

How accurate are modern pictorial representations of the castles development over time?

When assessing the accuracy of castle representations, it is important to consider the purpose of the piece. If it is intended to be highly accurate, showing every possible detail known, from sources and the current ruins, then it is far easier to criticise the picture as there would undoubtedly be some flaws. No-one today was alive when the castle was at its peak so no reconstruction can be totally accurate. However some reconstructions are drawn with the intention of giving the feel of the castle and what it would have been like to be there. For example the great hall reconstruction shows a feast with many people and tables. This occasion is most likely to be fictional and there are details in the picture, which do not match up with any evidence. The floor for instance is shiny, probably marble, which gives the impression of grandeur, this is perfectly true, as marble would have been extremely expensive and probably too heavy to be supported as a first floor. The bay window probably has the incorrect amount of inner windows too, but it does not affect the quality of representation as the picture as it still helps you get to know how the place would feel.

Kenilworth castle today is in ruins, nearly all of the buildings are badly damaged and it is hard to see how grand the castle would have looked in the sixteenth century and earlier. The four representations here show how the castle developed over time and anyone can see how changed without having to go through books of sources and accounts. The reconstructions make Kenilworth castle accessible to anyone which cant be a bad thing.

The reconstruction's are likely to be mostly accurate, the outlines of the main buildings and walls are largely still in tact today. The present evidence of a dam and the features of water gates as well as marshy land indicates the presence of a large mere which has been included on all the representations. The large features, which give the overall impression of the castle, are going to be mostly accurate in the representations and it is only minor things, which may be subject to the artist's imagination. For instance the thin towers around the great hall in the fourteenth century and the absence of a chapel, which's foundations remain today close to the long barn.

To conclude I think modern pictorial representations are accurate enough for their purpose,

giving people the overall feel of the structure. Individual instances of error in reconstructions are inevitable but it does not particularly matter unless you want an entirely accurate reconstruction which is not possible.