

The ‘Polish National Style’ in Interwar Architecture

The Case of Railway Station Buildings

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Abstract. The article is devoted to the formation of the ‘national style’ in Polish architecture. It outlines the evolution of architectural forms characteristic of particular currents of the ‘national style’ in nineteenth and early twentieth-century architecture. It introduces the broad historical, political, social, and cultural context of the development of the ‘national style’ in Poland under the occupation of neighbouring powers. This context has significantly contributed to the extremely intense involvement of artists in search for forms of this style both on a practical and a theoretical level, as reflected in numerous publications cited in the article. The idea of the ‘national style’ was implemented both in sacred architecture and in residential and public utility architecture. A short study cannot present the entire range of objects created at the time. Therefore, the article focuses on a small but significant and coherent group of railway facilities constructed after Poland regained its independence in 1918. In the interwar period, the railway was a lever for the state’s economic development, when new stations were built and others rebuilt with state funds. The stations were treated as visual gates of the city, model objects for the local population rebuilding their homes damaged in the war. Rooted in domestic architecture, they were to shape local and foreign travellers’ image of the Republic of Poland. The article gives numerous examples of railway stations of the interwar period, representing the last phase of the ‘national style’ called the ‘manor style,’ which draws its formal sources from a typical aristocratic residence—the Polish manor. The issue is presented in the context of the heavy damage that station buildings suffered during World War I, which triggered a strong construction movement. The uneven development of railway networks during the partitions, which had to be counterbalanced after regaining independence, is also addressed. The study is based on illustrative archival material and numerous publications from the period.

Keywords: Polish national style, railway architecture, architecture of the Second Polish Republic

The ‘Polish national style’: the idea and its sources

The concept of national styles originated during the period when Central and Eastern Europe was divided among three major powers. Between 1772 and 1918,

Poland was occupied by its neighbours Prussia, Russia, and Austria. The idea of a 'Polish national style' emerged at the end of the eighteenth century and was based on Romanticism.¹ It found fertile ground in the prevailing cultural trends in Europe during the Spring of Nations. These trends involved a stronger sense of national belonging, as well as the promotion of local distinctiveness, contributing to the growth of national styles.² In architecture, it emerged from the mid-nineteenth century, and its influence extended beyond the Old Continent.³ As a widespread phenomenon, it was based on similar formal assumptions in various countries, searching for inspiration within historical styles considered the most characteristic of local construction, or marked by a significant difference in local interpretation. The members of the movement also expressed admiration for folklore and encouraged drawing on folk culture. János Gerle (1947–2012) put forward the thesis that national ideas were imparted to architectural shapes in two types of cases: firstly, in nations with semi-realised imperialist aspirations, such as Russia and Germany and, secondly, in smaller nations at a turning point in their political or economic independence, such as Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Catalonia, Finland, Norway, the Netherlands, Estonia, and Latvia.⁴ In both cases, there was some form of manifestation of the national culture. An anonymous author in the World War I period wrote,

"In view of the fact that the current of nationalism has spread to all nations today and has become the most powerful development factor, art, which until the end of the eighteenth century had faithfully reflected the contemporary generation's spirit and feelings, must also reflect this nationalist current in terms of both content and form."⁵

The concept of a national style held particular significance for countries lacking political independence, such as Poland at the time. The national style encompassed a variety of artistic disciplines, including music, literature, handicrafts, and

1 Cp. Stefański, "Jan Sas Zubrzycki"; Omilanowska, *Kreacja – konstrukcja – rekonstrukcja*; Omilanowska, "Searching for a National Style," 99–116; Rączka, *Walka o Polski styl narodowy w architekturze*.

2 Cp. Kornacka-Skwara, "Tożsamość narodowa w świetle przemian kulturowych," 113–20.

3 Similar trends have taken place in the United States of America, Japan, Turkey, among others, more broadly: Omilanowska, "Nacjonalizm a style narodowe," 145–55; Tejszerska, "National style in the reconstruction of Poland," 143–71.

4 Gerle, "What is vernacular?," 143–54; cp. Omilanowska, "Nacjonalizm a style narodowe w architekturze," 146. Andrzej Olszewski mentions the Netherlands, Sweden, Czechoslovakia and Romania in particular among the smaller countries where the idea of national styles gained particular importance (Olszewski, *Nowa forma*, 127). Krzysztof Stefanski points in particular to Hungary, Finland and our neighbouring Czech Republic, as well as Estonia and Latvia (Stefański, *Architektura historyzmu*, 11; Stefański, *Polska architektura sakralna*, 127).

5 *Architektura polska-na progu*, 258.

architecture. In Poland's circumstances of external enslavement, this awareness extended to the role that culture played in building and preserving the national community. Countess Julia Ledóchowska (1865–1939), representing the Committee for the Relief of War Victims, which Henryk Sienkiewicz (1846–1916) founded in Vevey, proclaimed the following in a lecture she gave abroad:

“You are immortal, beloved Homeland, my Poland! Immortal through art and literature, which cannot be erased from the memory of nations.”⁶

Ignacy Jan Paderewski (1860–1941) used his talent as a pianist to fight for the Polish cause. Earlier, Frederic Chopin (1810–1849), who was in exile, dedicated his compositions to the country. Jan Matejko (1838–1893), Artur Grottger (1837–1867), Juliusz Kossak (1824–1899), Maksymilian Gierymski (1846–1874), Jacek Malczewski (1854–1929), and Józef Chełmoński (1849–1914) served it with their talents through their choice of subject matter. In the field of writing, the national identity was built by Cyprian Kamil Norwid (1821–1883), Zygmunt Krasiński (1812–1859), Juliusz Słowacki (1809–1849), Adam Mickiewicz (1798–1855), Maria Konopnicka (1842–1910), and Henryk Sienkiewicz (1846–1916). Stanisław Wyspiański (1869–1907) also dedicated his multifaceted talent to the homeland. Naturally, the architecture responsible for the visual shape of the land divided by the borders of the partitioning powers was also attributed a nation-building role. In a Lviv exhibition of Polish architects in 1910,⁷ it was proclaimed:

“We expect that the public will understand the significance of our aspirations, that they will feel that only by supporting creative work in all fields can they contribute to the formation and strengthening of our national forces.”⁸

In terms of ideology, the shaping of the Polish landscape in a specific spirit was also a peculiar antidote to the spatial Russification and Germanisation of the country, which found its expression in the deliberate construction projects of the



Figure 1 Horodec railway station 1925

Source: Polona, F.17932/AFF.III-44.

6 AGSU, Julia Urszula Ledóchowska's speech delivered in French during a concert at Odd Fellow Palace in Copenhagen, translated by Sister Anuncjata Gerlicz USJK, 13 March 1916.

7 The exhibition took place in Lviv from 8 to 30 September 1910.

8 *Pierwsza ogólna wystawa prac architektów polskich we Lwowie*, 72.

partitioners on Polish territory. This was particularly true of the campaign, which intensified after the fall of the January Uprising (1863–1864),⁹ to build Orthodox churches in the central squares of major Polish cities, bearing distinctive architectural features and giving a clear sign of Russian hegemony. Among others, in Lublin, the Cathedral of the Elevation of the Holy Cross was erected in Litewski Square (1870–1876), in Siedlce, the Holy Spirit Cathedral at the intersection of the representative Alejowa and Ogrodowa Streets (1867–1869), and in Warsaw, the Alexander Nevsky Cathedral in Saski Square (1894–1912). About the location of the latter, the Russian-language *Warszawskij Dniownik* bluntly stated:

“The Russian Orthodox church [...] magnificent from the outside, erected in the most prominent place in Warsaw, is necessary not only for religious purposes but as a symbol of Russian statehood in this country, a symbol of Orthodox Russia, of which the Polish Kingdom is an integral part.”¹⁰

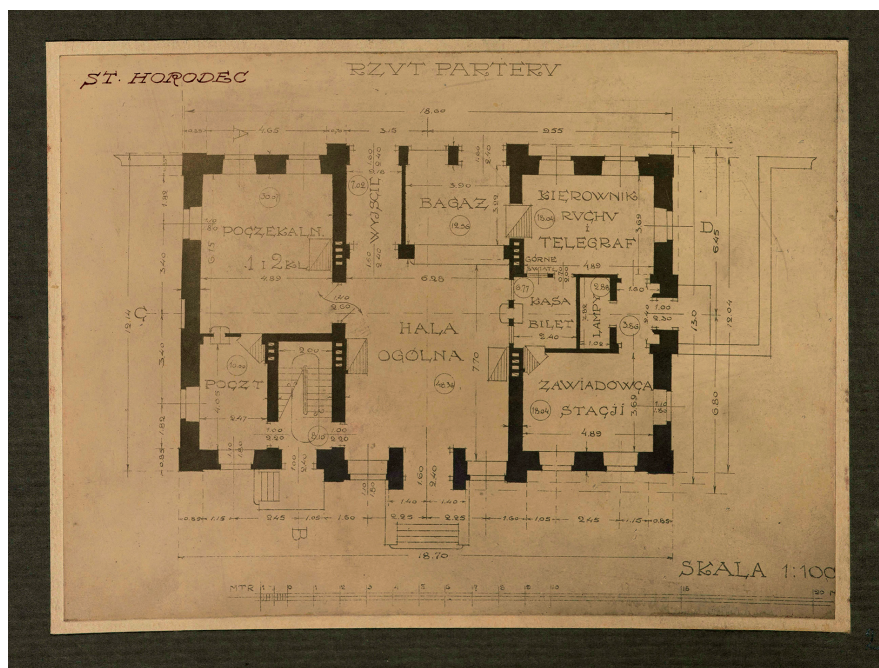


Figure 2 Horodec railway station, plan

Source: Polona, F.17933/AFF.III-44.

9 One of the national uprisings during the partition period, it lasted from January 1863 to autumn 1864 throughout the Russian partition. It was the largest and longest-lasting independence uprising in Polish history.

10 Cited from: “Kronika Warszawska, Nowa cerkiew,” 12.

In turn, the construction of the historicising Imperial Quarter in Poznań (1903–1910), whose form was to testify to the city's long-standing links with the empire, was an instrument of spatial Germanisation.¹¹ A similar aim was served by the construction of the model German village Golenhofen (1901–1905) in the area of the village Gołęczewo (Greater Poland Province).¹² As demonstrated by the above examples of the partitioners' spatial policy, the process of shaping the landscape in a peculiar national spirit was a kind of architectural counterpart to the struggle to preserve the Polish language. And in the voice of the eminent representatives of the contemporary architectural community who prepared a set of model reconstruction projects:

“The spirit of a nation manifests itself not only in its literature. Construction is also the speech through which this spirit expresses itself, and a speech all the more important because it strikes the senses of even the less educated man, is comprehensible to his own and to strangers, and sets the tone for a landscape, a locality or a part of a country.”¹³

Linked to an ever-deepening knowledge of indigenous monuments, the idea of a national style was reinforced by the development of two related disciplines: monument conservation and art history. The architects' study tours acquired a special, almost patriotic dimension, as they offered an in-depth knowledge of the history of the native architecture with its specific features and character. Architect Adolf Szyszko-Bohusz (1883–1948) notes in his biography that, when applying for a job, at the Faculty of Architecture at the Lviv Polytechnic, he reported that “already before entering the Academy [of Fine Arts in St. Petersburg], in order to get to know his homeland and Polish architecture, in 1901–1903 he went on a longer walking tour of Poland. Totalling several thousand kilometres, these excursions yielded a large body of notes on architecture and prepared the ground for more purposeful further undertakings.”¹⁴ The results of the first field research projects found expression in numerous publications. It is worth mentioning the two-volume encyclopaedic work by Zygmunt Gloger, part of the Encyclopaedia of Old Poland, devoted to a wide range of areas that constitute Polish culture.¹⁵ We should not omit Stefan Szyller's

11 More broadly: Kodym-Kozaczko, “Poznański Ring,” 19.

12 The buildings here, in the Prussian red-white-black colours and *fachwerk* construction, were designed to resemble the typical buildings of Baden, Westphalia, Thuringia and Saxony. Rylukowska, “Wzorcową wieś niemiecka,” 45; Tejszerska, “Tożsamość i tradycja,” 93. More on spatial Germanisation: Störkuhl, “Architektura wystawowa,” 242–45.

13 Introduction to: *Odbudowa polskiego miasteczka*, 6.

14 DAŁO, Sygn.: 27/4/703, p. 16. See also: Walanus, “Z dziejów fotograficznej dokumentacji polskiego dziedzictwa kulturowego,” 59–89.

15 Gloger, *Budownictwo drzewne*.

(1857–1933) study, which introduces the regional architecture of individual Polish lands, as well as Adolf Szyszko-Bohusz's numerous papers dedicated to single monuments or groups of buildings.¹⁶ This trend also includes Stanisław Noakowski's drawing series of architectural fantasies (reflecting the spirit of Polish buildings not always literally and accurately drawn), considered to have contributed to the formation of the 'Polish national style.'¹⁷ Napoleon Orda (1807–1883), in turn, made a visual documentation of Polish architectural monuments. In the late years of his life, travelling through the territory of the former Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth, he made over a thousand drawings and watercolours, some of which were published as lithographs.



Figure 3 Orańczyce railway station, from the collection of the author (public domain).

Knowledge of Polish architectural works, a sense of their character, their specificities and local differences were to be the basis for shaping the landscape in a 'homely' and 'native' spirit.¹⁸ The 'national style' was therefore intended to be ret-

16 Szyller, *Czy mamy polską architekturę?* Adolf Szyszko-Bohusz himself lists among the published items of his authorship: [Polish two-nave churches, Hall churches in Poland, Fortified churches, Churches in Mnichów and Tomaszów, Our three castles, The Krakow system, Synagogues in Poland, St Mary's Church in Krakow, From the history of Romanesque Wawel, Rotunda of St Felix and Adauctus (DALO: Sygn: 27/4/703, the architect's doctoral thesis).

17 Noakowski, *Architektura Polska, szkice kompozycyjne*.

18 The architects Stefan Szyller and Jan Heurich were strongly encouraged to make scientific journeys around the country, making drawings and taking photographs. See, for example, the report on Jan Heurich's three-part lecture On the Views of Poland in the Drawings of Napoleon Orda, reproducing historical places, churches, castle ruins, palaces, and manors in Poland from the earliest times to the end of the nineteenth century ("Z towarzystw technicznych," 400).

respective. Nevertheless, all its promoters agreed that “any building to which we accidentally adapt a motif from an old building standing on Polish soil will not be Polish in its character”¹⁹ because the national style is not created “by thoughtlessly compiling details from our old monuments.”²⁰

“It is not motifs taken live from the past and used at random, like the Polish motif in the Symphony of a Foreigner, but the sense of the connection between the shape and the conditions of the site, with the living tradition of the inhabitants, the national language of the architectural shape that will give a measure of the Polishness that resonates in the work of the Polish creator even when he composes on foreign themes.”²¹

Only “the artist who finds and senses this soul in the native architecture will possess the secret of evoking with his works the moods created by the monuments of our ancient art, i.e., of creating in his own style.”²²



Figure 4 Narewka railway station

Source: from the collection of Artur Soszyński.

Architects were faced with the difficult task of producing works that were not marked by epigonism, but drew on and were rooted in tradition, and preserved its specific character, which had to be identified and defined. The most frequently used phrase ‘search for a national style’ is apt and precise. In 1918, Zdzisław Mączyński

19 Szyszko-Bohusz, “Zadania polskiej architektury nowoczesnej,” 18.

20 Lewiński, “»Polish Style« imported from Vienna,” 20.

21 Jakimowicz, “Z Wystawy Architektonicznej Wsi i Miasteczka,” 60.

22 Mączyński, “Kilka uwag o swojskości w naszej architekturze,” 22.

pointed out that “[...] the issue of the nationalisation of architecture, as it is called in our country, the »homely style« [*styl swojski*], has been occupying our minds for some time, yet it has always remained unclear not only for the general public of the intelligentsia but even for architects.”²³ On the other hand, Ewa Łuskińska wrote in 1910 that “[...] in this field, we have a huge task ahead of us. The style of the epoch is like a universal theme, which each nation should mould in its own spirit, breathe its deepest breath into it, bring in its own creative elements, and so, according to the measure of the genius of its race, create its own work of art from it.”²⁴



Figure 5 Czeremcha railway station

Source: AGC.

Krzysztof Stefański notes that the creative search took place on three overlapping levels.²⁵ The first is represented by shaping individual buildings in a native spirit, based on the compilation of elements considered native, without an attempt to methodologically create a ‘style’ *sensu stricto*. The second was an attempt to develop a style based on a new interpretation of historical forms characteristic of Polish architectural history. This gave rise to the ‘Vistula-Baltic (or Vistula) style’, which is discussed in the next section. The third aimed to develop a fairly new style, appropriate to the spirit of the construction date of the young state.²⁶ At the same time, the possibility of national styles appearing in the form they did was linked to

23 Mączyński, “Kilka uwag o swojskości w naszej architekturze,” 20.

24 Łuskińska, “W obronie piękności kraju,” 4.

25 Stefański, *Polska architektura sakralna*, 10.

26 The latter attitude is given special attention by Szczerski, *Modernizacje. Sztuka i architektura*.

general historicising trends in art design.²⁷ Nevertheless, gaining inspiration from the building tradition, typical of historicism and a characteristic feature of nineteenth-century architecture in Western and Central European countries, and even the use of indigenous colours of particular historical styles, were not features necessarily related to nationalistic ideological tendencies.²⁸ Although the abstract concept of a national style must be transformed into a concrete architectural shape, form alone does not constitute substance. Władysław Tatarkiewicz emphasises that the essence of nativeness lies in the content of art, not in its form, and is the outcome of the social function it performs.²⁹ Małgorzata Omilanowska puts it very precisely when stating that “a style can only be called national when it is used consciously as a sign or, better, as a carrier of certain national ideas. [...] One can, therefore, speak of a national style only when both the creator and the viewer of a piece of art perceive its ideological significance.”³⁰



Figure 6 Hajnówka railway station

Source: Biblioteka miejska w Hajnówce [Hajnówka Municipal Library].

In the case of Poland, the transformation of national ideas into architectural forms was not only fully conscious but even programmatic. In the first period of the formation of the national style, which ends with the happy year of independence (1918), external enslavement caused a particular turn towards national values. In the shackles of the partitions, tying architecture to ideological themes was part of

27 Cp. Stefański, *Polska architektura sakralna*, 9.

28 These trends did not emerge with such force in either England or France, although its architects were fond of referring to local varieties of the Renaissance. Omilanowska, *Kreacja – konstrukcja – rekonstrukcja*, 12–13.

29 Tatarkiewicz, “Realizmy i cechy rodzime w sztuce polskiego odrodzenia,” 218–19. More broadly: Leśniakowska, ‘*Polski Dwór*’: *wzorce architektoniczne, mit, symbol*, 69–70.

30 Omilanowska, “Nacjonalizm a style narodowe w architekturze,” 146. See also: Omilanowska, *Kreacja – konstrukcja – rekonstrukcja*, 12.

the struggle for the survival of the nation by virtue of its cultural distinctiveness. The architects' priority task was to promote, sustain, and protect the country's cultural values. In 1916, two years before the full realisation of the Poles' freedom aspirations, an anonymous author argued:

“Our nation, because of its tragic fate, has the strongest reason to assert as strongly as possible its right to the land it inhabits; our works of art should bear an outstanding national stamp.”³¹

After the restoration of independence, the shaping of a national style was linked to the assertion of identity and responsibility for rebuilding the state, whose architecture would bear the ‘marks of Polishness’, confirm that the lands belonged to the Republic, and give a sense of ‘living in one’s own home’ in a country with a long cultural tradition.³² It had to be rebuilt in a planned and aesthetically pleasing manner, while at the same time drawing on local traditions. Jozef Piotrowski (1873–1939), who was in charge of conserving monuments in the Lviv region, warned:



Figure 7 Słonim railway station

Source: from the collection of Marcin Gawlicki.

31 *Architektura polska - na progu polskiego stylu*, 258.

32 A clear expression of the ideological view of interwar architecture is the title of an exhibition organised by the Polish Institute in Minsk under the auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: “Eternity and Moment. 1918–1939 – Poland strong with architecture.” The creators of the event, which is part of the celebrations marking the centenary of the restoration of independence, emphasise the role of architecture as a tool for shaping Polish national identity, an instrument of spatial planning policy and the non-military strength of the Second Republic. *Eternity and a Moment 1918–1939*.

"We should bear in mind that nowadays it is not just one or a few houses, but hundreds of villages and towns, hundreds of thousands of various constructions that may raise and decorate the entire country or disfigure it for centuries. Today, we have the opportunity to change the appearance of whole areas of the country at will. We can single them out, distinguish them, individualise them in a peculiar and original way. [...] Such an opportunity will probably never return again."³³

Aware of the scale of destruction and the difficult economic situation, Stanisław Tomkiewicz (1850–1933), a monument conservator and art historian, made the following appeal:

"We love our homeland and therefore we want it not only to be fertile and happy, but also to be beautiful [...]. And if this beauty is homely and native, then it works most powerfully [...]. We must do everything to prevent [our country] from turning into something alien. We want and we should want Poland to remain our homeland, our native Poland, the Poland we know well and hold dear. [...] all efforts should be made to ensure that this pleasant homeland retains all that was beautiful in it, that it does not lose its proper and distinctive features, all that attached us to it, and that, in the eyes of strangers, made it attractive and increased its charm. Let us therefore guard the beauty of the Polish countryside, the Polish city, the Polish landscape. Let us protect the homeliness of Polish architecture. This should be our motto and our guideline."³⁴

The aim of the reconstruction path chosen was to give inhabitants a sense of 'being at home', strengthening their attachment to the homeland, to show, especially in areas of great ethnic diversity and to newcomers that they belonged to

33 Piotrowski, *Ochrona zabytków a odbudowa kraju*, 55–56. It is worth mentioning that, according to the registration made by the Fire Insurance Company, on the territory of Galicia alone, "[...] the number of buildings destroyed by warfare, amounted to 242,855 buildings, of which rural and urban residential buildings number 78,036 (89 percent peasant, 3 percent manorial, 8 percent urban buildings), while farm, urban and factory buildings number 164,819." Jabłoński, "Jak się odbuduje wieś polska?," 313. At the same time, a survey by the Galician Governorate showed that 1,323 rural communities and 112 towns were practically destroyed. A total of 69,716 residential and 119,265 business buildings were almost completely destroyed throughout Galicia—a total of 188,981 buildings not including manor houses, manor farms, factories and church buildings, among which total destruction, according to 1916 data, included: thirty-nine Catholic churches, eighty Greek Catholic churches, 1,378 vicarages and outbuildings. In addition, partial destruction affected 319 Roman Catholic churches, 179 Greek Catholic churches, and 2,505 parsonages and outbuildings. *Centrala Krajowa dla Gospodarczej Odbudowy Galicji*, 404–05. The lands of the north-eastern Borderlands suffered even heavier losses.

34 Tomkiewicz, "Odbudowa, swojskość, kosmopolityzm," 16–17.

the Republic, and to manifest the country's qualities and cultural distinctiveness. Władysław Skoczylas (1883–1934) envisioned the national style as “decorating the »recovered home« and freeing it from foreign influences, i.e., from the traces of the partitions.”³⁵ At the same time, the stylistically and ideologically coherent concept of reconstruction was to be the common thread binding into a single organism a state marked by numerous divisions, which inherited five systems of administration, five currencies, four official languages in the army, four legal systems, three penal codes, three networks and three railway systems. Stefan Szyller described the idea of unification through the jointly chosen direction of reconstruction:

“As soon as the smouldering of the ruins of burned-out Polish villages and towns had ceased [...] Polish architects started a lively activity in the areas of their reconstruction. [...] although at the time any communication between [...] circles of Polish thought was [...] completely disrupted [...] without any mutual understanding, one slogan was frequently voiced by architects: We want to rebuild Poland in the Polish spirit, and we will certainly rebuild it! This unanimity, rare in our conditions of political and social disintegration, proves how strongly we have matured in feeling and understanding the need to mark our individuality [...], the most tangible expression of which is and should always be architecture.”³⁶



Figure 8 Bielsk Podlaski railway station

Source: Polona, F.17944/AFF.III–44.

35 Skoczylas, “O zadaniach Szkoły Sztuk Pięknych,” 3; cited from: Chmielewska, “Styl narodowy w Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej,” 191.

36 Szyller, “Polskę tylko w duchu polskim odbudować chcemy i odbudujemy!” 421.

Shaping the forms of the various phases of the 'Polish national style'

As in other European countries, when searching for the form of the 'national style', folk models were used. Created by Stanisław Witkiewicz (1851–1915), the 'Zakopane style' was the most popular pattern, a peculiar interpretation of the Podhale building industry.³⁷ Also included in the folk trend are the explorations of Julian Zachariewicz (1837–1898), Dean of the Faculty of Architecture and Rector of the Lviv Polytechnic, Kazimierz Mokłowski (1869–1905) connected with the culture of the Carpathian Mountains and the promotion of the so-called 'Hutsul style,' and the activity of Józef Witkiewicz in favour of the 'Mazurian style.'³⁸

In the wider geographical area, the initial stage of the search for a national style in Polish architecture, dating back to the second half of the nineteenth century, applied neo-Gothic and neo-Romanesque forms. This was prompted by the pan-European trend and the marked difference of Gothic forms from the canonical shapes of the Orthodox churches of the Tsarist empire. References to Gothic architecture were therefore intended to indicate Poland's long-standing links with the cultural heritage of Christian Latin Europe.³⁹ At the same time, attempts were made to define the indigenous specificity of medieval styles, creating the theoretical basis for the constitution of the so-called 'Vistula-Baltic'⁴⁰ and 'transitional styles.' Some ten years later, in turn, more distinct local features were perceived in the medieval architecture of Lesser Poland. In this field, both in terms of publication and design activities, Jan Sas Zubrzycki (1860–1935) played a significant role: he promoted 'Polish' forms of neo-Gothic, called Vistula Gothic.⁴¹

Just before independence was regained, neo-Baroque and neo-Renaissance forms constituted a peculiar sign of Polishness, recalling the times of the country's

37 Named after the central Podhale region town of Zakopane.

38 See: Fański, "Nowy styl swojski. Rozmowa z p. Józefem Witkiewiczem," 424–45; Fański, "W swojskim stylu. Nowe próby (Wypowiedzi Józefa Witkiewicza)," 9–10. Józef Szymon Wroński emphasises that after 1905, when the Zakopane style was slowly losing its significance, architects turned their attention to the wooden buildings of other regions of the country. The foundations of the Mazurian, Hutsul, and Kolomyśian styles were then formed. However, despite the enrichment of 'native' architecture with motifs from other regions, the intended goal was not achieved. Attempts to shape the new style on the basis of non-Zakopanian regionalisms did not spread. Wroński, "Heimatsstil und nationale Stromungen," 15. See also: Szewczyk, "Regionalizm w teorii i praktyce," 100; Zarębska, "Historia przyjaźni Mariana Wawrzeńskiego i Antoniego Gawińskiego," 215–44.

39 More broadly, see: Stefański, *Polska architektura sakralna*.

40 More broadly, see: Majdowski, "O poglądach na styl wiślano-bałtycki," 303–28. The spread of this variety of neo-Gothic in Polish architecture—primarily sacred—owes much to Józef Pius Dziekoński (1844–1927).

41 Zubrzycki, *Styl nadwiślański, jako odcień sztuki średniowiecznej w Polsce*.

reconstruction after the seventeenth-century Swedish Deluge. The period acquired symbolic significance thanks to Henryk Sienkiewicz's excellent books, which inspired hope for the rebirth of the state. In 1912, Adolf Szyszko-Bohusz's inaugural lecture warmly encouraged students of the architecture department of the Lviv Polytechnic:

"If we want to get to know Polish culture [...] we should turn to the monuments least reminiscent of the canons of pan-European art, to the monuments most independent—and such are our monuments from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: churches, chapels, manors and mansions, synagogues, and finally [works from a period which saw] an unprecedented [...] blossoming of our independence in architecture [witnessed by] these substantial walls framed by battlements, dotted with towers and risalits, and frayed at the top by a rich attic [...]. This strange mixture of East and West is reflected [...] in the first better manor house of the nobility, in the first better town house."⁴²



Figure 9 Podbrodzie railway station, view from the tracks, Polona, Pocz.17816.

- 42 Szyszko-Bohusz, "Zadania polskiej architektury," 18. It is worth noting the similarity with the search for the sources of Hungarian national styles: Ödön Lechner (1845–1914), referring to the origin of the Magyars, also combined Baroque and Oriental motifs. His nephew Jenő Lechner (1878–1962), on the other hand, arguing his competition concept for the Hungarian Ethnographic Museum, wrote as follows: "I have strongly emphasised the Turkish character, which supports my view that in search for the Hungarian form, not only in the decorative layer but also in the execution of the construction, we are strongly approaching the East, where we come from and where the guiding idea of our folk art leads us." Gerle, "Historyzm narodowy Jenő Lechnera," 157.

A similar conviction was expressed by Zdzisław Mączyński when he stated that “our country is a mine of Baroque motifs.”⁴³ References to Renaissance and Baroque forms guided the country’s reconstruction after World War I. From a perspective of only fifteen years, Alfred Lauterbach (1884–1943) emphasised:

“The rebuilding of the country gave rise to a reflexive tendency towards certain pre-partition traditions and forms, and a desire to extend the old routes—while ignoring as far as possible the years of captivity.”⁴⁴



Figure 10 Podbrodzie railway station, view from the city

Source: Polona, F.17938/AFF.III–44 (Odbudowa dworców, domów mieszkalnych i wież ciśnień : dla dyr. departamentu inż. J. Mrozowskiego).

In the history of the architecture of the First Republic, the turn of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which Szyszko-Bohusz referred to, is the period when the noble residence (the manor house) assumed its final shape. This is the form that took root in the general Polish consciousness as a national spatial symbol, since it combined influences of various cultures, grew on our soil, and perfectly fit into the local climatic and landscape conditions.⁴⁵ At the same time, this Baroque or Classicist manor house, which Professor Stanisław Noakowski (1867–1928)

43 Mączyński, “Styl oraz jego wpływ,” 417, 418.

44 Lauterbach, “Szesnaście lat polskiej architektury,” 571.

45 Cp. J. W. [Warchałowski Jerzy], “Konkurs na szkice dworku polskiego na wystawie w Rzymie,” 82.

called “a treasure of the pure Polish soul,”⁴⁶ gained in times of external enslavement the significance of a “relic of the Republic,”⁴⁷ an oasis of national culture, a sign of Polishness, peculiarity, and indigenouness. It is not surprising that in the first years of regained independence, in search for a visual template of the national style, reference was made to its shape as a symbol of Polish identity, constituting not only a formal but also an ideological sign of the “treasury of national values.”⁴⁸

The so-called ‘manor style’ was born in this way, adapting the forms of the landed gentry’s residence to buildings of other functions. Its formation and spread were impacted by several factors. The architects’ interest in the noble residence as the source of the ‘manor style’ developed on the basis of European and, above all, contemporary English models for single-family housing. In the first years of the twentieth century, architects’ associations invited several competitions for manors: in Raszków (1903), Opinogóra (1908), and Niegowić (1913).⁴⁹ Their results were discussed in architectural magazines, which also published the highest-rated design concepts. In 1910, the Polish architectural community was preparing to present its achievements at the 1911 International Art Exhibition in Rome. Although due to political correctness towards the partitioners, the Polish representation (as the country did not exist on the political map of Europe at the time) was ultimately not allowed in the competition and exhibition, before the Exhibition Committee made this decision, delegations of architectural circles in Lviv, Warsaw, and Krakow had announced a competition for a *Polish manor house for the World Exhibition in Rome*, the results of which were later widely discussed in the trade press.⁵⁰ Only two years after the announcement of the competition for the Polish manor, in 1912 a delegation of Polish architects together with artists associated in the Polish Applied Art Society organised, under the patronage of the city of Krakow, the *Exhibition of Architecture and Interiors in the Garden Environment*. It was preceded by a competition for “five types of houses in a garden environment for different layers of the population.”⁵¹ These activities contributed to the development of a repertoire

46 S. Noakowski *Do czytelników*. Quoted from: Rozbicka, “Dom mieszkalny średniozamożnego ziemianina,” 37.

47 Cp. Libicki, *Dwory i pałace wiejskie w Małopolsce i na Podkarpaciu*, xv.

48 Małgorzata Rozbicka emphasises, however, that this trend, too, is embedded in the broader context of other European countries, where the form of housing for the middle-income population also received attention at a similar time. Rozbicka, *Małe mieszkanie z ogrodem w tle*.

49 As many as fifty-six projects were submitted for the latter. More Broadly: Rozbicka, “Dom mieszkalny średniozamożnego ziemianina,” 35.

50 J. W. [Jerzy Warchałowski], “Konkurs na szkice dworku polskiego na wystawie w Rzymie,” 80–82, Pls. 13–15.

51 Rozbicka, “Dom mieszkalny średniozamożnego ziemianina,” 35; *Wystawa Architektury i Wnętrz w otoczeniu ogrodowym w Krakowie w r. 1912*, 115.

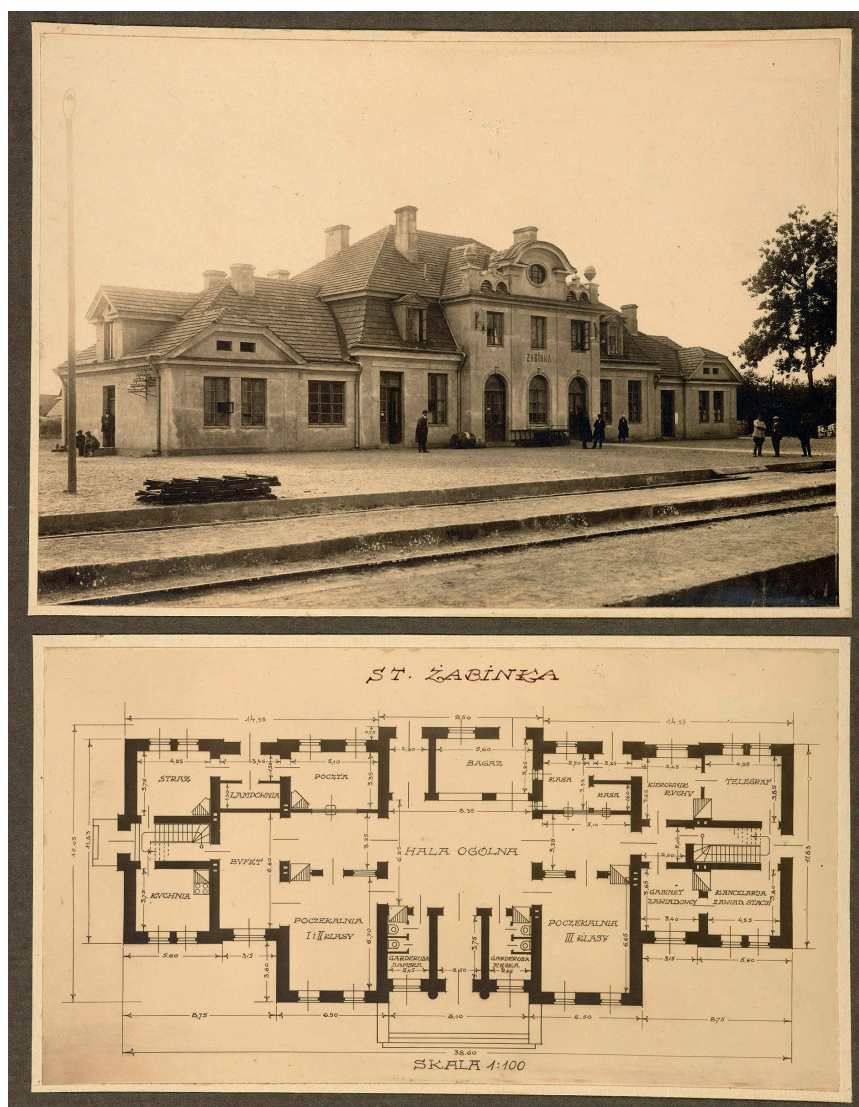


Figure 11 Žabinka railway station

Source: Polona, AFF.III–44, *Dyrekcja K.P. w Wilnie. Wydział Drogowy. Odbudowa dworców, domów mieszkalnych i wież ciśnień.*

of motifs and architectural forms, which by the 1930s had become—as Małgorzata Rozbicka emphasises⁵²—the basis for the formation of the ‘manor style.’ Numerous publications contributed to their popularisation—both dealing with the noble residences themselves and devoted to the broader issue of the country’s reconstruction

52 Rozbicka, "Dom mieszkalny średniozamożnego ziemianina," 35.

following the Great War. In 1915, the Civic Committee for Reconstruction and the Central Civic Committee launched a series of albums presenting projects of various types of buildings.⁵³ The designs included in the individual volumes were developed free of charge by Polish architects, as they were their honorary contributions to the programmatic reconstruction of the country in the national style.

Other events, such as the *Village and Town* exhibition (1915) organised by the Architects' Circle and the Society for the Preservation of Monuments of the Past in Warsaw also played a significant role in the promotion of national forms.⁵⁴ One of the main events was the Architectural Exhibition of Józef Czajkowski (1872–1947) organised in 1919 in Warsaw's Zachęta (Society for the Encouragement of Fine Arts).⁵⁵ Czajkowski was the creator, among other things, of the model design of the manor house at the above-mentioned Exhibition of Architecture and in the Garden Environment (1912).

Propagated by representatives of all major Polish architectural circles of the time, the 'manor style' gained great popularity in the housing and public utility construction of the Second Republic of Poland.⁵⁶ It shaped the forms of schools, offices, military buildings and, in a particular way, railway stations.⁵⁷ The next part of the study is devoted to these projects.

Railway stations in the Second Republic (1918–1939): the programmatic implementation of the 'national style'

Although not monumental buildings, railway stations are a characteristic example of the conscious, deliberate use of the 'Polish national style.' The construction of the first railway lines running through the territory of the Republic of Poland coincided

53 *Odbudowa polskiej wsi: projekty chat i zagród włościańskich* (1915); *Odbudowa polskiego miasteczka. Projekty domów opracowane przez grono architektów polskich* (1916); *Odbudowa polskiego miasteczka. Projekty budynków użyteczności publicznej, opracowane przez grono architektów polskich* (1918); *Odbudowa wsi polskiej. Projekty zagród włościańskich wyróżnione na konkursie ogłoszonym przez C.K.O. za pośrednictwem koła architektów w Warszawie* (1915).

54 The aim of the exhibition was to collect and make public iconographic material (photographs, models) presenting various objects belonging to the architectural heritage of individual regions of Polish. The result of the exhibition was an album containing photographs presented during the exhibition: *Materyały do architektury polskiej*.

55 *Wystawa architektoniczna Józefa Czajkowskiego w T.Z.S.P.*, 77.

56 Olszewski, *Nowa forma w architekturze polskiej*, 122–27; Tejszerska, "Nasz rodzimy ziemiański dwór," 33–51; Tejszerska, "National style in the reconstruction of Poland," 143–71.

57 Pszczółkowski, *Architektura użyteczności publicznej II Rzeczypospolitej 1918–1939. Forma i styl*, 83–114; Tejszerska, "Styl narodowy w architekturze dworców," 240–79.

with the period when Poland was under the rule of foreign powers.⁵⁸ After years of partitions, the Polish state inherited three independent, very poorly interconnected railway networks.⁵⁹ Networks built in systems corresponding to the interests of the partitioning powers,⁶⁰ shaped centrifugally, often provisionally, left much to be desired in terms of quality. The networks were developed to very different degrees⁶¹ (Table 1).

The hostilities, which for the Poles put a happy end to the period of captivity, left behind significant damage to such strategic objects as tracks, bridges⁶² and railway buildings. The Russian army, while leaving the central part of Poland in 1915, deliberately destroyed many lines and stations and took their equipment. Out of the 910 station buildings before the war within the later Warsaw, Radom, Vilnius, Lviv, and Stanisławów Directorates, 574 (63 percent) were destroyed. The above data do not take into account the losses incurred in the other directorates, due to their incomparably better situation. The slight damage to buildings within the Krakow Directorate in the years 1914–1915 was almost completely repaired by the Austrian authorities. The railway facilities of the Poznań, Gdańsk, and Katowice Directorates, i.e., those located in

58 "A great invention – the railway [...] it was born at a time when Polish political borders no longer existed on the maps of Europe. At that time, the only free and independent piece of Polish land was the Republic of Krakow (1815–1846)." *Twenty Years of Communication in Reborn Poland*, Wydawnictwo 'Ilustrowany Kurjer Codzienny,' Krakow 1939, 123.

59 "Many major Polish cities did not have direct railway connections with each other before 1915 (Warsaw with Poznań or Lviv). Huge areas of the country, especially the borderlands of the partitioning countries, were deliberately deprived of railway communication." *Twenty Years of Communication in Reborn Poland*, Wydawnictwo 'Ilustrowany Kurjer Codzienny,' Krakow 1939, 127.

60 "Before the war, the railway network of all three districts was adapted to the economic and strategic needs of the partitioning countries, and only secondarily to their own needs, but it could not have the needs of a united Poland in view." S. Sztolcman, *Plany rozwoju sieci kolejowej polskiej*, [Plans for the Development of the Polish Railway Network], "Inżynier Kolejowy," no. 11 (1928): 392.

61 "The density of the pre-war railway network in Poland was very unequal in the three partitions. In the former Prussian partition, it was the largest, equalling in density that of Western European countries, in the former Austrian partition it was half of it, and in the former Russian partition it was only its third." S. Sztolcman, *Plany rozwoju sieci kolejowej polskiej*, 392. For comparison, it is worth citing other data for 1914: there was an average of one running km of railway line in Belgium on 3.48 km² of land, in England on 8.33 km², in East Prussia on 9.54 km², in Poznań on 7.85 km², in Galicia on 18.75, in the former Congress Kingdom on 24.90 km², and in the Eastern Borderlands on 43.48 km². *Dziesięciolecie Polskich Kolei Państwowych 1918–1928*, 10.

62 "Inżynier Kolejowy" gives specific figures: destroyed bridges with a span of over 20 m—380 (41 percent) with a total length of 28,347 m; smaller bridges—2,019 destroyed (which is about 20 percent) with a total length of 11,201 m. Z. Gubrynowicz, *Destruction of railway bridges during the war and their reconstruction*, "Inżynier Kolejowy," no. 11 (1928): 382.

areas of the former Prussian partition, were not ravaged by either World War I or the Polish-Bolshevik War; thus, they survived in the best condition.

Table 1 Length of railway roads in individual Polish districts in relation to their area and population 1 January 1924⁶³

DISTRICTS	Area km ²	Population (thousand)	Length of Railways (km)			
			km	per 100 km ² (a)	per 10 thousand inhabitants (b)	on $\sqrt{a \times b}$
1. The former Russian district (voivodeships: Warsaw, Łódź, Kielce, Lublin, Białystok, Nowogródek, Polesie, Volhynia, Vilnius Land)	260 331	15 337	7 423	2.85	4.84	3.72
2. The former Austrian district (Krakow, Lviv, Stanisławów and Ternopil voivodeships)	80 089	7 628	4 417	5.51	5.79	5.65
3. The former Prussian district (Poznań, Pomeranian and Silesian voivodeships)	46 214	3 894	4 805	10.0	12.35	11.34
Total	386 634	26 859	16 645	4.30	6.19	5.16
In addition, in the administration of the Polish state on the territory of the Free City of Gdańsk	—	—	140	—	—	—

The reconstruction of destroyed buildings and the expansion and reconstruction of the railway network, especially the connection of lines previously located within the various partitions, was one of the basic demands of the reborn state. Specialists estimated that 3000 km of new lines had to be rebuilt.⁶⁴ In fact, in the interwar period (1918–1938), 1650 km of new standard-gauge railways were built in Poland.⁶⁵ The expansion and reconstruction of a line had to be accompanied by the construction of station buildings. A comparison of data on rebuilt and newly erected buildings (Tables 2 and 3) yields the conclusion that in the first post-war decade, about 600 of these edifices were built.

⁶³ Wasiutyński, *Drogi Żelazne*, 50.

⁶⁴ S. Sztolcman, *Plany rozwoju sieci kolejowej polskiej*, 392.

⁶⁵ *Twenty Years of Communication in Reborn Poland*, 240.

Table 2 Summary of the number of buildings rebuilt and in need of reconstruction in 1928⁶⁶

Types of buildings	Rebuilt	Percentage	In need of reconstruction	Percentage
Stations and stops	474	82.58	100	17.42
Warehouses	369	72.92	137	27.08
Water stations and water towers	387	79.14	102	20.86
Locomotive depots and workshops	64	82.05	14	17.95
Residential and administrative buildings	1 586	72.45	603	27.55

Table 3 Number of newly erected stations in the years following independence⁶⁷

Erected	From 1918 to 1920	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926–1927	1927–1928	Total
Number of stations	5	8	9	25	17	22	16	17	119

The greatest dynamism in the field of railway construction is seen in the 1920s.⁶⁸ Its architecture is marked by the aesthetics of the national style. The plan was that both the rebuilt and the newly erected stations should take on a homely form.

The realisation of the objectives was accompanied by a constant search for architectural forms and motifs that could be considered particularly Polish. The aim was that the new buildings should capture and reflect the general character or, as it was formulated, the 'spirit' of Polish construction, avoiding imitation and copying works of past eras. At the same time, a certain set of motifs was compiled, which were considered particularly Polish and gave the buildings a native character. The repertoire of forms included motifs typical of provincial buildings of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, such as the so-called 'Polish (broken) roof',⁶⁹ entablatures, arcades based on bulging non-classical columns, and the attic.

⁶⁶ *Polskie Koleje Państwowe 1918–1928*, 62.

⁶⁷ *Polskie Koleje Państwowe 1918–1928*, 161.

⁶⁸ With a break in 1920 for the duration of the Bolshevik War, which further increased the scope of destruction. By 1932, the reconstruction included 499 station buildings, 377 freight warehouses, 401 water stations and water towers, 64 workshops and locomotive depots, and 1632 residential houses. *Varia na temat budownictwa kolejowego* [Varia on the Railway Construction], "Architektura i Budownictwo" no. 1 (1934): 32.

⁶⁹ Otherwise known as a 'stepped roof,' a specific type of multi-sloped and multi-pitched mansard roof. As in the mansard roof, each pitch consists of two planes one above the other. In the so-called Polish (broken) roof, both parts have the same pitch, while in the mansard roof the lower part is at a steeper angle.

The attic in fact gained a highly individual character in Polish construction in its elaborate two-storey form, with a level of arcades and a decorative crest.

In the case of destroyed, partly demolished or burnt-out railway stations, for reasons of economy, the surviving foundations and walls were recycled.⁷⁰ These buildings were rebuilt, extended, and adorned with a different 'outer garment'. Thus, the foundations and walls of the central body were retained, often extending the buildings laterally along the long axis. Comparing photographs of pre- and post-war railway stations, we see the same spacing, size, and arrangement of window axes.

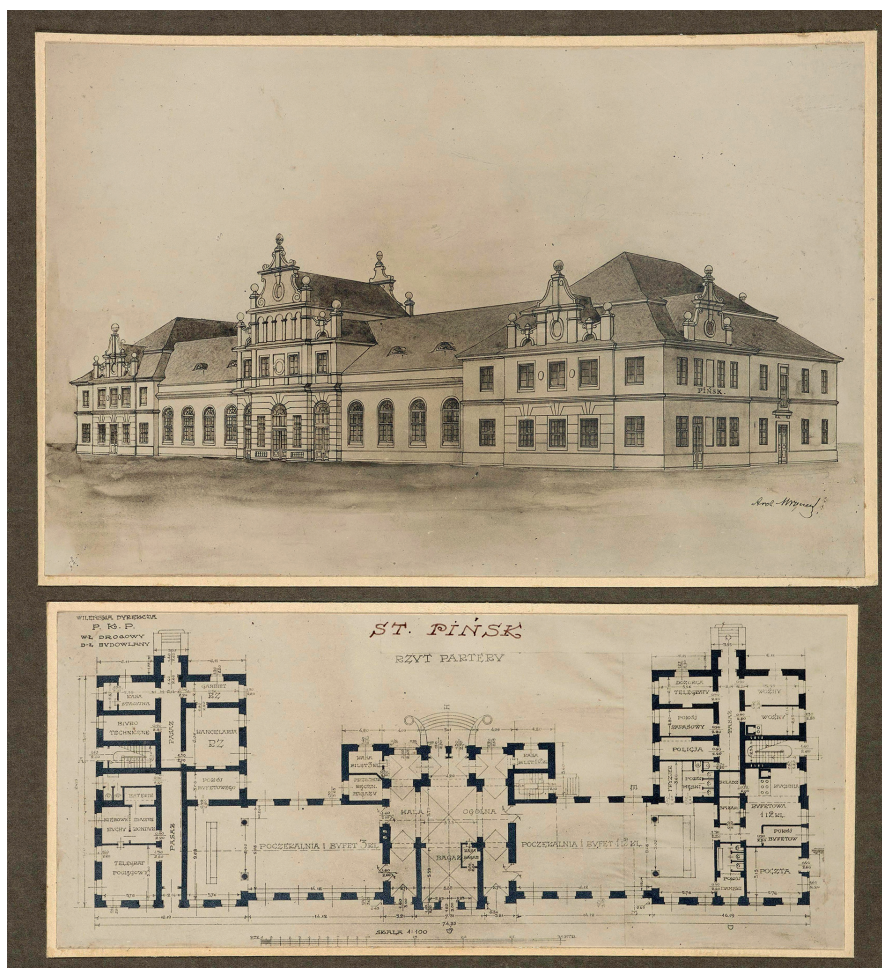


Figure 12 Pińsk railway station

Source: Polona, AFF.III-44, *Dyrekcja K.P. w Wilnie. Wydział Drogowy. Odbudowa dworców, domów mieszkalnych i wież ciśnień.*

70 *Dziesięciolecie Polskich Kolei Państwowych 1918-1928*, 85.

However, the overall aesthetic character of the buildings is completely different. The 1928 jubilee publication of the institutional history documenting railway operations gives this description:

“The necessity of the reconstruction had this positive side from an aesthetic point of view that the railway construction simultaneously got rid of the traces of the Muscovite and Austrian captivity, which would have disfigured the Polish landscape for a longer time in the form of typical ugly Muscovite and Austrian railway buildings alien to our culture.”⁷¹

In the first years of the reconstruction of the Republic after the war damage, especially in small towns where railway stations were almost the only buildings erected with state funds, they were assigned the role of a formal model for locals rebuilding their residences. In summarising a certain phase of railway investment, Feliks Lubierzyński states:

“Insofar as these railway stations are built in the »Polish style«, then—as we can often observe—other newly constructed private buildings are also usually erected in this style. Eventually, perhaps the whole of Poland, through its architecture, which in a way is already such an outstanding, external expression of the culture and tastes of the nation, will establish its proper type and character, immediately visible to all.”⁷²



Figure 13 Brześć railway station

Source: NAC, 1–G–3602.

71 *Dziesięciolecie Polskich Kolei Państwowych 1918–1928*, 85.

72 Lubierzyński, “Odbudowa dworców kolejowych na Kresach,” 11–12.

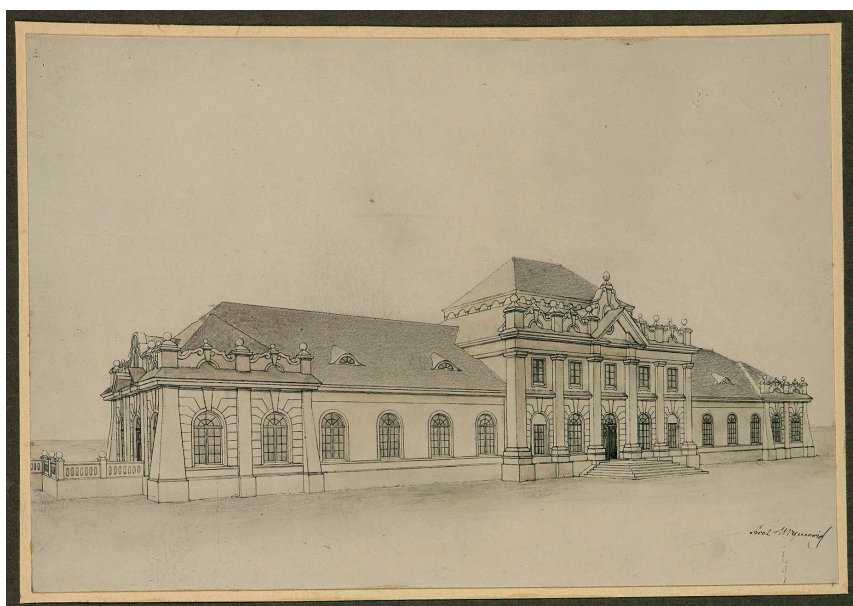


Figure 14 Porzecze railway station

Source: Polona, *Dyrekcja K.P. w Wilnie. Wydział Drogowy. Odbudowa dworców, domów mieszkalnych i wież ciśnień.*

In addition, the railway station was regarded as the ‘gateway to the city’, its calling card, the first object seen by a traveller arriving in a particular locality and the only one seen by those passing through it. Therefore, this edifice also fulfilled a propaganda role. This belief was expressed, for example, on the pages of the *Inżynier Kolejowy* [Railway Engineer] periodical:

“A foreigner’s first impression on foreign soil when travelling by rail always arises from contact with the railway station: its external appearance, the platform, the buffet room, the waiting room, and so on.”⁷³

The editors of the *Technical Review* made this recommendation:

“Poland should have stations that are modest—as the country itself is on the rise—but not ugly. Moreover, the variety of buildings in the country’s various regions can and should be taken into account [...]. [...] A foreign visitor will first of all remember the railway stations and from them will automatically obtain an impression of the wealth of architectural motifs in Poland. [...] It should not be the ambition of the circles that decide on the direction of railway construction to imitate Europe uncritically and ineptly. Instead, we should follow our own and aesthetically right path,

73 W. S. “Nasze dworce,” 124.

which will allow us to reach the point where everyone who crosses the borders of Poland will immediately feel that they are in a different country, but an attractive and pleasant one, inviting the passer-by to stop.”⁷⁴

This encouragement, which echoed industry discussions, was consistently followed. The jubilee publication summarising the first post-war decade of railway investment emphasised that “in drawing up the designs, attention was paid to giving the new railway buildings a homely appearance.”⁷⁵

Józef Andrzej Mrozek emphasises that “the Polish forms of architecture of the time had [...] a multiple political role to play [...], and [among other things] they emphasised »Polishness« in the Eastern Borderlands.”⁷⁶ The issue was addressed similarly already at the time of the Restoration:

“For both Polish citizens and foreigners passing by, the style and character of the newly rebuilt railway stations are both a visible sign and symbol that Reborn Poland, also through its art, reestablishes its ancient cultural connection with this country, interrupted by a century of slavery, and extends its dominion over it.”⁷⁷



Figure 15 Żyrardów railway station

Source: Polona, DŻS XII 8b/p.21/70.

74 “Od Redakcji,” 316.

75 *Dziesięciolecie Polskich Kolei Państwowych 1918–1928*, 85.

76 Mrozek, “Historyzm narodowy lat dwudziestych,” 163.

77 Lubierzyński, *Odbudowa dworców kolejowych na Kresach*, 9–10.



Figure 16 Radziwiłłów railway station

Source: NAC, 1G3701.

In the Second Republic of Poland (1918–1939), the largest number of new and reconstructed railway stations were built in the Eastern Borderlands, which had the least developed railway network and had been badly affected by wartime destruction. The areas under the control of the Vilnius Railway Directorate at the time, within the borders of present-day Belarus and Lithuania, saw the highest number of ‘typical’ buildings erected on the basis of a single design. Despite their ‘serial’ character, they were given elaborate, picturesque forms in the ‘manor style.’ They are characterised by, among other things, a multi-segmented ‘Polish roof’ and neo-Baroque or neo-Renaissance gables. In 1928, the pages of the *Railway Engineer* presented a type 4c fourth-class station⁷⁸ (Figures 1 and 2). It had a compact body, a ‘Polish roof,’ a two-storey entrance risalit crowned with a decorative triangular gable on the railway side, and a semi-circular gable with tracery on the city side. Edifices of this form served travellers at the stations near Vilnius: Bastuny, Bieniakonie, Jaszuny (Vilnius–Lida line), Rudziszki, Olkieniki (Vilnius–Grodno line), and in villages slightly further away from Vilnius: at Horodec station (Brest–Luninets [Łuniniec] line) and Kossow Poleski (Niechaczewo) (Brest–Baranovichi line). The same type of station is found also on the Polish side of the present border—at the station in Mońki (the Białystok–Königsberg [Królewiec] line opened in 1881) destroyed during World War I and rebuilt in the 1930s under the supervision of Stefan Szyller.⁷⁹ In the justification of the decision to enter the Mońki railway station

78 “St. [stacja] Horodec (dworzec typu 4c),” 346.

79 The architect supervised the construction of the neo-Baroque Mońki church of Our Lady of Czestochowa, which was of his own design. Hence, some attribute the design of the railway station to him.

in the register of monuments, we read that it is considered an excellent example of the 'manor style' in railway construction, which is part of the national trend of searching for a national style in architecture. Its form consciously refers to a manor house of the nobility, a symbol of Polishness and native traditions.⁸⁰ Tadeusz Maria Rostworowski (1860–1928), who worked for the Vilnius Railway Board, justified the need for referring to the form of the manor house in railway architecture, declaring in one of his lectures on the subject that

"[...] a railway station is nothing more than a richly furnished manor house. The same spacious vestibule–waiting room, hall–dining room, office–dispatching room, guest rooms, etc., etc. If we add to this a few cheerful manor houses with porches on pillars, warehouses, storerooms, covered with tiled roofs with eaves—if we put a water tower on the watch-tower, like the guild towers of Krakow or Vilnius, we give the whole place the air of a returning past tradition."⁸¹

At the same time, on the Brest–Baranovichi line there is another type of small station with a compact body and a form hinting at a nobleman's manor house covered with a high Polish roof with an upper floor hidden in the mansard and a characteristic hipped gable roof crowning the entrance tri-axial risalit. It is represented by the railway stations in Orańczyce (Figure 3) and Leśna.



Figure 17 Modlin railway station
Source: Polona, DŻS XII 8b/p.10/59.

80 *Decyzja w sprawie wpisania zabytku nieruchomego [dworca kolejowego w Mońkach] do rejestru zabytków*, Białystok 19 September 2012.

81 Lubierzyński, "Odbudowa dworców kolejowych na Kresach," 9.



Figure 18 Łęczycza railway station, foto: Author.

An excellent example of ‘shedding the Russian mark’ can be seen in the reconstruction and rebuilding of the typical stations of the Bologoye (Bołogoje)–Polotsk (Połock)–Siedlce line, still built by the Russian authorities in 1904–1907, in an aesthetic characteristic of the partition. Within our borders, we still see them in their original version at Nurzec, Mordy, and many other stations across Poland’s current eastern border. After World War I, as part of the reconstruction and rebuilding, some of these structures received a ‘Polish coat.’ The basic form of the plan and, in part, the shape of the outer walls was determined by the remaining walls and the prevailing principle of using them for economic reasons even if the station had to be extended. However, the introduction of a high Polish roof, which Stefan Szyller considered one of the basic features of Polish architecture, the partial elimination of the stucco decoration: pilasters and window bands, and the crowning of the entrance risalits with a semicircular gable with tracery gave them a completely new character. This type is represented by Narewka (Figure 4) and Svisloch (Swisłocz) stations on the Czeremcha–Volkowysk (Wołkowysk) section, Różanka on the Nemunas River (Niemen) on the Mosty–Lida section, the stations on the Lida–Molodeczno section: Juraciszki, Bohdanów, Połoczany, and the station at Krzywicz. ⁸² The station at Vileyka (on the Molodeczno–Zachat section) was given a similar form in a slightly enlarged version. Following World War I, the nearby Skidel station on the branch line between Mosty and Grodno was also given a similar shape. The originally larger junction stations of the line in question already had a more elaborate

82 The station has been renamed Kniahinin after the village in the municipality of Krzywicz, where the railway stop is located.

form: Czeremcha (Figure 5), Hajnówka (Figure 6), Mosty, Lida, and Mołodeczno. They also received 'Polish coats' after World War I—in this case already with more varied shapes.

Of the stations contemporary publications list as rebuilt by the Vilnius Directorate, it is worth mentioning the junction stations of the Paris–Moscow line connecting East and West. On the Warsaw–Stolpce section, these were: Białystok, Volkowysk I City, Volkowysk II Central, Slonim and Stolpce, built at record speed, which after the change of borders from a small station gained the importance of a border station.⁸³



Figure 19 Koło railway station, foto: Author.

The almost 'twin' railway stations in Slonim (Figure 7) and Volkovysk I Miasto, designed by Hipolit Hryniewicz (1876–1933), bear characteristic features of Polish traditionalism. They were buildings with an eighteen-axis ground floor, with a three-axis entrance risalit topped with a decorative gable in the central part, covered with a three-tier roof, the highest in the central part. In terms of the shape of their bodies, they are very similar to the stations discussed later in the study, built in Biała Podlaska and Żyrardów in the Warsaw Directorate. A similar 'Polish appearance' was given also to Bielsk Podlaski station (Figure 8) (on the Czeremcha–Białystok section) with a receding entrance section covered by a forward-facing pair of short side wings and accentuated by a gable with a soft finial line.⁸⁴

83 From 17 May to 30 September 1926; the design of the station was made within a week by the architects of the Vilnius Directorate H. Genello and H. Hryniewicz. Wołkanowski, "Otwarcie nowego dworca na st. Stolpce," 324.

84 The station did not survive World War II.

Still within the Vilnius Directorate, it is worth noting another beautiful station dating back to Baroque forms built in Podbrodzie (1920s)⁸⁵ (Figures 9–10). The same type was also used in Nowojelnya [Novojelny] (1925).⁸⁶ A similar gable shape, albeit without inter-storey cornices, this time crowning a single entrance risalit, was used in the station in Jeziornica (Oziernica) built in 1924 by Tadeusz Rostworowski.⁸⁷ In the Second Polish Republic, the station in Porzecze near Grodno on the Warsaw–Petersburg line was given a slightly different form with neo-Renaissance attics and entablatures.⁸⁸

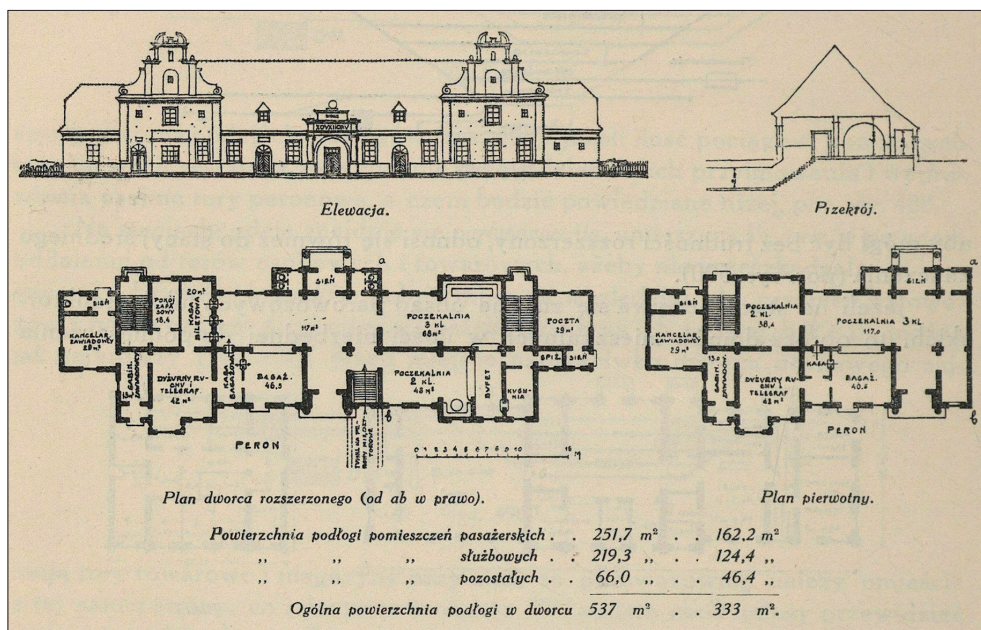


Figure 20 Design of the typical station in basic and extended version

Source: Wasiutyński, *Drogi żelazne*, 480.

Almost all of the listed buildings are characterised by the expansive, somewhat squat body forms typical of Polish manor houses. They are crowned with a high Polish roof or a mansard roof, higher in the central part, lower over the side annexes. They are complete with entrance risalits crowned with decorative neo-Baroque or

85 After World War II, it was rebuilt in classicist style.

86 These buildings, in turn, are similar in their layout to the typical stations (with two transverse pavilions) designed by Romuald Miller, presented later in this study. These ones are distinguished by the elevated roof ridge of the main body.

87 Lubierzyński, “Odbudowa dworców kolejowych na Kresach,” 6.

88 In 1862, the Warsaw–Petersburg railway line was opened with stations in Grodno and Porzecze. In the 1930s, a narrow-gauge railway was built connecting Grodno with Porzecze and Druskininkai. (Today, the tracks from Porzecze to Druskininkai have been removed, but the Porzecze station building has been restored for tourism purposes.)

neo-Renaissance gables, and sometimes with corner scarps. Their common feature is also high, semicircular window and door openings, particularly common on the ground floor, which in many cases are reminiscent of Tsarist architecture—because post-war forms are most often the result of the reconstruction and renovation of railway stations originating from earlier years.

Feliks Lubierzyński lists forty-one stations within the Vilnius Directorate that were 'completely rebuilt' between 1921 and 1927.⁸⁹ They are: Żabinka (Figure 11), Kobryń, Skidel, Sokolka, Skrzybowce, Novojelnia, Różanka, Mosty, Lesna, Oranczyce, Horodec, Drohiczyn, Bielsk Podlaski, Juchnowicze, Bohdanow, Horodyszcze, Kosow, Rudziszki, Olkieniki, Knyszyn, Czarna-Vieś, Volkovysk-Central, Slonim, Jeziornica, Vileyka, Krzywicz, Budslav, Podbrodzie, Jaszuny, Bieniakonie, Bastuny, Orany, Druskieniki, Połoczany, Juraciszki, Volkovysk-City, Narewka, Roś, Svisloch and Hajnówka. Unfortunately, the current form of most of these stations, if they have survived at all, differs significantly from what travellers saw before World War II. Their restoration leaves much to be desired.



Figure 21 Pruszków railway station

Source: Polona, DŻS XII 8b/p.13/29.

It is also worth mentioning some of the larger stations built at Pinsk (Figure 12), Brest (Figure 13), and Porzecze (Figure 14) on the Porzecze–Druskieniki line, which was put into service in 1934. No longer resembling aristocratic mansions but more like palaces, their forms were crowned with elaborate neo-Renaissance attics.

⁸⁹ Lubierzyński, "Odbudowa dworców kolejowych na Kresach," 10–11.

It should be recalled that architects considered the decorative attic, reminiscent, among other things, of the finial of the Cloth Hall in Krakow's Market Square, one of the most characteristic motifs of Polish architecture. In the appearance of the stations listed above, which no longer exist today, we can also detect similarities with Renaissance urban buildings, tenement houses, city gates, or public buildings.

The architects of the Vilnius Directorate in the interwar years were the aforementioned Hipolit Hryniewicz (1876–1933) and Tadeusz Maria Rostworowski (1860–1928), while the head of the building department was Henryk Genello (1872 – after 1924).⁹⁰ It can therefore be assumed that they were the authors of a significant proportion of the listed buildings, although this is only documented for some. Their efforts did not go unappreciated. An article from 1927 reads:

“Credit should be given to the architects of the Vilnius Railway Directorate Messrs. Tadeusz Rostworowski and Hipolit Hryniewicz [...] for the fact that these buildings, some of which have already been completed, while some are still under construction, were designed in the Polish style, and that this Polish manor house style, which originated in wooden construction and shortly before the war was still only tentatively developed in brick construction, found such excellent expression and the widest possible application in railway construction.”⁹¹

Among the most interesting and best-known designs are those of the architect of the Warsaw Directorate, Romuald Miller. Initially, Miller worked in collaboration with Bronisław Rogójski, after whose death in 1921, he took over the leadership of the architecture department of the Warsaw Directorate of the Polish State Railways. Their most characteristic elements are the neo-Renaissance gables crowning the entrance risalits or transverse pavilions. The sloping scarps surrounding the buildings render them rather massive, while the sculptural forms of the gables and finials of the towers give them dynamism and lightness. They may thus resemble Renaissance townhouses or even city halls. Undoubtedly, the most valuable buildings of this type in the areas covered by the Warsaw Directorate and constituting the author's interpretation of neo-Renaissance and neo-Baroque forms are the rebuilt stations of the Warsaw–Vienna Railway on the Warsaw–Skierniewice section: in Żyrardów, Pruszków, and Radziwiłłów Mazowiecki, the station in Modlin, the beautiful station with a spreading silhouette in Biała Podlaska, and a much smaller one in Chotyłów (both on the Brest–Łuków line).

90 Archiwum korporacyjne. Archiwum i Muzeum polskich korporacji akademickich [Corporate Archive. Archive and Museum of Polish Academic Corporations]. <http://www.archiwumkorporacyjne.pl/index.php/muzeum-korporacyjne/warszawa/k-welecja>.

91 Lubierzyński, “Odbudowa dworców kolejowych na Kresach,” 6.

The most elaborate form was given to the railway station in Żyrardów (Figure 15) (1919–1923), built on an elongated rectangular plan. The higher two-storey part is covered with a high (half-peak) roof, concealing an additional usable floor. The single-storey side parts are covered with a slightly lower Polish roof. The centrally located quadrilateral two-storey clock tower topped with a cupola gives the building a soaring appearance. The column galleries symmetrically attached to the side elevations connect the main building with the ground-floor pavilions, emanating a sense of spaciousness. The traditionalist, native character of the building is imparted by the slightly bulging columns typical of the twentieth century and the soft line of the gables crowning the tri-axial risalits located on the axis of the entrance. The one facing the town is preceded by a front projection, bevelled, tri-axial arcade.



Figure 22 Gdynia railway station, arch. Romuald Miller
Source: Polona, F.60257/II.

The railway station at Radziwiłłów Mazowiecki (1919–1923) (Figure 16), designed by Romuald Miller, was given an original form with a roof overhang and a characteristic Mannerist attic, with a Polish roof of the Krakow type⁹² over the bevelled side pavilions. An almost identical building was constructed at the nearby Teresin (Szymanów) station. An atypical design, with a distinctly indigenous, manor-like character was also used in Modlin (1927)⁹³ (Figure 17) on the Warszawa Główna–Nasielsk line. The building's compact, box-shaped body is enriched by a four-column recessed portico, a high Polish roof with a half gable and a centrally located triaxial roofed projection flanked by small volutes.

92 In a Polish roof, the two parts of the roof slope are separated by a low vertical wall.

93 The authorship of the station design is not established (Śliwa, "Dworce w stylu dworcowym," 33), although it is sometimes attributed to Romuald Miller.

Among the stations of the Warsaw Directorate, the one in Biała Podlaska (1928) on the Brest–Łuków line is the most similar both in form and location to the borderland stations in Slonim and Wolkowysk. The story of its construction on the ruins of the first station, which the retreating Russian army had burnt down in 1915, is also similar. The reconstruction and rebuilding project was drawn up by Władysław Kwapiszewski (1882–1938). The two-storey building was covered with a high two-tier roof (higher in the central part and according to the ‘Polish style’ broken in the side parts). The most characteristic element of the building is an axially located roof projection topped with a Renaissance gable. The ‘Polish character’ of the building is emphasised by the corner arcade of the entrance arcade in the side pavilions.

The neighbouring Chotyłów station on the Łuków–Brześć line, rebuilt in the 1920s according to another design by Władysław Kwapiszewski, also received a ‘Polish’ half-timbered roof, additionally decorated with dormers illuminating the usable attic. However, apart from the plastering and the modified shape of the roof, the building is deceptively reminiscent of the typical tsarist stations we know from the aforementioned Bołogoję–Połock–Siedlce line. On the city side, the building is adorned with a five-wall entrance risalit topped with a five-bay gable roof, a remnant of the first station from the 1880s. The first railway station in Biała Podlaska had similar risalits at the time.

As in the Borderlands, we find typical repetitive stations in central Poland as well, which is explained by practical and economic reasons. In addition to the serial stations on the Bydgoszcz–Gdynia line, among the more interesting typical designs created in the ‘national style’ is the one for stations of medium importance on the Zgierz–Brodnica and Nasielsk–Sierpiec lines.⁹⁴ in Łęczyca (Figure 18), Ozorków, Sierpiec, Płońsk i Gostynin and, in an extended version, in Koło (Figure 19) and Konin (demolished). The projections and elevations of the station in basic and extended versions are included in Aleksander Wasiutyński’s book on railways⁹⁵ (Figure 20). Unlike the previously discussed stations with stepped roofs, here the main body is slightly lower than the side pavilions flanked by gable walls with a sculpted finial line and an eaves roof, which Szyller considered a particularly Polish form.

The layout of the extended stations resembles that used by Miller at Pruszków (Figure 21) (1924). The body of the latter was given a slightly different form: truncated by side annexes. The central body was also narrowed to five axes. The

94 The construction of the line (and the reconstruction of some sections from the narrow-gauge route) was one of the first railway investments after the war. Due to difficulties related, inter alia, to the Polish-Bolshevik War, the Nasielsk–Sierpiec line was commissioned on 15 November 1925. On 19 October 1925, the Kutno–Płock line was commissioned, followed by the Zgierz–Kutno line. *Dziesięciolecie Polskich Kolei Państwowych 1918–1928*, 11–13.

95 Wasiutyński, *Drogi Żelazne*, 480.

architectural detail of the gables was treated slightly differently, emphasising the horizontal divisions more strongly. The gables, which are absent in the typical Konińskie and Kolskie stations, add a squat appearance to the body of the Pruszków station, while also hinting a reference to tradition.



Figure 23 Gdynia railway station, arch. Romuald Miller
Source: Polona, F.60258/II.

One of the most original designs by Romuald Miller, which cannot be omitted from this study even though it does not originate from any of the directorates under discussion, is the no longer existing passenger station in Gdynia (Figures 22 and 23). Due to its importance, it had the most extensive and interesting programme, ingeniously translated into a design concept. For example, for summer traffic, he proposed an open hall with ticket offices, connected to the platforms by a column gallery. In terms of architectural forms, the Gdynia station is a combination of local Gdansk motifs with those of the late Polish Renaissance and the bordering Baroque.⁹⁶ Jozef Andrzej Mrozek emphasises that the station in Gdynia “not only refers to Polish forms by showing their accumulation, but emphasises the permanence and continuity of our culture, which there and then was a political manifestation.”⁹⁷ At the same time, this project shows us how the proponents of the ‘Polish national style’ reacted to the call to draw on local patterns, to refer to local tradition, and to differentiate forms according to the region of the country.⁹⁸

96 *Polskie Koleje Państwowe 1918–1928*, 160.

97 Mrozek, “Historyzm narodowy lat dwudziestych,” 163.

98 Szyller, *Czy mamy polską architekturę?*

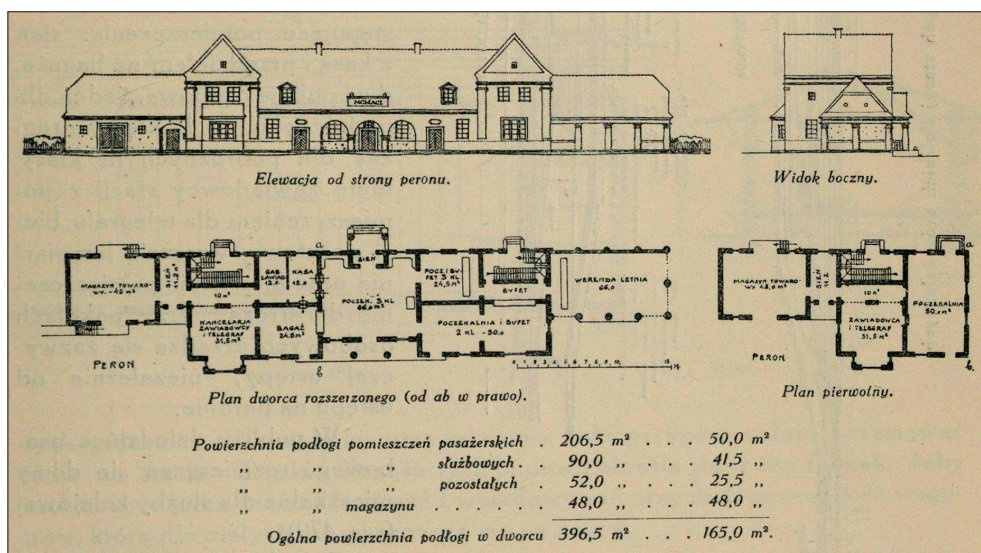


Figure 24 Typical station for a small station

Source: Wasiutyński, *Drogi żelazne*, 469.

Due to the reconstruction and expansion, the station in Lublin assumed an interesting form with a strongly fragmented body and an extremely decorative attic crest enriched with a monumental sculpture of the Polish emblem—an eagle in a crown.

To complete the subject, it is worth mentioning a few more examples of stations with architecture that Michal Pszczółkowski described as “traditionalism of classical provenance.”⁹⁹ They include the following stations: Grodzisk Mazowiecki, Łuków, Terespol, Klarysew, Wilanów, Łuck, and Smorgonie Wileńskie.

These are buildings which follow classicist patterns, but where, at least in some cases, a certain squatness of their massing, high pitched roofs and glazing allow them to maintain the convention of the ‘Polish’ or ‘manor style’.¹⁰⁰ Among their designers, the most prominent is another architect of the Warsaw Directorate, Konstanty Jakimowicz¹⁰¹ (1879–1960).

By way of conclusion, let us use a quote from the railway’s first decade anniversary publication:

“Most of the railway buildings rebuilt within the Polish State Railways in the first period, i.e., between 1919 and 1926, had clear ties to Polish

99 Pszczółkowski, *Architektura użyteczności publicznej II Rzeczypospolitej 1918–1939. Forma i styl*, 109.

100 A typical small station, presented by A. Wasiutyński [*Drogi żelazne*, 469] (Figure 24), was designed in a similar spirit.

101 Uchańska, “Konstanty Sylwin Jakimowicz — życie i twórczość (1879–1960),” 229–34.

architecture, or rather the use of old Polish Renaissance and Baroque motifs in a fairly pure form. Such tendencies were quite understandable in the first period of the resurrected Polish state.”¹⁰²

As Professor Andrzej Olszewski shows, in Polish architecture, the ‘national style’ reigned almost indivisibly during the first decade of the independent state.¹⁰³ However, by the mid-1920s, as in the rest of Europe, functionalist tendencies and the beginnings of an international were emerging. In a 1929 note on railway architecture, we already read:

“One cannot be an unqualified supporter of modern architectural modernisation, which, together with urbanism, is victoriously crushing traditions and striving boldly to establish new foundations for almost epoch-making construction, and yet one cannot help feeling that we are close to standing still, using old, outdated templates.”¹⁰⁴

The 1930s already belongs to the international style, which becomes apparent in the railway architecture in the competition for the main railway station in Warsaw, where references to national values are still important, but no longer through a historicising architectural expression.¹⁰⁵ However, regardless of the opinion of the creators of the following generation, the ‘Polish style’ has given us many significant buildings with a pleasant, familiar, native character, reminiscent of the spirit of the time of regained independence.

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102 *Dziesięciolecie Polskich Kolei Państwowych 1918–1928*, 85.

103 Olszewski, *Nowa forma w architekturze polskiej*, 30, 35.

104 W. S. “Nasze dworce,” 124.

105 They will find their expression above all in the design of the interiors, including the statue of Polonia chosen in the competition (for the departures hall), allegorical reliefs depicting the most important areas of work in Poland for the arrivals hall, a statue of Marshal Piłsudski for the reception hall, or a painting of the Marshal together with a stained-glass window entitled Homage to the Army for the Resurrection of Poland, as well as a series of paintings by Rafał Malczewski entitled Centralny Okrąg Przemysłowy (Central Industrial District) for the banquet hall. The link between the station building and patriotic ideas in the décor can also be seen in the theme suggested in the competition conditions: “Poland — Mother to her Children.” More broadly: Konstantynów, “Dekoracje Dworca Głównego w Warszawie,” 88–90.

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