

A Symbol of Habsburg Military Power: the Slavonian General Command Palace in Osijek (1723)

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Abstract

The Palace of the Slavonian General Command in Osijek was built in 1723–1724 for the needs of the administration of the Slavonian Military Frontier, formed after the Karlowitz Treaty (1699). In keeping with its preeminent purpose as the seat of the Imperial War Council representatives, the palace stands out with a richly diversified exterior accentuated by a portal with atlantes, and a complex interior organized around a three-aisled vestibule. This gave it an outstanding position in the context of kindred administrative buildings in the wider Central-European region, indicating that the origins of the design were in the Baroque architecture of Vienna. The project itself emerged from the circle of military architects engaged in work on the border fortress cities of the Habsburg Monarchy, whose fortification was supervised by Eugene of Savoy, as President of the Imperial War Council.

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The Palace of the Slavonian General Command and the fortress city of Osijek

[1] The Palace of the Slavonian General Command in Osijek,¹ today the seat of the Josip Juraj Strossmayer University, was built in the 1720s for the administration of the Slavonian Military Frontier. The great war of liberation from

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the Ottoman Turks, in which Prince Eugene of Savoy played a key role, began with the Ottoman defeat at Vienna (1683) and ended with the Treaty of Karlowitz (1699). After it ended, the liberated territory of eastern Croatia (Slavonia, Baranja, Srijem) was excluded from the jurisdiction of the Croatian Kingdom and placed under the Court Chamber in Vienna, while the Imperial War Council took over military control. This territorial organization led to the construction of an integrated system of fortress cities and the establishment of general commands; in view of the order in which territories were liberated, the Slavonian General Command was founded first (1701). Its seat was in the city liberated first - Osijek (1687), which had a prominent strategic position on the south bank of the Drava. Parallel with the fortification of Osijek, which got a modern system of bastions, and the transformation of its medieval tissue into a planned Baroque town, plans began to build the Palace of the General Command on the central square. This palace was to house the offices of the Court Chamber and the War Council, and serve as a residence for the Commander of Slavonia (Figs. 1, 2).



1 Osijek, view of the fortress city with the General Command Palace on the main square (photo: P. Mofardin)



2 General Command Palace, Osijek, 1723–1765, main façade (photo: P. Mofardin)

[2] In accordance with its prestigious purpose, the palace is notable for distinctive architectural features – a richly diversified exterior accentuated by a portal with atlantes, and a complex interior arranged around a vestibule with columns. This makes it not only one of the finest Baroque palaces in Croatia, but also prominent in the framework of Central-European secular architecture.² Moreover, in the context of the other general command headquarters on the territory of the Habsburg Monarchy bordering with the Ottoman Empire, which were erected in the period when the frontier was being restructured in the first half of the eighteenth century, the Osijek palace played the role of a prototype. Nevertheless, it was mentioned no more than incidentally in existing scholarly literature, the history of its construction is unexplored, and attribution and evaluations remain incomplete.³

[3] The institution of the Slavonian General Command was already established two years after the Treaty of Karlowitz.⁴ However, in those still uncertain times at the turn of the seventeenth to the eighteenth century the situation in the Osijek

² More on the cultural influence of Central-European art on Slavonia: Mirjana Repanić-Braun, "Eastern Slavonia: Reception of Baroque Art and Culture on the Outskirts of the Habsburg Empire", in: *Barocke Kunst und Kultur im Donauraum*, eds. Karl Mösender, Michael Thimann and Adolf Hofstetter, Passau 2014, 353-366.

³ Blažo Misita-Katušić, "Kratok pregled arhitekture Osijeka kroz tri stoljeća", in: *Osječki zbornik* 5 (1956), 171-185; Anđela Horvat, "Barok u kontinentalnoj Hrvatskoj", in: Anđela Horvat, Radmila Matejčić and Kruno Prijatelj, *Barok u Hrvatskoj*, Zagreb 1982, 3-381: 116, 258; Ive Mažuran, *Grad i tvrđava Osijek*, Osijek 2000, 92; Vladimir Bedenko, *Generalvojarna – Tvrđa – Osijek, Konzervatorska studija i idejni projekt rekonstrukcije*, Zagreb 2004.

fortress city (known as *Tvrđa*) was such that the focus was on building fortifications; therefore, the General Command headquarters had at first to be placed in a temporary site. Archival plans – projects for the construction of the fortress and the town – show, however, that from the outset the most eminent city location had been reserved for the General Command Palace, on the spacious central square.

[4] When it was liberated from the Ottoman Turks in 1687, Osijek still retained its organic medieval urban tissue in which churches had been replaced by mosques during the 150-year-long Ottoman occupation. This is how it appears on the first plan for modernizing the fortifications from 1688,⁵ commissioned by the military commander Margrave Ludwig Wilhelm of Baden-Baden (1655–1707).⁶ Just two years later, the same military commander commissioned a new, considerably more radical plan from the chief fortification engineer for Hungary, Matthias von Kaysersfeld, which did not include only the bastion fortifications, but also an orthogonally planned city within them.⁷ Kaysersfeld's expertise on the basic principles of Baroque town planning is evidenced by the axial composition, in which the main communication passes through the central square, connects the 'land' and 'river' gates, and continues across a bridge over the Drava river to the Baranja plains. Crucial for our topic, though, is the planned building of the military command headquarters on the central square. When he came to Osijek in 1690, and devoted himself to the demanding work of reconstructing the town and fortifications, Kaysersfeld had to somewhat modify the intended ideal symmetry of the urban matrix,⁸ as his new plans dated 1691 and 1693 show.⁹ The city centre, however, persisted on the square of Paradni trg (German,

⁴ Zdenka Baždar, *Slavonska generalkomanda 1701-1848*, Zagreb 1999.

⁵ Kriegsarchiv, Vienna (hereinafter: OeStA/KA), GPA, Inland C VII, No. 5, 1688; published in: Sonja Gaćina and Grgur Marko Ivanković, *Planovi i vedute Osijeka*, Osijek 1996.

⁶ Mira Ilijanić and Marija Mirković, "Prilog dokumentaciji o građevnoj povijesti osječke Tvrđe na prijelazu sedamnaestog u osamnaesto stoljeće", in: *Godišnjak zaštite spomenika kulture Hrvatske* 4-5 (1978-1979), 91-107.

⁷ Badisches Generallandesarchiv, Karlsruhe; published in: Mažuran, *Grad i tvrđava Osijek*, 47-48. In Mažuran's opinion, the plan referred to the medieval town of Osijek, but our research into the Karlsruhe archives, carried out together with Ivana Haničar Buljan, showed that the intention at this stage was to build a new fortress city east of the existing town, on the site of today's Donji grad (Lower Town). The military authorities, though, rejected this proposal, and thus the fortifications of the existing town began to be modernized, with the concurrent redesign of its urban tissue.

⁸ Zlatko Uzelac, "Barokna preobrazba srednjovjekovne (orijentalizirane) urbane strukture Osijeka", in: *Artos. Online časopis Akademije za umjetnost i kulturu u Osijeku* 5 (2016), <http://www.uaos.unios.hr/artos/index.php/hr/clanci-i-eseji/uzelac-z-barokna-preobrazba> (accessed 4 June, 2020).

Paradeplatz), today's Trg Sv. Trojstva (Holy Trinity Square), on which the General Command Palace was erected about thirty years later.

[5] The intensive development of the Osijek fortifications and of the planned town within them continued after the Karlowitz Treaty (1699), when Prince Eugene of Savoy (1663–1736) was appointed key organizer of the frontier defences.¹⁰ Becoming the head of the Imperial War Council in 1703, Prince Eugen began a radical modernization of the fortified border towns and carefully selected their commanders and engineers. In 1710, he sent a new commander to Osijek, General Johann Stephan von Beckers, who until his death in 1721 headed the construction of the fortress according to the Prince's instructions. He was succeeded by his son-in-law, General Maximilian Petrasch.¹¹ In keeping with his fascination by Vauban and French fortresses, Eugene of Savoy ordered the designs from first-rate French and Swiss military engineers, outstanding among which were Jean Petis de la Croix and Nicolas Doxat de Démoret (1682–1738).¹² The chief engineer, who supervised the construction of the fortifications and the town of Osijek for many years, however, was Johann Friedrich von Heisse (Heyß).¹³ Thanks to their activities, by the 1720s Osijek got a complex star-shaped surround of bastions reinforced with hornwork in the east and crownwork in the north, across the river Drava (Fig. 3).¹⁴

⁹ OeStA/KA, K VII I, 106, 1690, 1691; G I h, 159-50, 1693; published in: Mažuran, *Grad i tvrđava Osijek*, 50-52; Andrej Žmegač, *Bastioni kontinentalne Hrvatske*, Zagreb 2000, 134-136.

¹⁰ Zlatko Uzelac, "Tvrđava Osijek i začetak strateškog lanca gradova-tvrđava princa Eugena Savojskog prije rata 1716-1718", in: *Osječki zbornik* 33 (2017), 27-43. For more about Eugene of Savoy, see: *Prinz Eugen und das barocke Österreich*, Ausstellung der Republik Österreich und des Landes Niederösterreich, Vienna 1986; Agnes Husslein-Arco and Marie-Louise von Plessen, eds., *Prince Eugene: General-Philosopher and Art Lover*, Munich 2010.

¹¹ Mažuran, *Grad i tvrđava Osijek*, 69-94.

¹² Uzelac, "Tvrđava Osijek i začetak strateškog lanca gradova-tvrđava princa Eugena Savojskog prije rata 1716-1718".

¹³ Johann Friedrich von Heisse came to Osijek from Vienna in 1713. Mažuran, *Grad i tvrđava Osijek*, 72.

¹⁴ Žmegač, *Bastioni kontinentalne Hrvatske*, 134-139; Mažuran, *Grad i tvrđava Osijek*, 69-94.

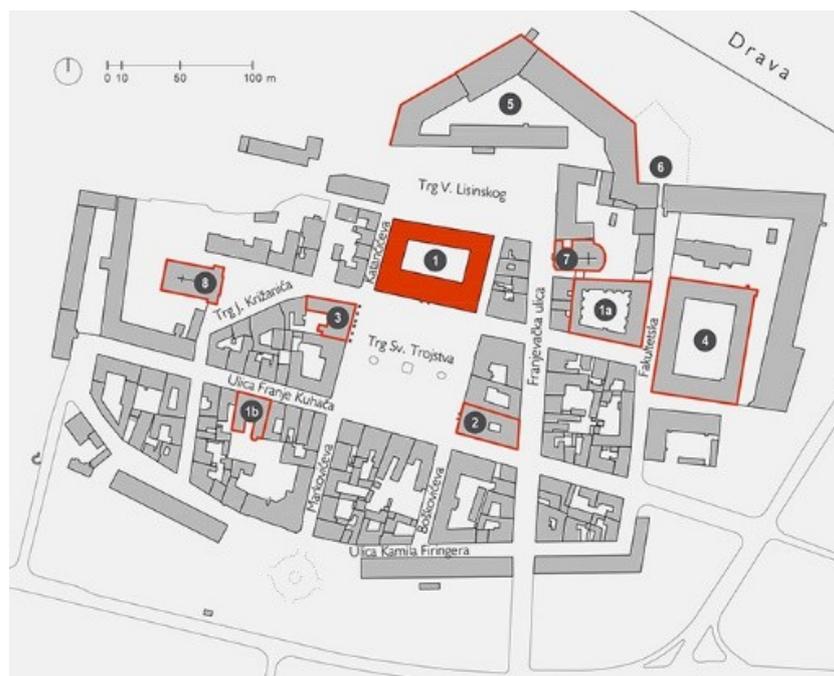


3 Osijek, plan of the fortress city, 1723. Österreichische Nationalbibliothek (ÖNB), Vienna, Archiv, AB 358, 1 (photo: ÖNB)

[6] Within this fortified surround the projected orthogonal town, which Kaysersfeld's plans show only in contours, grew into a Baroque setting, with large housing blocks, barracks built along the boundaries, and two religious focal points – a Jesuit College with the Church of St. Michael in the west, and a Franciscan Monastery with the Church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross in the east.¹⁵ The most striking Baroque features, however, were given to the central square of Paradni trg with its stately public administration and military buildings, from the Magistrate Building in the east (1702) to the Main Guard in the west (1728), and its central accent, the Baroque Holy Trinity Column.¹⁶ But the finest building, not only on the square but in the whole town, is the Palace of the Slavonian General Command, which occupies an entire block on the north side of the square (Fig. 4).

¹⁵ Mažuran, *Grad i tvrđava Osijek*, 95-98.

¹⁶ The column was erected in 1729-1730 by Beckers's daughter and Petrasch's widow, Baroness Maria Anna, on the model of the Trinity Column in Olomouc, her husband's native town. More about this in: Mirjana Repanić-Braun, "'Hoc protegente segura stat inclita urbs Esseck!'. On the Commission Circumstances and Authorship of the Plague Column in Osijek", in: *Acta historiae artis Slovenica* 20 (2015), 139-154.



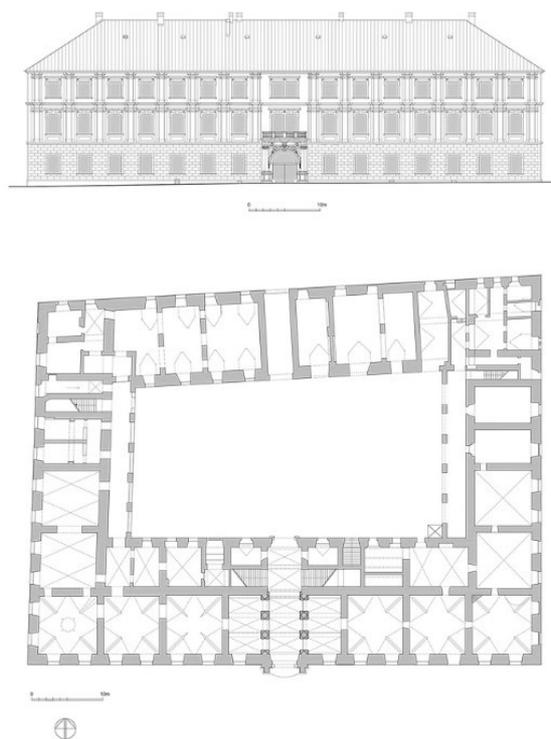
4 Osijek - Tvrđa, city plan with marked public and sacral buildings: 1 Palace of the General Command (now the Rectorate of Osijek University) | 1a Location of the original seat of the General Command | 1b Kostić House, the general's later residence | 2 Magistrate Building | 3 Main Guard Building | 4 Great Armoury | 5 Eugene Bastion | 6 Water Gate | 7 Franciscan Church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross | 8 Jesuit Church of St. Michael (architectural drawing: I. Haničar Buljan)

Architectural characteristics of the Slavonian General Command Palace

[7] In its present form, the former Slavonian General Command Palace is a three-storey building with an inner courtyard.¹⁷ In its four-wing floor plan, the south front wing stands out as wider and more complex, with two rows of rooms – a row of wider rooms along the outer façade and a row of narrower rooms on the inside, and with a corridor (gallery) running along the courtyard side (subsequently removed).¹⁸ The somewhat narrower lateral wings have one row of rooms along the outer façades and a corridor (earlier a gallery) running along the courtyard side. The north, rear wing, the narrowest and originally the lowest (with then only a ground floor and an attic space; today it also has three storeys) has one row of rooms (Fig. 5).

¹⁷ The palace was built in brick, and some of the architectural elements were made in stone.

¹⁸ The south part of the palace has a vaulted cellar.



5 General Command Palace, Osijek, plan of the ground floor and south façade (architectural drawing: I. Valjato-Vrus, M. Vojtić)

[8] The ground floor of the front wing features a centrally placed, elegant, cross-vaulted vestibule (Figs. 6, 7) that passes through the entire width of the wing and is accessed through a portal. The axial nature of this composition is echoed in the appropriate positioning of the porte-cochère in the rear wing of the palace. The front part of the vestibule broadens into two 'side aisles', separated with stone Tuscan columns (two pairs) and corresponding semi-columns on the walls. The typically Baroque dynamic of this composition is complemented by the scenic arrangement, in the back part of the vestibule, of two symmetrically-placed, two-flight staircases that rise behind the lateral broadenings of the vestibule and lead to the first-floor lobby. The front end of the vestibule is flanked by square rooms with shallow sail vaults, while the flights of the staircases continue into small, cross-vaulted rooms. Cross vaults also appear above the staircase landings, and in the ground floor of the lateral wings.



6 General Command Palace, Osijek, vestibule, view towards the inner courtyard (photo: P. Mofardin)



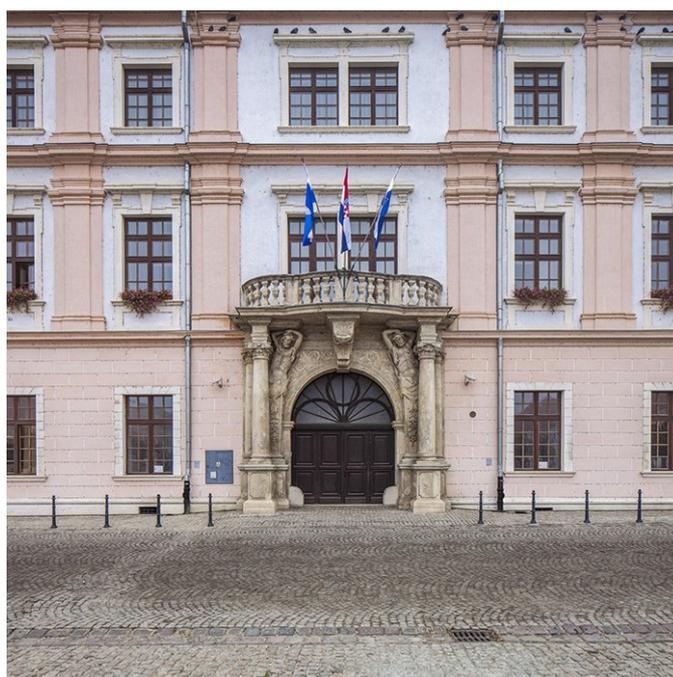
7 General Command Palace, Osijek, vestibule, view of the columns (photo: P. Mofardin)

[9] On the high first floor (*piano nobile*) the central zone is emphasized with a hall above the three-aisled part of the vestibule, opening onto a balcony above the portal. The lower second floor also used to have a central hall. In all the three floors the rooms in the front and side wings had communicating doors placed in line with each other – *enfilade*, and communication among them was improved by the courtyard corridor – the gallery. There are narrow, two-flight staircases at

the ends of the two side wings. The rear wing has rooms of varying sizes, among which only those on the ground floor, with barrel vaults penetrated by lunettes, follow the original disposition, while the upper floors in that wing are entirely the result of recent additions.

[10] Not only the original floor plan, but also the interior Baroque arrangement and fittings have been partly preserved – the columns in the vestibule already mentioned, pilasters and mouldings in the staircases, as well as the ornate stucco featuring cartouches, volutes and lambrequins that adorn the arches and vaults in the vestibule, staircases and front rooms in the ground floor.¹⁹

[11] The palace exterior has uniform façade articulation, graded by the varying degrees of importance of the wings, with the main emphasis on the south-facing entrance façade (Fig. 8). The basic articulation is the profiled base and stylized rustication on the ground floor above which, on the upper floors, rise two superposed rows of Tuscan pilasters separated by a profiled string course. The façades are also broken up by the use of two colours of plaster – pink for the ground-floor rustication, cornice, string courses and pilasters, and white for the rest of the façade. The corners of the building are decorated with alternating rectangles painted pink.²⁰



8 General Command Palace, Osijek, detail of the front with the portal (photo: P. Mofardin)

¹⁹ In the context of the furnishings it is important to mention the woodblock paving of the central part of the vestibule, as well as the wooden stair treads, while the sides of the vestibule and the landings are paved in red stone from Siklós (Hungary).

²⁰ The colours of the plaster are based on restoration research. Vladimir Marković et al., *Osijek, Tvrđa: zgrada Rektorata Sveučilišta (bivša Generalna komanda) – glavno (južno) pročelje, study*, Osijek 2005.



9 General Command Palace, Osijek, portal with atlantes (photo: P. Mofardin)

[12] The south, entrance façade is fifteen window bays wide, with logical emphasis on the central zone, as an expression of axial spatial organization. The central bay is not only wider but has a magnificent portal on the ground floor, superposed by a balcony and by double rectangular openings on the higher floors – balcony doors, and windows. The stone portal (Fig. 9) features atlantes flanked by composite columns and half-columns – bearers of the first-floor balcony. Rising from herm pilasters, the atlantes lean slightly toward the arch of the portal, supporting the balcony floor with both hands. This is also supported by a central bracket that rises from the keystone of the portal's arch. The atlantes are cloaked with lion skins, which shows that this is in fact a combination with the mythological figure of Heracles. The herm pillars are decorated with the typically Baroque lambrequin motif, shallow vegetable motifs decorate the surfaces of the portal along the extrados, and the central bracket is particularly fine, with volutes, garlands and a mascarón. The convex-concave shaped balcony floor with a stone balustrade enhances the overall richness and Baroque dynamic (Fig. 10).



10 General Command Palace, Osijek, portal, detail of the balcony bracket (photo: V. Hrpka)

[13] In keeping with the articulation of the front, stylized rustication frames the rectangular ground-floor windows. The large first-floor windows have shallowly profiled frames, accentuated with trapezoidal keystones and lateral scrolling consoles for the hood moulds. Their frames are additionally adorned with panels in the parapet zones, which only appear on the main façade. The frames of the smaller square windows on the second floor are somewhat simpler.

[14] The side façades are eleven window bays wide and repeat the same moulding and colours, while the rear wing is only arranged with unframed openings (Fig. 21).²¹ The inner façades overlooking the courtyard are also completely simple, which is the result of recent interventions.

[15] The analysis of the building's structure clearly shows that the Slavonian General Command Palace has retained its basic eighteenth-century Baroque features, although it underwent considerable rearrangement during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. To accurately reconstruct what had been designed and what has been executed, it is necessary to rely also on archival documentation.

The design and construction of the Slavonian General Command Palace

[16] The earliest information about the headquarters of the Slavonian General Command in Osijek dates from 1705, when "instructions" for its construction were issued in Vienna,²² but the first building was located on the edge of the

²¹ The fact that the west wing of the palace was already three storeys high in the eighteenth century, while the northern part of the east wing was then only two storeys high, was reflected on the design of the north-facing rear wing, which was sixteen window bays wide. However, only its western end, two window bays wide, is designed like the other façades, while the rest of the rear has unframed openings.

town, in the block next to that of the Franciscan Church (Fig. 4).²³ By 1716, it was already in such a bad condition that the Imperial War Council requested its repair, having secured funding from the Fortifications Fund.²⁴ Documents in the Vienna War Archives note that the Commander of Slavonia, Johann Stephan von Beckers, got instructions about how to repair the General Command building and that the plan, apparently made by one of the competent engineers, most probably Johann Friedrich von Heisse, had already been sent from Osijek to Vienna for approval in January 1716.²⁵

[17] It is difficult to know the degree to which the project had been implemented. Five years later, after the death of Commander Beckers in 1721, due to whose long-lasting illness some problems arose in the functioning of the Osijek fortress,²⁶ the General Command building was again in a bad state of repair. The task of its rebuilding, this time in an appropriate location on Paradni trg Square, was given to Beckers's successor General Maximilian Petrasch (1668–1724).²⁷ He, too, was a close associate of Eugene of Savoy and was appointed to the prestigious position of Commander of Slavonia after gaining distinction not only in warfare but also as head of construction of the fortresses in Slavonski Brod and Stara Gradiška.²⁸

[18] Details about the beginning of construction of the General Command Palace in Osijek are to be found in newly discovered documents in the Vienna War Archives.²⁹ These are correspondence between Maximilian Petrasch and the

²² OeStA/KA, HKR, Registratur, fol. 737, 8 June 1705.

²³ Mažuran, *Grad i tvrđava Osijek*, 95.

²⁴ OeStA/KA, ZSt HKR Bücher 500, January 1716; OeStA/KA ZSt, HKR, Registratur, fol. 7, January 1716.

²⁵ OeStA/KA, ZSt, HKR, Registratur, fol. 81, January 1716; copy kept in: Ministarstvo kulture RH, Zagreb, MK-UZKB/SA-ZSG (Tvrđave na slavonskoj granici). OeStA/KA, ZSt HKR Bücher 500, January 1716.

²⁶ OeStA/KA, FA AFA, HR Akten, 382, 29 September 1721, 16 November 1722.

²⁷ Mažuran, *Grad i tvrđava Osijek*, 88-89.

²⁸ Josip Kljajić, "Zapovjednici brodske tvrđave i načelnici grada Broda u 18. i 19. stoljeću", in: *Scrinia slavonica* 2 (2002), 16-45.

²⁹ Research in the Austrian State Archives, the War Archives in Vienna – Österreichisches Staatsarchiv / Kriegsarchiv (OeStA / KA) and the Austrian National Library in Vienna – Österreichische Nationalbibliothek (ÖNB), and in the State Archives in Budapest – Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár and Zagreb – Hrvatski državni arhiv (HDA), were carried out by the authors with the cooperation of the Vienna archivists Markus Jeitler and Patrick Swoboda, and archivists Csilla Tuza from Budapest and Ivana Horbec from Zagreb.

Imperial War Council,³⁰ which show that Petrasch had already begun to organize the construction of the new General Command headquarters in the first year of assuming duty in Osijek. Namely, on 29 September 1721, he wrote to Vienna that after the plan for the "commander's house" is approved, preparations for its construction should be started in winter – felling trees and the construction of log cabins for a double brick kiln, and slaking lime in Srijem, which could be transported by boat. In addition, he worked out how many people would be needed to build the General Command Palace – thirty to forty masons in the first year, fifty to sixty in the second year, and after that, in the third and fourth years, as needed.³¹ Petrasch's letter of 16 November next year shows that the planned beginning of construction had not taken place in the previous year, because he wrote that "the mentioned apartment of the general or the commander is one of the highest priorities, because the old apartment is partially ruinous and without repairs it has started to collapse, and besides, it is so poorly furnished that no officer in the fortress has accommodation as bad as the commander's, which substantially prevents him from performing his imperial service".³²

[19] The above clearly shows that the architectural design for the General Command Palace was finished or nearing completion in September 1721 (its approval by the competent authorities in Vienna was expected), but that construction, despite Petrasch's insistence, had not even begun at the end of 1722. This is why the palace is not drawn on the report plans for Osijek in these two years, which the engineer Heisse sent to Vienna. Construction was obviously begun and completed in 1723, because in that year the caption on the plan of the Osijek fortress says the "building of the Generalate and the military commander's apartment" was placed under a roof (Fig. 3).³³ There is reference to an enclosed attachment showing a drawing, most probably the architectural drawing itself, but this has unfortunately not been preserved. Therefore, putting off the beginning of construction was obviously made up for by rapid work on the imposing three-wing, two-storey, public and residential part of the palace. The works recorded next year relate to the construction of the ground-floor utility tract in the rear with stables, which closed the quadrilateral form of the complex along the northern side of the plot. General Petrasch's report about "what was built last year [1723] and what was begun and what could be done this year [1724]" only says in general "the commander's house", but the caption of the

³⁰ OeStA/KA, FA AFA, HR Akten, 382, 29 September 1721, 16 November 1722.

³¹ OeStA/KA, FA AFA, HR Akten, 382, 29 September 1721.

³² OeStA/KA, FA AFA, HR Akten, 382, 16 November 1722. Translation: Sanja Lazanin.

³³ ÖNB, Archiv, AB 358, 1. The design was first mentioned in: Bedenko, *Generalvojarna – Tvrđa – Osijek*, 14.

accompanying plan of Osijek details that "the foundations for the stables had been laid along the military command building".³⁴

[20] Petrasch's further management of constructing the General Command Palace was interrupted by his sudden death in 1724, so he and his family never even moved into the palace. Joseph Anton Count Oduyer (John O'Dwyer), of Irish extraction, Petrasch's successor in the post of Commander of Slavonia (1724–1729), took over supervision of construction and was the first general to move into the palace.³⁵ The plans of Osijek show, however, that work on the palace continued even after it had begun to be used, under later commanders, all of them distinguished military leaders and aristocrats as Ludwig Andreas von Khevenhüller, Count of Aichelberg-Frankenburg (1733–1744), and Ascanio Guadagni (Quadagni) (1744–1750).

[21] In that period the interior was being furnished and the east wing was completed, as we learn from the 1731 plan of Osijek, which shows the northern part of the east wing as unfinished.³⁶ The reason for the delay in work on that part of the palace could have been caused by the existing artillery barracks (built on that site in 1711),³⁷ which could probably not immediately be completely removed. The data about the gradual completion of the eastern wing are confirmed by traces in the palace structure. In any event, the lists of work executed in 1747 and 1748 show that the east wing had already been built at that time.³⁸

[22] Traces in the structure itself suggest that the second floor was added to the elegant three-wing part of the building somewhat later. Namely, the string course between the first and second floors juts out from the wall more than is usual for a string course, indicating that it had originally been the final cornice of the façade. The originally smaller number of storeys is also logical, since the 1720s, when the palace was built, were still a time of uncertainty that did not allow construction above the height of the bastion defence ring. It is also possible that the construction of the second floor was planned in the original design, but was only executed subsequently. The need for this enlargement could have resulted from the decision to house the Land Deputation (German,

³⁴ OeStA/KA, K VII I 109-5 E'.

³⁵ Vladimir Abramović, *An Irishman in Habsburg Service – General Count John O'Dwyer, Commander of Belgrade, 1718–1722*, Belgrade 2014.

³⁶ OeStA/KA, K VII I 110 E'.

³⁷ The artillery barracks appear on the plan of engineer Dörck from 1711, on the plan of engineer Heisse for 1714 and 1715, and again for 1721 and 1722.

³⁸ OeStA/KA, KPS GPA, Inland C VII Env. B, Essegg, No. 28; published in: Helena Sablić Tomić, *U osječkom Nutarnjem gradu*, Osijek 2017, 27; OeStA/KA, KPS GPA, Inland C VII Env. B, Essegg, No. 12/1.

Landesdeputation) in the palace, which the Vienna Court founded in 1737 as provincial administration subordinate to the Court Chamber and the War Council.³⁹

[23] The above-mentioned condition of the three-storey Baroque palace of the Slavonian General Command was fixed on drawings from 1765 (Fig. 11).⁴⁰ This report showed the floor plans of the ground floor and both the upper floors, a longitudinal section through the central part of the front and rear wings, and the main façade. Based on this drawing, in earlier literature the addition of the second floor was dated to 1765,⁴¹ but if the accompanying captions and graphics are read and analysed carefully, it is clear that this took place earlier. The title of the plan says that the palace was in the "military year 1764/1765, by building a new roof, renewed and ready for occupancy, and the upper (second) floor was renovated to accommodate staff members". This is confirmed by the graphic interpretation of the drawing in which, in the manner usual at that time, red was used to mark what already existed, and the existing construction and the walls of the second floor are shown in red. Yellow, which marked new construction, was only used for certain partition walls on the second floor, the slight raising of its bearing walls, and the new pitched roof with small mansard windows lying in them.⁴² The conversion of the second floor into officers' accommodation is indirectly confirmed in the 1764 plan of Osijek, on which the General Command Palace, which had until then usually been referred to as *Generalat Haus* or *Kommandanten Wohnung*, was for the first time called *Generalat Caserne*, indicating that it also contained accommodation for a larger number of soldiers.⁴³

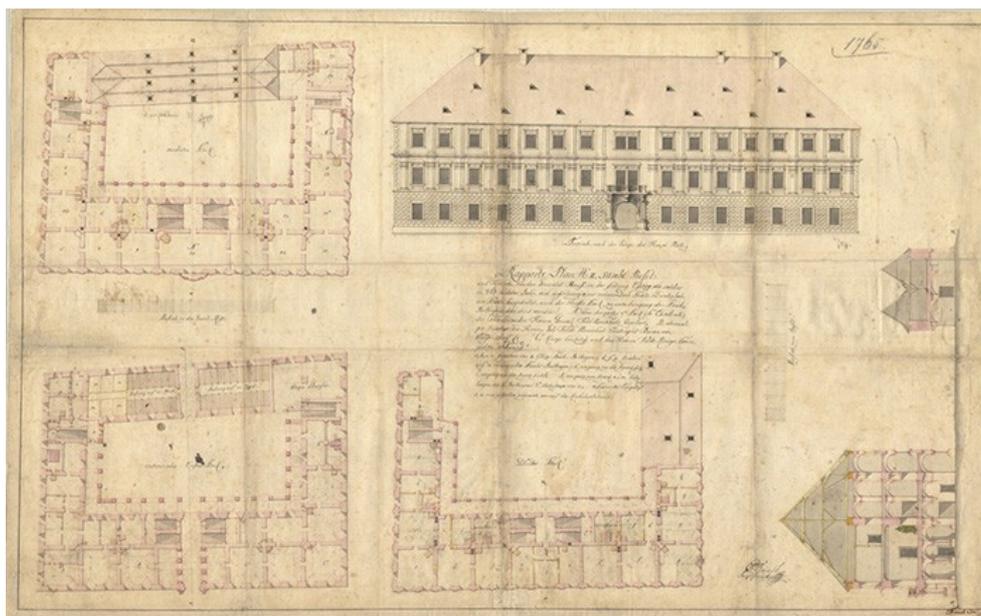
³⁹ The Land Deputation was soon superseded (1744) by the establishment of counties. Mažuran, *Grad i tvrđava Osijek*.

⁴⁰ Muzej Slavonije (Museum of Slavonia), Osijek, MSO 157062; published in: Mažuran, *Grad i tvrđava Osijek*, 103.

⁴¹ Mažuran, *Grad i tvrđava Osijek*, 101.

⁴² Above the lower rear wing there were two parallel hip roofs, but they were to be corrected into a single hip roof.

⁴³ Nacionalna i sveučilišna knjižnica u Zagrebu (National and University Library in Zagreb) (NSK), Digitalne zbirke / Digital Collections, 912.43(497.5 Osijek), <https://digitalna.nsk.hr/pb/?object=info&id=11607> (accessed 4 June 2020).



11 General Command Palace, Osijek, archival drawing, 1765. Museum of Slavonia in Osijek, MSO 157062 (photo: MSO)

[24] Along with revealing details about furnishing the second floor, the drawings from 1765 are also valuable for analysing the Baroque characteristics of the palace. In the first place, comparison of the drawings with the present status of the building proves that the floor plan of the palace and the design of the external façades⁴⁴ have basically preserved their original appearance. In contrast, the volume composition, the appearance of the courtyard façades and the roof were considerably altered in recent interventions. Unlike today's closed, four-wing building of uniform height,⁴⁵ the floor plans and the section show the palace as a structure of diversified volume with a three-storey, three-wing representative part (south front wing and side wings) and a northern, low, utility wing with a ground floor and attic space. The stages in completing the east lateral wing, mentioned earlier, have remained documented on the 1765 plan, which shows the second floor in that stretch as only partially constructed. As for the appearance of the interior façades, which are today completely plain, the floor plans show arcaded galleries with sail vaults, and the section confirms that Tuscan columns carried the arches.⁴⁶ The Baroque quality of the palace was also

⁴⁴ One difference is in the design of the pilasters on the higher storey, which the plan shows as simpler, without a cornice, but conservation research confirmed that the existing condition is like the original one had been. Marković et al., *Osijek, Tvrđa: zgrada Rektorata Sveučilišta (bivša Generalna komanda)*, 17.

⁴⁵ The back wing was raised by two floors in the second half of the nineteenth century.

⁴⁶ The design of the arcades and columns was also recorded on the old photograph published in: Mažuran, *Grad i tvrđava Osijek*, 104. In the 1930s the galleries along the front wing were removed completely, and along the side wings they were replaced with reinforced concrete structures.

greatly diminished by replacing the high, steep roof, that is shown, with a roof that is much lower and less steep.⁴⁷

[25] The 1765 plans are also a valuable document for understanding the purpose of particular rooms. The apartment assigned to Johann Reichard Baron of Wolffersdorff, then a vice-commander in Slavonia, occupied the ground floor in the western side of the main south wing and in the entire west wing. The eastern side of the main south wing and the east wing served as a war office and an apartment for the keeper of the war records. The entire first floor was reserved for the apartment of the Commander of the Slavonic General Command: "his excellency the commanding officer, the marshal general".⁴⁸ On the second floor were apartments for seven staff members and their families. In the north wing, the ground floor held stables situated on both sides of the central porte-cochère, which originally had a sail vault. To the north-west was a store for wood, and the north-east corner of the building was a store for carts. This wing had a relatively high knee wall to create additional attic space (for a hay loft). The courtyard had a well alongside the rear wing.

[26] The 1765 design faithfully shows interior furnishings, some of which are still preserved. Among those that are missing is the mirror vault with moulding and central stucco moulding in the first-floor hall, as well as numerous ornate tiled stoves. We can only speculate about the other elements of interior furnishing, but given that the palace was home to members of the Central-European nobility and that they used it to receive high political, military and other officials, we may assume that the living quarters were luxuriously furnished.⁴⁹

[27] There was no need for any major architectural interventions on the palace and its arrangement until the end of the eighteenth century. The decline in the military importance of the frontier areas of the Habsburg Monarchy due to the weakening of the Ottoman Empire, and the accompanying reorganization of the military administration, resulted, however, in the gradual loss of its original functions. In 1774, the commander's apartment was moved to the Kostić House in today's Ulica Franje Kuhača 23⁵⁰ (Fig. 4), which may have been because

⁴⁷ In the second half of the nineteenth century the roof was lowered.

⁴⁸ Of the total of nineteen rooms in the apartment, as many as four were kitchens, and according to the plan, they were to have obtained cross vaults in the renewal.

⁴⁹ Jasminka Najcer Sabljak assumed that the inside rooms, and especially the ceremonial hall, may have been decorated with painted portraits of rulers from the Habsburg family; lecture at the international conference "The Power of Media. Patronage, Representation and Propaganda in the Early Modern Period (1450–1800) between the Mediterranean and Central Europe", Split, 13-15 June 2018. In the middle of the eighteenth century, there was also a theatre in the palace.

⁵⁰ Mažuran, *Grad i tvrđava Osijek*, 102; Katarina Horvat-Levaj, Ratko Vučetić and Goran Vareško, *Konzervatorska studija sa smjernicama za obnovu kuće u Ulici Franje Kuhača 23 u osječkoj Tvrđi* [Institute of Art History, Zagreb, Conservation study with guidelines for

Emperor Joseph II arrived in Osijek that year and resided in the General Command Palace.⁵¹ Somewhat later, in 1783, the palace lost its public function when the military command headquarters were relocated to Petrovaradin.⁵² It was degraded to ordinary barracks in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which led to the deterioration of the building's fabric. When the palace became the seat of the University of Osijek in the 1990s, it got back its public role and the process of gradual restoration began.

The origins of the project and the Central-European context of the Slavonian General Command Palace

[28] The Slavonian General Command Palace has the essential features of a Baroque palace, these being a dominant position in the urban tissue, a free-standing multi-wing volume, and an axial internal organization with impressive spaces, such as the vestibule and hall, in the central axis, which also finds articulation in the design of the façade. It is not only the first palace of this kind on the south-eastern frontier of the Habsburg Monarchy, but is also an unprecedented architectural accomplishment on the wider territory of continental Croatia. In addition to the above, which we might call general characteristics of a Baroque palace arising from the stylistic development of the seventeenth-century *palazzo* in Italy, and especially in Rome,⁵³ the Osijek palace also has some specific elements of design. These are the frequently-mentioned vestibule with columns and the front portal with atlantes. They greatly narrow down the possible origins of its design to the capital of the Habsburg Monarchy, Vienna, which controlled the development of post-Ottoman Osijek, and therefore also the construction of the Palace of the Slavonian General Command.

[29] After the Ottoman defeat at Vienna in 1683, Austria flourished politically and became a leading European power, and this also resulted in the burgeoning of Baroque architecture in its capital. The palace or the stately mansion was the main way for political leaders to express their power, primarily for a personage like Prince Eugene of Savoy and other aristocrats.⁵⁴ The main visual characteristic of the Viennese palazzo was the inventive combination of the reconstruction of house in the street of Franjo Kuhač 23 in Osijek's Fortress], 2017, <https://www.bib.irb.hr/921557> (accessed 4 June 2020).

⁵¹ Bedenko, *Generalvojarna - Tvrđa - Osijek*, 20.

⁵² HDA-430, Slavonska generalkomanda, box 18 (1783); box 19 (1783-1784).

⁵³ Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Architettura barocca*, Milan 1979, 13-15, 144-174.

⁵⁴ Hellmut Lorenz remarked about aristocrats that were allied with the imperial court and erected new innovative buildings vis-à-vis the imperial ones, that these aristocrats were like a moon that illuminates the sun (the emperor). Hellmut Lorenz, "Vienna Gloriosa Habsburgica?", in: *Kunsthistoriker. Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Kunsthistorikerverbandes* 2 (1985), 44-49, especially 48.

French plan and Italian articulation, the main architects were Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach (1656–1723) and Johann Lucas von Hildebrandt (1668–1745), and the main theme was the aristocratic palace, both the palace within the city walls as well as the suburban garden palace.⁵⁵ However, the principal Baroque features in the spatial organization of Vienna's aristocratic residences, reflections of which we find in the Osijek palace, were not innovations introduced solely by the aforementioned great Austrian Baroque architects, nor were they primarily reserved for privileged palaces.⁵⁶ These features appeared in Vienna earlier, brought by a succession of Italian architects educated on the heritage of Roman architecture. These architects contributed to the Baroque transformation of the Habsburg capital and to the spreading of Baroque innovations to Austrian provinces and border areas, which included Osijek. It is this circle that launched the elements specific for our palace – the vestibule with columns and the portal with atlantes – which soon became a kind of hallmark for the most prominent Baroque palaces of Vienna.

On vestibules with columns

[30] The division of entrance halls with columns, as a highly elegant element that enables separation into several aisles and was previously reserved almost exclusively for sacral buildings, is not, of course, a Viennese invention; it first appeared in Roman palaces, from the Farnese Palace (Antonio da Sangallo the Younger, 1515) to the Barberini Palace (Carlo Maderno, 1627–1629; Gian Lorenzo Bernini, 1629–1633), to mention only the finest.⁵⁷

[31] In Vienna, the idea of a vestibule with columns was inaugurated in the Liechtenstein Garden Palace (Domenico Egidio Rossi, Domenico Martinelli, begun in 1690), although there the columns are not detached but lean against piers. However, it reached perfection in the city palace of the same family, with a 'forest' of monumental Tuscan columns (begun in 1692).⁵⁸ The basic design was conceived by Enrico Zuccalli (1642–1724), an international-level architect, which also meant co-operation with Gian Lorenzo Bernini himself, while Domenico Martinelli headed the construction.⁵⁹ Their efforts produced a magnificent, almost free-standing palace located on the very edge of Vienna's historic core (Bankgasse 9), along the former defence wall, today's Ring.⁶⁰ The special importance of the Liechtenstein Palace for the development of Viennese architecture arises from the successful creation of a monumentalized version of

⁵⁵ Norberg-Schulz, *Architettura barocca*, 202.

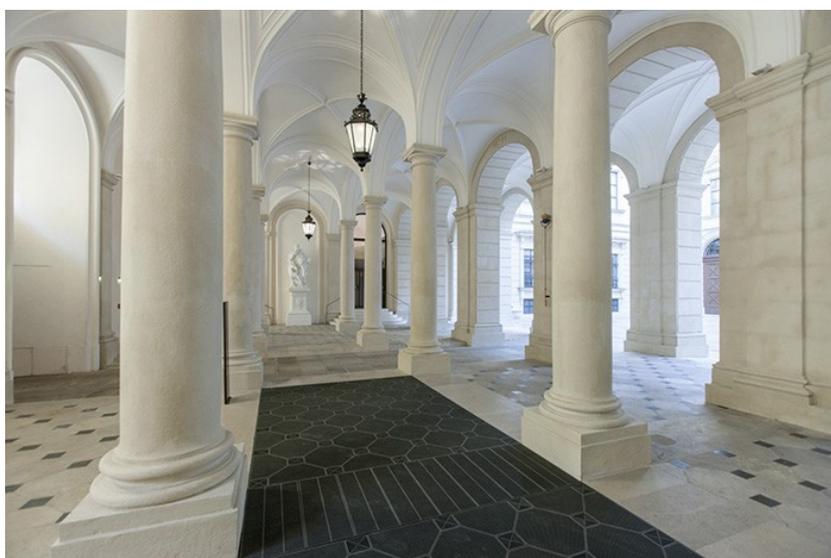
⁵⁶ More on this in: Günter Brucher, *Barockarchitektur in Österreich*, Cologne 1983; Hellmut Lorenz, "Architektur", in: *Barock, Geschichte der bildenden Kunst in Österreich*, ed. Hellmut Lorenz, Munich, London and New York 1999, 219-302.

⁵⁷ More about the palaces in: Peter Murray, *Architettura del Rinascimento*, Milan 1978, 86-87, 107-108; Norberg-Schulz, *Architettura barocca*, 147-150.

⁵⁸ Lorenz, "Architektur", 251-252.

the front of Bernini's Chigi-Odeschalchi Palace in Rome, which was, thanks to Hellmut Lorenz's research, clearly defined as the contribution of Zuccalli.⁶¹ Martinelli is attributed with the sculptural enrichment of the exterior, particularly expressed in the numerous fantastic mascarons above the ground-floor window architraves.

[32] The interior is dominated by a magnificent vestibule, which Tuscan columns divide into five cross-vaulted aisles (Fig. 12). The laterally placed, ceremonial, L-shaped staircase underlines the modernity of the spatial solution, although in this case there is no symmetrically positioned staircase on the opposite side because of constraints imposed by the size of the town plot. The scenic properties of the vestibule are enhanced by its opening into the atrium, and the Baroque idea of axial spatial organization is rounded off by the centrally-placed main hall, whose width corresponds with that of the middle-storey projection on the façade above the vestibule.



12 Liechtenstein Palace, Vienna, Enrico Zuccalli, Domenico Martinelli, 1692, vestibule (photo: P. Mofardin)

[33] After the Liechtenstein Palace, vestibules divided by columns and lavish staircases pushed back into their depths gradually became a feature of both the

⁵⁹ Hellmut Lorenz, "Enrico Zuccallis Projekt für den Wiener Stadtpalast Kaunitz-Liechtenstein", in: *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Kunst und Denkmalpflege* 34 (1980), 16-20; Hellmut Lorenz, *Domenico Martinelli und die österreichische Barockarchitektur*, Vienna 1991.

⁶⁰ More about the palace in: Johann Kräftner, *Das Stadtpalais der Liechtenstein. Geschichte und Restaurierung des fürstlichen Palais in der Wiener Bankgasse*, Vienna 2015.

⁶¹ Lorenz, "Enrico Zuccallis Projekt für den Wiener Stadtpalast Kaunitz-Liechtenstein", 16-20.

most luxurious and the smaller aristocratic palaces in Vienna. Thus, in the same year, 1698, Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach used this solution in the impressive Batthyany-Schönborn Palace (Renngasse 4),⁶² and Domenico Egidio Rossi in the relatively small Caprara-Geymüller Palace (Wallnerstraße 8).⁶³ Rossi used Tuscan columns in his three-aisled, cross-vaulted vestibule that widens into a seven-aisled part leading to a lateral staircase and the inner courtyard (Fig. 13), and Fischer von Erlach opted for a three-aisled vestibule and double columns broken up with rustication, into whose transversal axis he placed a staircase of the so-called imperial design, T-shaped with a central flight that branches into two lateral flights. Somewhat later, Fischer von Erlach in the Trautson Garden Palace (1710–1712) used four-fold columns in a three-aisled atrium with a lateral staircase.⁶⁴ This typically Baroque idea comes to full expression because the staircase was placed in the central transversal axis of the vestibule, which was a 'step forward' in relation to the prototype Liechtenstein Palace.



13 Caprara-Geymüller Palace, Vienna, Domenico Egidio Rossi, 1698, vestibule (photo: P. Mofardin)

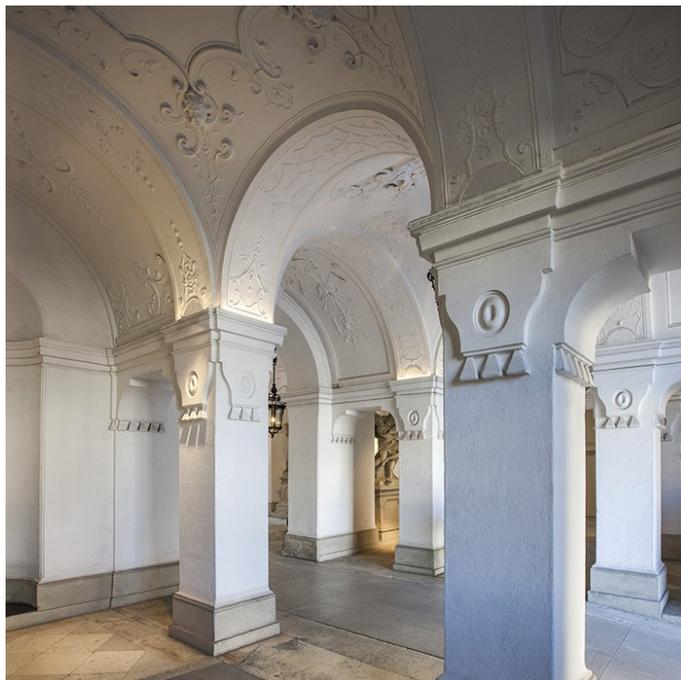
[34] An even greater move forward in the Baroque scenic and dynamic approach, which takes us away from our Osijek example, was Johann Lucas von

⁶² More about the palace in: Bruno Grimschitz, *Wiener Barockpaläste*, Vienna 1944, 18-19; *Dehio Wien, I. Bezirk - Innere Stadt*, ed. Bundesdenkmalamt, Vienna 2003, 297.

⁶³ More about the palace in: Grimschitz, *Wiener Barockpaläste*, 12; *Dehio Wien, I. Bezirk*, 316.

⁶⁴ More about the palace in: Grimschitz, *Wiener Barockpaläste*, 22-23.

Hildebrandt's variation on the theme of the multi-aisled vestibule in the Daun-Kinsky Palace (1713–1716).⁶⁵ Here, the three-aisled vestibule decorated with effective piers and sail vaults (Fig. 14), continues into a transparent oval lobby that projects convexly into the elongated inner courtyard. Thus Hildebrandt compensated for the impossibility of highlighting the palace centre with an oval volume in the tissue of the city, which he practiced in out-of-city residences. He also used optical effects to transform the staircase, in the relatively narrow side wing, into one of the most splendid Baroque interiors in Vienna.



14 Daun-Kinsky Palace, Vienna, Johann Lucas von Hildebrandt, 1713–1716, vestibule (photo: P. Mofardin)

[35] Grand vestibules separated into aisles by bearing elements were, as a feature of interior design, transferred to other important state-owned buildings throughout the Habsburg Monarchy. One of the earliest examples is the Palace of the Invalids in Pest (1716–1741).⁶⁶ Designed as a monumental building with an incorporated church in the centre and four inner courtyards, this hospital for war invalids was the work of the chamber engineer Fortunato da Pratti (circa 1682–1738), the architect János (Johann) Hölbling (1660–1736) from Buda, who were later both present in Osijek, and an architect from the Vienna Court's Construction Office (German, *Hofbauamt*), Anton Erhard Martinelli (1684–1747).⁶⁷ Spacious, three-aisled vestibules with piers and vaulted domes (Fig. 15) appear

⁶⁵ More about the palace in: Grimschitz, *Wiener Barockpaläste*, 26; Lorenz, "Architektur", 253–254.

⁶⁶ The project was only partly executed. Edina Osgyán, "[Restaurálják a Városháza háromszáz éves homlokzatát](#)" [20 February 2018], website *PestBuda* (accessed 12 November 2019).

at the two entrances in the long façade, and the palace in Pest has similarities with the General Command Palace in Osijek in some details of the façade, as well as in the design of the rear ground-floor wing. Also, similarly as in the Osijek palace and unlike most of the Viennese examples,⁶⁸ here the vestibules are flanked with two symmetrical pairs of staircases, thus bringing to complete fruition the idea of axial organization and the dynamic of entry spaces.



15 Palace of the Invalids, Budapest, Fortunato da Pratti, Johann Hölbling, Anton Erhard Martinelli, 1716–1741, vestibule (photo: P. Mofardin)

[36] Although the palaces in Osijek and Pest are similar in spatial organization, it is the Caprara-Geymüller Palace in Vienna, whose vestibule is also divided with Tuscan pillars, that the Osijek palace corresponds with most closely in the design of the vestibule and the bearing elements of the arches. An additional coincidence is that it was commissioned by Imperial Field Marshal Aeneas Silvio Caprara, who was Commander-in-Chief of Hungary and thus also linked to the territory of Croatia, and fought in battles at Petrovaradin in 1716.⁶⁹ His palace is important for our topic because it affirmed, within the framework of Vienna's

⁶⁷ Martinelli was put in charge of the construction of the hospital in 1727. György Kelényi, "Hungarian Architecture in the Eighteenth Century", in: *The Architecture of Historic Hungary*, eds. Dora Wiebenson and József Sisa, Cambridge, MA and London 1998, 101-144: 105.

⁶⁸ Unlike Vienna's city palaces, the garden palaces, such as for example that of the Liechtenstein family, as a rule had symmetrically arranged side staircases.

⁶⁹ Ruth Haas and Petra Gröbner, "*Rossi Domenico II*" [2005, with additions 2009], website *Artisti Italiani in Austria*, ed. Petr Fidler (accessed 12 November 2019).

profane architecture, another element that is a key feature of the Osijek palace, the portal with atlantes.

On portals with atlantes

[37] Portals decorated with atlantes, male figures supporting an upper structure, most often a balcony or a cornice, and shown as carrying a great load, just like the mythical Atlas bearing the world on his shoulders, are a clear indication of roots in ancient classical architecture. Atlas (in Roman mythology Telamon) was one of the Titans who fought against Zeus, and was punished by having to support the celestial heavens on his shoulders. Because it symbolized strength, the Atlas motif was often combined with that of Heracles (in Roman mythology Hercules), who was most often shown with the skin of the Nemean Lion and a club. The striking mythological figure of Atlas found its place in classical art, but unlike the globally famous caryatids, female figures as bearers of architectural elements in the Erechtheion Temple (421–406 BC) in Athens, relatively few corresponding male figures have been preserved from the times of ancient Greek and Roman architecture.

[38] Figures of atlantes in high relief or as free-standing statues only regained popularity in north-Italian Mannerist architecture. This is primarily due to the new grotesque decoration that resulted from the work of Giulio Romano, the protagonist of Mannerist architecture, in Mantua. This type of decoration spread through prints and stucco, which is why the atlantes motif, often combined with herms, is first found as a characteristic decoration of fireplaces and the interior furnishings of late-Renaissance and Mannerist palaces.⁷⁰ However, unlike the Mannerist examples, which often show atlantes shaped as fantastic creatures like satyrs, or as static figures that show no effort in carrying their loads, the portal of the Davia Bargellini Palace in Bologna (Bartolomeo Provaglia, 1638; Gabriele Brunelli and Francesco Agnesini, 1658) shows realistic sculptures in true-to-life dynamic movement, such as those present in Vienna somewhat later. Bologna was the town in which Domenico Egidio Rossi got his training; he was one of the first sculptors to create atlantes on the portal of the Vienna palace owned by Aeneas Silvio Caprara, also originally from Bologna;⁷¹ this can certainly not be a coincidence.

⁷⁰ Laris Borić, "Renaissance Telamons of the Former Fanfogna Palace in Zadar – an Attribution to the Paduan Workshop of Vincenzo and Giangirolamo Grandi", in: *Književnost, umjetnost, kultura između dviju obala Jadrana – Letteratura, arte, cultura tra le due sponde dell'Adriatico*, eds. Nedjeljka Balić-Nižić, Nikola Jakšić and Živko Nižić, Zadar 2010, 327-352.

⁷¹ *Dehio Wien, I. Bezirk*, 316.



16 Caprara-Geymüller Palace, Vienna, Domenico Egidio Rossi, 1698, portal with atlantes (photo: P. Mofardin)

[39] Like in Bologna, the atlantes on the Caprara Palace portal in Vienna (1698) are complete figures standing on high pedestals and supporting a first-floor balcony; in fact, they are a replacement for columns (Fig. 16). In the same way, but with even more dynamic movement of the statues and more plasticity in shaping the richly decorated, projecting, convex portal and balcony, Johann Lucas von Hildebrandt showed the same theme on the side portal of the Liechtenstein Palace (1705). The atlantes themselves were carved by the sculptor Giovanni Giuliani,⁷² who made the atlantes in the staircase of Eugene of Savoy's Winter Palace.⁷³ However, the conceptual creator of the atlantes in the Winter Palace, Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach,⁷⁴ gave an alternative variation in the portrayal of atlantes-herms on the *Böhmische Hofkanzlei* Palace (1708-1714) in Vienna (Fig. 17).⁷⁵ Four monumental figures adorn the portal facing the street (Wipplingerstraße 7), while two atlantes-herms and allegorical

⁷² Kräftner, *Das Stadtpalais der Liechtenstein*, 64.

⁷³ Lorenz, "Architektur", 253.

⁷⁴ More about the iconography and meaning of atlantes in: Friedrich Polleroß, "Von redenden Steinen und künstlich-erfundenen Architekturen. Oder: Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach und die Wurzeln seiner conceptus imaginatio", in: *Römische Historische Mitteilungen* 49 (2007), 319-396.

⁷⁵ More about the palace in: Grimschitz, *Wiener Barockpaläste*, 23-25; Hans Sedlmayr, *Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach architetto*, Milan 1996, 237-242.

figures flank the opposite portal of the palace-block, on the square of Judenplatz.⁷⁶ An addition to the atlantes motif is that of the impenetrable skin of the Nemean Lion, which also appears on the atlantes on the Osijek portal. On the portal of the Daun-Kinsky Palace (1713–1716), however, Hildebrandt again represented the male bearers in full figure. Besides atlantes flanking the opening of the concave portal, with recumbent figures adorning its segmental broken pediment, here columns frame the outer edges of the entire composition, an idea that was applied in Osijek, as well.



17 *Böhmische Hofkanzlei* Palace, Vienna, Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach, 1708–1714, portal with atlantes (photo: P. Mofardin)

[40] It is not difficult to conclude that the iconography of atlantes,⁷⁷ giants bearing the celestial heavens, which could be construed as the whole world, was connected with the then triumph of the Habsburg Monarchy, which had saved Christian Europe from the Ottomans. The atlantes are presented in two different ways. They can be looked on as vanquished, carrying their burden as punishment, as suggested by the Ottoman attributes added to the atlantes on the Daun-Kinsky Palace portal⁷⁸ commissioned by Count Wirich Philipp Daun, who

⁷⁶ The four-wing palace with an inner courtyard was enlarged in 1751–1754 according to a design by Mathias Gerl, so that the portals were repeated on both the extensions of the front façade. *Dehio Wien, I. Bezirk*, 300–301.

⁷⁷ In addition to showing atlantes on staircases (Eugene of Savoy's Winter Palace, the Daun-Kinsky Palace), mention should also be made of the atlantes in Hildebrandt's *sala terrena* in the Upper Belvedere (1720–1721).

⁷⁸ Lorenz, "Architektur", 254, calls it a "Portal mit Türken-Atlanten". A similar idea has created four atlantes-moors on the tomb of Doge Giovanni Pesaro (Baldassare Longhena, 1665–1669) in Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari in Venice. Andrew Hopkins, *Baldassare Longhena and Venetian Baroque Architecture*, New Haven and London 2012, 6.

also had a distinguished military career. But far more often the atlantes, together with Heracles, symbolize the victors who saved the Monarchy and who keep on 'carrying it'. Thus the atlantes, as a personification of virile strength, became a fitting symbol for the greatest imperial generals, and especially for Eugene of Savoy himself, known as the "Hercules and Apollo of his time".⁷⁹

[41] Soon, the classic iconographic programme involving atlantes and Heracles, combined with battlefield scenes and depictions of spoils of war, became part of imperial propaganda; they underlined its political message with a powerful representational image and were placed in strategically important places in the Habsburg Monarchy. Monumental buildings under the auspices of Imperial Vienna showing the atlantes iconography were built primarily in Buda, the Hungarian capital, and neighbouring Pest. Outstanding among them was the Palace of the Invalids, already mentioned, whose central portal has a freestanding sculpture of Atlas carrying the terrestrial globe, and the allegorical figures of War and Peace, as well as reliefs showing war scenes – one of them a depiction of Eugene of Savoy as the victorious Heracles, made in 1735–1736 by the sculptor Johann Thenny (Fig. 18).⁸⁰



18 Palace of the Invalids, Budapest, Fortunato da Pratti, Johann Hölbling, Anton Erhard Martinelli, 1716–1741, front (photo: P. Mofardin)

[42] Also interesting in this context is the former arsenal building in Buda (1725–1730),⁸¹ designed by the military engineers Johann Mathey and Donato Felice d'Allio, the latter of which also worked in Osijek.⁸² Like in Vienna, atlantes featured on the private palaces of prominent aristocrats in Budapest, too, often

⁷⁹ Georg Lechner, "Prince Eugene of Savoy. The Hercules and Apollo of His Time", in: *Prince Eugene's Winter Palace*, ed. Agnes Husslein-Arco, Vienna 2013, 99-107: 101.

⁸⁰ Osgyán, "Restaurálják a Városháza háromszáz éves homlokzatát".

designed by architects who were also involved in public and fortification construction.⁸³ Good examples of this are two palaces by Andreas Mayerhoffer, the Grassalkovich Palace (1735) and the Péterffy Palace (1756).⁸⁴ In this context must also be mentioned the portal with atlantes that Petrasch's widow erected on his palace in Olomouc after his death (Fig. 19), probably inspired by the General Command Palace in Osijek.



19 Palace of Maximilian Petrasch, Olomouc, eighteenth century, portal with atlantes (photo: P. Mofardin)

[43] The atlantes motif, and that of Heracles, was often used on fortresses gates. Especially impressive are the four gates of the main Transylvanian fortress Alba

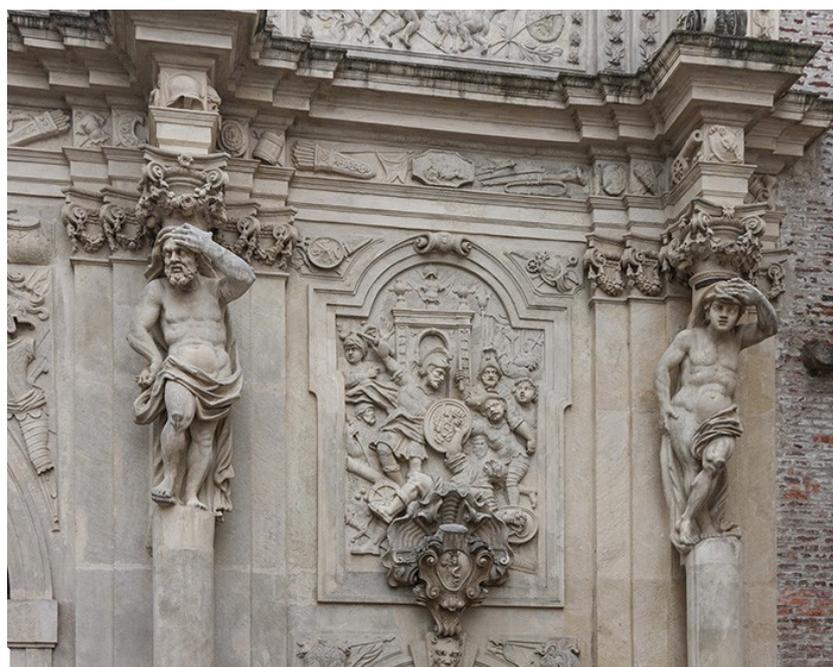
⁸¹ The arsenal was pulled down when the north wing of the royal palace was built in the nineteenth/twentieth century.

⁸² György Bánrévy, "A budavári katonai szertár (Zeughaus), 1725-1901", in: *Tanulmányok Budapest Múltjából* 2 (1933), 104-140: 130.

⁸³ Petar Puhmajer, "Odras ugarske graditeljske radionice Andreasa Mayerhofferera u stambenoj arhitekturi Osijeka u 18. stoljeću", in: *Radovi Instituta za povijest umjetnosti* 37 (2013), 129-144: 133 f.

⁸⁴ Puhmajer, "Odras ugarske graditeljske radionice Andreasa Mayerhofferera u stambenoj arhitekturi Osijeka u 18. stoljeću", 133-134. The Grassalkovich Palace has been demolished, but its appearance is known from old photographs. Atlantes appeared on private palaces in other towns, too, such as the Esterhazy Palace in Bratislava, a palace in Győr, the bishop's palace in Sümeg, the Grassalkovich Manor in Hatvan and elsewhere. We thank Petar Puhmajer, Ph.D., on these data.

Iulia (Fig. 20). The sculptural ornaments dominated by atlantes and battle scenes are the work of Austrian sculptors led by Johann König, Giuseppe Tancalla and Johann Vischler.⁸⁵ From old descriptions we learn that similar motifs used to decorate the gates of the fortress in Slavonski Brod; they were made at the time when General Maximilian Petrasch was in charge of the construction of the fortress. Petrasch immediately informed Prince Eugene of Savoy about the completion of these gates in 1723.⁸⁶



20 Town gate, Alba Iulia, eighteenth century, atlantes (photo: P. Mofardin)

As the above examples show, most of the buildings mentioned were of great political and national importance, as was the General Command Palace in Osijek.

On the question of attribution

[44] The above account of the development of secular, Baroque architecture in Vienna at the turn of the seventeenth to the eighteenth century makes it easier to evaluate the Palace of the Slavonian General Command in Osijek's Tvrđa, and also to attempt its attribution, since the designer's name is unknown. As has already been said, in style and typology the Osijek palace corresponds with contemporary Baroque buildings in the capital of the Habsburg Monarchy and its wider area. However, if we analyse the important factors in the palace design separately and compare them with trends present in Vienna, the centre of

⁸⁵ "[The Bastionary, Vauban-Type Citadel of Alba Carolina](#)", website *Primăria Municipiului Alba Iulia* (accessed 12 November 2019).

⁸⁶ Josip Kljajić, *Brodaska tvrđava*, Slavonski Brod 1998, 95.

politics and style, then we must conclude that the level of quality and style is not uniform.

[45] There is no doubt that the 'most advanced' feature of the Osijek Palace is its spatial organization. This four-wing building with differing volumes and outlines, which was transformed into an open three-wing structure by grading the wings according to importance, shows a consistent implementation of axial disposition with a central vestibule and hall, which implies two symmetrical pairs of stairs. This is especially significant, as it is a solution that goes beyond some prominent Viennese examples, restricted as they were by the dense urban structure – they often featured an irregular ground plan with only one side staircase.⁸⁷ The concept and design of the three-aisled, cross-vaulted vestibule with stone Tuscan pillars is on an equally high level. The high-quality and expertly-conceived elements of the Palace of the Slavonian General Command include the front portal with columns and atlantes-herms that support the balcony floor of a convex-concave outline. The plant ornaments, lambrequins and especially the mascarons on the balcony bracket are an integral part of the decoration repertoire of contemporary Viennese Baroque.

[46] However, the quality of sculpting the atlantes is somewhat lower than the conception of the portal, and so are the proportions of the vestibule columns, which are surprisingly robust. Even the choice of columns is in itself more characteristic of the somewhat earlier period from the second half of the seventeenth century; piers prevailed in eighteenth-century Central Europe, which are easier to integrate into the overall division of space in the spirit of late Baroque.

[47] The stylistic level falls even more markedly in the appearance of the façade of the Slavonian General Command Palace. One would expect projections to enliven such an elongated wall, not just the slightly wider central bay with double openings on the upper floors, a motif that was already going out of fashion in other centres of the Habsburg Monarchy in the 1720s.⁸⁸ The idea of superposing two rows of pilasters on the upper floors suits a more modest building than a palace with a three-aisled vestibule, whose façade would have been more fittingly integrated with giant-order pilasters, but this was probably

⁸⁷ The use of two symmetrical pairs of stairs, like in the Palace of the Slavonian General Command in Osijek, is symptomatic for public buildings like the Palace of the Invalids in Pest or the Aula of the University in Vienna designed by Jean Nicolas Jadot (1753).

⁸⁸ At that time accentuating the façade with a wider portal bay and double openings on the upper floors also appeared on other public buildings in the frontier fortresses, such as the old Prefecture Palace in Timișoara. Rodica Vârtaciu-Medelet, *Barock im Banat*, Regensburg 2012, 50-51. A similar design of façades without a projection on the wall, with two superposed rows of double pilasters (instead of giant-order pilasters), separated by a profiled string course and sometimes with an arcaded gallery, is evident in city palaces of the early eighteenth century in Styria. A good example is the Palais Attems (1702-1716) in Graz.

the result of the subsequent addition of the second floor. Finally, the most archaic elements of the Osijek palace, although not the least picturesque, were the courtyard galleries with arcades and columns. This fundamentally Renaissance approach to diversification (and communication) had at that time been almost completely abandoned in Vienna and other major centres of the Habsburg Monarchy, and the courtyard façades of palaces usually had windows. Only exceptionally did they have arcades, and then only in certain places, not evenly distributed on all the floors.

[48] In this context, the question arises as to who could have designed such a palace in the 1720s? Was it designed on-site in Osijek or was its design commissioned in Vienna, and, in view of the differences mentioned, was it the work of a single person?⁸⁹ In order to try finding answers to these questions, one must examine the wider situation in the construction of frontier fortress cities and the facilities within them. These were impressive architectural endeavours of particular strategic importance for the Habsburg Court, which required considerable resources and manpower, but also good project management and construction organization. To this end, at the instigation of engineer Kaysersfeld and General Caprara, a military-engineering school was founded in Vienna in 1690, and then in 1717 a military-engineering academy (German, *Technische Militärademie*).⁹⁰

[49] Trained military engineers were therefore engaged in the construction of the Osijek fortress from the very beginning. Among them, special merit in the development of Osijek at the time when the General Command Palace was being built goes to the aforesaid Johann Friedrich von Heisse. The Imperial War Council additionally employed builders and engineers from other parts of the Habsburg Monarchy, mostly from Hungary, for particular operations on the fortress, as well as for civilian and religious buildings. Thus, the well-known architect, builder and engineer Donato Felice d'Allio (1677–1771) visited Osijek as a military construction consultant in about 1720,⁹¹ and was re-called in 1733 when the

⁸⁹ According to Hellmut Lorenz, when attempting to attribute early eighteenth-century Viennese palaces, one should not start from the idea of a single designer. Rather, such structures should be viewed within a framework of complex and diverse influences and levels of decision-making, implementation and duration of construction. Lorenz, "Kunstgeschichte oder Künstlergeschichte", 99-131. This can also be applied to the General Command Palace in Osijek.

⁹⁰ Friedrich Gatti, *Geschichte der K. und K. Technischen Militär-Akademie*, vol. 1: *Geschichte der K. K. Ingenieur- und K. K. Genie-Akademie, 1717–1869*, Vienna 1901; Ante Grubišić, "Šume Vukovarskog vlastelinstva u 18. st. prema kartografskim izvorima", in: *Slavonske šume kroz povijest*, eds. Dinko Župan and Robert Skenderović, Slavonski Brod 2017, 147-192: 149.

⁹¹ Bánrévy, "A budavári katonai szertár (Zeughaus)", 104-140; Maria-Luise Storch and Irene Raifer, "[Allio, Donato Felice D'](#)" [2004], website *Artisti Italiani in Austria*, ed. Petr Fidler (accessed 12 November 2019).

Great Armoury was being constructed, together with the imperial architect János (Johann) Hölbling (1660–1736),⁹² who designed the Jesuit Church of St Michael in Osijek.⁹³ In the 1720s and 1730s, the prominent chamber engineer Fortunato da Pratti made visits to Osijek.⁹⁴ In about 1720, in order to continue building Eugene of Savoy's castle in Bilje, the architect Andreas Mayerhoffer came to the immediate vicinity of Osijek, and he could also have participated in certain architectural undertakings in the Osijek fortress.⁹⁵

[50] Therefore, given its distinguished style and typology, if the project of the General Command Palace originated in Osijek, it was probably the work of one of these visiting architects and engineers who designed similar buildings in other towns of the Monarchy. However, if the project was commissioned from Vienna, the choice of potential designers is far wider. It is, of course, possible, given the different levels of quality among the particular elements of the palace, that the design underwent corrections in the Imperial War Council, or that it was to a certain extent modified during construction, which was certainly supervised by the engineer Johann Friedrich von Heisse. In any case, the initiator of the construction, Commander Maximilian Petrasch, and the body that commissioned the work, the Imperial War Council with its president Prince Eugene of Savoy, had to have played an active role in selecting the designer and creating the project.

⁹² Mažuran, *Grad i tvrđava Osijek*, 94. D'Allio advised the Imperial War Council to use Hölbling rather than Heisse to build the armoury in Osijek, because he had submitted a more favourable proposal. Bánrévy, "A budavári katonai szertár (Zeughaus)", 104-140.

⁹³ Margareta Turkalj Podmanicki and Katarina Horvat-Levaj, "Nekadašnja isusovačka crkva sv. Mihovila u Osijeku u srednjoeuropskom kontekstu", in: *Peristil* 54 (2011), 223-233.

⁹⁴ Arnold Schoen, "Prati kamarai építész-mérnök Budán", in: *Művészettörténeti értesítő* 9 (1960), 29-35: 31-32.

⁹⁵ Puhmajer, "Odras ugarske graditeljske radionice Andreasa Mayerhofferera u stambenoj arhitekturi Osijeka u 18. stoljeću", 133-134.



21 General Command Palace, Osijek, view of the back of the recently upgraded north wing (photo: P. Mofardin)

[51] The Slavonian General Command Palace (Fig. 21), in the way in which it was constructed, remained somewhat isolated in its milieu. Its architecture was too demanding to be applied to other military and public buildings, both in Osijek and in most other border towns. Its reinterpretation would have required an equally distinguished commission – which happened to take place several years later when the Banat General Command Palace was to be built in Timișoara (1727). Although this four-wing building, with wings graded in volume, a central three-aisled vestibule and pairs of two-flight staircases, can today only be judged from an archival design,⁹⁶ even this is enough to dare assume that its spatial organization had been inspired by the Osijek palace. In the Slavonian General Command Palace, indeed, the high reaches of Viennese residential architecture had been successfully combined with the needs of high-grade, public, military use in a fortress city built on the defence line of the Habsburg Monarchy and Europe.

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⁹⁶ The Banat General Command Palace is no longer preserved in its original form as it was reconstructed in 1848/49. Vârtaciu-Medelet, *Barock im Banat*, 45-47. The designer of the palace is not known.

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