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AN UNFULFILLED DREAM: THE TARTU CITY AND UNIVERSITY CHURCH DESIGNED BY JOHANN WILHELM KRAUSE

The legacy of the architect of the University of Tartu, Johann Wilhelm Krause (1757–1828), has shaped Tartu’s appearance for over 200 years. In addition to his finished buildings, many plans remained on paper. In terms of urban space, the planned large city and university church would have changed Tartu’s look in many ways.

While the restoration plans of Tartu Cathedral from the 1820s were known to earlier Krause scholars, the plans for the university church downtown were only published as a set together with an article in 2016.¹ Three of those designs, stored in the Tartu branch of the National Archives of Estonia, were known to art historian Olga Paris,² and the author of this article has discussed them in her master’s thesis³ and in the Johann Wilhelm Krause Catalogue;⁴

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1 Juhan Maiste, “Ülikooli- ja linnakirik”, *Johann Wilhelm Krause 1757–1828: Ülikool Emajõe Ateenas = Die Universität im Embach-Athen*, 4, ed. by Juhan Maiste, Anu Ormisson-Lahe (Tartu: Tartu Ülikool, 2016), 221–279. The church plans have been briefly discussed also in *Johann Wilhelm Krause 1757–1828: Tartu Ülikooli ansambel valgustusajastul = The University of Tartu Ensemble in the Age of Enlightenment* (Tartu: Tartu Ülikool, 2017).

2 Olga Paris, *Johann Wilhelm Krause* (Tartu, 1943), 89–91. Manuscript in the University of Tartu Library.

3 Anu Ormisson, *Tartu ülikooli hooneteansambel: toomkiriku rekonstrueerimine ja valgustusajastu park*, MA Thesis (Tartu: Tartu Ülikool, 2010), 74–78.

4 Anu Ormisson-Lahe, “Toomkirik. Kataloog 1803–1821”, *Johann Wilhelm Krause 1757–1828: Linnaehitajana Tartus = Als Stadtbauer in Tartu*, 3, ed. by Juhan Maiste, Anu Ormisson-Lahe (Tartu: Tartu Ülikool, 2011), 121–162.



FIG. 1. POTENTIAL LOCATION OF THE CHURCH IN TARTU (APRIL 1820). RGIA, 733-98-258, 6.

however, until recently, the planned location of the church was not known. Nonetheless, the drawings found in the Russian State Historical Archive in St Petersburg formed a whole,⁵ which is why it is possible today to give an overview of the planned church.

⁵ Materials reached the researchers thanks to Dr. Georgi Smirnov (State Institute of Art Studies, Moscow).

The different potential locations of the church have been marked on the map of the city⁶ (Fig. 1), which bears the signature of Krause's son, August Krause. The map, compiled on 16–17 April 1820, depicts the city plan of the time. The first plan, created on 22 April, includes a detailed explication where the old town, the Riga and St Petersburg suburbs, and the area belonging to Tähtvere manor have been indicated. In addition, the plan contains all significant historical buildings, incl. Tartu Cathedral, St John's Church and the hypothetical location of the Russian Church in 1030; the most important part of the plan is the four⁷ potential locations of the planned church. The first of them is on a river island, the so-called Holm of Emajõgi, opposite Stone Bridge; the second is near a market (not marked on the drawing, designed by Georg Friedrich Wilhelm Geist in 1815⁸); the third on a city green by the Uspenski Cathedral; and today's Barclay Square is marked as the fourth possibility. The possible locations of the church have been marked on the plan as striped asymmetrical squares.

Krause made several projects for the building of the new church downtown. There is a noteworthy difference in the titles: these designs are titled *Stadtkirche* or *Kleinen Stadtkirche*, while the Cathedral restoration projects drawn in autumn 1820 or later have been labelled *Univesität-Kirché*. This gives us cause to ask, did the city play a role? What is the difference between the designs for *Stadtkirche* and *Kleinen Stadtkirche* when they were drawn simultaneously? The needs of the university church are documented in the protocols of the University Council,⁹ but it is impossible to discern an agreement with the city in there. However, the university's initiative is clear, as is the fact that some projects were sent to St Petersburg for coordination, where they were rediscovered a few years ago.

Krause's first draft for a "small city church" dates from 29 May 1820 (Fig. 2).¹⁰ It is an aisleless church, whose hexagonal shape bordering

⁶ Russian State Historical Archive [RGIA], 733.98.258, 6.

⁷ The Krause Catalogue No 4 erroneously states that there had been 3 potential locations.

⁸ National Archives of Estonia [Rahvusarhiiv, RA], EAA.995.1.6855, 7.

⁹ The documentation relating to the construction of the university church is in the National Archives RA, EAA.402.5.143. *Kostenaanschlage und Briefwechsel mit dem dorpater Lebezirks dem Architekten Krause und anderen über den Ausbau dem Domkirche im Dorpat zu einer Universitätskirche und den bau eines Kazellei und Auditorien Gebäude* (1820–1837).

¹⁰ RA, EAA 2100.11.132, 20.



FIG. 2. FLOOR PLAN OF THE DOMED CHURCH (29 MAY 1820). RA, EAA.2100.11.132, 20.

on a triangle has received the attention of earlier researchers. Olga Paris notes that the design of the church interior that proceeds from geometrical straight lines to almost an oval shape points to Christoph Haberland (Valga, Marienburg).¹¹ Actually, the direct examples of

¹¹ Paris, *Johann Wilhelm Krause*, 89.

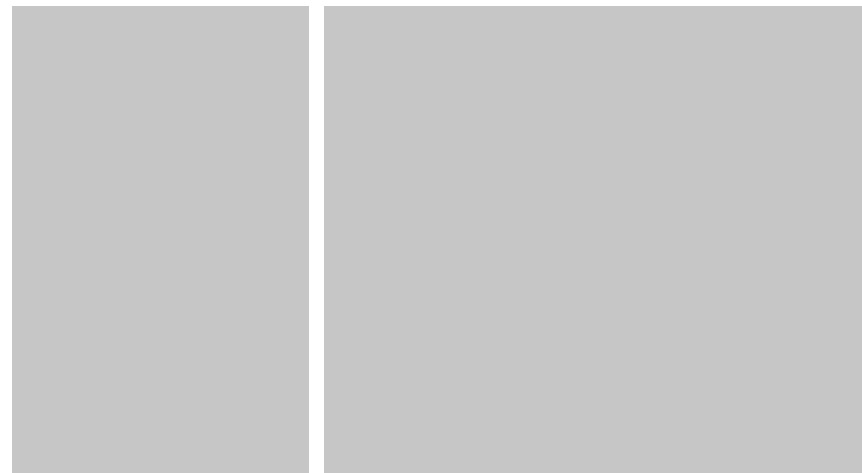


FIG. 3. ONE POTENTIAL EXAMPLE – PLANS OF THE PROTESTANT CHURCH FROM *VOLLSTÄNDIGE ANWEISUNG, ALLE ARTEN VON REGULAREN PRACHT-GEBÄUDEN NACH GEWISSEN REGULN ZU ERFINDEN* (1754) BY L. C. STURM.

FIG. 4. DOMED CHURCH WITH COLUMNED PORTICO FROM *ENCYKLOPÄDIE DER BÜRGERLICHEN BAUKUNST* BY C. L. STIEGLITZ, BD. 3 (1797), TAF. 9.

such a floor plan are familiar to Krause from his contemporary literature on architecture — there are two very similar Protestant church floor plans in the 1754 work by Leonhard Cristoph Sturm, *Vollständige Anweisung alle Arten von regularen Pracht-gebäuden*, (Fig. 3)¹² and Christian Ludwig Stieglitz's encyclopaedia of 1797 (Fig. 4)¹³ contains a domed church with a columned portico which has the exact same floor plan. Art historian Juhan Maiste has alluded to various examples in St. Petersburg, and also to the Cathedral of Christ the Savior project in Moscow (Carl Ludwig Engel, 1815),¹⁴ with which the architect could have been familiar. Here I would like to add the Holy Trinity Cathedral of Saint Alexander Nevsky Monastery in St

¹² Leonhard Christoph Sturm, *Vollständige Anweisung alle Arten von regularen Pracht-gebäuden nach gewissen Reguln zu erfinden, auszuteilen auszuzieren: Benebst Einer deoppelten Vorstellung der Sechs Ordnungender Bau- Kunst, in solcher Vollkommheit und Geschitlichkeit auf alle gebräuchliche Säulen-Weiten...; Dass demnach dieses nutzlicherVerbesserungen und Vermehrungen mit darleget* (Augsburg: Wolff, 1754), Table XV.

¹³ Chistian Ludwig Stieglitz, *Encyklopädie der bürgerlichen Baukunst, in welcher alle Fächer dieser Kunst nach alphbetischer Ordnung abgehandelt sind. Ein handbuch für Staatswirthe, Baumeister und Landwirte*, I–IV (Leipzig, 1792–1798), Bd. 3 (1797), Taf. 9.

¹⁴ Maiste, “Ülikooli- ja linnakirik”, 246–250.



FIG. 5. DRAWING OF THE FRONT FAÇADE OF THE HOLY TRINITY CATHEDRAL OF NEVSKY MONASTERY, DESIGNED BY IVAN STAROV. PHOTO: JUHAN MAISTE.



FIG. 6. THE FRONT FAÇADE OF THE DOMED CHURCH (31 MAY 1820). RGIA, 733.98.258, 3.

Petersburg as one possible example, by architect Ivan Starov (Fig. 5), which was completed in 1790 and which could not have left Krause indifferent when he visited St Petersburg in 1791, as its 62-metre dome was visible even when strolling along Nevsky Prospect. The main entrance of the church is located on the front façade on the first draft (Fig. 6) and it is depicted as a prostyle hexastyle; two other entrances have been accentuated with pilasters. In addition to the aforementioned three entrances, the church also has three smaller entrances, which ensure access to the church from every cardinal point. Inside the church (Fig. 2),¹⁵ there is an encompassing gallery (the architect himself has called it *Emporkirche* – gallery church), which creates a spacious congregation hall in the centre. In the middle of the room, there are hexagonally placed columns, which were probably supposed to support the dome. It is evident from the drawing's explication that there was a freestanding mensa in front

15 RA, EAA.2100.11.132, 20.

of the altar, which was separated from the rest of the church by handrails and elevated by three steps (Krause calls it *Estrade*). To the back of the altar table, there towered a pulpit, which was supposed to be well observable from the entire church. The pulpit stood in front of a wall decorated with paintings and columns. Behind the altar there were the necessary auxiliary rooms – a heated christening room, a sacristy. This kind of solution can still be associated with the pulpit altar common in the 18th century. The pews on this draft have been moved to the walls, and there is a separate space for lodges for dignitaries and senior citizens (*Logen für Honorationer erti Senioren*). Juhan Maiste has noted that various characteristics of both the Freemasons and the Herrnhuters are discernible on that draft.¹⁶ Compared to the congregation space, the eastern part has been brought a little higher on this draft, which creates a ritual zone in the church, consisting of the podium and estrade for the priest. The pulpit stairs that rise from behind the altar allowed the priest to rise higher than the congregation, which can be associated with the Freemasons' lodges, where the distinction between two hierarchical zones was common. Also, the spacious sacristy planned for the church might signify that more things were needed to be stored there than necessary for ordinary services.

Two days later, on 31 May 1820, the architect finishes the drafts for the first floor and basement, as an addition to the floor plan drawing (Fig. 7).¹⁷ It is an expansion of the previous plan, where the main floor plan of the church has remained the same. The differences are in the interiors, where the baptismal font has been marked out and the altar solution has been altered completely — in the eastern part of the room there is an estrade shaped like a podium with a central freestanding altar, a space in front of it, pulpit and pulpit steps. The drawing contains a solution for the heating, which is by underfloor heating channels. On this draft, Krause has presented the centre of the church in the shape of an amphitheatre, having abandoned the central pillared hall. The church has been designed with 810 seats in mind. The drawing also includes the roof truss and staircase design. Considering the capacity of the church, it definitely cannot be regarded as a small city church.

¹⁶ Maiste, “Ülikooli- ja linnakirik”, 243.

¹⁷ RGIA, 733.98.258, 2.

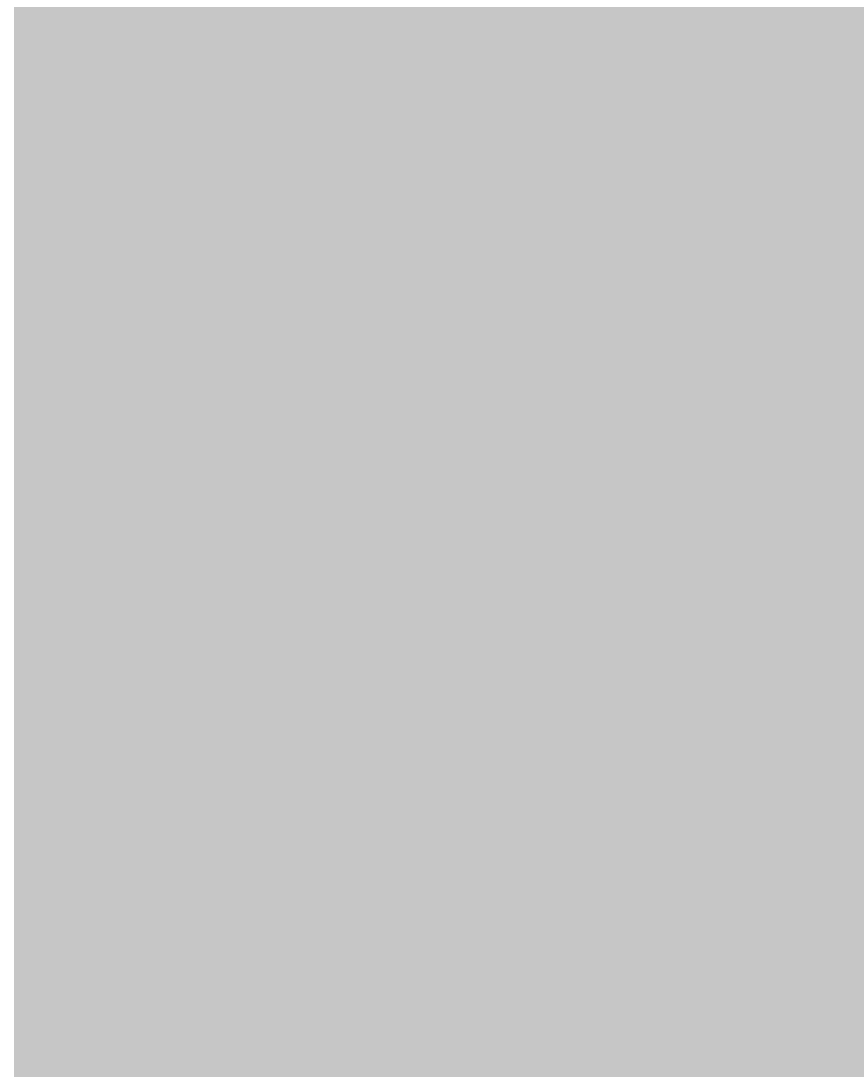


FIG. 7. PLANS OF THE FOUNDATION AND FIRST FLOOR OF THE DOMED CHURCH (31 MAY 1820). RGIA, 733.98.358, 2.

On the same day, Krause finished a spectacular drawing of the front façade of the domed church (Fig. 6),¹⁸ which greatly resembles the main building of the university — six Doric columns, triglyphs in the frieze, a wide triangular fronton and a dentilated cornice below

¹⁸ RGIA, 733.98.258, 3.



FIG. 8. FRONT FAÇADE OF THE DOMED CHURCH (6 JUNE 1820). RGIA, 733.98.258, 4.

the roofline. Nonetheless, the building probably could not have been constructed in such manner, because the bottom part would not have been able to carry an upper part this massive, and a high dome. Nevertheless, the architect most certainly was visualising a domed church, akin to some glorious examples from history — from

St Peter's Basilica to Pantheon in Paris, St Paul's in London and the Savior in St. Petersburg. It is probable that a more direct example for Krause was probably the façade drawing of a church with a very similar floor plan by the earlier mentioned Stieglitz,¹⁹ whose decorative spires appear on Krause's next façade attempt.

The façade with spires is dated to 6 June 1820 (Fig. 8)²⁰ On this drawing, the dome is significantly lower, which allows us to assume that the architect had realised that the previous solution would not have been technically sustainable. Completely new (or else directly borrowed from Stieglitz) is the placement of the bell towers on the front façade. The tower on the left, which is lower and covered by a hip-roof, is probably inspired by the Santa Maria Novella solution by Alberti, which has been rehearsed in different architectural treatises. The bell tower on the right is taller, domed and originates directly from suggestions by Stieglitz. The front façade solution repeats the earlier drawing. The set of the domed church drawings also includes a section of the church,²¹ which includes a raft foundation – very characteristic of Tartu. The drawing implies that the semibasement was planned to be vaulted. A spacious hall emerges in the central part of the church, dominated by a pulpit altar.

Apparently, such a grandiose project was not approved and a few days later Krause draws the plans for a much more modest small city church. When previously the tomes discussing Krause as the architect of the university have neglected these plans, then together with the domed church idea we have reason to suppose that the commission was linked to the pressing question of the university church. Nonetheless, the projects for the small city church, preserved in the National Archives in Tartu, have caused confusion in researchers.

Plans drawn on 7–10 June 1820 (Fig. 9, 10, 11) include the façade and section of the small city church,²² roof truss and basement,²³ and floor plans for the first and second storeys.²⁴ The exterior of the

19 Stieglitz, *Encyklopädie der bürgerlichen Baukunst* (1797), Bd. 3, Taf. 9.

20 RGIA, 733.98.258, 4.

21 Ibid., 5.

22 RA, EAA.2100.11.132, 21.

23 RA, EAA.402.10.130, 2.

24 Ibid., 1.



FIG. 9. FAÇADE AND SECTION OF THE SMALL CITY CHURCH (9–10 JUNE 1820). RA, EAA.2100.11.132, 21.

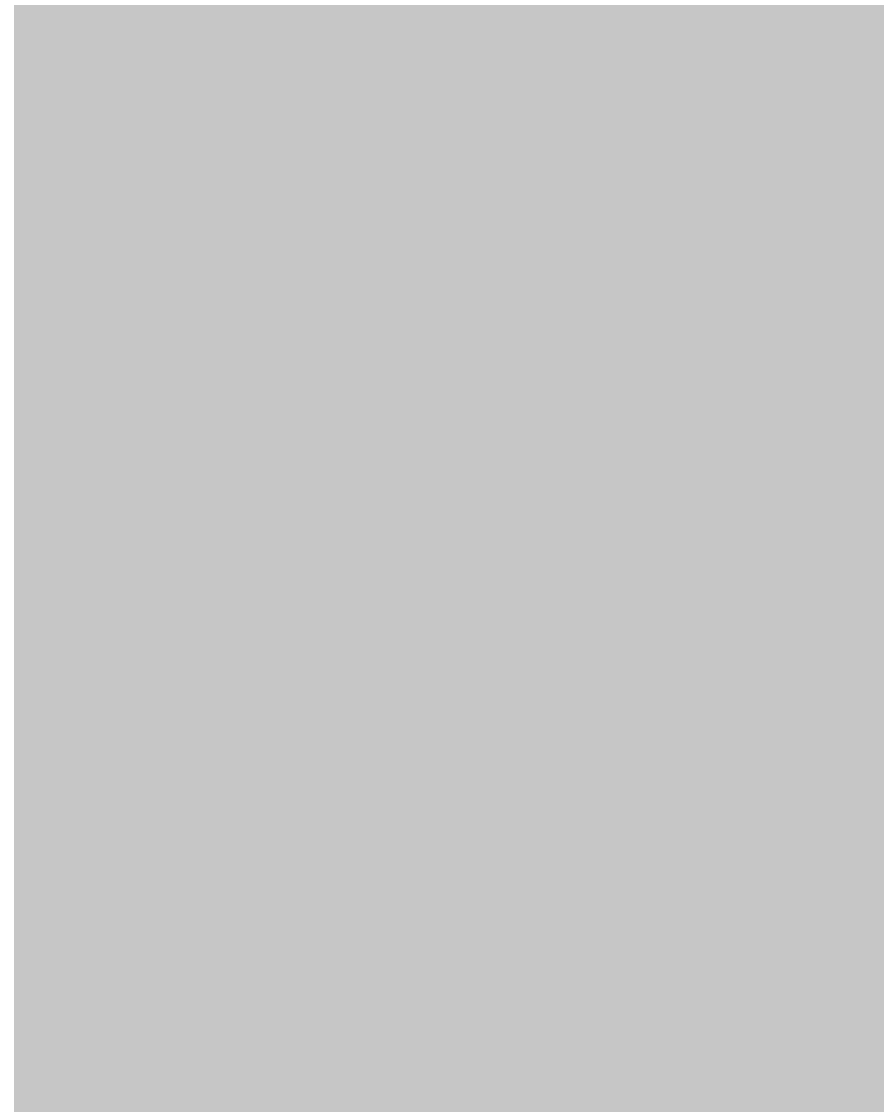


FIG. 10. ROOF TRUSS AND BASEMENT OF THE SMALL CITY CHURCH (8 JUNE 1820). RA, EAA.402.10.130, 2.



FIG. 11. FIRST AND SECOND FLOOR OF THE SMALL CITY CHURCH (7 JUNE 1820). RA, EAA.402.10.130, 1.

building does not immediately imply that it is a church, rather it creates associations with a type of town hall, introduced to Dutch classicism by Jacob van Kempen. That particular building's front façade is similar to Tartu Town Hall, which follows the Netherlands tradition. The front of the building has wide pilasters of Tuscan order, a triangular fronton on the central avant-corps, quite a high roof and a bell tower in the centre. The building has two main storeys and a fairly high socle, windows are placed between pilasters and between the storeys they are differentiated by simple panelling. The placement of the main entrance on the southern façade seems extraordinary, as it is not in accordance with the Christian tradition. Just as extraordinary seems the Eye of Providence designed for the gable, which similarly to earlier drafts alludes to Freemasonry, but which is also often seen on the architectural drawings of Stieglitz. Here we can also sense the influence of the Holy Trinity Cathedral of the Alexander Nevsky Monastery – the dentilated cornice, the Eye of Providence surrounded by foamy clouds and a garland of rays on the gable, but everything in a very modest manner. The interior of the building is depicted as a single and spacious hall, which is covered by a mirror vault. Wall surfaces are articulated by giant columns placed on high pedestals, with simple, classicistic balconies between them. In its overall image, the building greatly resembles a plan Krause drew for a village church in 1796:²⁵ the same capacities, high ridge turret, entrances to the sides. In that same set of church drawings there is also a church with a pulpit altar crowned by the Eye of Providence (Fig. 13).²⁶

The building's cellars are vaulted, the foundation has been laid on base rafts and posts. The roof truss and the design of the round tower are simple. Olga Paris has been critical of the ridge turret, saying that the tower is too small for the building and not organically linked with it.²⁷ On the roof truss and basement drawing,²⁸ Krause has brought the tower from the centre of the building to the front façade, which was supposed to form a whole with the triangular fronton of the central avant-corps. Still, in the plans for the storeys

25 TÜR KHO, 9.23, 1.

26 E.g. TÜR KHO, 9.23, 3.

27 Paris, *Johann Wilhelm Krause*, 90.

28 RA, EAA.402.10.130, 2.



FIG. 12. DRAWING OF A VILLAGE CHURCH BY J. W. KRAUSE IN 1796. TÜR KHO, 9.23, 1.

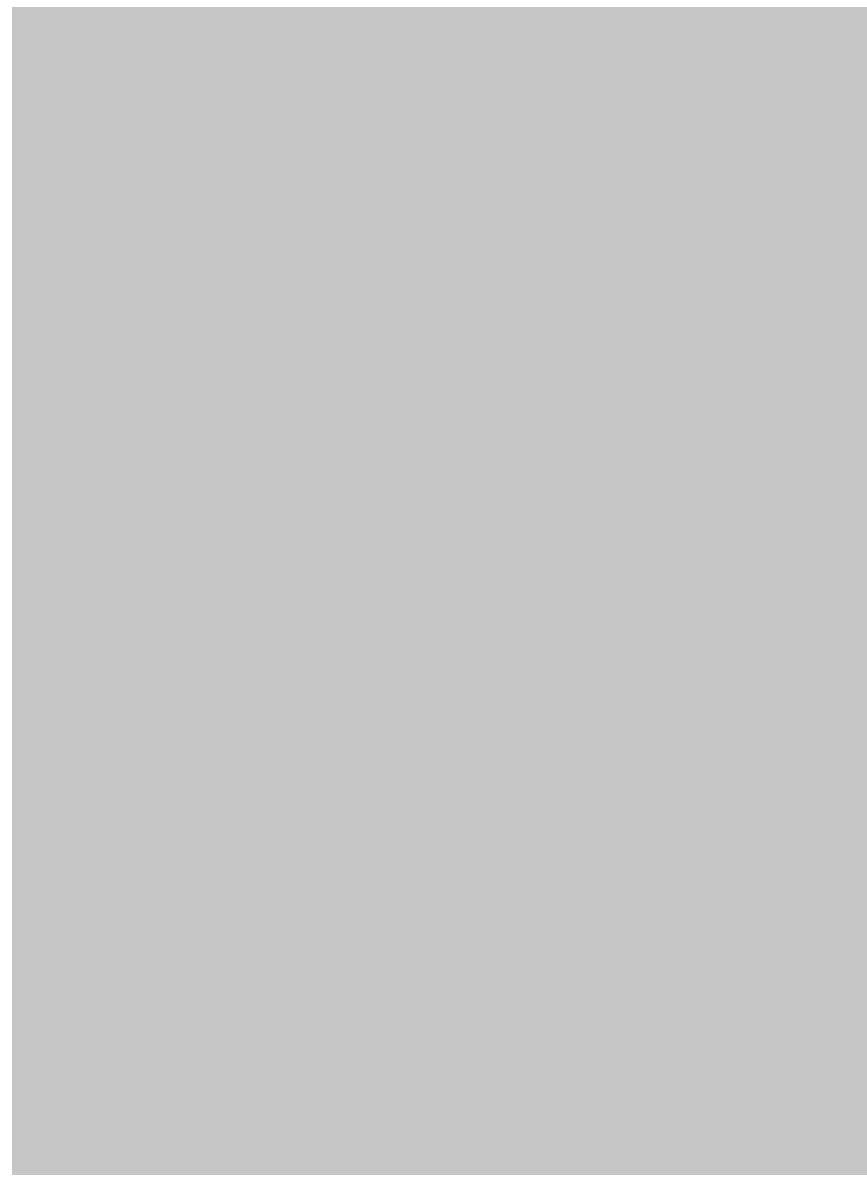


FIG. 13. DRAFT FOR A CHURCH WITH A PULPIT ALTAR DESIGNED BY J. W. KRAUSE. TÜR KHO, 9.23, 3.

of the almost square building²⁹ we can spot the resemblance with the floor plan of Krause's hexagonal church.

The interior is designed as a spacious hall, the altar is placed on a podium, balconies rest on columns. The plan mentions seats for 400 ladies (*Frauenbänke*) on the bottom floor, men have been allocated places on the balconies (340 places). This separation of men and women points to post-Reformation era and its use was prolonged in country churches, mainly. Here, too, Krause turns back to plans he had drawn earlier; on a plan probably dating from the 1790s, on a drawing of a smaller church with a pulpit altar, the architect has depicted seats for men and women in detail (Fig. 14).³⁰ Similarly to earlier solutions, the pulpit has been placed in the eastern wall. To the eastern part of the church, where in the sacristy behind the altar there are rooms for storage of church books and altar utensils, there is now also a vestibule and a stairwell, and in the eastern direction of the building there is a separate entrance to the rooms behind the altar.

The drafts made in the summer 1820 were not realized and in autumn of the same year Krause returned to the restoration of the Cathedral ruins. In 15 years, the Gothic had again found its place in the European cultural space. Numerous extraordinary plans for the restoration of the Tartu Cathedral were composed.³¹ The University Council weighed potential solutions, considered the pluses and minuses for both the restoration of the cathedral and the new solution planned downtown. The memorandum of 12–13 June 1821,³² pointed out negative arguments for the restoration of the cathedral; as well as the problem that a plot would have to be purchased downtown which might not go simply; in addition, building in downtown Tartu would require constructing large base rafts, owing to Tartu's ground conditions (marshy and soft ground). Neither draft was put to work and the university kept looking.

In 1821, Carl Ludwig Engel, a graduate of the Berlin Building Academy who had worked in Tallinn in 1808–1812 and moved from there via St Petersburg to Helsinki, was offered the opportunity

29 RA, EAA.402.10.130, 1.

30 TÜR KHO, 9.23, 11.

31 See *Johann Wilhelm Krause 1757–1828: Linnaehitajana Tartus = Als Stadtbauer in Tartu*, 3, 152–162.

32 RA, EAA.402.5.143, 147.

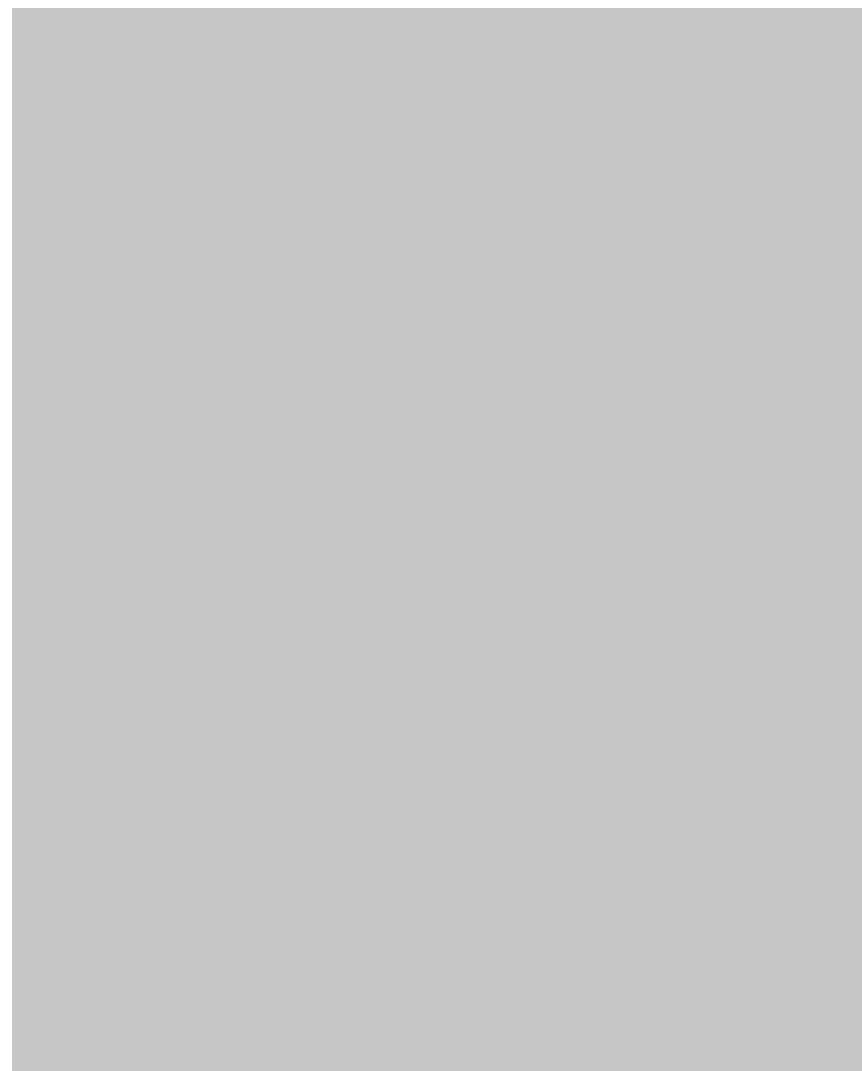


FIG. 14. DRAWING BY J. W. KRAUSE OF A LUTHERAN CHURCH WITH A PULPIT ALTAR (PROBABLY 1790s), WITH DESIGNATED SEATS FOR MEN AND WOMEN. TÜR KHO, 9.23, 11.

the design a church for Tartu. In 1822, Engel wrote to a friend of his youth, Carl Herrlich, "I received a letter from Struve in Tartu — the university's curator Lieven had tasked him to turn the ruins of the old Russian church (the Cathedral) into the university church, with new halls and with a tall Gothic style spire. Professor Krause, who has built all other university buildings, is so old and sick that he is not capable of managing this large construction procurement."³³ Engel rejected the offer.³⁴

In 1826, old plans were requested to be sent from St. Petersburg, including the overall floor plan for the university buildings, church plans, special sections and façades regarding the church's condition at the time, where the damaged places would also be marked. Requests were also made to search for the drawings of the cathedral façade until the fire of 1598. Unfortunately, it was impossible to find data on the Church of Holy Dionysius³⁵ in the Tartu City Archives because of the fires and because of the archive having been sent to Pskov and returned incompletely during Peter I. As far as we know, corresponding material was also missing in Riga.³⁶ Krause's plans were set aside for good, and on 10 August 1828 Krause died.

In October 1829, David Visconti, architect from St. Petersburg, visited Tartu with an assignment to discern whether the ruins of the cathedral could be used to build the university church.³⁷ Following the list compiled at the university in 1834,³⁸ which contains the plans for university buildings and lands in 1800–1831, Visconti made at least six drawings. With regards to the church we can distinguish four drawings — two drawings of the façade, and a floor plan,

33 "C. L. Engel Herrlichile, 22.12.1822", *C. L. Engel: Kirjeet – Brev – Briefe 1813–1840*, comp. by Nils Erik Wickberg (Helsinki: Helsinki-seura, 1989), 177.

34 See also Juhan Maiste, Anu Ormisson- Lahe, "Toomkirik valgustusajastu valgusel. Varemest kerkib raamatukogu", *Tartu toomkirik: Katedraal. Raamatukogu. Muuseum*, comp. by Mariann Raisma, Krista Andreson (Tartu: Tartu Ülikooli muuseum, 2018), 180.

35 The name "Church of the Holy Dionysius" was in use since the 17th century. This name is erroneous and the cathedral was actually consecrated for apostles Peter and Paul. It is possible that one of the altars in the church had been dedicated to Holy Dionysius (Kaur Altoa, *Tartu toomkiriku pikihoone ja lääneseina ajalooline uurimus*, I–A (Tartu, 1979), 26. Manuscript in the possession of the author.

36 Cultural Heritage Board Archive [Muinsuskaitseameti arhiiv], ERA T-76.1.1582. Niina Raid, *Ajalooline õiend Tartu ülikooli raamatukogu remontide kohta*, 6.

37 Ibid., 7.

38 RA, EAA.402.5.282. Full list also published in *Johann Wilhelm Krause 1757–1828: Ülikool Emajõe Ateenas = Die Universität im Embach-Athen*, 4, 484 ff.

and a section. In addition, the St Petersburg architect proposed a "construction budget for the Cathedral of Holy Dionysius"³⁹ on 2 December 1829, which was also added to the plans. The list also reveals that Visconti had been made a member of the building committee.⁴⁰ The list additionally shows that Visconti was planning a new building for offices and auditoriums (two drawings). Unfortunately, those plans and the budget are not available or preserved in Tartu today. It is also known that in 1830 the idea to build a church in the ruins of the cathedral had not been abandoned completely, because the librarian of university Emil Andres describes a visit to the library by Emperor Nicholas I in May 1830, where the emperor had supposedly claimed that the library should be moved elsewhere and the ruins rebuilt in their entirety for the university.⁴¹

In 1835, Moritz Heinrich Jacobi, who had studied in Göttingen and Königsberg, became the professor of architecture at the university, and he compiled the construction plans and budget for the domed university church.⁴² Again, the church was left unbuilt until Karl Rathaus became the university architect, who proposed his own projects for the church to the university in 1851, and on 31 January 1860 the church built behind the university's main building was consecrated.⁴³

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KEYWORDS: JOHANN WILHELM KRAUSE; TARTU; TARTU CITY AND UNIVERSITY CHURCH

39 The list of documents also includes a construction budget, with a title that confirms it – *Bauanschlag für die St. Dionysius- Domkirche in Dorpat, durchsehen von Glied des Baucomite Visconti d.2. Decb. 1829*.

40 RA, EAA 402.5.282. Full list also published in *Johann Wilhelm Krause 1757–1828: Ülikool Emajõe Ateenas = Die Universität im Embach-Athen*, 4, 484 ff.

41 Emil Anders, *Erinnerungen des weil. Universitäts-Bibliothekars zu Dorpat Emil Anders nebst einer Biographie und Charakteristik des Verfassers*, hrsg. von L. v. Schroeder (Reval: Lindfors' Erben, 1892), 292–293.

42 *Tartu ehitusmeistrid 17. sajandist kuni 19. sajandi keskpaigani*, comp. by Niina Raid (Tallinn: Tartu Riiklik Ülikool, 1987), 87.

43 Johannes Frey, *Aus der Geschit der Universitätskirche zu Dorpat* (Dorpat 1910), 26.

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