

## Arguments over the restoration of the château du Haut-Koenigsbourg



As soon as **Bodo Ebhardt** was appointed to manage the project, many people voiced their doubts.

**Otto Piper**, the author of the *Burgenkunde* (the first general scientific survey of German castles) and editor of the newspaper 'Le courrier du Bas-Rhin', did not hold back. **Wilhelm II** had consulted him first, but his plan to safeguard the ruin had not convinced the Kaiser. Arguing that a restoration might damage the historical value of the site, the man rejected for the role of managing the project criticized the work of B. Ebhardt, who he accused of opportunism, time and time again.

### The controversial keep

The controversy was especially heated with regard to the shape of the keep. Whilst Bodo Ebhardt correctly rebuilt it in the shape of a square, the opponents of the restoration claimed the keep would have originally been round. These critics, who included famous scientists, went as far as to counterfeit evidence that would prove that they were right!

These attacks were obviously aimed at Haut-Koenigsbourg because the Kaiser had made it into a **political symbol**.

The Kaiser did not escape criticism. After the castle was unveiled to the public, a section of the regional and international media and well-known pro-French activists like the artist **Hansi** enthusiastically attacked him. They made fun of the parade and historical pageant that took place before the unveiling of the castle. The ceremony was meant to be an impressive event but took place in heavy rain! The Kaiserwetter (the good weather that was supposedly associated with the Kaiser) was nowhere to be seen!