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IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF  
CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY.  
INFLUENCES OF THE ANTIQUE  
IN ESTONIAN MANOR MURALS

This article examines the reception and reflection in Estonian manor murals of the impact of the rediscovered antique in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Europe. The extensive excavations of the legacy of ancient Rome in the 18<sup>th</sup> century influenced the whole visual culture in Europe from Germany to Italy and from England to Scandinavia<sup>1</sup>, as an indirect source of inspiration and the basis of direct quotation and copying. The current article takes a look at the decorative murals in Estonian manor houses, which are part of this visual geographical circle and contain references to antiquity as a set model.

Wall paintings in Estonian manors have not been extensively studied<sup>2</sup>; they have been seen via individual objects or in a general architectural context. Many unpublished materials are related to conservation-restoration reports and are kept in the archives of the National Heritage Board. Krista Kodres and Juhan Maiste have tackled the topic, indicating the influence of antiquity in certain wall paintings (*à l'antique* (Hõreda); *à la Pompeij* (Vihterpalu); the grotesque (Volveti)).<sup>3</sup> However, since the article

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Translated by Tiina Randviir.

<sup>1</sup> Peter Werner, *Pompeji und die Wanddekoration der Goethezeit* (München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1970), 14.

<sup>2</sup> The article by Krista Kodres and Juhan Maiste is one of the few generalising overviews of wall paintings in Estonian manors in the 18<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup> centuries (Krista Kodres, Juhan Maiste, “Purilast Inglisteni. Seinamaalingute leiud mõisates”, *Kunst*, 70, 2 (1987), 41–48).

<sup>3</sup> Kodres, Maiste, „Purilast Inglisteni. Seinamaalingute leiud mõisates”, 44–45.

was published a few decades ago, various new discoveries have been made, which greatly supplement the topic. The tradition of perceiving and copying antiquity in Estonia has also been studied from various perspectives, although the focus has been on the easel painting rather than interior design.

This article was written from the viewpoint of a conservator, focusing on the state of conservation and material-technical issues of murals. The primary sources of information were chosen according to empirical data directly derived from objects, based on conservation reports and on the work experience of the current author and her colleagues. Less attention is paid to art-historical interpretation and a wider contextual analysis.

#### REDISCOVERING CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY

The 18<sup>th</sup> century is associated with the large-scale rediscovery of the Roman legacy: systematic archaeological excavations began at the beginning of the century in Rome, first on the Palatine Hill (1720s), then in Emperor Nero's Domus Aurea (Golden House) on Esquiline, in Domus Aurea (second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century).<sup>4</sup> The most influential and inspiring sources in the spread of ancient culture were the Campanian towns of Pompeii and Herculaneum, which were perfectly preserved underneath lava after the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 A.D. They were discovered and excavated from the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century onwards. Numerous ancient finds caused a real boom of interpretation, adaptation, imitation and copying antiquity in architecture, interiors, figurative and applied art, graphic art, travel writing etc.

Although the direct source of Antiquity-inspiration was the newly discovered classical culture, the range of mediators was much wider. On the one hand, the mediators were the numerous sample books, copying and reproducing the heritage of antiquity. For example, coloured prints of the interior décor in Domus Aurea, published in 1776 by the Roman antiquarian Ludovico Mirri; early 19<sup>th</sup> century topographical reproductions of antiquities, including works by the archaeologists-

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<sup>4</sup> Elisabetta Segala, Ida Sciortino, *Domus Aurea* (Roma: Soprintendenza Archeologica di Roma, Electa, 2003), 100. The first regular excavations in Domus Aurea took place during the reign of Pope Clement XIII in 1758–1769.

architects William Gell, Francois Mazios and Desiré-Raoul Rochette; and the grand albums of Wilhelm Zahn in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, the sources of 18<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup> century decorative art could be seen in the Renaissance, primarily in the school of Raphael, the first to follow examples of Antiquity in its grotesque and arabesque paintings (e.g. the Vatican Loggias, Villa Madama and Caprarola).<sup>6</sup> In addition to Classical Antiquity, the aesthetics of red-black vase painting of Etruscan art was discovered in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>7</sup>

The most prominent interpreter and populariser of the heritage of Antiquity in interior art was the English architect Robert Adam, one of the founders of the 'Antiquity'-style that conquered all of Europe. Interpreting and synthesising documentary materials at the excavations in Rome and in the Campanian towns, the visions of Winkelmann, Stuart-Revet and Piranesi on antique interiors, and the motifs and colours familiar from Etruscan culture, Adam created his own personal 'Adam's style'.<sup>8</sup> The rediscovery of the ancient world introduced a new imagery, motifs and colours into the interiors of the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century: arabesque and grotesque ornaments, garlands, acanthuses, amphorae and pillars; figurative scenes and (architectural) landscapes based on antiquity topics framed within ornamented background; 'ancient-Roman' bright, vivid and deep blue-green-pink tones in combination with gilding; and reddish-brown and black referring to ancient vase painting. On walls, this was combined with delicate white relief decor and stucco.<sup>9</sup>

## THE INFLUENCE OF POMPEII IN GERMAN INTERIORS

Peter Werner, who has studied the influence of Pompeii in German interiors, sees the models as having arrived in two waves, which differed in ideology and in imagery. As the temporal border of the two periods he proposes the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The first period is associated with the beginning of early neo-classicism in the 1760s in northern

<sup>5</sup> See more in the article by Inge Kukk in this volume.

<sup>6</sup> Renaissance sources provide only limited knowledge of Domus Aurea, which was interpreted as underground painted grottoes (hence the name "grotesque painting") (Segala, Sciortino, *Domus Aurea*, 47–52).

<sup>7</sup> Werner, *Pompeji und die Wanddekoration der Goethezeit*, 37–38.

<sup>8</sup> Steven Parissien, *Adam Style* (London, etc: Phaidon, 1996), 49; Eileen Harris, *The Genius of Robert Adam: His Interiors* (London: Yale University Press, 2001), 4.

<sup>9</sup> Parissien, *Adam Style*, 156.

and central Germany and the increased impact of antiquity from the excavations in Rome and in the Campanian towns. The second period, related to high neo-classicism, fell into the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and rested on the numerous books of systematically documented décor schemes, appearing after thorough excavations. The period ended with the emergence of historicism in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>10</sup>

The first period is characterised by the realisation of ancient models only formally and the use of single motifs according to the knowledge of the architect-decorator. Models of antiquity were interpreted freely; they were seen as sources and not aspiration to reconstruct or copy. The attempt was not made to create compact rooms or spaces, but instead to use single elements (e.g. a framed painting depicting a landscape with ancient ruins, genre scenes or individual figures, or a frieze of grotesque ornaments), adapting and changing everything according to the situation or taste. Sources and motifs from antiquity and the Renaissance blended, and models were recomposed on the basis of free inspiration and set in a new context. This period is represented by the work of Friedrich Wilhelm von Erdmannsdorff, Christian Traugott Weinlig and Carl Gotthard Langhans.

Only in the second period was the formation of spatial integrity based on classical models – single elements were subordinated to the whole and became part of it.<sup>11</sup> Wall surfaces were divided into three horizontal zones, where the dominant decorative scheme was located between the socle and frieze: framed pictures, painted architecture or individual elements copied from Antiquity.<sup>12</sup> The impact of the school of Raphael and other secondary sources diminished considerably, with the antique interior becoming the direct starting point. Reconstructing an ancient room did not merely entail imitating and copying the visual language, but included an attempt to simulate it in materials – polished and brightly coloured ancient paintings were thought at the time to have been realised in the wax-based encaustic technique.<sup>13</sup> The most promi-

<sup>10</sup> Werner, *Pompeji und die Wanddekoration der Goethezeit*, 42.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*, 73.

<sup>12</sup> Werner, *Pompeji und die Wanddekoration der Goethezeit*, 119.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*, 133–136. Only in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century did Paolo and Laura Mora finally prove that it was, in fact, the fresco technique. Its technological construction and special polishing was described by Vitruvius. See Paolo Mora, Laura Mora, Paul Philippot, *The Conservation of Wall Paintings* (Oxford: Butterworth, 1984), 94–101. An interesting parallel to the search in Europe at that time was the initial attempt of the author of the wall paintings at Tartu University Art Museum to realise the murals in the encaustic technique – see the article by Inge Kukk in this volume.

ment representatives of this period were Leo von Klenze, Karl Friedrich Schinkel and Gottfried Semper.

## THE INFLUENCE OF ANTIQUITY IN ESTONIAN MANOR INTERIORS

In the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the English influence spread throughout Estonian manor architecture and landscape design. On the one hand, it did not arrive in the Baltic area directly from the British Isles, but via the court in St Petersburg.<sup>14</sup> On the other hand, the local manor lords travelled extensively and were familiar with new European fashions and tastes. The influence of Antiquity was thus a mediated, rather than direct experience. There were plenty of people among the Baltic nobility and the arriving German intellectuals who were well versed in German culture, but only a few made it to the Roman art scene.<sup>15</sup>

It is quite difficult to determine the murals that can be associated with Antiquity as a source of inspiration. Most of the interiors created in the art-historical heyday of decorative painting, i.e. from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century to the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>16</sup> can be indirectly related to the impact of Antiquity, whether through the chosen colours, the ornamental scheme or a single motif. The current article offers the first selection of wall paintings in Estonian manor houses that can be associated with the massive rediscovery of Antiquity. Ornamental friezes and other types of modest décor are not examined here; instead the more extensive murals with figurative or landscape scenes will be considered, which were directly or indirectly inspired by Antiquity, referring to, copying or reconstructing an ancient room.

Adapting the afore-mentioned periods proposed in the German context to Estonia is rather hypothetical, as the spatial integrity of many manors

<sup>14</sup> In 1779 the Scottish architect Charles Cameron was invited to St Petersburg. In his youth, Cameron had been briefly involved in Domus Aurea excavations. He supervised the design of Tsarskoe Selo and the Pavlovski Palace, which introduced 'Adam's style' into Russia (Dorothee von Hellermann, "Candidatus Pictura. Gottlieb Welté rokokoo- ja klassitsismiajastu kunstnikuna", *Maarjamaa rokokoo / Rokoko in Estland. Gottlieb Welté (1745/49-1792)*, koost Anne Untera (Tallinn: Eesti Kunstimuseum –Kadrioru Kunstimuseum, Printon, 2007), 78).

<sup>15</sup> Kadi Polli, "Balti "Unistuste arheoloogia"", *Varemed. Ruins*, koost Juhan Maiste, Kadi Polli (Tallinn: Eesti Kunstiakadeemia Restaureerimiskool, 2004), 26.

<sup>16</sup> Kodres, Maiste, "Purilast Ingliteni. Seinamaalingute leiud mõisates", 41.

has not been preserved or has not yet been revealed in its entirety. Two periods can, however, be distinguished – although they do not precisely correspond to those in Germany – in which the ideological and visual sources of interior design coincide with that suggested by Peter Werner. The first includes temporally and geographically close early neo-classical manors on the border of Järva and Viru Counties (Norra, Liigvalla, Varangu and Kiltsi). The other group consists of late neo-classical manor houses and museum rooms in southern Estonia from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Suure-Kõpu, rooms in the Tartu University Art Museum and Voltveti<sup>17</sup>). The mural cycle in Hõreda manor, quite exceptional in the Estonian context, is positioned between them. Its single analogue is the frieze in the hall of the Vatla manor.

The turn-of-the-century and early 19<sup>th</sup> century wall paintings in manor houses interpreted and referred to models of Antiquity, mixing them with the romantic cult of (ancient) ruins, adding temples, columns and other attributes associated with Antiquity in compositions. The mid-19<sup>th</sup> and the second half of the century, instead, brought along more direct copying, both in detail and in the spatial whole, as well as an attempt to imitate the general impression derived from the technique of ancient murals.

### EARLY NEO-CLASSICAL MURALS

Considering the quantity and quality of murals inspired by Antiquity, the most fascinating in the Estonian context is the **Norra** manor house, representing the apogee of the period's monumental art.

The manor belonged to the von Knorring family. The early neo-classical main building was completed in 1792, according to the design of the Tartu master mason J. A. S. G. Kranhals.<sup>18</sup> Abundant wall paintings covered most of the first floor rooms, thus making the manor unique in the

<sup>17</sup> Recently discovered extensive cycle of Pompeian style wall paintings in Tartu, Vallikraavi 7/9 can likewise be associated with this range of murals. The building dates from the late 1860s. Since the murals constitute the first finishing layer, most probably these originate from the same period. At the moment of publishing this article, only small sample areas of the decoration have been uncovered in five rooms. On the basis of existing data the composition shows typical Pompeian style wall division into three horizontal zones, depicting wainscots and architectural elements. The cycle of decorative paintings seems to follow rigorously antique model both in form and colour.

<sup>18</sup> *Eesti arhitektuuri ajalugu*, koost Harald Arman (Tallinn: Eesti Raamat, 1965), 328.

Estonian context. Most probably, the majority of them date back to when the manor was built. The wall paintings depicted antique sculptures and columns, landscapes with temple ruins, figurative compositions, and Pompeii-style wall decorations. After the manor was expropriated in 1919, the local school moved in and stayed until the 1970s. Probably at that time, the major part of the murals were covered up. Only two landscapes depicting ancient ruins remained visible on the back wall of the school stage and were reproduced in *Eesti arhitektuuri ajalugu* (History of Estonian Architecture), published in 1965.<sup>19</sup> After the school was closed, the building did not have a roof for a long time. As a result of this, and of incompetent renovation work, the murals perished totally in the early 2000s, before they could be properly examined, documented and systematically revealed underneath the layers of overpainting.

The fragmentary information on the rich wall paintings in the Norra manor mainly derives from the thorough report on the architectural surfaces compiled by Jaan Kobin in 1974, in which he briefly described the findings of murals in each room.<sup>20</sup> A more comprehensive description was offered by Epp Kangilaski in her reports in 1975 and 1991<sup>21</sup>, chiefly relying on Kobin's findings and information. On the basis of reports and the surviving photographs, it is possible to precisely map the location and the situation upon the discovery of the wall paintings, and monitor their maintenance. Although the sample cleaning carried out by Kobin was quite extensive, the paintings were never fully revealed. As the interiors have perished, it is no longer possible to reconstruct the spatial whole at the Norra manor.

In 1975, Jüri Kuuskemaa (under the pseudonym Antiquarian) vividly described the sensational discovery of the murals: 'In the spring last year, the restorer Jaan Kobin carried out sample cleaning at the Norra manor. The results exceeded our wildest expectations. It turned out that lime, green oil paint or ergot had not totally managed to damage the bright colours of the original murals. What had dimly glowed as sooty apparitions, acquired clear forms and a cool neo-classical, refined colour gamma.'<sup>22</sup>

<sup>19</sup> *Ibidem*, 331.

<sup>20</sup> Jaan Kobin, *Aruanne Norra mõisahoonde seinamaalingute sondeerimise kohta* (Tallinn, 1975, manuscript in the Archives of the National Heritage Board [Muinsuskaitseameti arhiiv, MKA], P-2226).

<sup>21</sup> Epp Kangilaski, *Norra mõisa ajalooline õiend* (Tallinn, 1975, manuscript in MKA, P-2226); Epp Kangilaski, *Järvamaa, Norra mõis. Ajalooline õiend* (Tallinn, 1991, manuscript in MKA, A-2791).

<sup>22</sup> Antikvaar [Jüri Kuuskemaa], „Viirastuvad seinamaalid”, *Sirp and Vasar*, 15. VIII 1975, 8.

On the basis of Kobin's report, all of the rooms on the manor house's two floors were examined by him. No traces of wall paintings were found on the ground floor. However, seven rooms on the first floor revealed murals. Their location is precisely described and can be reconstructed on the basis of photographs from different periods:

Room 1 – geometric ornaments, surviving only on the inner side of external walls.

Room 3 – paintings on all walls, door and window jambs, depicting ancient sculptures (fig. 1).

Room 4 – partially surviving paintings, depicting smoking scent utensils, with figurative compositions between them on small rectangular and medallion-shaped surfaces. Everything within foliage and line-ornament frames.

Room 5 – partially preserved paintings on south and east walls, representing figurative and geometric images.

Room 10 – paintings surviving on all walls. Compositions within frames, possibly figurative.

Room 11 – paintings well preserved. Landscapes. Ancient heads above doors, medallions with figurative compositions on both sides (fig. 2).

Room 12 – initially two rooms – traces of demolished wall. Murals in rooms A and B were different. B - landscapes and ancient figures between windows. A – paintings in Pompeii style.

Kobin assessed the murals as being fairly well preserved having only a few losses and cracks. In his opinion, the adhesion was generally good (the layer of paint had peeled off only to the extent of 3–5 %). However, the paintings had been repeatedly whitewashed. As the binding between the lime and paint layers was weak, it seemed possible to uncover them without causing much damage, except in the lower zones of the walls and in room 10, where the paintings were covered with oil paint that was difficult to remove. In Kobin's estimation, about 600 square metres of wall paintings had survived, which is a remarkable amount.

Kuuskemaa's description of the surviving murals and their quality was impressive as well: 'The paintings have mostly excellently survived. The ornaments, landscapes with ruins and figures of ancient goddesses are only occasionally marred by scratches, a tiny amount of peel-off or nail holes. [---] The paintings have been discovered in seven rooms, whereas there are totally different compositions and ornamentation in each of them. The artist's aim was to create an environment at the Norra manor



Fig. 1. Norra manor. Detail of the mural in the room of Classical sculptures. Photo by Ants Hein, 1978.

Fig. 2. Norra manor. Framed landscape with Classical ruins. Photo by Juhan Maiste, 2002.

that aspired towards the past, away from everyday reality to the ancient world. Its loftiness should inspire people to meditate, dream and philosophise. The artist probably fed his imagination from the most modern source, the wall paintings of Pompeii, where the fantastic architectonic alternates with illusionary landscapes and figures.”<sup>23</sup>

Seemingly the plan was to carry out thorough restoration work, with the aim of adapting the manor for the administrative building for a Young Pioneers’ camp<sup>24</sup> – this must have been the reason for carrying out the research.

Due to economic difficulties, the work did not proceed according to plan and, in 1991, Epp Kangilaski again recommended uncovering and restoring the murals. Nothing much was done in the meantime to

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*, 8.

<sup>24</sup> M. Lume, *Koeru vald, Norra mõisa peahoone. Kohandamine pioneerilaagriks, eskiisprojekt* (Tallinn, 1975, manuscript in MKA, P-2444).

preserve them, although according to photographs the murals had, miraculously, not drastically deteriorated. The photographic documentation from 2002 still shows paintings in relatively good condition.<sup>25</sup> However, few years later the original finishing layers in the entire house had been replaced by concrete grout – one of the grandest and most unique sets of murals in Estonia were destroyed even before anyone had a chance to uncover and restore them and to conduct a comprehensive art-historical analysis.

When exactly were the wall paintings completed, who was the artist, what was the general composition of the interiors and what were the constitution materials? All of these questions can today be answered only on the basis of fragmentary photographic documentation. Did all or only part of the murals date back to the time when the house was built? Epp Kangilaski refers to a note from 1929, mentioning that the paintings dated from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, when interior renovation had been carried out.<sup>26</sup> Although she doubts this claim to be true for the whole floor, the photographs show that the paintings differed in style and in execution and occasionally seem to exist in two layers.<sup>27</sup> Because of reliance on secondary sources, technical realisation of the paintings is also only speculative. Kuuskemaa mentioned tempera paintings<sup>28</sup> and Kobin referred to a dense network of craquelé covering the paint layer<sup>29</sup>, which was not typical of the glue-based distemper paints generally used at the period. From photographs, the type of paint layer deterioration also seem to vary in different rooms, indicating the usage of various binders. Unfortunately, it is no longer possible to find answers regarding materials and the realisation of murals.

The closest geographical, temporal and stylistical parallel to the Norra manor is what has survived of the **Liigvalla** manor interiors. The mansion was completed on the initiative of Gustav Wilhelm von Rehbinder in 1797. As at the neighbouring Varangu, the architect here was prob-

<sup>25</sup> Liina Hansen, *Norra mõis. Proseminartöö* (Tallinna Pedagoogikaülikool, Kultuuriteaduskond, Kunstiosakond. Tallinn, 2002; manuscript in the library of Tallinn University).

<sup>26</sup> Epp Kangilaski, *Järvamaa, Norra mõis. Ajalooline õiend* (Tallinn, 1991, manuscript in MKA, A-2791), 20.

<sup>27</sup> It is the ornamental décor that stands out visually and in realisation, whereas compositions on ancient topics seem to belong to one (the first) layer.

<sup>28</sup> Antikvaar, "Viirastuvad seinamaalid", 3.

<sup>29</sup> Kobin, *Aruanne Norra mõisahoonde seinamaalingute sondeerimise kohta*, 37.

ably Johann Heinrich Bartholomäus Walther,<sup>30</sup> the author of the Tartu Town Hall and several early neo-classical buildings.

In the mid-1990s, splendid murals, depicting temple facades, were occasionally discovered underneath several layers of over-painting and wall paper.<sup>31</sup> They were thoroughly examined and documented in 2000 by the Conservation Department of the Helsinki Metropolitan University of Applied Science (EVTEK).<sup>32</sup> The paintings on the first layer of plaster probably date back to the time when the manor was built, i.e. the late 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Antiquity as a source of inspiration is primarily associated with a room depicting a temple (ruins), although polychrome décor has survived in other parts of the building as well. Due to an only partial uncovering and the fragmentary state of the murals, the legibility of the overall composition of the room can only be speculative. The graphic documentation carried out in 2000 mapped the hypothetical layout of the composition on the basis of surviving fragments of paintings. The wall space is divided into two horizontal zones, where the division of the socle zone corresponds to the panels of the central part of the wall. Decorated pilasters divide the painted panels on the vertical line. The section above the doors was probably ornamented with rhombic images.

It is difficult to work out from the surviving fragments whether the artist had depicted temples or temple ruins in the landscape, but grand columns are clearly legible in three panels. According to visual examination, oil was used as a binder.<sup>33</sup>

The current condition of the manor house unfortunately puts the long-term survival of these murals in grave danger.

Parallels between the destroyed Norra and collapsing Liigvalla wall paintings depicting ancient architecture are obvious. Both can probably be dated to the same turn-of-the-century period, although there are no references to reliable dates for the paintings. This group of paintings is supplemented and the date confirmed by the **Rutikvere** manor, which used to belong to the Baltic-German Freemason and amateur ar-

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<sup>30</sup> Juhan Maiste, *Mõisaarhitektuur Eestis* (Tallinn: Kunst, 1995), 206.

<sup>31</sup> The paintings were found in 1996 within the framework of the international student project "Manor Renaissance" supervised by Juhan Maiste.

<sup>32</sup> *Liigvalla mõisahoone väritutkimus*, compiled by EVTEK Muotoiluinstituutti (Vantaa, 2000, manuscript in MKA, A-5879).

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*, 5.

chitect of Scottish origin, Otto Friedrich von Pistohlkors (1754–1831).<sup>34</sup> Mention should be made here of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century interior designs for the neo-Palladian manor house, signed by an artist named Plesch.<sup>35</sup> One drawing shows painted landscapes with ancient ruins on panels between rich stucco décor division, similar to the Norra and Liigvalla compositions.<sup>36</sup> The spatial design as a whole resembles interiors in the manner of Robert Adam in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>37</sup> Today, the manor house stands in ruins (it burnt down in 1954), and thus it is not known whether the interiors were ever realised according to the plans. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, Pistholkors found himself in financial difficulties and had to pawn the manor in 1816, and for that reason not all of his construction plans were realised.<sup>38</sup>

In reference to early neo-classical manor house murals, inspired by Antiquity, mention should also be made of Liigvalla's neighbouring manor **Varangu** (fig. 3). At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Carl August von Berg built an early neo-classical manor house following the drawings by the Tartu architect J. H. B. Walther.<sup>39</sup> The building was completed by the owner of Liigvalla, G. W von Rehbinder, who bought the manor after Berg's death in 1798.<sup>40</sup> The interiors boasted rich decorations: stucco décor, beautiful glazed-tile stoves and wall paintings. The latter were accidentally discovered and partially uncovered in 2005.<sup>41</sup> Pillars with capitals, inspired by a papyrus-leaf motif, divide the wall into panels. An ornamented frieze rests on amphora-type vessels on top of the pillars. The paintings are currently displayed without pictorial reintegrations, but nevertheless their form and colour are amazingly well preserved: bright blue panels and amphorae and pitch black columns on a vivid pink background. The planned retouching would certainly increase the effect.

<sup>34</sup> Epi Tohvri, "Vabamüürlike ideede avaldumisest Eesti arhitektuurikultuuris 18. sajandi lõpus – 19. sajandi alguses", *Kunstiteaduslikke uurimusi*, 17 (1–2) (2008), 77–80.

<sup>35</sup> First published: Anne Untera, "Gottlieb Welté. Teekond peatustega", *Maarjamaa rokokoo / Rokoko in Estland. Gottlieb Welté (1745/49–1792)*, 46. These drawings belong to the Estonian Art Museum.

<sup>36</sup> Eesti Kunstimuuseum, G 2893.

<sup>37</sup> Tohvri, "Vabamüürlike ideede avaldumisest Estonia architectureikultuuris 18. sajandi lõpus – 19. sajandi alguses", 78–79.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibidem*, 80.

<sup>39</sup> Maiste, *Mõisaarhitektuur Eestis*, 161.

<sup>40</sup> Ants Hein, *Ettekirjutused Varangu mõisaansambli korrastamiseks*, kd IV (Tallinn, 1983: manuscript in MKA, A-1035), 5.

<sup>41</sup> The paintings were revealed and conserved by ART Restauraator (interview with Toomas Tenso from Art Restauraator on 24. I 2011).



Fig. 3. Varangu manor. Murals after uncovering. Photo by Villu Plink, 2010.

This manor will probably offer more astonishments in the future: the traces of fluted pillar motifs are exposed in the room next to the one with the already uncovered murals.

The group of Antiquity-inspired wall paintings is supplemented by an extensive cycle of murals recently uncovered and conserved in the **Kiltsi** manor. The early neo-classical Palladian manor was rebuilt from an ancient vassal castle and completed in 1790, when it belonged to the von Benckendorff family.<sup>42</sup> Well before the whole interior décor was restored, thorough research was conducted at Kiltsi, identifying Antiquity-influenced murals in the first layer from 1790.<sup>43</sup> Between 2008 and 2010, the students of the Tartu Art College uncovered and restored the interiors, supervised by Heli Tuksam and Nele Rohtla. The general concept of conservation focused on the maximum uncovering and exposing of the original paint layer, with minimal retouching emphasising only the architectonic scheme. As a result, the interiors constitute excellent material for future research and analysis of authentic substance.

The murals in the five rooms – the Pompeian room, library, north and south tower and bathroom – can be associated with the theme of Antiquity. As the décor in all of the rooms lies on the first layer of finish-

<sup>42</sup> *Eesti arhitektuuri ajalugu*, 326; Maiste, *Mõisaarhitektuur Eestis*, 37.

<sup>43</sup> Correspondence with Heli Tuksam, (05. I 2011).



Fig. 4. Kiltsi manor. Murals in the so-called Pompeian room. Photo by Heli Tuksam, 2010.

Fig. 5. Kiltsi manor. Detail. Photo by Villu Plink, 2010.

Fig. 6. Lohu manor. Detail of the mural in the hall. Photo by Stanislav Stepaško, 2006.

ing, it is likely that the paintings date from the time of the construction of the manor house, i.e. the last decade of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Of all the rooms, the Pompeian room (figs. 4, 5) is most explicitly associated with the first wave of Antiquity-subject, interpreting and combining the models. The wall is divided into panels, subdivided by pillars carrying the motifs of tripods. The intense ochre yellow hue of the wall corresponds to the tradition of Antiquity; this impression is enhanced by red-and-black painted figurative motifs on lunettes, referring to the vase decoration familiar from the Greek-Etruscan legacy.

The fragmentary painting in the former library resembles decorations in ancient secondary rooms (servants' quarters), for example the decoration in the zone of Domus Aurea facing the Hill of Esquilinus: the white lime plaster background is divided into panels, composed of plants, garlands, amphorae, and scent receptacles. In ancient art, the panels had the function of an integrated painting constituting the basis for a figurative or landscape composition. However, in Kiltsi the library paintings are so fragmentary, that we do not know whether and what motifs decorated the panelling. Also, the general spatial overview, colour gamma and specific models remain speculative due to the incomplete condition.

The illusory greenish-blue garden (of paradise) in the southern tower of the manor house can also be associated with ancient heritage. Its most explicit parallel in Estonian murals is a fragment in a niche in the great hall of the Liigvalla manor. The model here was probably the popular depiction of the illusionary garden of Arcadia, of which the best surviving examples are the painted rooms in the Villa Livia at Prima Porta in Rome and the Casa del Bracciale d'Oro in Pompeii.

This circle of murals also includes *grisaille*-technique compositions at the Lohu manor, one of the few signed manor paintings: *fec Welté 1791*. Gottlieb Welté's name is primarily associated with rococo interiors in the Põltsamaa Castle, although his creative development underwent a radical change from rococo to early neo-classicism. According to Anne Untera, the best examples of that in Estonian figurative art are the murals at the Lohu manor.<sup>44</sup> Besides the Rousseau-like romantic-sentimental perception of nature, Helmi Üprus, who compiled the report on the Lohu manor house, also saw there 'the era of J. J. Winckelmann and J. W. Goethe, late 18<sup>th</sup> century, cultivation of neo-classicism's desire for Antiquity, a eulogy to classical ruins and ancient mythology. [...] ... where ancient forms of architecture, grottoes and vaults constitute the central motif of composition and also the idea. It is the "forgotten" world of the past, of ancient culture, presented here in wild nature as crumbling stone walls'.<sup>45</sup>

The Lohu manor murals were discovered in 1966 underneath the early 19<sup>th</sup> century pictorial wallpaper on the topic of Don Quixote. The

<sup>44</sup> Untera, "Gottlieb Welté. Teekond peatustega", 18.

<sup>45</sup> Helmi Üprus, *Lohu mõisahoone ajalooline õitend* (Tallinn, 1974, manuscript in MKA, P-1858), 25.

wallpaper was removed<sup>46</sup> and the paintings were restored in 1966–1968 by the prominent Russian restorer Viktor Filatov, who was later active in Saaremaa churches.<sup>47</sup> The Lohu manor's badly damaged wall paintings provide the first instance in Estonia where Filatov consistently employed the principles and methods of the Italian restoration philosopher Cesare Brandi, and he later applied them in Saaremaa churches.<sup>48</sup> The wall paintings have not been re-restored for forty years, but are in excellent condition nevertheless.<sup>49</sup>

Typically for 18<sup>th</sup> century interior design, the Lohu murals are situated in wainscoting subdividing the walls. Unlike the examples mentioned above, these paintings constitute romantic figurative scenes and landscapes. However, their aspirations to Antiquity are expressed in the choice of mythological topics, i.e. the story of Pyramus and Thisbe.<sup>50</sup> The architectural background details, such as fountains, grottoes and vaults, also indicate an ancient legacy.

In addition to the figurative compositions in the hall, a detail of a pillar with an Ionic capital was discovered in 2003 in the adjacent vestibule (former staircase; fig. 6). The whole composition has not yet been uncovered, but the detail suggests that we are dealing with an excellent architectural painting, which could perhaps be associated with Welté. The painting, in a pink-brown colour, seems to depict floor-to-ceiling pillars with a (decorated?) frieze.

## HÕREDA MANOR

The first group of manors, i.e. Norra, Liigvalla, Rutikvere, Varangu, Kiltsi and Lohu, are linked to early neo-classicism both temporally and stylistically. The next circle of Antiquity-inspired murals, however, dates to the early decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. One of the most remarkable ex-

<sup>46</sup> The wallpaper was restored in Moscow in the Central Restoration Workshop and is preserved at the Estonia History Museum (Eesti Ajaloomuuseum, G 7860–G 7869).

<sup>47</sup> Viktor Filatov was invited on the initiative of Eda Liin from the Inspectorate of Museums and Cultural Monuments operating at the Ministry of Culture of the Estonian SSR. See Eda Liin, *Minu elulugu. Meenutusi 20. sajandi teise poole kultuuri- ja kunstielust* (Tartu: Eda Liin, 2008), 96–102.

<sup>48</sup> See В. В. Филатов, “Реставрация стеной живописи художника Готлиба Вельте”, *Сообщения ВЦНИЛКР*, 26 (1970), 177–186.

<sup>49</sup> See more: Hilkka Hiiop, Anneli Randla, “Eesti kirikute keskaegsete seinamaalingute uurimisest ja restaureerimisest”, *Kunstiteaduslikke Uurimusi*, 18 (3–4) (2009), 25–30.

<sup>50</sup> Untera, “Gottlieb Welté. Teekond peatustega”, 52.



Fig. 7. Höreda manor. Murals in the domed hall. Photo by Villu Plink, 2010.

Fig. 8. Höreda manor. Detail of the triumphal frieze. Photo by Juhan Maiste, 1985.

amples is the **Höreda** manor, which belonged to the von Stahl family from 1755 on.<sup>51</sup> The neo-classical main building was completed in 1812 by Gideon von Stahl.<sup>52</sup>

The wall paintings are in two grand rooms of the mansion – the oval cupola hall and the room behind it. The illusionary architectural landscape in the cupola hall is painted with extraordinary skill. The two-dimensional columns with Corinthian capitals alternate with three-dimensional ones, and the real stucco cornice separates the illusionary coffered ceiling from the wall. The delicately painted frieze finishing the wall surface was inspired by the reliefs of ancient victory columns (e.g. the columns of Traianus and Marcus Aurelius in Rome) and shows a row of warriors in Roman clothes moving in a long triumphal procession (figs. 7, 8). The design in the other hall is also devoted to the topic of triumph. The frieze is divided into panels, where figurative triumphal scenes alternate with ancient-style acanthus ornaments.

In contrast to the cold grey-blue shades of both halls are the brownish lunette paintings above the doors and windows, depicting figurative scenes from ancient history. Their unsuitability to the general composition and their rather poor quality indicate their later origin.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>51</sup> Eesti Ajalooarhiivi kinnistute register. Höreda mõis. <http://www.eha.ee/kinnistud/kinnistud.php?module=65&op=3&kid=16760> (accessed 06. II 2011).

<sup>52</sup> Eesti arhitektuuri ajalugu, 355; Juhan Maiste, "Höreda võidukäigust", *Kunst*, 60, 2 (1982), 40.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibidem*, 39.



Fig. 9. Vatla manor. Detail of the triumphal frieze in the hall. Photo by Hilkka Hiiop, 2011.

During the documenting procedure in 1979, occasionally the artist's signature and date on the triumphal painting of the cupola hall was discovered: P. J. Neus, 1811.<sup>54</sup>

Unfortunately, these paintings are deteriorating as well; the boarded-up windows might keep away vandals, but not the damp and fluctuations of temperature. However, the surprisingly still-surviving fragments allow further research, which might confirm the hypotheses concerning painting technology and stratigraphy.

The only known analogue to the triumphal procession at Hõreda is the painted frieze in the hall of the **Vatla** manor. This thematically similar image represents the marching soldiers with all the military attributes and costumes of ancient Rome (fig. 9). The painting is undated and has not been properly studied, but being the first finishing layer and an ideological analogue to Hõreda, presumably it dates back to the time when the manor was built: it was completed in the first decades

<sup>54</sup> Juhan Maiste, *Rapla raj Hõreda mõisa uurimis- ja projekteerimistööd. Maalingute ajalooline õiend*. Vol. III (Tallinn, 1980, manuscript in MKA, A-404), 4. Considering the extremely high quality of the cupola hall paintings, Juhan Maiste doubts the sole authorship of the lesser artist Paridon Jacob Neus, but due to the absence of proof, this remains mere speculation. Maiste suggests Giovanni Battista Scott from northern Italy who worked in Russia, referring to similarities with Seleznov's house designed by Scott in Moscow. As a more distant model for the frieze, Maiste suggests Andrea Mantegna Caesar's triumphal procession, which was initially located in the Palazzo Vecchio in Mantua, but was brought to the Hampton Court Palace near London during the reign of Charles I. (Maiste, "Hõreda võidukäigust", 41–43). See discussion on the topic Ants Hein, "Mööda mõisaid koos Juhan Maistega", *Akadeemia*, 3 (1997), 620; Juhan Maiste, "Retsensioon Ants Heina retsensioonile", *Akadeemia*, 6 (1997), 1295–1296; Ants Hein, "Veelkord koos Juhan Maistega mööda mõisaid", *Akadeemia*, 7 (1997), 1485.

of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by Otto von Rosen.<sup>55</sup> According to another version, the triumphal painting is associated with the other particular decoration at the manor, a grotto in the former mantel chimney depicting a strange underwater landscape, which is signed and dated (Thompson 1847). However, these two do not seem to have anything in common in material, manner of painting or style.

Similarly to Hõreda, the Vatla triumphal procession is painted in *grisaille*-technique, but unlike Hõreda's blue-grey shades, it was executed in brown sepia colours. However, compared with the fine realisation of the artwork at Hõreda, the Vatla painting has less artistic quality, so the parallel is primarily ideological and thematic.

#### LATER MANIFESTATIONS OF ANTIQUITY

The second wave of Antiquity-inspired murals arrived much later, in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This period followed direct models, reproducing Antiquity as whole interiors or copying individual details in rooms composed by an artist. Here, mention should be made, first of all, of the recently discovered masterful dining-room murals at Suure-Kõpu, seconded by the spatial décor of the Tartu University Art Museum, based on the same source material.

From 1805 on, **Suure-Kõpu** manor belonged to the von Stryk family. In 1825 the old mansion burned down, and in 1836 Alexander von Stryk began a new two-storey late neo-classical grand mansion. The manor, probably designed by the architect Emil Julius Strauss, was completed only in 1847, after Alexander's death.<sup>56</sup>

The most valuable part of the building is the interior décor, especially the figurative Pompeian-style painting cycle in the former dining-room, which is unique in the context of the entire manorial architecture in Estonia (figs. 10, 12). A few years ago, there were only faded pinkish walls in a bleak school assembly hall. The only trace of the murals was a legend and a single black-and-white photograph from the 1960s – a figurative scene was occasionally uncovered during renovation work back then, but was quickly covered up again.

<sup>55</sup> Toomas Varrak, *Vatla mõisa ajalooline õiend* (Tallinn, 1977, manuscript in MKA, P-3052), 7, 18. Varrak suggests 1812–1825 as the time of construction.

<sup>56</sup> Ants Hein, *Eesti mõisaarhitektuur. Historitsismist juugendini* (Tallinn: Hattorpe, 2003), 73.



Fig. 10. Suure-Kõpu manor. Murals in the dining-room. Photo by Villu Plink, 2010.

Fig. 11. Suure-Kõpu manor. 'Signature' of the painter in the dining-room. Photo by Villu Plink, 2010.

The wall paintings were rediscovered in 2003 by the conservators of the company Vana Tallinn, and in 2006 they were fully revealed.<sup>57</sup> Although the memory of the murals that had been overpainted in the 1920s had survived, their condition and quality caused a furore. Three figurative scenes have survived as a whole, one in the southern and two in the western wall. During the Soviet era, the door in the western wall was enlarged and thus the fourth panel lost a considerable part of its painted surface. The demolition of the northern wall probably destroyed one of the panels, which symmetrically corresponded to the painting on the southern wall. During the restoration project, the wall, the cavetto vault and the architectonic division of the décor were reconstructed, although the missing figures in the painted panels were not remade. The extensive paint layer losses of the figurative scenes were reconstructed during a workshop of conservation students of the Estonian Academy of Arts. The Italian background of the paintings made it possible to rely

<sup>57</sup> See about restoration: Svea Volmer, Hilkka Hiiop, "Salapärase ja ihaldatud Pompei. Suure-Kõpu maalingute avastamine ning restaureerimine", *Muinsuskaitse aastaraamat 2007* (Tallinn: Muinsuskaitseamet, 2008), 56–60.



Fig. 12. Suure-Kõpu manor. Dining hall. Photo by Toomas Vendelin / Royal Norwegian Embassy, 2011.

on the Italian tradition in the conservation concept and to use the *tratteggio*-technique in retouching the figurative parts.<sup>58</sup>

The mythological scenes depicting centaurs are copies of the paintings in the Villa Cicero in Pompeii. The originals were excavated and detached in 1749; since that time, they have been kept in the National Archaeological Museum in Naples. The murals in the Villa Cicero inspired many 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century artists, who produced numerous black-and-white and coloured graphic copies. The graphic models for the Suure-Kõpu artist were probably Wilhelm Zahn's albums, which

<sup>58</sup> Retouching constitutes a network of fine parallel lines in basic colours. From a distance, such reintegration blends into the pictorial whole of the original; a closer look clearly shows the conservator's addition. Retouching was not applied in missing areas where the reconstruction would have required a hypothesis. Such lacunae were covered with an even layer of grey neutral tone, which in regard to the original, becomes background. The main principles of contemporary conservation are thus fulfilled: reconstructing the pictorial whole, maintaining the differentiation between the original historical work and the later additions. See Volmer, Hiiop, "Salapärane ja ihaldatud Pompei", 56–60.

were acquired by Tartu University soon after publication.<sup>59</sup> The three albums consist of dated fascicles and were published as follows: 1828–1829, 1842–1844 and 1852–1859. The models for Suure-Kõpu, the four centaur scenes of Villa Cicero, come from the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> fascicles of the third album, published in 1855 and 1856, respectively. The colours and the soft *chiaroscuro* manner are very close to the images in Zahn's album, which gives reason to assume that they indeed were the models for the wall paintings. Although the murals constitute the first finishing layer in the dining-room, they could not therefore have been completed before 1856.

However, the overall composition, with its architectural articulations, caryatids between the windows, marbled Corinthian orders dividing the panels, the painted dentil moulding that creates an optical spatial effect, and the ceiling that imitates graining, is the result of the artist's own imagination.

One of the Villa Cicero's four centaur-scenes was probably demolished along with the northern wall, whereas the model for the fragmentarily surviving central painting on the western wall is still unknown. Only the upper part of the scene is currently visible, showing a figure's head and wings. No analogue to this composition can be found either in Zahn's album or in the Villa Cicero.

Who then was the author of the murals? Like most wall paintings, these were not signed either. The high artistic quality of the work suggests that it could not have been a local master. A slight indication could be the self-portrait of the artist concealed in the marbling of a pillar framing a field of painting; it seems to be a southern type of face (fig. 11).

Or should the links be sought in the oil sketches by Otto Friedrich Moeller visible in the historical interior photographs of Kaali manor?<sup>60</sup> At any rate, it is remarkable that the Villa Cicero's small figurative scenes ended up in the two Estonian manor interiors. One had random and movable sketches and the other formed part of the composed wall decor. Moeller's sketches do not seem to be meant as separate and finished works; their small format and simple listel frames instead indicate that they were prob-

<sup>59</sup> Wilhelm Johann Karl Zahn, *Die schönsten Ornamente und merkwürdigsten Gemälde aus Pompeji, Herkulanum und Stabiae: nebst einigen Grundrissen und Ansichten nach den an Ort und Stelle gemachten Originalzeichnungen* (Berlin: Riemer, 1828–1859). About Zahn see the article by Inge Kukk in this volume.

<sup>60</sup> See the article by Tiina-Mall Kreem in this volume.



Fig. 13. Voltveti manor. Wall paintings on the *lambris* of the ballroom. Photo by Martin Siplane, 2010.

ably produced as designs. This allusion is supported by the fact that, similarly to Suure-Kõpu's wall paintings, Moeller's sketches were painted in an oil technique which is quite unusual for that particular form of art. Associations between these two can, however, only be hypothetical, and require further research.

Wilhelm Zahn's albums inspired another major Pompeian-style interior design in Estonia, i.e. the Tartu University Art Museum, where a spatial whole was reproduced.<sup>61</sup>

Another manor whose murals display inspiration from Antiquity, is **Voltveti**.<sup>62</sup> The manor's late neo-classical mansion was completed in the 1830s and 1840s, when it belonged to the von Stryk family – both the owners as well as the completion date coincide with the nearby Suure-Kõpu manor. During investigation work in 1985, wall paintings underneath monochrome oil paints were revealed in the ballroom and the adjacent room behind the vestibule.<sup>63</sup> Thorough trial cleaning identified murals in both rooms in three layers; they were documented and covered up again. Krista Kodres wrote a comprehensive overview of the paintings; according to her, the décor of the first layer probably dates from the time when the house was built.<sup>64</sup> In her opinion, the primary source of inspiration for the painting in the hall behind the vestibule is the Antiquity-based 'grotesque style', modelled after the paintings in the Domus Aurea in Rome.

<sup>61</sup> See more: in the article by Inge Kukk in this volume.

<sup>62</sup> Kodres, Maiste, "Purilast Inglistani. Seinamaalingute leiud mõisates", 44–45; Krista Kodres, *Värv Eesti arhitektuuris. Voltveti mõisa maalingud*. VIII (Tallinn, 1985, manuscript in MKA, A-1412), 5-7.

<sup>63</sup> The research was conducted by Kristi and Rein Raie; the report was compiled by Krista Kodres.

<sup>64</sup> Kodres, *Värv Eesti arhitektuuris. Voltveti mõisa maalingud*, 13.



Fig. 14. Voltveti manor. Wall paintings on the cavetto vault of the ballroom. Photo by Martin Siplane, 2010.

The murals in the ballroom constitute an eclectic mix of stucco décor panelling, with relief figures of angels in the centre; this is supported by the painting of the marbled wainscoting, which is rhythmically articulated with Ionic orders in the *lambris* part (fig. 13). Between the stuccos in the middle zone of the wall, the painting continues with floral motifs in the *grisaille*-technique, symmetrically placed in the corners of the stucco wainscot. Cavetto moulding that has never been overpainted is, in turn, divided into wainscots, where the mascarons, zithers, seashells and stylised figures in the *grisaille*-technique, inserted between grotesque plant ornamentation, alternate with vividly coloured laurel wreaths (fig. 14). Painted volute consoles (modiglions) between the wainscots display a three-dimensional *trompe l'oeil* effect at certain points in the room and seem to support the stucco cornice dividing the ceiling and the cavetto moulding. Although the details follow ancient examples, the general wall surface impression and the alternation of pastel warm-cold tones do not correspond to this.

In 2010 the Conservation Departments of the Estonian Academy of Arts and the Tartu Art College carried out thorough research on the architectural surfaces, in order to check the results of earlier studies and identify more murals in other rooms of the manor house.<sup>65</sup> Paintings covering the whole surface of the walls were indeed discovered in three additional rooms, although their stylistic and stratigraphic origin probably dates to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century or early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Surprisingly, the paintings in the hall behind the vestibule had vanished from underneath the over painting layers. More thorough testing revealed that all three walls (east, west and south) had not been paint-

<sup>65</sup> *Voltveti mõisa peahoone siseviimistlusuuringute aruanne*. Vol I and II, compiled by the Estonian Academy of Art / Tartu Art College (Hilkka Hiiop, Maris Suits, Heli Tuksam) (Tallinn, 2010, manuscript in MKA, A-9300).

ed over after the 1985 investigation, as assumed, but the entire layer of original coating had been removed and replaced with cement plaster. When exactly, by whom and why such an act of vandalism had been carried out is not known, although according to the locals this could have happened in the second half of the 1980s. We can thus only rely on the black-and-white photographic documentation from 1985. On the other hand, the ballroom murals had survived rather well and are relatively safe to uncover.

The first-layer wall paintings were executed with a skilled hand, although the general impression of the decorated room can be assessed only after the paintings and stucco decor have been fully revealed. The initially suggested dating of the murals, corresponding to the construction period of the manor, rests on the fact that this is the first polychrome finishing layer on the monochrome bright yellow layer of paint (but not directly on the plaster). However, the possibility of its being instead a later work from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century cannot be excluded either. A note in the book on the history of the von Stryk family suggests that the hall's stucco décor originates from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>66</sup> It is not clear what this information is based on, but the style and stratigraphy of the murals do not conform to this claim.

The second layer of painting, repeating mechanically, and in a simplified manner, the decorative scheme of the first one, is from the late 1930s or early 1940s – this is indicated by the second-layer painting continuing on the intrados of an opening, revealed after the wall was demolished in 1939–1940, followed by a third painting layer with a new ornamental scheme, dating from the post-WW II period.

It is the task of future research to establish whether and to what extent there is any reason to seek connections between the wall paintings in two neighbouring manors, Suure-Kõpu and Voltveti, belonging to the same family and built at more or less the same time, and inspired by the same ideological source – Antiquity.

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<sup>66</sup> Wolf Dietmar von Stryk, *Perekonna von Stryk-Tignitz ajaloost aastatel 1784-1920: mõtteid ja tagasivaateid Tignitz-Voltveti-Tihemetsale* (Viljandi: W. Stryk, 2002), 20. The stucco and the first polychrome finishing layer are certainly from the same period.

## CONCLUSION

The impact of Antiquity in interior decoration has been long-lasting and the usage of source material extensive. The number of manors where the ideological sources can be traced back to Antiquity is certainly bigger than the current article has tackled, for example the Alu vestibule, Vihterpalu and the models of the recently revealed Väätsa manor ornamental décor. The keywords there include meander, palmette, acanthus leaves, animals integrated into plant ornamentation, mascarons and everyday utensils. Historically assessed as decorative art, most murals are unsigned and undated and the chance of establishing the artist or precise date on the basis of documentary material is pretty remote.

Just like the manors as a whole, the wall paintings inside them form a significant part of our cultural heritage. Considering how few high-quality, truly grand murals our puritan culture possesses, each coloured fragment on a wall deserves special attention. On the one hand, we have cause to rejoice over several recently found wall paintings, e.g. in Kiltsi and Suure-Kõpu. On the other hand, some superb paintings have been irredeemably destroyed: Norra, lost forever; Hõreda, where only some miserable fragments survive today; and Liigvalla, where the untold story is quietly fading away.

However, the positive development for researchers is the changing strategies, methods and principles in conservation of murals. Original historical substance is increasingly more appreciated, and besides the decorative side of wall paintings, their historical and artistic value is emphasised, as is true with easel painting. This means that the practice of extensive reconstructing and 'refreshing' original decoration is diminishing, and the emphasis is on uncovering, preserving and displaying the original substance. Although such a conservation strategy is more expensive and time-consuming, the owners of the heritage, either the state or private individuals, have fortunately learned to value, beside the decorative function of the mural paintings, the beauty of history as well.

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**KOKKUVÕTE: Klassika jälgedes. Antiik Eesti mõisamaalingutes**

Artikkel käsitleb 18. sajandi teise poole ja 19. sajandi üle-Euroopalise nähtuse – taasavastatud antiigi – retseptiooni ja reflektiooni Eesti mõisamaalingutes. Artikkel on kirjutatud konservaatori positsioonilt, seades fookusesse maalingute säilivuse, seisundi ja materjali-tehnilise probleematika. Artikli eesmärk on ühelt poolt kaardistada Eesti interjööri maalingute hetkeolukord, koondades tänaseks hävinud ja hävivate maalingute dokumentaalse informatsiooni ning asetades värsked maalinguleiud sellesse pilti. Teiselt poolt püütakse paigutada Eesti mõisates olnud ja olevad maalingud laiemasse Euroopa visuaalgeograafilisse ringi.

Euroopa vallutanud antiikkultuuri taasinterpreteerimise laine lähtus Rooma pärandi ulatuslikust taasavastamisest ja väljakaevamisest 18. sajandil (Palatinus ja Domus Aurea Roomas, Campania linnad Pompei ja Herculaneum). Mõjukaimaks antiigi interpreteerijaks ja populariseerijaks interjööri kunstis oli Euroopa vallutanud antikiseeriva stiili üks loojatest, inglise arhitekt Robert Adam.

Pompei mõju saksa interjöörides uurinud Peter Werner näeb eeskujusid kahe ideoloogiliselt ja kujundikeelelt eristuva lainena, kus kahe perioodi ajalise piirina on välja pakutud 18.–19. saj vahetust.<sup>67</sup> Esimene periood seostub varaklassitsismi algusega 1760. aastatel Põhja- ja Kesk-Saksamaal, mida iseloomustab antiiksete eeskujude formaalne rakendamine ja üksikmotiivide kasutamine vastavalt arhitekti-dekorraatori muinsusteadlikkusele. Teine, kõrgklassitsismiga seostuv periood jäi 19. saj esimesse poole ja lähtus juba ruumiterviku komponeerimisel antiigi eeskujudest.

Saksa kontekstis välja pakutud periodiseeringu kohandamine Eestile on küll hüpoteetiline, kuna paljude mõisate ruumitervik pole säilinud või veel tervikuna avatud. Siiski võib eristada kahte – küll Saksamaaga võrreldes ajalises nihkes – perioodi, mil siseviimistluse ideelised ja visuaalsed lätted kattuvad Peter Werneri pakutuga. Esimese moodustavad ajaliselt ja geograafiliselt lähedased varaklassitsistlikud mõisad Järvamaa ja Virumaa piiril: Norra, Liigvalla, Varangu, Kiltsi. Selle ringiga haakub ajaliselt ja ideoloogiliselt ka Gottlieb Welté signatuuriga maalingutsükkel Lohu mõisas. Teise eristuva grupina võib vaadelda juba hilisemasse

<sup>67</sup> Werner, *Pompeji und die Wanddekoration der Goethezeit*.

perioodi, 19.saj teise poolde jäävaid hilisklassitsistlikke mõisahooneid ja muuseumiruumi Lõuna-Eestis (Suure-Kõpu, TÜ Kunstimuuseumi ruumid<sup>68</sup>, Voltveti). Nende vahele paigutub Eesti kontekstis erandlik Hõreda mõisa maalingutsükkel, mille ainsaks analoogiks on Vatla mõisa saali friis. Kui sajandivahetusse ja 19. sajandi algusesse jäävad mõisamaalingud interpreteerisid ja tsiteerisid antiikseid eeskujusid segades neid romantilise (antiik)varemete kultusega ja integreerides kompositsiooni antiigiga seostuvat atribuutikat, siis 19. sajandi keskpaik ja teine pool tõid kaasa juba otsesema antiigi kopeerimise nii detaili kui ruumiterviku tasandil, samuti püüde imiteerida antiikmaalingute tehnikast tulenevat üldmuljet.

Nii nagu mõisad tervikuna, moodustavad neis leiduvad maalingud meie kultuuripärandi olulise osa. Selle taustal on põhjust rõõmustada mitmete hiljutiste maalinguleidude üle, nagu Kiltsis ja Suure-Kõpus. Samas hoiatab ja hirmutab mitmete siinse dekoratiivkunsti tippu kuuluvate maalingute häving: Norra, mis on nüüdseks jäädavalt kadunud; Hõreda, millest on praegu järel vaid haledad riismed; Liigvalla, mille veel uurimata lugu on vajumas ajaloo hämarusse. Arvestades interjööri kunsti muutlikku pilti, kus avastus käib käsikäes hävinguga, saab antud käsitlus kaardistada ja interpreteerida vaid hetkeolukorda. Seda enam muutub oluliseks fikseerida ja dokumenteerida hetke, mis võib osutada ainsaks vahendiks selle hapra kunstiliigi säilitamisel.

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<sup>68</sup> Suure-Kõpu söögisaali ja TÜ Kunstimuuseumi maalingute graafiliseks eeskujuks olid Wilhelm Zahn antiigi-ainelised albumid, mille originaalid jõudsid vahetult pärast ilmumist ka Tartu Ülikooli kogudesse: Zahn, *Die schönsten Ornamente und merkwürdigsten Gemälde aus Pompeji, Herkulanum und Stabiae: nebst einigen Grundrissen und Ansichten nach den an Ort und Stelle gemachten Originalzeichnungen.*