



CASTELLA MARIS BALTICI 6

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Editor Albinas Kuncevičius,
Layout Alvydas Ladyga

Front cover: Castle of Trakai

Photos by Albinas Kuncevičius

Back cover: Royal palace in an Upper castle.

*Corrected S. Lasavickas sketch-project 1977–2001,
3 - D view by V. Abramauskas, drawn by A. Mizgirienė*

ISBN 9986-420-55-5
ISSN 1236-5882


Savastis
Vilnius 2004

CONTENTS / ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Charlotte Boje Hilligsø Andersen	Material culture in Danish castles9
Aleksander Andrzejewski, Leszek Kajzer	The Chelmno bishops' castle in Lubawa in the light of the latest research17
Lars Bengtsson	Three crowns – the royal castle in Stockholm23
Maria-Letizia Boscardin	Die Wasserversorgung auf Schweizer Höhenburgen35
Tomáš Durdík	Zur Einflussproblematik im Rahmen der böhmischen Burgenarchitektur41
Aleh Dziarnovich	Castella Alboruthenica: castle building in Belarus at the crossroads of cultural influences during the 12 th to 14 th centuries49
Øystein Ekroll	Norwegian castles north of the Arctic Circle55
Nils Engberg	Three castles on Hjelm island – their military, social political and significance.....63
Giedrė Filipavičienė	Retrospection of Trakai fortification system in the 14 th –15 th centuries83
Jonas Glemža	Medininkai castle93
Christofer Herrmann	Deutschordensburgen in der „Grossen Wildnis“97
Napaleonas Kitkauskas	The primeval relief of the Lower castle of Vilnius and the earliest building105
Raman Likhashapka	The Western European articles and innovations in the castles' material culture of the Belarusian Nioman Region in the 14 th –17 th c111
Werner Meyer	Burgenbau und natürliche Umweltbedingungen115
Terhi Mikkola	Spatial organization in the late Medieval castle of Häme, Finland123
Michail Miltschik	Die Verteidigungssysteme von Iwango-rod und Narva: Wechselwirkungen in der Entwicklung im 15.–18. Jahrhundert131

Ieva Ose	Die ersten Burgen mit regulärem Grundriss in Lettland141
Tadeusz Poklewski-Koziell	The royal castles and defensive towns on trading routes through Poland to the Baltic Sea in the 14 th–15 th century. A contribution to the history of country defence system planning.....147
Kazimierz Pospieszny	Der preussisch-livländische „Konventshaustyp“ als eine Kloster-und Herrschaftsidee153
Gintautas Rackevičius	The royal palace in Vilnius Upper castle – problems of reconstruction159
Henriette Rensbro	Stige castle 1314 AD – a Danish wooden castle ?.....165
Anders Rejnert	Some Scanian and Scandinavian castles and their relations to the Livonian Order173
Heinz Sauer	Vir nobilis Bernhardus de Lippia (1140–1224), Spurensuche im Balticum185
Daiva Steponavičienė	Gothic period music in the court of the Lithuanian Grand Duchy197
Tomasz Torbus	Die Untere Burg zu Wilna (Vilnius) und ihre möglichen Vorbilder201
Gintautas Zabiela	Castle warfare between Lithuania and the Order in Lower Panemunė in the late Middle Ages211
Algirdas Žalnierius	The first castle of Kaunas219
Rita Mosiejienė	Symposium Castella Maris Baltici VI 231
	Bibliography / Literaturverzeichnis235

On September 18–22, 2001 the Symposium Castella Maris Baltici VI was held in Lithuania. This is already the 6th symposium for the researchers of the medieval castles. The first symposium was held in Turku, Finland in 1991, the second – in Nyköping, Sweden in 1993, the third - in Malbork, Poland in 1995, the fourth - in Estonia in 1997, and the fifth – in Denmark in 1999.

The topic of the conference held in Lithuania was “Contacts and Genetically Dwellings in the Castle Buildings”. Over 40 scientists participated in the conference from Denmark, Belarus, Finland, Sweden, Switzerland, Germany, Russia, Great Britain, Poland, Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania. In the conference there were not only reports presented but also the most famous castles of Lithuania visited in Vilnius, Trakai, Kernavė, Kaunas and Klaipėda.

The time of this conference coincided with the European Heritage Days “Defensive Fortifications in Lithuania”.

This conference was organised by the Public Institution Academy of Cultural Heritage established by Vilnius University, Vilnius Academy of Arts, Vilnius Gediminas Technical University, Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania and Department of Cultural Heritage Protection. The Symposium Castella Maris Baltici VI was sponsored by the Department of Cultural Heritage Protection.

The Center of Cultural Heritage funded the publishing of this publication. I would like to express my gratitude to Diana Varnaitė, Director of the Department of Cultural Heritage Protection, Vitas Karčiauskas, Director of the Center of Cultural Heritage, Alvydas Nikžentaitis, Director of Lithuanian Institute of History, Juozas Bardauskas, Director of the Publishing House Savastis, and editors of the publication prof. Werner Meyer and dr. David Gaimster.

Especial thanks deserve my colleagues who organised this event Rita Mosiejienė, dr. Justina Poškienė and dr. Gintautas Zabiela.

Dr. Albinas Kuncevičius

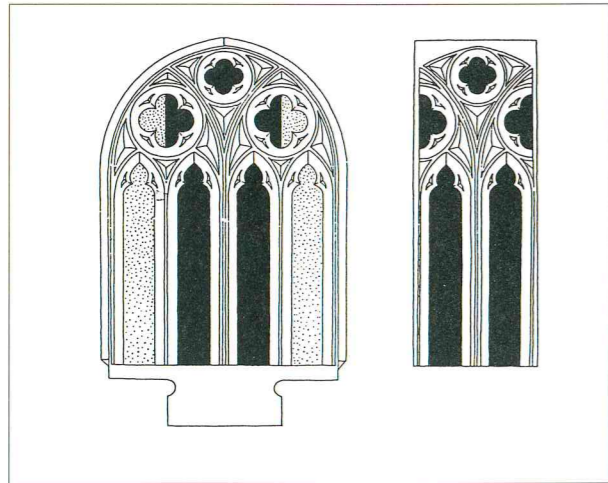


Abb. 11. Burg Dražice. Zeichnerische Rekonstruktion des Fensters im 2. Obergeschoss des grossen Palas. Nach V. Mencl

ger Burg wirken konnten (Durdík - Chotěbor 1993) - praktisch keinen Widerhall.

Allgemein kann also behauptet werden, dass die im Gegensatz zur üblichen einheimischen Bauweise

gut erkennbaren Rezeptionen, ob nun im Bereich der Anlage, oder der technischen Massnahmen, oder im Bereich des künstlerischen und architektonischen Details, im Rahmen der böhmischen Burgenarchitektur als interessante und wichtige Episode angehörten die weitere Entwicklung aber nicht prinzipiell beeinflussten. Sie wurden zu einem Bestandteil des ausserordentlich bunten Bildes bester Qualität, in dem parallel nebeneinander Objekte existierten, die verschiedenen fortgeschrittene und unterschiedliche genetische Zusammenhänge präsentierten. Daneben entwickelten sich zahlreiche eigenständige böhmische Äusserungen der Burgenarchitektur, die dann ihrerseits in fremden Regionen exportiert wurden (u.a. das mitteleuropäische Kastell /Durdík 1994 a; 1996 b; 1998/; oder die Artilleriebefestigungen /z.B. Durdík 1996 c/).

Anmerkung:

Dieser Artikel wurde im Rahmen des Grantprojektes A9002903 Böhmisches Burgen des Übergangstyps der Grantagentur der AW TR verfasst.

Aleh Dziarnovich

CASTELLA ALBORUTHENICA: CASTLE BUILDING IN BELARUS AT THE CROSSROADS OF CULTURAL INFLUENCES DURING THE 12TH TO 14TH CENTURIES

Der Burgenbau in Belarus (Weissrussland) im Schnittpunkt der kulturellen Einflüsse im 12. – 14. Jahrhundert

Im Territorium des gegenwärtigen Belarus, das von einer slawischen und baltischen Bevölkerung besiedelt ist, bestanden im 12. Jahrhundert die Verteidigungseinrichtungen aus Holz. Nur die christlichen Kirchen im byzantinischen Stil und einige fürstliche Paläste waren aus Ziegeln und Natursteinen errichtet. Der Nachweis der Ziegelwand am Ende des 12. Jahrhunderts in Hrodna (Grodno) bildete eine Überraschung.

Die weitere Entwicklung des Burgenbaues in Belarus ist mit dem Aufkommen des Donjons oder der Türme von der Art des Bergfrieds verbunden. Hier können wir Einfluss aus Wolhynien (Ukraine) vermuten. Der einzige er-

haltene Donjon, der Turm in Kamianiec (Gebiet Brest), wurde zwischen 1276 und 1288 errichtet.

In der ersten Hälfte des 14. Jahrhunderts kam der Kastelltypus auf. Wahrscheinlich waren am Bau dieser Schlösser deutsche Meister beteiligt. Diese Anlagen hatten nur einen Turm. Die Modernisierung der Schlösser setzte am Ende des 14. Jahrhunderts ein, in Krewa und Lida wurde ein Turm errichtet. In der Zeit der Union des Grossfürstentums Litauen mit Polen wurde der Krieg gegen den Deutschen Orden vorbereitet. In der Folgezeit wurden die Kastelle nicht mehr umgebaut.

Aleh Dziarnovich
Athaeneum Institute of History
Vul. Akademichnaya-1
Minsk 220072, Belarus

In the 12th century only wooden fortifications were known on the territory of Belarus populated with the Slavs and Balts. That was typical for Eastern Europe. Only Byzantine churches and princes' palaces were built of stone and brick. So it was completely unexpected to discover a brick wall dating to the end of the 12th century in Hrodna (Grodno, north west of Belarus). The wooden fort with wooden towers which was built on the steep bank of the Nioman river, had two walls of thin brick ("plinfa", 27–29 x 16.5–18 x 3.5–4.5 cm) the walls were not less than 5 m high). The longest one was 42–45 m long. There is an explanation of how these walls could come into existence. The second half of the 12th century was the time when a number of brick christian churches and a prince's palace were built in Hrodna. The chronicles mention that wooden fortifications were burnt down in the fire of 1183. It was at that time when the brick walls appeared (they were erected on the thick layer of coal left by the fire) (fig.1). For this purpose the bricks that had been destined for the church were used (A. Trusau, V. Sobal, N. Zdanovich 1993: 19–22). This account is supported by the fact that figured bricks were used together with rectangular ones (A. Trusau 1990: 44). That could only happen in case of an emergency.

Historians think that the walls were built by the architect Peter Milaneg who moved to Kiev together with his guild of builders in 1190-s (P. Rapoport 1987: 21–22.). It is known that Peter Milaneg had constructed a stone wall in Vydubick monastery in 1199 on the orders of prince Rurik. It was a breast-wall on the bank of the Dnieper river and it was used

simultaneously as an observation platform (P. A. Rapoport 1982: 26). And that surprised contemporaries very much. Milaneg was even compared by the chronicler with the biblical architect Veseliil. The fact that the annals have kept the name of the architect is also indicative.

But it is necessary to note that the wall in Hrodna practically had no basement and was erected on a thin layer of building refuse. Consequently it was not of great defensive significance. Yet since it stood out among the city's wooden buildings it had rather decorative function. The brick wall was also to raise the Hrodna prince's prestige. Thus the traditions of stone and brick fortifications in Belarus were only developed at the end of the 12th century.

The following stage of stone castle building in Belarus is connected with the donjon - type towers. In this case we should recognize the influence of the territory of Ukraine. The tower of Kamianiec (Brest region) (fig. 2) is the only preserved tower of this type in Belarus. It was built by the architect Aleksa between 1276 and 1288 by the order of the Volhyn prince Vladimir who was in the possession of this territory at that time (Polnoe sobranie russkich letopisey 1962: 876, 924). The tower was situated inside of the ring of the ramparts with wooden walls on them. There were significant changes in building materials and engineering of the construction. In the 13th century "plinfa" were not used any more; large-sized bricks were used (26.5 x 13.5 x 8 cm), which have traces along the wide sides left by the craftsman's fingers (so called "palchatka"). The masonry is characterized by: two long sides and one short side. Such a

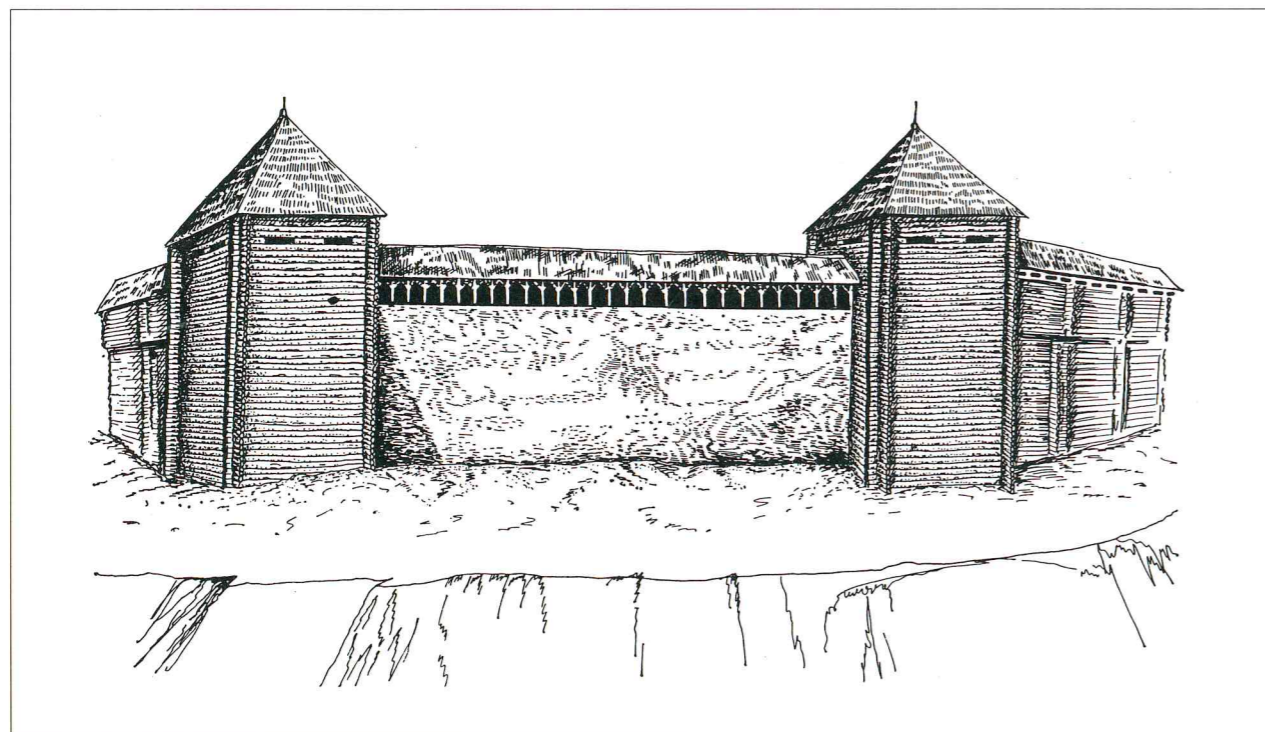


Fig. 1. The brick wall in the Hrodna wooden fort. 12 c. (Reconstruction by Fiodar Sielazniou)

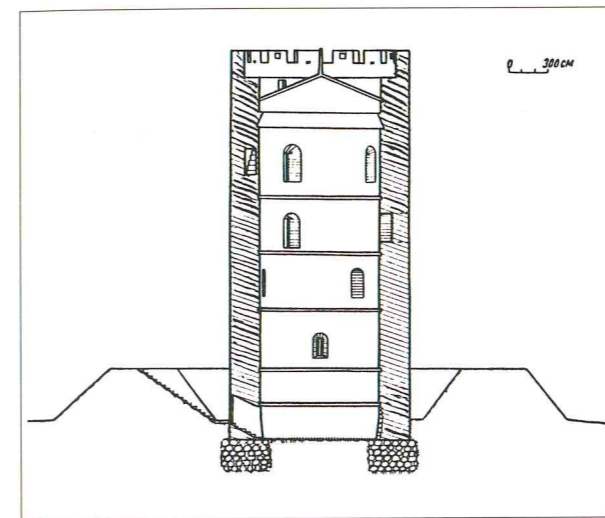


Fig. 2. Kamianiec tower (It was built between 1276 and 1288). Cross-section

masonry system was widespread throughout the Baltic region and is called "Baltic". The Kamianiec tower was 30m high, the thickness of the walls 2.5 m, the external diameter 13.5 m. Besides some Gothic elements can be observed in the decoration of

the arches. This defensive work had mighty basement made of large boulders, interspersed with fine sand.

This type of towers received the name of "Volhyn towers". This term was used by Rapoport for the first time while studying such towers on the territory of Volhyn (P. A. Rapoport 1952). There was a rectangular donjon in Brest; a round brick tower stood in the wooden castle of Turau (not very far from the Ukrainian border).

But not all the donjons on the territory of Belarus can be captured by the term "Volhyn towers". In the end of the 13th century the wooden and brick fortifications of the Hrodna castle were strengthened by a brick tower which projected out of the wall line (fig.3). This tower is mentioned for the first time in 1277 in the connection with the princes of Halich - Volhyn campaign against Hrodna (Polnoe sobranie russkich letopisey 1962: 579). In 1398–1402 the Duke Vitaut (Vytautas) built a new Gothic stone castle so that the 13th century donjon was incorporated into the new defensive system (N. N. Voronin 1954: 189–191, M. A. Tkachev 1978: 53–54). The tower kept on to protect the approach to the gate of the castle. In the second half of the 13th century the gate of the Navahradak (Navahrudak) castle was protected by the

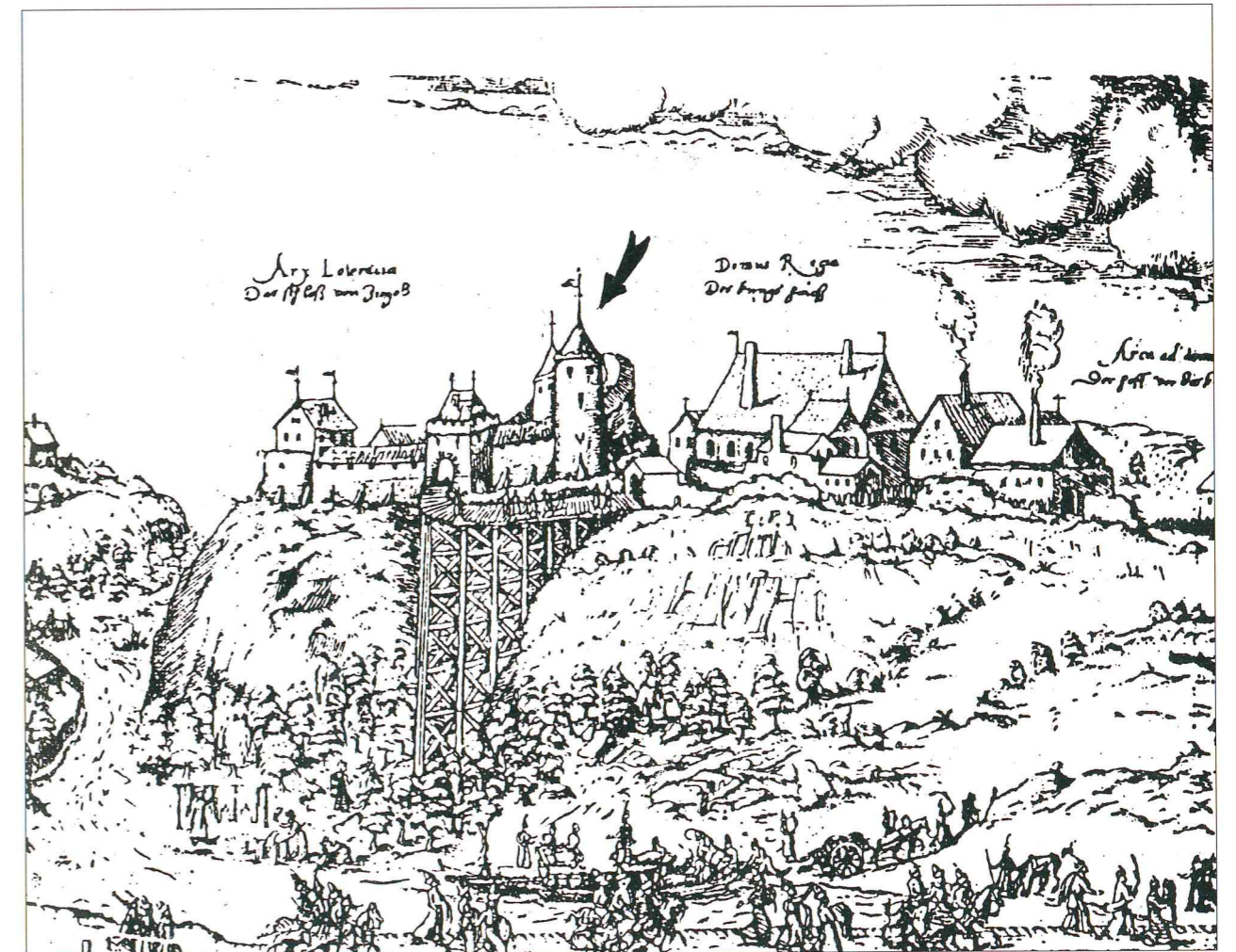


Fig. 3. Hrodna castle (Engraving by M. Zuendt, 1568). The 13th century Donjon

quadrangular stone tower. In the 14th century the basement and the walls rests of this tower were used for the construction of the new central (or Shield) tower built of brick. The same can be said for the Small castle tower of Navahradak.

The building tradition characterized by separate towers had been retained in Belarus for quite a long period. Towers of this type were built during the 15th century (e.g. the Miadziel castle). And even later in the 16th century this old tradition did not disappear entirely and the towers of this type were sometimes built of wood. Such towers are known in the castles of Polack (Polotsk) and Radaškovičy, the remnants of the octagonal wooden "donjon" were excavated by the archaeologists in Mscislau (M. A. Tkachev 1987: 11–12). No wonder that a donjon is depicted on the arms of Kamianiec town (A. Citou 1989: 114–115, E. Rimša 1999: 255–258).

It is considered, that donjons appeared in central and eastern Europe in connection with the changes in the sieging tactics. Taking the castles by storm with catapults replaced passive sieging. The donjons appeared as the response to these changes. Powerful defensive towers were intended to strengthen strategic qualities of the castles. They could not be so easily destroyed by catapults, provided the castles with more intensive shooting defense, so-called "dead zones" of bombardment were reduced. It was possible to carry out circular firing and in some cases to flank fire in the most dangerous areas of the fortification (P. A. Rappoport 1962: 625).

Such towers were "the main element" in the defensive system of the Livonian castles in 13th century (Turaida / Treiden, Viljandi / Fellin, Tallinn / Reval) and in the 14th century (Paide / Weissenstein, Ventspils / Windau etc.) (V. I. Neiman 1893: 36–37, Janis Graudonis 1966: 69–74, I. Ose 2001: 235–244). Round "main towers" were known in the region of Basel since the middle of the 12th century (Werner Meyer 1982: 287–293). This list can be continued. The towers of this type most likely only had insignificant regional features and were widespread all through Europe.

But if we want to understand the further evolution of castle building in Belarus we should return to the end of the 14th century. Belarusian archaeologists have some problems in dating the cities' material culture of the end of the 13th–14th century. Some archaeologists characterize this period in terms of "some regress" in the material and spiritual culture of Hrodna in the second half of the 13th–14th century (J. G. Zverugo 1989: 66) or write about insignifi-

cant stratification of the 14th–15th c. in Polack (S. V. Tarasau 1998: 35, 40).

The material culture of the previous (the 12th–13th centuries) and the following (the 15th–16th centuries) periods have more definite characteristics. We can assume that this was connected with the cultural transformations which took place in our region. Until the 13th century, Belarus was within the Byzantine cultural sphere of influence. But with the formation of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (GDL) Belarus was to be enclosed into the Baltic cultural area.

One of the distinctive features in the castle building in the new state were regular castles. The most possibly that German specialists took part in the building of the regular castles. Here it is necessary to mention the fact of invitation of the craftsmen from the cities of the Hanseatic League by Grand Duke Gedymin / Gediminas in 1323. Belarusian historians consider that they took part in building of the Lida castle (fig.4) either in the 1320 to 1328 (M. A. Tkachev 1987: 35, A. A. Trusau 1990: 8) or during first half of the 14th century (A. Kraucevich, A. Trusau 1992: 83).

But Lida castle is first mentioned in 1384, when it was captured by the Teutonic Knights. As a rule the narrative sources of that time may not mark the year of construction, yet they mention the dates of destructions and attacks.

This castle (93.5 x 83.5 x 80 x 84 m) was built in a marshy district on a "pillow" of stones and sand. Originally the castle had only one tower (11.3 x 11.3 m). The second tower was built at the end of the 14th – beginning of the 15th century (12 x 12.5 x 12.3 x 12.15 m). The walls of the castle and its towers were made in the following technique – at first two external parts of the wall were built of stone, and then the space between them was filled with fine stones and lime. Bricks were used only for basic elements

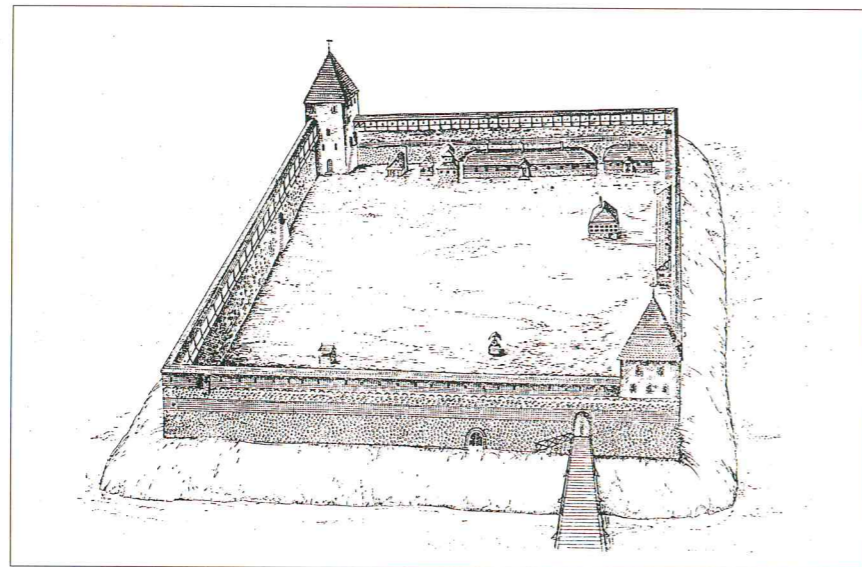


Fig. 4. Lida castle. Reconstruction for 15–16 centuries (by Aleh Trusau and Uladzimir Kisly)

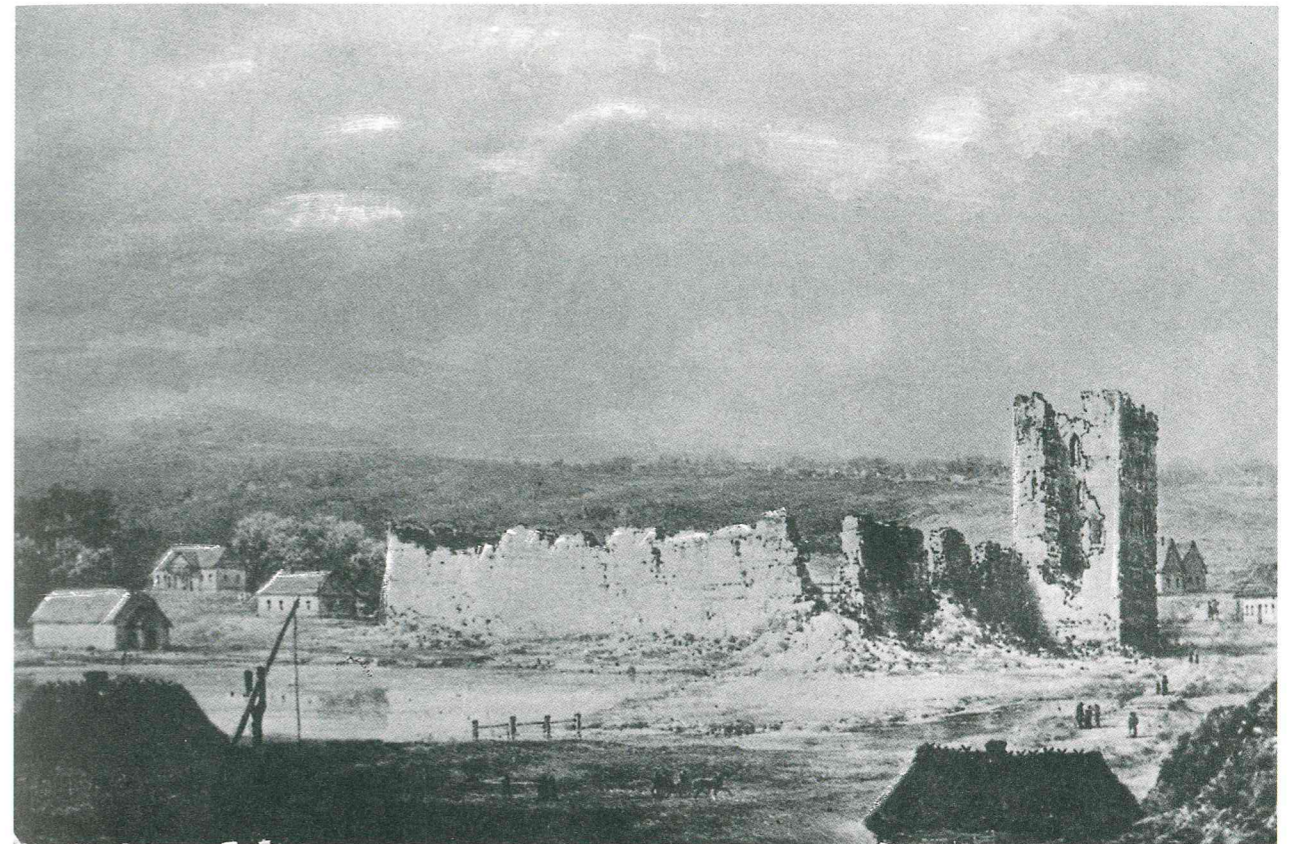


Fig. 5. Kreva castle. Picture by Napoleon Orda (Middle of the 19th c.)

of design and architectural details (the walls' corners, decorative belts on the walls' facades, arches, vaults, loopholes).

The latest archaeological researches proved that the Kreva castle (85 x 108.5 x 71.55 x 97.2 m) was built at the end of the 13th to early 14th centuries (A. Dziarnovich, A. Trusau, I. Charniauski 1993: 5, M. Tkachev, I. Charniauski 1997: 287). The Duke Tower (fig. 5) (18.65 x 17 m) of the castle was built later than the walls. The builders, being in a hurry, first built only the walls and then erected the tower. The Duke Tower can be called a donjon itself since it had not only military functions but also residential. The fragments of frescos (including those with the images of people) were found. They covered internal walls and the windows' jambs. This remarkable fact testifies to the status of the Kreva castle (fig. 6).

Kreva castle is mentioned for the first time in an account of Kiejstut / Kęstutis' assassination at the castle in 1382; it was there where the conditions of the Kreva union between the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Polish Kingdom in 1385 were worked out. The castle of Medininkai (Lithuanian Republic) is another regular castle of the GDL.

The first regular castles in the neighbouring Livonia were built already in the end of the 12th – beginning of the 13th century. The Heinrich Chronicle informs, that the construction of Ikšķile / Uexkül and Holme castles on the Dzvinia / Daugava river took place in 1185–1186. The chronicle mentions also that the craf-

tsmen from Gotland had been invited to build them. According to Ieva Ose, Livonian castles were built by the craftsmen from Lower Saxony and Middle Germany (Ieva Ose 2003).

The regular castles in the GDL had some specific features of their own. The area of the castle's ground was increased in size in comparison with the castles of the Teutonic Knights' Orders in Livonia and Prussia. In case of threat, not only military groups, but also the civil inhabitants could hide behind the walls. Since the castles were usually built in marshy lowlands they needed an artificial mound to be thrown up. The internal space between the walls was filled with stones.

It is necessary to say something about the discussions concerning the time when the first regular castles in the GDL came into existence. Belarusian researchers are inclined "to make them more ancient"; on the contrary Lithuanian historians give very late dates. Algirdas Žalnierius considers Medininkai, Lida and Kreva castles to be built after 1380. (Algirdas Žalnierius 2003). It is possible to agree with the statement that the first Kaunas castle was being built in 1361, but until the spring of 1362 it had not been finished. There are also some indirect written data which lets us assume that the castle of Lida was built in the first half of the 14th century.

It may seem strange to admit but neither Belarusian nor Lithuanian historians while studying the castles of GDL do not take into account the castles of Volhyn

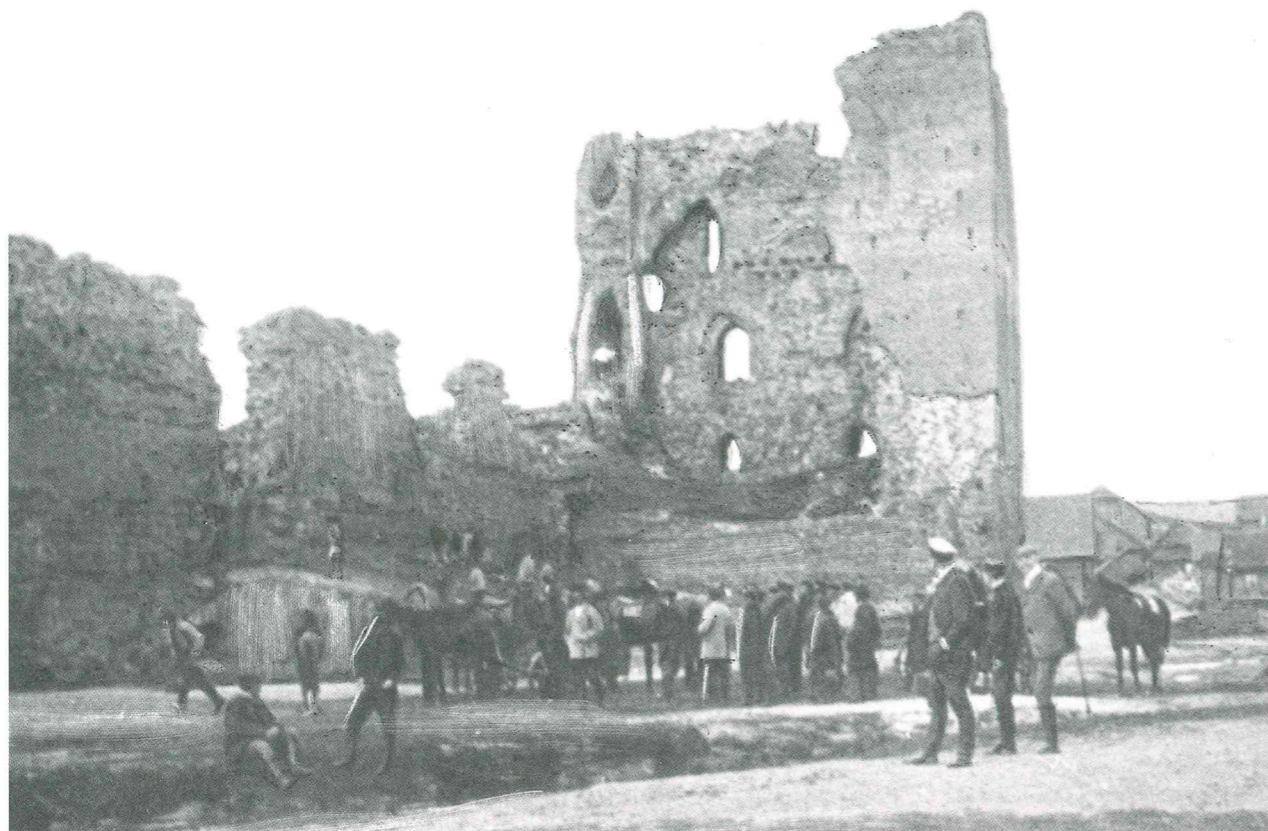


Fig. 6. Excursion party near walls of the Kreva castle. Photo of the beginning of the 20th c.

(the historic region of Ukraine) which made part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania as well. The historical sources directly say that the building of the Upper and the Lower castles in Luck / Lutsk was launched by the prince Lubart (Gedymin / Gediminas's son; the prince of Volhyn in 1340–1384) (Pamyatniki, izdannye vremennoy komissiiy dla razbora drevnich aktov 1859: 66). It was really significant castle ensemble more complex than regular castles. Some researchers consider that Lubart has only erected the walls and the towers of the Lower castle (G. N. Logvin 1967: 102–107). But anyway it was a grandiose building enterprise which proved that the central authorities of the state had been acquainted with the stone castles building. Most likely that Volhyn craftsmen themselves took part in the construction. Yet there must be no doubt that the information and technological exchange with the Belarusian and Lithuanian territories of the GDL existed. Again it is necessary to mention the fact that in the middle of the 14th century the prince Koriat's sons (who was the duke Alhierd / Algirdas's brother) constructed the complete system of fortifications (the strong stone castle in Kamenech as its part) in Podolsk lands (south-west of Ukraine). No stone fortifications existed there before when the territory was controlled by the Tartars (M. Hruševski 2001: 134).

The large-scale castle building in the first half the 14th century demanded enormous expense of finan-

cial resources and labour forces of the state. The traditional Belarusian curse is one of the evidences of the efforts: «Let you carry the stones to the Kreva castle!»

But by the middle of the 14th century the castles are not built any more. The castle building in Belarus was renewed only by the end of the 14th century. If we compare the course of events and some indirect evidencies from the annals we shall come to the conclusion that this happened as a result of the plague pandemic of 1347–1351. In these conditions the government could not mobilize the population for large scale building. The government could only afford to modernize the state castles at the end of the 14th century. New towers were built in the castles of Kreva and Lida. That was the time when the GDL together with the Polish Kingdom was preparing for the war against the teutonic Order.

Afterwards these regular castles were not rebuilt. Has been preserved the 14th century lay-out. At the same time many European regular castles were rebuilt. For this reason the archaic types of regular castles in Belarus and Lithuania are of great value.

I have not mentioned all Belarusian castles. I have just tried to illustrate the difficult and sometimes unexpected history of castle building in Belarus and to show the different factors which affected this process.

Øystein Ekroll

NORWEGIAN CASTLES NORTH OF THE ARCTIC CIRCLE

Burgen in Norwegen nördlich des Polarkreises

Drei mittelalterliche Burgen sind in Norwegen nördlich des Polarkreises bekannt. Die runde Burg Tromsø, deren Durchmesser 60 Meter beträgt, wurde um 1250 höchstwahrscheinlich von König Hakon IV. errichtet, zum Schutz vor russischen Angriffen. Sie markierte damals die nördliche Grenze des Königreiches. Um 1300 wurde die zweite königliche Burg in Vardo, im nördlichsten Teil von Norwegen gegründet. Diese erste Burg, über die nichts bekannt ist, wurde im 15. Jahrhundert durch eine quadratische An-

lage ersetzt. Sie mass 39x39 Meter im Quadrat und war mit hölzernen Türmen und Befestigungen ausgestattet. Diese Burg wurde 1734 zur noch heute bestehenden Festung umgebaut. Eine katholische Kirche wurde in Trondenes errichtet, wo eine grosse Steinburg im 15. Jahrhundert gegründet worden war. Die Burg war später von einer 4 bis 5 Meter hohen Mauer mit mindestens zwei Türmen umgeben. Nach der Reformation verschwand die Mauer, weil man sie nicht mehr benötigte.

Øystein Ekroll
Willmannsveita 2
N-7012 Trondheim, Norway