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REFLECTIONS OF ANTIQUE ART IN THE
INTERIOR PAINTINGS OF RESIDENCES
AND MANOR HOUSES IN LATVIA.

THE SECOND HALF OF THE 18TH CENTURY – THE FIRST
QUARTER OF THE 19TH CENTURY

This article summarizes material in the history of the Latvian interior, available in residential paintings, which reflect the inspiration of ancient art. Painting compositions are grouped by iconographic methods for dividing the three thematic blocks: colonnades; ruins and southern landscapes; and the Pantheon-dome-type motifs. A large number of the examples considered are paintings discovered during the existence of the Architectural Investigation Group Ltd¹, most of which are unpublished and significantly enrich the knowledge of the era. This article also contains materials and information found in the publications and in the archives of the Centre of Documentation of the State Inspection for Heritage Protection of the Republic of Latvia.

It provides a brief look at the historical context that contributed to the interior painting boom in the territory of Latvia in the second half of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century. The possible roots and impression circles from the western European interior finish range are also outlined. This article does not include a comparison of the development in the history of interior paintings in nearby regions, which is to be considered in a future study.

¹ The Architectural Investigation Group (Arhitektoniskās izpētes grupa) was founded in 1982. See www.AIGsia.lv.

The period in the history of the Latvian interior reviewed here was rich and varied. This period was a time when both urban and manor cultures were extremely active. After the stagnation of the first half of the 18th century, caused by the Great Northern War and plague epidemic, a relatively long period of peace began. It was not significantly affected even by the continuing political and regulatory changes in the whole territory of Latvia or Latvia's inclusion as a part of the Russian Empire.² Economic affluence, especially in Riga, was driven by the rise of citizens' living standards and the desire to follow the fashion trends in Europe. In Courland, in the Zemgale (Curland, Semgallen) Duchy, the tone was set by the scope of construction of the Duke's palaces in Rundāle (Ruhental) and Jelgava (Mitau), as well as the Duke's residences in Vircava (Würzau), Svēte (Schwethof), Zaļenieki (Grünhof) and Luste (Friedrichlust). In the middle and the second half of the 18th century, general construction activity on manor centers took place in Courland (Curland) and Vidzeme (Livland). Manor houses became more luxurious and no longer resembled simple peasant dwellings, as they had previously. The manor architecture in Vidzeme (Livland) was strongly influenced by Riga. Several manors were created according to the Riga builder Christoph Haberland's designs³, popularizing the master's specific handwriting, 'Bourgeois Neo-Classicism'.

Due to the diversity of political backgrounds in different parts of Latvia, the cultural orientation differed as well. While the Courland-Zemgale Duchy, Riga and Vidzeme (Swedish Livonia) prevailed in northern German and Scandinavian Protestant traditions of art, the Latgale (Polish Livonia) architectural and artistic impression range was based on direct impulses from the southern Catholic countries, and by influences from the central European centers in Austria, southern Germany and Poland.⁴

In the third quarter of the 18th century in Latgale, the Krāslava (Krasław) palace ensemble, built according to the design of the Italian architect Antonio Paracco, became an outstanding cultural centre⁵.

² Riga fell under the rule of the Russian tsar in 1710, and Vidzeme in 1721. Latgale – the eastern part of Latvia – was annexed to the Russian Empire in 1772, and the Duchy of Courland-Zemgale in 1795.

³ The manor house of Ikšķile (Uexküll), the palace of Carnikava (Zarnikau), and probably the manor houses of Ulbroka (Stubensee) and Ozolmuiža (Lappier).

⁴ Rūta Kaminska, *18. gadsimta glezniecība Latgalē* (Rīga: Zinātne, 1994), 8.

⁵ *Ibidem*, 72.

Decorative polychromy and mural paintings throughout the 18th century and in the first quarter of the 19th century played a central role in the techniques of interior finish. The services of painters in the decoration of both urban residential buildings and manor houses were quite widespread. Wallpaper application at that time had not yet become as commonplace as it became later. Due to the high import price of wallpaper, it was expensive and therefore was a particularly significant product.⁶ The increase in interior painting orders was most strongly felt by the Riga painters' guild craftsmen. Although in the fourth quarter of the 18th century, compared to the previous period, the number of painters in the city had nearly tripled⁷, it was still a problem to serve all clients in a timely manner⁸. The Riga city court judicial (*Rigasches Kämmereigericht*) records of 1780's contain complaints by artisans of an excessive number of orders and a lack of masters, which significantly impeded the execution of orders to meet deadlines.

In the second half of the 18th century, the genesis of Neo-Classicism in Europe directly influenced the change in taste regarding interior finish among clients all over the Latvian territory. An important role here undoubtedly was played by the circulation of engraving albums, which informed local masters of the latest style trends. Riga and other Latvian cities received the albums thanks to trade relations with Scandinavia, northern Germany, Holland and other European countries, as well as due to the migration of master craftsmen and apprentices. Although there have been no studies on the presence of certain stocks of engravings in the Latvian centres, preserved interior paintings show that the inspiration came from two sources: Marie-Joseph Peyre's book '*Oeuvres d'architecture*', printed in France in 1765, which popularized ancient Roman interior details, including the coffered dome of the Pantheon, and Giovanni Battista Piranesi's views of ancient Roman ruins⁹: romanticized visions of the legacy of Roman Empire. As can be seen from the preserved examples of interior paintings, Piranesi's approach gained more popularity in Latvian interior design than the German artist and

⁶ Latvian State Historical Archives (henceforth LSHA), 1382-2-60, 7.

⁷ In the third quarter of the 18th century, there were 17 painters in Riga. During the fourth quarter of the century, the situation had changed: there is information about 44 artisans. Most of them worked at the very end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century.

⁸ LSHA, 749-6-2066, 246.

⁹ Giovanni Battista Piranesi, *Varie Vedute di Roma Antica e Moderna* (1745); *Antichità Romane del tempo della prima Repubblica e dei primi imperatori* (1748–1774).

theorist Johann Joachim Winckelmann's (1717–1768) severe Greek Revival-inspired art.

As early as the second and third quarter of the 18th century, illusory painting – *quadratura* and *trompe l'œil* – became a fashionable Latvian residential interior decoration. Also from an earlier period, the second half of the 17th century and first half of the 18th century, both in Riga and in the residences in Liepāja (Libau), there were wall and ceiling paintings which sought to transform the decorated surface into a 'different reality' – a fantastic garden or a starry sky. However, these paintings were still dominated by ornamental decorativeness. Even when architectural elements are displayed, the inconsistent observance of the perspective law makes the illusion inconclusive. But in the second and third quarter of the 18th century, the craftsmanship of painter guild artisans increased, as did the desire to play with volume and space effects. A vivid example of this trend is provided by the painted doors in the Krāslava palace, which prove to be inauthentic only after direct physical contact by the viewer.

The interest in antique art and history has been established as occurring relatively early in Latvia, during the beginning of the Baroque style expansion. For example, in the 1739 inventory of the **Vircava manor** (Würzau), the old palace of the Dukes of Courland, there is mention of a number of large-scale wall paintings on canvas, with pictures from the history of ancient Rome, on the first floor of the premises.¹⁰ They most likely originate from the 1690s, the time of Duke Friedrich Casimir, when this building was decorated.¹¹ Unfortunately, these paintings on canvas have disappeared and, as a result, the compositional structure and content cannot be assessed.

In the second half of the 18th century and beginning of the 19th century Neo-Classical interior painting examples known today in the territory of Latvia, it is possible to distinguish several themes connected with reminiscences on antique art. This indicates that the prevailing interest in Europe in antique culture and art, especially deepened by the mid-18th century archaeological excavations in Pompeii and Herculaneum, was significant for the local society as well.

¹⁰ Ieva Lancmane, "Jelgavas mākslinieki un glezniecība 17.–18. gadsimtā", *Senā Jelgava* (Riga: Neputns, 2010), 122, fn 29; LSHA, 6999-44-1146, 2.

¹¹ In the 1780s, the building was rebuilt after the design of Severin Jensen, the court architect of the Duchy of Courland.

COLONNADES

One of the typical compositional methods of illusory painting is division of a wall surface into parts with the help of painted columns or pilasters. In this way, space seems to reshape itself into a pavilion surrounded by columns, with views of landscapes or other decorative motifs passing by in perspective. This interior composition schema has a long history, with its roots in antique culture. With *trompe l'œil* ('trick of the eye') paintings, the second Pompeii style is well known, and this style was used in the above-mentioned wall division system. A fine example of such painted architecture is the Cubiculum in the villa at Boscoreale, dated 1 BC. Analogue wall painting systems were also common in the southern Europe interior culture of the Renaissance and Baroque eras. At the end of the 17th century, painted colonnades appeared as a means of expression of northern German painters. Column shafts are often twisted into a Baroque spiral, as seen in a 1680 painting at 53 Deichstraße, Hamburg¹².

Finishes with painted colonnades in Latvian residential interiors have also been known since the Baroque age. Several such compositions from the 1740s and 1750s painted directly on timber constructions have been found in the Courland harbour city of **Liepāja** (Libau): **6 Kungu Street**¹³, **16 Kungu Street**¹⁴, **21 Bāriņu Street**¹⁵ and **11/13 Baznīcas Street** (fig. 1)¹⁶. Here column shafts are interlaced with gorgeous flower garlands and ribbons. However, the capital solution is mostly a free improvisation, only distantly resembling the classical order. It may even be replaced by such atectonic details as orbs or bizarre bundles of leaves. In sever-

¹² *Decken- und Wanddekoration in Hamburg vom Barock zum Klassizismus*. Hamburg Porträt. Heft 28 (Hamburg: Museum für Hamburgische Geschichte, 1997), Abb. 12.

¹³ Kristīne Veinberga, Juris Zviedrāns, *Liepāja, Kungu iela 6. Arhitektoniski mākslinieciskā izpēte* (Rīga: Arhitektoniskās izpētes grupa, 2001; manuscript in the Center of Documentation of State Inspection for Heritage Protection of the Republic of Latvia and in the archives of the Architectural Investigation Group).

¹⁴ Vija Strupule, Juris Zviedrāns, *Liepāja, Kungu iela 16. 18. gs. sienu un griestu gleznojumu fiksācija. T18 un T20* (Rīga: Arhitektoniskās izpētes grupa, 1997; manuscript in the Center of Documentation of State Inspection for Heritage Protection of the Republic of Latvia and in the archives of the Architectural Investigation Group).

¹⁵ Vilnis Auziņš, Ilmārs Dirveiks, *Liepāja, Bāriņu iela 21. III daļa. Interjeru fotofiksācija* (Rīga: Arhitektoniskās izpētes grupa, 1994; manuscript in the archives of the Architectural Investigation Group).

¹⁶ Juris Zviedrāns, *Liepāja, Baznīcas iela 11/13. Apsekošana* (Rīga: Arhitektoniskās izpētes grupa, 2005; manuscript in the Center of Documentation of State Inspection for Heritage Protection of the Republic of Latvia and in the archives of the Architectural Investigation Group).



Fig. 1. Liepāja, 11/13 Baznīcas Street. Second floor painted colonnade on wooden beams. 1740s–1750s. Photo by Juris Zviedrāns, archives of the Architectural Investigation Group Ltd.

al premises, the surfaces between columns are enriched with splendid abstract ornamental acanthus foliage scrolls. However, more realistic landscape paintings were also included, for example the seascapes with sailing windjammers at 21 Bāriņu Street.

In the third quarter of the 18th century, painted colonnades became a feature of residential interiors in **Rīga** as well. An intact and restored example of such an interior is located on the ground floor of the Mentendorff house (18 **Grēcinieku Street**, fig. 2). Here smooth column shafts are also interlaced with flower wreaths, but the dado between the column pedestals is filled with a painted balustrade. In this case, an unknown master had showed an understanding of a definite order system, because the columns are decorated with a capital similar to the Corinthian capital. The columns support an illusory painted entablature with floral ornamentation on the frieze. It is interesting that it is not located right beneath the ceiling zone, but considerably lower. Consequently, an illusion of an open colonnade standing in a city garden is created. In a small area there has also survived a landscape painting, showing a river or channel bank with houses visible through trees. In the foreground, a man in mid-18th century dress stands on a bridge with his back turned to the onlookers, watching together with the visitor to the

room boats on the water and society figures leisurely walking along park lanes.

Colonnades were also a favorite motif in a number of the painted interiors of the Vidzeme wooden architecture pearl **Ungurmuiža** (Orellen) manor house. A master painter from Limbaži (Lemsal), Georg Dietrich Hinsch, worked here in the 1750s.¹⁷ The master used this compositional schema in several premises, employing Baroque twisted columns, which were additionally girdled with gorgeous flower and foliage garlands. The first floor staircase painting on wooden construction walls is the

Ungurmuiža manor's signature feature. Here, through the colonnade, the visitor's eye is caught by hilly landscapes with fortresses and church towers, with the entrance guarded by painted figures of grenadiers. This interior, unique in many ways, has entirely retained its original idea, because it has never been covered with later finishing layers. The corresponding ceiling central panel painting is also still extant, showing birds flying between the clouds. The master obviously had at hand a 'pattern book' on antique order system details, because Corinthian capitals are shown very convincingly.

The same cannot be said of the work of the unknown master of the **Cēsis** (Wenden) **New Palace**¹⁸. Significant repairs took place here after



Fig. 2. Mentzendorff house. Rīga, 18 Grēcinieku Street. First floor colonnade painted on plaster. The 3rd quarter of the 18th century. Photo from the restoration documentation, compiled by Polish restorers in 1991.

¹⁷ Ieva Lancmane, Imants Lancmanis, "Innenausstattung des Herrenhauses Orellen", *Gutshof unter den Eichen. Orellen und die familie von Campenhausen in Livland*. Katalog der Ausstellung im Schlossmuseum Rundāle und im Herder-Institut Marburg (Rundāle: s.n., 1998), 153, 155.

¹⁸ Ilmārs Dirveiks, Vija Strupule, *Cēsis, Pils iela 9, bij. Jaunā pils. Arhitektoniski mākslinieciskā izpēte* (Rīga: Arhitektoniskās izpētes grupa, 2004; manuscript in the Center of Documentation of State Inspection for Heritage Protection of the Republic of Latvia and in the archives of the Architectural Investigation Group); Vija Strupule, *Cēsis, Pils iela 9, bij. Jaunā pils. Rekonstrukcijas laikā veiktie papildus izpētes darbi* (Rīga: Arhitektoniskās izpētes grupa, 2008; manuscript in the Center of Documentation of State Inspection for Heritage Protection of the Republic of Latvia and in the archives of the Architectural Investigation Group).



Fig. 3. Limbaži, 4 Burtņieku Street. Second floor colonnade painted on plaster, after conservation. The last quarter of the 18th century. Photo by Marina Mihailova, archives of the Architectural Investigation Group Ltd.

1777, when the property passed to the von Sievers family.¹⁹ At the time, the first floor central hall walls were covered with a very smooth, polished gypsum rendering layer, serving as a base for freehand painting. Here illusory, foliage-garland-ornamented columns support a real cornice. However, the capitals, painted in a bronze colour, resemble fancy coral bough grating, possibly presenting the author's idea of a once-seen Corinthian capital. On the column pedestals and dado panels, there are painted refined rocaille ornaments, shaped with a more refined understanding. The space between the columns is filled with panel framing. This layer of painting was relatively quickly – by the end of the 18th century – covered with a refined Neo-Classical style painting composition.

Evidence of the ambitious goals of a citizen of a Vidzeme town at the end of the 18th century in finishing his residence is provided by the painted interiors in **Limbaži** (Lemsal), at **4 Burtņieku Street**²⁰. The building was constructed between 1776 and 1798 as a private residence, and

¹⁹ Vija Strupule, "Īeskats Cēsu Jaunās pils interjeru vēsturē", *Cēsu un Vidzemes novada vēsture 3* (Cēsis: Cēsu pašvaldības aģentūra "Vidzemes vēstures un tūrisma centrs", 2005), 156.

²⁰ Iveta Jēkabsons, Daiga Lēvalde, Ruta Taurena, *Limbaži, Burtņieku iela 4. Arhitektoniski mākslinieciskā izpēte* (Rīga: Arhitektoniskās izpētes grupa, 1995; manuscript in the Center of Documentation of State Inspection for Heritage Protection of the Republic of Latvia and in the archives of the Architectural Investigation Group).



Fig. 4. Riga, 6 Lielā Pils Street. Painted capital of a column. Late 18th century. Photo by Juris Zviedrāns, archives of the Architectural Investigation Group Ltd.

its owner was the merchant Braunschweig²¹. Wall and ceiling paintings were first detected in 1988. Now they have been revealed, consolidated and partially restored in three places (fig. 3). In all of them, in a noteworthy professional manner, a romantic sea or southern landscape is depicted surrounded by illusory architectural framing. Both frame and colonnade systems are used here. Rectangular forms, panels ornamented with festoons in the dado zone, a reserved colonnade solution without previous-period-favoured flower garlands, as well as the lack of a luxuriant framing for the landscape panels reflect the presence of a Neo-Classical style. Pale pinks, bluish, greyish-white hues and marbling effects were used in the colouring.

A painted colonnade in the Neo-Classical fashion, lacking the playful rococo touch, was revealed in a residence in **Rīga**, at **6 Lielā Pils Street**²², designed in 1795 by Christoph Haberland. The painting is located in a second floor hall (fig. 4). Entering the room at the end of the 18th centu-

²¹ Today the building is known as the Limbaži Old City Hall. The city council bought this property only in 1850.

²² Vija Strupule, Ruta Taurena, Ināra Cine, *Ēka Rīgā, Pils ielā 6. Arhitektoniski mākslinieciskā izpēte* (Rīga: Arhitektoniskās izpētes grupa, 2002; manuscript in the Center of Documentation of State Inspection for Heritage Protection of the Republic of Latvia and in the archives of the Architectural Investigation Group).

ry, one would have had the impression of entering a column-embraced pavilion, beyond which an azure sky and possibly some natural landscape was revealed. Illusory painted architecture divides walls: the base, treated as a low stone wall or pedestal with laurel leaf festooned garlands on panels, and fluted columns with Corinthian capitals, 'carrying' a real cornice. Beneath the cornice, possibly, a painted drapery was hung. In the areas between the columns, sculptural characters of fashionable women of the period, painted in full figure, are standing on socle pedestals. The painting was carried out in off-white: a white grisaille technique on a pale blue background with distempers. The limited opening volume and missing painting layers, as well as a change of rendering in separate areas, do not allow for complete reconstruction of the painting composition. The colour layer has survived better at the bottom and in the corners of the wall, but the central plane is in places fully cleared away. Only a preparatory painting drawing contour is visible in this zone – the outline of a lady's figure. Therefore, even though the irreversible loss is regrettable, we have an opportunity to observe the painter's work process. As often happens, the initial painting of the ceiling plane is gone.

In the finishing of the Courland manor, such a belated example of the application of a wall division scheme was also found. There are preserved and restored 1820s paintings in the **Kukšu** (Kuckschen) **manor**²³.

The most magnificent works were located on the right side of the main entrance. Paintings were found in five rooms, so here we may talk about the whole complex of representation premises. Right after 1821, the walls were plastered once more and painted with distemper. The chosen motifs and principles of compositions came from the Neo-Classical style, which was not very common at the time in cities. But, as we see, in the countryside this tradition was rather strong for a long time. A master (perhaps with assistants) had worked here, but it's not possible to name him today.

²³ Liesma Markova, Ruta Taurena, Vija Strupule, *Kukšu muiža. Kungu nama divu 1. stāva telpu arhitektoniski mākslinieciskā izpēte* (Rīga: Arhitektoniskās izpētes grupa, 2002; manuscript in the Center of Documentation of State Inspection for Heritage Protection of the Republic of Latvia and in the archives of the Architectural Investigation Group), Liesma Markova, Ruta Taurena, Vija Strupule, *Kukšu muiža. Kungu nama halles, zāles un "ziemas dārza" interjeru arhitektoniski mākslinieciskā izpēte* (Rīga: Arhitektoniskās izpētes grupa, 2002; manuscript in the Center of Documentation of State Inspection for Heritage Protection of the Republic of Latvia and in the archives of the Architectural Investigation Group).

Entering the main hall, thanks to the wall paintings you feel as though you have come into an open-air pavilion, surrounded by columns. There are landscapes with classical buildings and a garden between the painted columns with Corinthian order capitals. The columns 'stand' on a monochrome dado section and there is an illusory support for a real cornice. There are antique figures – perhaps allegories of virtues – painted in gray grisaille technique on the sides of the window openings (the reveals). The figures are placed in peaked ovals against a light blue background.

Dating back to the 1820s is yet another one of Courland's estates – the **Liguti** (Ligutten) **manor house**²⁴. There is a parade of character rooms, located along the Durbes Lake side facade; the interior finishing was originally created with the assistance of painting or decorative polychromy. Two of these, the wall compositions, consist of colonnades. The most luxurious and most complex painting was created in the former dance hall. With the help of illusionary painting, the space was transformed into an architectural pavilion, with viewable painted landscapes in the box openings. The ceilings were turned into a blue sky, where in the middle, with wings fully spread, an eagle soared. It is possible that the bird was used for the ceiling socket functions and 'held' a chandelier in its claws. On both sides of the wall painting compositions, there are, in a coulisse-style perspective, painted classical architectural motifs, serving as the lower fragment of a gateway or the triumphant arches of the Ionic pilasters, which support the entablature with an ornamented frieze band. Between them, a landscape was painted with a view of the lake and forest meadows, which is very similar to the real view of Durbes Lake, which can be seen through the windows of the opposite wall.

Also, in the other room, the architectural motifs selected were of a simpler form, revealing the intimate nature of the room. The wall surface here is rhythmically divided by white Tuscan order columns, which stand on a base with a pedestal. The columns are placed on both sides of the openings of doors and windows and in the corners of the room. Both the column stalks and bases and capitals are shaded, creating the illusion of volume. The wall surface between the columns is painted in

²⁴ Daiga Lēvalde, Vija Strupule *et al.*, *Līgotu muižas kungu nams. Arhitektoniski mākslinieciskā izpēte* (Rīga: Arhitektoniskās izpētes grupa, 2006; manuscript in the Center of Documentation of State Inspection for Heritage Protection of the Republic of Latvia and in the archives of the Architectural Investigation Group).

a bright red and monochrome colour, which is probably a reference to the style of Pompeii as a source of inspiration. The frieze band and the ceiling painting, unfortunately, have not been preserved.

ROMAN ARCHITECTURAL MOTIFS, RUINS AND ITALIAN LANDSCAPES

In the second half of the 18th century in Western Europe, parallel to the formation of the Neo-Classical style, a romantic view of history and natural phenomena was becoming popular. The 'ruin aesthetic' combined these two trends, leading to a submerging in philosophical reflection on the ancient golden age and the intense feelings of the transitory nature of all existence.

The earliest known example of painted finishings with Roman architectural motifs in **Riga** residences is located at **24 Jauniela Street**. It dates back to the third quarter of the 18th century – the period of Rococo-style expansion. The 'frame systems'²⁵ were already popular at this time in compositions of wall paintings. They were widely used in the fourth quarter of the 18th century, and the first decades of the 19th century. In the hall on the first floor of 24 Jauniela Street, the frames are composed of luxurious, sophisticated rocaille ornament painted in grisaille technique, which includes the ribbon loop motif, popular in the late Baroque. Rocaille frames and rectangular marble pannels are arranged alternately. In each frame, a different piece of southern architecture is painted: a fountain, a part of an ornate staircase or a pedestal with an antique vase. The architectural motifs are complemented by demure characteristics of the natural environment: stems of grass, shrubbery or a painting of a slender tree. The bluish-grey hue of marbling and landscape paintings is juxtaposed with sandy yellow-brown shades in rocaille frames. Although so far the search for the particular model engravings used by the artist has not been successful, the characteristics of the painted architecture show that they could be sights of Italy, most likely architectural fragments of Rome. Unfortunately, the interior space has survived only partially, and has not been reconstructed.

²⁵ Illusory painted architectonic décor of a wall. More often, there is panelling in the dado part, but on the upper part of the wall: landscapes or decorative paintings in frames.



Fig. 5. Riga, 11 Kalku Street. Wall painting on plaster. Late 18th century. The painting was covered up before it was entirely uncovered. Photo by Juris Zviedrāns, archives of the Architectural Investigation Group Ltd.



Fig. 6. Riga, 11 Kalku Street. Fragment of a triumphal arch. Late 18th century. Photo by Juris Zviedrāns, archives of the Architectural Investigation Group Ltd.

Wall paintings in **Riga, at 11 Kaļķu Street**,²⁶ date back to the end of the 18th or the beginning of the 19th century (figs. 5, 6). The Architectural Investigation Group carried out research there in 1997. Before the beginning of practical work on the site, even professionals with considerable experience were unable to predict the existence of interior finishing older than the second half of the 19th century in the building, which was totally rebuilt in 1902. Serious alterations also occurred in the mid-19th century. Therefore, it seemed unreasonable to search for any older remains in the building. However, when probing of the painting took place in one of the rooms on the second floor of the premises, pieces of painted landscapes and architectural details were exposed on two walls. The finishing had been executed with oil paints on plaster. It was the first finishing layer, which had been preserved in relatively good condition.

Historical data shows that ownership of the house was obtained in 1785 by a Great Guild merchant and senior member of the Blackheads'

²⁶ Daiga Lēvalde, Zanda Bikše, *Rīga, Kaļķu iela 11. Arhitektoniski mākslinieciskā inventarizācija un interjeru izpēte* (Rīga: Arhitektoniskās izpētes grupa, 1997; manuscript in the Center of Documentation of State Inspection for Heritage Protection of the Republic of Latvia and in the archives of the Architectural Investigation Group).

Association named Ebel. At this time (1785–1802), the value of the building significantly increased – by about 2121 thalers. It is very likely that this gentleman, who was respected in the community, ordered superior quality painted interiors for his residence. In the fragments uncovered in the probing of 11 Kaļķu Street, there are illusory painted architecture and marble panel-framed marine views with boats and a detailed frigate type windjammer, decorated with the 18th-century flag of Iceland. Possibly, this is an indication of Mr. Ebel's marketing ability. Apparently, the landlord sought to perpetuate current stories of his life.

However, the period fashion dictated the need for the presence of ancient motifs in the composition. There is an impressive marble urn in grisaille technique, decorated with classical laurel leaf, oval rosette and fluting motifs, placed in an illusory niche. Next to it is a fragment of a triumphal arch overgrown with vines and a cluster of trees. In this scene, there is a romantic touch with a typical idealization of ruins, and contemplation on the shortness of life and the transitory nature of existence. The marble urn – as a monument to a time and people that have passed away – also expresses romanticized feelings. Unfortunately, nowadays, the painting has not earned the interest of the residents of the house and is hidden under a plaster board lining, waiting for 'better times' to come.

The aesthetics of antique ruins is also evident in a wall painting on the first floor of the building at **5 Laipu Street in Riga**. These paintings were found accidentally during a renovation in 1983, by a tenant of the apartment, increasing the interest in the inspection of monuments and among the general public. However, the documentation practices of historical interior finishing at the time were not yet fully developed, so the paintings were hidden again, without any proper documentation. Only descriptions²⁷ and some photographs have survived.

Landscapes with ancient ruins are included in the second layer of painting, which dates back to the first quarter of the 19th century. The time period is indicated by the presence of Egyptian motifs in the composition, being characteristic of the Empire style. The landscape framing consists of pilasters with bundle-type capitals. The pilaster stems are divided into rusts with images of birds and small human figurines in

²⁷ Imants Lancmanis, Dace Čoldere, *Slēdziens par sienu gleznojumiem Rīgā, Laipu ielā 5. Rīga, 03.02.1983.* (Typewritten descriptions in the Center of Documentation of State Inspection for Heritage Protection of the Republic of Latvia).

profile. The master painter combined various ancient cultural layers in a single decoration, revealing behind these Nile Valley civilization references views of the ancient Roman aqueduct, or classical temple ruins²⁸.

Besides direct reproductions of antique architectural ruins, Rigans also wanted to see landscapes of Italy or other southern lands and cities, including antique reminiscences, on the walls of their residences. An example of such a painting can be found at **17 Vecpilsētas Street in Riga**²⁹, on the second floor of the mansion designed by Christoph Haberland for the head of the town council, Sebastian Kruse. This is the most magnificent painting in the interior of the building. A coved back wall and oven niches, as well as a rectangular niche in the side wall, dominate the layout of the room. The main emphasis of the room is located here: a large laurel foliage wreath, capturing a southern landscape with an antique rotunda on the high bank of a romantic stream and, in the foreground, two male figures immersed in conversation under the shade of trees. The roundel of the painting is in a frame above the illusory painted dado, which is a part of the polychrome 'frame system' that covers the whole room. The landscape is painted in monochrome: greenish-grey, grey and white shades on a light grey background. In contrast, on the dado and frame, marble is imitated in saturated gold and brick-red, with dark brown veining. Both the stone imitation and painting were created in a highly professional manner. Therefore, this area, decorated only with paint, is not less and may be even more luxurious than the moulded plastic decoration of the lower floor hall. The painting was restored in 1998.³⁰

At beginning of 1980, Baroque, Rococo and Neo-Classical style paintings were found in a (typically for the period) neglected shabby communal flat building at **18 Grēcinieku Street in Riga**. These were discoveries that provided an incentive for the professional development

²⁸ After several years, outstanding paintings were revealed (by the specialists of the Architectural Investigation Group) in another first floor premise. Here, in three landscapes, idyllic views from the beginning of the 19th century of a rural manor with staffage were depicted. See: Kristīne Veinberga, *Rīga, Laipu iela 5, 4. Dzīvoklis. Arhitektoniski mākslinieciskā inventarizācija* (Rīga: Arhitektoniskās izpētes grupa, 1998; manuscript in the Center of Documentation of State Inspection for Heritage Protection of the Republic of Latvia and in the archives of the Architectural Investigation Group).

²⁹ Kristīne Veinberga, Ilmārs Dirveiks, *Rīga, Vecpilsētas iela 17. Arhitektoniski mākslinieciskā izpēte* (Rīga: Arhitektoniskās izpētes grupa, 1997; manuscript in the Center of Documentation of State Inspection for Heritage Protection of the Republic of Latvia and in the archives of the Architectural Investigation Group).

³⁰ Restorers: Gunita Čakare, Sandra Priēžčiekure.



Fig. 7. Mentzendorff house. Riga, 18 Grēcinieku Street. Second floor wall painting with an Italian landscapes. Early 19th century. Photo from the restoration documentation, compiled by Polish restorers in 1991.

of architectural research in Latvia. Today this building, the 'Mentzendorff House', is restored and Riga's residence museum is located here.

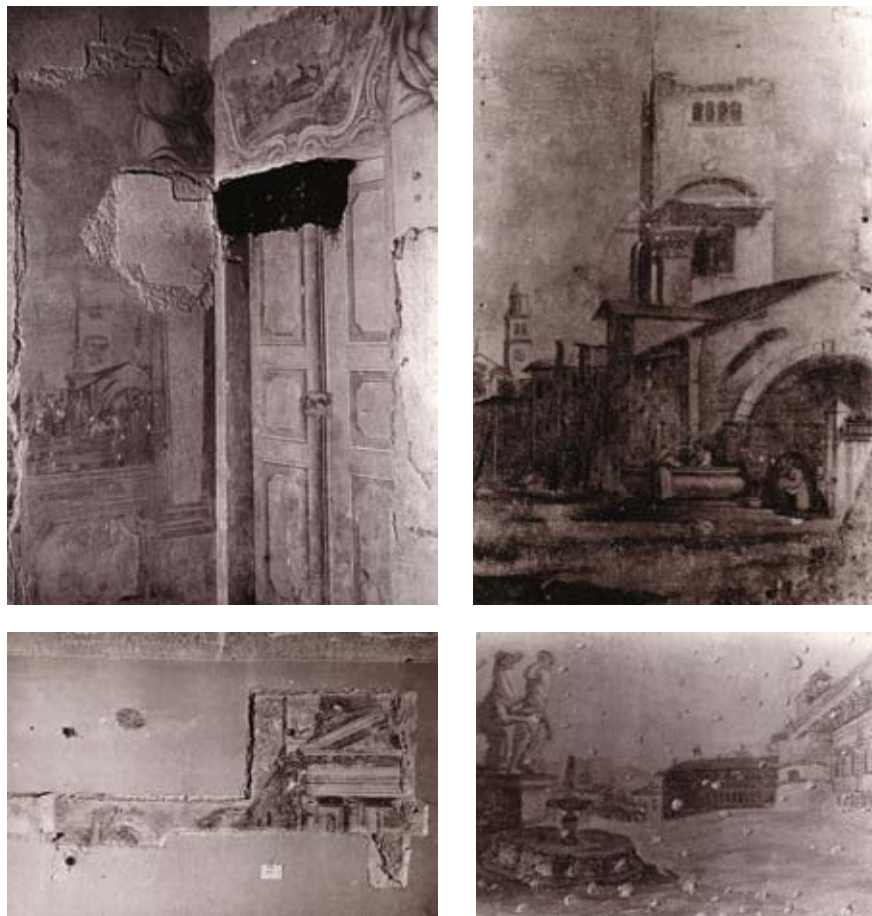
In a small area on the second floor, fragments with Italian landscape paintings have been restored (fig. 7).³¹ A simplified frame system version was used: a band-like base without panels and a smooth, undecorated frame with austere chiaroscuro contouring. The landscapes show southern city architecture embraced by trees, and the romantic feeling is deepened by

the ruined stone block mason-work bridges and walls in the foreground of the painting. Possibly, the interior is a result of the repairs of 1804, when the value of the property increased by 1600 thalers.

Even though illusory paintings in Riga burghers' flats were pretty pompous, they were no more pompous than the typical manor house finishing. Outstanding examples of such pictorial art in Latgale are the **Krāslava** (Krasław, Kreslau, Kreslavka) **Palace** interiors, created in the 1760s and 1770s, possibly connected with the Italian master Filippo Castaldi (1734–1814) (figs. 8–11). Though no direct documentary confirmation has been found, both the painter's background and his connections with the family of the owner of the Krāslava manor, Count Plater, as well the style of the paintings point to the master's work on the decoration of the palace interiors.³² The painting composition on the wall of the ground floor hall consists of views of Rome and landscapes with staffage, enclosed in convincingly grisaille technique architectural framing:

³¹ The restoration was carried out by Polish restorers, and it was finished in 1991.

³² Ieva Lancmane, *Krāslavas pils izpētes materiāli* (manuscript in the Center of Documentation of State Inspection for Heritage Protection of the Republic of Latvia); Rūta Kaminska, *18. gadsimta glezniecība Latgalē* (Rīga: Zinātne, 1994), 84; Rūta Kaminska, "Filipo Kastaldi un viņa mantojums", *Mākslas vēsture un teorija*, 2 (2004), 24–25.



Figs. 8.–11. Krāslava Palace. Fragments of the wall painting. The 1760s–1770s. Photos from restoration documentation (1994) and Ieva Lancmane's *Krāslavas pils izpētes materiāli* (manuscripts in the Centre of Documentation of State Inspection for Heritage Protection of the Republic of Latvia).

dado, pilasters, herms and consoles (corbels). Rococo-style ornamentation was applied. The motifs in the landscape drawings have been identified as a direct borrowing from the engraving sheets of Giovanni Battista Piranesi. For example, the composition of the Palazzo Quirinale precisely duplicates Piranesi's etching "A view of the 'Monte Cavallo' Square", from the series *'Vedute di Roma'* (1748–1760). In other compositions, the author used details of separate Piranesi engravings, freely varying and

supplementing them.³³ Perhaps the painting of Constantine's Arch was ordered by the master in honour of the Krāslava Palace owner's father, Count Konstanty Ludwik Plater.

While the Riga master painters acquired the principles of illusory painting, *quadratura* and *trompe l'œil*, through intermediation within the guild craftsmanship training system, the Krāslava Palace painter came from Italy, where this interior decoration system was created and a land that was not lacking in brilliant examples. The professional background of a master born in the town of Arpino, near Rome, was significantly higher than that of a painter trained within the guild system, at the artisan level. The Krāslava Palace, as well as its interior paintings, is still waiting for restoration.

The second presently known master's house from the Latgale region whose rooms were decorated with romanticized southern landscapes, with classical architectural framework, is the **Varakļānu** (Warkland) **manor**³⁴. In this case, the antique ruins theme was not employed. The paintings allow the observer to become submerged in the idyllic world of a mysterious grotto, mountain lakes and hidden valley villages, which encourages the feeling of a life in the harmonic paradise of nature – ancient Arcadia.

In the Vidzeme (Livland) region, admirable quality paintings with ruined Forum Romanum landscapes adorned the central hall of the **Stalbe** (Stolben) **Manor House** (fig. 12). Fate has not been kind to this building or to the interiors (as in many other manor buildings). They perished during the war and as a result of the following Soviet system's nihilistic attitude. Only a few photographs, taken about 1912, have survived³⁵, and they show the vast compositions. There is illusory painted architectural framing: a panelled dado, resting on its columns, divides the wall into parts, where, in rectangular frames, there are landscapes with large-scale antique temple ruins. The painter is unknown, though the surviving photographs testify to his high professional level. The paintings were created in the mid-1790s, after an additional building was added to the 1780s constructed main block of the manor house.

³³ Ieva Lancmane, "Krāslavas Jaunā pils – 18. gs. Latgales arhitektūras un mākslas piemineklis", *Materiāli feodālisma posma Latvijas mākslas vēsturei 2* (Rīga: Zinātne, 1987), 36.

³⁴ The building was built from 1783–1779, after a design by the Italian architect Vincenzo Maccotti.

³⁵ Imants Lancmanis, "Nāve Stalbē. Drāma 5 cēlienos", *Māksla +*, 2 (1998), 23.

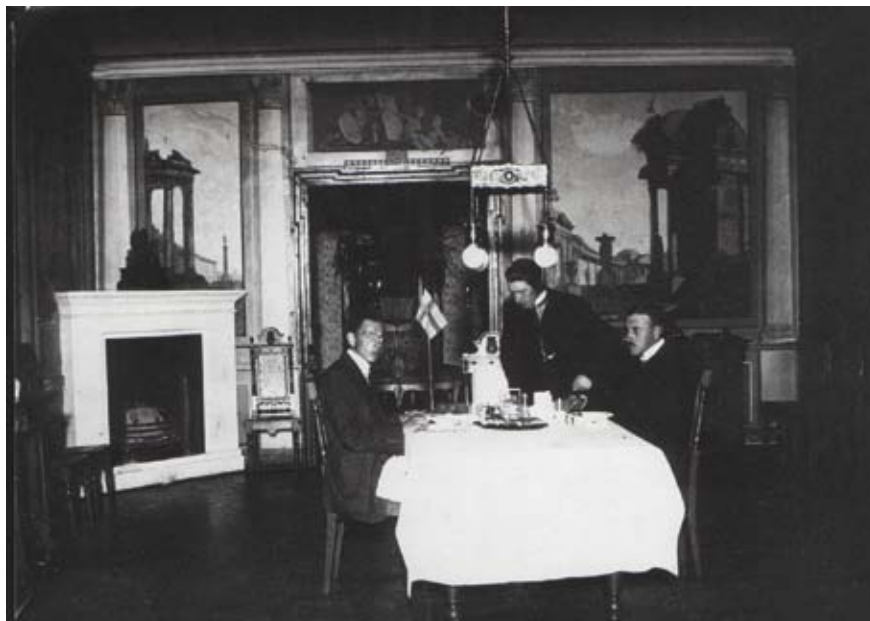


Fig. 12. Manor House of the Stolben estate. Photo ca 1912. © Herder-Institut, Marburg.

According to the order of Baron Mengden, they were designed by Johann Wilhelm Krause.³⁶

In the first quarter of the 19th century, both in Europe as a whole and in Latvia³⁷, a panoramic type of wallpaper became fashionable; the wallpaper was imported from France and in its own way helped ease the burden of painters. Such wallpaper with views of ruins of the Forum Romanum was, for example, used for the finish of the **Inčukalns** (Hinzenberg) **manor**.³⁸

Kurzeme (Courland) and Zemgale (Sembgallen) landlords were quick to follow the period fashion. This is verified, for example, by the **Paplaka** (Paplacken) **manor house** hall paintings, created about 1808.³⁹ Landscapes of the antique world alternate here with ornamental panels, with antique vases and Cupids interlaced with acanthus arabesques. These paintings have also not survived.

³⁶ *Ibidem*, 18.

³⁷ Imported panoramic type wallpaper may have appeared in the Latvian territory at the beginning of the 1820s, when the wallpaper importation prohibition was annulled.

³⁸ Imants Lancmanis, "Inčukalns blakus Inčukalnam", *Māksla+*, 6 (2010), 37.

³⁹ Imants Lancmanis, "Dumlraka pastaiga Paplakā", *Māksla+*, 1 (1998), 73.

The same fate that befell the building as a whole struck the **Eleja** (Elley) **Palace** first floor billiard room paintings. In this case, an interesting compositional solution was used. There is no frame system, nor were the walls designed as an illusory colonnade. Landscapes with ruins of antique temples appear as if through openings in the walls constructed from big rectangular stone blocks.⁴⁰ In the 1990s, plaster with remains of paintings still showed natural tones: brownish rustication on a cream-colored background.⁴¹

Paintings of romanticized southern landscapes with motifs from classical architecture were also a part of other manor interior decoration compositions, for example, in the **Aizkraukle** (Ascheraden) and **Iļģi** (Illien) **manor houses**, as well as in the **Zaļenieki** (Grünhof) **Palace** interior paintings.

ARCHITECTURAL ILLUSION OF THE CEILING. PANTHEON-TYPE CEILING DOMES

The coffered dome of the ancient Roman Pantheon was a model for many ceilings and decorations of Western European churches and other buildings for a long period of time. As early as the 15th century, the dome of the Siena Cathedral was decorated with painted *trompe l'œil* coffers. In the last quarter of the 17th century and in the beginning of the 18th century, the idea of a coffered dome reflection on a flat surface appeared in the artist Andrea Pozzo's plane-'destroying' dome paintings in the Sant'Ignazio di Loyola Church in Rome and the Jesuit Church in Vienna. A coffered dome decorates St. Paul's Cathedral in London (1675–1710) and the Church of St. Genevieve and the Pantheon (1756–1789) in Paris. A half-dome with coffers, inspired by M. J. Peyre's drawings of the Roman Pantheon, was created for the amphitheatre of the School of Surgery in Paris by the architect Jacques Gondouin (1769–1775). The idea of a coffered dome also spread in Germany, for example, in Nürnberg's Church of St. Elisabeth, which was built after 1785. This impressive element of architecture was continuously used in the 19th century, for example in

⁴⁰ *Elejas pils. Katalogs* (Rundāle: Rundāles pils muzejs, 1992), Nos. 65, 66, fig. 144, p. 59.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, 59.

Napoleon's custom-built Church of St. Mary Magdalene in Paris (1804–1849) and in the Rotunda of Mosta in Malta (1833–1860).

As early as the end of 1870's and the 1880's, a new type of illusory painting composition appeared in Riga residential ceiling decoration. While before – in the Baroque and Rococo periods – a ceiling very often was decorated like an open sky or celestial sphere with mythological or Christian allegories, now a level ceiling was converted into a three-dimensional architectural creation with the assistance of perspectives. Already used in 17th century Europe, the *quadratura* technique, similar to the *trompe l'œil*, which is based more on the artist's intuition, came into use once again, although it was different in its focus on the theory of perspectives.

Such an example of a plafond may be found in **Riga, at 21 Pils Street**,⁴² in the first floor corner. In the ceiling cove, there are illusory painted consoles (corbels) and panels with rosettes in the centre. The ceiling plane is "broken" by pilasters with capitals directed in a dynamic perspective from the corners to the centre. Between them, there are regular lines of square coffers. The strong chiaroscuro of the painting makes every detail boldly plastic. This forms an impression of a rectangular tower, where in the opening – in the centre of the ceiling – the architectural framework is broken by a tiny space of bright blue sky. It features a figure of a lady. A smiling face, shoulders, a hand and a foot are revealed. The rest of the figure is covered with a levelling plaster layer, which replaced an earlier ceiling rosette. In the character of the image, the easy grace of the Rococo style can be felt, which may give some indication of the date of the painting, linking it to early Neo-Classicism – the 1770s or 1780s. Most likely, it is an image of a mythological character, but as the attributes of the image have not been preserved, this cannot be confirmed.

The above example combines an innovative architectural approach and the display of the ceiling as a transcendental celestial sphere with religious or mythological characters, which was a traditional approach in the previous period. A painting can, in an illusory manner, transform a ceiling plane into another structure – a dome. In this case, the proto-

⁴² Vija Strupule, Ruta Taurena, *Rīga, Pils iela 21. 2. stāva stūra telpas griestu gleznojuma apsekošana* (Rīga: Arhitektoniskās izpētes grupa, 1998; manuscript in the Center of Documentation of State Inspection for Heritage Protection of the Republic of Latvia and in the archives of the Architectural Investigation Group).

type for the sunken panels seems to be the ancient Roman Pantheon dome ceiling, which became a model for various dome finishes of the period in Latvia.

In Riga, two such ceiling examples are presently known. The painting on the first floor of the **4 Miesnieku Street**⁴³ residence has been dated to the end of the 18th century. An illusory cupola is formed by painted-in-perspective coffers, radially turned towards the rosette, painted in the centre. The panelling is bordered with laurel leaf wreath and illusory moulded framing.

A similar ceiling was found and later restored in **Riga, at 3/5 Torņa Street**⁴⁴. The painting of the first floor dates back to the beginning of the 19th century (after 1807). Fortunately, here it was possible to trace and restore the complete finishing idea for both walls and ceiling. The space was shaped by creating an illusion of a pavilion, covered by a small panelled dome. Red-brown rosettes are painted on pale blue panels. Adjusting to the rectangular layout of the room, a 'dome', located in the centre of the ceiling, is surrounded by garlands of plants and bands of trellises attached to its ends. The walls are divided by fluted Ionic order pilasters and marbled panels between them. Supraports painted above the door openings contain paintings of antique mythical stories.

A similar illusory painting scheme is present in a building in **Ventspils (Windau), at Market Square 1 (Tirgus laukums 1)**.⁴⁵ This finish may have been created even a little earlier and is dated to the end of the 18th century or beginning of the 19th century. The interior of the room is painted in distemper. Both wall and ceiling paintings were found, which, as in the previous example, depict, in an illusory manner, a pavilion colon-

⁴³ Ināra Cine, Ruta Taurena, Anda Robežniece, *Ēka Rīgā, Miesnieku ielā 4. Arhitektoniski mākslinieciskā apsekošana 3* (Rīga: Arhitektoniskās izpētes grupa, 2003; manuscript in the Center of Documentation of State Inspection for Heritage Protection of the Republic of Latvia and in the archives of the Architectural Investigation Group).

⁴⁴ Daiga Lēvalde, Ruta Taurena, Juris Zviedrāns, *Rīga, Torņa iela 3/5. Pagraba konstrukciju apsekošana, interjeru arhitektoniski mākslinieciskā izpēte 1* (Rīga: Arhitektoniskās izpētes grupa, 1998; manuscript in the Center of Documentation of State Inspection for Heritage Protection of the Republic of Latvia and in the archives of the Architectural Investigation Group); Daiga Lēvalde, Ruta Taurena, *Rīga, Torņa iela 3/5. Pirmā un bēniņu stāva, atsevišķu 2. stāva telpu interjeru arhitektoniski mākslinieciskā izpēte* (Rīga: Arhitektoniskās izpētes grupa, 2001; manuscript in the Center of Documentation of State Inspection for Heritage Protection of the Republic of Latvia and in the archives of the Architectural Investigation Group).

⁴⁵ Vija Strupule, *Ventspils, Tirgus laukums 1. 2. sējums: Interjeru arhitektoniski mākslinieciskā izpēte* (Rīga: Arhitektoniskās izpētes grupa, 2007; manuscript in the Center of Documentation of State Inspection for Heritage Protection of the Republic of Latvia and in the archives of the Architectural Investigation Group).

nade covered with a dome. In this case, the whole ceiling of the almost square room is devoted to a dome imitation. At the bottom of the wall, there are two rows of rustication, depicted in black and white, showing chiaroscuro in the seams of the blocks and simulating a 'bubble-shaped' stone structure on rustication planes; this is probably atypical marble nervation. On the base in the corners of the room and on both sides of the aisles, there are columns. In the ceiling cove above the columns, there is a painted frieze or cornice zone with an ornament that is decipherable. Plafond coffers narrow towards the centre, where they are connected to a circular painted rosette. There is no ornamental decor in the coffers. The central rosette was probably painted in a grey grisaille technique. However, as it was covered by two more layers of paint, the ornamentation of the rosette could not be determined.

These examples demonstrate that the ancient idea of the dome was successfully employed even in cases of urban residential flat ceilings. However, a much greater effect was achieved when the following decoration was applied to a real dome. The benchmark here was Count Medem's **Eleja** (Elley) **manor**. In the first draft version (1795–1797) by the author, the prominent Italian architect Giacomo Quarenghi⁴⁶, there appears, situated on the park side floors, a penetrating domed hall. This idea was maintained in the final draft version (before 1806) developed by the Saxon origin architect Johann Georg Adolph Berlitz.⁴⁷

Unfortunately, nowadays the Eleja palace is in ruins. In April 1915, the manor was on the front lines during World War I and, when the Russian army retreated, all the manor buildings were burned, and the palace was also bombed. The several attempts to restore the building have not succeeded.

The Dome Hall of the Eleja Palace was the spatial compositional centre of the building. The nine-meter-high dome was supported by eight semi-circular arches. The core area of the dome was divided into 288 coffers, located in nine concentric circles in 32 radial rows. The slightly coped coffers had two types of rosettes: lancet-shaped leaves and spiral acanthus foliage. They were placed alternately in perimetral and radial arrangements and shrunk towards the centre, thereby optically increasing the height of the ceiling construction. In the centre of the

⁴⁶ Giacomo Quarenghi (1744–1817). Born in Bergamo, Italy and died in St. Petersburg.

⁴⁷ Imants Lancmanis, "Elejas pils un grāfa Žanno Mēdema būvepopeja Kurzemē", *Elejas pils*, 11–37.

dome, there was an acanthus leaf rosette, surrounded by three lines of meander, including a swastika. The eight vaulted sails carrying the dome were decorated with large stucco eagles, holding palm branches in their claws.

The design of the Eleja palace was the first consistent mature example of a Latvian Neo-Classical building.⁴⁸ It became the prototype for a whole series of impressive structures. Practically at the same time as the Eleja manor, a similar building was constructed in the Von Lieven family-owned **Mežotne** (Mesothén) **manor**. The construction started in 1797, and it was designed and built by the same architects – Giacomo Quarenghi and Johann George Adolph Berlitz. The interior decoration of the palace was completed in 1817.

Mežotne's most imposing room is also a dome hall. It is one of the greatest surviving examples of Neo-Classical interiors in Latvia, and an example of the Roman Pantheon dome idea. While the dome of the Eleja palace was designed to represent more of the ancient prototype of the moulded coffer, in Mežotne a similar effect was achieved only with the help of painting. On a flat surface, there is an illusion of octagonal coffers with white, differently shaped rosettes painted on a light blue background. Between the large cassettes, there are smaller square indentations. An identical composition can be seen in Charles Louis Clerisseau's room decor for the Holy Trinity Monastery (Santissima Trinità dei Monti) in Rome, completed in 1760⁴⁹, one of the most prominent incarnations of ancient ruin aesthetics in the history of interior design. Mežotne dome cassettes are reduced in size towards the centre of the dome, repeating the effect of 'heightening the ceiling' already applied in Eleja. The dome is carried on the shoulders of grisaille technique painted Atlases. The Mežotne palace paintings have been restored and are available for viewing by interested parties.

The same cannot be said of the once adorned dome painting in the **Tāšu–Padure** (Tels-Paddern) **manor**. The palace was built from 1808 to 1810 by the architect Heinrich Eduard Dicht.⁵⁰ As in the Eleja and Mežotne buildings, there was an oval room with a wooden dome roof

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁹ Peter Thornton, *Authentic décor: The Domestic Interior 1620–1920* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1993), p. 90.

⁵⁰ Imants Lančmanis, "Der kurländische Gouvernementsarchitekt Heinrich Eduard Dicht", *Studien zur Kunstgeschichte in Estland und Lettland*. Homburger Gespräche 1992 und 1993. Heft 14 (Bad Homburg: Martin-Carl-Adolf-Böckler-Stiftung, 1995), 139.



Fig. 13. Jaunauce manor. Fragment of the painted dome. Photo by Jānis Zilgalvis, 2001 (Centre of Documentation of State Inspection for Heritage Protection of the Republic of Latvia).

on the garden side of the building. Some black and white photographs showing illusory cassette paintings have survived. The solution of the composition with quadrature cassettes, decorated with rosettes, is close to the Eleja palace model. Another similarity is the rosette painted in the centre of the dome, which in this case is a bit stretched, being adapted to the oval plan of the room. Nowadays, there is a school located in the palace. The oval hall was rebuilt in the 1960s, and the space was divided into two levels. The dome painting was not saved.

Still in existence, but not restored, is an authentic coffered dome painting in the **Jaunauce manor house** (Neu-Autz), built at the beginning of the 19th century (fig. 13). Similar cupola paintings once existed,

but have not survived, in the **Iecava** (Eckau), **Dinsdurbe** (Diensdorf) and **Budberga** (Budberg) manor houses.⁵¹

The **Kazdanga** (Katzdangen) **manor** was built in 1800–1804 according to the design of Johann George Adolph Berlitz. The architect used his previously gained experience at Eleja and Mežotne to find architectural and spatial solutions. There was also a two-story round dome hall near the garden. It is very likely that there was an illusory coffer painting here as well. Unfortunately, the palace was burned during the 1905 Revolution, and there was a subsequent conversion. The dome hall was divided into two levels. Nowadays, on the ground floor of the hall, there is an interesting painted dome, reminiscent of the Pantheon type, on a flat ceiling, created in the 1980s, by students from the Latvian Academy of Art, as a monumental painting project.

CONCLUSIONS

The reviewed examples of some motifs of antique art in the residential interiors of Latvia lead to the following conclusions:

Local society adapted novelties created in the cultural centres of Europe, and within a short period of time introduced them into everyday use.

Interest in the themes developed from antique art appeared as early as the Baroque period. The earliest scheme of wall composition, which came from the times of the Roman Empire, was a colonnade painted in *trompe l'œil* technique. Colonnades from the 1740s are found in the interiors of several residences in the Courland harbour city of Liepāja (Libau). During the third quarter of the 18th century, this decorative system was adapted and accommodated to the Rococo style in the residences of Riga citizens and the manor houses of Vidzeme (Livland). Illusive colonnades were still used in painted finishings in Riga and Livland in the fourth quarter of the 18th century. During the Neo-Classical period, the painter's idea of the shape of classical orders in depictions of capitals of columns became much more precise. In the first quarter of the 19th century, illusive columns on wall surfaces were frequently used as supports for painted ceiling domes. However, in the 1820s one couldn't

⁵¹ Imants Lancmanis, "Dinsdurbē meklējot zudušo laiku", *Māksla+*, 6, 2004, 40–46.

find colonnades as a part of painted decors in the finishings of manor houses in Courland.

Even in the third quarter of the 18th century, in landscape paintings on walls, still related to the Rococo style, in Riga and the Krāslava palace – the centre of Latgale nobility – one can find architectural references to Rome in etchings by Giovanni Battista Piranesi. The fragments of antique ruins and views of the Forum Romanum were also popular painting motifs in the interiors of Riga residences and manor houses during the last quarter of the 18th century and the first quarter of the 19th century. This tendency shows the flow of Romanticism inside the Neo-Classical style, which was popular in the interior culture of Europe during this period. The main elements of the 'aesthetic of ruins' were the idealization of the world of Classical Antiquity and the contemplation of the brevity of life and ephemeral character of all existing things. As a parallel phenomenon, the inclusion of romantic landscapes of southern cities and nature in wall paintings appeared in Riga, provincial towns and manor house interiors.

In the 1770s and 1780s, a new approach to the decoration of ceilings came into fashion. The plane became a three-dimensional architectural formation by means of illusive perspective (*quadratura*). There are several paintings of illusive domes from the end of the 18th century and beginning of the 19th century in residences in Riga and Ventspils. A prototype for these compositions was the ancient Roman Pantheon dome ceiling. The same motif was a pattern for several real dome hall finishings in manor houses which were built at the end of the 18th century and the first quarter of the 19th century. The palace of the Eleja manor was the standard.

We can regard the interior paintings of this period in Latvia as a part of a common development of interior culture throughout Europe.

There are some other schemes of composition (e.g. frames, and horizontal division in three parts: base (dado), wall plane and frieze or ornamental motives) where one can find reflections of antique art. But that must remain the subject of another article.

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KOKKUVÕTE: Antiikkunsti kajastused Läti elamute ja mõisate interjöörides 18. sajandi teisest poolest 19. sajandi esimese veerandini

Artiklis antakse ülevaade antiigimõjulistest interjööri maalingutest põhiliselt Riia kodanikemajades ja aadlipaleedes ning Läti mõisates. Vaatluse alla on võetud kolm maalinguterühma: sammastikud, varemed ja lõunamaised maastikud ning Panteoni-tüüpi kassetlaed.

Kõige laialdamaselt kasutati maalitud sammastikke, mille eesmärgiks oli tekitada tegelikkusest erinev ruumiillusioon kasitades *trompe l'œil* tehnikat – neid esineb alates 1740. aastaist nt Liepāja elamutes ja Ungurmuiža mõisas ja hiljem mitmetes Riia interjöörides. Mida lähemale 18. sajandi lõpule, seda klassikalisemaks muutusid kujutatud sambad.

Teise rühma kuuluvad maalingud, millel on kujutatud suuremaid maastikukompositsioone antiikvaremetega. Need esindavad klassitsismi romantilisemat hoovust ning olid moes 18. sajandi lõpuveerandil ja 19. sajandi alguses. Eriti uhked on olnud Krāslava mõisa maastikega maalingud, kuid Rooma varemete kujutisi esineb ka mitmetes Riia interjöörides.

1770. aastaist alates hakati Riia elamutes ja mujalgi lagede kujunduses kasutama uut moodust – *quadraturat* –, et lamedale laele anda illusoorse kupli kuju. Algeeskujuks oli Rooma Panteoni kassetlagi. Maalitud kaseteeringut kasutati mõisates ka reaalseste kuplite kaunistamiseks, nt Eleja mõisas.

Kokkuvõtlikult võib väita, et Läti interjööri maalingud vaadeldud perioodil peegeldavad ilmekalt kaasaegseid suundumisi sisekujunduses mujal Euroopas.