

RUTH MACRIDES

The late Byzantine palace and its ceremonies

The main aim of this article is to draw researchers' and readers' attention to neglected and underestimated Byzantine source known as Pseudo-Kodinos. The fourteenth-century text which is one of two surviving ceremonial books from the Byzantine empire, next to *Book of Ceremonies*, includes the combination of hierarchical lists of court officials with protocols of ceremonies; a detailed description of the clothing used at court; an account of the functions of the court title holders, a description of the ceremonies of the year which take place both inside the palace and outside and much more. Based on that, the author of the article is trying to bring developments in ceremonial which occurred since tenth century and discussed the space in which ceremonial was performed. Without any archeological research the author depicts the Blachernai palace, its setup and structure, its buildings and chambers, and compares it with those of Great Palace. In the article can be also found description of most important ceremonies which were held in the Blachernai Palace such as Christmas or Epiphany. Finally the author answers questions why Michael VIII Palaeologus, establishing new dynasty in Constantinople, chose as a place of his residence the Blachernai Palace.

WITOLD FILIPCZAK

The Sejmiks in Nur 1780–1786

The article concerns the sejmiks held in the land of Nur, which was a part of the Mazovian palatinate. The szlachta who arrived in the city of Nur elected envoys, deputies in the Crown Tribunal, candidates for the judiciary offices in the land of Nur, and found solutions to problems connected with self-government. Even though Mazovia was dominated by the royalist party, the sejmiks in Nur were very turbulent. In 1782 two elections connected with two offices were held simultaneously, which was against the law and thus gave rise to displeasure. The animosities between local szlachta activists made Stanisław August refrain from

appointing people to some important offices in the land. The election of envoys for the sejm of 1786 was particularly tumultuous. The article includes an analysis of instructions for the representatives of the land of Nur in Parliament. It also dwells on the local political élites.

WOJCIECH SZCZYGIELSKI

On the threshold of political breakthrough in the debates of the Great Sejm at the beginning of the second half of 1790

In 1790 there was a political breakthrough in the debates of the Great Sejm. It was marked by: a crisis of social trust in the Potocki family, the gentry's support for the king, taking over the initiative to draft the constitution by Stanisław August. From the very beginning of 1790 the Potocki family were more and more often accused of oligarchic tendencies and an attempt to seize the control of the country for their own benefit. On the other hand, joining the Polish-Prussian alliance by Stanisław August (March 1790) made the king more and more popular both in the Sejm and in the provinces. The king, having definitely rejected the pro-Russian orientation, started to be perceived by the landed gentry as a much more reliable advocate for the democracy of the gentry than the Puławy party. A special role in the breakthrough mentioned above and in taking over the constitutional initiative by the king was played by the elite of the gentry who wanted to shape the Commonwealth following the model of the leading free states of the contemporary world.

The article looks at the parliamentary sessions that were held in August 1790. It is during these sessions that for the first time the gentry presented, as strongly as never before, their critical attitude towards the Potocki family showing at the same time their support for the king. The August parliamentary sessions became the announcement of the political breakthrough in the sejm debates which was about to happen. This breakthrough came in the first half of September 1790 when Stanisław August received the right of nomination for the highest offices, contrary to the initial intention of Ignacy Potocki (session from 13th September 1790).

ADRIAN ULJASZ

**Maria Zarębińska Broniewska (1904–1947).
Actress, writer, prisoner of Auschwitz**

Maria Zarębińska-Broniewska, the wife of Władysław Broniewski, a poet, was an actress, performing during the period of „2nd Republic” on stages of Wilno, Radom, Katowice and Warszawa. She also gained film experience by playing a few small parts in Polish films. At the outset of World War II she was performing in Lviv, then under Soviet occupation. Later she resided in the area occupied by Germans and was the prisoner of Auschwitz and Ravensbrück–Altenburg camps. After the liberation she performed in Polish Army Theater in Lodz.

She died as a result of health problems caused by her stay in camps.

She left us her literary work, of high historic, esthetic and educational value, published after World War II, such as a children’s book *Children of Warszawa*, a novel on Holocaust and the support provided by Poles to persecuted population, and *Stories from Auschwitz*, with autobiographic themes, addressed to adults.

ELEONORA JEDLIŃSKA

**Władysław Strzemiński’s series of collages
to *My friends the jews*. Experience of war-mourn and sadness**

The artist was born on November 21, 1893 in Mińsk, Bialorussia. He was the eldest son of a Polish family, though his father was a Lieutenant Colonel of the Tsarist Army. Strzemiński’s first encounter with modern art took place during his studies in Sankt Petersburg. He graduated from Tsar Alexander II Cadet School before studying at a Tsar Nicholas Military College of Engineering (1911–1914). In the middle of 1922, Strzemiński and Katarzyna Kobro – his wife – left the Soviet Smolensk and came to Poland. The events which undermined their and many other artists’ belief in value of art fully expressing the ideas of victory of new forms might have influenced their decision to settle down in Poland.

In autumn 1931 Strzemiński moved to Łódź. Following the opening of the International Collection of Modern Art at the Łódź, Strzemiński was offered a teaching position in Łódź. Almost from the beginning Strzemiński was surrounded by young artists, graduates of art schools in Warsaw and Kraków

(Stefan Wegner, Aniela Menkes, Jerzy Ryszard Krause, Bolesław Hochlinger). He was their teacher and master. The Public School was not only a place which offered additional training for printers and house-painters, but also the meeting place and studio where theoretical programs and exhibitions were prepared. Strzemiński taught typography and the principles of functioning printing.

Another group of students who studied with Strzemiński was recommended to him by Mojżesz Broderson and Jankel Adler. It was the group of very young Jewish students: Samuel Szczekacz, Julian Lewin and Pinkus Szwarc. They started a private evening course at the Public School of Technical Training No. 10 in Łódź. The intensive art course attended by this group included practical elements inspired by the image-making and spatial form techniques developed by Pablo Picasso, Kazimierz Malewicz, Piet Mondrian, Strzemiński and Kobra, and Jean Arp. These forms of art are known as cubism, unism, nepolasticism, suprematism and surrealism.

Strzemiński and Kobra spent the summer 1939 together with their daughter Nika in Hel Peninsula. When the war broke-out, they left Łódź and headed East, where they spent the severe winter of 1939/1940. The first war series of drawings was created there.

In May 1940 the artists came back to Łódź/Litzmannstadt. The first 3 months after the invasion of the city by the German was a period of massive extermination, including creation of Łódź ghetto. The Strzemińskis, without work, prosecuted for their revolutionary artistic activities tried to survive; at the end of war Strzemiński was seriously ill. In this period the artist drew a series of six drawings made in pencil on paper (*Deportation*). The drawings made in a winding line and showing deformed, as if deprived of the structure human beings, created the artist's auto-commentary. After the series *Deportation* he created the next series *War Against Homes* (1941) and *Faces*, which consist of closed forms drawn in thin, wavy line suggesting eyeless human faces composed of fragmented facial features of anonymous people. Then the series *Cheap as Mad* (1942–1944) was created. These drawings were produced during the war and are highly deformed, drawn in one contour of an amorphous line.

The last cycle connected with war and the Holocaust was a series of collages dedicated *To My Friends the Jews*. He re-used copied by carbon paper war drawings of the previous series as a matrix. The artistic technique used here by Strzemiński touches the primary, in relation to the Holocaust. The Holocaust should exist for us as „an empty place”, one which cannot be possessed by means of the metaphor. This place of lack or the fissure is filled here with documentary photographs, which give the evidence and confirm the extermination.

At the bottom there is the cut out photo showing a charred corpse. The sketchy line and the charred corpse are joined together by the red color of

splutter of blood. In other works of this series the artist used a photographic document showing children from an orphanage in the Litzmannstadt ghetto in the company of their caregivers going in pairs to the extermination camp in Chełmno. Mendel Grossman was a Jewish photographer in Łódź/Litzmannstadt ghetto and author of one of a few photographs used by Strzemiński (*The Empty Shinbones of the Crematoria*). Strzemiński used in his collages also the documentary photographs printed in Polish newspapers, edited between 1945 and 1946. It was the time of Nuremberg Trials, and the time when the pictures made by photographers of the US Army at time of liberation of concentration camps were published [*Stretched by the Strings of Legs* and *Vow and Oath to the Memory of Hands (The Existence which We Do Not Know)*]. Strzemiński also used the photographs from „The Stroop Report” – 75-page official report and a series of approximately 52 photographs prepared in May 1943 by the commander of the forces that liquidated the Warsaw Ghetto. The art work titled *With the Ruins of Demolished Eye Sockets* presents a solitary man among the ruins of Warsaw Ghetto, and is from „The Stroop Report”.

Strzemiński rejected Communism in the 20ies and then Fascism in the 30ies but didn't find the canon, which could negate his feeling of helplessness and nonsense, losing himself in a lack of form of his war drawings. This series of Strzemiński analyzed from the distance of few decades makes a suggestive, forceful and permanent picture of emptiness and void, which he tried to fill with the state of mourn and sadness.

TOMASZ SKRZYŃSKI

**The Polish Peasant Party „The New Deliverance”
in the light of the reports of The PPR Provincial Committees
and The PPS Provincial Committees
(June 1946 – January 1947)**

In the spring of 1946, a small part of the broadly understood PSL management concluded that in the view of the Communists' determination and ruthlessness of the remaining in opposition made no sense any longer. Without their party superiors' knowledge they established contacts with the authorities of the PPR and PPS. Since they had failed to convince the Supreme Council of PSL of their views, they began to publish a newspaper „The New Deliverance”. After their exclusion from the ranks of the legal opposition they formed a new political party. They argued that they would be the best representatives of the peasant's

interests in the country. They disassociate themselves from the PSL opposition tactic. They proclaimed to be in favor of the agreement and the cooperation on equal terms with PPR and being its allies which resulted in voting 3 times „Yes” in the referendum. They considered themselves to be the party standing, as far as their program was concerned, between SL and PSL, between the opposition and the government. The most important problem, however, was their credibility. PSL „The New Deliverance” was used by Communists to make the independent peasant movement weaker (e.g., during the election campaign to the parliament), and the Socialists to expand their influence in the country.

The time for the departure from the ranks of the legal opposition was politically missed. The construction of the group was facilitated by the impunity of the falsified results of the referendum done by the Communists and the growing pre-election terror of PPR. The weakest structures were created at the level of the party’s circles.

MIROSLAW ROMAŃSKI

Sabotage in Poland in 1944/1945–1956

The article presents the subject of resistance of the sabotage nature which was not so much known in Poland. Apart from the information about the range of the sabotage phenomenon, the Polish legislation on repression matter for these types of acts and the structure being involved in combating that phenomenon has been discussed.

The article is a monograph on the development of that interesting issue. Its chronological frames include the years 1944/1945–1956 and are in accordance with the widely accepted chronological division in the latest history. The year 1956 was a turning point in a policy of the Polish authorities. Assuming power by Gomułka, liberalization of social life, stopping the Stalinist tyranny and practices and reorganization of security services caused that the sabotage during these times was perceived in a lenient way. It was limited, although other forms of resistance were more intensive, for example anonymous letters, leaflets or strikes.

The basis of the preliminary sources of that article are materials prepared by the Ministry of Public Security and Ministry of the Interior, deposited in the Institute of National Remembrance Archive in Warsaw.