

It has been nearly forty years since the time when Henryk Gawarecki, in his study on the architecture and urbanism of Lublin in the years 1918–1939, published a postulate of a monographic description of Aleksander Gruchalski's work. Gruchalski was one of the contemporary architects¹ (Fig. 1). In Gawarecki's text, he is mentioned three times: as a designer of a residential house extension at 7 Obywatelska Street, an author of the "remarkable and original form" of the chapel which is located at the cemetery at Unicka Street, and as the creator showing a "modernized classicism"² throughout his work. From Stanisław Łoza's lexicon *Architects and builders in Poland*, one can only learn that Gruchalski was an engineer and architect who "disappeared in the years 1939–1945".³ Monographs dedicated to the architecture and history of Lublin also do not extend the knowledge of Gruchalski, because even if his name appears in them, it is only on the margins of other considerations. Who was Aleksander Gruchalski and what achievements should he be associated with? He was born on February 24, 1894 in Urzędów; one day later he was baptized⁴. His parents were Franciszka Gruchalska (*née* Golińska) and Franciszek Gruchalski – the owners of a large farm in Urzędów and he had two siblings: brothers Jan and Stefan. He started his education at the elementary school in Urzędów⁵. From 1906 to 1912, he was a student of the Stanisław Staszic Grammar School in Lublin. On the completion certificate of this private, male philological school, where Polish was the language of instruction, and the headmaster

was the famous Gracjan Chmielewski – an educator, botanist and a former January insurgent – Gruchalski had good or very good grades.

In his descendants' memoirs it has been stated that he studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków⁶, but in the archives of the Academy, there is no confirmation of this fact. However, Gruchalski confirms it, claiming that after graduating from the Grammar School in Lublin, he "worked" at the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków for two years⁷. It is not known how to treat this information, but one can guess that wanting to study at the Academy, he was preparing for the entrance examination as a hospitant, however, those were not registered. If the information is credible, then he probably must have combined the student's status (a free listener) with some gainful employment that gave him financial maintenance. Another confirmation of Gruchalski's connections with the Academy is a photograph showing a naked model surrounded by some students with palettes in their hands. One of them is Gruchalski.

Since the outbreak of World War I in 1914 until 1916, he was in Urzędów. In July of 1915, when the First Brigade of the Polish Legions under Józef Piłsudski was engaged in fighting there, he actively supported it (alongside his brother Jan and 26 other inhabitants of Urzędów)⁸.

On 2 October 1916, he submitted a request to "His Magnificence Rector of the Warsaw University of Technology" containing the following words: "I have the honor to ask you to admit me in the community of students of the Faculty of Architecture of the War-

¹ H. Gawarecki, *Rozwój urbanistyczny i architektoniczny miasta w latach 1918–1938*, [in:] *Dzieje Lublina*, ed. S. Krzykała, Lublin 1975, p. 265.

² Ibidem, pp. 254, 262, 265. Today, the building at Obywatelska Street is numbered 11.

³ S. Łoza, *Architekci i budowniczowie w Polsce*, Warszawa 1954, pp. 104, 123–124.

⁴ A biography of the architect is based primarily on material from his personal file stored in the Archives of the Faculty of Architecture of the Warsaw University of Technology [next: Arch. PW], as well as on the interviews with his grandson – Jacek Bunsch, a resident of Wrocław.

⁵ *Wspomnienie Dominika Wośki* [chosen and prepared for print T. Surdacki], „Głos Ziemi Urzędowskiej”, 2011, p. 55.

⁶ J. Bunsch: „Often, there were talks about an *evening drawing* – I remember it from my mum's story – that my grandfather was fond of talking about. There is a certain curiosity, which I talked about with my father [Franciszek Bunsch, a painter and graphic designer, professor of the Kraków Academy of Fine Arts, A. Gruchalski's son-in-law – J. Ż.]. The *evening drawing* at the Kraków Academy of Fine Arts had a specific character – it was attended not only by students, but also by those not enrolled at the university (there were even *peepers* watching the models, who had to be disposed of) and they could, for example, rely on the professor's correction ...”.

⁷ Arch. PW (see there: *Curriculum vitae*).

⁸ W. Szzymanek, *Przebieg pierwszej wojny światowej 1914–1915 na Ziemi Urzędowskiej*, „Głos Ziemi Urzędowskiej”, 2000, p. 20.

saw University of Technology.”⁹ He was given approval, but conditionally – with the right to study as a “free listener” – since he was not able to present a matriculation certificate. A year later – on November 16 – the headmaster of the “Staszic” school in Lublin sent a letter “to the Office of the Warsaw University of Technology” which reads as follows: “I have the honor to inform the Chancellery of the University that the certificate given to and received by Aleksander Gruchalski was lost, thereupon in 1916, the copy was issued”.¹⁰ Ten days later, A. Gruchalski, as a second semester student of architecture, residing in Warsaw at 40/6 Piękna Street, addressed to the Rector of the Warsaw University of Technology again with a request “to admit him to the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Technology”.¹¹ This time, he obtained the approval, but he was not given the chance to complete the studies quickly (Fig. 2). A break in its continuation was in 1918 when he was a student of the fourth semester. The reason for that were the First Polish-Bolshevik War’s preparatory events and then the war itself.

For two years – from November 1918 to November 1920, the Warsaw University of Technology was closed. During this period, Gruchalski started a family and began his professional career. He was married to Katarzyna Wołowicz – a teacher he met in Urzędów, and they had a daughter¹². In 1918 and 1919 he worked in the Magistrate of the city of Lublin, in the Building Department. In 1920, he voluntarily enlisted in the army. Being a private, he worked as a technician in the Building Department of the Third Army’s Military Construction Management Board. On 11 November 1920, he was given an indefinite leave from the army. On 5 December 1920, he returned to the Faculty of Architecture of the Warsaw University of Technology. A year later, he took the “first diploma exam”.¹³ During the exam, which took place on 2 December 1921, he received 4 (good) as an overall rating, certified by a signature of Czesław Domaniewski – the Chairman of the Examination Board. It was the result of the marks obtained by Gruchalski in a “detailed

exam” and in a “commission exam”.¹⁴ The first one consisted of such subjects as Polish architecture, history of Ancient architecture, mathematics, mechanics, surveying, architectural drawing and construction statics. The subjects he took the next exam in were construction, descriptive geometry, perspective, rural design and freehand drawing.

In October 1922, Gruchalski – the listener of the seventh semester of the Faculty of Architecture – asked the Rector of the Warsaw University of Technology about the possibility of spreading over the tuition fees for the academic year 1922/1923 (he motivated it in the following way: “material issues do not allow me to pay the whole amount at once”)¹⁵. In May 1923, he submitted an application addressed to “the Chairman of Examination Committee”. He asked for an admission to the final diploma exam, which was agreed to by Stanisław Noakowski – the Dean of the Faculty of Architecture. The exam was held on 21 June 1923. Four months later – on October 23 – Karol Jankowski, another Dean of the Faculty of Architecture, issued a temporary certificate that “Mr. Aleksander Gruchalski graduated from the prescribed program of academic studies at the Faculty of Architecture of the Warsaw University of Technology, submitted his thesis, and took a final diploma exam with a good result” on the basis of which “the Council of the Faculty of Architecture at its meeting on 21 June 1923, at the request of the Examination Committee, awarded Mr. Aleksander Gruchalski a degree of a qualified architect”.¹⁶ The certificate was “issued by the time of preparation of the relevant diploma”.¹⁷ It seems that it was not until the spring of 1939 that it was issued. Confirmation of this fact is the letter that Gruchalski addressed to the “Office of the Warsaw University of Technology”: “As a result of a request, I send my birth certificate, which is necessary to print my diploma. Printing costs have been paid. I kindly request a notification when I can receive the diploma. Lublin, 24 March 1939, Aleksander Gruchalski”.¹⁸

It may be added that the hero of this study was one of the first students of the Faculty of Architecture at

⁹ Arch. PW.

¹⁰ Ibidem.

¹¹ Ibidem.

¹² Katarzyna was born in 1891 in Brody near Stryj, died in 1970 in Kraków. Krystyna was born in 1920 in Lublin, she graduated from the Kraków Academy of Fine Arts and the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague. Since 1950, she was married to F. Bunsch. She died in Kraków in 2013. This information comes from J. Bunsch. See also: K. Bunsch-Gruchalska, *Rozmowa*, Kraków 2013.

¹³ Arch. PW.

¹⁴ Ibidem.

¹⁵ Ibidem.

¹⁶ Ibidem.

¹⁷ Ibidem.

¹⁸ Ibidem.

the Warsaw University of Technology – a graduate of the third year of architects educated in independent Poland¹⁹. And among the professors, with whom he met while studying, were such eminent Polish architects as: Józef Pius Dziekoński, Stanisław Noakowski, Czesław Domaniewski, Karol Jankowski, Rudolf Świerczyński, Oskar Sosnowski, Tadeusz Tołwiński or Czesław Przybylski.

After graduating, Gruchalski settled in Lublin. Over the first three years he rented a flat at 6 Bychawska Street²⁰. Then he settled at 8/16 Szpitalna Street. He worked as a building inspector in the Building Department of the Magistrate of the city of Lublin, combining his professional career with running a private architectural practice²¹. He engaged in the work of the Architects' Club. The purpose of this branch organization created in 1926 and operating under the Association of Technicians of Lublin Province, was to defend the professional interests of an architect and oversee the level of architectural work carried out in Lublin Voivodeship. Gruchalski was the member of the first Board of the Architects' Club²². In 1931, in the monthly magazine "Technik Lubelski" (the press organ of the Technicians' Association of Lublin Province) he published an article entitled *On the margins of the housing development in the city of Lublin*²³. Assessing the state of housing in Lublin as very weak and chaotic, he called for its arrangement within the framework of planned activities undertaken by the municipal government, while reviving it through low-cost loans granted by the Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego. According to Gruchalski, the best solution for Lublin would be "initiating actions to build single- and two-family houses and the trend towards building multi-family residential which, after building completions,

would be given to the holders of small capitals on the basis of payments"²⁴. The content of the article was complemented by two tables; the first of them contained "a quantitative list of residential buildings with given construction chambers in Lublin, in 1930," the second one – "a quantitative list of flats and rooms, which were no longer found in 1930 in the city of Lublin". As a side note, let us state that the same number of "Technik Lubelski", in which Gruchalski published his article, also informed about his removal from the list of members of the Technicians' Association of Lublin Province – "because of failure to pay dues"²⁵.

In his daughter's memoirs, Aleksander Gruchalski had left-wing views, and he maintained contacts with the "Praesens" group (primarily with colleagues from the University – architects Bohdan Pniewski and Roman Piotrowski)²⁶. We also know that in Lublin, he maintained social contacts with local artists: Wiktor Ziółkowski and Janusz Świeży. They shared some difficult to explain today, "photographic passions". This is confirmed by a handwritten postscript placed on one of Gruchalski's cards from Ziółkowski's collections: "Today, at 15.55, along with my wife I'm going to Krężnica. I would ask you (Ziółkowski) and Mr. Świeży to come tonight at 20.40 with a camera and films"²⁷. The issue of "photography" also appears in Gruchalski's correspondence with Ziółkowski – a postcard from 25 June 1932, reads as follows: "Dear Mr. Wiktor. I've been staying in Urzędów for a week. I haven't taken any pictures yet, though I have a lot of films. I will start from now on, and for the remaining two weeks I'll probably catch up on it a lot. Please arrive in Urzędów as soon as possible – so that you could stay for Sunday or on Peter and Paul's Day. It would be best to arrive by car – it costs 4 zł 40 gr one way.

¹⁹ *Warszawska Szkoła Architektury 1915–1965. 50-lecie Wydziału Architektury Politechniki Warszawskiej*, Warszawa 1967, pp. 277, 299.

²⁰ The State Archives in Lublin [next: APL] Akta miasta Lublina, 1918–1939 [next: AmL], sig. 1814, pp. 128, 179.

²¹ Gruchalski's work in a state job is certified by multiple materials from the SAL. See: AmL, sig. 1944, *Księga protokołów Rad Budowlanych 1929–1932*; sig. 453: *Spis pracowników miejskich od 22 lutego 1933 roku*; Lubelskie Province Governor's Office in Lublin, Division V, for Communication and Construction [next: UWL, WKB], sig. 2895: *Lublin różne sprawy budowlane*. See also: „Dziennik Zarządu M. Lublina” 1928, no. 45, p. 599, 1932, no. 3–4, pp. 1028, 1053.

²² „Głos Lubelski”, 1926, no 96, p. 4; H. Gawarecki, *O dawnym Lublinie*, Lublin 1974, p. 274. At the time of its founding, the Architects' Club had 16 members. Its chairman was an engineer architect Ignacy Kędziński, and members of the Board – Gruchalski and an engineer architect, Kazimierz Lipiński.

²³ Inż. Al. Gruchalski, *Na marginesie sprawy budownictwa mieszkaniowego w m. Lublinie*, „Technik Lubelski”, III, January 1931, no. 1, pp. 12–14.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 12.

²⁵ „Technik Lubelski” III, January 1931, no. 1, p. 24. Information repeated in issue 4 of the same journal in April 1931.

²⁶ Based on interviews with J. Bunsch (K. Bunsch's memories were written in 1977). Pniewski graduated a year earlier than Gruchalski, and Piotrowski a year later. Vide: *Warszawska Szkoła Architektury...*, p. 299.

²⁷ In the Special Collections Section of the H. Łopaciński Provincial Public Library in Lublin [next: WBPL ZS] are stored A. Gruchalski's three cards from Ziółkowski's collections – sig. XXVA, vol. 26, Wizyt. 19z, 20z, 25z. See also: *Katalog dokumentów życia społecznego 1918–1939*, ed. J. Kus, Lublin 2012, p. 214, no. 777.

While awaiting the arrival, I'm shaking your hand".²⁸ And although it is difficult to answer what were the photographs taken in Krężnica, or in Urzędów related to, one can guess that it was regional folk costumes. Both Ziółkowski and Świeży, were lovers of folk art, its researchers and documentarians (they both photographed regional clothing)²⁹. Gruchalski's request to arrive in Urzędów on Sunday or on St. Peter and St. Paul's Day could be affected by the hope that especially on these days the faithful dressed in beautiful costumes will gather in churches. However, in case of Ziółkowski's arrival in Urzędów it was rather about something else, namely about local potters, because it is them and their wares he dedicated his book to. It was published in 1935.³⁰

At the beginning of the German occupation of Lublin, on 9 and 11 November 1939, there were mass arrests of Lublin intelligentsia³¹. Historians describe the event as "Sonderaktion" (emergency action). Aleksander Gruchalski was arrested on 9 November. He was locked in the cell No. 35 at the Lublin Castle³². He was released the next day (as one of the 7 people out of 64 prisoners in cell No. 35). In such a rapid release of an architect one should surmise that his arrest came about accidentally, in the street or while staying at home of someone the Germans selected to imprisonment. *Sonderaktion Lublin* was an action directed primarily against the professors of the Catholic University of Lublin, teachers, clergy, lawyers and judges, students and secondary school students. One of those arrested was a relative of Gruchalski (through his mother's family), a bishop Fr. Zdzisław Goliński – the assistant professor of moral theology at

the Catholic University and the professor at the Seminary in Lublin. He was also arrested on 9 September, but Gruchalski was not there at that time³³. Fearing re-arrest, after his release he left Lublin and moved to Urzędów. A stay in his home village, however, did not guarantee him a safe life. His older brother, Jan Gruchalski, codename "Falcon" (*Sokół*), associated for years with the communist movement in Janów Lubelski County, was one of the main organizers of the underground left-wing Workers and Peasants Fighting Organization, and then the Polish Workers' Party; moreover, he commanded a division of the People's Guard (*Gwardia Ludowa*)³⁴. At the beginning of 1943, he was the victim to internal competition within the ranks of the People's Guard³⁵. A short time later, on May 5, 1943 Aleksander lost his life as well. He was shot in the street in Urzędów. His killers were Polish "Kripo" officers, from Kraśnik who recognized him as an activist of the underground (perhaps as a result of denunciation) and, without warning, they began to shoot at him³⁶. Aleksander Gruchalski was buried in the cemetery in Urzędów, next to Jan, in a common grave.

The year 1925 is the beginning of an independent architectural activity of Aleksander Gruchalski. The architect has done a number of projects relating both to the extension of existing residential buildings, as well as the construction of completely new homes. They were located at the following streets: Zaciszna, Długa 46, Czechowska 38, Równa 14, Ciepła 63, Króla Leszczyńskiego 24, Dolna Panny Marii 53, Żelazna 31, Nowy Rynek 8 and 9.³⁷ None of them was marked by an interesting architectural

²⁸ WBPL ZS, sig. 2273, vol. III, p. 236 [Ziółkowski's correspondence with Gruchalski].

²⁹ Świeży amassed a rich collection: over 1,000 films documenting folk clothing. Vide: J. Optołowicz, *Janusz Świeży. Życie i działalność*, „Prace i Materiały Etnograficzne”, XVIII, 1961, sec. 1; R. Reinfuss, *Zmarł Janusz Świeży*, „Polska Sztuka Ludowa”, 17, 1963, no 1, pp. 60–61; M. Surmacz, *Janusz Świeży (1884–1962). Etnograf z zamiłowaniem*, katalog wystawy w Muzeum Lubelskim, wrzesień–listopad 2013, Lublin 2013.

³⁰ J. Kot [W. H. Ziółkowski], *Kropielniczki garncarzy z Urzędowa*, Lublin 1935. The book reveals that one of the stoups was given to Ziółkowski during his stay in Urzędów in 1932. Before World War II, there were 25 potters. Their workshops were focused not only on the production of utensils, but also on decorated items of high artistic values such as stoups, small crucifixes (Polish: *pasyjki*), various statues and toys. Vide: T. Wyka, *Garncarstwo urzędowskie*, Lublin-Urzędów 1996, p. 11.

³¹ *Sonderaktion Lublin, listopad 1939*, ed. Z. Mańkowski, Lublin 1989.

³² *Ibidem*, p. 90 [in the memories S. Wojciechowskiego, *Cela nr 35*].

³³ Bishop Z. Goliński was arrested in the street. In the Lublin Castle prison he stayed until 26 March 1940. He was imprisoned in a different cell than A. Gruchalski. Za: *Sonderaktion Lublin...*, p. 29, 35, 55.

³⁴ *Urzędów w latach okupacji niemieckiej 1939–1944*. Materiały konferencji naukowej, Urzędów 10 V 1986, ed. Z. Mańkowski, Urzędów 1988, p. 26; *Urzędów w latach okupacji niemieckiej 1939–1944. Aneks*, ed. T. Moch et. al., Urzędów 1992, p. 4.

³⁵ K. Kołodziejczyk, *Jan Gruchalski „Sokół” – komunista czy zdrajca?*, „Głos Ziemi Urzędowskiej” 2007. See also: W. Szymanek, *W latach okupacji niemieckiej 1939–1944*, [in:] *Dzieje Urzędowa*, ed. R. Szczygieł, M. Surdacki, Lublin-Urzędów 2011, pp. 381, 389; P. Gontarczyk, *Z genealogii elit PZPR. Przypadek Stefana Kilianowicza vel Grzegorza Korczyńskiego*, „Glaukopis”, 2003, no. 1, p. 219–220.

³⁶ *Urzędów w latach okupacji niemieckiej 1939–1944. Aneks...*, p. 5. Available sources do not confirm the activity of A. Gruchalski in the underground independence organization.

³⁷ APL, AML, sig. 1814, pp. 6, 125–131, 133–138, 192, 245, 253, 366, 367, 441. These houses either no longer exist or have been completely transformed in later years.

form. They were all located in small plots and were mostly small (ground-floor) or one-storey houses with a minimal user program. They were characterized by simple forms and the lack of architectural decoration, possibly limited to simplified cornices. The exception was Józef Wernicki's ground floor house at Nowy Rynek Street (Fig. 3), whose elevation was enlivened by the rhythm of alternating wide stripes – smoothly plastered and brick (made, in accordance with the architect's postulate, of the „colourful, glazed bricks or excellent veneers”). The above-mentioned houses were designed for not affluent investors – workers or low-level officials, residents of the periphery of Lublin and hence, such a form.

Looking at the first works of Gruchalski, it is worth paying attention to the cover of some of them, where, next to the title, there are shown the forms of the designed buildings³⁸. Developed in black ink, characterized by a simplification and thick lines, they resemble woodcuts or linocuts, testifying artistic “passions” of a young architect³⁹. At that time, in addition to designing, Gruchalski dealt with construction supervisions. He supervised both the buildings of which he himself was the author, as well as those that he did not design⁴⁰.

The ideas of a young architect not always ended with success. For example, the case of wooden trading kiosks, which were to be placed at 13 Furmańska St⁴¹. Their projects did not gain the acceptance of the Magistrate, because according to the resolution of the City Council dated February 15, 1923, “wooden buildings (not to mention commercial ones) within the downtown area must not be erected”.⁴² However, his design of a “makeshift wooden building intended for the colonial shop”, was endorsed without any ob-

stacles. It was built at 47 Bychawska St (distant from the downtown)⁴³.

In 1926, Gruchalski's draft of the building expansion at 7 Obywatelska St., owned by Mikołaj Pajdowski – the Director of the Agricultural Chamber of Lublin – was given approval⁴⁴. The building exists till today, but it was much transformed in contemporary times. In 1930, this extensive house had six apartments equipped with kitchens, but without plumbing or sewage system⁴⁵. In 1926, in the Ryłski brothers' eternit factory area (Firlejowska St), Gruchalski designed a dwelling house for the deputy director of the company. It was built the following year⁴⁶.

In the years 1924–1925, an Orthodox cathedral on the Litewski Square was demolished. Immediately afterwards, there were taken actions to change the compositional arrangement of the Litewski Square⁴⁷. In 1926, the Magistrate of Lublin announced the competition for its adjustment. Gruchalski was one of the participants, alongside such architects as Bohdan Kelles-Krauze and Jerzy Siennicki. According to the jury's opinion, Gruchalski and Kelles-Krauze's projects were considered as suitable for further discussion and on their basis, the guidelines for the development of the Litewski Square were defined.

In 1928, Gruchalski developed the project of reconstruction of the church in Ostrówek (Lubartów County), (Fig. 4)⁴⁸. Ostrówek parish was founded on July 8, 1921 by separating the villages formerly belonging to Czemierniki and Kock parishes⁴⁹. A few months earlier, residents of Ostrówek purchased the Grodzicki family's former manor house and have converted it into the church using the projects prepared by Kelles-Krauze⁵⁰. At that time, however, works were carried out only inside the building. It was not until

³⁸ APL, AmL, sig. 1814, p. 367, 451.

³⁹ Another indication of Gruchalski's artistic talent are drawings and watercolors from the collection of J. Bunsch. One of the drawings shows a generic scene with people taking rest in the meadow, the theme of remaining works are the following buildings: the Tatar house in Janów, tenements (*kamienice*) in the Old Town in Warsaw, the Kazimierz tenement house of the Przybyła brothers, the country's parish church, an Orthodox church in Chodorów (Fig. 2).

⁴⁰ E.g. The implementation of a plan of building a house at 80 Bychawska Street. See: APL, AmL, sig. 1814, p. 179. Supervising and conducting construction works, Gruchalski identified himself using a certificate issued to him by the Ministry of Public Works on 9 April 1924. See: APL, UWL, WKB, sig. 2876, p. 012.jpg.

⁴¹ APL, AmL, sig. 1814, pp. 222, 230–232.

⁴² APL, AmL, sig. 1814, pp. 222, 230.

⁴³ APL, AmL, sig. 1814, p. 285.

⁴⁴ H. Gawarecki, *Rozwój urbanistyczny...*, op. cit., p. 245.

⁴⁵ APL, Inspekcja Budowlana [next: IB], sig. 3361: *Obywatelska 7a (1936)*.

⁴⁶ J. Czerepińska, G. Michalska, J. Studziński, *Katalog architektury przemysłowej w Lublinie*, vol. I, sec. II, Lublin 1995, typescript in the Library of the Regional Office for the Protection of Monuments in Lublin [next: WUOZ].

⁴⁷ „Dziennik Zarządu M. Lublina” no. 17 (23.10.1926), p. 121; WUOZ, sig. 13933: *Plac Litewski w Lublinie. Studium architektoniczno-krajobrazowe*, Lublin 2000, p. 21.

⁴⁸ APL, UWL, WKB, sig. 1323: *Projekt rozbudowy kościoła w Ostrówku, pow. lubartowski*.

⁴⁹ The Archiwe of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Lublin [next: AAL], IVb:87, *Kościół parafialny i parafia Ostrówek, 1921–1937*; M. T. Zahajkiewicz, *Diecezja Lubelska. Informator historyczny i administracyjny*, Lublin 1985, pp. 244–245.

⁵⁰ E. Błotnicka-Mazur, *Między profesją i pasją. Życie i twórczość Bohdana Kelles-Krauzego*, Lublin 2010, pp. 123–124.

1929, when the reconstruction performed according to Gruchalski's ideas, resulted in the church's present appearance. The reconstruction consisted primarily in raising up the walls of the building and replacing the original half-hip roof with a slender and optically lighter gable roof with a pseudobaroque turret. Comparison of the projects prepared by Gruchalski with the current shape of the temple reveals some differences⁵¹. Today, the church in Ostrówek presents itself as a modest modernist building, even though Gruchalski designed it in the spirit of the more picturesque historicizing modernism. Full implementation of the architect's ideas would undoubtedly have served as a better link of the Neo-Baroque interior of the church with its exterior.

Another temple, which can be combined with Gruchalski is a Roman Catholic church of St. John Mary Vianney which is located nearby Kraśnik, in Polichna (Fig. 5 a, b). The parish was also young. It was founded on November 1, 1929 excluding its area from the terrain of Modliborzyce parish⁵². The faithful from Polichna and nearby villages joined their efforts to erect the parish with the assurances of the will of the church construction. Its design was entrusted to Gruchalski who worked on it in the first months of 1929⁵³. It was designed as a brick and plastered on both sides, single-nave building with a single tower in the front, chancel (narrower and lower than the nave) of a semicircular closure, and with two sacristies on both sides. The construction of the temple was carried out in the years 1929–1931, and for most of that time it was supervised by Ludwik Słapczyński – an experienced master bricklayer from Zaklików⁵⁴.

The appearance of the church in Polichna is determined primarily by its facade, whose main feature is the slender tower with an arcade preceding it in the

basement. The arcade is sheltered by a single-sloping roof. The tower is topped by a rectangular, openwork lantern with simple clearances and a cross on the ball at the top. The quoins between the sides of the tower and the front of the nave are filled with small buildings of two-storey space (storeroom and a staircase leading to the tower) with rectangular windows and pent roofs as covering. The front elevation of the tower is flanked to about two-thirds of its height by slender buttresses⁵⁵.

In shaping the form and interior of the church in Polichna, it is visible the desire to combine tradition with modernity. Slender form of the nave, buttresses, vertical components of the front and elongated windows refer to the Gothic tradition and the front arcade reminds low arcades (*soboty*) characteristic of wooden buildings in Silesia and Lesser Poland, whereas the contemporary, modernist character of a building is determined by limiting the decorative elements, the presence of rectangular windows and clearances, as well as composing the form with simplified, stereometric ingredients.

In August of 1930, the Building Council issued a positive opinion on Gruchalski's commercial kiosk project which was to stand at Nowa St. "vis a vis the bus station", as well as the projects that he developed jointly with an engineer architect, Henryk Bekker. They were four-storey residential house projects of the Cooperative Housing Association "Spółdom" at 6 Wieniawska St. (Fig. 6)⁵⁶. The construction of this large building whose form filled the quion between Wieniawska and Zielna Streets (now Bieczyńskiego), was conducted in the years 1930–1932.⁵⁷ After completion of the investment, the building presented itself as a fully modern, modernist building, with spacious, comfortable and well-lit apartments of high standard.

⁵¹ A rectangular vestibule with a gable roof, planned by Gruchalski, has not been realized. In the triangular gable of the temple and the transept it is noticeable the lack of an original decoration – wrought iron ornaments with a volute motif shaped in plaster. The differences also concern the reduction of the number of pilaster strips which adorn the facades of the temple, and also the appearance of some window openings, e.g. the replacement of oval window of the facade with an elongated rectangular one with a semicircular closure.

⁵² AAL, Rep.61, IVb:95, *Akta parafii Polichna (1926–1967)*.

⁵³ APL, UWL, WKB, sig. 986: *Projekt kościoła w Polichnie, pow. janowski*.

⁵⁴ L. Słapczyński in June 1930 – during the works on the vaults of the church – fell ill and died shortly afterwards. See: AAL, Rep. 61, IVb:95, *Polichna*. The work was led by Julian Stryjecki, also from Zaklików. Vide: J. Żywicki, *Architektura neogotycka na Lubelszczyźnie*, Lublin 1998, pp. 110, 114.

⁵⁵ As in the case of the church of Ostrówek, comparing the drafts drawn up by Gruchalski with today's shape of the buildings reveals the differences. The most important concern the lack of, planned by the architect, side entrances to the church, the lack of a slim turret, as well as reducing the height of buttresses. The latter were to be higher than the walls of the church.

⁵⁶ APL, AML, sig. 1944: *Księga protokołów Rad Budowlanych 1929–1932*. H. Bekker (1886–1942), was a graduate of the Technical University of Munich. During the interwar period, in 1927, as an architect he designed a large tenement house at 19 Probstowo St. for the Cooperative Housing Association „Spółdom” (the investment was carried out in the years 1928–1930).

⁵⁷ APL, IB, sig. 5706: *Wieniawska 6 (1931–1950)*; APL, IB, sig. 5707: *Wieniawska 6, sec. II (1936–1943)*.

Tenants of the house at Wieniawska 6 St were mainly lawyers, doctors, bailiffs and senior officials.

In the 1930s, Gruchalski prepared, for his hometown of Urzędów, a “beautiful school project”, which, “unfortunately, met with an unfavourable opinion, because it was too expensive”.⁵⁸ Instead, they realized Gruchalski’s project (probably from 1930) of a school building in Parczew – the building with the characteristics of modernism⁵⁹.

In July 1934, an engineer Gruchalski – an official of the Magistrate of the city of Lublin – had asked his superior to issue him the certificate which was necessary to show in the Tax Chamber, that in 1932, he created only one architectural project⁶⁰. It concerned a non-existent today, two-storey residential house of Marcel Więkowski, which was built in the years 1932–1936 at 49 Narutowicza St (the corner of 2 Konopnicka St)⁶¹. In the same letter, the architect also asked to inform the tax authorities, that he does not direct any private works in the area of Lublin, because it is “officially banned”.⁶²

It is not known whether Gruchalski’s poor job evaluation⁶³, or the restrictions associated with taking private orders which the architects occupying state jobs were subject to, resulted in his departure from work in the Magistrate. In the second half of the 1930s, his name is no longer found on the lists of employees of the office⁶⁴.

In 1932, after several years of efforts, in the north-eastern part of Lublin, in the so-called “former Basilian” land and a part of the Ponikwoda farm, it was established a new Roman Catholic burial cemetery⁶⁵. In autumn 1934, at the cemetery it was started the

construction of the mortuary chapel, according to the plans prepared by Gruchalski⁶⁶. A year later, the “Voice of Lublin” (*Głos Lubelski*) reported: “On Sunday, November 3 at 10 a.m., at the Catholic cemetery at Unicka St. there will be held the consecration of the newly built chapel. The construction of the chapel was taken a year ago and it is almost complete for considerable expenses (ca. 55 000 zł.) The chapel is nice and big, almost like a church, and it was built with cemetery funds. It is not quite finished yet, because of the lack of external plastering and internal devices ...”.⁶⁷

The chapel at the cemetery at Unicka St is certainly not only the most well-known, but also the most valued building designed by Gruchalski (Fig. 7 a, b). As we recall, H. Gawarecki praised its original form. Its form is truly original and picturesque. It is determined by the shape of its front (preceded by an arcade, a single-tower facade formed from overlapping blocks), the use of steep roofs, the buttresses of walls, and also contrasting of smooth and bright facade plaster with a thick texture of red tiles. The style of the chapel should be classified as modernism inspired by the architecture of the past (“Romanesque” additive quality of forms, “Gothic” buttressing of walls). One can also notice – as Hubert Mącik does – “the connection of the so-called national style in Polish sacral architecture, with modernism”.⁶⁸ “Among the distinct historical references within the building...” – as we repeat after Mącik – “... we can distinguish, apart from the steep roofs, an arcade in the outer wall of the chancel – a specific kind of travesty of Gethsemane chapels (frequent in Poland), built between the buttresses of chancels of Gothic churches. An avant-corps of the

⁵⁸ M. Barwa-Grotkowska, *Publiczna 7-klasowa Szkoła Powszechna „Jagiellońska” w Urzędowie lata 1923–1939*, „Głos Ziemi Urzędowskiej”, 1996, pp. 11–12. Earlier, in the mid-20s, in Urzędów, at Wodna St., it was erected the Gruchalski family home, designed by the hero of this article (the building is now inhabited by the Roll family).

⁵⁹ APL, UWL, WKB, sig. 263: *Sprawozdanie z lustracji budowlanej we Włodawie, 1935*, p. 14. The construction works were led by an engineer Wojciechowski from Lublin. In 1933, the school was put into use.

⁶⁰ APL, IB, sig. 3247: *Narutowicza 49 (1928–1940)*, pp. 7–9.

⁶¹ APL, AmL, sig. 1944: *Księga protokołów Rad Budowlanych 1929–1932*; APL, IB, sig. 3247: *Narutowicza 49/Konopnicka 2 (1928–1940, 1948)*.

⁶² About the restrictions the architects occupying state jobs, are subject to writes E. Błotnicka-Mazur, op. cit., pp. 44–48.

⁶³ Lustration carried out in 1933, in the Magistrate of Lublin showed that with over thirty construction sites supervised by the architect there were committed offenses relating to violation of applicable laws. APL, UWL, WKB, sig. 239, pp. 321–331.

⁶⁴ The last known official letter in which Gruchalski occurs as a civil servant is dated September 1935. APL, IB, sig. 5327: *Szopena 41 (1935–1940)*; APL, IB, sig. 3674: *Piechoty 25 (1935–1950)*.

⁶⁵ AAL, Rep. 61, XVI:12, *Cmentarze grzebalne w Lublinie*; APL, AmL, sig. 2000: *Nowego cmentarza na gruntach po Bazylikańskich (1923–1933)*.

⁶⁶ *Nowy cmentarz i kaplica-kościół przy ul. Unickiej w Lublinie*, „Wiadomości Diecezjalne Lubelskie”, XIX., October 1937, no 10, pp. 305–307; H. Gawarecki, *Rozwój urbanistyczny...*, op. cit., p. 261; M. T. Zahajkiewicz, op. cit., p. 98; *Archidiecezja Lubelska 2006*, Lublin 2006, pp. 385–386; WUOZ, the so-called „white card”, sig. 4487; B. Stanek-Lebioda, A. Smolnik, *Kaplica cmentarna ob. kościół pw. Najświętszego Zbawiciela*.

⁶⁷ *Nowa kaplica cmentarna*, „Głos Lubelski”, no 297 (30 X 1935), p. 5.

⁶⁸ H. Mącik, *Kaplica na cmentarzu przy ulicy Unickiej w Lublinie*. A study published on the NN Theatre website: teatrnn.pl/leksykon/node/1974/kaplica_na_cmentarzu_przy_unickiej_w_lublinie [access: 29.07.2013].

vestibule is a motif of clearly vernacular inspirations. The same theme, though of course on a different scale and in different forms, occurs in the parish church in Kazimierz Dolny...”⁶⁹

The second half of the 1930s was a period of an exceptional architectural activity of Gruchalski. For two years (1935 and 1936), he was involved in the construction of Antoni Simon’s tenement at 12 Skłodowska St⁷⁰. In 1935, he drew up its draft, and then – until August of the following year – he supervised its construction, conducted under the guidance of experienced craftsmen: a bricklayer Władysław Witkowski and a carpenter Józef Cyrka. During the construction works, in April 1936, the investor decided to enlarge its tenement by adding the third floor, Gruchalski drew up a new project, and then again supervised the construction work. It was conducted under the direction of the aforementioned craftsmen until May 1938. After the investment, the house presented itself as a modernist building with a simple form and smooth, symmetrically composed facades with rectangular windows and balconies with metal railings. The major element of the front facade was the elongated window of the staircase running through almost its full height, as well as thick, semi-circular and rusticated pillars that flanked the opening of the main entrance to the building and supported the eaves that sheltered it.

It may be added that a similar type of a multi-family lucrative building of modernist style will be also presented by those buildings which Gruchalski designed later. Rectangular forms, flat roofs, as well as symmetrical facades devoid of detail in which the central axis will be highlighted with vertical windows illuminating the staircase, will be typical for them. And when it comes to individual differences between particular buildings, and, at the same time, their more or less expressive form, there will decide the details, e.g. embellishing the façade with a shallow avant-corps, a niche in or filleting of individual quoins.

In 1936, Władysław Chmielewski (the owner of a well-known local sugar refinery) involved Gruchalski (twice) in the design of his tenement at 10 Skłodowska St.⁷¹ In May 1936, Gruchalski com-

pleted the first project of this house, in December, the second one (the so-called “alternative project”), introducing some transformations in the internal layout of the rooms. Then, he supervised the construction works, implemented by W. Witkowski and Józef Cieślik – a carpenter master. In the same year, he designed several other buildings. Among them there were profitable ones – a three-storey tenement at 19 Chopina⁷² St. (Fig. 8), and a two-storey building at 46 Skłodowska St (now 50)⁷³, as well as, distinguished by a large cubic capacity, a Kamilla Moritz’s villa at 9 Podwale St⁷⁴. Gruchalski was also involved in the design and construction supervision of the second floor extension on the top of the tenement erected in 1910, which is located at 7 Piękna St⁷⁵. His design of a neon sign of “Szkłopol” company, which he created in December 1936, is a confirmation that he did not avoid taking private orders of considerably different kind⁷⁶.

For three years, Gruchalski dealt with the two-storey residential house at 13 Godebskiego St⁷⁷. In 1936, he completed his project in which he introduced several modifications, and then (until December 1938) he oversaw its construction. After all the work, the house presented itself as a comfortable and fully modern building. The characteristic elements of its elegant, a seven-axis and symmetrically composed facade were semi-circular balconies, a central avant-corps with rounded edges (similar to a turret), as well as engaged pillars with half-round moulding, flanking axes in which there were balconies.

Gruchalski’s three completed projects are dated back to 1937. At the beginning of this year, he designed the three-storey tenement house at 8 Skłodowska St (owned by Adam Rokicki, and a priest Wincenty Szczepanik, a pastor of the parish in Kurów) and then, he oversaw its construction⁷⁸. In the coming months, he designed Dr Krzysztof Śląski’s house, built under his guidance in the Legionnaires’ Estate (Polish: *Osiedle Legionistów*), at 23 Czechów Dolny St (today: 12 Płk. Stanisława Nowickiego St)⁷⁹. He was also the author of the adjoining – now defunct – building at 24 Czechów Dolny St, which was owned by Józef Łanowski, the

⁶⁹ Ibidem.

⁷⁰ APL, IB, sig. 4910: *Skłodowskiej 12 (1935–1940)*.

⁷¹ APL, IB, sig. 4909: *Skłodowskiej 10 (1936–1940)*.

⁷² APL, IB, sig. 5312: *Szopena 19 (1936–1938, 1947–1950)*; *Architektura modernizmu. Kraków. Lublin. Otwock*, ed. E. Przesmycka, Lublin 2008, pp. 103–104.

⁷³ APL, IB, sig. 4924: *Skłodowskiej 46 (1936–1938, 1949)*.

⁷⁴ APL, IB, sig. 3921: *Podwale 9 (1933–1940, 1945–1950)*.

⁷⁵ APL, IB, sig. 3795: *Piękna 7 (1936–1940)*.

⁷⁶ APL, IB, sig. 2568, *Lubartowska 5 (1933–1940, 1946–1949)*.

⁷⁷ APL, IB, sig. 1611: *Godebskiego 13 (1936–1940, 1948–1949)*.

⁷⁸ APL, IB, sig. 4908: *Skłodowskiej 8 (1937–1943)*; APL, Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego, sig. 224: *Projekt budowy domu mieszkalnego na Czechowie własność dr Krzysztofa Śląskiego (1937)*.

⁷⁹ APL, IB sig. 595: *Czechów Dolny 23 (1937)*.

Municipal Justice of Peace in Puławy⁸⁰, as well as the house of the Gaworczyk family at Sławinkowska St (today Popiełuszki 13)⁸¹. Moreover, in 1937, he oversaw the third floor extension of Szmul and Brucha Jakóbsen's tenement at 18 Skłodowska St⁸².

In 1938, Gruchalski prepared the plan of the third floor extension in the tenement at 14 Skłodowska St⁸³. The tenement was a new building, erected after 1935, according to an engineer Michał Krzywicki's design, and the formal decision to expand it was not taken until October 1940, so at the time, when Gruchalski was no longer in Lublin.

In 1938, the tenement house at 16 Skłodowska St, owned by Fajga Goldstejn, was enlarged by adding the third floor⁸⁴. The project was a joint effort of architects Henryk Paprocki and Jerzy Siennicki, whereas Gruchalski was entrusted with the management of construction works. And we know that from the notice, which Gruchalski submitted on February 23, 1938 in the Municipal Board of Building Department in Lublin, indicating that construction works carried out by the owner in the attic of the house were made without his consent and knowledge⁸⁵. The notification was submitted on the architect's letterhead, consisting of (in addition to his address) such an advertising: "Projects of all construction works, water and sewage facilities, central heating, wells. Urban planning, cost estimation models, economic advice, counts. Managing of the construction works (technical supervision), static calculations of architectural structures, etc."

Gruchalski's project of a three-storey, profitable house owned by Jan Olszewski and Antoni Guniewicz located at 3 Jasna St⁸⁶, as well as the design of the Folk House (Polish: *Dom Ludowy*) in Urzędów, are dated 1938 (Fig. 9)⁸⁷. The latter was supposed to be a multi-

purpose building with a capacity to accommodate in its interior a bakery, shop, theatre, fire station of a Volunteer Fire Department, library and consulting rooms. Folk House's projects have gained official approval on 13 July 1938, and soon afterwards the construction was initiated. After a few months, the Folk House (now the headquarters of the Municipal Cultural Centre) was completed, and its opening ceremony was attended by the numerous local community, as well as Juliusz Poniatowski, the Minister of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform, who previously had endowed the investment with the sum of 10,000 złotych⁸⁸.

Gruchalski designed the Folk House as a building with an irregular plan consisting of an elongated middle part and laterally adjoining side parts. The middle part was planned as a ground-floor in the front side of the building, but as many as three-storey in the rear side. One of the side parts was to be ground-floor in the front side and one-storey in the back, whereas the second one – which adjoined a four-sided observation tower designed for firefighters – one-storey in the front, and two-storey from the rear side. The complexity of the form resulted from the need to adjust it to the terrain on which the edifice was placed, but it was also determined by its multiple functions. The designer has not provided any embellishment. He planned it as a cost-effective, modernist building with smoothly plastered facades, rectangular openings and low roofs. Reconstructions in the subsequent years introduced certain changes to this project⁸⁹.

The last two projects that we associate with Gruchalski are connected with Parczew, a town in the northern part of Lublin Voivodeship. The first of them, dating back to May 1938, concerns the construction of the Riflemen's Association House⁹⁰, the second one

⁸⁰ In 1937, architect Tadeusz Witkowski designed this house as a brick, ground-floor building. However, according to Gruchalski's project, it had one storey. See: APL, IB, sig. 596: *Czechów Dolny 24 (1937–1942)*; E. Przesmycka, op. cit., p. 121.

⁸¹ The design of this house is owned by its current residents – the Gaworczyk family. APL, Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego, sig. 158: *Materiały w sprawie pożyczki budowlanej Gaworczyk Stanisław i Maria 1938 (1953–1954)*.

⁸² APL, IB, sig. 4913: *Skłodowskiej 18 (1934–1940)*. The author of this two-storey tenement and its later expansion was Henryk Paprocki, the senior among the contemporary architects.

⁸³ APL, IB, sig. 4911: *Skłodowskiej 14 (1935–1940, 1950)*.

⁸⁴ APL, IB, sig. 4912: *Skłodowskiej 16 (1936–1940)*.

⁸⁵ Ibidem.

⁸⁶ APL, IB, sig. 1772: *Jasna 3 (1938–1940)*.

⁸⁷ APL, UWL, WKB, sig. 1026: *Projekt budowy Domu Ludowego w Urzędowie, 1938*; E. Kuśmiderska, *Urzędowscy budowlancy*, „Głos Ziemi Urzędowskiej”, 2003.

⁸⁸ E. Kuśmiderska, op. cit.

⁸⁹ The form of the building has been expanded (mainly from the rear side). In front, there appeared a previously non-existent arcade, through which one can enter the high wing of the building. One of the repeated elements, which is also applied in the same part of the building, is a triangular gable with faults on the sides and a moderately high pinnacle at the top, as well as domed covering of the four-sided turret.

⁹⁰ APL, UWL, WKB, sig. 2628: *Projekt budowy Domu Związku Strzeleckiego oddziału w Parczewie*.

– developed in early 1939 – the Vocational School of Economics building⁹¹. The interiors of the Riflemen's Association House could accommodate a citizens' public hall, arsenal, chancery, auditorium with a stage, cash desk and cloakroom. The characteristic element of the defunct wood-and-brick⁹², single-storey building on rectangular plan, was a five-axis portico with thin pillars and decorative swords forming a kind of arcades. The element was placed on the axis of its facade. Whereas the school was supposed to be a modernist edifice of simple forms and large cubic capacity, sufficient enough to contain eight classrooms, three specialized workshops (commodity, merchant's and natural science), the headmaster's office, teachers' room, chancery and cloakroom (separate for boys and girls). Next to the school there was to be located a pitch, and, at a certain distance from the school, a brick building with a few toilets. Although the school project received official approval, its implementation was never started, probably because of the war.

Summary

The result of Aleksander Gruchalski's works in the field of architecture is more than thirty buildings of various purposes. That is quite a lot, especially if we take into account that the architect realized them in a short, only a fourteen-year period between 1925 and 1939. We cannot forget that the beginning of his activity coincided with the crisis of the 1930s, when the state of the civil engineering was very bad. Another reason for limiting the design activity of Gruchalski was certainly his work as a building inspector. What is more, he had to reconcile the full-time and difficult occupation with the difficulties of taking private orders. It is no wonder that Gruchalski could become fully active as an architect only after leaving state jobs.

In his architectural creative output, there can be noticed two trends, both associated with modernism. The first of them, synthesizing traditional forms and patterns of the architecture of the past with the aesthetics of modernism, is primarily visible in objects such as the chapel at the cemetery at Unicka St in Lublin, or the church in Polichna. The second one – represented by far the greater number of buildings – is

combined with modernism breaking with any historical tradition. Lucrative tenements and villas in Lublin, the Folk House in Urzędów, as well as the School of Economics, which was to stand in Parczew are good examples of this. These buildings were characterized by rational projections and cubic forms. They were covered by completely flat, or slightly sloped roofs. Due to the window sizes, the rooms are well-lit, and the interior layout was planned according to the principle of functionality. The characteristics of these buildings were facades without any ornamentation, often with uniform and flat areas, sometimes enlivened by shallow avants-corps and a sparingly used detail. The latter resulted in an individualized appearance of particular objects. If it was not for the World War II and Gruchalski's tragic death, perhaps we could evaluate yet another trend in his creative output, namely avant-garde. Its manifestation is noticeable in the project of a constructivist kiosk, designed for selling newspapers (Fig. 10). Although it seems, that it was never realized, it constitutes an excellent proof that Gruchalski knew and accepted the most innovative phenomena in architecture.

The hero of this article was certainly one of the most important architects of the interwar Lublin. He should be considered one of those artists whose work influenced the modernization of the city's architecture. For many years, he was associated only with a chapel-church located at the cemetery at Unicka St. Currently, we can link him with numerous other buildings. However, if we do not find those ones that we would recognize as particularly outstanding, we should not forget that the impact on their form had both tastes and financial capacity of investors, as well as local traditions and construction capabilities.

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⁹¹ APL, UWL, WKB, sig. 263: *Sprawozdanie z lustracji budowlanej we Włodawie (1935)*, p. 10; APL, UWL, WKB, sig. 2614: *Projekt budowy szkoły handlowej w Parczewie*, 1939.

⁹² The building was based on a brick foundation. The walls of an arsenal were also made of bricks.

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