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# "Countryside Cathedrals"? Communicating Meanings Through the Sacred Architecture of J.P. Dziekoński in the Diocese of Łomża within Its Current Borders. Part I

"Wiejskie katedry"? Komunikowanie znaczeń w architekturze sakralnej J. P. Dziekońskiego na terenie diecezji łomżyńskiej w jej obecnych granicach. Cz. I.

#### **ABSTRACT:**

In this article, the figure of a Warsaw architect, today slightly forgotten, Józef Pius Dziekoński is being discussed, with the occasion for this being in 2017 the 90th anniversary of his death. The decision on discussing the design works of Dziekoński which were developed in the territory of the Diocese of Łomża was influenced by two reasons: 1) this architecture has not been adequately researched in terms of its capacity to communicate messages; 2) there is no comprehensive study describing all Dziekoński's churches in the territory of today's Diocese of Łomża. The main aim of this paper is to present the historical background and the ideological program (communicating messages) which informed the Vistula-Baltic style building designs evident in the religious buildings of the late 19th and the early 20th centuries. The monumental character of these buildings is their distinctive feature which in the professional literature earned them a nickname of "countryside cathedrals".

### **KEYWORDS:**

J.P. Dziekoński, Diocese of Łomża, sacred architecture, historic styles, neo-Gothic, Vistula-Baltic style

#### STRESZCZENIE:

W niniejszym artykule przypomina się sylwetkę nieco zapomnianego architekta warszawskiego, Józefa Piusa Dziekońskiego, z racji 90 rocznicy jego śmierci, która przypadła w 2017 roku. Na podjecie sie w artykule charakterystyki twórczości projektowej Dziekońskiego na obszarze obecnej diecezji łomżyńskiej wpłynęły dwa zasadnicze czynniki: 1) architektura ta nie została wystarczająco dotąd zbadana pod kątem komunikowania znaczeń; 2) nie istnieje całościowe opracowanie obejmujące wszystkie kościoły Dziekońskiego na terenie obecnej diecezji łomżyńskiej. W prezentowanym tekście chodzi głównie o przedstawienie kontekstu historycznego i programu ideowego (komunikowanie znaczeń), który przyświecał budowlom w stylu wiślano-bałtyckim, których eksplozję odnotowujemy w budownictwie sakralnym u schyłku XIX i na początku XX wieku. Szczególnym przedmiotem analizy jest monumentalny charakter tego budownictwa, które w literaturze przedmiotu otrzymało miano "wiejskich katedr".

#### **SŁOWA KLUCZOWE:**

J.P. Dziekoński, diecezja łomżyńska, architektura sakralna, style historyczne, neogotyk, styl wiślano-bałtycki

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Architecture does not stay silent – it speaks through its form and essence. It speaks by its ideological program, function, and goals for which it has been created. Ever since the second half of the 19th century when architecture got crystallized to become an independent academic discipline (then called the "archeology of art"), architecture researchers have been trying to thoroughly read out, describe and define the meanings enshrined in architecture.<sup>1</sup>

From 1880 scientific and popular Polish magazines<sup>2</sup> started publishing discussions on the reevaluation of Gothic, a style deeply rooted in the medieval building tradition. As early as in the 19th century, in his article entitled *O nowoczesnym malarstwie religijnym niemieckim* (On the modern German religious painting, Adam Mickiewicz pointed out that in Poland, like in Germany, the sources of art are strictly medieval.<sup>3</sup> This ideological position found many followers at the beginning of the 1880, among other things, in the publications on architecture contributed by Karol Matuszewski and Franciszek K. Martynowski.<sup>4</sup> A vibrant intellectual debate in the Polish press greatly influenced the way of building. The landscape of Masovian towns and villages started to fill up with ever more

¹ The decision on analyzing here the design legacy of Józef Pius Dziekoński was influenced by two reasons: 1) this architecture has not been adequately researched in terms of its capacity to communicate messages; 2) there is no comprehensive study describing all Dziekoński's churches in the area of today's Diocese of Łomża. The profile of this slightly forgotten architect is being remembered due to the 90th anniversary of his death which falls in 2017. The analysis is based on direct examination of the discussed buildings *in situ*, notes on the heritage buildings from *Katalog Zabytków Sztuki w Polsce*; moreover the diocesan guides published by the Łomża curia, archive research done on site (parish archives), and archived regional press. Also, for the research, theoretical studies on the neo-Gothic architecture in Poland proved very helpful, especially the ones on Józef Pius Dziekoński's designs by his monographer Andrzej Majdowski.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> These publications are quoted in Andrzej Majdowski's article. The passage by K. Matuszewski seems to be especially striking: "(...) może i Warszawa doczeka się świątyni w tym stylu, na którym dziś jej jednej tylko z większych miast naszych zbywa" ["(...) perhaps also Warsaw will live to get a temple built in this style, which seems to be commonplace in all Polish bigger cities but Warsaw"]. See A. Majdowski, *Nurt narodowy w architekturze sakralnej Królestwa Polskiego od drugiej połowy XIX wieku*, in: *Studia z historii architektury sakralnej w Królestwie Polskim*, Warszawa 1993, pp. 130–131.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> A. Mickiewicz, *O nowoczesnym malarstwie religijnym niemieckim*, in: idem, *Pisma arty-styczne i pisma krytyczne*, Warszawa 1999, p. 274.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> A. K. Olszewski, *Poszukiwanie stylu narodowego w architekturze polskiej ostatniego stulecia*, "Architektura" 1976, No. 3–4, p. 58.

numerous brick halls and neo-Gothic basilicas (*rohbau*).<sup>5</sup> In 1887, Władysław Łuszczkiewicz wrote that in Poland "brick churches spring up like mushrooms following a rainy night." This was the case in the entire north-east Masovian province, including the Łomża land county. This land, whose area historically has been included in the Diocese of Łomża (since 1992), has been formed by common history, cultural, economic, demographic and religious distinctiveness as well as economic specificity. Uniqueness of the Łomża land county. The uniqueness of the Łomża land county is to a great extent a result of it being situated on the peripheries, between the territories of the Masovian, Podlasie regions and the lands of Prussians and Jaćwings, later taken over by the Teutonic Order. The border between the Teutonic Order and the Masovian province drawn based on the boarder treaty of Grodno in 1358 remained unchanged until 1939, being there also the boarder of Poland until 1939.

The Łomża land county was inhabited by the knights who in return for their military service used to receive generous land donations from Masovian princes (and later from Polish kings). However, majority of this land remained half-wild, with Puszcza Kurpiowska being here main case in point; it was mainly situated in the territory of the Łomża district. In terms of Church administration, the Łomża land county originally belonged to the Płock diocese (before the partition), next until 1925 to the Wigry, Augustów and Sejny dioceses respectively when Pope Pius XI created an independent Diocese of Łomża whose current borders were established during the reorganization of Church structures in Poland in 1992.

The territories of the Łomża land county did not have any great tradition of medieval building. Gothic architecture appeared there quite late and remained there until the early 17th century.<sup>8</sup> In the today's Diocese of Łomża there is a late Gothic fara church at Łomża (nowadays Łomża cathedral) and two late Gothic

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> All across the Masovian province the neo-Gothic building got adopted fairly easily. There are about 90 neo-Gothic churches (in the literature there are considerable discrepancies as for the numbers which is the case, among other things, due to the fact that the discussed architecture is not purely Gothic in all the places).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> W. Łuszczkiewicz, Kilka słów o naszym budownictwie w epoce ostrołukowej i jego cechach charakterystycznych, "Przegląd Techniczny" R. 1887, p. 54. Cited: J. Żywicki, Architektura neogotycka na Lubelszczyźnie, Lublin 1998, p. 152, Note 426.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> W. Jemielity, *Diecezja Łomżyńska. Studium historyczne parafii*, Łomża 1990, p. 4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> R. Kunkel, *Architektura gotycka na Mazowszu*, Warszawa 2006, p. 315.

country churches. The St. Michael Archangel and St. John the Baptist fara churches built in 1504–1525 at the expense of Masovian Princess Anna and her sons, Janusz III and Stanisław. Later, in 1691–1693, Simone Giuseppe Bellotti, an architect, redecorated the church in the Baroque style. The remaining late Gothic churches in the diocese are located in Wąsosz and Niedźwiadna; they were also built in the first half of the 16th century. The construction works of the previous one started before 1508 and lasted, with a few interruptions, till about 1540; the church has been rebuilt a number of times, with major changes made to its form and structure. The latter one has retained its original structure of a one-nave Gothic indoor church at Niedźwiadna with a well-preserved wooden ceiling.<sup>9</sup>

With few medieval buildings built in the Middle Ages and retained in their original form, the renaissance of the Gothic inspired architecture of the late 19th century seems to have been driven by other factors than a romantic fashion for the Gothic style. So great a popularity of this style in the north-east Masovian province was more likely to be a product of favorable conditions. Gothic reminiscences kept appearing in the entire post-partition period as a result of the fashion for the post-romantic architectural costume. However, the explosion of the neo-Gothic architecture in the late 19th century seems to be undoubtedly related to important historical developments: the fall of the January Uprising and following repressions which came about as restrictions in the field of religious freedom and Russification on the Polish lands annexed by Russia, including the Łomża land county. The neo-Gothic style in religious (Catholic) architecture undoubtedly came to be a spectacular manifestation of faith and national identity of the Polish people. It was also a reaction to the Byzantine-Russian style imposed by the Tsar's administration, which was interpreted by the public as a demonstration of Russian domination in the Polish cultural landscape. One should add that in April 17/30, 1905, a tolerance ukase (edict) was issued by the Tsar's administration relaxing for some time the restrictive approach of the Russian authorities to the building policy, which made another important historical circumstance.<sup>10</sup> Based on this edict, a great deal of competences pertaining to building religious

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> J. Stefaniuk, *Architektura sakralna Henryka Lufta*, "Episteme" 54 (2006), p. 77.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> A. Majdowski, *Budownictwo kościelne w twórczości projektowej Józefa Piusa Dziekońskiego (1844–1927)*, Warszawa 1995, p. 27, Note 80.

buildings were transferred from the Petersburg-based Ministry of Internal Affairs to the Polish diocesan authorities.<sup>11</sup>

It seems justified to assert that in the late 19th and the early 20th centuries the choice of the ancient Gothic architectural style in the Łomża land county became a kind of demonstration of cultural and religious objection to the Russification following the January Uprising. 12 Part of the so called Vistula-Baltic style, the developing neo-Gothic building would make a deliberate reference to the times of ancient magnificence of the Polish state. Getting increasingly established, the Vistula-Baltic style became a "substitute of the national spirit" communicated through the architectural style of new buildings. 13 This style merged two leading building traditions present on the Polish lands of the Medieval times (mainly due to their provenance): the "Baltic style" common for the Pomerania and Kujawy<sup>14</sup> and the "Vistula style" developed in the Lesser Poland. 15 These traditions brought about a constitution of the Polish "national style" in the minds of the Polish intellectual elites in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, with the source of inspiration being the regional Gothic architecture of Pomerania and Lesser Poland; this style was preferred by a major part of the contemporary architects, clerics, professional press, and the publishers of the church and architecture related writings. 16 This style was championed by a distinguished Warsawian architect Józef

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Despite relaxing some strict laws, the Russian authorities continued creating numerous hurdles and restrictions (e.g. establishing the need of securing the financing of the projects in cash) so one could speak about administrative obstruction hindering the process of erecting Polish Catholic churches. Cf. J. Łupiński, *Ukaz tolerancyjny cara Mikołaja II z 17/30 kwietnia 1905 roku*, "Saeculum Christianorum: pismo historyczno-społeczne" 8/1 (2001), pp. 183–200.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> For example, a neo-Gothic fara church in Białystok (today a cathedra) was deemed to be a "brick and mortar commentary" to the history of persecuting the Polishness and Catholicism by the Russian authorities. In the same way, in the territories annexed by Prussia, the response to the spread of the neo-Gothic style was neo-Baroque. Cf. Z. Bania, *Zabytki architektury w Polsce*, in: *Zarys problematyki ochrony zabytków*, Warszawa 1996, p. 81.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> A. Majdowski, *Nurt narodowy...*, op. cit., p. 32. K. Stefański, *Architektura XIX wieku na ziemiach polskich*, Warszawa 2005, p. 203.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Z. Kiślański, *Projektowany kościół dla Radomia*, "Przegląd Katolicki" 1885, p. 678.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> J. Sas-Zubrzycki, *Styl nadwiślański jako odcień sztuki średniowiecznej w Polsce*, Kraków 1910, p. 87n.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> T. S. Jaroszewski, *O siedzibach neogotyckich w Polsce*, Warszawa 1981, pp. 107–146.

Pius Dziekoński (1844–1927).<sup>17</sup> He argued that "in terms of Church architecture the most appropriate and logical is the art of the Middle Ages: Gothic."<sup>18</sup>

Józef Pius Dziekoński graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw and the Academy of Fine Arts in Petersburg, at the Faculty of Architecture. One of the main representatives of historicism, with his pursuit of the essence of the Polish "national style", he earned his place in the history of Polish architecture. He was focused on designing and the supervision of the delivery of the sacred architecture following the historicism, especially its neo-Gothic line, in the Vistula-Baltic style.<sup>19</sup> He was particularly credited for the contemporary design of the St. Florian church in Praga, Warsaw. Designing this church Dziekoński paid attention to every detail<sup>20</sup> following the best examples of the European neo-Gothic architecture and the Polish Gothic architecture, especially the one in Cracow. The construction and ornamentation methodology worked out in this work was later consistently referred to in his career, including projects delivered in the Łomża land county. His St. Florian church came to be recognized as "a showcase specimen of a religious building built in the Vistula-Gothic style, which had come to be deemed the current national style."21 This model spread quite quickly in the North-East Masovian province leaving its mark on the entire architecture of this time up until Poland regained its independence in 1918.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> A. Nieniewski, *Architekt Józef Dziekoński*, "Przegląd techniczny" 1908, No. 1, p. 13.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> J. Dziekoński, *Budowanie kościołów z cegły palonej*, "Przegląd Katolicki" 1894, p. 615.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> See Z. Mączeński, *Dziekoński Józef Pius*, in: *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, vol. VI/5, of 28, Kraków 1948, p. 134; T. Kulik, *Dziekoński Józef Pius*, in: *Encyklopedia Katolicka*, vol. IV, Lublin 1985, p. 588. For this topic, the publications on Dziekoński by Andrzej Majdowski: *Rzymskokatolickie budownictwo kultowe w twórczości projektowej Józefa P. Dziekońskiego (1844–1927),* "Nasza Przeszłość" 1987, vol. 68, pp. 169–232 and other publications by this author, seem to be of particular importance.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> In his own notes drawn while building the St. Florian church in Warsaw, he says that he the neo-Gothic style was his deliberate choice: "(...) Its whole structure [of the church] is made visible by using bricks modeled into profiles according to the drawings: so the profiles of the pillars duly correspond with the vault ribs, arcades and hoodmolds; the rose window stonework has been done in the same way. The parts of the plastered surfaces between them are left for appropriate polychromy." See J. Dziekoński, *Kościół parafialny ś-go Floryana na Pradze pod Warszawą*, "Architekt", 1 (1900), p. 9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> A. Majdowski, *Nurt narodowy...*, op. cit., p. 133.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Cf. K. Stefański, *Architektura XIX wieku...*, op. cit., p. 203.

Drawing on the style of the Medieval cathedrals, Dziekoński would design a most monumental buildings for the Polish towns and villages, later referred to by Andrzej Majdowski, Dziekoński's monographer, as "countryside cathedrals".<sup>23</sup>

Dziekoński was able to sense the need of the public for anything of Polish character and "familiar" architecture.<sup>24</sup> The neo-Gothic churches of his design built in the North-East Masovian province, today's Diocese of Łomża, are fundamentally part of the Vistula-Baltic style, with some of them belonging to the so called "transformed historicism" or "transitory style". The earliest of Dziekoński's churches was built in **Dąbrowa Wielka**. This is a basilica church with a two-tower facade and a closed three-wall chancel. This design was created in cooperation with Stanisław Kucharzewski in 1879;<sup>25</sup> the design was approved by the Russian authorities in 1880; the construction works were carried out in the period 1883–1889.<sup>26</sup> In 1944, during the war the front facade and the towers as well as the southern bay of the aisle was destroyed. The church was rebuilt in 1947–1960.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> A. Majdowski, *Nurt narodowy...*, op. cit., p. 127.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Dziekoński defined the Polish neo-Gothic architecture drawing on the ideas of another distinguished architect and theoretician of the period, namely Jan Sas Zubrzycki, based on the characteristic elements of our national Gothic (sometimes even barbarisms): "Our architecture is always to be found in these (...) extensions of various times and styles, in these indispensible, often sizeable eaves and high roofs, regardless of conventionalities of styles. In these buttresses, sometimes huge and "bothering" the building (...) in the crowning of cornices with roof coverings, in the shape of very ornate and fantastic attics (...)". See J. Dziekoński, *Księgi o architekturze d-ra S. Zubrzyckiego*, "Przegląd Techniczny" 1915, p. 321. Cited: A. Majdowski, *Nurt narodowy...*, op. cit., p. 143.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> H. Faryna-Paszkiewicz, M. Omilanowska, R. Pasieczny, *Atlas zabytków architektury w Polsce*, Warszawa 2001, p. 172.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Designs, technical drawings and measurements are stored in the Russian National Historical Archive in Petersberg, fond 1293/171/218. See A. Majdowski, *Stan badań nad twórczością Józefa Dziekońskiego w zakresie architektury sakralnej: w 150 lecie urodzin architekta*, "Ochrona Zabytków" 47/3–4 (1994), p. 260.

The architecture and ornamentation of the church at Dąbrowa Wielka bear many similarities to the St. Florian church at Warsaw's Praga, which was designed concurrently. Writing about it Dziekoński said: "Generally, we built the church in such a way that all the design structure is visible thanks to the use of profile modeled bricks reflecting the lines of the drawings: thus, the pillar profiles go in line with the ribs of the vaults, arcades and hoodmolds also this technique was used for making rose windows. Parts of their inner surfaces were plastered, prepared for appropriate polychromy...."

Another design of a church – this time for the **Poświętne** parish – was made by Dziekoński in 1901; the design was approved in 1901; and the construction was carried out in 1903–1906.<sup>28</sup> Interestingly, the Catalogue of Art Heritage in Poland does not credit Dziekoński for making the design.<sup>29</sup> According to Majdowski, designing the church at Poświętne, Dziekoński referred to the famous basilica in Louny (the Czech Republic) by Benedikt Rejt, a great master of the Gothic style, though with a fairly relaxed approach to the facade of the building.<sup>30</sup>

More project deliveries in the territory of today's Diocese of Łomża followed with the issuance of the Tsar's tolerance edict of 1905. For some time, this edict relaxed the regulations concerning the Catholic religious building, which facilitated and accelerated some procedures. Following the edict, Dziekoński made designs of churches for the following parishes:

• **Długosiodło** (a parish in the Płock diocese, in 1992 it was merged with the Diocese of Łomża). It is a transept hall with a two-tower facade: designed in 1906, constructed in 1906–1908<sup>31</sup> (according to *Atlas Zabytków Architektury w Polsce*, an atlas of architectural heritage in Poland (hereinafter referred to as: AZAP): 1906–1912).<sup>32</sup> Inside, walls of the church were decorated with polychromy (most probably) by Józef Warzyński, which fits in well into the neo-Gothic interior.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> J. Dziekoński, *Kościół parafialny...*, op. cit., p. 9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> A. Majdowski, *Stan badań...*, op. cit., p. 261.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Katalog Zabytków Sztuki w Polsce. Województwo podlaskie (białostockie). Powiat białostocki (hereinafter: KZSP), ed. M. Zglińskiego and K. Kolendo-Korczak, Warszawa 2016.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> A. Majdowski, *Stan badań...*, op. cit., p. 250, Note 7.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 260.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> H. Faryna-Paszkiewicz, M. Omilanowska, R. Pasieczny, *Atlas zabytków...*, op. cit., p. 157.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> P. Jakubowski, Rozwiązania konserwatorsko-aranżacyjne wnętrza kościoła św. Anny w Różanie na tle estetyki neogotyckich obiektów sakralnych na Mazowszu, Warszawa 2008, p. 57.

- **Kulesze Kościelne**: designed 1909, design approved 1911, construction works started in 1918<sup>34</sup> and finished in 1925<sup>35</sup>; built by Adam Piotrowski from Siedlce.<sup>36</sup> This is a hall church with a central nave and two aisles, a five-bay main body, transept and a two-tower facade, and with a two-bay chancel enclosed by three walls; the net-palm vault, at the crossing an umbrella one; the choir rests on a three-pointed-arch arcade; pointed-arch lancet windows with tracery.<sup>37</sup>
- **Rzekuń**: designed about 1905, construction accomplished in 1914<sup>38</sup> (according to AZAP the construction works were being continued in 1914–1935).<sup>39</sup> A hall church with a central nave and two aisles, chancel enclosed by three walls and transept, two-tower facade, stellar vaults.<sup>40</sup> The church interior is dominated by the redness of its brick ceramics: the pillars and vault ribs are left unplastered; vault cells are plastered and whitewashed; the walls inside plastered and painted pale yellow. Careful use of a blue paint on the ornaments (on rib bordure, capitals, choir, side altar).
- **Wąsewo**: designed in 1911, built in 1912–1922 (according to AZAP the construction works were being continued in 1921–1929). It is a hall church with a two-tower facade. The church was partly destroyed in 1944, rebuilt in 1949. There is a polychromy by Edwarda Przeworska which was made upon the accomplishment of the rebuilding works. The paintings are dominated with the shades of the blue and pastel brown.
- **Zuzela**: designed around 1905; the design approved in 1907; construction works commenced in 1908.<sup>43</sup> It is a hall church with a central nave and two aisles, with major alternations made following the damage it suffered during the war.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> H. Faryna-Paszkiewicz, M. Omilanowska, R. Pasieczny, *Atlas zabytków...*, op. cit., p. 174.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> A. Majdowski, *Stan badań...*, op. cit., p. 260.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> P. Jakubowski, *Rozwiązania konserwatorsko-aranżacyjne...*, op. cit., p. 23.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> KZSP, ed. M. Kałamajska-Saeed, vol. IX: woj. łomżyńskie, of 1: Łomża i okolice, Warszawa 1982, p. 50–51.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> A. Majdowski, *Stan badań...*, op. cit., p. 261.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> H. Faryna-Paszkiewicz, M. Omilanowska, R. Pasieczny, *Atlas zabytków...*, op. cit., p. 164.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> KZSwP, vol. X: dawne województwo warszawskie, of 11: Ostrołęka i okolice, Warszawa 1983, pp. 34–35.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> H. Faryna-Paszkiewicz, M. Omilanowska, R. Pasieczny, *Atlas zabytków...*, op. cit., p. 165.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> KZSwP, vol. X: województwo warszawskie, of 12: powiat ostrowsko-mazowiecki, Warszawa 1974, p. 18.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> A. Majdowski, *Stan badań...*, op. cit., p. 261.

As one can see by the mentioned dates of construction, the time brackets are not only set by the tolerance edict of 1905, but also the years in which Poland was a theater of the Great War battles; the war suspended some investments for a few years. Apart from the above mentioned churches, there have remained the foundations of a once accomplished but non-existent neo-Gothic church in a **Puchały** parish, which was designed by Dziekoński about 1905 (the construction works started in 1908)<sup>44</sup>. The church got destroyed during the war in 1944. part of the foundations served for another two aisle church built in 1975–81 based on a design by Wiktor Zin.

In some publications, Dziekoński is credited for designing the hall church in the transitional style with transept and a front tower at Śniadowo, built in 1906–1912.<sup>45</sup> This, however, is rejected by Andrzej Majdowski.<sup>46</sup>

Among distinctive features of all Dziekoński's designs developed in the territory of today's Diocese of Łomża one could list a monumental form, esthetic approach to architectonic details, verticalizm and a sense of the sacred. Not surprisingly, a coryphaeus of "national-Catholoc" style in the Polish architecture of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Jan Sas-Zubrzycki wrote that religious architecture should be "light in its form, hoisting, taking off the ground since a church transcendence is of religious nature and religion is to raise your spirit." These words echo the voice of François-René de Chateaubriand who in *The Genius of Christianity (Génie du christianisme*) asserts: "You cannot enter a Gothic cathedral without the odd feeling of quiver and an indefinable sense of the divine."

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 261.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> KZSP vol. 9, of 1. [new series], p. 66; *Zabytki Architektury i Budownictwa w Polsce*, vol. 1, p. 21; H. Faryna-Paszkiewicz, M. Omilanowska, R. Pasieczny , *Atlas zabytków...*, op. cit., p. 165.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> A. Majdowski, *Stan badań...*, op. cit., p. 264.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> J. Sas-Zubrzycki, *Filozofia architektury. Jej teoria i estetyka*, Kraków 1894, p. 82.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> F.R. de Chateaubriand, *Geniusz chrześcijaństwa*, trans. A. Loba, Poznań 2003, p. 249.

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