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ESTATE OF KHREPTOVICHY IN BESHANKOVICHY

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The article considers the questions of the history of appearance and building of the estate of Khreptovichy in Beshankovichy. In addition, it reveals its historical and architectural value and need of full restoration for the use in tourist aims.

Beshankovichy is an urban settlement in Vitebsk region of Belarus, the former river port on the Western Dvina. On archival sources it is known from 15th century. In the 16-17th centuries the town belonged to princes Oginsky, Khreptovichy.

The name of Oginsky is associated with the flourishing of the then-occurring of Beshankovichy. In the middle of the 18th century the town becomes the city. In the same years here begin to be carried out the fairs, to which it assembles 4–5 thousand people not only from the surrounding cities, but also from Russia and Poland.

After the death of Ignatius Oginsky in 1775, Beshankovichy passes to the chancellor of Grand Duchy of Lithuania Joachim Khreptovich. He decides to build a Palace in the city, which was destined to become the most interesting sight of Beshankovichy. The estate of Khreptovichy (fig. 1) created at the end of the 18th century was saved to our days practically in a primordial kind [1].



Figure 1. – The estate of Khreptovichy

In the architecture of the palace, built in 1770, there is no portico traditional for the early classicism. Most of the details of the building belong to the empire style. As for its structure, the Palace has a U-shape, consisting of three interconnected buildings: two-storey central and one-storey side wing. The solution of the main facade is generally flat, used for housing. The main halls and offices were located in the central building. Openwork balcony of the second floor with a beautiful twisted cast iron fence (fig. 2), located directly above the main entrance, small cornices and flat niches make up a modest architectural and artistic decor of the building [1].



Figure 2. – Balcony of the second floor

Next to the Palace there was a greenhouse and various farm buildings, where there was a kitchen and a stable (some of those buildings are preserved). The palace was surrounded by the magnificent park with alleys and ponds in the "Anglo-French" style. The main alley was closed by an arched pond. Another circle-shaped pond had an

island with an arbor in the middle. Also, two artificial reservoirs with islets were created. Spouting springs under the water did not allow them to freeze, which made it possible to keep there swans year round. In 1821, during a visit of Emperor Alexander I to Beshankovichy, the park was enriched with small architectural forms. A wooden, straw and fir hall for 1500 people was built near the Palace among the park. Subsequently, count Irenaeus Khreptovich installed a monument sign with a height of 3 feet and 12.5 inches (269 cm). This sign consisted of four parts: a granite plate, a brick plaster pedestal and a truncated cone column. The monument was crowned with a granite ball with a diameter of 5 inches (22.2 cm). On the pedestal there was an inscription in gold letters in Latin: "Count Irenai Khreptovich in memory of the stay at this place of the divine sovereign Alexander I with his troops". The monument was surrounded with fencing from the chains suspended on eight granite columns.

Palace at different times was a place of stops of different people. In 1812, the Neapolitan king Murat and Napoleon arrived in Beshankovichy. The Emperor of France liked the reception organized by Khreptovich so much, that he decided to spend a few more days in the Palace. It is interesting that the room in the Palace of Count Iriney Khreptovich, where Napoleon spent the night, was being carefully preserved in the same form as the emperor had left it for over a century and shown to all guests. By the way, it was in the "room of Napoleon" in 1821 in Beshankovichy for the review of troops stopped another Emperor, but the Russian - Alexander I [2–3]. The Palace of Khreptovich in Beshankovichy was captured by Napoleon Orda on one of his watercolors (fig. 3) in 1876.



Figure 3. – Napoleon Orda's watercolor with the image of the Khreptovichy Palace

However, in 1918, the contents of the Palace were badly damaged by looting, but the building itself has retained its appearance and is now a historical and cultural value of the Republic of Belarus. Currently, its main building is used as the Beshankovichy School of Art.

Thus, the Palace of Khreptovichy is now of great importance as a historical and architectural monument, and with its full restoration can be an important tourist attraction.

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