

# ARCHITECTURE OF BREST-ON-THE-BUG IN THE SECOND POLISH REPUBLIC

MICHAŁ PSZCZÓŁKOWSKI

Architecture of the Second Polish Republic has been widely exploring for some years. Yet, when it comes to the Borderland cities, there is still much to discover. Even if we take into account only voivodeship cities, it is no more than Lvov that is relatively well portrayed<sup>1</sup>; to some extent also Vilnius<sup>2</sup> and Stanyslaviv<sup>3</sup>. Other voivodeship cities, not to mention district towns, have not been the subject of interest of Polish architecture historians. This is the consequence of a small number of source materials. In the most influential interwar architectural bulletin 'Architektura i Budownictwo' ('Architecture and Construction') Borderland architecture appeared very rarely. In the scope of interest of the magazine were mainly Warsaw and the centre of Poland. When in 1935 an issue of 'AiB' was dedicated to '110 reproductions of different buildings (...) which may present progress in Polish contemporary architecture'<sup>4</sup> only two pictures showed buildings from the Borderlands: post office in Równe and health-care fund in Czortków. The latter one was wrongly labeled as public insurance company in Bielsk.

Yet, there is no doubt that in Borderland cities there appeared a number of buildings characterized with high architectural quality. Thus, they deserve being placed in the history of Polish architecture. Brest is one of them. An average inhabitant of Poland or Belarus associates the city primarily with the fortress that was built by the Russians during the partitions. However, the most rapid growth of Brest was seen in the interwar period, when the city became the voivodeship seat. The result of this growth was the largest in Belarus number of examples of interwar Polish architecture.

In the period of the First Polish Republic, Brest was a city of great importance due to its central location. The significance was huge as the city was situated on the border of Polish, Lithuanian and Ruthenian lands (Fig. 1). In 1569, as a result of new administrative division pursuant to the Union of Lublin, strong in terms of politics and culture Brest became the capital of the Brest-Lithuanian voivodeship and performed this function till the partitions. Unfortunately, no trace of this ancient past has been left. In 1831, according to the decision of Russian authorities, the city was almost completely destroyed and one of the largest fortresses in the world appeared in its place. A few kilometers north-east from the fortress a new city 'looking like a huge village'<sup>5</sup> with a grid plan rose up (Fig. 2). The following years brought no change for better. On the contrary, the construction sites in Brest became stagnant because, due to the fortress, the authorities allowed only wooden buildings. The brick ones were allowed exclusively in special cases and they had to be adjusted to certain height<sup>6</sup>. After the fire in 1901<sup>7</sup> more brick buildings appeared, yet these were not the monumental or prestigious ones. Majority of the buildings from the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was quite small (two floors) and modest. They were based on simplified forms of the Russian Revival style (Fig. 3). World War I was 'the nail in the coffin' for the city. As the result of it 2,500 out of 3,670 houses were destroyed. It constituted almost 70 per cent of a total number of houses in Brest<sup>8</sup>.

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of February 1919<sup>9</sup>, Polish troops entered the city. This meant the end of the partitions

<sup>1</sup> R. Cielątkowska, *Architektura i urbanistyka Lwowa II Rzeczypospolitej*, Zblewo 1998.

<sup>2</sup> E. Małachowicz, *Wilno. Dzieje – architektura – cmentarze*, Wrocław 1996; E. Małachowicz, *Architektura dwudziestolecia międzywojennego w Wilnie*, in: *Architektura i urbanistyka w Polsce w latach 1918–1978*, ed. W. Puget, Warszawa 1989, pp. 121–141; J. Poklewski, *Polskie życie artystyczne w międzywojennym Wilnie*, Toruń 1994.

<sup>3</sup> M. Pszczółkowski, *Architektura Stanisławowa w latach II Rzeczypospolitej*, in: *Stan badań nad wielokulturowym dziedzictwem dawnej Rzeczypospolitej*, ed. W. Walczak, K. Łopatecki, vol. IV, Białystok 2013, pp. 383–416.

<sup>4</sup> *Od Redakcji*, „Architektura i Budownictwo”, XI, 1935, no 5, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> W. Mondalski, *Brześć Podlaski. Zarys geograficzno-historyczny*, Turek 1929, p. 17.

<sup>6</sup> *Słownik geograficzny Królestwa Polskiego i innych krajów słowiańskich*, ed. F. Sulimierski, B. Chlebowski, W. Walewski, Warszawa 1880–1914, vol. I, p. 402.

<sup>7</sup> W. Mondalski, op. cit., p. 19.

<sup>8</sup> H. Dudek, *Odbudowa kraju*, in: *Dziesięciolecie Polski Odrodzonej 1918–1928*, ed. M. Dąbrowski, Kraków 1929, p. 424.

<sup>9</sup> W. Mondalski, op. cit., p. 96.

period and the beginning of a brand new era in the history of Brest. In the city there appeared a number of state and municipal institutions, county office and city council. The war with the Soviet Union did not omit Brest. Nevertheless, the loss was not significant. On the 1<sup>st</sup> of August 1920 the Bolsheviks conquered the city, yet no major damage was made. After one month Brest came again under the authority of the Polish state<sup>10</sup>.

After establishing the territory of Poland the lands situated in the eastern regions of the country were divided into six voivodeships: Vilnius, Nowogródek, Polesie, Volhynia, Tarnopol and Stanislawow one. The largest (42 280 km<sup>2</sup>) and the most centrally located area of Polesie by the decision from the 19<sup>th</sup> of February 1921 became the Polesie Voivodeship whose capital city was Pinsk. This was quite obvious as Pinsk was at that time the largest one in Polesie. Moreover, it was significantly bigger than the other cities in the area and located in the heart of Polesie Voivodeship. However, due to the fact that in Pinsk there did not exist any building monumental enough to become the city hall, the decision was made that the temporary capital city was organized in Brest<sup>11</sup>. This decision proved fateful. In August 1921 fire broke out in Pinsk and Brest remained the capital city for good. Establishing the capital city in Brest was controversial and doubtful, mainly due to the fact that the city was situated on the outskirts of the voivodeship. Furthermore, it was heavily destroyed after World War I. On the top of that, Brest was a city that belonged to Podlasie, therefore foreign to Polesie region in terms of history. It was said in 1929: 'Brest has been a part of Polesie Voivodeship as a temporary seat of the Voivodeship Office up till this day, even though in fact the seat should be in Pinsk'<sup>12</sup>. The conclusion is that temporary character of Brest as a capital city was a fact at least till the end of the 1920s. In the meantime however, Brest became stable when it comes to administration. Also, the number of people got bigger, especially Polish citizens (Fig. 4). In such situation, transferring the capital back to Pinsk would mean liquidation of all Brest offices, which contributed to prosperity, emptying new public buildings and organizing the capital city from the

beginning. Consequently, the attempt of moving the capital to Pinsk was abandoned.

Brest, since 1923 called Brest-on-the-Bug (formerly Brest-Litovsk), became the seat of numerous voivodeship and district institutions: Voivodeship Office, Voivodeship State Police Headquarter, County of Brest, Regional Council of the District, Tax Office, School Inspectorate, Polesie District School Board, Regional Chamber of Control, Waterways Office, Designs of Land Improvement Company in Polesie, Employment Service Office, District Land Office and the local department of District Court in Pinsk. Brest Fortress became the seat of the Polish Army garrison and Command Corps District No. 9, one of the Ten Commands Corps District (territorial authority of the Ministry of Military Affairs). In 1935 population in Brest amounted to 50,282 people, including 22,250 Polish citizens. 53 per cent of the population was Jewish<sup>13</sup>.

The new situation contributed to the urban and architectural development of Brest. War damage was the additional motivation to rebuild the city. Besides, the lands that had been taken by the Russians as well as so-called annexed provinces, i.e. the eastern provinces, which before 1918 had belonged to the Russian Empire, in the interwar period required a substantial range of investments. Luck, Brest and Rowne were nothing like Poznan, Krakow and Torun. In the cities of the former Prussian partition 90 per cent of buildings were made of brick, whereas in the Borderlands relations were exactly the opposite: 80-90 per cent of buildings were wooden. Rarely were they more than one floor buildings. Moreover, they were often covered with thatched roofs. Borderlands cities did not have sewers, regulated street designs and sufficient municipal services. Even large centers were characterized rather with a rural structure, e.g. in Luck – the capital of Volhynia Voivodeship – in 1923 there were only 480 brick buildings while the total number of buildings was 2051<sup>14</sup>.

In the first decade of the interwar period rural image of Brest and the lack of historical city centre with ancient buildings (which was the consequence of liquidation of the historic city in the 19<sup>th</sup> century) were striking (Fig. 5). Even though in Brest

<sup>10</sup> *Kronika powstań polskich 1794–1944*, Warszawa 1994, p. 360.

<sup>11</sup> „Monitor Polski”, III, 1921, no 55, paragraph 97.

<sup>12</sup> W. Mondalski, op. cit., p. 97.

<sup>13</sup> M. Marczak, *Przewodnik po Polesiu*, Brześć nad Bugiem 1935, p. 54.

<sup>14</sup> *Luck w świetle faktów i cyfr*, Luck 1925, p. 174.

there operated fourteen banks, probably due to the expected beneficial economic situation, this significant number of money institutions did not trigger the economic growth and served mainly the small-scale trade<sup>15</sup>. At the same time, 824 houses with 3,714 rooms were built and the urban infrastructure significantly improved<sup>16</sup>; however, there was no factual urban design and the buildings were placed in a rather chaotic way, i.e. next to one-, two- or three-floor houses there were still small wooden buildings. The streets (including the main ones) in the areas away from the centre still kept their rural character<sup>17</sup>. It was no surprising though as even in the centre large areas were earmarked to grow potatoes<sup>18</sup>.

In 1929 Brest City Council introduced the project entitled 'The Great Brest'<sup>19</sup>, whose aim was to integrate the centre with the suburban areas. In this way the authorities wanted to develop the city architecture, embody new regulation design and, consequently, create new great urban centre. However, including large but sparsely populated rural suburbs in the urban tissue caused that the provincial image of Brest was even more evident. 'The Great Brest' seemed to have been a daunting task. It was said in 1929: 'architecture of wooden houses, built usually on the model of "residential chests" and painted with parrot colors like in the "Middle East", recently, due to the authoritative requirement, covered with monotonous iron-gray color, leaves its predominant and overwhelming imprint'<sup>20</sup>. Lingering war damage did not influence the whole situation in a positive way. In 1929 the afterwar reconstruction was still incompleting and plenty of the houses were still in ruins<sup>21</sup>. These circumstances contributed to the

popular opinion of Brest as a city of ruins and rubble. In addition, in the city there was neither water supply nor sanitation; no sidewalks or pavements. Undoubtedly, the image of Brest must have been rather depressing.

It goes without saying that introducing monumental and prestigious architecture was very much important. There were several reasons for that. Firstly, state buildings had to obtain representative forms. Secondly, certain architectural landmarks needed to be incorporated in the urban image of Brest. Before that, Brest did not have any architectural dominants. Regardless of the metropolitan character of the city, splendid buildings were to demonstrate power and stability of the Polish state. Yet, in the Borderlands it was also crucial because of the policy of so called polonization of these lands and legitimization of historical Polish rights in this region. It was immensely important as local people believed that Polish authority was rather provisional. That is why public buildings in the first years of independence were dominated by national stylistics<sup>22</sup>.

Manifestation of a social climate in the early years of the Second Republic was an architectural tendency called traditionalism. The characteristic feature of this trend was using typical elements and details of Polish historical architecture. Regained independence was the reason for romantic conception of patriotism seen through the prism of the splendor of ancient noble Poland. Pre-war publications, especially those by Stefan Szyller (who had searched for the individual stylistics of Polish architecture), provided the architects with the range of forms<sup>23</sup>. According to Szyller, typically Polish

<sup>15</sup> W. Mondalski, op. cit., p. 27.

<sup>16</sup> As for the significant work done by the municipal authorities in this time, there should be listed: measurements of the city, laying new pavements on some of the streets, provisional launching of the aqueduct, construction of the power station, the reconstruction of two-floor building of primary schools, storm drain regulation, working out and issuing local regulations pursuant to the Regulation of President of Polish Republic on the building law from 1928, organizing municipal park (Park of Liberty), a partial extension of the municipal slaughterhouse, organizing veterinary clinic and professional fire brigade; H. Dudek, op. cit., p. 424.

<sup>17</sup> W. Mondalski, op. cit., p. 23.

<sup>18</sup> Ibidem, p. 101.

<sup>19</sup> Ibidem, p. 17.

<sup>20</sup> Ibidem, p. 27.

<sup>21</sup> Ibidem, p. 19.

<sup>22</sup> „Referring the style (...) to the traditions of Polish architecture, we will continue the work of our ancestors carrying the Polish culture to the East, we will rid the local people of the unbearable and, unfortunately, quite widespread impression of Polish provisional government in the eastern borders of the Republic"; *Budowa domów dla urzędników państwowych w województwach wschodnich*, Warszawa 1925, p. 12.

<sup>23</sup> S. Szyller, *Polskość w architekturze*, „Świat”, II, 1907, no 23, pp. 2-3; idem, *O attykach polskich i polskich dachach wklęsłych*, Warszawa 1909; idem, *Czy mamy polską architekturę?*, Warszawa 1916; idem, *Tradycja budownictwa ludowego w architekturze polskiej*, Warszawa 1917; idem, „*Sparogi*”. *Studyum z dziedziny architektury i wierzeń ludowych*, „Tygodnik Ilustrowany”, LIX, 1918, no 6, pp. 66-67, no 7, p. 80; idem, *Dwudział w architekturze polskiej*, „Przegląd Techniczny”, XLVI, 1920, no 7, pp. 31-32, no 13, pp. 67-68, no 15, pp. 80-81.

details were: so called Polish attic, the Dutch gable roof and so-called Polish roof (a two-storey hipped roof), wide box cornices, archways, buttresses, decorative volutes and balls in gables and attics, flèches, Renaissance portals and squat (barrel-like) columns with simplified capitals.

The most evident example of traditionalism in Brest is the railway station building. Railway stations, emerging in abundance in the years 1919-1926 due to the railways development, present traditional stylistics in the most spectacular way. In the partitions period Brest station had typical features of so called Russian Revival style. In the 1920s it was extended with new, significantly bigger, dominating part (Fig. 6). Here, traditionalism was proved by light silhouette, deprived of academic rigidity, tall semicircular windows that referred to Renaissance arcades, gable derived from Baroque religious architecture, tall Polish roofs with *oeil-de-boeuf* and, first of all, Polish attic, which was believed to have been purely Polish architectural detail. Also building colours were characteristic, the elevations were white and the roofs red. Now, Brest station does not exist in its interwar form. After World War II it was rebuilt, but got the features typical of *socrealism*.

The most prestigious buildings in Brest were located along Union of Lublin Street (currently Lenin Street, Fig. 7). In the 1920s and 1930s there appeared a number of splendid public buildings that have been the hallmark of this period in the history of Brest. In terms of a urban design and scale they comprise coherent whole. Still, when it comes to architecture, they present diversified and original set of forms. The examples of certain buildings that are placed next to each other show process of interwar architecture evolution.

The oldest building of the abovementioned group is Bank of Poland designed in 1925 (currently National Bank of Belarus, 9 Lenina St., Fig. 8). Bank of Poland as an institution was significant for Polish economy in the interwar period because it was an issuing bank of Polish currency. Polish banks operated on a large scale in terms of organizing their new branches, especially in eastern voivodeships. In years 1925-1932 there appeared new bank build-

ings in Brest, Pinsk, Zamość, Luck, Baranowicze, Białystok, Grodno, Jasło, Królewska Huta, Gdynia, Ostrów Wielkopolski and Bielsko-Biała. Bank of Poland had its own design office (Technical Branch of Administrative Department of Bank of Poland)<sup>24</sup> and the author of almost all designs was Stanisław Filasiewicz, an architect and the head of Technical Branch in 1924-1939. He might be called the 'court' architect of Bank of Poland<sup>25</sup>.

The first bank building funded by Bank of Poland appeared in Brest. The style incorporated there was neoclassicism as a continuation of historical architecture. Apart from traditionalism, neoclassicism was another popular stylistics when it comes to interwar public buildings. Classical details were reliable and safe way to obtain representation and dignity required by the state architecture. Moreover, they were secure in terms of aesthetic since they referred to universal principles. The bank mentioned here consists of two perpendicular wings shaped as rectangles. They are joined by the middle part designed in a circular shape. One wing was devoted to bank chambers. In the other one there were flats for the officials. The middle part, which in fact is a rotunda, is articulated with Ionic half- and quarter columns and crowned with entablature, railing and not too high dome. Elevations of both perpendicular parts are vertically articulated and their ranks – regardless of the size but due to the function – are varied. The one with bank chambers is decorated with pilasters, and the housing one with modest pilaster strips.

Another public building in Union of Lublin Street was Tax Chamber (currently Administration of Lenin District, 13 Lenin St., Fig. 9), designed in 1928 by Witold Małkowski from Design Office in Vilnius<sup>26</sup>. Building presents features typical of so called modern classicism. Here, the architects used regular and symmetrical compositions and the architectural orders were implemented as 'quotes' in the most representative parts of the building. In the other parts details were more or less simplified, in a way which was not typical of neoclassicism and clearly inspired with the principles of modernism. The façade of the Tax Chamber building presents

<sup>24</sup> *Dziesięciolecie działalności budowlanej Banku Polskiego*, „Architektura i Budownictwo”, VI, 1930, no 4-5, p. 122.

<sup>25</sup> S. Stefański, *Ludzie, którzy zbudowali Łódź. Leksykon architektów i budowniczych miasta (do 1939 roku)*, Łódź 2009, p. 54. In older literature on the subject, design of the bank in

Brest is attributed to Marian Lalewicz; compare: J. Pruszyński, *Prof. Marian Lalewicz (1876–1944)*, „Kwartalnik Architektury i Urbanistyki”, XXXVIII, 1993, no 1, p. 65.

<sup>26</sup> The Central Archives of Modern Records (AAN), Records of the Ministry of the Interior 1918–1939 (MSW), no. 2414.

one of the most frequently used designs: the middle avant-corps is decorated with four flat Ionic pilasters, and the side parts are articulated with wide flat pilaster strips which apparently prove the influence of modernism.

Yet another version of neoclassicism is Regional Chamber of the State Control<sup>27</sup> (currently local branch of KGB, 7 Lenin St., Fig. 10). Certain inspirations of so called revolutionary classicism popular in France in the 18<sup>th</sup> century may be observed here. Characteristic detail of this kind of architecture, used by Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, was ‘column in chains’, i.e. a column compassed with horizontal, rhythmical strips. In Polish interwar architecture columns of this type appeared in buildings whose forms were simplified, brutal and monumental, e.g. Trade and Industry Chamber in Lodz or Ministry of Military Affairs in Warsaw. In the building of Regional Chamber in Brest, the pillars in chains were incorporated both in the façade and the side elevation. In this way, the building becomes brutal and geometrical in form. At the same time, it is monumental and mirrors the function.

In 1929 next to Tax Chamber there appeared the building of Healthcare Fund (currently hospital, 15 Lenin St., Fig. 11). Three years earlier, thanks to the international exhibition of modern architecture in Zacheta art gallery in Warsaw, there had been definite reversal in architectural design, directed to the achievements of Le Corbusier, Walter Gropius and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. It ended 150-year-long period of historical inspirations and started the era of so called ‘factory romanticism’ (expression used by the great architect and architecture theoretician Edgar Norwerth). The main features of this tendency – known as functionalism, international style or ‘Warsaw School’ (Polish term) – were: integration of the form and function, flat roof, free design and modern construction (reinforced concrete or steel one), frequently exposed in the façades and elevations. Healthcare Fund building in Brest was designed by Szymon Syrkus, one of the members and founders of Warsaw artistic group called ‘Praesens’. Syrkus was also one of the leading interwar avant-garde architects. He created the building which consisted of several asymmetrical blocks of different sizes and proportions, deprived of any decorations and stylization. Having decided to incorporate

the glass staircase in the building, he created a kind of vertical dominant which strongly underlined the architectural form of the whole composition. Such design was widely used, e.g. in secondary school in Piekary Śląskie or Institute of Food Products Research in Katowice. At the moment, the building is being extended, which contributed to the loss of its original proportions.

The capstone of the buildings in Union of Lublin Street became the youngest and the most prestigious public building – Voivodeship Office (currently Regional Executive Committee, 11 Lenin St.) that was built in years 1935-1938. This was time when architecture achieved certain compromise on the form. Avant-garde functionalism deprived of any historical decorations was still popular, but also traditional tendency became well-liked. What was characteristic of the architecture in those days was the attempt to obtain brutal monumentalism, together with using exclusive materials and exposing their attractive factures and features. Besides, the architects cared about the quality of construction standards. Moreover, buildings had to be equipped with modern appliances that would have provided the employees with the most comfortable atmosphere. The development of this tendency could be associated with the political climate in the Middle-East Europe in the late 30s and growth of authoritarian systems in certain European countries. Some common features were evident in all the totalitarian states – the USSR, Nazi Germany and fascist Italy. The abovementioned building (Fig. 12) is a perfect example of such tendency. It is located in the heart of the group of edifices, between Tax Chamber and Bank of Poland. The architect, Franciszek Papiewski<sup>28</sup>, in order to achieve the monumental effect, used classical composition in terms of symmetry, axis and vertical articulation. At the same time, he simplified the form, i.e. quit the articulation with columns or pilasters and incorporated simple pillars in the middle risalite. The side parts of the building were left without any vertical divisions. The decoration was entirely eliminated: windows seemed to have been cut out in the wall and deprived of any frames.

As for housing architecture, the most important in terms of architectural quality and spatial design is officials’ residential colony situated close to Union

<sup>27</sup> Ibidem, no. 2415.

<sup>28</sup> AAN, MSW, no. 2416

of Lublin Street. The state was founded as a part of a comprehensive investment program undertaken by the Ministry of Public Work. The aim of the program was to build residential colonies for Polish officials in the Borderlands. It came into force in 1924. In Brest there appeared the Ministry branch, whose head executive became the engineer Aleksander Próchnicki. In other voivodeship cities as well as in district towns there appeared construction committees. In mid-1924 fourteen architects (Warsaw and local ones) started to work on the designs. Due to economical reasons and time limits only repeatable types of houses were suggested<sup>29</sup>.

The unique link between the monumental buildings in Union of Lublin Street and the residential colony situated off the street became the building of Designs of Land Improvement Company in Polesie, then Voivodeship Department for Communication and Construction<sup>30</sup> (currently District Court, 1 Lewanewski St., Fig. 13). This large, 3-floor building was designed in 1928 by Julian Jotkiewicz, the architect from Warsaw<sup>31</sup>. It combined office and housing functions. As for its image, the building looked more like a detached tenement house. It was located in such a way that its façade came out towards Pułaski Street and set down the direction to the residential colony in so called New Quarter, one of the biggest and the best preserved housing estates in the Borderlands (Fig. 14).

The site manager and the main designer was another architect from Warsaw, Julian Lisiecki (1881-1944), a graduate of Karlsruhe University of Technology. Some of the designs were made by Marcin Weinfeld. The emblems of the houses were designed by the painter Waclaw Husarski<sup>32</sup>. The spatial design of the estate (Fig. 15) implies that the designers referred to the idea of the garden city, i.e. the site with dispersed buildings, surrounded by the gardens and squares. The estate consisted of four parts, the biggest of which was colony named after Gabriel Narutowicz (currently the site located in Levanewski St., Lenin St., Naganov St. and Gogol St., Fig. 16). As for their architecture, the buildings present stylistics of traditionalism. When it comes to residential architecture, the main pattern to follow was the noble manor house and its typical elements: simple silhouette, porch with columns, angular

buttresses, Baroque-like gables and tall, two- or four-storey roofs or so called Polish roofs (Fig. 17, 18, 19). The inspirations of the noble manor house were evident also inside the houses: on a ground floor there were living room, study, kitchen and dining room, whereas on the first floor there were bedrooms.

The heart of cultural and social life in the residential colony was the officials' mess in Pułaski St., designed by Lisiecki<sup>33</sup>. As it was superior to the other buildings, it had more dignified and prestigious architectural form. The building was designed in the stylistics of monumental neoclassicism. It is seen in the huge portico supported by four massive Ionic columns (Fig. 20).

The form typical of the noble house was popular in the residential buildings located in the city. The examples can be seen in southern areas of the Union of Lublin St. (currently 39 Lenin St., Fig. 21) and Kilinski St. (currently 24 Kommunisticheskaya St., Fig. 22). In the 1930s New Quarter was extended and the traditional forms were overtaken by the stylistics of functionalism. Simple, cubic blocks were frequently decorated with marine details which contributed to so called streamline style. Rational construction, simplicity and firmness of the transatlantic ships were the source of inspirations for the architects. Thus, the most commonly used details were rounded corners and terraces referring to captain bridges, circular windows (remaining portholes), antennae masts and rounded balcony railings. The examples of the streamline style in Brest are buildings in Pułaski St. (currently 17 Levanewski St., Fig. 23) and Wielka St. (currently 6 Kooperatywna St.), Kilinski St. (currently 25 Kommunisticheskaya) and also in Liberty Avenue (currently 16 and 18 Gogol St.). Tenements and detached houses in other areas of the city, e.g. in Mickiewicz St. (currently 2 Mickiewicz St., Fig. 24), Dąbrowski St. (currently 197 Soviet St., Fig. 25) and Liberty Square (currently 3 Svoboda Square, Fig. 26) are the good instances of the functionalism architecture in Brest. As for the public architecture, the significant one is building of Secondary Technical School of Railways (currently National College of Railway Transport in Brest), designed in 1937 by Jerzy Beill from Warsaw. It is located in 3<sup>rd</sup> of May Street (currently 65 Pushkin St).

<sup>29</sup> *Budowa domów...*, pp. 4-5, 10.

<sup>30</sup> M. Marczak, *op. cit.*, pp. 56.

<sup>31</sup> AAN, MSW, no. 2413.

<sup>32</sup> *Budowa domów...*, *passim*.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 20.

Yet another example of interwar stylistics is a residential colony, which appeared in the early 1920s. In 1923 it was named the Warburg Residential Colony. It was situated away from the city centre, in Kiev Suburbs (currently I Minsk Alley, Fig. 27). The colony consisted of wooden buildings and was dedicated to poor Jews who had lost their homes in World War I. The founder of the colony was Felix M. Warburg, the chairperson of the American organization called Joint Distribution Committee of American Funds for Jewish War Sufferers. In the colony, there were twelve 8-room houses, some utility buildings, mikveh, laundry and the shop<sup>34</sup>. The architecture here presented folk stylistics typical of the early 1920s – cottages, barns, stables, sheds, carriage houses, mills and inns. Popular details were mansards, Dutch gable roofs, wooden corbels etc. Zakopane stylistics was very influential in terms of creating such buildings. Unfortunately, this valuable in terms of architecture and history group of buildings nowadays is in ruins. Probably, it will be knocked down in the nearest future. The Jewish cemetery that is located close to the colony is also entirely devastated.

To sum up, in the interwar architecture of Brest there were present all the tendencies characteristic of that time: academic classicism, modern classicism and varieties of national styles, and finally, extreme functionalism. Despite of peripheral localization of the city in the scale of the whole country and all the spatial design problems typical of the Borderlands, the architecture which appeared here presents high artistic level, especially in terms of public buildings, which are unique and varied. Frequently, they do not give way to buildings from Warsaw or other important cities in Poland. The capital was crucial when it comes to the architectural landscape of Brest due to the fact that a large number of architects working here came from Warsaw.

Translated by Karolina Pszczółkowska

## Bibliography

*Budowa domów dla urzędników państwowych w województwach wschodnich*, Warszawa 1925.

R. Cielątkowska, *Architektura i urbanistyka Lwowa II Rzeczypospolitej*, Zblewo 1998.

*Dziesięciolecie działalności budowlanej Banku Polskiego*, „Architektura i Budownictwo”, VI, 1930, no 4-5, pp. 121-184.

*Dziesięciolecie Polski Odrodzonej 1918–1928*, ed. M. Dąbrowski, Kraków 1929.

*Kronika powstań polskich 1794–1944*, Warszawa 1994.

*Łuck w świetle faktów i cyfr*, Łuck 1925.

E. Małachowicz, *Architektura dwudziestolecia międzywojennego w Wilnie*, in: *Architektura i urbanistyka w Polsce w latach 1918–1978*, ed. W. Puget, Warszawa 1989, pp. 121-141.

E. Małachowicz, *Wilno. Dzieje – architektura – cmentarze*, Wrocław 1996.

M. Marczak, *Przewodnik po Polesiu*, Brześć nad Bugiem 1935.

W. Mondalski, *Brześć Podlaski. Zarys geograficzno-historyczny*, Turek 1929.

J. Poklewski, *Polskie życie artystyczne w międzywojennym Wilnie*, Toruń 1994.

M. Pszczółkowski, *Architektura Stanisławowa w latach II Rzeczypospolitej*, in: *Stan badań nad wielokulturowym dziedzictwem dawnej Rzeczypospolitej*, ed. W. Walczak, K. Łopatecki, vol. IV, Białystok 2013, pp. 383-416.

*Słownik geograficzny Królestwa Polskiego i innych krajów słowiańskich*, ed. F. Sulimierski, B. Chlebowski, W. Walewski, Warszawa 1880–1914, vol. I.

S. Stefański, *Ludzie, którzy zbudowali Łódź. Leksykon architektów i budowniczych miasta (do 1939 roku)*, Łódź 2009.

Michał Pszczółkowski, Ph.D.

Faculty of Civil and Environmental Engineering  
University of Zielona Góra

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.sztetl.org.pl/pl/cms/wiedza/1142,kolonia-warburga> (DOA: 22.09.2013).