

Ragnar Nurk

DOMENICO TREZZINI'S IMPERIAL GATE IN NARVA

When the fortification engineer and architect from Switzerland Domenico Trezzini¹ (ca. 1670–1734) begins his activities in Peter the Great's Russia, there is a fortress gate in Narva. Previously, we have not had further knowledge of the appearance of Trezzini's gate, although the potential similarities with St. Peter's Gate of the Peter and Paul Fortress in St. Petersburg, which he designed later, is no news to anyone. It has also been left open whether it was an actual city gate in Narva or a wooden triumphal arch or both, as well as where exactly it was located. The uncertainty has been aided by the confusion around whether the King's Gate (later Imperial Gate), planned as the main gate of the Narva Fortress, was finished during the Swedish rule, or what the actual architecture of the finished gate was, including the design of its façades. Nonetheless, drawings of the Imperial Gate are included in the set of drawings of the Narva city fortifications from 1728 in the Russian State Military Historical Archive.² While the sheet with the drawings of the Imperial Gate was familiar to Jevgeni Kaljundi, the architectural historian who studied the historic fortifications of Narva

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.12697/BJAH.2023.26.02>

1 About him: Irina I. Lisaevič, *Pervyj arhitektor Peterburga. Zodčie našego goroda* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1971) [new issue in 1986 titled *Domeniko Trezini*]; Jurij M. Ovsjannikov, *Dominiko Trezini. Žizn' v iskusstve* (Leningrad: Iskusstvo, 1987, 1988); Konstantin V. Malinovsky, *Dominiko Trezini*. (Sankt-Peterburg: Kriga, 2007).

2 The Russian State Military Historical Archive [Rossijskij gosudarstvennyj voenno-istoričeskij arhiv, RGVIA], 349-19-4476.

during the Soviet era, and a black-and-white photocopy³ had been ordered to Estonia, the discovery remained unintroduced to the wider audience and the backstory of the depicted structure unexplained.⁴

THE DESIGN OF THE KING'S GATE

In the second half of the 17th century, under the Swedish rule, Narva was at its prime. The city boasted a dynamic mercantile and economic life.⁵ New buildings were erected in the Baroque style, new city fortifications were designed and with them the expansion of the city.⁶ In administrative terms, from 1651, this was the seat of the General Governorate of Ingria and Kexholm County, i.e. the seat of the later St. Petersburg region. Nyen, which was in today's St. Petersburg, became less important in the second half of the century. Thus, Narva was St. Petersburg's predecessor as a regional administrative centre.

The Kingdom of Sweden began the grand reconstruction of Narva city fortifications in the beginning of the 1680s. In 1681, Quartermaster General Erik Dahlbergh assessed the condition of the city's fortifications on location.⁷ He considered it extremely

3 For example, there is a black-and-white photocopy of this drawing in the Archive of the National Heritage Board [Muinsuskaitsemeti arhiiv, MKA], a collection of copies of drawings.

4 Jevgeni Kaljundi thoroughly catalogued in Russian archives plans associated with Estonia and drawings of historical buildings. In a card index that has survived in his personal archive in the Tallinn City Archive, there is an index card with information on the 1728 drawing of the Imperial Gate in Narva. On the margin, there is a pencilled note 'Beautiful gate'. We do not know that Kaljundi had reached a more thorough analysis of that gate. – Card index on plans in Estonian and Russian archives about Tallinn, Narva, Kuressaare, Ivangorod and Vyborg. Tallinn City Archives [Tallinna Linnaarhiiv, TLA], 1432-1-87. See also Kaljundi's review of the fortresses of the modern era in Narva: Jevgeni Kaljundi, 'Narva. Uusaegsed kindlustused', *Eesti Arhitektuur*, 3 (Tallinn: Valgus, 1997), 181–183. The results of Kaljundi's studies have remained mainly in manuscripts which today are stored in the archive of the National Heritage Board.

5 See: Enn Küng, *Rootsi majanduspoliitika Narva kaubanduse küsimuses 17. sajandi teisel poolel*. Scripta Archivi Historici Estoniae (Tartu: Eesti Ajalooarhiiv, 2001).

6 A thorough monographic overview: Sten Karling, *Narva. Eine baugeschichtliche Untersuchung*. Kungl. Vitterhets- historie- och antikvitets akademien. Archäologische Monographien, 25 (Stockholm: Wahlström & Widstrand, 1936; Tartu: J. G. Krüger, 1936).

7 On Dahlbergh's inspection trips to the fortresses of Ingria and Karelia, see: Jevgeni Kaljundi, Anatolij N. Kirpičnikov, 'Kreposti Ingermanlandii i Karelii v 1681 godu. Po doneseniyu Èrika Dal'berga pravitel'stvu Švecii', *Skandinavskij sbornik (= Writings on Scandinavia = Skrifter om Skandinavien)*, XX (Tallinn: Eesti Raamat, 1975), 68–80, including about Narva and Ivangorod 71–73. While Dahlbergh stayed in other fortified places for one to three days, he dedicated two weeks to Narva with Ivangorod. (Ibid., 69.) Plan and section drawings that resulted from Dahlbergh's inspection, which depict the state of the city and its fortifications at the time together with the different positional options for the new earth fortifications: The Swedish National Archives [Riksarkivet, RA], SE/KrA/0406/28/031/014 and /015.

important to reconstruct the fortifications which were in disrepair at the time, and his design, approved by King Charles XI,⁸ was followed in the works that lasted until the city went under the Russian rule.⁹ According to this design, the city's territory was extended by the construction of a new zone of earthen ramparts to the north and west, stretching outwards from the existing one.¹⁰

The new main gate of the fortress was designated to be facing north, only a few hundred metres onwards from the location of the medieval Cattle Gate (German: *Karriforte*, Estonian: *Karjavärv*),¹¹ which had been renewed in the period of early bastion-style fortifications. The new gate had to be located in the centre of the curtain wall between bastions Honor and Gloria. This type of well-protected location for a fortress gate was the most common choice for bastioned fortifications at the time, and very rarely would an enemy attack through a gate – attacks were rather directed at bastions. Therefore, defence function was secondary for the fortress gates of the early modern period and representability gained importance more than before. The name of Narva's new main gate was supposed to be King's Gate (Swedish: *Konungs Port*, German: *Königspforte*, Estonian: *Kuningavärv*). The road to the gate was meant to lead across a ravelin (King's Ravelin, *Konungs Ravelin*) and two wooden bridges had to be crossed for that. According to Dahlbergh's city plan, King's Street (*Konungs Gata*),¹² a street wider than others, was meant to lead to the new marketplace

8 The final version of Dahlbergh's design drawing from 1685–1686: RA, SE/KrA/0406/28/031/022 a. Earlier version of the design dates from 1682 (with modifications in 1684): RA, SE/KrA/0406/28/031/053.

9 On Dahlbergh's design for the fortifications and Narva's new town: Ragnar Nurk, 'O proekte narvskih bastionov Èrika Dal'berga i ego fortifikacionno-istoričeskikh predposylkah', *Narvskij muzej. Sbornik*, 21. *Zamok. Bastiony. Birža. Vstuplenie. Issledovanija po istorii arhitektury Narvy*, comp. by Merike Ivask (Narva: SA Narva Muuseum, 2020), 146–189. Based on an article in Estonian, published in *Narva Muuseum. Toimetised*, 16 (2015).

10 On Narva's town planning and its changes during the Swedish reign: Ragnar Nurk, *Narva, Eesti linnaehituse ajalugu: keskajast tsaariaja lõpuni*, 2. *Linnade uuenemine. Uusaegse linnaplaneerimise algus kindlustinnades ja väikelinnade allakäik 1561–1710* (Tallinn: Eesti Kunstiakadeemia, 2019), 204–224, including new town 219–222. Even in that article (ibid., 221) the author voiced his suspicion that a drawing linked to Dahlbergh had been used as a source for the construction of the King's Gate.

11 Cattle Gate was located at the northern end of the city's main street, Suur street, which started at the fortress. The earlier, medieval Viru gate was closed off with an earthen fortification at the end of the 16th century.

12 Prior to World War II, this street was called Lai (Wide) (formerly in German: *Breite Straße*), being indeed wider than other streets of the new town, and today its successor is Karja (Cattle) street.



FIG. 1. POSSIBLE DESIGN FOR THE FAÇADE OF THE KING'S GATE IN NARVA. SWEDISH NATIONAL ARCHIVES, MILITARY ARCHIVES.

straight from the King's Gate.¹³ Therefore, the marketplace would have had a direct view of the inner façade of the gate. In Dahlbergh's design, the gate's defensive aspect is stressed by the bent entrance, and there are rooms on both sides of the gateway (probably vaulted casemates).

In the Military Archives of Sweden (currently part of the Swedish National Archives), an ink and pencil sketch has survived of the external façade of a fortress gate in the Baroque architectural style of second half of the 17th century, with 'Narva' laconically written on it, while 'Port i Narva' is written on the reverse.¹⁴ (Fig. 1) It is not clear whether the references to Narva come from the author of the drawing or whether they have been added later by someone else, during the registration in the fortification archive, for example (it wouldn't be the unique example there of the drawing with the name of the wrong city). Sten Karling, scholar of the Swedish-era Narva architectural history, links the drawing to the King's Gate, concluding that despite unfinished details, the drawing shows the shape Dahlbergh had envisioned for the gate ('*sie gibt doch ein Bild von der Gestalt des Tores, wie Dahlbergh sie sich gedacht hatte*') and that the strictly classicistic architecture most likely comes from Dahlbergh himself ('*Die streng klassizistische Architektur dürfte [...] von Dahlbergh selbst herrühren*').¹⁵ Karling does not offer a clear opinion on whether the gate actually was built according to the design drawing in question. However, in later treatments of the history of Estonian architecture it has become all but a fact.¹⁶ Oleg Kochenovskiy, the author of a comprehensive

13 Dahlbergh's design in the context of the Swedish urban planning of the great power period: Nils Ahlberg, *Svensk stadsplanering. Arvet från stormaktstiden, resurs i dagens stadsutveckling* (Stockholm: Formas, 2012), 128–129, 354–355.

14 RA, SE/KrA/0406/28/031/025. In Ulla Ehrensverd's catalogue no. 351 (see: Ulla Ehrensverd, 'Topographica Estoniae: handritade kartor och ritningar över Estland i svenska offentliga samlingar = handgezeichnete Karten und Zeichnungen von Estland in schwedischen öffentlichen Sammlungen', *Eesti Teadusliku Seltsi Rootsis aastaraamat = Annales Societatis Litterarum Estonicae in Svecia, 1991–1999*, XII [Stockholm, 2001], 139). The archive dates the drawing to 1691, Ehrensverd '(1691) 1703'. These datings are probably based on Karling and general logic, presuming that the gate was finished during the Swedish reign.

15 Karling, *Narva. Eine baugeschichtliche Untersuchung*, 300–303.

16 E.g. Voldermar Vaga, Harald Arman, 'Eesti ala Rootsi riigi koloniaalprovintsinä. Barokstiili kujunemine. Linnaehitus ja linnakindlustused', *Eesti arhitektuuri ajalugu* (Tallinn: Eesti Raamat, 1965), 221 and table XXXV, 10; Krista Kodres, 'Avalikud hooned – omavalitsuste arhitektuurne ja kunstiline manifest', *Eesti kunsti ajalugu 2, 1520–1770* (Tallinn: Eesti Kunstiakadeemia, 2005), 99. According to the first work, the gate was finished in 1700, and according to the second, by 1703.

Russian-language history of the architecture of Narva, has agreed with that, too.¹⁷

In fact, we have no proof that the Swedes were preparing to build the King's Gate before the Great Northern War according to the architecture on the drawing. It could have been simply one of many alternatives discussed and perhaps not the final one. For example, we know that instead of Dahlbergh's design for the King's Gate in Gothenburg in 1690, which Karling suggested as an architectural parallel, another and cardinally different solution was carried out. The structure's very small measurements, based on the linear scale in Swedish cubits (*Svenske Alnar*), cast serious doubt over the drawing's designation for the King's Gate.¹⁸ In case there has been no mistake with the scale, we might assume that the gate was actually meant for a small fort instead of a city.¹⁹ Nonetheless, the drawing undoubtedly depicts the style evident in the fortress gates in the 1660s–1690s Sweden; thus, the King's Gate in Narva could have been designed in some generally similar manner (see more e.g. on the Charles Gate in Riga below).

Gerhard Eimer, scholar of the architecture and city planning of the Swedish Imperial period, describes the fortress gates designed by Dahlbergh and other Swedish fortification officers as examples of their contemporary Swedish 'state style' (*Riksstilen*) – a characteristically strict but simultaneously elegant and monumental 'pilaster architecture', with the Cavalier Gate (*Kavaliersporten*) in Kalmar as its pinnacle.²⁰

17 Oleg Kochenovskiy, *Narva. Gradostroitel'noe razvitie i arhitektura* (Tallinn: Valgus, 1991), 65, Fig. 1.43 presents an extract of a fortification plan, from 1740 during Russian rule, of the section where the city's northern gate was located, assembling a picture next to it of a potential facade drawing of the King's Gate from the Swedish Military Archive, and adding to the latter a caption statement that the gate was finished in 1703. The contradiction that the plan depicting the actual situation lacks the pedestrian passageways, was explained by the scholar with a presumed reconstruction (*ibid.*, 66).

18 The face value of the linear scale is 13 and full length is 14 Swedish cubits. 1 Swedish cubit (*aln*) = 2 feet ≈ 59,38 cm. This brings the full-length value of the linear scale to ca. 8.31 m. The height of the gate depicted in the drawing would have been ca. 9.6 m (without the sculptural cap) and width ca. 8.9 m, the height of the gateway ca. 4.6 m and width only ca. 3 m.

19 For example, the gateway of the Kuressaare Fort from the Swedish rule is ca. 2.8 m wide. Of all the Swedish fortress gates of the second half of the 17th century, the drawing bears the greatest resemblance to the King's Gate of Riga's citadel. Perhaps, however, it was simply a generic sketch of a fortress gate, which was not linked to any concrete location. Such standard design type solutions for buildings of different purposes (e.g. gunpowder cellars, barracks) have survived by Swedish engineers.

20 Gerhard Eimer, 'Militära nyttobyggnader av Erik Dahlbergh och hans medarbetare', *Stormaktstid. Erik Dahlbergh och bilden av Sverige*, ed. by Leif Jonsson (Lidköping: Stiftelsen Läckö institutet, 1992), 170–171. For reasons unknown, he dated the probable drawing of the Imperial Gate in Narva to 1699.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE KING'S GATE

Based on the technical report drawings (Swedish: *relation*) of the new earthen fortifications in Narva in the Military Archives of Sweden, we can see that the almost 10-metre scarp wall of the curtain between bastions Honor and Gloria was built in 1691–1692.²¹ The conclusion that the construction of the gate commenced in 1691, as made by Karling based on archival materials, cannot be true because the gate's construction could only have started after the following year's works.²² However, as Karling points out, Narva's leading sculptor and also a very competent architect Johann Georg Heroldt, who on the Governor-General's own recommendation had agreed to lead the construction of the gate, died in 1693. Only in 1696, when master Mårten Meyer arrived in Narva, the new executor was found in him. The plans show that in that year, preliminary low earthen breastworks are created out of the formerly disorganised soil embankments on the both sides of the designated gate, and in 1697, the foundation walls of the straight external part of the gateway are built at 8 Rhineland feet or ca. 2.5 m in thickness²³ and at the same depth underground.²⁴ Then the work seems to have stopped on location, because the same situation with an uncovered passageway is also shown after the following year's works.²⁵ We find an explanation from Karling that after a large amount of money (900 state thalers in silver) had been made available in 1698, Meyer had travelled to a quarry in Märjamaa²⁶ to choose and process stones. Since the façade stones only arrived in Narva in May 1700, Karling concludes that the gate was probably finished after the first siege of Narva by the Russian troops which took place in autumn of that year. However, he ignores the possibility that the gate could have been finished during Russian rule.

21 RA, SE/KrA/0414/0013/0140 and /0141 (i.e. pages 209 and 210).

22 In this section, Karling's data comes from: Karling, *Narva. Eine baugeschichtliche Untersuchung*, 300–302.

23 Calculated as 1 Rhineland foot = ca. 31.4 cm.

24 RA, SE/KrA/0414/0013/0145 and /0146 (i.e. pages 214 and 215).

25 RA, SE/KrA/0406/28/031/039.

26 The place is far from Narva between Tallinn and Pärnu. Orgita dolomite, found near Märjamaa, is the best limestone in Estonia suitable for stonework, which has been used for making construction details in the past and today.

It is possible that the gate existed in some provisional form (built probably in 1699–1700) at the start of the Great Northern War, when Narva still belonged to Sweden, but unfortunately, we do not have precise drawings of the works from those years. In general, it was not rare that fortress gates were built of wood initially, for example. The fortress plan with the section drawings, compiled in the spring of 1703 shows works by the Swedes after the first siege.²⁷ Since it does not indicate the building of the gate in those years and the gate itself seems to be existing at least as a passage beneath a rampart, the emergency gate could have been finished before the siege of 1700. Thus, the building supplies for the stone gate could have been left to await their time when the war began in 1700, because the Swedes had more important things to do to improve the defensive condition of the fortress. Karling's unambiguous statement that the King's Gate was built during the Swedish reign²⁸ has hindered the understanding of the following information from the beginning of the Russian rule.

THE REVENGE OF PETER I IN 1704

After the failure of 1700, Peter I only managed to conquer Narva on the second attempt, on 9 August 1704 by the Julian calendar which was applicable in Russia (according to a version of the same calendar applicable in Sweden, on 10 August), according to the new or Gregorian calendar on 20 August, to be exact. The siege was led by Scotsman General Field Marshal Georg Benedikt von Ogiľvy. The fortress under the leadership of commander Major General Henning Rudolf Horn did not capitulate, but was taken by a storming, after which Russian troops mercilessly looted and killed in there, as was customary in cities occupied by storming. Boris Megorsky, Russian military historian who has studied the sieges of the Great Northern War thoroughly, stresses that it was the only siege during the Great Northern War where the defenders did not accept the proposal to

27 Cartographer Tõnu Raid discovered the 1703 plan for Narva in the card collection of the Berlin State Library (Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Kartensammlung, X 49166). He has published a general image of that plan: *Eesti linnade plaanid 1584–2011*, comp. by Tõnu Raid (Tallinn: Grenader, 2013), 88 (Narva no. 8).

28 Karling, *Narva. Eine baugeschichtliche Untersuchung*, 300: 'Von den Toranlagen [...] war die Königspforte in Norden die wichtigste. Sie wurde auch als einzige vollendet.'

surrender with dignity, so that it was necessary to storm the fortress.²⁹ For Peter, who was present at the siege and involved in leading it, this revenge was especially sweet, as it washed away his earlier shame.

The conquest of Narva was first celebrated directly after the event with the tsar present on-site. The erstwhile Swedish cathedral, where in 1700 the King of Sweden Charles XII had celebrated his victory, was transformed into an Orthodox church dedicated to Alexander Nevsky.³⁰ The choice of the name of the prince who defeated Swedes in the battle of Neva in 1240 was undoubtedly not accidental. The larger celebrations took place on 15 August, when the city had already been cleaned of ruins and the deceased.³¹ A thanksgiving service and a procession were held, with gun salutes from cannons and weapons, awards were handed out. Streets were decorated and Alexander Menshikov, whom the tsar had appointed the Governor-General of Narva, erected a triumphal arch of some kind in front of his house (the precise location of which is unknown), where one mortar was filled with wine so everyone could help themselves to toast the victory. Peter himself was said to have moved merrily around the city, singing *Te Deum*. Ivangorod, in a hopeless situation, surrendered only the following day. At the end of the year, on 19 December, a celebratory parade entered Moscow, where seven (or by some accounts eight) triumphal arches had been erected, and the imprisoned Swedish officers, headed by the commander of Narva, were demonstrated to the crowds, as well as flags, cannons and other war spoils taken from the enemy. Various commemorative medals were coined to celebrate the victory.³²

Peter I left Narva shortly after the siege, but afterwards, before heading for Moscow he spent several weeks in Narva. Later, he

29 A thorough overview based on archive materials and literature on the 1704 siege of Narva: Boris Megorsky, *Peter the Great's revenge. The Russian Siege of Narva in 1704*, transl. by Stuart Britton. Century of the Soldier, 34 (Warwick: Helion & Company, 2018). Book was originally published in Russian in 2016.

30 Later, in 1708, the former city church was taken over and named the church of the Transfiguration of Our Lord, and a while later the former Cathedral was given to the city's Lutheran congregation.

31 According to one source on the Russian side, 2118 dead bodies were collected from around the city (Megorsky, *Peter the Great's revenge. The Russian Siege of Narva in 1704*, 237).

32 Megorsky, *Peter the Great's revenge. The Russian Siege of Narva in 1704*, 182–185, 199, 237; Aleksandr V. Petrov, *Gorod Narva. Ego prošloe i dostoprimečatel'nosti v svyazi s istoriej russkogo gospodstva na baltijskom poberež'e 1223–1900 gg.* (S.-Peterburg: Tipografija Ministerstva vnutrennih del, 1901), 304, 308–309; Heinrich Johann Hansen, *Geschichte der Stadt Narva* (Dorpat: Heinrich Laakmann, 1858), 248–249.

visited Narva on numerous occasions, sojourning there for at least a few days at a time. For example, although we have no evidence of his staying in Narva in 1705, he stayed there on four occasions in 1706, thereafter his visits became rarer.³³ And on 29 June 1708 the tsar celebrated his name day, i.e. the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, in Narva, and the first mass was held with the tsar and his family present in the former town church, which had now been transformed into an Orthodox church.³⁴ In 1708, Peter's house, or palace, was finished in Narva. That small but stately stone building, which was only destroyed in World War II, was built on the riverside of Narva, on the walls of the Swedish era houses. The building was located right next to the rampart, so that the balcony provided a view of the river, and the ruler had quick access to his personal pier. A statue of Mars, the god of war, was placed above the porticus of the external portal. Inside the house, a rich iconographic programme unfolded in the ceiling paintings of mostly nautical and military themes, with Mars as an allegory for Peter I himself and with Venus as an allegory of his wife Catherine. Regarding this, art historian Krista Kodres has summarised that following the admired European courts, Peter I also enjoyed the possibilities of visual rhetoric in the depiction of topics of national importance.³⁵

For the citizens of Narva, however, it was not a very happy time, as in addition to the horrors of the sieges, in 1708, before the deciding events of the Great Northern War and the final conquest of the Baltic provinces of the Swedish Empire, they also had to suffer collective deportation to Russia, where they had to remain for years. Furthermore, in the longer view, the city's role as the seat of Ingria and a trading town was taken over by St. Petersburg, a newcomer, which hindered the city's development. Peter the Great's grandiose post-conquest construction enterprises remain a somewhat curious interlude or perhaps rather a sparkling endgame of an earlier hopeful

33 Evgenij V. Anisimov, 'Biohronika Petra Velikogo (1672–1725 gg.)', <https://spb.hse.ru/humart/history/peter/> [accessed 17/02/2024]; 1706. ff on the visits: Hansen, *Geschichte der Stadt Narva*, 250 ff.

34 Hansen, *Geschichte der Stadt Narva*, 255–256.

35 Krista Kodres, 'Peeter I residents Narvas', *Eesti kunsti ajalugu 2, 1520–1770* (Tallinn: Eesti Kunstiakadeemia, 2005), pp. 279–280. Kochenovskiy has associated Trezzini also with the construction of the house of Peter I: Kochenovskiy, *Narva. Gradostroitel'noe razvitiie i arhitektura*, 97–98. Malinovsky has also adopted this idea: Malinovsky, *Dominiko Trezzini*, 14, 135. On the house of Peter I and it as a museum, see also: *Doma i domiki Petra I*, comp. by V. V. Jakovlev (Sankt-Peterburg: Skriptorium, 2015), 273–295.

advancement, because the history of the city now already had set on a different course.

WRITTEN SOURCES ON DOMENICO TREZZINI'S GATE IN NARVA

Architectural historian Konstantin Malinovsky has discovered and cites various written, including archival, sources, which are of interest with regards to the Imperial Gate in Narva.³⁶ Firstly, according to Trezzini himself, his first works in Russia were 'city gates in Narva' ('в Нарве градския ворота').³⁷ Having previously partaken in fortification works at the service of the King of Denmark, and there joined the service of Russia, Trezzini had arrived in Russia in the late summer of 1703 and moved to St. Petersburg in the beginning of 1704, at the order of the tsar.³⁸ It is known that on 14 August 1704, Alexander Menshikov,³⁹ Governor-General of Narva and all conquered territories, ordered Ulyan Senyavin,⁴⁰ who was responsible for the matters of construction, from St. Petersburg to Narva, together with master stonemasons and lime burners, in order to repair the breaches in the fortifications and perform other restoration works.⁴¹

A letter, sent by Senyavin from Narva to Menshikov in St. Petersburg on 25 June 1705, states, '...breach is closed /.../ Architect from Saint Petersburg has arrived and is working now, Sovereign, on a gate with a team, and stonemasons /.../ are cutting stones for the breach. Please, Sovereign, instruct us which figures must be carved on the gate'. ('...breš' zadelyvajat /.../ Arhitektur is Sankt Piterburha

36 Malinovsky, *Dominiko Trezzini*, 13–14, 21. The references to the originals of the quotations below have been given after Malinovsky.

37 M. Korol'kov, 'Arhitektory Trezzini', *Starye gody*, 1911 April', 34.

38 Malinovsky, *Dominiko Trezzini*, 8–11.

39 Alexandr Menshikov, 1673–1729, a favourite of Peter I and his closest collaborator, the first governor-general of St. Petersburg, participated in the conquest of Narva in 1704, after which he was assigned as the governor-general of all conquered territories, also carrying the title Duke of Ingria from 1707.

40 Ulyan Senyavin, ca. 1679–1740, from 1706 officially the 'director of constructions' (*direktor nad stroenijami*) for Peter I, who ran the whole office in charge of all city construction in Russia (initially called *Kanceljarija gorodovyh del*), he was also simultaneously responsible for shipbuilding. The office was mainly in charge of stone building in St. Petersburg, including the execution of the construction of the Peter and Paul Fortress.

41 Megorsky, *Peter the Great's revenge. The Russian Siege of Narva in 1704*, 184. The exact quotation is not given.

priehal i rabotajut Gosudar' nyne u vorot odna posoha, a kamenšiki /.../ tešut kamen' k breštu. Izvol' Gosudar' prikazat' otpisat' k vorotam kakija rezat' figury.')⁴²

The reply, which Menshikov sent to Senyavin on 20 October 1705, says, 'The order is to carve Saint Paul the Apostle on the gate in Narva with fine artistry, just as the other figures /.../ Figures on the gate are ordered to be made after the painting that you sent me with the letter, but instead of the eagle in the centre there has to be Paul the Apostle'. (*V Narve na vorotah prikaži vyrezat' obraz svjatogo apostola Pavla dobrym iskustvom, takže i drugie figury kakie nadležit /.../ Na vorotah figury veli delat po rospisi kakovu ty ko mne pri tom pisme prislal, a vmesto orla v sredine veli delat' apostola Pavla.*)⁴³

There is no doubt that Senyavin wished to receive directions from the tsar and Menshikov here was simply the mediator of the tsar's desires. Thus, it is believable that Senyavin and his team were active in Narva in 1704 and 1705, and it is possible that their work continued even longer. We know that on later works in St. Petersburg Trezzini was basically the 'main architect' in Senyavin's administration for decades. It seems that the first serious collaboration between the two men happened on building projects in Narva.

According to Just Juel, ambassador of Denmark, who stayed at length in Narva in 1709 and familiarised himself with the fortress, Narva was so well secured that it could have been considered one of the strongest fortresses in Europe. He writes in his notebook on 19 October 1709, 'On the eastern side, a breach had been made on the order of the tsar, with the help of cannons that were located on the opposite shore of the river, because the city walls are standing by the river. /.../ The tsar had that breach repaired and built a grandiose gate in its place, which was decorated with his coat of arms'. (*S vostočnoj storony po rasporjaženiju carja dejstvoitel'no byla probita breš' orudijami, razstavlennymi na protivopoložnom beregu reki, ibo gorodskija steny stojat u samoj reki /.../ Ètu breš' car' tože velel zadelat' i soorudit' na*

42 The archive of the St. Petersburg Institute of History of the Russian Academy of Sciences [Arhiv Sankt-Peterburgskogo instituta istorii Rossijskoj akademii nauk, SPb II RAN], F. 83. Op. 1. Ed. hr. 643. L. 1.

43 Russian State Historical Archive [Rossijskij gosudarstvennyj istoričeskij arhiv, RGIA], F. 466. Op. 1. Ed. hr. 477. L. 48–49.

eja meste velikolepnye vorota, ukrašennye ego gerbom.')⁴⁴ Here it should be mentioned that the Danish original does not specifically mention the 'same place', but the wording is rather more ambiguous, alluding to the gate's location somewhere in the vicinity of the breach.⁴⁵

It is not clear from the sources when Trezzini's activities in Narva began or ended. Even though he was a fortification engineer, he is not mentioned among the engineers who participated in the siege. Nonetheless, it cannot be ruled out that Trezzini could have arrived in Narva for the first time immediately after the conquest of the city, in the late summer or autumn of 1704, when the works commenced on the restoration of the damaged fortifications, and that he partook in those works. Since the directives from the tsar for the sculptural programme of Narva's gate arrived only at the end of October 1705, the gate mentioned in the written sources clearly could not have been finished in that year. From spring 1706, Trezzini was back in St. Petersburg, working on the Peter and Paul Fortress. The works on the gate in Narva and perhaps also on other objects where Trezzini's involvement has been assumed⁴⁶ could have been by then at the stage which would have allowed him to leave them in the hands of local master builders and sculptors. Master builder Matthias Giese could still have been among them, the gate and drawbridge had been 'repaired' under his management in 1705, according to Karling.⁴⁷ However, since the cities are relatively closely located (ca. 135 km as

44 *Zapiski Justa Julja, datskago poslannika pri Petre Velikom (1709–1711)*, transl. by Ju. N. Šerbačev, notes by G. L. Grove (Moskva: Univ. tip., 1900), 75–76.

45 *En Rejse til Rusland under Tsar Peter. Dagbogsoptegnelser af viceadmiral Just Juel, Dansk gesandt i Rusland 1709–1711*, notes and ed. by Gerhard L. Grove (København: Gyldendalske Boghandels Forlag [F. Hegel & Søn], 1893), 87: '.../ Samme hull eller Bresche har og Tsaren ladet igien tilmuure, og derved en prægtig port oprætte, beprydet med Tsarens Vaaben.' In translation this would be: 'The tsar had this gap or breach walled in, and thereby erected a magnificent gate with the tsar's coat of arms embellishing it.' (Krødt Kaljusto-Munck helped with the translation here).

46 His participation has been deemed possible, for example, in the construction of the house of Peter I and the reconstruction of the church of the Transfiguration of Our Lord (Kochenovsky, *Narva. Gradostroitel'noe razvitie i arhitektura*, 92–100; Malinovsky, *Dominiko Trezzini*, 14). In addition, Malinovsky has noted that architect Ivan Ugryumov was busy in Narva with the construction of 'the sovereign's palace and churches', finishing his work there at the end of 1705 and returning to St. Petersburg. Malinovsky has thought the same of Trezzini, also in connection with the fact that someone was needed to continue the construction of the Peter and Paul Fortress after the death of the Saxon engineer Wilhelm Adam Kirschtenstein. At the same time, it seems that very little is known of Ugryumov's activities and competence as an architect, compared to Trezzini.

47 Karling, *Narva. Eine baugeschichtliche Untersuchung*, 302.

the crow flies), we cannot rule out that Trezzini visited Narva also in the next years as necessary.

CITY GATE OR A WOODEN TRIUMPHAL ARCH?

It is not known to this author which architectural historian was the first to identify Trezzini's connection with the Narva gate. Nevertheless, we find a well-nigh true statement, which is probably based on earlier publications, in the compendium on the history of Estonian architecture by Helmi Üprus in 1965, 'The buildings in question [buildings connected with the tsar – R. N.] also included Narva's new city gate, designed by architect D. Trezzini from St. Petersburg and decorated with sculptures, which was already destroyed in the 18th century.' True, the statement is generic and lacks explanation as to which city gate it is referring to.⁴⁸

Regardless of the previous statement, the literature that followed – especially in Russian – started using two false statements: 1) as though the Narva gate had been erected 'on a breach' and 2) as though it had been a temporary triumphal arch. Let's look at those statements one by one.

Written sources, especially descriptions by Juel, do indeed refer to both the breach and the gate alternately. As we delve into the maps of the 1704 siege of Narva and compare them to some later fortress plans for Narva, it becomes clear that no city or fortress gates were built on the breaches, but rather all the gates remained in their previous locations. The largest breach, through which the fortress was usually firstly and primarily invaded, was located on the right face, or the front (i.e. on the east, or riverside) of the Honor bastion. The second, smaller breach had been fired into the wall of the river-facing Victoria bastion, mostly with the help of cannons on the opposite riverbank, but the storming was halted there by the countermines used by the Swedes.⁴⁹ According to descriptions by Russians, the scarp of Honor's face had collapsed very easily,

48 Helmi Üprus, *Eesti ala lülitumine Vene keisririigi koosseisu. Barokkstiil. Ehitismälestised, Eesti arhitektuuri ajalugu* (Tallinn: Eesti Raamat, 1965), 248.

49 On the endgame of the siege of Narva in 1704, see: Megorsky, *Peter the Great's revenge. The Russian Siege of Narva in 1704*, 156–173. Some countermines in front of the Victoria bastion's river side are depicted on the above mentioned 1703 plan. River side of that bastion almost entirely (except in the salient of the bastion) lacked the scarp galleries so typical for Narva Swedish era bastions.

opening up a possibility for a storming for the enemy and speeding up the conquest of the fortress, and Peter I had taken it as a sign of divine favour (it is rumoured that he nicknamed the bastion *Božij brež* or 'divine breach' after the siege, although it does not appear on any plans of the fortress).⁵⁰ That very wide breach, which was thought to be able to allow a hundred men pass through at once, was located in the vicinity of the King's Gate, but still not on it or right next to it. The King's Gate was probably partly visible from the main storming location, because it was in the neighbouring section of the bastioned front. To the other side of the events, the Coastal Gate was near the Victoria bastion on the riverside of the fortress, but that survived after the siege in the shape of a modest tunnel as it had been previously.⁵¹

The origin of the second historiographical fallacy that Trezzini only built a wooden triumphal arch in Narva⁵², remains unknown to this author. As mentioned earlier, a triumphal arch was erected somewhere in a city street immediately after the siege, but it must have been a very simple structure; and we do not have the smallest evidence to connect Trezzini with it. According to Malinovsky, Senyavin's letter from 1705 is 'the first and only' source which confirms the architect's own claims and allows us to link him with the construction of the gate in Narva.⁵³ Therefore, the claim about a wooden triumphal arch is probably not based on any concrete sources but merely conjectural. Perhaps it is also connected with the fallacy that usually accompanies this one: as though St. Peter's Gate of the Peter and Paul Fortress, which according to one source was built to be 'similar to the gate in Narva', had originally been a wooden structure. The latter statement has been refuted by Malinovsky by

50 In the drawings in the set from 1728 (RGVIA, 349-19-4457 [detailed plan] and -4448 [sections]), the Honor breach is still not repaired. Looking from the side of the fortress, from the top of the bastion the breach stretched to the right, covering most of the face but not quite reaching the shoulder of the bastion, i.e. the flank. The drawing leaves the impression as though a part of the escarp wall with a wooden foundation had completely shifted out towards the moat. Therefore, a construction error seems plausible.

51 The remarkable neogothic façade, which can be seen in some 19th-century cityscapes (e.g. in the 1867 engraving by Wilhelm Siegfried Stavenhagen, see in references below), the gate received only immediately before the Crimean War.

52 It is repeated in e.g.: Vladimir I. Pilyavsky, *Russkie triumfal'nye pamätniki* (Leningrad, 1960), 8; Lisaeviç, *Pervyj arhitektor Peterburga*, 20 (according to the author's explanation, wooden gates perished already in the 18th century); Abram G. Raskin, *Triumfal'nye arki Leningrada* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1985), 12.

53 Malinovsky, *Dominiko Trezzini*, 13.

double-checking the archival source, as it refers, on the contrary, to stone works; and the construction had been granted a multi-year deadline, which would have been needlessly long for a wooden structure (see the quotation from the source below).⁵⁴

These claims have confused even a local scholar in Estonia, Oleg Kochenovskiy. Knowing Narva well, Kochenovskiy could not accept the suspicious claim that the triumphal arch had been positioned on a breach. As according to Karling, the King's Gate had to have been built earlier from stone as a city gate, and, according to Russian authors, Trezzini had built a wooden triumphal arch, Kochenovskiy has tried to ascertain a suitable place for the triumphal arch. It seems that he has found a potential place for it in the centre of the curtain wall between bastions Victoria and Honor, which, compared to the King's Gate, was in the opposite direction from Honor's breach, or in the neighbouring bastioned front where main siege events took place.⁵⁵ However, in his Narva-monograph he has presented that conclusion in such a doubtful and unclear fashion that it leaves the impression as though he himself was not very certain in his own result – there is no actual evidence after all.

Yuri Ovsyannikov, the last Trezzini biographer of the Russian Soviet period, reached especially strange conclusions. He wrote that Trezzini built a 'massive and celebratory triumphal arch in stone', which was named 'Peter's Gate' (*Petrovskie vorota*). From that we may assume, most probably, that the scholar meant the Narva fortress gate located in the west, i.e. opposite the river, which did carry that name, mistakenly considering it a contemporary of Peter I. In fact, a gate, which had already been specified by the Swedes in the Dahlbergh's design, was built in that place only in 1822, and named in honour of Peter I (officially in plans also as '*Vorota Petra Velikago*').⁵⁶ In another section of text Ovsyannikov writes that Trezzini built 'western and eastern gates' in Narva and that the tsar had shown special interest in the eastern (*sic!*) gate and demanded that it be built based on the triumphal arches erected in honour of ancient Roman emperors. We may but surmise that under eastern gate he now

54 Malinovsky, *Dominiko Trezzini*, 21.

55 Kochenovskiy, *Narva. Gradostroitel'noe razvitie i arhitektura*, 92 and footnote 3, p. 100 and see also the location that he meant p. 65 fig. 1.43 bottom right.

56 *Ibid.*, 122 and view of the facade p. 121 fig. 1.94.

meant the more important riverside gate, or the Water Gate that led to the Ivangorod bridge, which had been a structure of very simple architecture during the Swedish rule and also later, consisting of a short tunnel under a rampart. Only in 1790, the gate was given a strict classicistic façade design.⁵⁷ Thus, Ovsyannikov is completely confused about the historical topography of the Narva fortress and one stab in the dark follows another.⁵⁸

Malinovsky does not enter a discussion on which city gate it was in Narva or where it was located, only illustrating the text with a random Narva scene, where a city gate can be seen in a distance; as it happens (?), it is the Water Gate.⁵⁹ On the other hand, the fallacies ventured in earlier literature in Russian are echoed in his work. In the main text, he states that the city gate was built 'on the breach' under Trezzini's leadership. In the chronology of the architect's work, a statement is added that among the architect's activities in 1704–1705 there are the 'constructions of stone and wooden triumphal arches in Narva'⁶⁰ – therefore giving both variants as though just in case.

If we start from the position that either under Trezzini's direction, or at least according to his design, a city gate was built in Narva, as he has confirmed himself and what Juel probably alludes to, then we do not actually have many choices in the Narva fortress left. (Fig. 2) The King's Gate to the north was the main gate. The western gate of the fortress was built a lot later. The two gates on the riverside – the Water Gate in front of the bridge and the Coastal Gate (and the New Gate, later Blind Gate) – were both simple passages through an earthen embankment. The former main city gate was the aforementioned Cattle Gate, a reconstructed medieval gate structure, which demolition – together with the other older inner fortification

57 Kochenovskiy, *Narva. Gradostroitel'noe razvitie i arhitektura*, 115 and fig. 1.86.

58 Ovsyannikov, *Dominiko Trezzini*, 31–32. One of the reviewers of Ovsyannikov's book was Malinovsky, who later elaborated on the topic. Unfortunately, Estonian scholars have repeated his statements even recently: Kodres, 'Avalikud hooned – omavalitsuste arhitektuurne ja kunstiline manifest', 99; and Juhan Maiste, 'The concept of Russian architecture in the Baltic Provinces between the Great Northern War and the cosmopolitanism of the 19th Century', *Baltic Journal of Art History*, 17 (2019), 93; in the case of the latter, a false claim has been added as though Trezzini had been sent soon after arriving in Russia to 'Riga and Narva', which is impossible purely because Riga was under the Swedish rule until 1710.

59 Malinovsky, *Dominiko Trezzini*, 13. He published an excerpt of an 1867 engraving by Wilhelm Siegfried Stavenhagen (Malinovsky p.13; see e.g. in the art collection of the Narva Museum: NLM _ 565:2 K 22:2, <https://www.muis.ee/museaalview/1587706> [accessed 17/02/2024]).

60 Malinovsky, *Dominiko Trezzini*, 13, 135.



FIG. 2. OUTLINE OF THE FORTRESSES OF NARVA AND IVANGOROD WITH GATES. DRAWING: RAGNAR NURK.

MAIN PARTS: A. NARVA FORTRESS, B. NARVA TOWN (SEPARATED FROM THE FORTRESS BY THE MOAT, SURROUNDED BY OLDER CITY FORTIFICATIONS), C. NEW TOWN, D. IVANGOROD FORTRESS.

BASTIONS: (THEY BORE THE SAME NUMBERS DURING RUSSIAN REIGN): 1. FORTUNA, 2. TRIUMPH, 3. FAMA, 4. GLORIA, 5. HONOR, 6. VICTORIA, 7. PAX (ALSO WRANGEL, NEW BASTION), 8. TRIANGULAR (IN FACT AN OLD RONDEL), 9. SPES (A DEMIBASTION).

GATES: A. KING'S GATE, LATER IMPERIAL GATE, B. COASTAL GATE, C. WATER GATE, D. PETER'S GATE, E. CATTLE GATE, F. MAIN GATE OF THE FORTRESS, G. WESTERN GATE OF THE FORTRESS (IN TWO SEPARATE LOCATIONS THROUGH HISTORY), H. IVANGOROD FORTRESS GATE IN THE MODERN ERA.

– was delayed only due to the beginning of the Great Northern War. With regards to the northern and western gates of the former Teutonic (Livonian) order castle, they were by that time also inner gates within the city without any defensive purpose. True, some later drawings show a stately Baroque design on the city-facing gate, but the gate was given that look only during the reign of Catherine II in the 1760s, alongside the extension of the Commandant's House.⁶¹ The newer (northward) western gate of the castle was given a simple classicistic design simultaneously with the construction of Peter's Gate in the vicinity.⁶²

It is most logical that Peter I would have liked to design exactly the city's main gate according to his own taste. Opportunity for that, as we have seen, came from the fact that the King's Gate had been left unfinished in stone by the Swedes. That move was somewhat brave or perhaps even a little premature, as nothing was decided in the war by 1704–1705. The fact that it was indeed the former King's Gate, which was noted in earlier sources, is assured by a study of survey drawings of the Imperial Gate in 1728 in the Russian State Military Historical Archive. It was not the case of simply renaming the gate after the Russian takeover, as Kochenovskiy thought,⁶³ but rather now the main stone gate construction works only began.

As for the gate's name, the sources do not mention any special names. Peter I (1672–1725), tsar (*царь*) since 1682, bore the new title 'emperor' (*imperator*) only from 1721.⁶⁴ Therefore, we might presume that it is at that time that the King's Gate got its new, final, official name: Imperial Gate (Russian: *Imperatorskie vorota*, German: *Kaiserpforte*, Estonian: *Keisrivärv*). What the gate's name was in 1704–1721, we do not know currently, but we might assume that if the name existed, it stemmed from a title or address used for Russian rulers

61 See, e.g. facade in the 1798 drawing: RGVIA, 349-19-4693.

62 See drawings from 1821 with new facades: RGVIA, 349-19-4838.

63 Kochenovskiy, *Narva. Gradostroitel'noe razvitie i arhitektura*, 100.

64 The title of Russian rulers from 22/10/1721: *Imperator i Samoderžec Vserossijskij* (Emperor and Autocrat of all Russia). The designation of Russia as an empire and its ruler as an emperor occurred immediately after the conclusion of the Treaty of Nystad (30/08/1721) which ended the Great Northern War, and as part of the celebrations in honour of that, to stress Russia's new imperial position among European countries. Russians had equated 'tsar' with 'emperor' before, alluding to their historical connections with the Byzantine Empire. However, Europeans, who equated the tsar's title with the king, were not convinced by that interpretation. (Olga G. Ageeva, 'Titul "imperator" i ponjatie "imperija" v Rossii v pervoj četverti XVIII veka', *Mir istorii*, 5 (1999), <http://www.historia.ru/1999/05/ageyeva.htm> [accessed 17/02/2024].

at the time, the most common of which were 'tsar' and 'sovereign' (*gosudar*).⁶⁵ However, if we look at some later sources, we can see that the King's Gate (*Königs-Pforte*, *Königspforte*) survived among the locals at least in the German version.⁶⁶

SURVEY DRAWINGS OF 1728

In 1727, army engineers in Russia officially separated from the artillerymen and in the following years the establishment of an engineer corps commenced under Burchard Christoph Münnich, an engineer from Germany, as well as a larger inspection of fortifications. A comprehensive set of survey drawings of the fortresses of Narva and Ivangorod was compiled in 1728.⁶⁷ That year, Johann Ludwig Luberas von Pott⁶⁸ led a detailed inspection of the fortifications in Narva.⁶⁹ The conclusion was that the fortifications in both Narva and Ivangorod must be renovated as soon as possible, managed by colonel engineer Brekling.⁷⁰ Kochenovsky associates the compilation of the set of drawings with the beginning of his activities and the creation of the engineering brigade (Russian: *Narvskaja inženernaja komanda*) in Narva.⁷¹

That set, which is currently in the Russian State Military Historical Archive (*Rossijskij gosudarstvennyj voenno-istoričeskij arhiv*, RGVIA) in

65 E.g. one of the bastions of the Peter and Paul Fortress was called 'Gosudarev bastion' and some sources refer to Peter's house in Narva as 'Gosudarevyj palat'.

66 See in the plan of the new town of Narva from 1741 (National Archives of Estonia [Rahvusarhiiv, RA], EAA.1646-1-3451) and in the title of the cityscape from 1784 (see more in the paragraph below regarding the later fate of the Imperial Gate).

67 RGVIA, 349-19-4435 until -4487.

68 Johann Ludwig Luberas von Pott, 1687–1752, Russian engineer of Scottish-Swedish origin; at the time in question – Major General from 1727, designer of military harbours and fortifications; later, in the 1730s also involved in fortification works in Narva.

69 Fedor F. Laskovskiy, *Materialy dlja istorii inženernogo iskusstva v Rossii*, Č. 3: *Opyt issledovanija inženernogo iskusstva posle imperatora Petra I do imperatricy Ekateriny II* (Sankt-Peterburg: tip. Imp. Akad. nauk, 1865), 199 and the following footnote there: Inž. Arh. Zap. mem., no. 8. Thorough drawings of Tallinn's city fortifications date from the same year, so that it probably was a more general undertaking which did not simply involve Narva alone.

70 Brekling or Breklin, Russian engineer of Swedish origin, colonel from 1709, involved in fortification works in Azov, Taganrog, Kyiv and elsewhere.

71 Kochenovsky, *Narva. Gradostroitel'noe razvitie i arhitektura*, 102–103. Fedor F. Laskovskiy, *Materialy dlja istorii inženernogo iskusstva v Rossii*, Č. 2: *Opyt issledovanija inženernogo iskusstva v carstvovanie imperatora Petra Velikogo* (Sankt-Peterburg: tip. Imp. Akad. nauk, 1861), 420, 452. It is indeed known that a wide-ranging clean-up of fortifications occurred in the beginning of the 1730s (Hansen, *Geschichte der Stadt Narva*, 285).



FIG. 3. IMPERIAL GATE IN NARVA IN THE 1728 SURVEY DRAWING: FLOOR PLAN, CROSS AND LONGITUDINAL SECTIONS, EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL FAÇADES. RUSSIAN STATE MILITARY HISTORICAL ARCHIVES.

Moscow, also includes a sheet with drawings of the Imperial Gate, among other drawings (both plans and sections) of the earthen fortifications.⁷² (Fig. 3) It is sheet 40 of the set of drawings. The dimensions of the sheet of the drawing are 480 × 995 mm and it is drawn on paper in ink and watercolour.⁷³ One sheet contains a comprehensive set of drawings related to the gate and the wooden bridge associated with it: the floor plan, a longitudinal section, a cross section of the gate and two of the bridge (incl. the portal of the drawbridge gate) and – what is most thankworthy from an art historical perspective – views of both external and internal façades.

In contrast to what was proposed in Dahlbergh's design, the central arched gateway was straight, with a passageway in the central section. The gateway was flanked on either side by vaulted casemates, which were accessible through the passage, and which had a smaller window facing the passage and a larger one facing the city. Usually, those rooms in fortress gates were used as guard rooms or detention cells⁷⁴ or else for the storage of military equipment.

72 RGVIA, 349-19-4476.

73 Data from Jevgeni Kaljundi's index card (TLA, 1432-1-87).

74 On later plans, from at least the 1770s (e.g.: RA, EAA.1646-1-2659) until the end of the fortress period (e.g.: RA, EAA.1646-1-2720), the Imperial Gate's guardhouse is shown as a separate building in the gate's vicinity by the main street of the new town. At some stage, a separate prison corpus was built next to it.

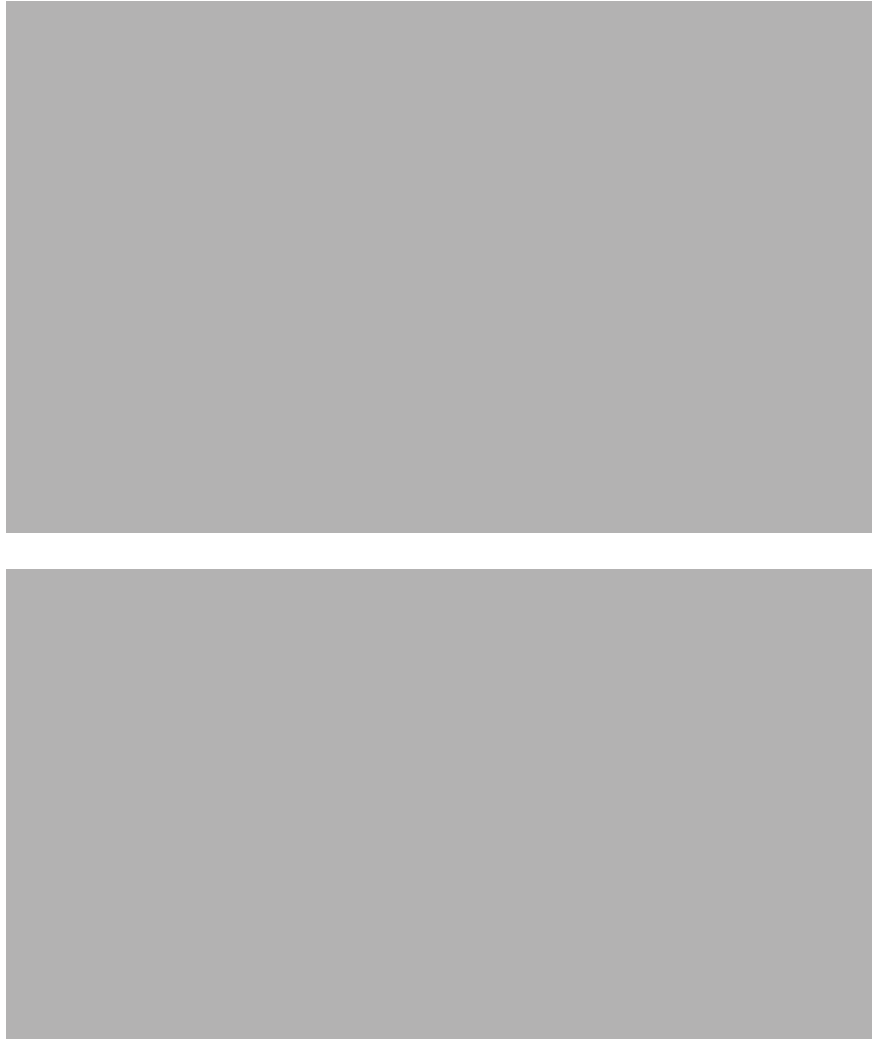


FIG. 3 A & B. IMPERIAL GATE IN NARVA IN THE 1728 SURVEY DRAWING: EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL FAÇADES. RUSSIAN STATE MILITARY HISTORICAL ARCHIVES.

In terms of protective measures, the gate was very modest, furnished with doors on either end – they were probably wooden and two-sided. As the gate did not have a superstructure, it lacked the portcullis, which the most important Swedish city gates often had (e.g. on the two gates of Pärnu, on the main gate of Tallinn, on the King's Gate in Gothenburg). Nonetheless, in the longitudinal section

from 1728, on the city-facing side of the gateway there is a groove, both on the wall and through the arch above. Into that prepared groove they could have fitted an emergency wall of wooden beams, if need be. Yet another defence measure, the drawbridge was located a little ahead of the external gate portal on the wooden bridge, which was a rather usual solution, and it had its own wooden façade, in this case with two small side openings, i.e., representing the type of the triumphal arch.

When it comes to the finish of the gate, the external and internal façades are shown differently in the drawing: with smooth surfaces and detailed square stones respectively. Whether it then follows that the external façade was plastered and painted, we cannot take the drawing as concrete evidence to decide on that for certain. For instance, in the second half of the 17th century, in Pärnu and Tallinn, the façades of grand gate structures designed by Swedish engineers and built under their guidance exposed natural stone. As an original construction-technical aspect we can see that the roof of Narva's gate is not covered with the usual roof tiles made of clay but probably with the tiles of stone (limestone?) instead, which were laid straight on the massive vaults of the interior. The pink colour used in the colouring of the drawing does not convey the actual colour of the gate's façade. Red and pink were the usual symbols of stone constructions in the drawings of fortification structures at the time, as evidenced in the fact that in the external façade drawing, the scarp of the curtain wall, which was made of limestone, is also thus coloured.

GATE OF SWEDISH DESIGN OR TREZZINI'S?

In the early modern era, many fortress gates in Europe boasted very decorative façades. The more pretentious façades would often carry different power symbols and texts. At the same time, gates with multiple sculptural figures with a more complicated iconographic programme were not very common.⁷⁵ In general, rulers and their engineers-architects endeavoured to give fortress gates a rather severe and belligerent image. Abundantly decorated triumphal and honorary arches were, by the rule, erected as temporary wooden structures.

⁷⁵ From the second half of the 17th century, for example, the Rhine gate of the Breisach Fortress, Marienberg Fortress gate in Würzburg, the North Gate in Copenhagen.

Since written sources indicate that the carved stones for the King's Gate had been stockpiled before the war, then it follows logically that the façades of the gate actually built may at least to some extent convey the Swedish design. The lower part of the Imperial Gate with its tripartite layout and pilasters resembles other Swedish fortress gates from the second half of the 17th century in the Baltic provinces (e.g. the Tallinn Gate preserved in Pärnu). Similar tripartite façades with the 'pilaster architecture', as Eimer had called it, resembling ancient Roman triumphal arches were found on the more important gates of the Swedish fortresses built in the 1660s–1690s in Riga, Pärnu and Tallinn. The general measurements are also similar.⁷⁶

If we continue with the speculation that the finished gate's external façade's architectural appearance in general conveys a structure designed at the end of the Swedish era, then in the search for potential parallels and templates we must first look to other fortress gates finished before the Great Northern War. Riga was the most important centre of the Baltic provinces of Sweden, and Narva had close artistic connections with it. Two stately triumphal arch style fortress gates had just been built there: the King's Gate (German: *Königspforte*) of the citadel and Charles's Gate (*Karlspforte*) of the city fortifications.⁷⁷ The King's Gate (built in 1688–1690 as part of the citadel reconstruction designed by Dahlbergh) resembled the Tallinn Gate in Pärnu, with its small side gates and a 'Baroque' upper part (high attic, segmented gable), but with modest, consistent décor. In Charles's Gate we notice a greater resemblance with the Imperial Gate in Narva.

76 Based on the 1728 drawing, the height of the external façade of the finished gate up to the ridge of the triangular fronton was ca. 9.7 m, and the width of the structure, excluding the protruding elements (from cornice to cornice of the adjoining the escarp walls), was ca. 12.6 m. The gateway in its main part was ca. 4.2 m wide and ca. 5.3 m tall. Of course, measuring error is possible in the case of historical drawings. The authors did not have access to original drawings to ascertain the scale and to remeasure. Since the 1728 drawing lacks a scale, the digital copy was converted into the right size following another existent sectional drawing of that gate's structure (section no. 18 of the works of 1774, see the Russian State Archive of the Navy [Rossijskij gosudarstvennyj arhiv voenno-morskogo flota, RGAVMF], 3L-25-93, section 18), and a comparison with a perspective drawing from 1850 has confirmed the credibility of that result (RGVIA, 349.19.5133), more on which see below. On these conditions, it is difficult to ascertain credibly which measuring system the gate's architecture was following. One possibility that seems fitting, for example, is that the gateway's width had been set at 2 Russian fathoms and height at 2.5 Russian fathoms and it is possible that the height of the whole structure was 4.5 and width 6 fathoms (1 Russian fathom [*sažen'*] = 7 feet ≈ 2.1336 m). On the other hand, whether that expresses the gate's actual measurements, or the measurement system used by the author of the survey drawing, is uncertain. If the drawings of the building were sent from Stockholm, then their author could have used Swedish cubits, but if they were made locally, then mostly so-called Rhineland units of measurement were used in architecture and fortification here.

77 See an overview: Anna Ancāne, *Rīgas arhitektūra un pilsētībūvniecība 17. gadsimta otrajā pusē*. Latvijas Mākslas akadēmijas Mākslas vēstures institūta disertācijas, V (Rīga: Latvijas Mākslas akadēmijas Mākslas vēstures institūts; Mākslas vēstures pētījumu atbalsta fonds, 2016), 275–276.

Charles's Gate, which was named after king Charles XI, was located on the south side of Riga's city fortifications and built in 1685–1687. The construction of this new gate was part of the renovation of the city fortifications, designed by Dahlbergh; a separate ravelin gate was built simultaneously. Since we know that the drawings for Charles's Gate were sent from Stockholm, it has been thought probable that Dahlbergh was closely involved in the preparation of the design for the gate.⁷⁸ It is clear from the written sources that a lavish sculptural décor was produced for the gate, including figures, relief busts of the king and queen and other decorations (sculptors Elias Rohn, Hans Walter Schmiessel).⁷⁹ The façade is depicted in a later drawing from 1761,⁸⁰ (Fig. 4) according to which it originally had a triangular gable and side niches, similarly to the Imperial Gate in Narva.⁸¹ From the figures in the drawing, we may surmise that the niches housed the statues of Minerva (or Pallas Athena) and Mars; in the two armed male figures reclining on the gable we might recognise the wild man with a bludgeon and a Roman legionary with a spear. Probably, Peter I had had a chance to study that gate at length, as well as other examples of Baroque architecture in Riga,⁸² when he stayed incognito in Riga as part of a 'large entourage'.

The foregoing also compels us to take seriously the possibility that the Swedes may have planned a rich sculptural décor, incl. human figures, for the city gate in Narva. If we study the written sources

78 It may be so, because in the beginning and middle of the 1680s Dahlbergh was most actively personally involved in the design of fortifications as a Quartermaster General, later he carried out different administrative roles and more often had to leave the fortification department to his colleagues.

79 Paul Campe, 'Die Stadttore Rigas im 17., 18. und 19. Jh. und deren Meister', *Latvijas universitātes raksti. Arhitektūras fakultātes serijs*, II, 3 (Rīga: Latvijas Universitāte, 1939), 286–298. The gateway, measured in a later drawing from 1795, is 3.7 m in width and 5.6 m in height. The figures and their placement differ somewhat from what is depicted in the 1761 drawing. The stones for stonework were brought from Saaremaa and Gotland.

80 First published: Yuri Vasilyev, *Klassicism v arhitekture Rigi. Ocherk istorii planirovki i zastrojki Rigi v konce XVII – nachale XIX v.* (Rīga: Akademija nauk Latvijas SSR, Institut stroitel'stva i arhitektury, 1961), 35. The drawing was in the Leningrad department of the Russian State Military Historical Archive at the time, but no precise citation has been given.

81 The Dome Gate in Tallinn, which was built in the main in 1685–1693, possibly according to Paul von Essen's design, also had side niches, although owing to the different architecture of the gate, they were located on the frontal facade of the balconied wings and the potential figures designed for the niches remained unmade. See e.g. a later drawing by C. F. C. Buddeus: Estonian History Museum [Eesti Ajaloomuseum, AM], AM 13757 G 6549, <https://www.muis.ee/museaalview/2509907> [accessed 17/02/2024]. Nurk, 'Tallinn', *Eesti linnaehituse ajalugu: keskajast tsaariaja lõpuni, 2. Linnade uuenemine. Uusaegse linnaplaneerimise algus kindluslinnades ja väikelinnade allakäik 1561–1710*, 193.

82 In Riga, three triumphal arch type portals with human figures have survived on the main façade of St. Peter's Church (1690s) from the Swedish rule till today. (Ancāne, *Rīgas arhitektūra un pilsētībūvniecība 17. gadsimta otrajā pusē*, 100 ff, 359).



FIG. 4. EXTERNAL FAÇADE OF CHARLES'S GATE OF RIGA'S CITY FORTIFICATIONS. DRAWING IS MADE IN 1761 PROBABLY IN ORDER TO DEMONSTRATE THE NEED FOR RENOVATIONS. REFERENCE TO THE ORIGINAL IS UNKNOWN. VASILYEV, *KLASSICIZM V ARHITEKTURE RIGI*, 35; ANCĀNE, *RIGAS ARHITEKTŪRA UN PILSĒTBŪVNICĪBA 17. GADSIMTA OTRAJĀ PUSE*, 276, FIG. 260.

specified by Karling carefully, then we find that when Heroldt is trusted with the works on the gate in the beginning of the 1690s, the possibility of making figures is indeed mentioned (*das Tor mit seinen Figuren und dem Zierat nach der Architektur auszuführen*).⁸³ Moreover, a main portal with human figures was not an unknown phenomenon in the Swedish era architecture in Narva: let us mention the main portal of the Narva Town Hall as the most stately example of many, ordered from Stockholm in 1686 and surviving to this day, whose gable includes, besides the coat of arms of the city, three

83 Karling, Narva. *Eine baugeschichtliche Untersuchung*, 300.

female figures, with the virtue Justitia towering above others.⁸⁴ It is also interesting that the façade drawing of the design for the very stately stock exchange building in Narva (ca. 1697) includes a rather similar larger-than-life figure composition as was on the later King's or Imperial Gate, although of course the figures are different, with Mercury in the highest honorary position (figures were not executed). Exactly the same Heroldt, mentioned above as a first master builder and maybe an architect of the King's Gate, is considered also as the author of the façade of the stock exchange building.⁸⁵ Furthermore, based on account books from the Swedish era, Karling has established that the triangular fronton of the main façade of merchant Hermann Poorten's grandiose palace-like house, which did survive until World War II, had originally boasted three large wooden figures, to which another figure was added on the gable of the house itself. Their author was a young sculptor Jakob Leu whom Heroldt had invited from Riga to help (see also below).⁸⁶ Therefore, it seems rather possible that the Swedes may have had similar ideas on the position of the figures on the external façade of the King's Gate, as became ultimately executed.

THE FIGURES OF THE EXTERNAL FAÇADE AND THEIR MESSAGE

Since the exact specification of the gate's sculptures and architectural details was not an aim for the maker of the 1728 drawing, the drawings undoubtedly do not depict the structure in all its particulars. In the drawing of the external façade, the figures have been drawn quite clumsily, even slightly cluelessly, but still with enough detail to help us understand who is who, in which pose and with which attributes.

In the drawing from 1728, Paul is at the top of the gate fronton, two female virtues stand lower down on his two sides, and in the niches next to the gateway there are two contextually appropriately belligerent ancient Roman male gods. Based on the surviving schematic depiction, it seems that the figures were in lively, mobile poses. Furthermore, the

84 Karling, Narva. *Eine baugeschichtliche Untersuchung*, 256–257.

85 Ibid., 361–362, incl. fig. 195.

86 Sten Karling, *Holzschnitzerei und Tischlerkunst der Renaissance und des Barocks in Estland*. Verhandlungen der Gelehrten Estnischen Gesellschaft, 34 (Dorpat: Öpetatud Eesti Selts, K. Mattiesen, 1943), 343.



FIG. 5. COMPARE: THE ICONOGRAPHIC PROGRAMME OF THE EXTERNAL FAÇADES OF THE IMPERIAL GATE IN NARVA AND ST. PETER'S GATE OF THE PETER AND PAUL FORTRESS. ACCORDING TO DRAWINGS FROM 1728 AND 1766 RESPECTIVELY. DRAWING: RAGNAR NURK.

A. IMPERIAL GATE IN NARVA:

- 1 – PAUL THE APOSTLE; ATTRIBUTE: BOOK, AN ANGEL BY HIS FEET;
- 2 – HOPE (LAT. *SPES*) THE VIRTUE; ANCHOR;
- 3 – FORTITUDE (LAT. *FORTITUDO*) THE VIRTUE; COLUMN;
- 4 – MARS, THE ROMAN GOD OF WAR; SPEAR, SHIELD, LION;
- 5 – NEPTUNE, THE ROMAN GOD OF THE SEA; TRIDENT, DOLPHIN.

B. ST. PETER'S GATE OF THE PETER AND PAUL FORTRESS (FROM THE 1714–1716 STAGE OF CONSTRUCTION):

- 1 – PETER THE APOSTLE, ATTRIBUTE: TWO KEYS (PERISHED), ANGELS NEXT TO HIM (CARRYING TRUMPETS ORIGINALLY);
- 2 – HOPE (LAT. *SPES*) THE VIRTUE; ANCHOR;
- 3 – FAITH (LAT. *FIDES*) THE VIRTUE; CROSS, BOOK;
- 4 – PRUDENCE (LAT. *PRUDENTIA*) THE VIRTUE; MIRROR, SERPENT;
- 5 – FORTITUDE (LAT. *FORTITUDO*) THE VIRTUE; COLUMN;
- 6 – MARS, THE ROMAN GOD OF WAR; SPEAR, SHIELD;
- 7 – NEPTUNE, THE ROMAN GOD OF THE SEA; TRIDENT, DOLPHIN;

A – RELIEF *SABAOOTH – THE LORD OF HOSTS*;

B – ALLEGORICAL RELIEF *PETER THE APOSTLE OVERTHROWS SIMON MAGUS*;

C – RELIEFS WITH TROPHIES.

THE ONLY THING KNOWN ABOUT THE ORIGINAL SCULPTURAL PROGRAMME OF THE STONE GATE COMMENCED IN 1708 IS THAT THERE WAS A FIGURE OF PETER THE APOSTLE ABOVE THE GATE, AND THE COAT OF ARMS OF RUSSIA WAS INITIALLY ON THE INTERNAL FAÇADE OF THE GATE, LIKE IN NARVA.

symmetry of the figures' poses clearly has been important for the artist. The emphasis is on the centre of the gate and every character's gaze is directed at the entrant to the city. The little angel next to Paul, swinging his legs over the gable's edge and peering down at the comers, is an

especially elegant vignette. The scheme here gives an overview of the figures and their attributes. (Fig. 5A) Thus, the lower part highlights the more militaristic side, as though to suggest that the fortress is under the protection of gods themselves, and the upper part stresses the Christian-spiritual values, to convey the moral superiority of the defenders. All figures were approximately 3 metres tall.

As we have seen, Peter I personally suggested which apostle should be placed in the highest honorary position on the gate structure. Of his two attributes – the sword signifying his martyrdom and the book representing his letters – Paul has been depicted with just the open book. Therefore, it seems that they wished to stress his role as a proselytizer and maybe more specifically also his role as an apostle of the gentiles. Tsar Peter had been christened on the Feast Day of Saints Peter and Paul (29 June, 12 July according to the Julian calendar of the Orthodox Church). Both apostles therefore were the saints of his name day; they are often depicted together, whether it be as name saints of churches or in art. The church built in the Peter and Paul Fortress, very tellingly, was dedicated to them.

The question of why tsar Peter wished to bestow that position in Narva to Paul the Apostle and what symbolism may lie behind it, would merit a more substantial analysis in the future. One simple explanation that could be proposed is that perhaps in the mind of Peter I the main gates of the St. Petersburg and Narva fortresses – two most important at that time in his hands – constituted a pair, and he wished to highlight one of the two apostles at either location. Another, more philosophical explanation could be that just as Paul had changed from the persecutor of Christians into the preacher of Jesus's message to all peoples, including pagans or gentiles, the city that had been astray had now been won over to the 'right' side.⁸⁷

Previous would align with the idea that is expressed more directly on the central relief on St. Peter's Gate of the Peter and Paul Fortress 'Peter the Apostle overthrows Simon Magus' (*Nizverženie Simona*

⁸⁷ According to the Biblical metaphor, Paul, then Saul, having been blinded by the divine light on his way to Damascus, regained his vision thanks to one good Christian. In the Baroque art he is depicted, similarly to other saints, as a tall man with long white hair and beard, although it contrasts with his descriptions in the scripture and with the earlier iconographic tradition. His attributes were a downward pointing sword, by which he as a Roman citizen would be privileged to die, and a book or a scroll, which symbolised his epistles. See e.g.: Diane Apostolos-Cappadona, *A guide to Christian art* (London [etc.]: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2020), 121–122.

Volhva apostolom Petrom'),⁸⁸ where Saint Peter, as the defeater of the great heretic, which their contemporary audience read as the victory over Sweden of Charles XII in the Great Northern War, is perceptibly depicted with the features of Peter I.⁸⁹ Both of the apostles appear in the better known version of the story, the Passion of Peter and Paul: when Peter ordered the demons to drop the witch/magician on the rocks, Paul was praying next to Peter. That is exactly how we see it on the relief on the Peter and Paul Fortress, which means that Paul is 'present' on that gate, too.

Virtues are on both sides of the apostle. Hope (*Spes*) is on his right – one of the divine virtues, depicted as a charming lady in loose clothing with the anchor, her usual attribute. Fortitude (*Fortitudo*) is on his left, one of the human or cardinal virtues, draped in abundant clothing and holding on to a sturdy column – her signifier. It was of course pertinent during a war to highlight hope for an ultimate victory or simply positive expectation of a better future under the new rule. Fortitude, for example, could convey that there is no way back, that the conquered city will be defended firmly, valiantly, bravely and there is no returning to the old.

Ancient Roman gods were placed in the niches on the sides of the gateway. Mars, the god of war, was armoured, holding a spear in his right hand and a shield in his left, with his right foot resting on a reclining lion. Neptune, the god of the sea, was depicted with long hair and a beard and an athletic naked upper body, wearing a crown as the ruler of the seas and holding a trident in his left hand, while his left foot was placed robustly on the head of a large sea creature. It may be surmised from the drawing that the depicted creature had a large head, fins near the head and a wide pronged tail. Thus, it was probably a dolphin, a frequent companion of the sea god in

88 Simon Magus – Samaritan magician turned Christian – is referred to in the 8th chapter of *The Acts of the Apostles* in the Bible. According to a separate apocryphal lore (Acts of Peter, Passion of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul), he later moved to Rome. As a 'false Messiah' he attempted to prove to Nero the emperor that he was the actual son of God, and jumped off a tower built for that purpose, to demonstrate his ability to fly, which at first indeed worked thanks to help from demons. When he, after the intervention by Peter (and Paul who had supported him in prayer), fell and died, Nero ordered the martyrdom of apostles. See e.g.: Alberto Ferreiro, *Simon Magus in Patristic, Medieval and Early Modern Traditions*. Christian Tradition, 125 (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2005), 55–81, including on Paul's role 70–74.

89 In order not to leave much room for interpretation, Peter I, in the guise of Peter the Apostle, is depicted also in Roman armour with a laurel wreath on his head.

works of art at the time.⁹⁰ It seems that something has broken off from Neptune's right hand by the time of the drawing of the façade in 1728, so that we do not know what he was holding in that.

The choice of the lion by Mars's feet raises questions (the wolf would be a more regular companion for Mars), as it was the well-known symbol of the enemy, Sweden. Perhaps there was no ulterior motive behind the lion, and it was just supposed to couple with the fish accompanying Neptune. At the same time, the lion could also have been a symbol of the taming of 'the lion of Sweden', or its surrender. Peter liked to associate himself with Mars, as noted before with regards to Peter's house in Narva. The choice of Neptune for the gate may express the fact that Narva was a harbour town, for whom the river and the link to the sea was vital. At the same time, it stresses the general importance that Peter I assigned to Russia's becoming a naval power.⁹¹

These are, of course, merely possible and very generic interpretations, and further analysis is welcome.

INTERNAL FAÇADE WITH THE COAT OF ARMS OF RUSSIA

The drawings of 1728 highlight the difference between the architectural executions of the gate's external and internal façades. The aesthetic of the internal façade somewhat, but not directly, resembles the robust rusticism of the external façade of St. Peter's Gate of the Peter and Paul Fortress, designed by Trezzini. By side of that, the wooden drawbridge gate with its stepped pilasters and baroquely lush volutes feels completely 'Trezzinian'.

We find the gigantic coat of arms of Russia with the two-headed eagle towering above the internal façade, as though constantly reminding the citizens about their new rulers. It is no wonder that the Danish ambassador remembered that coat of arms, of more than 4 m in height, from the gate. As evident from the written sources mentioned earlier, the eagle was originally meant for the highest position on the external façade. The eagle is holding the apple in his

90 Similar motif, for example, from the 16th century: Giulio Romano, Neptune Holding a Trident and Standing on a Dolphin. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Accession Number: 1975.131.30. Image: <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/338912> [accessed 17/02/2024].

91 A nautical school was opened in Narva after the siege, which was transferred to St. Petersburg only in 1715. (Kochenovsky, *Narva. Gradostroitel'noe razvitie i arhitektura*, 92).

right claw and the sceptre and sword in his left. If the drawing is indeed precise, then left and right had been switched on that coat of arms above the gate, in contrast to convention. Usually, the state apple and sceptre were positioned in reverse order, just like the direction of Saint George fighting the dragon on the small coat of arms. It is not known whether such a strange anomaly of directions actually existed, or perhaps the sketcher of the gate had made a mistake.

With regards to the sword, we might speculate that the weapon was deemed suitable for a fortress gate in a place that had been conquered by raw force. The sword in the claw of the eagle is unusual, but it did occur occasionally on the coat of arms during Peter I. Georgi Vilinbahov has given examples of the usage of the sword on coats of arms as a symbol of power, including on triumphal arches and designs for buildings. One triumphal arch, which was erected in Moscow for the victory parade in December 1704, to celebrate the conquest of Narva, also included a text that explained the meaning of the sword, 'holding a cruciform sceptre, the sign of power, and a sword, the sign of truth and revenge, with which His Majesty keeps his Russian land untouched' (in Russian: '*krestoobrazne skipetr s rukoju, znamenie deržavnyja sily, i meč*', *znamenie pravdy i otmšenija, jako tyimi ego carskoe presvetloe veličestvo rossijskuju zemlju svoju v celosti sobljudaet*').⁹² Thus, in his contemporary Russian rhetoric, the conquest of Narva, which had been founded by Western crusaders in the 13th–14th centuries, was justified as part of retaking 'Russian lands'.

Next to the sculptural décor, the rest of the Imperial Gate's surfaces seem to have been blank. It is possible that it was intentional, so that the sculptures would stand out more. On the other hand, it is unusual that no other reliefs, symbols or texts are visible on the gate. In contrast, for example, to St. Peter's Gate of the Peter and Paul Fortress. Perhaps the décor and iconographic programme remained unfinished in Narva? Perhaps, for example, because attention turned increasingly towards St. Petersburg?

92 Georgi V. Vilinbahov, 'Simvolika meča v ruskoj gosudarstvennoj geraldike XVII — pervoj četverti XVIII vv.', *Geraldika. Materialy i issledovanija. Sbornik naučnyh trudov* (Leningrad: Gos. Ėrmitaž, 1987). Reference to the source of the historical citation there: *Russkaja staropečatnaja literatura (XVI – pervaja četvert' XVIII v.). Panegiričeskaja literatura Petrovskogo vremeni* (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo 'Nauka', 1979), 168.

THE FATE OF THE SCULPTURES AND THE GATE

Regarding the sculptures, including the coat of arms, it is most possible that they were made of wood just like the first sculptures of St. Peter's Gate of the Peter and Paul Fortress (see below). Based on the drawing from 1728, which depicts all figures as uniformly whitish or grey, we might think that an attempt had been made to make them resemble classical stone sculptures. On the other hand, we cannot rule out the possibility that the sculptures were indeed polychromatic (e.g. simplification by the drawer, later overpainting). For example, regarding Riga's fortress gates, Paul Campe has discovered many reports in archival sources about their being painted in polychrome and even having their details gilded in the 17th–18th centuries.⁹³ Both the Orthodox church and the house of Peter I were also being built in Narva in the first years of the Russian rule, so wood carvers had to be at hand, whether from Russia or perhaps also some local masters. Regarding the latter, Karling had already discovered from archival sources that Trezzini (he has 'Dominicus Trezzini') collaborated with Jakob Leu in Narva. In the 1690s, Leu had made the above-mentioned wooden figures for the façade of the Poorten house. Leu was said to have been equally skilled at working with wood and stone.⁹⁴

It is not known until when the figures survived on the gate, but they were probably removed or perished sometime in the 18th century. The only hitherto published depiction of the finished King's or Imperial Gate in Narva is in a very generic and flawed cityscape from 1784.⁹⁵ The gate, which is obviously drawn in the wrong place,

93 For example, in 1746, Charles's Gate is 'newly painted and gilded' (Campe, 'Die Stadttore Rigas im 17., 18. und 19. Jh. und deren Meister', 297).

94 Sten Karling, *Holzschnitzerei und Tischlerkunst der Renaissance und des Barocks in Estland*, 343–344. Karling referenced Narva city account books from 1704–1709 as his sources. Leu's closeness to power and his position is attested to by the fact that in 1707 he had Christened his son Aleksander in honour of Menshikov, and the event was attended by the commandant and the mayor.

95 University of Latvia Academic Library, collection of Johann Christoph Brotze: *Sammlung verschiedener Liefländischer Monumente, Prospective, Wapen, etc., Teil 3*, 191: 'Prospect der Stadt Narva außerhalb der Königspforte, nach einem von dem jungen *de Witten* um J. 1784 gemachten Entwurf.' Black-and-white digital copy: <https://dspace.lu.lv/dspace/handle/7/2395> [accessed 17/02/2024]. Although Karling was familiar with that drawing and he published it (Karling, *Narva. Eine baugeschichtliche Untersuchung*, 368 fig. 198), he gave no explanation why it depicted a facade with a triangular gable, which does not match the plan found in Sweden. Brotze's publication *Estonica* does not make closer mention of the King's Gate, but it makes a mistake identifying the gate's location from the scene, claiming as though it is falsely shown to be between bastions Honor and Victoria (Johann Christoph Brotze, *Estonica*, compiled by Ants Hein, et al. [Tallinn: Estopol, 2006], 46–48) – in fact, the gate is probably, in general terms, in the right place in the scene and it is not the Honor bastion that is partially obscuring the gate, but the King's Ravelin, as it was known in Swedish time.

is accurately depicted with a triangular gable; however, no sculptures can be seen on it anymore (maybe only a pedestal of the Paul). As a possibility, the gate may have lost them in the great fire of 1773, when almost all of the new part of the city burnt down, including the church and the guardhouse in the vicinity of the gate.⁹⁶ In 1807, the 'Imperial Gate obtained a new shape' (*"bekam die Kaiserpforte eine andere Form"*).⁹⁷ Probably right then the last remains of Baroque décor were removed, and the gate was given a classicistic appearance. As Yuri Vasilyev has identified, a few years earlier, in 1792–1802, this had been done to the Baroque gates from the end of the Swedish era in Riga – the King's Gate and Charles's Gate.⁹⁸ The final appearance of the Imperial Gate in Narva, which it could have received in the beginning of the 19th century, is depicted in the survey drawings from 1850.⁹⁹ (Fig. 6) The niches have been removed from the external façade and the pilasters have been depicted with strong rusticism, but this time without the bases and capitals, the tone is set by simple wall surfaces. As the most significant architectural change, the square gable of the internal façade has been replaced by a triangular one. The gable of the external façade is shown to be similarly low and the whole frieze and gable area is considerably more 'compacted' than in the drawing from 1728. Whether some actual reconstruction had occurred (in addition to the removal of the pedestals of the sculptures), or the author of one of the drawings had been inaccurate, remains open for now. The whole structure had been given a tin

96 Hansen, *Geschichte der Stadt Narva*, 306–307.

97 Ibid., 329. According to a register in the Russian State Military Historical Archive, in two consecutive years, 1806–1807, drawings were made of the Imperial Gate (RGVIA, 349.19.4735 ja 4745), which the author has not been able to study. It is probable that the reconstruction occurred in those years.

98 Vasilyev, *Klassicism v arhitekture Rigi. Ocherk istorii planirovki i zastrojki Rigi v konce XVII – nachale XIX v.*, 230. Drawing of the old facade of Charles's Gate: *ibid.*, 35; drawing and photo of the new facade of the same gate: Campe, 'Die Stadttore Rigas im 17., 18. und 19. Jh. und deren Meister', 292 fig. 25 and 293 fig. 26. The coat of arms of Russia with the two-headed eagle on the background of trophies was placed above the new facade there.

99 RGVIA, 349.19.5133. Photocopy in the archive of the Narva Museum Foundation, V., folder no. 8. There is a set of drawings of the gate, similar to the one from 1728: the floor plan, two façade views, longitudinal and cross sections. According to the measurements on the drawing, the gateway was 53 Russian/English feet long (ca. 16.15 m), both façades 39 feet wide (ca. 11.9 m), and the internal façade with the wings 88 feet wide (ca. 26.8 m), the external façade 28 feet 6 inches (ca. 8.7 m) and the internal façade 28 feet (ca. 8.5 m) tall, the gateway in general 15 feet (ca. 4.6 m) and its openings 13 feet 6 inches (ca. 4.1 m) wide. This drawing, which seems to aim for precision, could be verified and better localised by an archaeological study and should that be trustworthy enough, then it could be taken as a foundation for marking the gate's location in the city.



FIG. 6. IMPERIAL GATE IN NARVA IN THE 1850 SURVEY DRAWING: EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL FAÇADES. THE HEIGHT OF THE FIGURE OF THE SOLDIER IS CA. 2.1 M. RUSSIAN STATE MILITARY HISTORICAL ARCHIVES, PHOTOCOPY IN THE ARCHIVES OF NARVA MUSEUM.

roof. Stove and beds had been built for the guards in the casemate towards the Gloria bastion.

When a pathway was constructed straight through the Water Gate from the Narva bridge to the new St. Peter's Gate, erected on the west side of the city in the beginning of the 1820s, the main traffic towards Tallinn started moving through that¹⁰⁰ and the Imperial Gate lost its importance, remaining mainly as a passage to the northern suburb of Narva. The Imperial Gate was demolished probably soon after the demilitarisation of the fortress in 1864. No other views or photos of the gate are known. Today, neither the gate nor the scarp of the curtain wall is visible in the landscape, the Karja (Cattle) street's northern, cul-de-sac section runs above the gate. A building in Vestervalli street 25, which is part of a dental clinic complex, stretches above the gate's casemate towards the Honor bastion.¹⁰¹

A PROTOTYPE FOR ST. PETER'S GATE OF THE PETER AND PAUL FORTRESS

The fortifications of the Peter and Paul Fortress built on the Zayachy Island in the mouth of river Neva in 1703 were made quickly from earth with wooden internal constructions. As an aside, it should be said that the double-flanked shape, chosen for the bastions at the first stage, very much resembled the bastions in Narva, which

100 Hansen, *Geschichte der Stadt Narva*, 331: 'Petri-Pforte', 'die den Namen "Peter des Großen" führende Pforte'; Kochenovskiy, *Narva. Gradostroitel'noe razvitiie i arhitektura*, 121 fig. 1.94 (drawing of the facade).

101 The walls of a small single-storey Orthodox Church of St. Vladimir, which was built in 1900 and perished in 1944, were used in the construction of the building.

Dahlbergh had designed in the beginning of the 1680s. In May 1706, the construction commenced on the stone-walled – or rather brick¹⁰² – version of the Peter and Paul Fortress. It was carried out by the building organisation of Senyavin according to Trezzini's design and under his management. The general six-bastioned shape of the fortress remained similar, but the bastions were given a completely different architecture from earlier – it is the shape with orillons we know today, whose templates can be found in Italy and elsewhere in southern Europe.

The fact that Peter I had the main gate of the Peter and Paul Fortress, facing the Troitskaya Square, built similarly to Narva's, is well known and often repeated.¹⁰³ Malinovsky quotes an archive, 'In the next, 708th year stonework must be done in St. Petersburg: /.../ 4. The gate must be like Narva's and finished in three years' ('*V budušeĵ 708-j god delat' v Sanktpiterburhe kamennuju rabotoju. /.../ 4. Voroty delat' podobny Narvskim i zdelat' onyja v tri goda*').¹⁰⁴ The order, of course, is most logical if we presume that its executors, Senyavin and Trezzini had earlier built a gate in Narva. Furthermore, as transpires from Peter's quite frequent visits to Narva in 1706, he must also have seen the gate himself.

Thus, in 1707–1708, the design for the stone St. Peter's Gate of the Peter and Paul Fortress was ready and works commenced on it.¹⁰⁵ In the mentioned years, Peter's curtain was finished in stone between bastions Menshikov and Sovereign (*Gosudarev*), with St. Peter's Gate (*Petrovskie vorota*), i.e., the main gate of the fortress, in its centre. All that is known about the original sculptural programme of the stone gate that was started in 1708, is that it had a wooden figure of Peter the Apostle above it, and a wooden coat of arms of Russia was placed on the gate's internal façade. Malinovsky suggests that that could have been it, although more certain evidence of whether there may have been other sculptures, seems to be missing. Not a single pictorial depiction exists of that gate, for a long time it was thought that the whole gate had been a wooden structure. It is not

102 Later, the part facing the river Neva is covered with granite blocks.

103 E.g.: Piljavsky, *Russkie triumfal'nye pamätniki*, 8; Lisaeviĉ, *Pervyj arhitektor Peterburga*, 20; Raskin, *Triumfal'nye arki Leningrada*, 12; Ovsjannikov, *Dominiko Trezini*, 37.

104 Reference (after Malinovsky, *Dominiko Trezini*, 21): *Obšij arhiv MIDa. Spiski i vypiski iz arhivnyh bumag, SPb. (1888), Č. 2, 45.*

105 Factual information in the paragraph below is from: Malinovsky, *Dominiko Trezini*, 19–23.

known what the architectural appearance of that structure was; for example, what was its gable like, whether it already resembled its final version or was it perhaps a triangular gable like in Narva.

Only in 1714–1716, during a thorough reconstruction, Trezzini gave the gate a new appearance. In the first views, which depict the Peter and Paul Fortress in 1716 and 1725 (authors Aleksei Zubov and Christofer Marselius respectively), the final architecture of the gate, with its tall 'Baroque' gable, is already clearly discernible.¹⁰⁶ A more detailed drawing that still shows most figures (excl. Peter), although some attributes seem to have perished, comes from 1766 (sometimes also dated to the 1730s).¹⁰⁷ Finishing the décor took until the end of the next decade. Based on archival sources, Malinovsky has established that all figures and reliefs were now erroneously made in plasterwork (*štukaturnaja rabota*). When it transpired that this material is completely inappropriate in the northern climate, Trezzini proposed adopting metal instead or, if that is not immediately possible, temporarily mount wooden and overpainted sculptures. Only the coat of arms was made of metal, it was placed on the external façade straight above the gateway and it has survived till today. Other figures and reliefs were again made of wood.¹⁰⁸ On the current gate, we can see only later copies of the reliefs, and of the figures, the two that are in the niches that flank the gateway (the latter made newly of mortar mix).

The question, where the templates for the definitive architecture of Peter's gates as we know them today came from, we will leave deliberately aside as insignificant with regards to the Imperial Gate in Narva, but we will highlight the parallels in their sculptural décor. The programmes for both Narva and St. Petersburg convey the ambiguous foundations of European culture at the time. Christian values (apostles, virtues) on the one hand, and on the other, the veneration of classical culture (Roman gods and military

106 At the same time, the drawing by Zubov is probably not very trustworthy, considering that in the same picture he has been liberally imaginative about the shape of the tower of the Peter and Paul Cathedral. It is the only image, however, where the figure of Peter with the keys has been drawn in more detail, but the female figures next to him seem to represent different virtues from those that are known from other sources (e.g. one of them is clearly *Justitia* with her weighing scales).

107 RGAVMF, 31-34-3099, 1–2.

108 Parts of the wooden original reliefs are exhibited in the museum exhibition in the casemates of the Peter and Paul Fortress, which presents the history of the fortress.

paraphernalia); the gate's classical Roman triumphal arch-inspired architecture also pointing to the latter.

As can be seen from the given comparison, all four classical gods and virtues that were present on the Narva gate ended up on the final St. Peter's Gate. (Fig. 5B) The gods Mars and Neptune are on the 'bottom floor' there, too, but they have been shifted from the centre of the gate towards the edges, having made room for the virtues in the niches. Of the virtues, Hope (Latin *Spes*, Russian *Nadežda*) occurs in the same position as in Narva, on the edge of the gable above Mars. Above its partner, on the other edge of the gable, where in Narva there was Fortitude, there is Faith (*Fides*, *Vera* or *Blagočestie*). Fortitude (*Fortitudo*, *Hrabrost'* or *Mužestvo*) is on 'a floor' below in St. Petersburg, next to Neptune, and partnered with Prudence (*Prudentia*, *Blagorazumie*).¹⁰⁹ Thus, two Christian virtues have been added: Faith of the divine virtues and Prudence of the human or cardinal virtues. Of the seven Christian virtues, the following have been omitted: Love (*Caritas*, *Ljubov'*) from the divine, and Justice (*Justitia*, *Spravedlivost'*) and Temperance (*Temperantia*, *Umerennost'*) from the human. Instead of the playful little angel in Narva, in St. Petersburg there were two majestic trumpeting angels of the same size as the rest of the sculptures.¹¹⁰

We could say that the programme of Trezzini's St. Peter's Gate is more profound and sober, more philosophical and religious than in Narva. Regarding the figures, compared to Narva, the programme has been broadened rather than completely altered, the more substantive profound innovations are the allegorical reliefs, which we lightly touched upon earlier. It is very clear that the whole gate, in terms of its scope and architecture as well as its programme, is developed more grandiosely, appropriately for the emergent capital city.

109 In the niches, uniquely today, we can see allegorical female figures, but compared to the originals, they have been redesigned to some extent (e.g. Fortitude lacks the column as an attribute) and the original meaning has become blurred. The current figures are often interpreted as embodiments of the goddess Athena – Athena Pallas in armour and the other Athena Polias (protector of cities).

110 Similar motif is later used in the sculptural décor of the hall of the Kadriorg Palace of Peter I.

CONCLUSION

The gates in Narva and St. Petersburg resembled triumphal arches rather than fortress gates, and their propagandist message was clearly of primary significance for Peter I: indeed, they were recently conquered territories. One of the differences in the iconographic programmes of the two gates is the apostle in the uppermost position on the gate structure – Paul and Peter respectively –, while both were important in the Christian church and for Peter himself. In the context of Europe, including the Swedish Empire and its Baltic provinces, these stately buildings and fortress gates with classical architecture and sculptural elements were nothing new. In Russia, however, next to the temporary wooden triumphal arches, Trezzini's Imperial Gate in Narva and St. Peter's Gate in the Peter and Paul Fortress were the first two examples of the triumphal arch-type fortress gate, which also paved a way for the future tradition of combining architecture and sculpture. As we have seen, the Imperial Gate in Narva was indeed the prototype for St. Peter's Gate, as Peter I had wished and dictated to Trezzini. At the same time, it seems probable that since the carved stones for the gate arrived in Narva in 1700, the gate's general architecture still partially reflects the Swedish design. That design was not the same as has survived in the archive in Sweden, but it probably rather resembled Charles's Gate, one of Riga's most significant city gates. It is possible that large figures had been planned for the gate even during the Swedish reign, but what kind, we will probably never know.

This article here is but a first overview of a hitherto unpublished source and of the general context of the structure depicted in it. It should encourage searches for additional information from archival sources, for example, about the gate's construction process and later fate, and for additional explanations for the iconographic programme. The possibility of finding better drawings of the gate's façade with the sculptures is probably modest, but it cannot be ruled out, because the respective collections in Russian archives have not been thoroughly studied yet.

RAGNAR NURK: DOMENICO TREZZINI'S IMPERIAL GATE IN NARVA
KEYWORDS: DOMENICO TREZZINI, PETER I, NARVA, THE PETER AND PAUL FORTRESS OF SAINT PETERSBURG, BAROQUE FORTRESS GATES, ALLEGORICAL SCULPTURES

SUMMARY

Before the devastation of the Second World War, the well-preserved historic city Narva, on the eastern border of the Republic of Estonia, was known as a pearl of late 17th century Swedish Baroque architecture. The development of the most promising economic and administrative centre of the Kingdom of Sweden in the eastern part of the Gulf of Finland was halted as a result of the Great Northern War. However, after the bloody and destructive siege of 1704, there was a short period in which Peter I tried to highlight Narva as his victory trophy, which was to undo the disgrace of his previous defeat in the Narva battle of 1700, resulting in several construction projects (for example the house, or “palace”, of the Tsar himself and the remodelling of one of the churches into the orthodox cathedral).

According to the personal testimony of Domenico Trezzini, famous first architect of St Petersburg, his first work in Russia was the city gates in Narva. Letters exchanged between construction project leader Ulyan Senyavin and governor general Alexander Menshikov confirm that the “architect from St Petersburg” was heading the construction of the city gates at least in 1705. Moreover, Peter I probably personally revised the design for the sculptural programme, demanding the figure of Paul the Apostle be set above the gates. The citations of these and other relevant sources were published by the recent biographer of Trezzini Konstantin Malinovsky, attracting the attention of the author of the present paper. Partly because of misinterpretations of earlier Russian authors Malinovsky did not manage to reach a conclusion as to whether it was a temporary triumphal arch in the place of the breach, or a real city gate, and if so which gate.

In the Russian State Military Historical Archives in Moscow, among a full set of drawings documenting the fortifications of Narva as of 1728, i.e. shortly after the Great Northern War, there is also one sheet dedicated to the Emperor's Gate that surprises with its rich sculptural decoration. During the Swedish era the new gate designated for the same location, in between the bastions of Gloria and Honour, was to

be called the King's Gate. Despite the opinion of the eminent Swedish art historian Sten Karling that this gate was built of stone before the 1704 siege, a closer look at the Swedish fortress plans (especially that of 1703 found only recently) makes it highly improbable. It is quite likely that the gate was made by Trezzini out of carved stones collected on the site before the war, which might explain the close resemblance of its architecture to the earlier Swedish fortress gates, especially Karl's Gate in Riga. The Emperor's Gate on its own became the prototype for Peter's Gate at the Peter and Paul Fortress in St Petersburg, as Peter I himself ordered it to be made “resembling the one in Narva”, although the gate itself was throned by St Peter, another of Peter I spiritual patrons. Trezzini, as is now clear, took over almost all the sculptural décor from Narva, expanding on it. The symbolic meanings of the statuary, here only covered at the most basic level, are ripe for further discussion.

CV

Ragnar Nurk, MA, (b. 1983) following earlier work experience as an archaeological fieldwork leader in a private company, is currently an archaeologist at the Tallinn Urban Planning Department Heritage Protection Unit. His research in the field of historical archaeology and architectural history focusses on early modern period bastioned fortifications in the territory of Estonia, including their connections with Baroque urban planning. He has studied the historic city and fortress plans in Swedish and Russian archives.

