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INTERWAR WORKS BY IZRAEL LEJZEROWICZ IN THE CONTEXT OF THE “NEW ART” MILIEU’S ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN ŁÓDŹ

Abstract: The article attempts to demonstrate associations between works by Izrael Lejzerowicz and avant-garde artists working in Łódź during the interwar period. Lejzerowicz's painting is sometimes connected with a trend called Jewish Expressionism, although many of his works are closer to Symbolism or even to naturalism. However, this text concerns only those artist's paintings and drawings that reveal his fascination with new directions in the art of the first half of the twentieth century: Expressionism, Cubism, Futurism and even Constructivism.

Keywords: Jewish art, Lejzerowicz, art in Łódź, Expressionism, religious syncretism.

Jung Idysz and the birth of the Łódź Avant-garde

In the early twentieth century, Łódź witnessed the birth of an artistic community in which Jews played a significant role. Their presence became an element defining the culture and the visual image of the city in 1900–1914, which was manifested, *inter alia*, by spreading *Art Nouveau*, a style perceived as strange and corresponding to Jewish tastes¹ in the architecture of the city. Painters and sculptors who were then active in Łódź represented a conservative attitude, probably in line with the expectations of their clients and patrons, creating their art in the spirit of realism, Impressionism and Symbolism. Until the middle of the second decade of the century, their works only slightly absorbed the early experience of the Western European Avant-garde, despite support by the local bourgeoisie, which in other centres constituted a major group promoting and financing innovative

¹ Secession was described as the art expressing Jewish tastes by i.a. Rudolf Klein and F. Bedoire. See: R. Klein *Secession; „un goût juif”?* – *Art Nouveau Buildings and the Jews in some Habsburg Lands*, “Jewish Studies at the CEU” 2009, vol. 5, pp. 91-124; F. Bedoire, *The Jewish Contribution to Modern Architecture 1830-1930*, KTAV, Jersey City NJ 2004.

activities, i.a. within art and architecture. Growing emancipation, being in other places an impulse for the search for a new language of visual forms, breaking with the traditions of Greek antiquity that determined the aesthetics of Western civilization, advanced more slowly in developing Central and Eastern European cities, meeting with opposition by the conservative majority of the Jewish community. The situation changed during the First World War and after its end, when Jewish artists faced the need to define themselves in the space between different religions, ethnic groups, different visions of the world and the homeland. Their desire to understand their own identity and redefine the national art was parallel to the goals pursued by Polish artists, although the situation of the former and the latter was somewhat different. Regaining Polish independence and the associated need to build a modern European state reaffirmed the need to create a national art with a modern formula. This task was carried out by a group of "Polish Expressionists," known after 1919 as the "Formists." Its representatives referred to motifs taken from Polish folklore (mostly from Zakopane), using them not only as a source of folk iconography, but, above all, as a repository of "primitive" forms expressing the Polish spirit that was not infected by outside civilization.² Another, no less important inspiration for the "Formists" was religion, treated as the foundation of national identity. Reference to the "Formists" in the context of deliberations on Jewish artists of the "new art" in Łódź seems to be justified, given their mutual contacts and similar aspirations, inspirations and means of artistic expression. Another impetus for development of Jewish art in the "Polish Manchester" was contacts with Poznań's "Bunt" group. Its members, publishing texts and graphics in the avant-garde magazine entitled "Zdrój", emphasized the group's universal goals, calling for introduction of a new language of art that would be able to radically oppose naturalism. According to them, art was to be a tool of protest, expressed in order to transform the society with particular artistic means.³ The Poznań artists represented an attitude that emphasized the relationship between art and the political situation of the 1920s, which placed the "Bunt" milieu in a specific historical and philosophical context.⁴ We should emphasize relationships of the group with the second generation of German Expressionists (after 1919), while pointing out that the ultimate goal of the Polish artists was not a universal social revolution and fraternity across borders but on the contrary: a striving to delineate new borders within which the Polish state should be established. The above-

² P. Piotrowski, *Od nacjonalizacji do socjalizacji polskiego modernizmu 1913-1950*, "Artium Questiones" 2004, vol. XV, Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, Poznań, p. 108-109.

³ Cf. M. Bartelik, *Jeszcze jeden most do przebycia: BUNT a wielokulturowość sztuki polskiej*, in: *BUNT. Ekspresjonizm Poznański 1917-1925*, ed. G. Hałasa, M. Waller, Muzeum Narodowe w Poznaniu, Poznań 2003, p. 30.

⁴ Cf. J. Malinowski, *Sztuka i Nowa Wspólnota. Zrzeszenie Artystów Bunt 1917-1992*, Wiedza o Kulturze, Wrocław 1991.

mentioned artistic formations, their programs and formal exploration significantly influenced art of the “Jung Idysz” group, which was active in Łódź in 1919–1921 and the works of visual artists who were its spiritual heirs, including Izrael Lejzerowicz. The avant-garde “Jung Idysz” group was the first Polish artistic and literary association of young Jewish artists.⁵ This milieu was the only group in the country having such wide international contacts, and, at the same time, intentionally belonging to Yiddish culture. Seeking the roots of Eastern European Judaism, group members, such as writers – Moshe Broderson, Jecheskiel Moshe Neumann, and visual artists – Jankiel Adler, Icchok Brauner, Henryk Barczyński, Dina Matus, Ida Brauner, Lindenfeld, Zofia Gutentag – turned to tradition, craft, and folklore. The group was formed in the difficult period when Poland regained its independence. Acting in Poland and maintaining contacts with Polish avant-garde artists, the group functioned within Polish art partly on the basis of anti-nomy. Drawing inspiration from Jewish folk culture and literature, the artists were forced to seek a compromise between their own vision of the national art and the current concept of Polish art. To be seen in the consciousness of a non-Jewish audience, this “Jewish Expressionism” had to not only apply certain formal solutions, but also introduce elements of the new iconography. Thus, in the works by “Jung Idysz” members, Christian motifs appeared alongside typical Jewish themes. As far as form was concerned, the artists associated with the group turned to the achievements of French Fauvists, German Expressionists, Italian and Russian Futurists, which they knew thanks to personal contacts established during their stay abroad (Adler, Szwarc, Broderson, Lindenfeld), access to avant-garde magazines and exhibitions. Expressionist art, representing a new synthetic means of expression, using simplified, dynamic forms, violent, applying clashing colour combinations, was able to evoke individual experience in a particularly powerful way. It is, therefore, hardly surprising that artistic groups operating in Łódź in the interwar period eagerly drew on both the works of European Expressionists and “Jung Idysz,” although diverse styles, tendencies, and inspirations present in the works of artists living in Łódź led to the establishment of artistic groups with different programmes, such as “Srebrny Wóz”, “Grupa Łodzian”, “Stowarzyszenie Artystów <ST.ART>”, “Stowarzyszenie Artystów i Zwolenników Sztuk Plastycznych”, or “Zrzeszenie Artystów Plastyków w Łodzi”. The works of Jewish painters associated in these groups were mostly a synthesis of Post-impressionism and specifically interpreted Expressionism, manifested in slight distortion, an expressive form, and deep, saturated colours.

⁵ The first one to describe the group’s history was Jerzy Malinowski, whose work on this topic is still the main source of information about the activities of the Łódź association. See: J. Malinowski, *Grupa Jung Idysz i żydowskie środowisko „nowej sztuki” w Polsce, 1918-1923*, Warszawa 1987.

Izrael Lejzerowicz (1902–1944)

Izrael Lejzerowicz was over a decade younger than the majority of “Jung Idysz” members. He debuted in 1921, when, during an exhibition of Jewish artists organized in Łódź by the Tel-Aviv publishing house, he presented three works: *The Inquisitor*, *I know*, and *The Martyr*, revealing a direction of his later interests and focusing on issues of religion and suffering. Despite many years of research and reconstruction efforts, the artist's biography remains incomplete, which hampers the analysis and interpretation of preserved or reproduced works.⁶ The relatively best-known period of Lejzerowicz's work is the last years of his life spent in the ghetto of Łódź, although, also in this case, information about his artistic activity and daily existence is sometimes fragmentary and requires verification.⁷

According to the account of Oskar Rosenfeld thanks to a scholarship from the Łódź industrialist, Nachum Eitingon, Lejzerowicz studied at a private art school in Berlin.⁸ The biography prepared by Chaim Lejb Fuks, a writer associated with Jung Idysz, includes information that in the 1920s Lejzerowicz collaborated with magazines dealing with the issues of contemporary Jewish art and poetry (“Toyz Royt”, “Vegn”, “Shveln”) and daily Yiddish newspapers, such as the “Lodzer Tageblatt” and “Najer folksblat”.⁹ In 1924, Lejzerowicz's name appeared on the occasion of a collective exhibition organized in May in the halls of the newly created City Art Gallery in Sienkiewicz Park in Łódź.¹⁰ The artist's work was also displayed a year later, in April 1925, on the premises at 63 Zachodnia street. In a short note published by “Republika”, the author remarked: “Undoubtedly, among four young artists, Lejzerowicz, Chajmowicz, Mittler, and Spiegel, who are organizing the exhibition, there is an artist who stands on the threshold of fame. That is Lejzerowicz, an extremely profound and subtle painter, who bewilders with the new, original content of his canvases and determined colours (the main navy black colour against the background of the background of clearly separating outline).”¹¹ In 1926 and 1930, Lejzerowicz, as a member of the “START”

⁶ Research on the artist is being conducted by William Gilcher Ph.D. and its results are being published on regular basis at: <http://www.lejzerowicz.org>

⁷ A full bibliography on the topic, together with quotations in Polish, German, and English is provided by W. Gilcher. See: <http://www.lejzerowicz.org/styled/index.html>

⁸ The information about his studies is confirmed by Lejzerowicz's niece, Ruth Lewis, who remembers him well during his stay with her family in Berlin. Oskar Rosenfeld, who knew Lejzerowicz well in the ghetto, writes in the *Ghetto Encyclopedia* that he studied with an Eitingon fellowship in Berlin. Cf. O. Rosenfeld, *Malerei im Ghetto*, YIVO Archives, New York, Nachman Zonabend collection, RG241, folder 863, English transl. W. Gilcher in: <http://www.lejzerowicz.org/styled/index.html>.

⁹ See: *Leksikon fun der nayer yidisher literatur, Alveltlekhn Yidishn Kultur-Kongres*, New York 1956–1981, vol.5, col. 132–133. Cf. <http://www.lejzerowicz.org/styled/index.html>

¹⁰ Her, *Wystawa artystów łódzkich*, “Tygodnik Ilustrowany” 1924, no. 24, p. 399.

¹¹ *Wystawa obrazów i rzeźb*, “Republika 1925, no 117, p. 7.

group, presented his paintings in Łódź and Kraków. An overview of his work took up most of the review published in “Głos Polski”. The works were still assessed positively, although the author of the text noticed indecision and inconsistency of the artistic vision, writing: “He cannot be pigeonholed in any painting school. Symbolism, Expressionism, Impressionism... they all can be found in his works... There is no iron artistic logic in Lejzerowicz yet.”¹² In the 1930s, the artist’s exhibition activity ceased and press articles about him concerned mainly his financial problems and bailiffs’ visits.¹³ An exception was the extensive interview which appeared in “Głos Poranny” on the occasion of the competition for the artistic prize of the city of Łódź.¹⁴ In the 1930s Lejzerowicz maintained close contacts with the Margolin family, who supported his work.¹⁵ At that time, the main source of the artist’s income was painting portraits on commission. He gave up this activity at the end of the decade to take it up again during his forced stay in the ghetto. The last trace of the painter’s pre-war activity is his membership card in the “Żydowskie Towarzystwo Krzewienia Sztuk Pięknych” (Jewish Society for the Support of the Fine Arts) dated 31 January 1939.¹⁶ During the German occupation, between 1942 and 1943, Lejzerowicz worked for the *Wissenschaftliche Abteilung*; he also made portraits of Chaim Mordechai Rumkowski and employees of the ghetto administration. Although he was in a much better situation than the average inhabitant of the closed quarter, documents, fragments of letters and notes, as well as excruciating pictures preserved in the Jewish Historical Institute reveal the artist’s deepening depression.

Baal Shem Tov, Christ, saints, and prophets. Religious syncretism in the artistic activity of “Jung Idysz” and Izrael Lejzerowicz

In addition to naturalist and Post-Impressionist portraits, Lejzerowicz’s artistic output includes works in which the artist experiments with form and colour and individually interprets threads taken up by the Expressionists, an example being religious motifs, primarily messianic, Christological, less often biblical. In the iconography of “Jung Idysz”, which seems crucial for Lejzerowicz’s paintings, this subject occupies an important place. The genesis of the presence of selected motifs in the works of the group’s artists should be linked, first and foremost, to the strong influence of the German philosopher and scholar, Martin Buber, who

¹² *Wystawa Startu*, “Głos Polski” 1926, no 355, p. 6.

¹³ *Sekwestrator w pracowni artysty-malarza*, “Republika” 1939, no. 68, p. 6.

¹⁴ Gel, *Nagroda artystyczna Łodzi*, “Głos Poranny” 1932, no 110, p. 7.

¹⁵ More on this subject see: William Gilcher, *The artist and the patron: Izrael Lejzerowicz and the Margolin/Spektor family in pre-war Lodz* in: *Art in Jewish Society*, eds. J. Malinowski, R. Piątkowska, M. Stolarska-Fronia, T. Sztyma, TAKO, Toruń 2017, pp. 85-94.

¹⁶ <http://www.lejzerowicz.org/photos-4/files/page30-1006-full.html>

on the one hand was fascinated by Christian mysticism, and on the other, contributed to an increasing interest in Jewish folklore, legends, and rituals. Works published by him, *Die Geschichten des Rabbi Nachman* (1906) and *Die Legende des Baalschem* (1908), turned out to be an invigorating impetus for the new art and Jewish literature. According to Małgorzata Stolarska-Fronia, “The Hasidic movement, recounted by Buber in the form of anecdotal legends, experienced a renaissance, especially after the First World War, when the devastating experiences of this worldwide apocalypse and the collapse of old values spurred people to embark on a spiritual quest for a ‘new religion’.”¹⁷ Buber’s reflections also included elements of religious syncretism. In, *Die Legende des Baalschem* the author compared Baal Shem Tov with St. Francis of Assisi and Buddha. A plot of the coexistence of divine beings representing different beliefs is also present in Broderson’s 1921 book, *Tchies Hamejsin (Resurrection)*, in which the hindu trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, Moses, Buddha, Jesus of Nazareth, Mohammed, St. Francis of Assisi, the tsaddik of Kock, Mother Rachel, Cain, angels, Cherubs, and Seraphs, and the thirty-six righteous opposed to Asmodeus. Hasidic motifs, which artists associated with “Jung Idysz” used willingly, are not present in Lejzerowicz’s works that are known to us; yet, they contain an interesting topic of Sabbatai Zevi, called the “false Messiah.”¹⁸ During the interwar period, colourful tales about the life of the mystic fascinated many Jewish writers, for whom he was the same “topos as the (noble) Satan in the literature of the Young Poland.”¹⁹ In Lejzerowicz’s works, the presentation of Sabbatai Zevi is an element of messianic and apocalyptic iconography, which is present in the entire career of the painter. Although his composition created in 1924 has more in common with symbolist painting than avant-garde art, the figures of the main character and the accompanying woman are related to Jankiel Adler’s early works. They become apparent mainly in the way of shaping faces and characteristic hands with elongated fingers. The image of a false Messiah created by Lejzerowicz, with a pale, elongated face, deep-set eyes, dark beard, and long hair corresponds to depictions of Uriel Acosta and Christ, known in Jewish art.

Figures of Christ, saints, and the scenes of the New Testament often appeared in the works of “Jung Idysz” artists. Whereas, as Jerzy Malinowski notes, they disregarded the notions “which would be difficult to accept for the Jewish

¹⁷ M. Stolarska-Fronia, *Saints and Tsadikim - The Religious Syncretism of Jewish Expressionism in: Jewish Aspects in Avant-Garde. Between Rebellion and Revelation*, eds. M.H. Gelber, S. Sjöberg, The Gruyter, Berlin-Boston 2017, p. 168.

¹⁸ Sabbatai Zevi (1626-1676) an initiator of the largest Messianic movement in the history of Judaism, called Sabbathaism. In 1665, Zevi announced that he was the Messiah, and a year later, he converted to Islam at the court of the Sultan of Turkey. He considered himself the successor of Christ, gathering seed spread by God in various religions. Imprisoned in 1773 in Dulcingo, he died three years later.

¹⁹ I. Piekarski, *Falszwy mesjasz: o jednym toposie żydowskim w twórczości Juliana Strykowskiego*, “Pamiętnik Literacki” 2008, vol. 99, part 2, p. 58.

audience.”²⁰ The presence of iconography that strongly accentuated a connection between Jewish and Christian traditions in the works of Jewish inter-war artists was a signal of growing distance, separating their generation from the religion of their fathers, and the same time, as a tool for shaping a new, secular identity. It enabled them to exist in the space of international art. Lejzerowicz's works also feature motifs pointing to a fascination with Christian themes.

In an interview in 1932, the artist invoked the *Apocalypse of St. John*, which indicates that he knew this passage from the New Testament.²¹ Certain references to its content can be found in symbolic paintings, showing processions of sinners following the cross or walking towards it. However, what seems more interesting from the perspective of Lejzerowicz's painting and its association with avant-garde art, is a painting from 1924, titled *Christ*, a work created during the same period as the Sabbatai Zevi discussed above. Both works portray the Messiah, the ascetic and mystic with elongated eyes, accompanied by two people. In the case of *Christ*, these are Mary and St. John. Lejzerowicz, as an enthusiast of medieval art, used the iconographic scheme known from Western European painting, where the Virgin Mary is on the right hand of Christ and John on the left. This reference to gothic art was characteristic of the Expressionists, but what is much more interesting in the case of this painting is a method of presenting faces resembling masks. The face of the Messiah, placed in the centre of the composition, was shaped by the contrast of light and dark planes, with expressive, almost sculpted lines of the eyebrows, the bridge of the nose, the cheekbones, and the pointed chin. Squinting eyes and long hair make him similar to Sabbatai Zevi. But in this representation we can also find inspiration from the famous graphic work by Henryk Berlewi, *Uriel Acosta* (1921).

“Inhospitable harbour.” Izrael Lejzerowicz in the context of Strzemiński's painting concepts.

In the middle of the 1920s, Lejzerowicz created several works revealing attempts to experiment with form and colour. He then departs from mystical themes,

²⁰ J. Malinowski, *Malarstwo i rzeźba Żydów Polskich w XIX i XX wieku*, Wydawnictwa Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2000, p. 207. The most common motif was the scene of the Annunciation, the image of the *Holy Family* (Braunerówna, Szwarc), *Worship of the Three Wise Men* (Icchok Brauner), *Crucifixion* (Marek Szwarc, 1917), *Deposition from the Cross* (M. Szwarc 1919), *Resurrection* (Jankiel Adler circa 1918). Images of the evangelists are also known, e.g. St. Luke (M. Szwarc, circa 1918), St. Peter - St. Francis, St. Anthony (H. Barczyński), St. Barbara (Icchok Brauner). Lithographs by Marek Szwarc also contain expressive representation of Christ's head, treated with a strongly deformed line and images of St. Francis.

²¹ Processions painted by Lejzerowicz may also be inspired by suggestive visions contained in Broderson's poem discussed above, *Tchies Hamejsin*: “Forgive, our Father, your adrift children. Who have not experienced happiness, walking across the desert without reprieve. Forgive their sins and relieve the suffering of the harassed! Send them your grace! Heal from purulent wounds! Feed their hungry souls - give them new breath in their misery!” See: M. Broderson, *Tchies Hamejsin*, trans. D. Dekiert, Łódź 1921.

though not giving up religious threads. In compositions, such as *The Nocturnal Wandering* (1925), *Moses*, or a *Design of Masquerade* (1926), he introduces bold deformations, breaks shapes, does not avoid geometric styling. We can see inspiration from the art of Italian Futurism and even Constructivism, although it should be noted, in the latter case, that it is very superficial. The press release concerning the exhibition of the “START” group in 1926 contains a brief description of *The Feast* (1926) and a *Design of Masquerade*, interesting mainly because of information on the colours of the presented works and their expression: “In *The Feast* Lejzerowicz mainly focuses on the composition. But here a purple tone of the whole picture symbolizes passion whipped bloody, an orgiastic nature of the feast. It rarely happens that a form alone fills the picture, like in Witkiewicz’s works. One such rarity is a decorative design of the masquerade, harmonious in the layout and colour transposition, despite the whole battle of triangles, hemispheres of colours.²² A described clash of geometric figures prompted the author of the text to describe the project as constructivist, while recognizing “noble decorativeness” in it.²³ Taking into consideration formal distinctions characteristic of Israel Lejzerowicz’s works, his indifference towards radical aesthetics of abstract art seems to be interesting. In Łódź, where, thanks to the international contacts of local visual artists and the exchange of avant-garde periodicals, artistic ideas circulated without much disturbance, theoretical texts about new trends in art must have been known to Lejzerowicz, although in the 1930s he himself stayed away, not participating in local bohemian activity. In this context, it is worth mentioning a part of the artist’s statement on Władysław Strzemiński, published in *Głos Poranny* on the occasion of a discussion about candidates for the artistic prize of the city of Łódź in 1932.²⁴ Sympathizing with the difficult situation of contemporary artists and pitying his own hard lot and financial problems, Lejzerowicz stated: “The only painter in Łódź who deserves the prize... as an outstanding art theorist is Władysław Strzemiński. I am saying that openly although ideologically I am his strong opponent. Recognizing the value of intellect in art, I do not recognize the advantage of this factor over other elements. I believe that Strzemiński’s “unism,” being the most extreme result of almost all basically formalist trends in visual art, is eventually a bright but inhospitable harbour in contemporary art, from which we can normally sail away. “Unism,” as I predict, will play an extraordinary role in further development of painting synthesis, because it is the “ism” that will swallow all other “isms” and will die together with them, marking the

²² *Wystawa <Startu>*, “Głos Polski”, *Głos Polski 1926*, no. 355, p. 6.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Candidates for the prize, apart from Strzemiński, were Łódź citizens: Maurycy Trębacz, Karol Hiller, Artur Szyk, Henryk Jan Szczygliński and professors of the Kraków Academy of Fine Arts: Leon Wyczółkowski and Wojciech Weiss. Cf. Gel., *Władysław Strzemiński was awarded the first artistic prize of the city of Łódź, amounting to 10 thousand zlotys*, “Głos Poranny” 1932, no 120, p. 1.

beginning of great art.”²⁵ Lejzerowicz perceived Strzemiński mostly as a theoretician, not so much as an artist. Undoubtedly, he knew Strzemiński’s concept of unistic painting described in the book published in 1928; however, he himself was inclined to Expressionism and Symbolism, which was expressed in his delight with the works of Aron Haber (Beron) from Łódź, whose works reveal a far-reaching similarity to Lejzerowicz’s pieces.

Conclusion

Izrael Lejzerowicz debuted in 1921 at the age of 17. In this period, as reported by one of the daily newspaper, Łódź, located in the central part of the reviving Polish state, was the most important centre of Jewish artistic and literary life in the country, primarily because of the expressionist “Jung Idysz” group working there.²⁶ The group’s programme, expressed in the form of a manifesto, emphasized the importance of the national (folk) tradition as the cornerstone of Jewish art, and it emphasized transcendent aspects of art, meeting postulates formulated in 1912 by Wassily Kandinsky, who wrote: “The [artist’s] eyes should be open to their own inner life, and their ears directed to the side where the voice of inner necessity comes from... This is the only way to extract the truly spiritual necessities.”²⁷ The longing for God-Logos, declared by the “Jung Idysz” members, made them interested in religion and Christian iconography, which resulted in numerous works on the subject, placing their work in the heterogeneous space of avant-garde art. The “Jung Idysz” group was ephemeral, but its influence on the younger generation of Jewish artists from Łódź proved to be long-lasting,²⁸ manifesting itself mainly through the reinterpretation of iconographic motifs and imitation of the means of artistic expression. The works of Izrael Lejzerowicz contain numerous references to the works of “Jung Idysz” members, especially Jankiel Adler, but also Henryk Barczyński and Icchok Brauner. It should be noted, however, that this is not a matter of indisputable convergence, finding similarities between particular canvases or graphics. What seems more important is recalling a spiritual bond, a kind of relationship with “Jung Idysz’s” idea of a universal Jewish art. Lejzerowicz’s works described here are characteristic of Expressionists: anti-traditionalism (understood as opposition to nineteenth-century realism) and an inclination towards metaphor and symbolism. He willingly used deformation and unnatural colours as tools to express extreme emotions. Contrary to the represen-

²⁵ Gel, *Nagroda artystyczna Łodzi*, “Głos Poranny” 1932, no 110, p. 7.

²⁶ “Republika” 1923, no 10, p. 4.

²⁷ W. Kandyński, *O duchowości w sztuce*, transl. S. Fijałkowski, Łódź 1996.

²⁸ A majority of group members left Łódź after its breakup, but some of them, such as Icchok Brauner and Moshe Broderson, stayed in the city. They gathered the milieu of young Jewish artists, for whom ideology and the art of “Jung Idysz” remained an important point of reference.

tatives of the so-called Great Avant-garde, Lejzerowicz did not want to completely cut off from the tradition of figurative painting. The idea of a transcendent art was also unfamiliar to him. His art, developing in a peculiar complex of spiritual and synthetic inspirations, can be embedded in the context of emerging modernity, which for the artist turned out to be only a transitional stage on the way back to naturalism.

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<http://www.lejzerowicz.org>

<http://www.lejzerowicz.org/styled/index.html>

MIĘDZYWOJENNA TWÓRCZOŚĆ IZRAELA LEJZEROWICZA WOBEC DOKONAŃ ŚRODOWISKA "NOWEJ SZTUKI " W ŁODZI (streszczenie)

Artykuł stanowi próbę wykazania związków pomiędzy twórczością Izraela Lejzerowicza i innych awangardowych artystów działających w Łodzi w okresie międzywojennym. Malarstwo Lejzerowicza łączy się niekiedy z nurtem tzw. żydowskiego ekspresjonizmu, choć wiele z jego prac bliższych jest symbolizmowi czy wręcz naturalizmowi. Niniejszy tekst dotyczy jednak wyłącznie tych obrazów i rysunków artysty, w których ujawniają się jego fascynacje nowymi kierunkami w sztuce I połowy 20 wieku - wspomnianym już ekspresjonizmem, kubizmem, futuryzmem a nawet konstruktywizmem.

Słowa kluczowe: sztuka żydowska, Lejzerowicz, sztuka w Łodzi, ekspresjonizm, synkretyzm religijny.



1. I. Lejzerowicz, *Self-portrait*, c. 1927



2. I. Lejzerowicz, *Sabbatai Zevi*, 1924



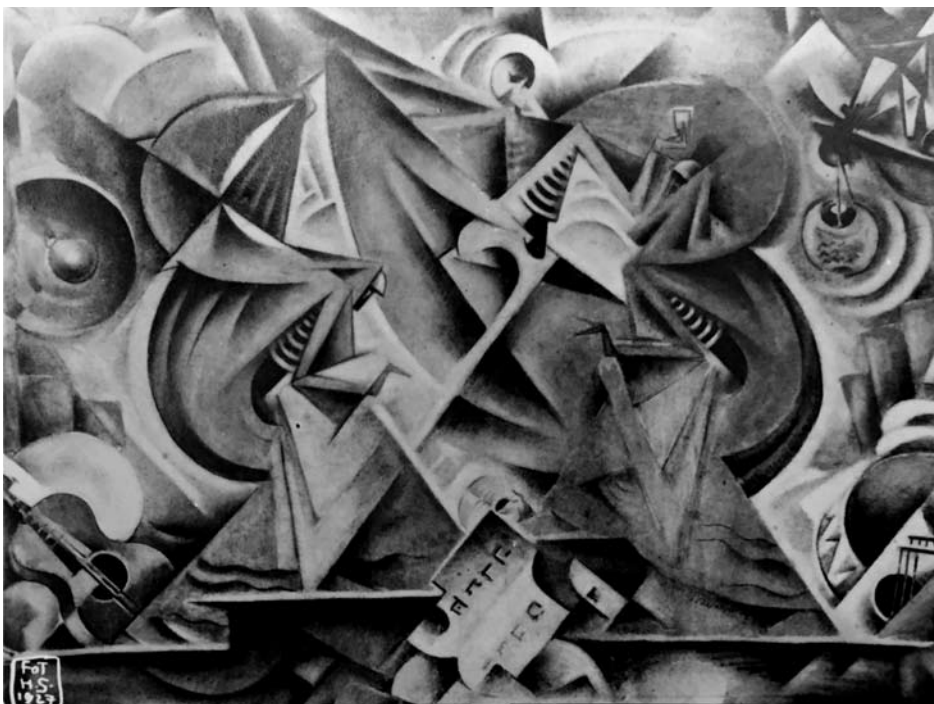
3. I. Lejzerowicz, *The Christ*, 1924



4. I. Lejzerowicz, *The procession in Grey* (fragment), 1923 / 1925?



5. I. Lejzerowicz, *The Nocturnal Wandering*, 1925



6. I. Lejzerowicz, *The masquerade decoration*, 1926



7. I. Lejzerowicz, *The Feast/ The Revel*, 1926.

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