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**WOODEN MANOR HOUSES IN ESTONIA
1700–1850: FROM ARCHAIC TRADITIONS
TO MODERN IDEAS**

When thinking about the architectural heritage of the Baltic countries, thousands of manor ensembles that cover the land like a dense network come to mind. Naturally, the manor house has been the topic of interest for Estonian and Latvian researchers over the past hundred years and this has resulted in numerous books and articles detailing different nuances of local manorial architecture. Although it seems that most aspects of the manorial era have already been discovered, there are still several topics that are open for further research. One of these is the topic of wooden manor houses, which has to date received very little attention from architectural and art historians.

There are many reasons for this lack of research into wooden manorial architecture, of which most are connected to the word ‘heritage’ in its most traditional sense. For many decades the architectural heritage of the Baltic-German nobility had a strong negative association, reminding Estonians in the newly established nation-state of centuries of oppression. Even though ‘foreign’ art and architecture was renamed ‘Baltic art’ in the early decades of the 20th century, the discipline of art history focused on the research methods

of the time and turned most of its attention toward medieval heritage.¹ Wooden manorial architecture could have sparked the interest of ethnographers due to its choice of materials and connections with local vernacular traditions, yet complex social relations prevented this from happening.²

Against this background, and to encourage an appreciation and preservation of manorial architecture, enthusiasts from Riga's Historical and Archaeological Society (*Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Altertumskunde zu Riga* in German) joined forces to put together the first monograph on Baltic manor houses (*Das baltische Herrenhaus, 1926–1930*), which introduced the reader to the history of manorial architecture.³ Although the book was praised by contemporaries as comprehensive, the handful of wooden manor houses that were included were used to illustrate the periods during which connection with vernacular traditions was stronger.⁴

Approaches to the architectural heritage of the Baltic-German nobility in Estonian history writing started to change slowly in the middle of the 20th century when manorial architecture was becoming a topic of interest. The first few articles written by Helmi Üprus⁵ gave rise to the idea to inventory the former manor ensembles that had fallen victim to decay. Thanks to a very systematic approach and funding from the state, the extensive fieldwork that was carried out at the end of the 1970s found hundreds of previously unknown objects and emphasized the need for greater protection of Baltic-German architectural heritage in all parts of the country. The representation of wooden architecture increased in the first two monographs that

1 Kristina Jõekalda, 'Võõra pärandiga leppimine ja lepitamine. 1920.–1930. aastate debati ajaloolise arhitektuuri väärtuste ja kaitse üle', *Maastik ja mälu. Pärandiloome arenguhooni Eestis*, ed. by Linda Kaljundi, Helen Sooväli-Sepping (Tallinn: Tallinna Ülikooli Kirjastus, 2014), 182–245, 182, 200–203, 227–228.

2 A monograph on Estonian farm house types 'Saaremaa taluehitised: etnograafiline uurimus. I. Ehitiste üksikosad, elamu ja kõrvalhooned, mis osalt täidavad elamu ülesandeid' was published by Gustav Ränk in 1939.

3 Estonian Heritage Board [Muinsuskaitseamet, MKA], ERA.T-76.1.10728, Juhan Maiste, Ants Hein, *Eesti NSV mõisaarhitektuuri inventariseerimise koondaruanne* (Tallinn, 1980), 10, 13.

4 Ibid. Altogether only 16 Estonian wooden manor houses are mentioned in three volumes of the book.

5 The first study Helmi Üprus published on the topic was about the manor ensemble in Kolga in 1956 (MKA, ERA.T-76.1.815, *Kolga loss. Ajalooline õiend*). A few years later she wrote some articles in a magazine called *Sirp ja Vasar*. In 1965 longer articles followed in *Eesti arhitektuuri ajalugu*, the first comprehensive book on the history of Estonian architecture.

were written soon afterwards,⁶ but the topic in its entirety received attention on an academic level only a decade later. Wooden manor houses were first taken up by Maria Silla at the Estonian Academy of Arts in 2010, who wrote about the history of the development of wooden manorial architecture based on the then-standing manor houses.⁷ In 2017, a deeper historical dimension was given to the research topic at the University of Tartu, where a research group was set up to collect data and define the scope of the topic in time and space.⁸

Currently, the only monograph on wooden manorial architecture was written by ethnographer Gustav Ränk (*Die älteren baltischen Herrenhöfe in Estland, 1971*) about the time known as the Swedish Era when wood as a building material dominated in building practice. Since it is generally accepted that earlier centuries do not allow for great conclusions, this article aims to introduce the latest research results⁹ and turns its attention toward the heyday of manorial culture, asking how modern ideas made their way into wooden heritage. The inclusion of wooden architecture alongside previous research allows us to paint with a much more diverse colour palette and ask what the overall picture might have looked like.

THE PERCENTAGE OF WOOD AS A BUILDING MATERIAL

Viewing this as a question and answering it means first and foremost looking at the percentage of wooden manor houses, for which the best archival material is a manuscript compiled in 1797–1799 by a land surveyor named Samuel Dobermann. Since the document was directly related to the Russian government's increased interest in

6 See *Eestimaa mõisad* (Tallinn: Kunst, 1996) written by professor Juhan Maiste, and *Eesti mõisaarhitektuur: historitsismist juugendini* (Tallinn: Hattorpe, 2003) by Ants Hein. Both men inventoried manor ensembles in the late 1970s. Juhan Maiste took over the role as the main keeper of the inventory after the initiator of the project Helmi Üprus passed away.

7 Maria Silla, *Puitmõisad Eestis. Tüpoloogia, väärtused ja kaitse*. BA thesis (Tallinn: Eesti Kunstiakadeemia, 2010).

8 See Elis Pärn, *Puitmõisad Põhja-Eestis 18. sajandist 20. sajandi alguseni*. BA thesis (Tartu: Tartu Ülikool, 2018), and Maria Sigal, *Puitmõisad Lõuna-Eestis 18.–20. sajandil*. BA thesis (Tartu: Tartu Ülikool, 2018), supervised by Juhan Maiste.

9 This article is based on the author's master's thesis *Eestimaa puitmõisad aastail 1700–1850: etnoloogilisest pärandist stiiliarhitektuurini* (Tartu: Tartu Ülikool, 2022), which was also supervised by Juhan Maiste at the Department of Art History, University of Tartu. The thesis can be accessed at: <https://dspace.ut.ee/handle/10062/83263> [accessed 15/12/2022].

the economic activity and geography of various regions of its empire in the second half of the 18th century, the five-volume manuscript includes information that not only described the manorial buildings and materials they were built of, but also listed villages and other landforms.¹⁰ After having worked through the compiled data of 407 knight manors (*Rittergut*) in the Governorate of Estonia, it can be said that wooden residencies made up 58% (235 buildings) of the manor houses that existed at the time. The word 'stone' was only mentioned 149 times (37%) and the last 5% reflected lands where there were no manor houses at the time of the survey.¹¹

Although there are no other sources that would include the same amount of information, it is possible to illustrate the topic with remarks from Georg Julius von Schultz (1808–1875, also known as Dr. Bertram), who spent his youth studying and travelling around the region in the first decades of the 19th century. According to his memoirs, most manor houses in the Baltics at that time were made of wood,¹² which allows us to conclude that the building material was not only widespread but continued to hold a dominant role in building practice.

The large percentage of wooden manors on the eastern edge of Europe should not come as a surprise, especially since the area is filled with resin-rich conifers. Building from natural resources was easy and economically beneficial, especially when most of the materials came from the landowner's forest. According to the secretary of the Livonian Public and Economic Society (*Liefländische Gemeinnützige und Ökonomische Sozietät*) Wilhelm Christian Friebe (1761–1811), the walls of a medium-sized German house were erected in 4–6 weeks, which meant that manor houses were habitable in one summer.¹³ In the harsh Nordic conditions, a warm building with a healthy indoor climate was also a much better choice for its residents, who were looking for ways to create a sense of a true home, something that

10 Estonian History Museum [Eesti Ajaloomuuseum], AM.70.1.2-5, Gea Troska, *Miks koostas S. Dobermann käsikirja 'Topographische Nachrichten von Esthland'*. *Lisandeid eesti kartograafia ajaloole*, handwritten manuscript (1976), 10–13.

11 AM.70.1.2-5, Samuel Dobermann, *Topographische Nachrichten von Ehtland* (1797–1799). Pärn, *Eestimaa puitmõisad aastail 1700–1850: etnoloogilisest pärandist stiiliarhitektuurini*, 24.

12 Dr. Bertram, *Der baltische Skizzen oder fünfzig Jahre zurück. Drittes Bändchen* (Berlin: Verlag von Alexander Duncker, 1857), 77.

13 Wilhelm Christian Friebe, 'Haben die Gründe, welche den hölzernen Gebäuden in unseren nordischen Gegenden noch immer die meisten Liebhaber verschaffen ein hinnlängliches Gewicht?', *Der nordischen Mischellaneen*, 26 (1791), 327–241, 327.

became very important for Baltic-German families in the first half of the 19th century.¹⁴ Numerous commentaries testify to the coldness of buildings made of brick and limestone, which looked great but 'were not the cosiest during winter storms'.¹⁵ Although in some cases the choice of building material was related to the wealth of the manor, it may have also been a conscious choice that was given impetus by the pastoral way of life, which gained importance in the last few decades of the 18th century. At the same time, the use of stone was held back by prejudice, mainly that buildings made of stone were dank and unhealthy.¹⁶ Wood was already tested and therefore considered trustworthy.

ARCHITECTURAL GENESIS

The first half of the 18th century or the time after the Great Northern War (1700–1721) has often been described as a dark period that left a very strong mark on building activity and allowed the nobility to only erect wooden manor houses that resembled the ones that were built under Swedish rule.¹⁷ As described by Gustav Ränk, the typical wooden dwelling in the 17th century was a small rectangular building that was characterised by a central mantle chimney (*Mantelschorstein*), which was surrounded by heated rooms. Along the short axis of the building were two small and dusty entrances, lit by small windows placed next to the main door. In bigger manor houses there were often cold chambers next to the heated rooms, which were usually only used in the warmer months.¹⁸

Although several manor houses did continue the tradition, newer architectural forms appeared on lands that were either donated to the nobility by the Russian rulers or had escaped the negative consequences of the war and plague. Since these types of buildings

14 Read more of this in an article written by Ulrike Plath, 'Rändrahnu ja majaisandad', *Vikerkaar*, 7-8 (2008).

15 Theodor von Bernhardt, *Jugenderinnerungen* (Leipzig: Hirzel Verlag, 1893), 180.

16 Friebe, 'Haben die Gründe, welcher den hölzernen Gebäuden in unseren nordischen Gegenden noch immer die meisten Liebhaber verschaffen ein hinnlängliches Gewicht?', 327–330.

17 This is an understanding that has essentially been repeated in numerous books and articles ever since *Das baltische Herrenhaus*.

18 Gustav Ränk, *Die älteren baltischen Herrenhöfe in Estland* (Stockholm: Norstedt, 1971), 90, 96.



FIG. 1. THE ARCHAIC 'OLD BALTIC' MANOR HOUSE IN KESKVERE (*KESKFER*) IS ONE OF THE FEW REMAINING WOODEN MANOR HOUSES FROM THE EARLY 18TH CENTURY. PHOTO TAKEN BY VELJO RANNIKU IN 1969. PHOTO: ARCHIVE OF THE ESTONIAN NATIONAL HERITAGE BOARD.

were characterised by high mansard roofs, paired pilasters and dragon-headed gargoyles, they may have taken inspiration from St Petersburg or overseas from the Swedish lands, where the influence of Dutch architects had already been strong in the previous decades. On most occasions, these wooden residences followed a simple rectangular form, although the manor house in Rasina (*Rasin*), which was built in the 1730s, had a rare Dutch-style *avant-corps* in the middle of the façade.¹⁹

In other places, manorial architecture continued with the local traditions, although the buildings had grown bigger and started to indicate a greater sense of symmetry, which was expressed in the grouping of the windows. The surface of the façade was made livelier with vertical beams, which were used to strengthen the manor house and hide the overlapping wooden joints. The general impression of the dwellings was however still given by the archaic

19 Heinz Pirang, *Das baltische Herrenhaus. Die älteste Zeit bis um 1750* (Riga: Jonck & Poliewsky, 1926), 49.



FIG. 2. MANOR HOUSE IN RASINA. PHOTO TAKEN BY BARON FRIEDRICH WOLFF-LETTIN IN 1924. PHOTO: ART HISTORICAL PHOTO COLLECTION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TARTU.

mantle chimney and an unusually high half-hipped roof, which was covered by straws or reeds. In the words of Theodor von Bernhardi (1802–1885), these buildings had '... a strange peculiarity, which was connected to the basement rooms. Through the door of the house, one could get to the vestibule and from there often directly to the hall of the house. However, there was a floor hatch in front of the hall door, that lead to the basement, and the only way to get into the hall was over the cellar hatch. Such a wonderful arrangement of things sometimes caused strange accidents.'²⁰

From the second half of the century, other manors also began to recover from the effects of the war. Although wooden architecture still followed the same long old Baltic (*urbaltisch*) house type, it started to reflect the local nobility's greater need for representative purposes, which not only brought changes to the construction techniques but also to the overall appearance. This meant that the vertical beams

20 Bernhardi, *Jugenderinnerungen*, 89.



FIG. 3. NOBLE RESIDENCE IN RIIDAJA (*MORSEL-PODRIGEL*), WHICH WAS OWNED BY THE STRYK FAMILY, IS ONE OF THE MOST TYPICAL LATE-BAROQUE WOODEN MANOR HOUSES IN ESTONIA. WHAT MAKES THE BUILDING INTERESTING, ARE THE THREE MANTLE CHIMNEYS IN THE FLOOR PLAN. PHOTO: ELIS PÄRN, 2021.

were removed from the surface of the façade and replaced with simple boards that were usually also placed on the corners of the dwellings. Most manor houses at the time doubled in size and introduced another chimney to the ground plan of the building. In addition, the main entrances, which had previously been small, were enlarged and given more importance with double-sided Baroque doors with beautifully forged door handles. One of the extraordinary examples of the time was the manor house in Kavastu (*Kawast*), which had a rare volute pediment that was supported by small adjacent pilasters. Side wings that had been important to the architectural trends of the time seem to have been represented only in a handful of manors: a much more popular architectural form was the mansard roof.

In parallel with the elements of Baroque, early Neoclassical elements started making their way into wooden manorial architecture in the last quarter of the 18th century and this was generally reflected in the symmetrical distribution of windows, dentil block cornices and small semi-circular skylight windows. Previously used straws and reeds were replaced with stone tiles and wooden shingles, which gave the residences a more refined appearance. In addition, double-sided doors were made longer and decorated with garlands, rhombuses,



FIG. 4. VAO (*WAOKÜLL*) MANOR HOUSE WITH ITS SYMMETRICAL WINDOW DISTRIBUTION INDICATES THE INCREASING INFLUENCE OF NEOCLASSICISM IN ESTONIAN WOODEN ARCHITECTURE IN THE LAST QUARTER OF THE 18TH CENTURY. HOWEVER, THE MANOR HOUSE ITSELF CAN MOST LIKELY BE DATED TO THE THIRD QUARTER OF THE CENTURY, WHICH MAKES IT ONE OF THE EARLIEST EXAMPLES OF ITS KIND. PHOTO: JUHAN MAISTE, 2018.

triangles and meanders, whereas the main door itself was often placed on one side of the façade, making room for a medium-sized hall in the middle of the building.

Kuigatsi (*Löwenhof*) differed considerably from other traditional wooden manor houses of the time as it was a one-and-a-half-story dwelling that was articulated on all sides by *avant-corps* with triangular pediments and pilasters in colossal order. Similar to this, the manor house in Kuusiku (*Saage*) had central attics built into both the front and rear façades. In addition to new manor houses (for example Uue-Varbla or *Neu-Werpel*), attics were often built into other wooden residences for modernisation purposes: according to Heinz Pirang, who compiled *Das baltische Herrenhaus*, the first of its kind was the wooden dwelling in Audru (*Audern*), which was remodelled around the year 1800.²¹

Wooden manor houses erected in the first decades of the 19th century were similar to previously built architectural forms, although the high roofs were slowly starting to be replaced with lower ones, testifying to the increasing influence of Neoclassicism. This also

21 Pirang, *Das baltische Herrenhaus. Die älteste Zeit bis um 1750*, 48.



FIG. 5. WOODEN RESIDENCE IN KUIGATSI, BUILT IN THE LATE 1770s. PHOTO: OLGA PARIS, 1940; ART HISTORICAL PHOTO COLLECTION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TARTU.

meant the introduction of the saddle roof, which made the overall appearance of the buildings a lot more horizontal. Main entrances were often placed on the side façades, moving all other rooms to the front façade of the residence. Double-sided doors took up Neoclassical elements, which meant the introduction of rosettes, small columns or fluted slabs; boards were replaced with horizontal slabs to create an overall smoother surface to the façade. Similarly, previously used windows with small window frames were replaced with bigger ones, allowing more light into the interiors. The corners of the buildings were covered with tiny wooden slabs that resembled rustication, yet all other decorative elements were generally excluded: the only exception was the dentil cornice, which was used to enliven the space under the roof. On rare occasions, small pediments were added to the surface of the façade.

However, the most important architectural element of the first half of the 19th century was the portico, which gave wooden manor houses a 'fragility, zestfulness and a summery nature'.²² Lightness also resulted from the disappearance of the mantle chimneys, which

22 Dr. Bertram, *Baltische Skizzen oder fünfzig Jahre zurück*, 77.



FIG. 6. MANOR HOUSE IN KUUSIKU. PHOTO: ARNO JAKOBSON, 1930s. PHOTO ARCHIVE OF THE ESTONIAN AGRICULTURAL MUSEUM.



FIG. 7. NOBLE WOODEN RESIDENCE IN UUE-VARBLA, BUILT IN THE LATE 1790s. PHOTO: ELIS PÄRN, 2022.



FIG. 8. PORTICO OF EINMANNI (KORPS) MANOR HOUSE. PHOTO: ELIS PÄRN, 2020.



FIG. 9. NOBLE WOODEN RESIDENCE IN KOKORA (*KOCKORA*) CAN BE CONSIDERED ONE OF THE MOST HARMONIOUS EXAMPLES OF NEOCLASSICAL WOODEN MANOR HOUSES IN ESTONIA. TODAY, ONLY HALF OF THE BUILDING IS REMAINING. PHOTO: BARON FRIEDRICH VON WOLFF-LETTIN, 1922; ART HISTORICAL PHOTO COLLECTION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TARTU.

were replaced by simple ovens, which were put in all living spaces. This change was mainly seen in the addition of several chimneys on the ridge of the roof. As in previous decades, most manor houses of this period were simple one-story dwellings, although on some rare occasions there were buildings with partially built second floors. One of these examples was the manor house in Türsamäe (*Türsel*), which had a portico with columns in colossal order. This was followed by the noble residence in Penijõe (*Penijõgi*), which was originally a stone building on which a second wooden floor was added in the 1830s. The only two-story wooden residence at this time was built in Jootme (*Jotma*) and can be dated to the second half of the 19th century.

Although most Neoclassical wooden manor houses were compact medium-sized buildings, the manor house in Sõtke (*Sõtkeüll*) had *corps-de-logi* in the front façade with a central pediment, which emphasized the four pilasters in the middle of the façade. Similar to this was the wooden residence in Tilsit (*Tilsit*), although this had been rebuilt from an earlier dwelling and showed similar architectural forms on both



FIG. 10. REAR FAÇADE OF PAGARI MANOR HOUSE. PHOTO: GUSTAV MÜNTER, 1909; PHOTO COLLECTION OF ESTONIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM.

sides of the building. In addition, it had stepped pediments, which were not widely used in Estonian wooden manorial architecture. The last decades of the first half of the 19th century favoured the previously used building type with a central attic, which had lost the heaviness from the high half-hipped roof that was characteristic of the wooden residences erected a few decades earlier. The latest example of this was erected in Pagari (*Paggar*) in the late 1870s which, following the ideas of Neoclassicism, had an unusually large number of pilasters and cornices on the surface of the façade.

LOCAL MEN AND FOREIGN CRAFTSMEN

Just as there were changes in the political sphere in the Baltics, the beginning of the 18th century marked changes in the social sphere. In the first years after Estonia's capitulation in the Great Northern War, many new craftsmen and artisans arrived in local towns and found employment in places where nobility had a greater demand for the

art of construction. Although archival sources refer to German men, the number of Russian workers in local manors at the time seems to have been much higher than previously recorded in manorial history writing.²³ However, in most places, wooden architecture was still dependent on inherited knowledge and woodworking skills that had been passed on from father to son for centuries. Occasionally foreign men were employed in places that had not been donated to the nobility by the Russian rulers, fulfilling the need for greater expertise.²⁴ Judging from the architectural appearance of the buildings erected in the first half of the 18th century, this must have been connected to windowpanes, tiled stoves and other elements of interiors.²⁵

The proportion of skilled foreign workers in the Baltic region increased significantly in the second half of the 18th century. Compared with the first decades of the century, the number of German craftsmen grew even more rapidly, partially caused by the Seven Year War (1756–1763), which forced artisans to find other places of employment.²⁶ According to Jüri Linnus, most Russians at the time were employed as brickmakers and construction carpenters (*Zimmermann* or *плотник* in Russian), whereas Germans usually worked as masons (*Maurer*), carpenters (*Tischler*) and building masters (*Baumeister*).²⁷

Although the opening of the Russian market in the second half of the 18th century increased the income of many manorial estates, most of the Baltic manors were still strongly dependent on feudalistic relationships and many local artisans and peasants from nearby villages, who helped them to save money on foreign handicraftsmen, who had often scared the building contractors away 'with their wage and catering requirements'.²⁸ Since the artisans related to the

23 For instance, the families of two Russian carpenters and their families are listed in the manor in Albu (*Alp*). The men not only worked on the manor house but completed other building projects in the manorial ensemble. Ants Hein, 'Albu. Lisandeid ühe 18. sajandi mõisamaja portreele', *Kunst*, 1 (2004), 82–89; 83. In addition, a Russian carpenter Timmofoe Dimitro worked in Räpina (*Rappin*) for 15 years. Jüri Linnus, *Maakäsitöölised Eestis 18. sajandil ja 19. sajandi alguses* (Tallinn: Valgus, 1975), 97–98.

24 Ants Viires, *Eesti rahvapärane puutööndus. Ajalooline ülevaade* (Tallinn: Ilo, 2006), 205.

25 Linnus, *Maakäsitöölised Eestis 18. sajandil ja 19. sajandi alguses*, 20.

26 Juhan Maiste, *Refuugium. Kodu Toomi varjus. Aadlipaleed Kiriku 2 ja 4. Toompea sajandeis* (Tallinn: Riigikontroll, 2018), 113.

27 Linnus, *Maakäsitöölised Eestis 18. sajandil ja 19. sajandi alguses*, 92–98.

28 Friebe, 'Haben die Gründe, welche den hölzernen Gebäuden in unseren nordischen Gegenden noch immer die meisten Liebhaber verschaffen ein hinnlängliches Gewicht?', 328. In the words of August Wilhelm Hupel, German craftsmen were paid five times more than they were in Saxony. August Wilhelm Hupel, *Topographische Nachrichten von Lief- und Ehtland. Band 2* (Riga: Johann Friedrich Hartknoch, 1777), 6.

construction work usually worked in small groups and stayed in the countryside during the summer months when the building process took place, it left only a little time for the local men to learn new technical skills. Carpenters who were employed in one in ten estates in the late 18th century created a more fertile ground for learning new woodworking skills as these were easy to learn through close contact.

However, in the 1780s and 1790s an enslaved Estonian called Mart listed as a building master in Kuusiku, was probably responsible for the construction works undertaken. Since the manor house itself is an extraordinary example of late 18th century early Neoclassical architecture, the builder must have learned his profession under some talented craftsman. In the words of Linnus, Estonians were often sent to St Petersburg at the expense of the landlord²⁹, yet how common that venture was is still difficult to know due to the lack of further research on the topic. Thus, it seems much more likely that new construction skills were mostly learned in other manor estates where more foreign men were employed or set up factories or crafts workshops. For example, in Kõrgessaare (*Hohenholm*) it was not only possible to learn pottery or the carpenter's trade, but also 'do all kinds of blacksmith jobs for carriages, carts and horse equipment'.³⁰

THE BALTIC-GERMAN LANDLORD AS AN ARCHITECT

In the 18th and first half of the 19th century, the most important men in the construction process were building masters and masons, who not only drew up the ground plans but were also often involved in the construction process, laying foundations and building chimneys, roofing the dwellings and installing staircases.³¹ Since the terms were used interchangeably, it is possible that 'construction carpenter' referred to a craftsman doing something similar, although the latter was sometimes also used to mark other woodworkers who were not involved in construction.³² Based on the considerably small amount

29 Linnus, *Maakäsitöölised 18. sajandil ja 19. sajandi alguses*, 183.

30 *Revalische Wöchentliche Nachrichten*, 4 (27th January 1785). Juhan Maiste, 'Hiiu-Suuremõisa and Kolga. Two Manor Ensembles of the De la Gardie and Stenbock Families in the Mirror of the 17th–18th Century Noble Culture', *Baltic Journal of Art History*, 22 (2021), 71–141, 119.

31 Niina Raid, *Tartu ehitusmeistrid 17. sajandist 19. sajandi keskpaigani* (Tallinn: Tartu Riiklik Ülikool, 1987), 10.

32 For example, a 'Zimmerman' called Tarto Hans was creating and fixing wooden dishes in Ravila (*Meks*) in the 1730s. Linnus, *Maakäsitöölised 18. sajandil ja 19. sajandi alguses*, 171.

of information gathered on wooden manorial architecture in Estonia so far, it is still possible to shed some light on the men employed. For example, it is known that a German named Johann Georg Keiser was working as a building master in Räpina (*Rappin*) in the 1720s.³³ Several decades later when building activity resumed in other places, the number of men leading the construction work increased, of which only a few are known today: Johann Paul Dürschmidt, the master of Dom Guild was working in Roela (*Ruil*), Johann Peter Gerlach in Moe (*Muddis*), Johann Gabriel Sigfried Kranhals in Karlova (*Karlowa*)³⁴, a Russian construction carpenter named Michail Firson found himself a workplace in Perila (*Pergel*)³⁵ and a Frenchman called Fanquet (or Tanguet) was employed in Raadi (*Ratshof*) in the 1780s.³⁶

Although the number of professionals may increase with further research, the relationship between masons, building masters, and construction carpenters during this period in Europe was often like a patron and a servant, rather than a professional and a customer,³⁷ which is why it is possible that in many cases the landowners sketched the plans for their wooden residences themselves.³⁸ According to local pastor August Wilhelm Hupel (1737–1819), there were men among the nobility here ‘... who, devoting themselves to the beautiful art of architecture, had tried to delve carefully into its rules. The buildings they erected, or at least the drawings they have for themselves and others, acknowledge both their subtle taste and their great expertise.’³⁹ By writing this, Hupel may have only had the men who were true patrons of the arts whom he knew in mind, yet the architectural self-activity must have been more widespread.

33 MKA, ERA.T-76.1.2082, Elsbet Parek, *Räpina mõisa ajalooline õiend* (Tallinn, 1975), 11.

34 Ants Hein, *Eestimaa mõisaarhitektuur: historitsismist juugendini* (Tallinn: Hattorpe, 2003), 32.

35 Linnus, *Maakäsitöölised Eestis 18. sajandil ja 19. sajandi alguses*, 97.

36 Juhan Maiste, ‘Mõisaarhitektuur valgustusajastu valguses’, *Eesti kunsti ajalugu*, 3. 1770–1840 (Tallinn: Eesti Kunstiakadeemia, 2017), 15–51, 36.

37 Howard Montagu Colvin, *Essays in English Architectural History* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1999), 273.

38 Although, if the landowner was the author of the architectural design, the final input may have still come from the craftsmen working in towns, who ensured that the sites were suitable for building and the wooden dwellings remained stable. This is of course difficult to prove, since the men working more continuously in the cities were recorded in the guild masters’, not the manorial documents. Linnus, *Maakäsitöölised Eestis 18. sajandil ja 19. sajandi algul*, 28.

39 August Wilhelm Hupel, ‘Der in Lief- und Ehistland zunehmende gute Geschmack’, *Nordische Miscellaneen*, 14 (1787), 489–502; 497–498.

Since the so-called Swedish time, most of the noblemen in the Baltics and other places in Europe were employed in the army, which meant that they had received a proper education that included the study of fortifications. After retiring from service, their architectural knowledge and skills could easily have been used in civil engineering.⁴⁰ In addition, architectural interest in the 18th and early 19th centuries was strengthened by Freemasonry, which had grown out of the old masonry tradition, turning architecture and gardening into important hobbies for the nobility. A morally enlightened member of the lodge was not only interested in growing spiritually, but also in creating a living environment that corresponded to his spiritual and philosophical beliefs.⁴¹

ARCHITECTURAL HANDBOOKS FROM THE 18TH AND EARLY 19TH CENTURIES

The architectural activity was made easier by tractates or handbooks that were either bought from travel or local bookshops that were revived in the Baltics in the last quarter of the 18th century.⁴² A lot of the time architectural literature arrived here from German university towns, where the young people were sent to study.⁴³ Buying books from the cities where they were printed was much cheaper than buying them in regions where an extra duty was levied on foreign goods.⁴⁴ In addition, there was also the opportunity to borrow literature from acquaintances, friends, local reading clubs or Freemasonic lodges, which must have had architectural literature in their libraries.

40 One of the noteworthy examples of this are the Stael-Holstein brothers, Jacob and Johann, who created several designs for manor houses in Estonia. Although Ants Hein has touched upon this topic in many of his articles, the latest additions are made by Juhan Maiste in his book *Anija mõisa ajalugu. Aadel ja talupoeg* (Anija: SA Anija Mõisa Haldus, 2020).

41 Epi Tohvri, ‘Vabamüürlike ideede avaldumisest Eesti arhitektuurikultuuris 18. sajandi lõpus – 19. sajandi alguses’, *Kunstiteaduslikke uurimusi*, 1-2 (2008), 56–83, 56, 59.

42 Indrek Jürjo, ‘The Book Trade in Tallinn During the Century of Enlightenment’, *Tuna, [Past. Special Issue on the History of Estonia]* (2009), 82–103, 86–90.

43 For example, it is known that Arend Dietrich von Pahlen, the landlord of Palmse (*Palms*), had bought Nikolaus Goldmann’s *Vollständige Anweisung zu der Civil-Bau-Kunst* from Halle, where he studied. Ants Hein, *Palms* (Tallinn: Hattorpe, 1996), 49–50.

44 Arvo Tering, ‘Baltimaadest pärit üliõpilaste rahalised väljaminekud Saksa ülikoolides 18. sajandi teisel poolel’, *Muinasaja loojangust omariikluse läveni. Pühendusteos Sulev Vahtre 75. sünnipäevaks*, ed. by Andres Andresen (Tartu: Kleio, 2001), 291–339, 314.

Although it is difficult to give an overview of all the handbooks that may have reached the hands of the nobility at the time, some conclusions can be drawn from the editions held in various Estonian libraries and archives today:

Nikolaus Goldmann's *Vollständige Anweisung zu der Civil-Bau-Kunst: in welcher nicht nur die 5 Ordnungen samt den dazu gehörigen Fenster-Gesimsen* (1699) and its several later editions;

Jaques Francois Blondel's *Cours d'architecture ou traite de la Décoration, Distribution & Construction des bâtiments* (1771–1777) ;

Nicolas Le Camus de Mezieres' *Traite de la force des bois: Ouvrage essentiel, qui donne les moyens de procurer plus de solidité aux édifices* (1782) ;

Friedrich Christian Schmidt's *Der bürgerliche Baumeister oder Versuch eines Unterrichts für Baulustige* (1790–1799);

Christian Ludwig Stieglitz's *Encyklopädie der bürgerlichen Baukunst, in welcher alle Fächer dieser Kunst nach alphabetischer Ordnung abgehandelt sind: ein Handbuch für Staatswirthe, Baumeister und Landwirthe* (1792–1798);

David Gilly's *Handbuch der Land-Bau-Kunst, vorzüglich in Rücksicht auf die Construction der Wohn- und Wirthschafts-Gebäude für angehende Cameral-Baumeister und Oeconomen* (1797–1811);

Christian Ludwig Stieglitz's *Zeichnungen aus der schönen Baukunst oder Darstellung idealischer und ausgeführter Gebäude mit ihren Grund- und Aufrissen: mit nöthigen Erklärungen und einer Abhandlung über die Schönheit in der Baukunst beleitet* (1798);

Lorenz J. D. Suckow's *Erste Gründe der bürgerlichen Baukunst* (1798);

Johann G. Klinsky's *Geschmackvolle Darstellung zur Verschönerung der Gärten und öffentlichen Plätze; enthaltend auf XXXV-Plätten eine Sammlung in Kupfer gestochener Gebäude, Tempel, Denkmäler, Brücken, Wegweiser, Wasserfälle* (1799);

Friedrich Meinert's *Der Landwirtschaftliche Baumeister, oder die unentbehrlichsten Kenntnisse der Landbaukunst: Ein Taschenbuch für Gutsbesitzer, Pächter und andere Landwirthe* (1802);

Jean Nicolaus Louis Durand's *Preis des leçons d'architecture donnée a l'école Polytechnique* (1802–1805);

Heinrich Carl Riedel's *Sammlung architektonischer äußerer und innerer Verzierungen für angehende Baumeister und Liebhaber der Baukunst* (1803–1806);

Francesco Milizia's *Grundsätze der bürgerlichen Baukunst* (1824);

Ferdinand Wilhelm Holz's *Die Landbaukunst: eine Sammlung von ökonomischen und überhaupt allen ländlichen Wohn- und Wirtschaftsgebäuden in Grund- und Aufrissen, Profilen und Perspektive in Anschluss an die Gillysche Landbaukunst* (1847).

As an analysis of the above-mentioned handbooks and tractates is beyond the scope of this article, only the three most widely used authors – Nikolaus Goldmann, Friedrich Christian Schmidt, and David Gilly – and their works will be described in more detail.⁴⁵

HANDBOOKS OF NIKOLAUS GOLDMANN AND LEONHARD CHRISTOPH STURM

Nikolaus Goldmann (1611–1665) was born in Wroclaw but spent most of his life in a Dutch university town in Leiden, not only teaching his students law and mathematics but also military architecture and architectural theory, which had interested him for a long period.⁴⁶ The mathematics professor himself did not practice as an architect, since in his view no theoretician associated himself with the actual construction process.⁴⁷ At the end of his life, he was planning to compile a comprehensive study from his lecture notes, but passed away before he had the chance to act on this idea. Luckily, thirty years later his manuscripts were taken up by Leonhard Christoph Sturm (1669–1719), who published them as an illustrated work. Since his notes were read in many different regions, the tractate immediately gained a positive reception, which meant the compilation of several new editions soon after.⁴⁸

45 Friedrich Christian Schmidt's *Der bürgerliche Baumeister* and David Gilly's *Handbuch der Land-Bau-Kunst* were even used by Johann Wilhelm Krause in the building of the university ensemble in Tartu at the beginning of the 19th century. See more: Juhan Maiste, 'Johann Wilhelm Krause ja ajastu arhitektuuripilt', *Tuldud teed tagasi* (Tallinn: Eesti Kunstiakadeemia, 2002), 466–501. According to Imants Lancmanis, Gilly's handbook was also recommended to governor-general Filippo Paulucci to help him with the modernisation of peasant houses at the beginning of the 19th century. Imants Lancmanis, 'V. Architecture. 1780–1840', *Art History of Latvia. III. 1780–1890* (Rīga: Institute of Art History of the Latvian Academy of Art; Art History Research Support Foundation, 2019), 159–332, 257.

46 Jeroen Goudeau, 'A Northern Scamozzi: Nicolaus Goldmann and the Universal Theory of Architecture', *Annali di architettura*, 18-19 (2006/2007), 235–248, 236.

47 Goldmann also had an impressive library with many architectural handbooks and tractates. Jürgen Zimmer, 'Nicolaus Goldmann and Leonhard Christoph Sturm', *Architectura Theory: From the Renaissance to the Present. 89 Essays on 177 Treatises* (Köln: Taschen, 2003), 550–559, 550.

48 Jacob Stael von Holstein had Goldmann's manuscript *La nouvelle Fortification* (1645) and *Elementorum Architecturae militaris libri IV* (1643) in his collection. See more Ants Hein, 'Jacob Stael von Holstein and the Development of Palladianism in Estonian Architecture in the 17th Century', *Sten Karling and Baltic Art History* (Tallinn: Teaduste Akadeemia Kirjastus, 1999), 103–124, 107.

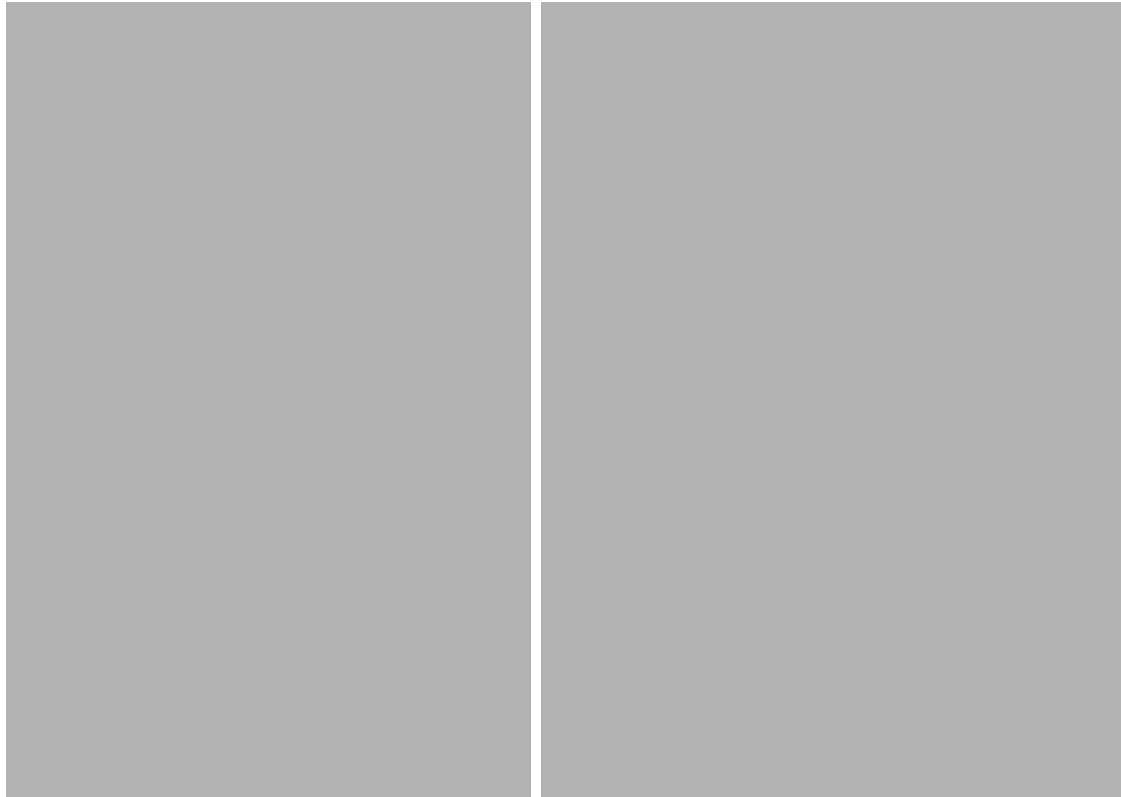


FIG. 11A, 11B. DESIGNS FOR LARGE WINDOWS AND A PRINCELY PALACE IN NIKOLAUS GOLDMANN'S *CIVIL-BAU-KUNST*. DIGITAL COPY FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF HEIDELBERG.

Publishing Nikolaus Goldmann's manuscript was of great significance in the German-speaking regions, since he was the first person north of the Alps to give an overview of all the different building types in architectural history. In addition, he refined the proportions of the classical system of orders and gave explanations for several terms and words, which he translated into five different languages.⁴⁹ Most of his architectural designs were meant for grand palaces and dwellings in the city, but he also wrote about churches, universities, hospitals, gates, bridges, arsenals, markets, and town

49 Hanno-Walther Kruft, *A History of Architectural Theory from Vitruvius to the Present* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2007), 177.

halls. However, under the editorial work of Sturm, Goldmann's theory was slowly abandoning its original ideas and starting to carry the architectural influences of the late 17th and early decades of the 18th century, which made it difficult for the readers to distinguish his original ideas.⁵⁰

As may be understood, Goldmann's architectural designs depended on social hierarchy, which meant there was a building type and a decorative style for each status as per classical order. Although most of his plans included columns or pilasters, he recommended using other decorative elements for smaller buildings.⁵¹ The stone or wooden dwelling itself had to follow the form of a cube or rectangle and had to be covered with a hipped or mansard roof with skylight windows: '... beautiful skylight windows can add a lot of beauty to a building, especially when high roofs are built; and we have to learn something like that from the French and Dutch, because the Italians, with their low roofs and forms, do not need them'.⁵² In addition, Sturm recommended adding a triangular pediment to large multi-story buildings, which had to be avoided if the result was disproportionate.⁵³

In Nikolaus Goldmann's eyes, architecture was defined by the same keywords of strength, utility, and beauty, which had defined architectural theories since the rediscovery of Vitruvius' *De architectura*. To Goldmann, utility was tied to functionality which, in terms of the overall impression of the building mainly meant that the main door had to be built in the middle of the façade and be surrounded by identical windows. In addition, the building had to have side entrances for the servants and all the rooms were meant to follow the enfilade.⁵⁴

50 Goudeau, 'A Northern Scamozzi: Nicolaus Goldmann and the Universal Theory of Architecture', 237–238.

51 Krista Kodres, *Esitledes iseend: tallinlane ja tema elamu varauusajal* (Tallinn: Tallinna Ülikooli Kirjastus, 2014), 76–78. Sturm also introduced a 'German order' in the later editions, which was a mixture of Ionic and Doric elements. Kruft, *A History of Architectural Theory from Vitruvius to the Present*, 178.

52 Leonhard Christoph Sturm, *Erste Ausübung der vortrefflichen und vollständigen Anweisung zu der Civil-Bau-Kunst Nicolai Goldmanns* (Braunschweig: Heinrich Kesslern, 1699), 40.

53 Ibid., 190.

54 Nicolaus Goldmann, *Vollständige Anweisung Zu der Civil-Bau-Kunst: In welcher nicht nur die fünf Ordnunge, samt den dazu gehörigen Fenster-Gesimsen, Kämpfern, Geländer-Dokken, und Bilderstühlen. Auf eine neue und sonderbare leichte Art aufzureis*, hrsg. von Leonhard Christoph Sturm (Braunschweig: Heinrich Kesslern, 1699), 1, 25–27.

FRIEDRICH CHRISTIAN SCHMIDT AND HIS *DER BÜRGERLICHE BAUMEISTER*

Just like Goldmann, Friedrich Christian Schmidt (1755–1830) was a man who was interested in many topics. In his youth, he had studied philosophy and law at the University of Leipzig, but after taking some time off to focus on his health, he continued to study in Jena, increasing his desire for knowledge with additional classes in mathematics, physics, and natural sciences.⁵⁵ Since he was taught drawing and geometry by his father at a very young age, it was only logical that he would return to the art of architecture at some point in his adult life.⁵⁶ Although his handbook *Der bürgerliche Baumeister oder Versuch eines Unterrichts für Baulustige* was left unfinished, the published parts immediately received positive feedback and were widely used.⁵⁷

Compared to the numerous handbooks that were given out by Sturm, Friedrich Christian Schmidt made it his mission to write a single comprehensive book that would give a person interested in architecture detailed answers to any question. For the same reason, he made it his task to illustrate his treatise with hundreds of copper engravings, which made his architectural guide one of the most lavish manuscripts of the era.⁵⁸ The author mainly presented ideas for the dwellings of the bourgeoisie, but also had numerous designs for interior decorations, furniture and ovens. Manor houses, which had previously received little to no attention in 18th-century German architectural treatises, were analysed in the second volume of his handbook. In addition, he included several plans for English-style gardens, including furniture, pavilions, monuments, and garden

55 In 1779, he published his study *Historisch-mineralogische Beschreibung der Gegend um Jena*, in which he described how the region got its shape and form. After his father's death, he started collecting mussels, which were later bought by Duke Ernst I. From 1821, Schmidt was the member of several research societies in the region. See more in Antje Schumann's 'Friedrich Christian Schmidt', *German biography*. Visited at <https://www.deutsche-biographie.de/gnd11750467X.html?utm> [accessed 15/12/2022].

56 Ibid.

57 Klaus Jan Philipp, *Um 1800: Architekturtheorie und Architekturkritik in Deutschland zwischen 1790 und 1810* (London: Edition Axel Menges, 1997), 146. According to Schumann, Schmidt was compiling economic handbooks at the same time and the exhaustion kept him from finishing his architectural treatise. Schumann, 'Friedrich Christian Schmidt'.

58 Philipp, *Um 1800: Architekturtheorie und Architekturkritik in Deutschland zwischen 1790 und 1810*, 146.



FIG. 12A, 12B. ILLUSTRATIONS FOR A MULTI-STORY DWELLING AND A SMALL COUNTRY HOUSE IN THE SECOND VOLUME OF FRIEDRICH CHRISTIAN SCHMIDT'S *DER BÜRGERLICHE BAUMEISTER ODER VERSUCH EINES UNTERRICHTS FÜR BAULUSTIGE*. DIGITAL COPY FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF HEIDELBERG.

houses. In the fourth edition, he tried to provide readers with a coherent architectural vision for the building of suburbs.

Architecturally, Schmidt was very strongly influenced by Dresden and the broader Prussian cultural scene at the time, which meant that the designs in his handbook were very closely related to what is known as *Zopfstil* in German-speaking regions.⁵⁹ Most of his designs included high-hipped or mansard roofs, rusticated ground floors and small vases, urns, panels, garlands, guttae and keystones. His favourite architectural elements were however small, rounded skylight windows, which have sometimes been described as 'ox-eye' windows (*oeil-de-boeuf* in French), which he added to almost all his

59 Philipp, *Um 1800: Architekturtheorie und Architekturkritik in Deutschland zwischen 1790 und 1810*, 146.

plans, both in the more ambitious and modest solutions. Although his designs were usually compact, rectangular buildings, he often added pediments, balustrades or central attics and side wings to his buildings.

To Schmidt, the main target group of his work was the citizens of small towns, which is why he considered wood as a construction material from the very beginning. He advised people who were wealthier to build from stone, since the building material was durable and looked beautiful, but admitted that wood not only created a dry but also a healthy living environment and was much easier to repair.⁶⁰ In his eyes, all wooden buildings were meant to be covered with clay so that they would 'have a less rustic result'.⁶¹

According to Schmidt, the external beauty of the buildings both in cities and in the countryside depended on regularity, which he associated with the symmetrical distribution of building parts and good proportions of individual elements. Instead of symmetry, inner comfort was even more important, which had to be preferred to external regularity on narrow construction sites. In interior planning, he recommended building a central corridor, but also considered it important to preserve the enfilade throughout the rooms.⁶²

DAVID GILLY'S HANDBUCH DER LAND-BAU-KUNST

Compared to the other two authors, only David Gilly (1748–1808) was a practising architect who had spent most of his life working for the Prussian government. After the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648) Prussian rulers carried out settlement and land cultivation projects that reached their peak in the second half of the 18th century. Although Gilly had published other technical texts related to construction, *Handbuch der Land-Bau-Kunst* was his most popular treatise born out of the need to simplify the work of the building masters appointed

60 Friedrich Christian Schmidt, *Der bürgerliche Baumesiter, oder Versuch eines Unterrichts für Baulustige. Band 2: Welcher im 1. Abschnitt die Anlage der zwischen andern Häusern eingeschlossenen steinernen bürgerlichen Wohngebäude lehrt, und im 2. Abschnitt Pläne zu kleinern und grosse freystehenden Landhäusern liefert* (Gotha: Selbstverlag, 1794), 1–2.

61 Friedrich Christian Schmidt, *Der bürgerliche Baumeister, oder Versuch eines Unterrichts für Baulustige. Band 1: Welcher sie durch eine grosse Anzahl ganz verschiedener Pläne in den Stand setzt, die Einrichtung ihrer Wohngebäude selbst zu entwerfen, und ihnen alles lehrt, was sie vor, während und nach einem Bau zu wissen nöthig haben* (Gotha: Selbstverlag, 1790), 2, 144.

62 Ibid., 10–11, 130–131.

by the government.⁶³ According to David Gilly, men working in construction were not always familiar with the latest developments in architecture and thus it was also the landlord's or the tenant's job to keep themselves updated.⁶⁴ Compared to Goldmann, Sturm, and Schmidt, Gilly was only working with rural architecture, i.e. manor houses and the construction of distilleries, pigsties, and other farm buildings.

In Gilly's eyes, the elements of good architecture were durability (*Dauerhaftigkeit*), comfort (*Bequemlichkeit*), and beauty (*Schönheit*) of which the latter was however only meant to describe the buildings of the upper layers of society. In his handbook, he associated durability with many different aspects, but mainly explained how important properly selected materials and a solid foundation were to the life of the building. To him, comfort was closely related to symmetry, which meant that all the windows had to be equidistant from one another and the main door had to be built in the middle of the façade.⁶⁵

Of all the different ways buildings could be roofed, David Gilly preferred hipped and half-hipped roofs, which he thought were best for climatic reasons. Thus, he did not recommend building them too low but suggested the form be 1/3 of the building's overall height so that they would not get crushed under the heavy snow. Compared to Goldmann, Sturm, and Schmidt, the Prussian architect was not very fond of mansard roofs, which is why he saw a *mezzanine* as a solution for those who required more space. His favourite architectural elements were the skylight windows that resembled the eyes of bats (*Fledermausdächfenstern*), which he recommended adding to all the buildings in the manor ensemble.⁶⁶

63 One of these examples was *Sammlung nützlicher Aufsätze und Nachrichten die Baukunst betreffend* (1797–1806), which was the first periodically published magazine in Prussia. The magazine was given out with other authors, who had studied in *Berliner Bauakademie*. Michael Lissok, 'Progressivaim ja tehnika. Im Geiste des Fortschritts und der Technik', *Johann Wilhelm Krause 1757–1828. Kataloog 2: Arhitektina Liivimaal* (Tallinn: Eesti Keele Sihtasutus, 2002), 335–384, 343, 353.

64 David Gilly, *Handbuch der Land-Bau-Kunst, vorzüglich in Rücksicht auf die Construction der Wohn- und Wirthschafts-Gebäude für angehende Cameral-Baumeister und Oeconomen. Erster Theil* (Berlin: Friedrich Vieweg d. Ä., 1797), 2.

65 Ibid., 1, 8–9.

66 David Gilly, *Handbuch der Land-Bau-Kunst, vorzüglich in Rücksicht auf die Construction der Wohn- und Wirthschafts-Gebäude für angehende Cameral-Baumeister und Oeconomen. Zweiter Theil* (Berlin: Friedrich Vieweg d. Ä., 1798), 49, 50, 65, 78–80.

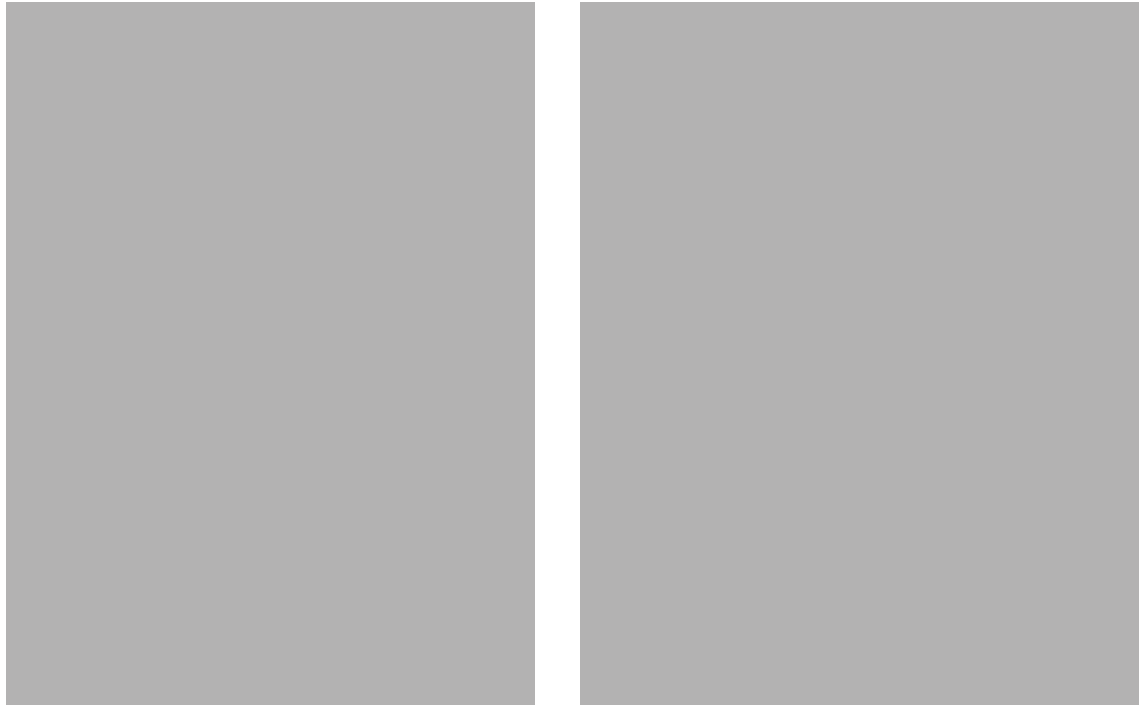


FIG. 13A, 13B. BUILDING INSTRUCTIONS FOR SMALL SKYLIGHT WINDOWS AND PEDIMENTS IN DAVID GILLY'S *HANDBUCH DER LAND-BAU-KUNST*. DIGITAL COPY FROM UNIVERSITY OF TARTU LIBRARY.

Since the keywords in the Prussian land cultivation project were beauty and utility (*schön und nützlich*), Gilly's architectural guidebook introduced several new construction techniques that were not only meant to reduce building costs but also cut the construction time in half. One of these techniques was 'rammed earth' or '*pisé*', which meant compacting a damp mixture of soil into a frame or a mould.⁶⁷ As Schmidt also found, David Gilly thought that natural materials were not suitable for display and needed to be plastered. However, the plastered surface of the building was supposed to stay quite simple: cornices or tiny pediments could be used as the only new

67 The technique was first introduced in 18th-century architectural books by Guillaume-Marie Delorme in 1745 and David Gilly took the idea up from Francois Cointereaux. Louis Cellauo, Gilbert Richaud, 'Thomas Jefferson and Francois Cointereaux, Professor of Rural Architecture in Revolutionary Paris', *Architectural History*, 48 (2005), 173–206, 173–174.

decorative elements. If the landowner wanted to build a family house with a central gable, he had to give up on the smaller ones that were meant to be used above the windows.⁶⁸

Although Gilly spends a considerable proportion of his handbook explaining how to build from natural stone and clay, he accepted wood as a widely used building material. In the case of wooden dwellings, some things had to be kept in mind: for example, it was necessary to choose a roofing material that would not crush the walls and to build a foundation of at least one and a half feet above the ground. Similarly, he suggested building partition walls to allow the weight of the roof to be distributed more evenly.⁶⁹

THE INFLUENCE OF ARCHITECTURAL LITERATURE

A comparison of the ideas of Goldmann, Sturm, Schmidt and Gilly on wooden residences shows that many principles found their expression in local manorial architecture, starting from those related to the distribution of proportions and ending with the materials that the authors recommended as roof coverings.⁷⁰ However, the question remains: how widely were the handbooks used as architectural models, by professional masons, building masters, construction carpenters, and self-taught landowners? Answering this question is not simple, especially since 'the book technique' usually meant combining several ideas into one that was later modified by the workers who were employed in the building process.

While the influences are tangible and need to be further analysed, it is possible that modern architectural ideas did not always come directly from written sources. Friedrich Christian Schmidt stated in the first edition of his handbook that '... because the size of the room is not bound by any regulations, but must be determined entirely according to the intentions of the builder (*Bauherrn*), it is very good for the builder to look around carefully in other houses beforehand and note all the rooms that are available for his convenience and

68 Gilly, *Handbuch der Land-Bau-Kunst. Erster Theil*, 267–268.

69 *Ibid.*, 8–9, 248.

70 The only recommendation that seems to have been discarded was the requirement to cover the façade with clay. As far as it is known, wooden manor houses in Estonia were not covered with clay at that time.

appear to be the right size and have them measured so that he can tell the master builder.⁷¹

How much of the measuring was put to practice is difficult to answer, yet everything that could have been seen on travels, cities or neighbouring estates surely must have worked as an inspiration. Therefore, the influence of German architectural handbooks in the building of wooden manor houses could have been more indirect and depended on the general stylistic and technical changes of the period.

LOCAL MODIFICATIONS: HUPEL'S OEKONOMISCHES HANDBUCH

A much more accessible treatise for many noblemen may have been the *Oekonomisches Handbuch für Lief- und Ehstländische Gutsherren, wie auch für deren Disponenten*, which was published by August Wilhelm Hupel in 1796. Although the book mainly shared tips for cultivation and farming, it also included a chapter that was focused on the buildings in the manor ensemble.⁷² As an enlightened pastor who founded a reading club in Estonia in his parsonage in the 1770s, Hupel must have been well acquainted with the architectural trends of the time.⁷³ The list of the books he had in his library has been destroyed, but it is known that *Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste* (1771–1774) by Johann Georg Sulzer (1720–1779), which was the first art-related encyclopaedic work in the German-speaking region, was represented in his enormous collection.⁷⁴

71 Schmidt, *Der bürgerliche Baumeister oder eines Unterrichts für Baulustige. Band 1*, 20.

72 The question remains, whether Hupel's ideas were all his own. When comparing the ideas presented in his economic handbook to the previously mentioned article 'Haben die Gründe ...?' written by Wilhelm Christian Friebe, similarities appear. Compared to Hupel, Friebe was certainly more familiar with issues related to construction, as Livonian Public and Economic Society started sharing tips on building techniques in its publications at the start of the 19th century. Epi Tohvri, 'Eesti puitasumite kujunemisest ja elamutüüpidest', *Eestimaa puitarhitektuur: Estonian Museum of Architecture's exhibition catalogue*, ed. by Karin Hallas (Tallinn: Eesti Arhitektuurimuuseum, 1999), 73–112, 75.

73 Indrek Jürjo, *Liivimaa valgustaja August Wilhelm Hupel. 1737–1819* (Tallinn: Riigiarhiiv, 2004), 120–121.

74 Hupel also collected coins and copper prints of scholars. One year before he died, he demanded his manuscripts be burnt, his books distributed to schools and everything else sold. *Ibid.*, 84, 100, 113, 131.

Based on the idea of improvement, which was one of the most central themes of the era, Hupel did not come up with any new architectural ideas but carried on with the local traditions that favoured the traditional old-Baltic house type with high-hipped roofs. Most of his recommendations were related to introducing landowners to new building materials and techniques, which were meant to increase the dwellings' durability. Thus, he suggested replacing roofs covered with thatch, with shingles and stone tiles, which were supposed to help the building better withstand the climatic conditions. Of all the building materials, Hupel recommended using brick and stone, because they allowed the landlord to build a more beautiful, as well as more durable house that could have been passed down to children and grandchildren.⁷⁵

Although the pastor did agree that it took less time to erect timber dwellings, he did not suggest using the material due to its flammability and propensity to rot. However, if one was to erect a wooden manor house, one needed to make sure that the woodworkers put a large amount of moss between the beams and placed them on a foundation high enough above the ground. Just as in the architectural handbooks that Hupel must have read, wooden surfaces were in his eyes also meant to be covered with clay so that they would not only look better but also retain more heat in the buildings.⁷⁶

When comparing Hupel's recommendations with wooden manorial architecture at the time the book was published, it seems the ideas he was advocating were already in practice, which makes us ask for whom were the recommendations intended? As the intensified economic activity of the 18th century required the use of new farmland, new support manors and farms (*Beigut* and *Hoflage*) emerged and needed buildings to store agricultural production.⁷⁷ Therefore, it is possible that his ideas were put to practice in places, where the landlord himself did not actively live. However, the book could have been in many landlords' libraries: the author's other publications,

75 August Wilhelm Hupel, *Oekonomisches Handbuch für Lief- und Ehstländische Gutsherren, wie auch für deren Disponenten; darinn zugleich Ergänzungen zu Fischers Landwirtschaftsbuche geliefert, auch für auswärtige Liebhaber die Liefländischen Verfahrungsarten hinlänglich dargestellt werden* (Riga: J. F. Hartknoch, 1796), 203, 205–208.

76 *Ibid.*, 196–198.

77 Tiit Rosenberg, 'Mõisate arv ja liigid XIII sajandist XX sajandi alguseni', *Eesti mõisad*, ed. by Tiit Oja (Tallinn: Olion, 1994), 7–55, 28.

and especially his *Topographische Nachrichten von Lief- und Ehstland* (1774–1789), which introduced the Baltic life to foreign and local inhabitants, were extremely popular at the time.⁷⁸

STANDARDISED MODEL FAÇADE PROJECTS IN THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE

Continuing with the idea of local architectural influences, it has often been thought that the standardized model façade projects (*образцовые фасады* in Russian) created under the rule of Alexander the I influenced Baltic manorial architecture in the first decades of the 19th century.⁷⁹ The idea of creating a collection of similar forms to modernise the overall outlook of the empire's cities was not new but already followed during the reign of Peter and Catherine the Great in the 18th century. However, the architectural designs created under Alexander I were made obligatory for all buildings, including privately held dwellings, and took inspiration from Claude Nicolas Ledoux's (1736–1806) treatise *L'Architecture Consideree sous le Rapport de l'Art des Moeurs et de la Legislation* (1804), which meant that the models did not depend on the owner's social position and were compiled in random order. To implement this construction utopia, a team of architects including Scotsman William Hastie, Russian Vassily Stasov and a Swiss named Luigi Rusca compiled five catalogues full of designs, which were characterised by the symmetrical distribution of windows, a central *avant-corps* or portico, dentil cornices, rustication and keystones.⁸⁰

Although there are some similarities, it is unlikely that the model projects were used as architectural examples for manor houses in the countryside, where the noblemen were free of obligations and had the freedom to build as they liked. The model projects were met with

78 Jürjo, *Liivimaa valgustaja August Wilhelm Hupel. 1737–1819*, 167–168.

79 This was first proposed by Heinz Pirang and later by Epi Tohvri, who analysed the model projects' influence on building activity in Tartu. See more in her PhD thesis *Valgustusideede mõju Tartu arhitektuurile 19. sajandi alguses* (Tartu: Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus, 2009), 207. In 2010 this idea was also proposed by Maria Silla in her bachelor's thesis.

80 The five albums that were created even included designs for gateways, fences, walls and domestic buildings. Epi Tohvri, *Valgustusideede mõju Tartu arhitektuurile 19. sajandi alguses*, 208, 211.

great reluctance in most Estonian cities⁸¹ and the first editions were available for the general public only a decade later after they were published in 1809, which means that the only way for the influences to come from these printed examples was probably rare cases when the masons or building masters who worked in the cities were employed on construction in the countryside and continued to use the designs unconsciously. A greater likelihood may have been with the new compilations, which were made obligatory in the 1840s,⁸² but since noble residences were still following Neoclassicism and the model façades testified to the increasing influence of Revivalism, their effect on wooden manorial architecture must have been just as small.

CONCLUSION

The large percentage of wood as a building material in Baltic manorial architecture once again shows its peripheral role on the map of European art, where in the words of Wilhelm Neumann, the first professional art historian in the Baltic states, art did not resemble roses that grew in beautifully weeded flower beds, but wildflowers, that looked towards the neighbour's garden.⁸³ However, it is important to remember that the choice of wood was not itself the reason for traditionalism in building practices, rather it was the dependence on the skills of local craftsmen and the general aversion to all things drastically new. According to Theodor von Bernhardt, '...reminiscences of experiences abroad found little support and understanding. Only a few families and isolated districts could maintain a certain standard of general education and keep abreast of great European interests. Added to this was an aspirational spirit, that was not universal, and a certain level of well-being, that was also not universal'.⁸⁴ This does not mean that one should look

81 One of these exceptions is Tartu, which had been damaged by the fire in 1775 and needed new buildings to revitalise the city. According to Epi Tohvri, every third building was built according to the models of the façades. Epi Tohvri, 'Tartu linnaruum ja arhitektuur 18. sajandi lõpul ja 19. sajandi esimesel poolel valgustusajastu ideede kontekstis', *Eesti kunsti ajalugu. 3, 1770–1840* (Tallinn: Eesti Kunstiakadeemia, 2017), 238–256, 248. Juhan Maiste has stated that in Tallinn only a handful of buildings followed the obligatory designs. See more in 'Kubermangulinn Tallinn', *Eesti kunsti ajalugu. 3, 1770–1840* (Tallinn: Eesti Kunstiakadeemia, 2017), 347–390, 351.

82 Ibid.

83 Wilhelm Neumann, '700 Jahre baltischen Kunst', *Baltische Monatsschrift*, 49 (1900), 320.

84 Bernhardt, *Jugenderinnerungen*, 90.

at wooden manorial architecture in Estonia and Latvia through darkened glasses, but rather acknowledge how it has been tied to complex social relations.

Wood as a research topic of course creates new perspectives to delve deeper into the connections with Scandinavia and Germany, both with the so-called 'high culture' and local vernacular architecture, where the material also played a part in the building practices of the higher and lower strata of society. Alongside limestone, rubble and brick, wood not only suited the region's natural conditions, but also the mindset of the local people and their perception of construction as an essential element in the quality of life. For centuries, the aspiration was to create a living environment that was beautiful and aesthetically pleasing. Therefore, when talking about Baltic manorial architecture we are not only just talking about a phenomenon preserved by history, but also about scenarios for the future, which allows us to find a creative approach to many of the problems today: how to live with nature and find new resources for the future in the experience of the past. All of this was understood in architecture by previous generations centuries ago.

ELIS PÄRN: WOODEN MANOR HOUSES IN ESTONIA 1700–1850: FROM ARCHAIC TRADITIONS TO MODERN IDEAS

KEYWORDS: BALTIC-GERMAN NOBILITY; WOODEN MANOR HOUSES; ARCHITECTURAL HANDBOOKS OF THE 18TH AND EARLY 19TH CENTURIES; THE ADAPTION OF MODERN ARCHITECTURAL IDEAS; NIKOLAUS GOLDMANN; FRIEDRICH CHRISTIAN SCHMIDT; DAVID GILLY; STANDARDISED MODEL FAÇADE PROJECTS

SUMMARY

Estonian manorial architecture has been a topic of interest to architectural and art historians for the last hundred years, but hundreds of wooden manor houses, of which many still exist day,

have largely remained unnoticed. The reason for this lack of research into wooden architecture are manifold but can most easily be associated with socially complex relationships and previous research methods, resulting in the only monograph to date, Gustav Ränk's *Die älteren baltischen Herrenhöfe in Estland* (1971), which analysed wooden architecture in the 17th century, known in Estonia as the Swedish period. Since it is generally accepted that previous classifications of wooden architecture do not allow for great conclusions, the aim of this article is to give an overview of the architectural genesis of wooden manor houses during the manorial 'golden era', asking how modern ideas made their way into local architecture. In this regard, this paper also deals with architectural treatises and handbooks from the 18th and early decades of the 19th centuries and the question of the adaptation of architectural theorists' ideas to local architecture.

The genesis of Estonian wooden manorial architecture can be divided into three distinguished periods that are similar to the overall development of manorial architecture in the Baltics. Although the very first wooden noble residences built at the beginning of the 18th century were small *urbaltisch* buildings with a central chimney that resembled those built in the Swedish era, newer architectural forms more in touch with the architectural trends of the time appeared on lands that had either escaped the negative consequences of the Great Northern War and plague or had been donated by the Russian rulers. In other places, manorial architecture continued with the traditions, which began to change more strongly in the second half of the century, reflecting the landlords' greater need for representative purposes. This not only brought changes to construction techniques but also to the buildings' overall appearance: most wooden dwellings doubled in size and were decorated according to late Baroque or early Neoclassical elements. More major changes took place in the first decades of the 19th century, which gave contemporaries a chance to describe wooden dwellings as 'light and summery', testifying to changes in building traditions.

Since at this stage of research only a handful of building masters, masons and construction carpenters are known to have worked in the building of wooden manor houses, this article suggests that the landlords may also have drawn the ground plans themselves, with the help of architectural treatises and handbooks of the time. Although the architectural ideas of Nikolaus Goldmann, Friedrich Christian

Schmidt and David Gilly are tangible, it is possible that in many cases the influence was more indirect and depended on the general stylistic and technical changes of the period. This architectural conservatism can partly be explained by the fact that Baltic manors largely depended on local craftsmen and peasants from nearby villages, but also by the nobility's general aversion to all things new.

A much more accessible treatise for many noblemen at the time may have been the economic handbook written by local pastor August Wilhelm Hupel, which included some thoughts on the building process; however, since he did not introduce any new architectural ideas, but rather carried on with the local traditions, it is possible that his ideas were put to practice elsewhere, where landlords did not actively live. The same conclusion can be drawn about the standardised model façade projects, which made certain façades compulsory for cities in the Russian Empire in the early decades of the 19th century, but had very little effect on Estonian wooden manor houses.

Although this article brings clarity to many aspects of wooden manorial architecture, the most important contribution to the history of Baltic manorial architecture is bringing attention to the fact that wood as a building material was not only widespread but held a dominant role in building practice. This not only emphasises Baltic manorial architecture's peripheral role on the map of European art, but also creates new perspectives to delve deeper into the connections with Scandinavia and other countries, where the material played a part in the building practices of the higher and lower strata of society.

CV

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