives practised experimental reconstructions, using fragments of lost originals to obtain decorative and compositional solutions. This approach is demonstrably proven by the cycle of renovation and



Fig. 1 The Riga Dom [photo by O. Spārtis]



Fig. 2. Cross Gallery of the Riga Dom [photo by O. Spārtis]

restoration works at the Riga Dom that lasted almost thirty years. The architect Reinhold Guleke, a professor at the Dorpat University, had offered a project for the reconstruction of the western façade and the construction of two towers in stylized Romanesque forms, but the Dom construction company (est. 1885) rejected it and entrusted the work to Karl Neuburger. Demolition of poor-quality occasional extensions, architectonic research and early restoration began with the transformation of the southern façade in 1887. Following the decision of the Dom construction company, the architects Wilhelm Bockslaff, August Reinberg, Vilhelm von Strick, Karl Mohrmann and Wilhelm Neumann in 1888 gradually became involved in the restoration. Their contribution included the restoration of the Chapter Hall, the theoretical reconstruction of the tonsory, the restoration of the Cross Gallery with its capitals and consoles. The work was completed in 1894 [30]. In the following years, W. Neumann took over the supervision of the restoration and proposed to use new bricks for the restoration of the eastern and northern façades, to build a theoretically reconstructed vestibule in front of the northern portal, to complement St Mary's chapel with innovations in neo-Gothic forms, to erect a new cement-cast portal and a rose window on the north façade of the tower (Fig.1, 2).

The restoration of the Riga Dom that lasted till 1912 included a whole complex of various professional activities related to the preservation of the technical condition of the cultural monument. They can be qualified as removing unwanted layers, repair and conservation of the original substance, as well as the era-appropriate restoration, and innovations implemented with the method of stylistic reconstruction, which included modern elements adapted mainly for decorative finish and the interior [12]. Great encouragement



Fig. 3. Castle of the Teutonic Order in Cēsis [photo by O. Spārītis]



Fig. 4. Ēdole Castle [photo by V. Mašnovskis]

for this direction of restoration related to the principle of historicity (or historicism) in the 19th century was provided by the practice of the French architect Eugène Viollet-le-Duc, who combined the techniques of both restoration and reconstruction, as well as stylized novelty methods [21]. On the initiative of the architect Wilhelm Neumann, the framework of the wall tomb of Meinhard, the first bishop of Livonia, in the northern wall of the choir of the Riga Dom was restored that clearly revealed the shortcomings of the romanticized approach in the restoration of cultural monuments. Based on C.J. Brotze's drawings and approximate measurements in 1775, W. Neumann in 1892 developed an academic theoretical project for a neo-Gothic wall tomb [6].

With the efforts of the historian Joseph Girgensohn, amateur history researchers Anton Buchholz, Gustav von Sengbusch, Nikolai Bockslaff, Karl von Loewis of Menar, architects Wilhelm Bockslaff, Wilhelm Neumann, Heinz Pirang, August Reinberg and other enthusiasts who were involved in the activities of the Society for the Research of History and Antiquity, extensive research and surveys of medieval architecture were carried out in Riga in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. When uncovering the ancient structures, architectural details, wall and ceiling paintings and carrying out their partial conservation in Riga, the Baltic German architects followed the theoretical principles of the restoration and reconstruction theorist and architect of the Marienburg [Malbork] Castle Conrad Steinbrecht and maintained professional contacts with him. In 1887, inspired by the authority of C. Steinbrecht, Karl von Löwis of Menar identified the walls of the altar,

apse and congregation space of St George's Church (built by the Sword Brothers) in the buildings of the Convent Yard that was rebuilt after the Reformation. In 1888, the architect Wilhelm Bockslaff in the architecture of Riga's St Peter's Church identified traces of structures and original vaults built by Johann Rumeschottel, the master builder of St Mary's Church in Rostock. During the restoration of both Riga's St Jacob's and St John's Churches, the remains of ornamental and figural paintings were uncovered, but the methods of the restorers in the late 19th century and the insufficient degree of preservation of the paintings rendered restoration ineffective. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, architects Wilhelm Bockslaff and August Reinberg discovered structures of St Catherine's Church and monastery concealed in the reconstruction of residential buildings. In a similar way, several medieval fragments have been identified in the Riga fortification walls and the watchtowers that had been considered lost: material for research and restoration.

The twentieth century introduced new knowledge, methods, technologies and materials into the practice of protection and restoration of European cultural heritage. Owing to the involvement of the Historical Research Society, archaeological excavations, surveys of medieval castles and protective measures to strengthen the ruins against erosion had already been carried out. However, only the initiative of Emanuel von Sievers Jr., owner of the Cēsis manor house, can be considered a measure of architectural monument conservation, not restoration. It envisaged, in 1914, to save the Teutonic Order castle's western or Master's Tower with a conical-shaped tiled roof, which has ensured the preservation of the wall structures, vaults and interior elements to the present day (Fig. 3).

At the first congress of Baltic historians in Riga in April 1908, the Riga Society of Architects and the Society of History Researchers agreed on the establishment of the Commission for the Monuments Protection (Kommission für Denkmalpflege), with the architect Wilhelm Neumann as its chairman [31]. However, since the Society of History Researchers was only a private foundation, the focus of this enthusiasm-based initiative was also more focused on ascertaining the state of sacred architecture using the method of inventory.

The renovation of medieval buildings and elements of restoration had to be tackled on a larger scale after 1905, when several families of landed gentry had to restore their burned medieval castles. There were several of them in Kurzeme - Dundaga, Jaunpils, Ēdole, but the most significant loss to Vidzeme's cultural heritage was the burning of the Lielstraupe Castle. The most prominent families of landed gentry, who had sufficient means at their disposal, embarked on the rebuilding task. During the period from 1906 to 1911, the renovated Ēdole Castle façade regained greater monumentality, abandoning the Tudor Gothic details of 1835-1841 (Fig. 4), [2].

On the order of Christian von der Osten-Sacken, the German architect from Braunschweig, Hermann Pfeiffer, in 1909 developed a project for the restoration of the Dundaga Castle [13]. He supplemented the burnt down medieval building with stylized interior elements, while the façades were supplemented with new structures, neo-Gothic merlons, as well as figural and heraldic reliefs on the facades, made by the sculptor August Foltz. The experience and talent of the architect Wilhelm Bockslaff were put to use in the renovation of the castles at Lielstraupe and Jaunpils, which had been burned down in 1905. Both castles had lost their historical interiors that were replaced with simplified neo-Baroque

and neo-Classical elements – wall panels, new doors and stoves, plaster mouldings. More substantial reconstruction took place in Jaunpils. The northern wall facing the pond in Jaunpils was complemented with an Art Nouveau bay window and a loggia, while the lattice construction lent a romantic “thieves’ staircase” image to the stairs in the corner of the yard. Moreover, Hans von Rosen, the owner of the Lielstraupe Castle, requested Wilhelm Bockslaff as an imitator of refined historical styles in architecture to give an archaic appearance to the 13th century Riga archbishop vassal’s castle. When the restoration of the Lielstraupe Castle was completed, the architect Heinz Pirang assessed the retrospective achievement of his colleague as a true embodiment of medieval philosophy [4].

3. Development of a national approach

The professional interest of Baltic German historians and architects with their scientific publications formed an academic basis for the activity of public organizations related to the research of Baltic history and culture [23]. They developed and refined understanding of the care, promotion and protection of cultural monuments, including the beginnings of science-based restoration. However, practical restoration in Latvia in a scientifically and legally approved manner began only in 1923 with the establishment of the Monuments Board and the Saeima adoption of the “Law on the Protection of Monuments” [22]. Until then, individual projects comparable to restoration were not systematic, but rather occasional in nature, manifested mainly by corporate or private initiative. From 1918 to 1940, the protection of cultural monuments, including measures for the conservation and restoration of medieval architecture, became part of state policy, which was inevitably influenced by both the economic situation and ideological standpoints. This attitude is illustrated by the 1935 list of state-protected monuments with only 35 of the 100 medieval castle ruins identified in the territory of Latvia [25]. From 1937 to 1939, small-scale preventive conservation and wall strengthening works were carried out in the castle ruins of Cēsis, Rauna, Koknese and Sigulda. However, at the same time, at the meeting of the Monuments Board on July 18, 1939, it was decided to exclude the castle ruins of Rēzekne and Grobiņa from the list of protected objects [40]. With the ongoing revisionist trend aiming to reduce the number of financially intensive monuments, the possibility of starting the demolition of the castle ruins of Rēzekne, Ludza, Grobiņa and Dobeles was considered. A precedent for a similar practice was the conciliatory position of the Monuments Board in the case of the demolition of the northern block of the Mazstraupe Castle [26] and the reconstruction of the Krustpils Castle, allowing the latter to be used for the needs of the Latvian Army [24].

During the interwar period, archaeological and architectonic research was carried out in individual objects of medieval sacral architecture in Latvia as well as efforts were taken to get rid of the damage of the First World War. For the most part, it concerned the medieval sacred architecture of the regions but did not affect Riga. In 1927, under the leadership of the Swedish architect Helgi Kjellin, excavations were carried out in the ruins of the Ikšķile Church, and measurements of these ruins were also made [39]. Based on the research and on behalf of the Board of Monuments, P. Kampe developed a project for the restoration of the oldest part of the church, intending to abandon the late 19th century neo-Gothic reconstructions. However, the project remained unimplemented [20]. In connection with the Aizkraukle mound archaeological excavations, the archaeologist Pēteris Stepiņš in 1939 excavated and measured the foundations of the Aizkraukle



Fig. 5. Fresco “Crowning of Mary”, the Riga Dom [photo by V. Mašnovskis]

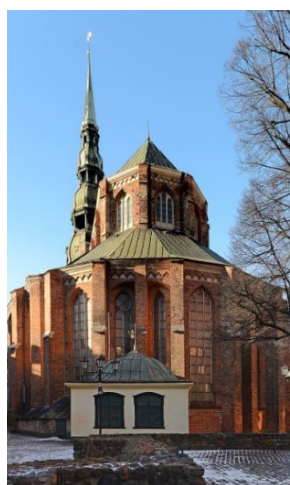


Fig. 6. Choir part of St Peter's Church in Riga [photo V. Mašnovskis]

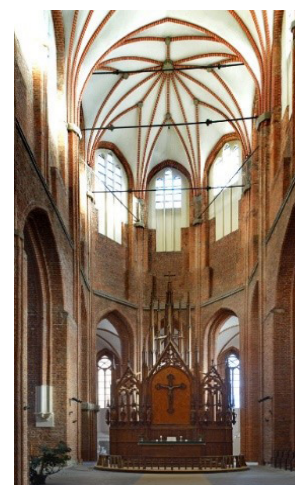


Fig. 7. Nave of St Peter's Church in Riga [photo V. Mašnovskis]



Fig. 8. Ruins of the Ikšķile Church after conservation [photo by O. Spārītis]

medieval church, which allowed to reconstruct the plan of the church [37]. Architects Pauls Kundziņš (Rauna, 1936-1937) and Pēteris Ārends (Lielstraupe, 1938) supplemented the interiors of the churches with stylized vaults, thus creating a visual image consistent with the aesthetic ideas of the 20th century [27]. Summarizing Latvia's state policy in the field of protection and restoration of monuments in the 1920s-1930s, it appears ideologically motivated, insufficiently supported in terms of finances and thus unable to embrace the entire spectrum of the heritage.

The Second World War caused irreversible damage to the cultural heritage of both Latvia and Riga. In the first days of the war, part of the administrative centre of the medieval city was destroyed. Fire ravaged the Town Hall and the Blackheads House, as well as St Peter's Church. As the front line moved to the east, Riga's architects embarked upon the

survey of the ruins of the damaged cultural symbols and carried out preliminary works for their conservation. In 1943, the architect Pēteris Ārends published the book "Blackheads House in Riga" [Melngalvju nams Rīgā], and a year later a book documenting the history of the church and the damage caused by the fire: "St Peter's Church in Riga" [Sv. Pētera baznīca Rīgā] [1]. Already in the summer of 1941, museum employees and students of the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Latvia, who had been invited by the initiative of the Monuments Board, took part in the removal of the ruins and the measurement of the most important details. To ensure St Peter's reconstruction in the autumn of the same year, the Riga City Directorate of High-rise Buildings erected a protective wall of boards above the entrance portals, while the aisles of the church and the crown of the chapels were covered with a temporary roof. However, in the final phase of the war, in the autumn of 1944, these preventive defence structures were also destroyed [38].

4. The approach during the Soviet occupation period (1944/1945-1991)

The repressive Soviet power imposed ideological clichés on Latvian cultural life and deformed the cultural heritage protection system. In 1948, sappers of the Soviet Army blew up the remains of the Blackheads House medieval walls, and the walls of the Town Hall were also demolished in 1954. The expropriation of the Riga Dom created a paradoxical precedent in the protection of cultural heritage, allowing funds to be officially allocated for the repair and partial restoration of the medieval sacred building. On the completion of the renovation works in 1962, the Riga Dom church was transformed into a concert hall and museum for 40 years to come. Only in 1989 was the church returned to its rightful owner - the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia. Repeated repairs, visual improvement of the Dom, restoration of the organ took place in 1982-1984, while in 1986-1987, under the supervision of the architect Juris Galviņš, the conservation of the consoles and capitals of the cross gallery was carried out [11]. The Czech restorer Miloš Gavenda in 2009-2010 restored the 14th-century fresco "Crowning of Mary" above the northern portal of the church (Fig. 5), [9]. Since 2011, the restoration of the church has been ongoing, preventing the harmful effects of groundwater in the foundations and walls of the church.

The tower walls of St Peter's Church in Riga received a temporary roof structure only in 1950, while the preparatory work for restoration under the architect Pēteris Saulītis commenced in 1954 and continued until 1970. Gradually, a roof was put on the aisles and the nave, the vaults were strengthened and restored, construction parts were

measured, and the project of the organ balcony and administration rooms was developed. To continue the work on the restoration of the church, the decision of the Council of Ministers of the Latvian SSR on June 11, 1966, which defined the future use of the church for the purposes of a museum, exhibitions and tourism, was necessary. In cooperation with the specialists of the Science Council of the All-Union Ministry of Culture and the restoration and construction organizations of the Belarussian SSR, a project was developed for the restoration of the Baroque spire of the tower. It provided for the installation of a high-speed lift in the centre of the tower metal structures. The restoration of the church and the reconstruction of the tower were completed on August 21, 1970 (Fig. 6, 7), [35].

In the context of the restoration of Latvian medieval architecture, the conservation measures of the Ikšķile church are notable. The project that was developed in 1962-1963 by the architect Gunārs Jansons and the historian Roberts Malvēss was implemented for the conservation of the ruins of the church that had been damaged by shelling in 1916, and the marking of the contours of the foundations with the aim of providing a visual representation of the lost volume and preserving the most important details. The speeded construction of the Riga HPP in 1968 also brought unwanted haste to the preservation of the medieval castle and church ruins of Ikšķile. The planned increase of the water level by about 1.5 m above the level of the church floor threatened to turn the territory of the cultural monument into an island. Thus, in 1973-1975, a compromise decision was reached to raise the surface of the island by two metres and bury the foundations of both the castle and the church with gravel and rubble [16]. To protect the walls of Latvia's oldest masonry architectural monument from adverse weather conditions, a metal canopy was installed in 2002 over the church ruins (Fig. 8). The conservation measures of several medieval castles were stimulated by their archaeological and architectural research. It created favourable conditions for the use of these objects for educational and tourism purposes. Archaeologists Jānis Graudonis, Jānis Apals, Ēvalds Mugurēvičs, Andris Caune and Ādolfs Stubavs developed recommendations for the conservation and further use of medieval architectural objects [34]. Their initiative was supported by the Ministry of Culture and the State Inspection for the Protection of Cultural Monuments. The Society for the Protection of Nature and Monuments of Latvia, founded in 1959, further popularized these goals of cultural education and patriotic regional studies among wider public.

The Cēsis Castle of the Teutonic Order in Livonia ranks among the most important medieval architectural monuments in Latvia. Its function at the edge of the wall-protected town was to serve as the residence of the Master of the Order and,



Fig. 9. View of Turaida Castle ruins, 1930 [photo by E. Ansulis]



Fig. 10. View of the restored bergfried, granary and the semi-circular tower in the courtyard of Turaida Castle [photo by V. Mašnovskis]



Fig. 11. Reconstructed Blackheads House [photo by V. Mašnovskis]



Fig. 14. Castle of the Teutonic Order in Ventspils [photo by O. Spārtiis]



Fig. 12. Sigulda Castle ruins after conservation and improvements [photo by O. Spārtiis]



Fig. 15. Chapel of the Ventspils Castle [photo by O. Spārtiis]



Fig. 13. Conservation structure of the watchtower as a tourist viewing platform at Sigulda Castle ruins [photo by O. Spārtiis]

together with St John's Church, form a military, administrative and religious complex. Partial conservation of the northern tower and the castle walls was carried out already in 1952-1960 under the supervision of the architect Ojārs Treigūts. Since 1974, the archaeological excavations under the archaeologist Zigrīda Apala have uncovered parts of the western block of the castle, the buried cellars, bridge structures and fragments of the forecourt buildings that had been destroyed since the Livonian War [15]. Conservation of the most important parts has eliminated the most critical risks of erosion, and the castle is open for the purposes of educational tourism.

Noteworthy objects of Latvia's cultural and historical heritage are the castle ruins of Sigulda and Turaida, whose romantic attraction was already known during the Enlightenment period. The strengthening of the northern tower of the

Sigulda castle ruins according to the project of the architect G. Zirnis was already carried out in 1962, but in the following period the Chapter Hall and the chapel were conserved and restored under the supervision of the architect T. Vītola [7]. The link between the early construction period of the castle and the Order of the Sword Brothers is reminded by the so-called Jerusalem cross, preserved in the red-brick pediment of the chapel. In 2011-2012, with the European Union co-financing, extensive conservation and partial reconstruction of the Sigulda castle ruins were carried out that created a safe infrastructure for cultural events in the inner courtyard of the fortress and adapted the northern and southern towers for tourist visits.

The present-day image of the Turaida Castle, residence of the Archbishop of Riga, is formed by the sum of various components that includes both emotional cognitive values and the information obtained through archaeological research, conservation and restoration. The construction of the viewing area in the ruins of the defence tower, bergfried, in 1936, is noteworthy as the first conservation measure of the castle ruins. According to the project developed by the architect Kārlis Vikmanis, in 1953-1959 the tower was raised by about one third. It was given several new floors, a visitor entrance was created, the inside staircase system was restored and topped with a conical roof (Fig. 9, 10), [17].

The granary, the best-preserved building of the castle, was also restored in 1961 according to the project of the architect G. Zirnis. Until the mid-20th century, the walls of the semi-circular defence tower had survived at a height of about 15 metres. The conservation measures in 1962 protected the walls from erosion, but the entire restoration of the semi-circular tower was completed in 1973 according to the project of the architect G. Jansons. The archaeological excavations



Fig. 16. Chapel block at the Dobele Castle ruins [photo by O. Spārtis]

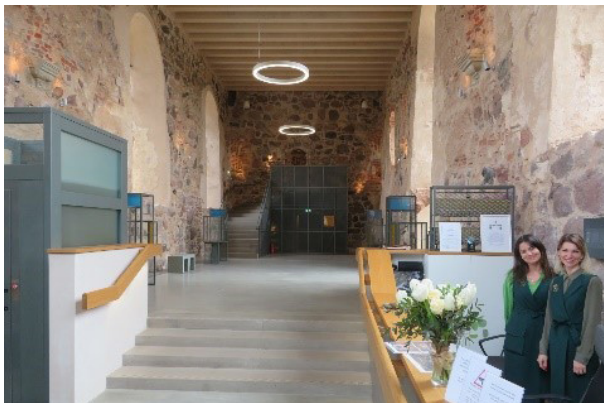


Fig. 17. Interior of the former chapel after renovation [photo by O. Spārtis]



Fig. 18. The Riga Castle [photo by O. Spārtis]



Fig. 19. Chapel of the Riga Castle during restoration [photo by O. Spārtis]

under the archaeologist Jānis Graudonis were started in 1976 which made it possible to develop a plan for the scientific research, conservation and restoration of the castle ruins, adapting the castle ensemble for the needs of the Sigulda Local History Museum. The restored castle defence wall creates the necessary seclusion for the museum territory. To avoid exaggerated historical credibility when restoring the medieval fortress, the uncovered foundations of the southern and northern blocks of the castle have been strengthened by conservation. This technique protects the foundations from further erosion and provides minimal information about the configuration of the castle ensemble building plan.

5. Continuation or a new beginning?

In the brochure "Restoration" published by the National Cultural Heritage Board in 2019, the art historian Dace Čoldere wrote: "With the re-establishment of the independent State of Latvia, the field of restoration in 1991 did not start completely anew - as is known, the monument protection system in Latvia had been operating since 1923 and, thanks to the people who continued to protect the heritage, maintained its continuity during the Soviet period. Neither had restoration as a field of activity to be reinvented" [10]. This description, in a generalized form, includes the idea of implementing a sustainable policy of protection of cultural monuments under changing economic and political conditions, which directly affected the choice and result of the objects to be restored, but allowed the advance of new knowledge about conservation methods and restoration technologies and materials.

The technical conditions of the medieval building monuments that have survived to the present day are not uniform, so a complex approach is needed to improve them. The measures taken for the preservation of medieval architectural monuments reflect the methodological and technological approaches for improving the technical condition depending on the intended function for each individual object. Even several methods can be used on one monument – conservation, restoration, as well as reconstruction, as has been done, for example, in the complex research and adaptation of the Turaida Castle ruins to the function of a museum. However, from the point of view of the philosophy of cultural heritage protection, reconstruction is the last and least recommended method, to be used only in rare cases that are justified by the policy of culture. In Latvia's architecture, this approach was applied in the reconstruction of the Blackheads House in Riga that had been destroyed in the Second World War (Fig. 11), individual elements of the Turaida Castle complex, the state stairs, roof and interiors of the Renaissance block of the Bauska Castle.

Considering the large number of castle ruins in Latvia, it is the conservation measures that are most often recommended and implemented for their preservation, as has been done for preventive protection of the most valuable construction parts, such as structures, foundations and wall fragments of Sigulda, Rauna, Koknese, Cēsis, Aizpute, Ludza, Alūksne, Dobele, Ērgeme, Valmiera, Tērvete and other castles. Along with the wall strengthening and conservation measures, several damaged castle complexes have been supplemented with elements of tourism infrastructure: paths, stairs, viewing platforms. Architecturally significant fragments of buildings in the castle ruins of Limbaži, Rauna, Bauska have been given roofs to protect the original constructions (Fig. 12, 13), [8].

The general picture of the cultural monuments' protection is enriched by those special cases whose re-valuation programme is determined by the diversity of the intended

functions. The typical uses are representation, cultural and art events, scientific research, education and tourism. Preservation of scenic, architectural and art values is a means to achieve these goals. The part of the Cēsis Castle complex with the "Lademacher Tower", the former Zwinger and the gatehouse between the first and second forecourts, jointly called "New Castle", in the possession of Karl Adam von Wolff, had undergone a major reconstruction since the 1860s. After the renovations, the former Teutonic Order castle block acquired the comfort and space appropriate for the life of aristocrats, with artistic decoration reducing the impression of medieval structures to a minimum. During the modern restoration from 2007 to 2011, the New Castle recovered both the 18th and 19th century interior decorative finishes as an expressive cultural environment for the Cēsis History and Art Museum located in the premises. The restoration in the basement of the Lademacher Tower and of the first floor of the new castle helped to preserve the medieval constructions and certain decoration elements [5].

The castle of the Teutonic Order, built in the 13th century, restored with the Ventspils City Council authorization and handed over to the Ventspils City Museum, was revived from 2002 to 2012. Research and restoration of the former fortress built by the Teutonic Order in Livonia to protect the port of the Venta, renovation, repairs and adaptation of the premises for the new functions required several years. The Ventspils Castle is a typical a rectangular convent-type building within a territory fortified with a protective wall. The concept of modern use envisaged the adaptation of the castle for the reception of visitors in the basement and the first two above-ground floors. At the same time, the restored rooms on the third and fourth floors were intended for the creation of the museum's repositories and exhibitions, as well as for a modern exhibition hall. According to the project developed by the architect Pēteris Blūms, modern restoration technologies and the craftsmanship of professionals made it possible to carry out perfect conservation of the Gothic-style brick walls, portals, building structures, vaults, niches and capitals (Fig. 14, 15) [3].

The municipality of Dobele region commissioned restoration of the Dobele Castle ruins of the Teutonic Order in Livonia and, from 2018 to 2020, the walls of the 14th-16th cent. architectural monument were strengthened with conservation measures, the spatial reconstruction of the Reformation period chapel was also carried out with restoration techniques. According to the architect Pēteris Blūms' project, the upper part of the walls was strengthened with a layer of fibre-reinforced concrete. Without changing the overall silhouette of the castle ruins, the chapel space was covered with a recessed horizontal roof. This approach ensured that the romantic silhouette of the castle ruins was preserved in the urban landscape and an attractive viewing area for tourists was obtained. The conservation of the castle ruins and the restoration of the chapel have created a winsome place for cultural events and the exhibition of archaeological finds (Fig. 16, 17), [36].

After the restoration of Latvia's national independence, the rooms for the chancellery of the President of the State, the office of the President of the State and the reception rooms were fixed up in the Riga Castle. Large-scale repairs and restoration related to this process had taken place already in 1993-1994. From 2009 to 2015, according to the project developed by the architect Artūrs Lapiņš and the office AIG, cosmetic repairs of the President's workspace and representation rooms as well as the restoration of the rooms of the eastern annex of the Riga Castle and forecourt

were carried out with the management and financing of the State JSC "Valsts nekustamie īpašumi". The measures taken corresponded to the goals set for the restoration of the castle and practically did not affect the medieval architectural fragments that had been integrated in the reconstructions of the 17th-20th centuries. Ten years later, the tandem of "Sudraba arhitekti" and "Mark arhitekti" offices under the leadership of architect Reinis Liepiņš developed a project for the renovation and restoration of the 14th-16th cent. convent-type castle, adapting the premises to the function of the Latvian National History Museum. The project envisaged to open the restored premises with an area of 12,000 square meters for the needs of museum visitors, exhibitions, staff offices and collections. The restoration of the castle took a longer time than was intended, and the construction phases 1 and 2 were completed at the end of 2023. It resulted in the renovated exhibition halls on five floors of the castle, as well as the restoration of the basement, the castle chapel and the refectory, with maximum respect for the medieval image of the historical premises, the authenticity of constructions, sculptural details, fragments of frescoes and decorative painting, as well as the aesthetics of individual elements of the finish (Fig. 18, 19), [32].

Conclusion

In summary, the changing nature of Latvian society's attitude towards medieval architectural heritage becomes evident, subject to dialectical development in all centuries and at any time.

The Middle Ages in the Baltic area (13th - 15th centuries) constitute the period of Livonia's Christianization, conquest, founding of feudal states and European-type cities and, above all, the emergence of defensive wall structures. The development of the typological diversity of buildings in the urban cultural environment called forth the planning, construction and aesthetic evolution of buildings based on their functions of either sacred, administrative or civil architecture.

The spiritual and technical revolution of the Renaissance period brought to Livonia not only the Reformation, Counter-Reformation, wars and other political upheavals, but also cardinal social changes that endangered material culture as well. Some of the fortresses destroyed in the Livonian wars remained in ruins, others were restored and adapted to protection against modern firearms, and still others were rebuilt and adjusted to the planning and aesthetics of Renaissance-style residences. Therefore, the attitude of 16th and 17th century customers towards medieval architecture can be characterized as pragmatic, with the desire to adapt the buildings of the earlier centuries to the new functions and comfort requirements. A noteworthy feature of modern history is the interest in the heritage of the past caused by Renaissance humanist culture, which in 17th century Sweden and the part of Livonia under its control manifested itself as the documentation of historically significant artefacts.

The spiritual aspirations of the Age of Enlightenment all over Europe stimulated the encyclopaedic thirst for knowledge in society and the concurrent birth of academic science. They stirred interest not only in the ancient heritage, but also in the culture of more recent historical periods. Impressive architectural evidence of the past became objects of study for artists and architects, while the educated society saw in the buildings of the past an idealized testimony of the achievements of previous generations. Surveys of Greek and Roman buildings, sketches in travel albums, and the romance of the ruins documented in works of art fed imagination and promoted the transfer of medieval, Renaissance and Baroque

architectural forms to contemporary buildings. Moreover, it also taught people to identify and preserve authentic evidence in historical buildings or to imitate them. Thus, at the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century, foundations were laid for the educated society's interest in the enhanced cognitive possibilities of history, archaeology and architecture.

The industrial 19th century developed new construction technologies and, based on researches in the history of architecture, encouraged defining the principles of preserving valuable buildings and embarking on practical renovation or reconstruction works, which would be too early to be called restoration. However, these efforts encouraged further action, and the reconstruction method, although questioned as a reliable method of visual imitation of buildings and their details, has been often used since the middle of the 19th century as a method of obtaining a medieval image of socially significant and recognized medieval architectural objects.

At the turn of the 20th century, the theoretical and methodological prerequisites for the preservation of cultural monuments in Latvia were formed based on the efforts of some professionally educated historians, archaeologists, architects and history enthusiasts to explore and restore specific architectural objects. Also, the optional approach to restoration made it possible to accumulate significant experience in documenting historically significant objects and the restoration process itself. It proved useful at the early stages of the implementation of national cultural policy that included a systematic inventory of historical, archaeological, architectural and art monuments, as well as measures for their practical protection. The process began in 1923 with the creation of the Monument Board and the adoption of the "Law on the Protection of Monuments".

Today, when more than a hundred years have passed since the national approach to the protection and restoration of cultural heritage, it has become evident that the protection of all types of cultural monuments depends on political and ideological positions, as well as on the financial possibilities that the state budget and society are able to devote to preventive actions, as well as to the research, conservation and restoration of architecture. A politically motivated attitude towards medieval architectural heritage has existed throughout the 20th century - both in the interwar period and during Soviet occupation. More objectively, it came into being after the restoration of Latvian national independence in 1991. The change in attitudes is ensured by the extensive international experience and information exchange, the necessary materials, technologies and special knowledge on offer in the global market for obtaining for unlimited construction and restoration. Within the available budget, it permits the implementation of the national cultural policy also in the field of restoration of medieval architecture.

Preservation of cultural heritage, enriched by a continuous cognitive process through its conservation, restoration or even reconstruction, is the responsibility of both the owner and the public. Ensuring the long-term function of a valuable architectural monument is an endless process that requires observing the ethics of cultural heritage preservation, investing financial resources in the maintenance of the physical condition of the historical artefact, and using the era-specific technological and artisan skills. This is an axiomatic truth concerning the preservation of cultural artefacts from the Middle Ages and any other historical period.

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