

Jewish Artists
of the
19th and 20th Centuries

by
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Preface

EVER SINCE the early 19th century opened up the world of art to the Jews, more and more Jewish artists have made their appearance in all countries. Much has been written and discussed as to the extent to which the Jew is capable of playing a part within the framework of art in general, and what position he takes therein. In Europe the chapter of Emancipation that started out so hopefully came to a tragic end, and we are able to draw certain conclusions from the balance sheets of that epoch.

This book is an attempt in that direction. From the abundance of Jewish artists, individual personalities were picked out so that the development of their life work might explain the fate of the Jew. It was the author's intention to define the respective position of the Jew in art by identifying him with his surroundings. For this reason, in various instances somewhat more extensive attention has been given to art in general.

This book is not a history of Jewish artists during the last 150 years, and makes no claim to completeness; as a matter of fact, for the purpose of simplification, and in order to avoid repetition, much has been omitted intentionally. For this reason many names of important artists are absent from these pages. This is merely a general survey—a backward glance and an outlook.

At the most critical turning point in Jewish history, this book wants to direct attention also to the lot of the Jew as an artist.

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Introduction

When, on September 27, 1791, the French Constituent Assembly gave recognition to the Jews as citizens with all civil rights, it seemed as though, after 1800 years of oppression, the hour of liberation had approached for the Jews of all the other countries as well.

True, fifteen years previously the North American State had proclaimed in their Declaration of Independence that "all men are created equal and are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights. Accordingly, no man who acknowledges the existence of God may legally be deprived of his civil rights, nor may he be exposed to any kind of oppression for his religious beliefs."

But this first declaration of human rights died out, unheard, in the countries of the Old World, where two and a half million Jews, as a group entirely without rights, were exposed to the tyranny and despotism of nations.

Not until the victorious troops of the French Revolution, carrying the motto of equality, liberty and fraternity upon their banners, brought their laws into the conquered countries did the first rays of liberating light penetrate the dark ghetto districts.

Following the destruction of their own nation, the Jewish people had sunk to political and national insignificance wherever their scattered members had settled. The Jews lived as separate groups of stateless

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foreigners among nations that denied them their civil rights and set them back economically.

Although within the confines of their communities they were usually allowed to retain the peculiarity of their constitution and their particular laws of spiritual life, still, they were cut off from all contact with the rest of the world, so that they were in no way able to participate in the progress of the world.

That in spite of all this the Jewish people was able to survive through centuries is due to its peculiar mental attitude. While all other nations perished as soon as they lost their homeland, and their remnants were dissolved, Judaism alone had the strength and ability to preserve its life and maintain a nation's right to exist.

This is one of the most problematical chapters in the history of nations, because for almost 2000 years now, the Jewish people lacks the actual prerequisite of a nation: its own homeland. As a nation without a country, these people had to find an equivalent that would make possible the continuation of their existence, and they found it in a way of life that was governed by their religious laws.

Heritage in blood and spirit is the destiny of the Jew. It is difficult to interpret, and one would actually have to go back to the very beginning in order to comprehend the mental disposition of the Jew that distinguishes him so clearly from other peoples. In no other nation in the world were, and are faith, doctrine and law interwoven to a unity such as Judaism has developed through the ages.

The Jewish state had been formed from nomadic tribes at a time when the world was already dominated by powerful empires. Its life span was but short, for it could not stand up to the weapons of the others. But



PLATE 1

MORITZ OPPENHEIM: The Speech of the Bar Mizwah (Oil Sketch)
From the "Sefer Bar Mizwah", Edition Keren Kayemet, Jerusalem



PLATE 2

MARK ANTOKOLSKY: Ivan the Terrible (Bronze)
Ermitage, Leningrad



PLATE 3

MAURICY GOTTLIEB: *The Praying Jews* (Oil)
Museum Tel Aviv



PLATE 4

SAMUEL HIRSZENBERG: *Taschlich* (Oil)
Museum Tel-Aviv

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this little nation had a vitality that proved itself stronger than that of all the others. From its midst there arose spiritual heroes of a magnitude never again attained. They gave to their people—and thus to the world—a doctrine that became the foundation of all ethical thinking, and the people carried it with them after their unity was destroyed and they were dispersed in all directions.

They had again become a kind of nomad, and the old peculiarities came back to life within them; mainly the questioning and worrying about the “*WHY*” that results from the feeling of weakness and of being delivered up to inexplicable powers. The final answer was never anything but self-accusation. Being thrown about, stateless, always insecure, and having only very loose contact with their scattered brethren, there was nothing left to them but spiritual conceptions that had to substitute for the material treasures of life.

The special circumstances under which, for centuries, the Jew was forced to earn his livelihood molded his mental attitude in many different ways. He lived *among* the nations, but not *with* the nations. He had no part in world events. As from a distance the echo of these happenings penetrated the isolation that was forced upon him, making him even more strongly aware of it. Since he could not expand his development, he turned increasingly petty and broody.

The beauties of the world were hidden from his view; how was his eye to recognize them? His glance was not directed toward the outside, but sank into the dark depths of his innermost being, or it turned back to the past. His spiritual nourishment did not come from reality; he had to feed his thinking out of his own imagination. This resulted in a totally peculiar

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type of "learning" which, while it rendered his mind more acute, nevertheless let it slip into a more and more inextricable labyrinth of reflection and brooding and never-ending questioning.

Thus he developed a certain form of mistrust, which was fed only too abundantly in everyday life. For one came no closer to truth, and found nowhere a satisfactory answer. Instead, one was befallen by doubts that were directed against everything: against oneself and against one's fellow-creature. One was on the lookout for something suspicious lurking behind every phenomenon, and one examined such phenomena thoroughly before giving them credence.

One invented subtleties to avoid being exposed. However, this required keen thinking and training of the mind, which again demanded wide-awake senses and a continuous preparedness for perception. In the course of centuries such conditions led to a state of mind that showed positive as well as negative results.

This physical and psychical inbreeding preserved the Jew from extinction on the one hand, and on the other hand cut him off from world progress. But by no means did it make him unfit for life, which is a sign of his extraordinary power to hold his own. For as soon as he was offered the chance, he gave proof of his right to live in the midst of nations which heretofore had denied him this right. /

When the Jew first stepped out of the darkness of seclusion into the all too tempting sun of liberty, he found himself confronted by new problems. It is amazing how quickly he overcame them.

Inasmuch as the Jewish law had made him familiar with the most varied fields of science, he was able to continue his education on the foundation of his knowl-

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edge. No people in the universe possessed a compendium like the Talmud, which embraced all aspects of private, domestic, social and economic life; of life on earth and after death; of law, philosophy, ethics and aesthetics, of medicine and botany, astronomy and astrology. The Jew was accustomed to rationalistic thinking. Small wonder, then, that he soon proved himself everywhere in the exact sciences.

However, due to all this, as well as to the external circumstances of his life, one of his senses was much less developed than it was among other peoples. He lacked the purely sensual enjoyment and the ability to grasp, spontaneously and intuitively, all phenomena. In other words, he lacked the sense of the artistic. Important to him were conception, knowledge and perception, but not the event proper. He possessed a peculiar talent for combination, but not the inventive power of artistic flight of fancy.

He was too remote from nature to absorb it completely without the help of spiritually conceivable interpretation. He was not able to give his senses free rein, to indulge them unconcernedly and to luxuriate in the fields of fantasy. Always the question of the *WHY* and *WHEREFORE* stood at the beginning of his actions. Reasoning suppressed instinct.

This does not mean that the Jew was artistically untalented or, as is so often claimed, hostile to art. It is a completely mistaken interpretation of the picture ban to assume that the law barred the Jew from all artistic activity. This picture ban referred solely to the manufacturers of religious objects of every form and description, and was formulated so sharply because, in olden times, idolatry and superstition were widespread and keeping the Jewish doctrine unadulter-

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ated was the most important commandment for its continuance.

One has only to read the detailed description of the Tent of Meeting, or the exact delineation of Salomon's Temple, to realize to what extent artistic taste was intent upon giving sacred structures dignified shape and adornment. Fanaticism and zealotry, however, exaggerated the law *ad absurdum* by absolutely prohibiting every activity in formative art.

And, indeed, Jews of all eras, and in all countries did engage in artistic activity. Where conditions permitted, they achieved results of no little importance. Of course, prior to the modern era the sphere of their activity was greatly limited. There were laws that cut them off from contact with the rest of the world and prevented them from developing in artistic professions. And so, an inclination that slumbers in every human being was nipped in the bud and, accordingly, was left to wither.

However, where such was not the case—as, for instance, during the Mohammedan rule in Spain, or under the rule of the Yaguellos in Poland, the Jews developed considerable artistic talents.

In their own communities there was little opportunity for real occupation in art. They lacked the security of opulence and the necessary stability of a gradual evolution. They had no inspiration, and they did not know what it meant to be carefree and to fully enjoy life. Nor were there any tasks that might stimulate them. Their religious cult did not require art; it was not permitted to erect monuments and was satisfied with modest implements. Private dwellings were limited, even poor. Since there was no abundance, every type of luxury was *eo ipso* ruled out.

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Still, the artistic tendency and the impulse to employ it had not died. Indeed, it made itself noticeable continually albeit—in proportion to the world at large—to a moderate degree. It was mostly anonymous art, so that it is possible only in scattered instances to discover its traces and find definite names. It was a minor art that was practiced with great love and devotion and that, with the exception of manuscripts and the painting of miniatures, more or less came to a stop at handicraft.

Of a certainty much has been destroyed that was created by the hands of Jews. History tells us practically nothing about it. We must, therefore, rely upon meagre chance discoveries that show no continuous development. However, they do enable us to draw conclusions that are important insofar as they allow us to recognize the attitude of the Jew toward art at a period when the confining barriers were lowered.

For example, there are neither landscapes nor still life pictures to be found among artistic achievements before this period; where they were used, it was solely for the purpose of clarifying a situation, or as monumental adornment. Historical events and genre scenes are not represented; they appear only in book illustrations, and then more in a literary sense.

Chief interest was centered on the portrait. For centuries the Jew was pretty much estranged from free nature and country life, since nothing bound him to the soil that was not his, and he spent his life for the greater part in dismal, narrow villages and overcrowded cities. Aside from that, his fight for existence took place with people and not with nature. In order to win this battle, he had to probe his way into the souls of others, had to observe them and try to analyze them.

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Accordingly, he was more intent upon the domination of man than upon observation of nature.

He listened to the voice and speech of the other man and was, therefore, intent upon training his aural sense. He used his visual faculties less for the purpose of optically absorbing a phenomenon than for analytical observation. He was not so much interested in the external appearance as in what was happening behind it. Therefore he sought to "read" the faces of people and thereby gain entrance to their souls. He watched and questioned every line and wrinkle, dismembered the total picture into individual parts and studied it in the same manner as he had been taught to study a difficult text.

The Jew was accustomed to using his eye for reading. Books, rather than nature, were his fount of knowledge. He saw the universe in letters—black and white; not in the motley reflection of colors. He read and he wrote. When he wanted to make a picture, he made notes of it, "described" it and "wrote" it down. And for this purpose, he used pencil and quill, not the brush.

The Jew saw and felt graphically. For this reason he distinguished himself as calligrapher and also achieved success as a graphic artist. Even when he occasionally touched upon other art disciplines, one can almost always detect the lineal trend. And later on, too, this trend is and remains for quite a while the focal and cardinal point of his artistic work.

The same holds true of the size. The small and perceptible was more to his liking, and the conception of the monumental was almost entirely alien to him. Anyhow, where was he to cultivate it? The narrow streets and homes of the ghetto offered no space; free-standing

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architecture and sculpture were impossible, and there was no room for paintings. Being thus restricted, the Jew developed a kind of miniature art. The portrait became a miniature, sculpture a medallion.

Wherever a matter could be penetrated by hard study and continuous deliberation of all problems involved, and where new facts could be acquired by exploring, searching and thinking, the Jew was always able to show special achievements. From the beginning he had lived in the realm of books, and the book was his true element. The "rabbi" was the sage and scholar, and was considered a personage of highest esteem. In lieu of a nobility that made itself conspicuous with external pomp and splendor, with prosperity and an entourage, the Jews had their spiritual princes, mostly very modest men who spent their lives in the seclusion of their studies.

The rabbi was not merely their religious leader, but also the interpreter of the profane law and of all sciences. Being experienced in all directions, he was consultant in matters medical and economical, as well as the diplomatic agent and representative of the congregation. The rabbi was the prototype of Jewish scholarliness.

It is not astonishing, therefore, that as soon as he was no longer confined to the narrow environments of his community, the chief accomplishments of the Jew moved in similar directions; in other words, that it was the Jewish scholar and researcher who first appeared on the surface of the world at large.

In the exact sciences, and wherever it was a matter of fighting and conquering new territory with intellectual weapons, there were to be found Jewish pioneers who contributed in extraordinary measure toward the

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cultural development of mankind. Out of their scholarly studies came the men who were now working in laboratories and other research institutes, and succeeded in gaining a world-wide reputation.

Art, on the other hand, was the realm of free and unburdened spiritual flight, of fantasy and joy, of laughing unrestraint and sensual enjoyment and rejoicing of the soul. A tempting and promising world opened up before them, but it was a world that was completely foreign to their whole disposition and hitherto existing mode of life. Because of this, and of the oppression that weighed upon them and was not so easily thrown off, they first had to grope their way forward, and it took a certain amount of time before they could fully develop in this field.

Finally, in order to explain the position of the Jew and, in particular, his attitude toward art at the start of the 19th century, the following must be considered:

The fanfares of freedom that echoed from France into the other countries by no means meant abolition of oppression for the enslaved Jewish people who were wholly without rights. For the time being the emancipation touched only certain circles in Western Europe in which preparedness for religious and social liberation, and efforts toward intellectual development had existed for quite a while.

It was hoped that by suppressing Jewish peculiarities one could easily gain the social access that appeared so enticing; and without any great qualms one relinquished the old and seemingly antiquated faith. So far, religion had preserved the national tie of Jewry. Now it appeared not to count any longer as compared to a free enlightenment. Complete assimilation, if possible via intermarriage, seemed to be the salvation of one's

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human dignity, even at the cost of one's *Judaism*. Since the Hebrew language was considered merely a medium of literature, one endeavored to emulate the others by using colloquial conversation, thereby gradually dooming Hebrew to near-oblivion.

Although the emancipation had such an extreme effect only upon a certain upper class of intellectuals, the consequences were nevertheless fateful for the future of all.

For the time being the great bulk of the Jewish people lived under the old conditions. In some instances the liberating laws were repealed, and it took another half century before the revolutionary wave of 1848, extending from Paris across the continent toward the east and the south, brought final democratization.

Frankly, this introductory chapter has been extended beyond its limits, and has dealt with questions that may not seem to pertain to our actual topic. Nevertheless, the author feels himself entitled to make further claim upon the attention of the reader who has followed him patiently thus far. In return, he promises to employ a lighter vein in the ensuing chapters and to report in a narrative manner rather than to analyze in school-masterly fashion.

The following attempt at appraising a number of prominent Jewish artists of the last 150 years is made for the purpose of giving as clear a picture of their accomplishments as is possible. However, since the Jew as artist makes his first appearance in history in the 19th century, it seemed necessary to uncover the reasons and circumstances that heretofore prevented the Jew from engaging in artistic work, and to explain his peculiar nature and the difficulties that beset him. This required enumeration of the many historical, cul-

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tural and social factors involved, which tend to show how complicated is the unique position of the modern Jew.

We will have to enlarge the structure of this general survey a bit in order to give the ensuing artistic personalities their rightful place therein. For just as in a picture the subject is clearly recognizable only when it is sufficiently projected from the background, so, too, man and his achievements are completely comprehensible only when viewed within the framework of his era.

If the Jew had thought that the new century would grant him the chance of a quiet and consistent development, both as a human being and as cosmopolite, he was soon to find himself greatly disappointed. The temporary relaxing of oppression was not freedom. After a short breathing spell, new dangers and enemies emerged all over. They complicated the existence of the Jews more and more until finally—in our own age—they flung them into the most terrible abyss.

Once the emancipation had begun, the invisible tie that had bound the Jewish nation thus far began to loosen everywhere, with the result that the people became strangers to one another. One part outgrew their community. The century of the machine, of technics and inventions brought about entirely new social aspects. Great enterprises developed a powerful capitalism that made itself felt all over. In order to maintain itself, it needed barter trade and had to conquer the world's markets.

A spirit of enterprise, and a knack for invention and combination gave many Jews a chance to participate in such undertakings and produced an influential Jewish capitalism of occasional international importance.

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This again created the first new danger, one that was full of suspicion and malevolence against the Jews: competition.

On the other hand, though, the bulk of the Jewish people were dependent to a greater extent upon the industrial entrepreneur, and their position was jeopardized by competition from the other workers. There arose, as a result, a new form of the battle of all against all: the battle of the classes, which availed itself of two particularly pernicious weapons against the Jews: anti-Semitism and the racial theory.

May one example show the gross incongruity in which the Jew found himself. While in Czarist Russia three quarters of the railroads were built by Jews, and the Poliakoffs, Kronenbergs, Nathansons and Guenzburgs ruled as kings of finance and railroads, and Brodetzky managed the entire sugar production, mass pogroms were being instigated against the impoverished Jews under the subterfuge of ritual killings. A wave of emigration set in as the defenseless people sought protection in the far West; but by their mass appearances, they only created new scenes of misery.

The worst symptom of anti-Semitism, however, was the Dreyfus trial that was taking place right at the birthplace of the freedom movement. And here there arose in the soul of a man the voice that was to give warning to his people. He foresaw the inevitable destruction that would occur if the Jew failed to be aware of himself.

Only if he disassociated himself from the others and became himself again; if he could reconquer what he had lost in the course of his so-called freedom, viz: his national pride and his language and his law—in short, his life; if he started, modestly and consistently, to re-

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build his Judaism: then he could hope for a future.

The Jew possessed all faculties for development—he had proved them in the vicissitudinous century that had just expired; but he had not made them profitable to himself. His accomplishments were accepted and absorbed by the others. And the Jew himself, indulging in the folly of world fraternization, was proud of being recognized. He was not aware that such tribute was meant only for the individual achievement, and that great care was taken everywhere that their number did not increase too much. Just as soon as a numerical overweight—or even a balance—made itself noticeable, reaction set in, in the form of anti-Semitism.

Even the proclaimers of human rights who had demanded abolition of the defamatory laws against the Jews, did not do so out of pure human kindness. Having realized that Judaism was not to be exterminated by either persecution or segregation, they set their hopes on the disintegrating effect of assimilation. In a letter to the Minister of the Interior, Champagny, Napoleon had stated expressly: “so that the Jewish blood may lose its specific essence.”

When the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and drove the Hebrews out of their land, they thought they had exterminated Judaism for all times. The nation that was at that time the most powerful on earth knew only the meaning of external might and the language of weapons.

Civilization did not make people and nations more humane in the course of the centuries; it was just that more cunning means of fighting were found. Worst of all was the method of hypocritical humanity, which actually had as its goal the exact opposite. The Jew had gone after this bait only too willingly, and only a

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very few recognized the imminent danger. However, their warnings went unheeded.

One did not have sufficient faith in the new prophet either. Only a small number heeded him and began the reconstruction of a new Judaism upon their own soil. For the first time after a period of almost 2000 years, Jews began to erect their home on their own ground. The others, though,—millions of them—had to suffer the horrors of two world wars, of the concentration camps and the gas chambers, where one-third of all Jewry perished.

But we, who today have experienced the greatest tragedy of Jewish history; who have witnessed the once promising sunrise of emancipation and the frightful night of a ruination never before seen: we stand before this terrifying picture and attempt to analyse and understand it. We will pick out some of its details so that, from a better recognition of past history, we may learn to know ourselves better.

At this point we will continue to occupy ourselves with one of the aspects: that of the Jewish artist. We will isolate him from this chaotic picture, and try to comprehend him. To this end, however, it was first necessary to let this introduction answer a series of questions which, thus far, had not received enough attention. Or, at least, they had not been presented with the necessary clarity and had caused quite some confusion, from which it is chiefly the Jewish artist who suffers. For since it is often difficult to know how to classify him in the course of evolution, his picture sways somewhat precariously, usually to his detriment.

In reality, however, the achievement of the Jew in the course of an exceedingly short period—at least it was short in proportion to such an evolution—is a con-

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firmation of his intellectual, spiritual and artistic capacity. This, on the other hand, would seem to prove with great distinctness the fallacy of the frequently heard assertion that the Jew is actually untalented in art.

True, the Jewish people was never especially well developed artistically, as for instance the Egyptians, Greeks and Chinese were in ancient times, or, in the modern age, the Italians and the French. But neither was it *shy* of, or *hostile* to art. Rather, it had become estranged from and disaccustomed to art. To compensate for that lack, it possessed other intellectual talents (the English, for example, were gifted in literature, the Germans in music).

With the begin of emancipation, Jewish artists appear in all lands and all spheres. Like any artist, the Jew, too, is the reflection of his era and his surroundings. However, due to the fact that, unlike other artists, he does not create in his own surroundings, his achievements may not be evaluated as specifically Jewish. It is not—or at least only in negligible degree—Jewish art, but art of a Jew. No matter how greatly it is influenced by his temperament and character; regardless of the high quality it attains by virtue of his talent—it nevertheless is conditioned by the circumstances of time and environment.

And regardless of how many qualities one recognizes as coming from his spiritual heritage or, as Napoleon expressed it, “from the essence specific to the Jewish blood”—still his work does not belong to the assets of the Jewish nation; it is simply a gift that he presents to a hospitable world. The Jew as artist not only learned a great deal in the relatively short time of his cosmo-

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politanism, he also gave to the world much of his inner self.

It is our intention to present here the many aspects and vicissitudes of the appearance of the Jewish artist from the moment of his entrance upon the world stage.

Let us raise the curtain, then, and review the individual figures.

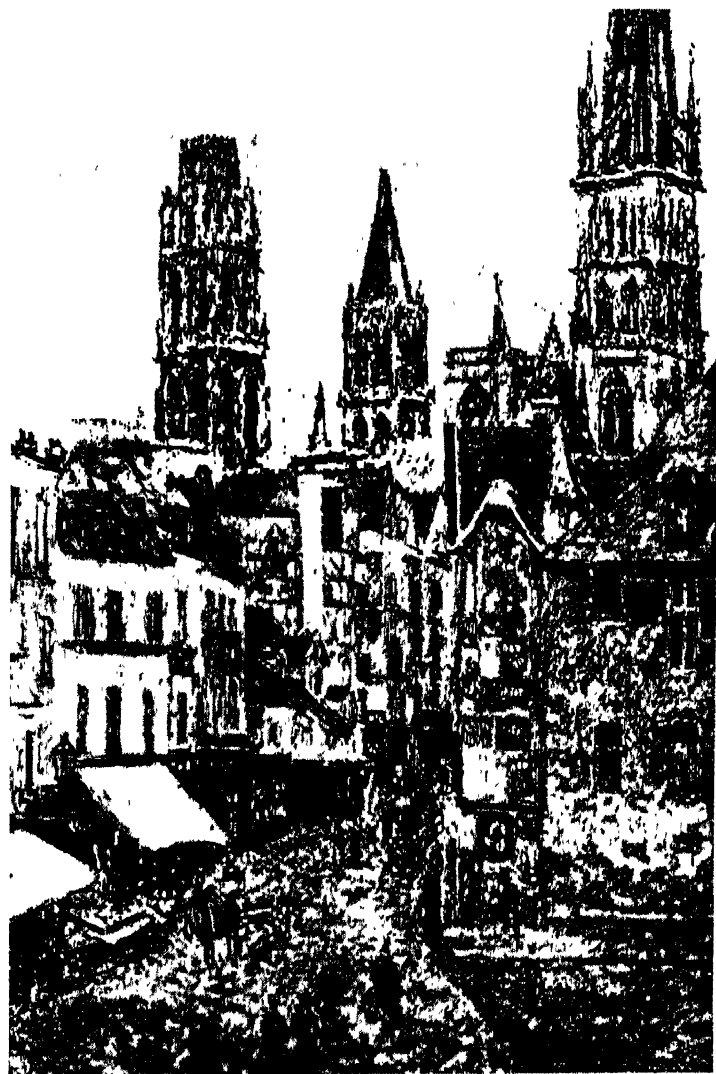


PLATE 5

CAMILLE PISSARRO: Rue de l'Épicerie, Rouen (Oil)
Priv. Coll. Paris





PLATE 7

MAX LIEBERMANN: Tiergarten-Alley, Berlin (Oil) *Museum Tel-Aviv*



PLATE 8

EUGEN SPIRO: Albert Einstein, 1941 (Oil)
Courtesy, the artist

The First Generation

MORITZ OPPENHEIM

NOT JUST BECAUSE he was born at the exact turn of the century, but because his artistic career embraces the whole scope of the first generation of Jewish painters, the name of Oppenheim occupies first place. For here we find in every respect the positive and negative aspects of talent combined with conditions created by environment.

Oppenheim is the first to risk the step to freedom from a heretofore barred world, and the first to follow this path successfully. He is the first Jew who unreservedly professes to art and to whom, favored by personal circumstances, its gates are opened.

He is in every respect a child of good fortune, one of the few artists who were never beset by difficulties. On the contrary, his life was destined to be borne by success and recognition, and radiant with the favor of the most important and influential personalities.

His memoirs are written down in a little book, in which the aged artist tells in naive and simple manner about himself and the many people whom he met and by whom he was patronized and admired. It gives a contemplative picture of a happy era.

Moritz Oppenheim was born in what was still the ghetto in Frankfurt, on one of the first days of the year 1800. Being the son of God-fearing parents, he was first reared in the narrow, strict tradition of cheder

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(parochial school). However, when he was eleven years old, the oppressive anti-Jewish laws were repealed and his parents made it possible for him to attend the Gymnasium. They also indulged his inclination toward art by permitting him to enroll in the Staedel Art Institute, of which he became the first Jewish pupil.

By copying old pictures, he acquired a certain routine in painting that enabled him to quickly and easily draw portraits.

He went to Munich for a while to continue his studies, then to Paris where he was attracted less by its art than by his brother's presence there. He was in closer contact with Jewish circles than with artists, and as a result he became associated with the house of Rothschild. This connection was to be of decisive importance for his further progress.

It so happened that Oppenheim had a chance to accompany a courier to Rome where he was introduced into the art circle that determined the direction of his work.

In his memoirs, Oppenheim describes not so much his artistic impressions as he does the conditions under which the Jewish population of Italy lived. This is significant for him and for the circumstances under which he—who was a Jew and thus somewhat of an outsider—could move about among his colleagues and in what was otherwise a free artistic life.

He frankly admits that "it was not true, genuine love of art that drove him to Rome". As a matter of fact, he felt quite forlorn there and first sought access to Jewish circles. He was attracted to the Ghetto, especially at the approach of the Jewish High Holy Days. He visited its synagogues and was introduced into the homes of families living there. In other ways, too, he

his art studies.

During a visit to Naples he enjoyed the hospitality of the local Rothschild, who bought his first pictures and continued to patronize him. In Rome he participated in a contest sponsored by the academy. However, the prize was denied him upon discovering that he was Jewish, despite the fact that the then all-powerful Thorwaldsen pleaded for him energetically.

The other artists, especially the rather large circle of Nazarenes appreciated the young artist. Still, he remained somewhat aloof; for, contrary to many others, the alluring opulence of the Catholic Church did not induce him to sacrifice his faith for the sake of art. He claimed, rather, that "attempts to convert him succeeded only in making a more pious Jew of him", inasmuch as "the pomp of St. Peter impressed him as an exhibition calculated upon effect, in contrast to the unpretentiousness and proud simplicity of the Jewish synagogue". Says he: "Our frequently dismal houses of worship affected me more intimately; they appeared magnificent to me".

Oppenheim is the only one of these German-Roman artists who does not seek salvation in the false geniality of a canting sentimentality, or by taking refuge in the inspiring arms of the Catholic Church, which alone seemed to guarantee the true revelation of art. To him the only genuine artist is the one who remains true to himself. And in that respect he was a genuine artist, even if he was not one of the great, and he gave his best within the scope of his ability. While his artistic capacity was limited because of an epigonous preoccupation, still he achieved some notable results that as-

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sured him recognition among the ranks of his contemporaries.

At the age of twenty-five, after five years of art pilgrimage, he returns home and settles there for the rest of his life. To be sure, he travels extensively, is brilliantly entertained by the greatest personalities, receives medals and other honors and leads the respected life of a celebrated artist; yet he retains his personal modesty and his affinity to Judaism.

Again it is the house of Rothschild that furthers him. He instructs Baroness Charlotte, a patroness of the arts; he sketches illustrations for a Haggadah, which she then paints in the style of old miniatures. He also participates in the brilliant festivities of Jewish finance kings and thereby becomes acquainted with the highest ranks of society.

Oppenheim himself relates, with a keen sense of humor, that he was called "painter of Rothschild and the Rothschild of painters", and further, that he painted the portraits of the wealthiest Jewish families and beautiful young Jewesses for good money.

Accordingly, he soon became a very busy and popular portraitist.

He went to Weimar, where he made contact with Goethe and where he was made Grand Ducal professor. Returning from there, he painted portraits of Boerne, Heine and Gabriel Riesser that soon made his name known all over Germany.

These pictures represent the peak of his artistic achievements. They demonstrate his whole ability as well as his specific talent.

The portraitist is of a nature that is innately trained to be critical. He first employs his intellect for analytical appraisal and psychological penetration of the in-

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dividual. This enables him better to judge the outward appearance through the medium of the eye. Heine's portrait, is not only a picture of the handsome, delicate poet, but the vitalization of Heine the cynic and lyricist, whom the sharp eye of the artist has detected.

One of the most beautiful portraits, though, is that of the artist's young wife. It is a work full of essentiality that cannot deny a certain Jewish sentimentality; but a quiet distinction and reserve imparts an air of nobility to it.

Despite the fact that his many excellent portraits are considered the best of his era, his truly great success resulted from compositorial portrayals and, chiefly, from a picture in which, for the first time, a Jewish subject was treated by a Jewish artist. The painting, "Return of the Volunteer", completed in 1833, met with such approval that several years later Oppenheim began to busy himself with a picture serial entitled "Pictures from Jewish Family Life". This series caused such a general sensation that he repeated it several times.

In 1865 a Frankfurt publisher approached him with the idea of circulating his pictures in photographic prints. So the artist did them over, gray on gray, since photography at that stage was not able to reproduce the color values of a painting.

These gouaches, the number of which he increased from an original six to twenty-three, served as a model for the folders that gained wide-spread popularity in the course of a few years and were to be found in almost every Jewish home in the old and in the new world.

Such sentimental portrayals were supposed to be the reflection of ancient Jewish rites and customs. Oppen-

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heim made a name for himself with these pictures that seems justified only insofar as he was the first painter ever to undertake the creation of works with Jewish content.

They represent a courageous feat, but they are weak as an artistic accomplishment and do not exceed the niveau of a shallow genre style that was popular at the time. One might have called Oppenheim the Jewish Nazarene, for his figure compositions are held intrinsically in the taste of a romantic perceptive art as it was fostered by the so-called German-Roman.

He had received¹ his early education in that circle, and its influence upon him is apparent in his sketches of "Return of the Prodigal Son" (1823); "Susanna in the Bath" (1824); and the various Tobias pictures (1826), all of them done in Italy. Despite this influence, there is a huge difference that reveals his rectitude and courage.

These sentimentalists believed they could find the true expression of their art only by surrendering themselves heart and soul to the Catholic Church. They were blinded by its splendour and mystic and claimed that only the true believer could be endowed with truly fine and noble sentiments. Consequently, they demanded baptism as the first requisite for a genuine artist.

Oppenheim, on the other hand, remained true to his own self and did not succumb, as did so many of his colleagues, to the allurements as formulated by young Wackenroder in his "Herzensergiessungen eines kunstliebenden Klosterbruders" (Effusions of an art-loving friar).

Thus the picture of this painter stands before us pure and immaculate. We see him with all his merits

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and weaknesses, his innate talent for portraying people and, on the whole, as an artist whose creative talent adheres entirely to the formalistic and sentimental art theories of his time.

* * *

One can recognize practically the same qualities among other Jewish artists of that epoch, viz. a talent for portrait painting that helped them achieve notable results but which, in compositorial work, never extended beyond the average.

Eduard Magnus, for instance, who was born in Berlin in 1799 and died in 1872, became a favorite society painter. He came from those circles that sought to reinforce their acceptance by the world at large with baptism. Of course, this did bring them a number of advantages which, at the time, were considered the aspiration of so-called enlightenment.

Magnus was baptized while still a child and was rewarded with early membership in the academy and the title of professor. He attained prominence chiefly through the elegance of his women's portraits. His landscapes in Italian style prove only that his talent adapted itself easily to whatever influence it was exposed to.

Another painter, also born in Berlin and belonging to the same circle, was *Julius Jacob* (1811-1882). In England, where he spent eleven years, as well as in Vienna, he made a name for himself as a portraitist. During extensive travels that led him as far as the Orient, he made exhaustive landscape studies and even composed a number of pleasing aquarelles. However, his compositions show the same weak points as those of the aforementioned artists.

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In our opinion, though, there is another painter who is in several respects more noteworthy than the scintillating Berlin group. He is the less known *Wilhelm Henschel* (1785-1865) who lived in Breslau and who, in his much more unassuming portrait art, represents a special category.

Henschel carries on the good tradition of the miniature portraitists. He is an experienced designer and excellent physiognomist. He renders the people that belong to his circle, and whom he knows well, in all modesty and without pathos. He presents them to us as they really are. Yet he knows how to instill so much life into those likenesses that they have to be regarded as important human documents.

Such Jewish artists, having attained a certain local fame, worked in various regions and created many portraits of Jewish men and women; it had become fashionable to acquire an ancestral gallery of paintings and, too, congregations honored the memory of prominent members in this manner.

The grandsons of the venerable Moses Mendelssohn, and many others as well, thought they could follow their calling as artists only by converting to Catholicism and even becoming fanatical professors of the new faith.

Philipp Veit, who later became director of the Stadel Institute in Frankfurt and who painted the frescoes in the cathedral at Mainz; the *Schadow brothers*, sons of a Jewess; *Eduard Bendemann*, son of the well-known Berlin banker Bendix, who later was director of the academy in Duesseldorf; and the talented *Julius Muhr*, son of the champion of emancipation, Abraham Muhr, who painted "Die Messe in der Sixtinischen Kapelle" for Bishop Lichnowsky—these names are just a few examples to show what forces were lost

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to Judaism because these otherwise innately talented people succumbed to the temptations of a bloodless and vain art trend.

MARK ANTOKOLSKY

A CERTAIN PARALLEL to the appearance of the first great Jewish painter in the great world of art is given by that of the first Jewish sculptor. We experience here, and to a greater degree even, the problems confronting the Jewish artist; for like the bold seafarer of yore, he exerted his whole strength and unrelenting energy toward penetrating new regions that heretofore were unknown to him.

In this venture the sculptor had much greater difficulties to overcome than the painter. Sculpture as such was much more alien to the Jew than painting, and mastering it required qualities to which, in a way, his faculties were diametrically opposed.

Not only had religious laws prohibited the Jew from occupying himself with sculpture; but due to the peculiarities of his race, he even lacked the tendency for it. The Semite never did have a cubic sense, nor a feeling for tectonics.

Building, constructing and shaping did not lie within the sphere of his formative faculties. And when he did attempt it, in his hands it became a work born of the experience of the picturesque. It was for the same reason, then, and not just due to lack of opportunity, that the Jew is of no significance as an architect until architecture becomes utilitarian construction.

However, as soon as modern architecture was confronted with new tasks; when it became necessary to build practical and ingenious structures with new

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technical media, and serving special purposes; in other words, ever since the architecture of our age has become something of an aesthetic engineering and construction "science"—from that moment on we find Jews in prominent position.

Plastic art is the expression of ideas affected by rhythm and based on sensual attitude. Therefore the Jew, with a totally different disposition by virtue of his heritage, education and customs, found himself confronted by problems completely strange to him. He lacked the sense of symmetry and proportion, as well as the sureness of clear perception. His forever restlessly questioning soul did not know the harmony that is the first requirement for the shaping of a form. With pencil and brush one could narrate, and start out from the substance, and for this type of art the Jew possessed a certain talent and inclination. But sculpture is born of physical experience and grows out of the material.

Besides, life thus far was so strictly limited that it offered the Jew no possibilities for plastic work. He was forbidden to reproduce the human shape which formed an essential part of sculptural creation, in that it represented material experience. There were no monuments and no public orders. And even when it gradually became the fashion, in enlightened circles, to have one's portrait painted, one was still very far from having it done in plastic form.

It was already quite a concession—one that could be justified, though—to permit a relief-like portrayal in the form of a medallion. The medallion could be compared with a miniature portrait; the figure as such was merely indicated, and the physiognomic reproduction

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did not present the artist with the form problems of freestanding sculpture.

Reliefs had been used ages ago as tombstone adornments. Originally the inscription alone served that purpose. It was chiselled into the stones, and a great deal of care was exerted to achieve a beautiful and ornamental effect.

It did not take long, however, before the step to symbolic portrayals was taken, and some truly artistic results were attained. They showed a style all their own and surpassed by far a merely skillful handicraft. It is significant, though, that usually only low relief was employed, and this low relief seemed to do justice to the picture only when color was added. In most cases the color was given very strong and varying tones. Thus was expressed the Oriental sensibility that had been the heritage of the Jews through the ages.

Relief designing in the form of coin and medallion has about the same relationship to sculpture as etching to painting; i.e. it is not so much bound to pure abstraction and leaves the artist more leeway. Accordingly, he can more easily "narrate" and become more expansive. It is no coincidence, as we shall see later on, that Jewish artists play an important part in the revival of the modern medallion.

At the turning point from the bound to free standing sculpture, the Jew is at first faced with tasks which even a man as talented as Antokolsky could not master.

Mark (actually Mordechai) Antokolsky was born in Vilna in 1843 and was educated at the cheder in that city. Later he was apprenticed to a maker of gold lace and, after a short while, to an engraver. Here he became acquainted with a land surveyor who instructed him in wood carving.

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Intelligent and skilled as he was, the youth soon came to the attention of the wife of the Vilna governor general, who referred him to the academy in Petersburg. He worked there from his 20th to his 26th year, and earned his livelihood with turnery.

A small wood relievo "The Jewish Tailor" brought him a prize during his first year, which was followed the next year by the big silver medal of the academy and an imperial scholarship for his ivory relief "The Miser".

Another relief, "The Judas Kiss" terminated his apprenticeship at the academy with a scholarship abroad. He thereupon went to Berlin and, upon returning to Vilna, he continued his work independently.

So far he had been occupied only with Jewish themes; now he turned to Russian history and, simultaneously, to free standing sculpture. In this field he created a giant statue of "Ivan the Terrible" in marble. Czar Alexander acquired the statue, at the same time ordering a copy in bronze for the Hermitage in Petersburg. He also made Antokolsky a member of the academy.

An almost fatal lung hemorrhage necessitated his traveling to Italy soon thereafter, and he spent the next eight years in Rome. There, in addition to many other works, he created the colossal statue of Peter the Great and "Christ Chained to the Pillar".

The years from 1875-1880 were spent in Petersburg, where he created the "Dying Socrates".

At about that time he exhibited his life production in Paris, and was hailed as one of the greatest European masters. He became the recipient of the great Gold Medal and was made a Knight of the Legion of Honor. The entire world press emphasized his significance, and

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in Russia the poet Turgenieff, and the most important art historian, Stassow, joined in the applause.

Among other things, Stassow wrote: "We are less concerned with Europe's opinion about Antokolsky than with the question as to what he means to us Russians. He is the greatest sculptor of our time, and his personality differs from that of everybody else. Ever since he created his Ivan, his fame has grown constantly, and continues to increase. Let us not forget, too, that he is a Jew, and what this means in Russia. In order to reach his goal, he endured privations and suffering in a measure such as no other race ever had to bear."

But instead of fearfully concealing his Judaism, he stressed it with pride and intrepidity. With bold resoluteness he first appeared before the Russian public with purely Jewish themes. Luckily, Russian society, or at least a large part of it, began to oppose the shameful views of former eras. Pirogiw's sermons, to the effect that the Jews also had a right to live, resounded through all Russia and found a response among many.

However, such recognition was met by the Russian-national press with the most spiteful contumely. They polemicized against his Ivan and rejected the monument of Peter the Great on the grounds that the artist lacked the true Russian spirit and that, being a Jew, he was not qualified to portray their national hero.

They maligned the arrogance of the foreigner, and embittered the artist to such an extent that, disgusted with all the controversies raging about him, he left the country and went to Paris to continue his work in peace.

He spent two decades in Paris, and in his work he returned to the Jewish topics of his youth. One of the first, and probably the most mature artistic achieve-

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ment among these creations was his Spinoza. Aside from his work, he lived rather like a meditating philosopher and expressed in various documents the full realization of his artistic limitations. He died in Homburg shortly before reaching his 60th birthday.

Antokolsky is perhaps the most interesting personality among the great Jewish artists, for his life shows most distinctly the light and shadow sides of Jewish destiny. He is all Jew; Jew by heritage, by sentiment and by talent. He is Jew in his aspirations and unrelenting will, but at the same time in the realization of the limits set him. His life and his work was at once victorious and tragic.

He starts out as carver of wood and ivory and, in small works fashioned in anecdote style, attempts to give artistic expression to his Jewish philosophy. The Jewish tailor who tries laboriously to thread his needle is a typical example.

Following this, he works at a relief portraying arguing Jews, but he is not able to master it pictorially. He endeavors repeatedly to find a solution for this work, which is supposed to be half relief, half free standing sculpture. He does not succeed, though, because he does not sense plastic lawfulness clearly enough. One feels the struggle between the subconscious artistic impulse and the burden of his heritage that oppresses and restrains him.

Still, he is impelled to go on, and he ventures the step toward free standing sculpture. He fails here, too, though at first not realizing it, and is encouraged by success and general recognition.

He is twenty-five years old and has suffered many hardships. Now, as the result of indescribable trouble and toil, he achieves his first great victory with his

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Ivan statue. But, despite all his grandeur, this Ivan is an anecdotal figure, and it is easy to understand the controversies caused by this work. The Terrible is not terrible, the statue does not portray the demonic disposition of the terrible czar. An over-abundance of petty details destroys the total effect.

"The Dying Socrates" and "Spinoza", which most certainly were his top achievements, have their weaknesses in the sculptural form. Socrates, slumped in his mighty chair, his limbs gradually growing limp, his bald pate sunk upon his chest, shows a uniform rhythm in the extremities. But in profile the free standing sculpture falls apart, so that the compactness is disrupted and the collective sculptural effect is ruined.

In this respect Spinoza is even less satisfactory inasmuch as the artist presented the figure more in a spiritual analysis than as a sensual form.

The philosophical attitude of his later years rounds out the picture of the artist—despite all his imperfections—to that of a perfect human being. For the evaluation of a life lies not in deeds alone, but equally in the sentiments by which they are borne and which speak out of them.



PLATE 9

LESSER URY: *The Lake of Garda* (Oil)
Museum Tel-Aviv





PLATE 11

HERMANN STRUCK: Polish Rabbi (Etching)



PLATE 12

JOSEPH BUDKO: "A Man Such As I Does Not Flee"
(Woodcut)

The Jewish Genre Painters from the East

IN THE SECOND half of the 19th century there are already many Jewish artists everywhere. The greater number stream from the east to the academies in western Europe. So strong is their ambition and enthusiasm that they endure all privations and overcome even the greatest difficulties in order to reach their goal.

The life story of most of them is usually the same. Instead of listening attentively to the teacher, the little cheder boy scribbles in his books. He dreams of the big, beautiful, free world, from where distant echoes penetrate into the most remote villages. Already emancipation is finding followers all over.

Some one sees the artistic endeavors of the boy, thinks they show a lot of talent and induces him to study art. The young fellow comes to town and, after first starving his way through, he finds some patron who supports and recommends him, thus enabling him to visit the art school.

It becomes apparent that he is at least as talented as the other pupils, but thanks to his tenacious diligence he soon surpasses them.

The young academy student makes amazing progress, he becomes the pride of the class and the teacher's favorite. He receives high marks and wins prizes. Since portrait painting seems to be the best field for these young artists—for reasons which we attempted to give previously—they are able to earn a modest livelihood by accepting commissions and can complete their studies before going abroad to perfect their art.

The road of a whole generation of artists is pretty much the same. Coming from the east, they begin their

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studies in Germany or Austria. Munich and Vienna are the centers of attraction. From there they proceed to France and Italy.

One has to know the general academic trend of that era, and the doctrines that were taught by the omnipotent art professors in order to comprehend the atmosphere into which these youngsters fell, hungry for art as they were yet totally unprepared and lacking self-reliance.

They knew next to nothing about art, had seen nothing and were, therefore, dazzled by the models shown them, and unable to make criticisms.

What they saw in the academy served as their ideal, and what they learned there was mostly a solid technique. Art at the academy was "taught"; i.e., one learned whatever can be learned from it. The Jew was accustomed to "learning" and possessed a keen sense of perception. So he learned with ease that which could be learned, and turned out to be what might be termed a good painter.

Something else came to his aid. At that time great stress was laid upon the "substance" of an art work. Mind you, we are speaking here only of the artist who came from the milieu which is our topic, for he represents a characteristic step in the evolution of Jewish art. The substance and the narrative had always been familiar to the Jew; he observed the development of a situation rather than that he grasped it momentarily. It is not surprising, therefore, that the novice, still insecure in the new and unknown territory of art, was able to find a footing more rapidly here and that his talent followed the given path with particular willingness.

Thus, partly consciously, partly unaware, these art-

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ists expanded their knowledge in the direction of this highly esteemed and demanded art of substance, in which they could express their thoughts and emotions. And the public's approval was their reward.

Here, then, were Jewish painters who told of Jewish life and Jewish fate. And their pictures were, after all, more than just a report; for they were born out of genuine, deep experience, and every stroke of the brush was full of trembling from the emotional excitement of remembrance.

Accordingly, it may be somewhat risky to denote these artists as genre painters. Genre is generally understood to be an art that is rather unconcerned and entertaining, occasionally interspersed with sentimentality and humor, an art that places its emphasis on a given situation.

In this respect the Jewish artists must be evaluated somewhat higher. Many of their pictures have documentary value, which does not pass for artistic value. They move on a center line and show distinctly the border between the desire for art and that which is actually required in order to create a true work of art: namely, the invention of form that is engendered not by intellect and thought, but by vision and fantasy.

* * *

The most important artist in this group is one who achieved perfection at an early age:

Mauricy Gottlieb

He only lived to be twenty-three years old, and thus barely survived adolescence and the years of his apprenticeship.

At 16 he left his home in Drohobycz, Galicia, and

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went to Vienna. After two years he went on to Cracow, then to Munich. Having absolved his academic studies, he spent a short time in Rome and soon after his return home he died of galloping consumption.

His artistic work is condensed into a span of only seven years, a period of time in which most other artists first prepare to get ready. His path is a steep climb, the final result so astounding that one can safely say in this instance that one of the greatest talents was prematurely destroyed.

In view of such tragedy, one is easily inclined to exaggerate, since sympathy overrules objective criticism. Perhaps the works of a precocious youngster might not have received such loving and admiring attention had they been followed by subsequent works. To correctly appraise Gottlieb's achievement, we must refrain from overestimating it when viewed in the perspective of his era.

When Gottlieb began his studies, he was equally an enthusiastic art disciple and a fiery Polish patriot. In this he was greatly encouraged by his freethinker father, a diligent follower of the Haskala.

After working with Makart in Vienna, he came to the famous Polish historical painter, Matejko, who took him under his wing and whose favorite pupil he became.

Under his guidance Gottlieb made sketches for expansive paintings such as "Boleslaw before the gates of Kiev"; "Casimir the Great admits the Jews into Poland"; "The Prussians paying homage to King Sigismund" and "Christ before Pilate".

At first Judaism was a remote and vague conception to him, and did not begin to interest him until he read Graetz's History of the Jews. In Munich this interest

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found artistic expression under the influence of Piloty, who was cultivating a theatrical romanticism. Gottlieb created 16 sketches to Lessing's "Nathan the Wise" and painted, among other things, "Shylock and Jessica" and "Uriel Acosta". However, these pictures differ from earlier ones only in their greater virtuosity.

Finally, Gottlieb returned to his teacher, Matejko, who hailed him as the "most promising disciple of Polish art and as his worthy successor." A fellow pupil, offended by the praise lavished upon the "Jewish intruder", gave him to understand in a violent argument that he was to consider himself a pariah. Then Gottlieb's Jewish soul came awake, and his reply was given in a great painting. The challenge of the envious competitor had awakened his innermost sentiments.

Now he no longer copies the others in painting posed historical romance. He finds himself and his true calling. He recognizes the people of his own blood, and proudly demonstrates his Judaism.

He attempts to portray it in a monumental painting, and, tackling a powerful subject, sets to work. In this painting he displays all his talent and, although only twenty-two, the youth suddenly reaches maturity in his work. At the same time, however, he exhausts himself and, having reached his goal, he collapses.

"The Praying Jews" is the swan song of a short life. With all due admiration for the extraordinary performance, we do not wish to overestimate it and claim, perchance, that it represents the ultimate in artistic quality. His young genius was not far-reaching enough for that; after all, it was still bound by the chains of a tutelary tradition. Nor did he possess sufficient knowledge of art in general to have developed a more liberal painting style. He had been in Italy only once and for

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a very short time, and he had never seen the modern painting trend of France. Accordingly, one must be able to judge correctly the qualities that were derived from his own artistic experience.

In composition and construction, the picture is reminiscent of his teachers. But it has neither Makart's pompous display, nor Piloty's theatrical finesse, nor the somewhat barbaric bulk of his chief mentor, Matejko.

Matejko is the accomplished virtuoso in the touch of the brush, and portrays his figures in lively motion. But in their psychological profundity, the pupil surpasses the master. Matejko declaims; Gottlieb characterizes. His figures are less posed. Even if they are not absolutely natural, they are not invented but experienced. They are not hollow visions; rather, they are people who reveal an inside life that is marked by suffering. And, since suffering had been the lot of the Jew through the ages, the Jewish artist generally succeeds in such expressions of the soul.

An absolutely peculiar and unique combination of an intentionally emphasized monumentality and an essentialized and spiritualized lyricism stamps his work with a personal note. Not since Rembrandt had portrayed Jews from the Amsterdam ghetto—he having been the first to present them as real people, not just as genre figures—had any artist gone beyond anecdotal milieu descriptions. All they did was create a kind of ghetto poetry, but they did not reproduce ghetto life.

Gottlieb's lyricism is not of a poetical nature; it is expressive art, for every gesture and position has intrinsic value, and even the motion of the hands is not a shallow pose.

In spite of its huge dimensions, the picture shows no empty spaces; and despite the minutely executed

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details it gives a thoroughly uniform effect. It is a great achievement that rises high above those of his Jewish contemporaries. Even today, despite all the progress made by greater masters, it may be so considered.

This picture was to be Gottlieb's confession. He expressed this intention in purely external form by painting himself, wrapped in his prayer shawl, in the midst of the praying crowd, which included all the members of his family in a portrait-like rendition. In an earlier self-portrait he had proudly posed himself in the Polish national dress.

However, this monumental picture is not the sole expression of his change in spirit and his artistic liberation. In our opinion, a small sketched grisaille picture of a Jewish wedding is much more characteristic of his whole artistry. In this portrayal—which measures only 30 to 20 centimeter—he has grown artistically far above his other works. Here we discover for the first time in a Jewish artist a quality which, because of his hereditary constraint, was usually so difficult to attain: intuitive pictorial conception.

In this picture we are given a preview of something in which, 24 years later, only a Jozef Israels succeeded. Therefore, we believe that this little picture entitles Mauricy Gottlieb to be named among the great Jewish painters of the modern era.

* * *

In complete contrast to Gottlieb are two other painters, both born in Hungary but reared in the same art atmosphere of Vienna.

Leopold Horovitz

Leopold Horovitz was 17 years Gottlieb's senior and, like him, came to the academy at the age of 16. The

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stroke of his brush was skillful and elegant from the start. It brought him success all through life and, eventually, the patronage of Emperor Franz Josef, so that he was popular as a painter of society in Austria and Germany until he reached the age of 78.

Although after completing his studies he spent eight years in Paris, there is nothing in the genre pictures made in that city that indicates a French influence. Once he had learned the routine academic style of Vienna, he stuck to it.

As a matter of fact, he would be of little interest to us if he had not painted a series of pictures representing Jewish life in Poland. Outstanding among these is a large painting in preparation for which he spent a year and a half in Vienna and which, at the World Exhibition of 1873 in Vienna earned for him the great gold medal for art.

The picture, which has since become famous, is his "The Ninth of Ab". It is a posed composition of wildly gesticulating people whose convulsive gestures in no way render their inner turmoil and emotional contrition.

What the artist intended to describe was an ecstatic lament; instead he merely portrayed a miserable wailing. The picture has nothing to do with Jewish art and Jewish expressiveness; it is hypocritical stage acting, a purely external straining for effect and a repulsive caricature.

Isidor Kaufmann

Isidor Kaufmann (born 1853 in Arad, died in Vienna in 1921) also earned much praise and honor with his pictures of Jewish customs. He won no less than four gold medals in Vienna, Berlin, Munich and Paris.

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Life in the ghettos of Galician, Hungarian and Polish towns furnished him with material for his many miniature paintings which even today are held in high esteem. With great skill he produces every nuance of the objects portrayed. Using a pointed brush, he makes note of the most minute details, always in the best of taste and in brilliant colors. Occasionally he achieves certain moods, but they remain at the surface. We are able to follow him best in such pictures as "Visiting the Rabbi"; "The Chess Players"; "The Doubter" and similar scenes in which he remains the amusing genre portrayer.

Samuel Hirszenberg

That the life of *Samuel Hirszenberg* came to an end just when his art began to take a decisive turn was a fateful loss.

Hirszenberg came from Lodz. He studied in Cracow and Munich in the '80's, suffering great privation, and then lived in his hometown for seventeen years, where he painted a large number of pictures with Jewish content.

On the whole his portrayals are pretty sentimental, as for instance the pictures "Jeshiba"; "A little piece of politics" and "Sabbath Afternoon".

These themes, recited in a leisurely narrative tone, are followed by several with an over-emphasized dramatic display: "The Jewish Cemetery" and "The Eternal Jew".

After that, he acquired a more even style that found ultimate expression in the great monumental painting "Galuth". Also called "They Wander", it is composed of many figures, and not unjustly has won universal fame.

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With all its academic restraint, this picture surpasses by far his earlier works inasmuch as sentimentality has been corrected in favor of more spiritual content. Also, the picture has a certain significance as a first attempt to portray the vicissitude of Jewish life.

With a minimum of pathos, the artist endeavors to treat the theme of Jewry that is condemned to perpetual wandering. Still, it remains "theme", which means it is still too much of a literary narration.

A procession of people moves soundlessly across an unending field of snow. A bent old man leads the procession, followed by men and women, young and old. One man carries the Torah, another carries a child in his arms, and a small girl has a bucket in her hand.

The picture is touching, but its pictorial value is not very great. Twenty-six years previously Gottlieb had painted his "Praying Jews", likewise a monumental painting portraying God-fearing Jews. It would seem that he was the more talented of the two.

The Galuth picture is the artist's last great work, for what follows are merely sketches.

Then Hirszenberg goes to Palestine. Out of the dismal grey of the Polish sky and the hopelessness of Jewish Galuth, he comes into the brilliant light of hopeful revival. With one stroke this experience changes the restraint in his soul, and his artistry. He has an urge to create new things, but realizes that he will require some time to get acclimated and to digest the new impressions.

This is a new beginning altogether. He accumulates sketch after sketch and paints small designs. About a hundred are completed within a very short time—one freer, lighter and more brilliant than the other. These little color studies herald the awakening of a newborn

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painter. Then, suddenly, an old ailment attacks him and within a few days deals him the death blow. There remain only the preparations that proclaim the progress of his art.

By prematurely cutting off Hirszenberg's life, fate prevented one who began under the shadows of the past from becoming one of the truly great under the new conditions.

* * *

Up to this point we were actually concerned more with artistically talented Jews than with Jewish artists. Their achievements are not so much the result of their education as a spontaneous outburst of not-being-able-to-do-differently. Artistic talent can attain important heights through the influence of the most varying circumstances, but always it is dependent to a certain extent. The artist evolves from his own self, not *due to* various circumstances, but *despite* any and all conditions. They may act stimulating or retarding, but ultimately his fundamental willpower is the victor.

In general, the public's taste in art at that time was governed by big, official expositions. Here reigned the professors of the academies and art schools where "rules and regulations wore on like an eternal illness". The more a picture purported to tell, and the cleaner it was painted, the more it was worth. Its value was usually estimated according to its substance. This way, every talented art pupil was likely to succeed.

No wonder, then, that the young Jew, inexperienced in matters of the world, and seeking instruction at an approved art institute (where else was he to turn?), progressed the easiest and the fastest in these circles because of his willingness to learn and because of his adaptability. And when he then portrayed his own

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milieu—that is, the milieu from which he came—such pictures attracted far-reaching interest.

The public at large knew little about the progress of modern art. They were unaware of the struggle for new perceptions, and of the frequently heroic battle of courageous artists against academic ossification and professorial tutelage that was being fought in countries of Western Europe and particularly in France. Or, if the public did know about it, they rejected it as an innovation and were either incredulous or indignant.

As we have seen, the young Jew who came from the east of Europe for the time being got no further than the academies. No sooner did this first generation cross the border than it felt itself free. They considered Austria and Germany to be the zenith of all progress. And there was also this factor: the Jews living in Germany who gave shelter to the newcomer and sponsored him socially, came almost exclusively from the East; therefore, they understood his language.

Besides, Yiddish had some resemblance to German, so the Eastern Jew could more easily make himself understood and thereby acclimate himself faster.

The Jews in France and Holland, on the other hand, were of Sephardic origin, and there was practically no affinity between them and the Ashkenazim. The customs and language there were altogether different, presenting difficulties and obstacles that made a stay in those countries less desirable.

The mental attitude with respect to art leaned toward a studio art that could be learned by reasoning. Consequently, this type of art was bound to lead the young Jew to genre, history and the romantic style that was then popular. He was talented, to be sure—and it is indeed amazing how great was the number of Jews

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gifted in art—but in general his talent did not reach the point where genius blazes its own trail with elemental force.

The Western Jew, on the other hand, came from a milieu that had long since leaned toward mundane tendencies. His impressions in early childhood were already much more liberal. He received a broader education, and he no longer suffered so much under the emotional oppressiveness and spiritual incarceration of the ghetto and the cheder.

The first generation of newcomers from the east had, therefore, first to overcome the stage of adapting and familiarizing themselves with the challenges presented by the world. This required all their powers. As far as their artistic achievements were concerned, their receptive faculties were too confined as yet, so that they were not ready to perform productively without being encumbered.

Emancipation meant a transformation for the Jews. From being merely that part of a nation that is limited in all cultural and social rights, and is usually only suffered, they became citizens of equal standing who no longer were subjected to special laws, thus being enabled to develop economically as well as intellectually.

The process of emancipation took a dissimilar course in the various countries, and under varying conditions. In the countries of Eastern Europe, i.e., in Poland, Russia, Galicia and Hungary, were the main settlements in which large groups of Jews living under orthodox supervision adhered strictly to tradition. These groups opposed any relaxing by reform elements. Some did press impulsively toward escape from the old ties but, as we have seen from the instances given thus far of younger elements aspiring to art, while they were tal-

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ents who made their mark in the world at large, they were still, emotionally and spiritually, strongly linked with their milieu.

The further west we turn, however, the more rapid was the assimilation associated with emancipation.

In the Jewish communities of the Western countries an unbending of religious and cultural attitude had been in preparation for decades. Humanistic and philosophical ideologies found their way into the traditional law, thereby gaining admittance for worldly languages.

Despite all legal barriers, isolation from the rest of the world gradually became less rigid because of increasing economic ties, and this again led to a higher social status for many circles. Thus was formed a Jewish upper class that wished to lead a more liberal life in social respect as well.

Accordingly, when the barriers were lowered, members of these circles were well prepared to absorb the world's spiritual culture. As a matter of fact, one strained enthusiastically to meet it and believed that by suppressing as much as possible old peculiarities and religious tradition, one could achieve complete assimilation. This was the only way, so one thought, of realizing the dream of generally applicable human rights.

In Moritz Oppenheim we had already met an artist emanating from such circles. A quarter of a century later personal conditions were much more favorable for the would-be artist. From early childhood his chances of living his life were altogether different.

Subsequently, another half a century had sufficed to augment the artistic powers of the Jew to such an extent that he produced important works of his own invention and became a universally accepted artist.

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Nor was this all. A series of virtuosos makes its appearance; masters with a stamp all their own, to whom art owes much. Their names win universal acclaim and have been included in the history of the various countries as belonging to leading personalities.



PLATE 13

JACOB STEINHARDT: In the Old City of Jerusalem
(Woodcut)



PLATE 14

ARNOLD ZADIKOW: Motherhood (Untersperg Marble)
Destroyed by the Nazis



PLATE 15

BENNO ELKAN: Arturo Toscanini (After the Plaster-
cast) *Courtesy, the artist*

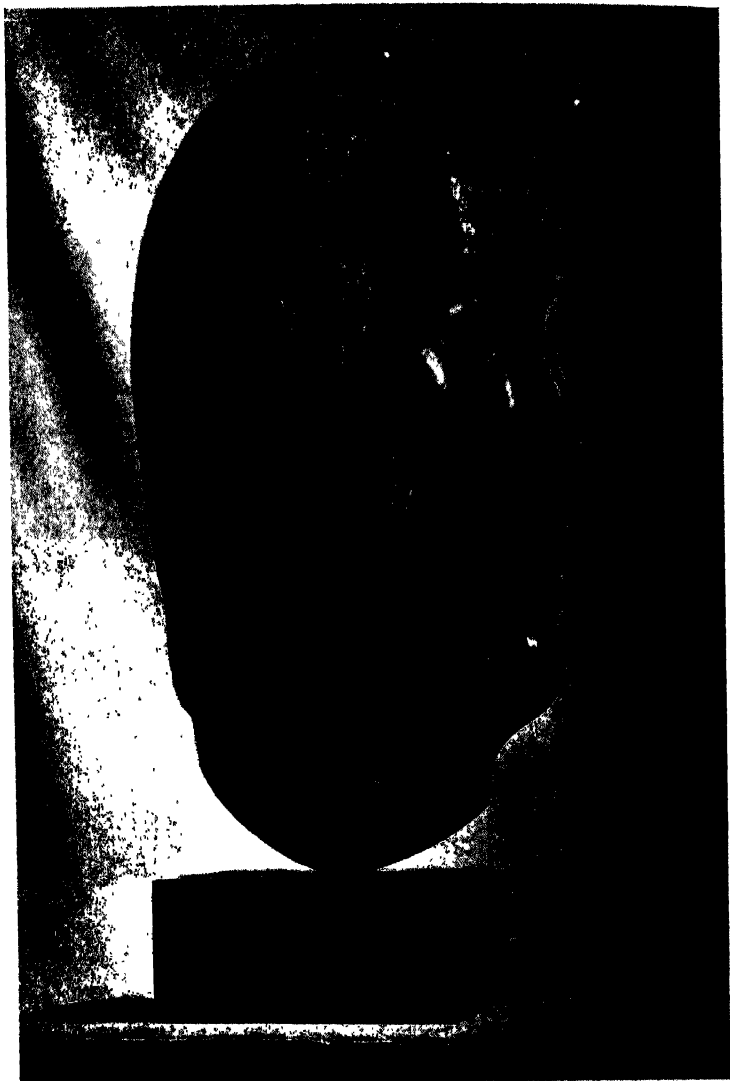


PLATE 16

WILLIAM ZORACH: Prophet (Black Granite)
Priv. Coll. Boston, Mass.

The Great Masters

CAMILLE PISSARRO

ON JULY 10, 1830, on St. Thomas in the Antilles, a son was born to Mr. and Mrs. Pizarro, and was given the name of Jacob.

The island, colonized almost exclusively by Jews, belonged to that territory of the New World in which Dutch, French and English Jews had settled as early as the middle of the 17th century.

In the 18th century Paramaribo, capital of Dutch Guiana, had a community consisting of 900 Sephardim and 100 Jewish mulattoes; and Curacao, the Dutch settlement in the West Indies that became famous for its liquor, was inhabited by over 2000 Jews as early as 1750. Naturally the great distance, and a difference in living conditions had increasingly estranged the Jews settled there from their European congregations, so that there remained only a loose bond between them.

Abraham Pizarro was a Portuguese Jew of French nationality and ran a prosperous hardware business. He had married the widow of Isaac Petit, nee Rachel Pommié, a Creole. From this peculiar mixture of Jewish blood is descended the painter who was to become famous under the French name of Camille Pissarro.

The boy grew up in the sunny, oriental luxury of his homeland until he was eleven. Then, to continue his education, his father sent him to a boarding school in Passy, near Paris, which had been recommended to him.

The owner of the school, Savary, was a drawing

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teacher by profession, and cultivated drawing with his pupils. He soon discovered the unusual talent of his new pupil and therefore devoted special care to him. Once before his institute had harbored a particularly talented boy who was to be a credit to his name as a teacher. This was the prominent etcher Charles Meryon.

Now his care was turned to young Camille who, by the time his father called him home, six years later, had enjoyed a thorough education in drawing.

Savary had trained his pupil chiefly in drawing from nature, and at his departure admonished him to continue studying nature diligently at home and, above all, to draw cocoanut trees which, to him, were the essence of the Far East. And the boy followed his advice.

Although his father had planned on his son becoming a merchant, and had placed him in his store, the boy utilized every opportunity to draw. And he drew everything and everywhere: exotic plants, picturesque corners of the city, and the lively activities in the harbor where freighters were loaded and unloaded and the negro porters offered a picturesque sight.

For five years he led the double life of a businessman and an artist, until, one day, he met a Danish painter, Fritz Melbye. The latter persuaded him to flee with him to Caracas, Venezuela's picturesque capital. Here the two of them devoted themselves eagerly to the study of painting.

This vigorous act convinced the father that his son was cut out to be an artist, and that all opposition would be useless. So he finally agreed to let him return to Paris for his further development.

Thus Pissarro returned to France in 1855, to the country that was to be his second home and in which he

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was to become one of the greatest masters of his time.

The father had granted him a modest monthly allowance so that he could pursue his studies in peace. The young man looked around the art city, looked up the famous Corot and then worked for a while at the "Academie Suisse" where he met a number of young progressive colleagues. Among these was Claude Monet, with whom he became close and permanent friends.

Pissarro soon realized that the metropolis was not the proper field for him. Accordingly, he retired to the country, although he would have had easier sledding amidst active art pursuits. He worked in quiet seclusion in the suburbs of Paris, and accumulated his pictures at home, since they had been rejected by all exhibits and in thirteen years he was not able to sell one. His sole customer, finally, was a small dealer who occasionally purchased a picture and who paid him, according to its size, twenty to forty francs at the most.

When the German troops marched on Paris in the fall of 1870, he was forced to leave his country house abruptly, leaving all his property behind. The result was that he lost all the paintings he had completed thus far—about 300 pictures.

He fled to England, and when he returned to France after the war had ended, a year later, he was totally without means.

Pissarro always lived and worked in remote quiet. Not that he withdrew from art life in general; but for his work he needed the concentrated calm of the countryside. From there he came to Paris regularly in order to orient himself, to visit exhibitions and to meet with colleagues. But he also obeyed necessity, for he had to try to sell his pictures to dealers and collectors.

He was always willing to learn from others, with-

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out thereby forfeiting his personal note. His early works closely resemble the paintings of Corot in the delicate transitions of grey tones. Among the leading masters of those days were Courbet, Delacroix and Daubigny. To them, too, he owed many an inspiration. However, it was Manet, whom he counted among his closest friends, who made the greatest impression on him.

In England he admired Constable, and Turner's mist and light effects. He followed willingly the impressions of his friend Monet, ten years his junior, and also worked with Cézanne for a while. And, although he had already passed his 50th birthday, he took up with great interest the pointillistic experiments of young Seurat, and spent some time at that.

Yet, despite all these complex influences, Pissarro never lost himself. On the contrary, he was able to combine them to a unit; for, in his wonderful equanimity and intelligent openmindedness and receptiveness he stayed true to himself from the very beginning.

He loved the quietness of nature and painted it in all simplicity. Mostly he created small pictures that portrayed some modest nook hardly noticed by others. He saw the country in a different light than his colleagues, and took note of colors that they were not aware of. He had grown up in a different land, where the colors show up brightly and the shadows are without heaviness. His eye was accustomed to the glowing light of his native South, and he came from a race that had keen powers of observation.

Pissarro was a Jew to whom all the qualities of his people were peculiar. He carried their heritage in his blood, in many ways unconsciously, since education and environment had estranged him from it. He was a Jew in an entirely different sense than the artists who

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come out of the subjection of Eastern Europe. He had been reared under totally different influences, under which his personal talent had developed a priori. No confining ghetto walls or despotic laws had affected his young years. He knew only the conception of liberty, to which he held fast all his life, and which, to him, meant political and religious freedom as well.

Only once did he frankly and proudly confess to being a Jew. That was in Paris where, motivated by the Dreyfus-Zola trial, anti-Semitic demonstrations and riots broke out. But even in this instance he did it less because of any bond with his people than because of a general feeling for justice. He was immediately convinced of the innocence of the accused, who was made the scapegoat of political intrigues, and was certain that truth would win the final victory.

In his youth, the sun shone upon him in a happy world. Hence it was his lot to be one of the first Jews to play a part in art especially since, in all modesty, yet with a firm sureness of manner, he knew how to win the admiration and affection of everyone, thereby imparting a vivid and productive resonance to his personality and his art.

Pissarro was the painter of nature and country life. His pictures have occasionally been compared to those of Millet, but the resemblance is a purely external one. Millet gave his peasants a mien of awareness, he ennobled them and their work. Pissarro, on the other hand, avoided all pathos. Man and nature were one to him. He never searched for motives that could be portrayed with special effectiveness. Nothing was more alien to his whole character than to exhibit brilliancy. His art is based on objective observation. However, to call it, as does Max Nordau, the "triumph of non-

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thinking vision", is a complete misunderstanding of its true nature. It is rather the "triumph of consequential vision", and it made him the most important, the clearest and, at the same time, the most versatile representative of impressionism.

He was no law maker like Manet, nor fanatical protagonist of an idea like Monet. Not a doctrinarian like Seurat, and not a dry matter-of-fact man like Degas—still, he was a teacher and educator.

Pissarro was the most important graphic artist among the impressionists. His etchings and lithographs were equal to his paintings. Likewise, he was a master of the pen, and we have him to thank for one of the most comprehensible art books since the writings of Delacroix.

The book consists of letters to his oldest son, Lucien, who attained some prominence in England as a book artist. These letters were entirely personal, and not intended for publication, but they represent a treasure of artistic knowledge for every one. (Pissarro had 5 sons, all of whom became artists. However, with the exception of Lucien, none gained any importance. Lucien's only daughter, using the pseudonym of Orovida, made a name for herself in England.)

Pissarro was a letter writer par excellence. His powers of portrayal and observation, his just and sure opinion and precise phraseology induced Octave Mirbeau to call him "a concealed poet". In his writings he manifests the whole clarity and purity of his thinking, the charm of his disposition and his equanimity. No other artist voiced opinions about himself as unreservedly, or took up the battle for his existence with such tenacious energy. Never did he sacrifice one iota of his conviction to any convenient advantage and, despite

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all the difficulties that beset him, he was always ready to lend a helping hand. By his mode of living he was friend and ideal to all, for his was not an easy lot.

All through life he had to struggle, and many was the time he stood at the edge of the abyss.

When the group of impressionists gave their first exhibition, in 1874, it turned out to be a catastrophe. For years these artists reaped nothing but ridicule, and had not the slightest chance of earning money. Pissarro was one of the hardest hit. He had seven children, and the worry about his family upset him constantly. Often not even the barest necessities were available, and he was forced to run from one dealer to the next to offer his pictures.

In 1887, that is at the age of 57, he was barely able to find a purchaser for his aquarelles at the price of 20 francs! On May 14th he wrote to his son: "I wanted to write you three days ago, but had no money for the stamp"! And several months later he asked for the immediate transmittal of a few francs as he absolutely must go to Paris and try to raise some money, but did not have the necessary fare!

The more admirable, then, that under such circumstances he managed to create works replete with calm and happiness-inspiring beauty.

To add to his miseries, in his later years he was afflicted with a painful eye ailment that necessitated numerous operations and forced him to give up his open-air painting. So he resigned himself to sitting at the window and painting from there, and transferred his activities to the city. First he worked in Rouen, then in Paris. He would rent some room that afforded him a view of the streets and squares.

In order to cope with the perspectives thus forced

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upon him, he invented a special form of portraying mass objects, whereby he was able to fashion not only the various illuminative effects, but atmospheric conditions as well: the mistiness and trembling of the dust-laden air, the golden reflection of the sun and the heavy grayness of a rainy winter's day.

Pissarro was neither a prosaic realist nor a visionary; he was a thoroughly creative talent whose fantasy awakened before the subject. The material sensation and purely optical impression was a prerequisite for him, and not the final goal.

There are people whom one cannot picture in their younger years and who remain in one's memory as a dignified person of mature age. In speaking of Pissarro, there arises in our mind the picture of a patriarch—just as he portrayed himself and as his friends described him.

At the age of 40 he was already the acknowledged chief of his painter colleagues. His outward appearance was enough to command respect. He had typically Semitic features: an abundance of dark hair that turned grey early and then became snow white; a fine aquiline nose and large somewhat sad-looking eyes that occasionally could flash as fiery as they could shine affectionately.

George Moore, the writer, describes him in 1873 like this: "Pissarro looked like the patriarch Abraham. He had a mighty white beard that framed his entire face, a high forehead and a marvelously arched, bald pate, although at that time he was not yet 50 years old."

He gave the effect of a sage, never complaining or accusing, always trying to understand and explain. He was the most harmonic and perfect synthesis of man and artist.

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He was of the firm belief that the genuine and the true would gain recognition, no matter how late, and for this reason he bore with equanimity a life that was full of hardship and negation.

And the time did come, although slowly and belatedly. His situation had improved a bit during his last years, but not until after his death did the world recognize his real greatness. His pictures, for which he had barely received enough to cover his expenses, were now worth their weight in gold. The government, which had paid him no attention whatsoever during his lifetime, honored him with a huge, posthumous exhibition. Today, his name shines in the whole world as one of the greatest masters of the 19th century.

JOZEF ISRAELS

“**D**O COME to my atelier one of these days, and I will show you my latest creations. But on the Sabbath my studio is closed.”

With these words, the venerable, 87 year old master took his leave of me when I visited him in his house in the Koniginnengracht in the Hague. The date was March 1911, just a few months before his death.

A very young art historian, I had published an article in honor of his 85th birthday, and thereupon had received a letter from him in which he wrote, among other things: “You may be assured that I consider it a ‘schie’ (honor) to receive such a write-up.”

This letter gave me the courage to visit the dean of Dutch painting, and the meeting has stayed fresh in my memory as one of the greatest adventures of my youth.

The impression made by this great little man is unforgettable! He was almost dwarf-like in stature. His most striking feature, though, were his deep-set shin-

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ng eyes. When they wanted to observe something more closely, they would peer sharply and intently over the spectacles. He carried himself slightly bent, and when he was standing he would cross his arms behind his back. He gave the impression of a Jewish scholar, and looked like a rabbi.

Supporting himself on the arm of his housekeeper, he would walk slowly through the tree-shaded paths of the Bosch around noon and was greeted respectfully by everybody. No one not knowing him would ever have guessed that this man was the great painter whom the nation honored as one of her most important sons.

No other Jewish artist was ever so revered as was Josef Israels. His 80th and 85th birthdays were celebrated as national holidays, and when he died all Holland mourned and laid him to rest with royal honors.

It is difficult to write about Israels without giving vent to emotionalism. The heart is too greatly involved.

Max Liebermann, who wrote a delightful little book about him, begins with these words: "Only a lyric poet could do justice to Israels; for Israels' paintings are a poem turned to color; a simple folk tune, childlike, artless in the biblical sense; all heart, feeling and gain heart."

Israels can not be measured by the standards of other artists, for his art seems to spring from sources that come from mysterious depths. To be sure, he is a painter of the 19th century, but he hardly belongs among his contemporaries. He is modern, but not in the sense that he could be included in one of the prevailing art trends. His roots are imbedded in the old and traditional styles, but not in an imitative or eclectic way. It is not as though he absorbs things of the past. Rather, he in-

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stills in them so much of his blood and his soul that they are revived.

Israels did not become his true self until he was fairly advanced in age. The rewards did not come easily, he had to work hard for them. He had to first fully develop his personality to reach the point of clarity at which his external and his internal world, the world of the eye and of the soul, could unite in harmonious congruity.

Israels' father was a merchant in Groningen. Because of his literary inclinations, which he cultivated during his leisure hours, he was respected as a learned man. Israels' mother observed the orthodox tradition of the house, and the boy attended Talmud Thora until he reached the age of fifteen. He was to have become a merchant too, but after trying it for a while, he proved himself quite inept. His interests were centered on art. He wrote, composed poems and drew. For a while he attended the one existing art school "Minerva", until the urge drove him to seek his further education in the old art city of Amsterdam.

Dutch art, which had once been in full bloom, at that time had sunk to the level of an academic conventionality. The great masters of the past, whose works were hanging in the museums, remained unnoticed. Art activity preferred to take its cue from Paris, where a literary-romantic hero-worship was fostered in big historical paintings, and where instruction exhausted itself in purely mechanical exercises in accordance with existing rules in art.

Thus the 17 year old Israels, attending the school of the then highly respected historic painter Kruseman, was given nothing further than the usual dry drill. But in the colorful activities of the ghetto district, where

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the figures of the Jews moved in the same manner as his great ancestor in art, Rembrandt, had experienced and immortalized them in his works, Israels found a kindred world that gave nourishment to his emotional life. In the beginning, though, he experienced all this without being able to express his sentiments.

A lengthy stay in Paris did not further him much artistically. Returning to Amsterdam shortly before the outbreak of the 1848 Revolution, he again attended the academy and then, two years later, made himself independent.

He painted neither better nor worse than others, and for the sake of earning a livelihood, painted romantic pictures and conventional portraits, depending on what was desired. Following the vogue, he composed big historical fanciful paintings and, had it not been for special circumstances that tore him out of this unreal existence, he would have gone on as one of many insignificant and unknown artists.

Israels fell ill, and retired to a lonely fishing village. And here, in quiet Zandvoort, he not only regained his health, but here it was that his true artistry gradually awakened. That which he had experienced only instinctively in the old art city of Amsterdam became conscious to his senses in the midst of nature.

And he made two discoveries: real life which, in its unconscious simplicity, is most impressive, was one. The other was the earth of Holland. The eyes of the artist opened wide before the miracle of this singularly reviving air. His great predecessor, Rembrandt, whose spirit hovered above the land in unattainable perfection, had given artistic expression to that atmosphere.

He saw the stout, clumsy men and watched them at their self-denying trade that drove them out to sea in

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storm and rain, with no regard for dangers; he saw the worried, harried women who knew only work and misery, the tired old men and the children playing innocently in the dunes.

He noticed the poverty in the low huts—yet all this appeared more beautiful to him than the romantic nonsense to which he had heretofore paid homage. Now, as his artistic eye glimpsed the true values of artistic experience, his dreaming soul began to expand. How noble these figures appeared to him, bent from work though they were, and the woebegone faces. How picturesque they looked in the moist air that seemed to envelop everything in a mysterious veil.

Still, he had a long way to go before he could shake off his sentimental restraint and attain genuine emotional expressiveness. And he did finally find the expressive style which even justified the literary content underlying his works.

He loved dreaminess and meditation, and liked to veil his figures in the vague light of dusk. He did not paint the vivid, shining colors of broad daylight, but developed a special technique of his own for a tone gradation in which light and shadow interlap gently.

In this he is chiefly the successor and continuer of Rembrandt, and the re-discoverer of the ancient art tradition of his country. He helped Dutch art rid itself of academic trash, and he initiated a new era of Dutch painting. For, although he was no teacher, he served the whole generation of his time as a model. His influence is felt in the landscapes of a Maris and a Mesdag, in the animal pictures of Mauve as well as in Bosboom's interiors.

Today, many of his pictures that were created in the 50's and 60's do not evoke as much enthusiasm as they

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did then. For, while at that time they were greatly admired, and while they made Israels the most popular painter in Holland and brought him honors and prosperity, there is often something about them that is too mawkish for our taste. Still, we cannot help but admire the strength and energy with which he increasingly masters his talents.

The originally disturbing over-emphasis of the substance continues to retreat before themes that are given in greater simplicity, and gives way to a human portrayal that increases in grandeur until it reaches the stage of monumentality. He waxes strongest and most impressive in his Jewish themes.

In the Municipal Museum of Amsterdam hangs the painting "A Son of the Ancient Tribe". It is the life-size portrayal of a young Jew, sitting in front of his old-clothes store in gloomy meditation. Could the lot of Galuth Jewry be described more movingly than in this simple picture that lacks all pathos and was taken from everyday life in the Amsterdam ghetto?

Right beside it hangs "The Jewish Wedding". This picture, too, comes straight from life and a momentary experience. The central figures are projected from the total scene as half-figures in a sector. The bridal couple—a rather unattractive bride and a fairly elderly-looking groom—stand before the rabbi. Two additional heads frame the scene.

The picture is of an unsurpassable simplicity and intrinsic concentration. The solemnity, which is particularly apparent in the faces of the bridal pair, imparts extreme sanctity to the portrayal.

Israels repeated the theme of the wedding ceremony a number of times, presenting the entire scene in the other pictures. One of the most beautiful of these is in

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the possession of the museum in Tel-Aviv. It is hard to say exactly which is the more touching: the substance or the manner of portrayal. In this instance the master's brush gave the most perfect finishing touch to the mysterious interplay of light and shadow, and the artist here rightfully steps into the place next to his great ideal.

The figures shine magically from out of the darkness. They are the same as in the Amsterdam picture, only they are included in the total scene, and the individuals are less distinct, just as the room, too, is only indicated. The picture is a piece of visionary painting, composed in a creative hour of special inspiration.

And we come, finally, to the third work in the Amsterdam collection, the only one with biblical content that Israels painted, "David before Saul". In this picture the artist again slips into literary sentimentality. The real fervour that he can produce so well when he draws it from real life turns to pathos when the foundation of actual experience is missing.

This is very apparent in his so simple portrayal of the "Thora Scribe" whom he overheard at work in Tanger. In his wonderful travel diary "Spain" he described this meeting with his fellow-Jew, with whom he conversed in their mutual tongue, Hebrew. The book is written just as his pictures are painted: he lives entirely in the appreciation of what is beautiful and noble in nature and art.

The life work of Jozef Israels is unique in its artistic consonance of that which he had seen, experienced and felt. This is why the master occupies a special position among the painters of his era.

Liebermann characterized Israels' art as "a simple folk tune". Folk tunes, too, are always genuine. Moritz

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Oppenheim still painted empty, artificial ghetto poetry, whereas Israels—just compare the wedding pictures of both artists—reproduced the plain, genuine event. He did not paint poetry, but lyric. And this painted lyric was his very own world, the world of a wonderfully rounded out personality. It was an art which only he was chosen to create and which passed away with him.

Israels had one son and one daughter. The son, Isaac, caused a stir at the age of sixteen with an excellent portrait. At 22, he had a successful exhibit in Paris. A well known impressionist, he lived in Paris for years and became popular for his sprightly metropolitan and genre scenes, especially in Holland. He died in 1934, at the age of 70, as the result of an automobile accident.

The daughter, Mathilde, lived to see the horrors of the Nazi invasion in Holland. She was deported to Theresienstadt and shortly after her liberation, 81 years old, she died in Geneva.

MAX LIEBERMANN

THE LIFE AND WORK of no other artist reveals as clearly the problems concerning the cultural existence of the assimilated Jew as does the lot of Max Liebermann. This extraordinary personality, whose long life embraces beginning and end of a whole epoch, is the synthesis of the elements characteristic of that era.

Thanks to his abilities, which he was able to develop under particularly favorable conditions, and with never lessening energy and astounding receptiveness, he combined such an abundance of intellectual and artistic culture that it became a creative force that determined the trend of German art.



PLATE 17

CHAIM GROSS: Circus Girls (Carved in Lignum Vitae
Wood) *Courtesy, the artist*



PLATE 18

JACOB EPSTEIN: 'The Weeping Woman' (Bronze)
At the artists' studio, London



PLATE 19

JACQUES LIPCHITZ: *The Harpist* (Bronze)
Museum St. Louis



PLATE 20

AMEDEO MODIGLIANI: Portrait Madame B. (Oil)
Formerly Coll. Sborowski, Paris

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Self-assurance and poise marked him as a representative personage of special rank, whose influence nobody could resist. His life was warmed by the sun of success and recognition until, in old age, there came that awful hour when he had to acknowledge the deceitful vicissitude of fate in all its gravity. The eulogies that had once proclaimed him "the ingenious artist who won European recognition for German art far beyond Germany's borders" had grown silent. Instead, he was insulted and his work disparaged. And he admitted that he "had awakened, although with difficulty, from the dream of assimilation to which he had devoted himself passionately and which he had dreamed all his life".

He died in embittered isolation.

The waves that had once lifted him now closed over him. Nevertheless, they were not able to pull his work into the abyss of total destruction. As is the case with all positive people, his life and his work constituted an offensive battle which had not always been easy. It had to make a path-way across many obstacles.

His friend, Paul Cassirer, once compared him to a big stone lying on the beach. The tide floods it frequently, and sometimes it seems as though it had disappeared completely; but then the water recedes and the stone re-appears, unchanged but for additional lustre and brilliancy.

This comparison holds true even beyond the limited term of life allotted to man; as a matter of fact, it becomes even more valid when considered in the frame of constant changes and the relentless passing of time.

The same applies in Liebermann's case. The magnitude of his art, even though it belongs to a bygone era,

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endures despite all objections that can be raised against it.

When Liebermann took up painting with Steffek in the middle '60's, Berlin art was still in a stage of insipid provincialism. True, Manet at that time had already painted his "Olympia" and "Breakfast in the Open"; and Monet and Pissarro were working at their sun-kissed landscapes. And in Holland Israels' sensitive peasant pictures had already gained some popularity for him.

But none of this was known in austere Prussia. Here they had just made the transition from the prescription painting of studio art and the vagueness of romantic idea painting to a dry naturalism. The dwarf-like painter Menzel, by far the most eminent representative of German art at that time, dictated a portrayal of natural scenery that was exercised with stubborn pedantry.

This then, was the artistic atmosphere into which young Liebermann was initiated.

The Liebermann family had acquired quite some wealth via factory enterprises. The artist's grandfather, founder of the firm, had already been "admitted" at court. Ergo, the family belonged to the aristocratic circles. The children grew up in a home that, while prosperous, nevertheless was moderate and was headed by a strict father. Their material inheritance guaranteed them a secure living, so that the artist never learned to worry about the bare struggle for existence.

Max Liebermann was very proud of being a citizen of Berlin. In reality he was only a semi-Berliner, and occasionally tried to compensate for that by being over-emphatic. While he did have the biting sarcasm and the somewhat arrogant manner of the Berliner, he also possessed that Jewish self-irony.

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Despite all realism, he was inclined toward pensiveness; not in a sentimental-contemplative sense, but in his ability to think an idea to the end.

Indeed, he was a keen, clear thinker, and his whole mode of life was dictated by rationalism. His power of comprehension was quick and sure, and he pursued with a tenacious persistency that was not impulsive, but of which he was fully aware, any goal that he aspired to. In that respect he showed the mercantile spirit that he had inherited.

Even in his artistry, incidentally, he retained something of the Jewish bourgeoisie.

All through his life, even when very aged, he was possessed of a restive, prosaic assiduity—which he called discipline—and was a tireless worker who was forever criticizing himself and was rarely satisfied.

Once he had chosen a theme, it often occupied him for years. Again and again he would return to it, sometimes after a long interruption, varying it and tackling it from a different angle.

This manner of working can be observed all through his life. In 1873 he painted "Die Konservenmacherinnen" in three versions. Six years later he did it again. Between 1896 and 1909 he repeated the theme of the "Bathing Boys" in eight paintings and fourteen etchings, "Riders at the Beach" in nine paintings and etchings. A year before that, he had painted life at the seashore in Nordwijk ten times in succession, each time with a different illuminative effect.

Of particular interest are the two totally different conceptions of his paintings "Samson and Delilah". The first was completed in 1902, the second eight years later. Both portrayals underwent variations in etchings, too. Inbetween he completed innumerable drawings,

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composition and figure sketches; all of which tended to show how much mental work went with each of his creations.

Most interesting, however, are the 21 repetitions of "Amsterdamer Judengasse", in 10 paintings and 11 etchings. In addition, there are a number of large drawings in plastic execution. Yet not one picture is a repetition of the preceding one; each one is a new creation with ever increasing dynamics.

Liebermann's works were never created in a moment of inspiration or, as one might say, as the result of artistic emotion. On the contrary, he worked hard to conceive them—a fact which is characteristic for his entire development and growth.

I visited the studio once—it must have been around 1930, and Liebermann had already passed his 80th birthday. There, lined up against the wall, were about 20 or 25 small oil sketches of a garment that was lying over a chair. Liebermann, seeing my astonishment, said: "You see, that's how one has to sweat in order to get the right effect of a crease. It still isn't the way it should be, but I'll get it yet".

Liebermann's paintings are always impressive, masterly in the rendition and, even in his early days, executed with assurance and conviction. But they are not overwhelming; they do not grip the spectator as does a Rembrandt picture or, to choose a more recent example, the "Jewish Wedding" of Israels.

The fundamental difference in temperament shows most clearly just at the point where Liebermann comes closest to him thematically. In 1890 he painted two pictures entirely in the Israels style: one a young peasant woman watching her baby's first steps; the other an old fisherman.

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Such scenes, as well as others, when painted by Israels arouse the sympathy of the spectator, while the impression received from Liebermann portrayals remains a purely optical one. One experiences the art of an Israel, whereas one enjoys Liebermann's art.

His drawings are not merely sketches for his paintings; they are the primary, the artistic adventure, the momentary vision. Often the idea for the picture first develops out of these sketches. As Erich Hancke says in his great Liebermann book, "the picture becomes a translation of the drawing".

Liebermann makes these drawings first only with pencil, then with chalk and crayons—which, incidentally, is also characteristic of him. Accordingly, they are often artistically more perfect than the paintings.

Liebermann's art is not that of a genius, but is the result of high intelligence and powerful talent. This was evidenced in his outward appearance, too; in his rigid, vigorous carriage, which began to bend only in the final years of his declining age; in the manner in which he wielded brush and palette, sometimes standing before his canvas in the almost lurking position of a fencer and then, having completed a few strokes, suddenly jumping back in order to control the effect from a greater distance.

His glance was somewhat piercing, and his sharply chiseled features with the hooked Semitic nose, the high, wrinkled forehead and the huge bald pate gave him the appearance of a bank director rather than an artist.

In 1912 the University of Berlin made him an honorary Doctor of Philosophy. The diploma with which they so honored him characterized him—and rightfully so—"as an active, ingenious mind".

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Another characteristic of his was his pleasure in taking the pen and expressing himself in witty and caustic form.

He felt the necessity of communicating his thoughts, and was well aware of the power of the written word. He was ambitious, and proud of his successes, and he knew how to make use of the honorary posts conferred upon him.

As leader of the secession movement, which he founded, he gained influence over the younger generation. It extended even further when he was elected president of the Academy of Arts. All the more bitter the blow when, toward the end of his long life, all this was taken away from him and "he was only too rudely awakened from his beautiful dream of assimilation".

The word assimilation—which we ordinarily identify with Judaism in connection with our cultural existence—may also be applied to Liebermann's art. It consists of the versatile susceptibility and dexterity with which he faced all occurrences. He, the freer and more worldly Jew, felt the urge to escape the narrowness of onesided views that were pettily cultivated and nationally prejudiced.

He saw and learned a great deal, but accepted nothing without criticism and did not succumb to any kind of influence. From the start his individuality manifested itself in that he digested new things and made them his own to such a degree that through him they received a new, absolutely personal touch — his own personal stamp.

Liebermann had learned to draw in Berlin. Krueger, Menzel and Steffek were eminent designers; they were the proper instructors for the beginner. But this academic atmosphere soon did not suffice. In Paris he saw

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Millet, the peasant painter from Barbizon, and soon thereafter he painted his first naturalistic picture of working people, "Arbeiter im Ruebenfeld" (Workers in a Carrot Patch).

This picture already contains the basic traits of his artistry: the presentation of man in his absolute form of existence. He wants neither to glorify nor to beautify him. All he wants is truth, simple truth.

Some time later he became acquainted with the great masters in Holland, and started out by copying Frans Hals in order to immerse himself in the nature of the old classicists. But here a new world is opened to him. Holland becomes a great, decisive event, his true artistic home. For here he finds the confirmation of that which he had been seeking thus far: life as it really is.

Man—not in his isolation, but in his union with the soil and with his work; the inseparable intertwining of man and nature that first gives him his true destiny—is final expression of life.

From then on the artist returns to Holland every year, bringing back studies for his big works. In Holland, too, he finds in Jozef Israels a new friend and guide to whom he owes many an inspiration. Liebermann, the naturalist or, perhaps better called the realist, who until now worked only with wide-awake senses, becomes acquainted, through Israels, with a mood atmosphere of which he had hitherto been unaware. He immediately translates it into his own language, however, proof of which is given in two magnificent pictures, "The Net Menders" and "Woman with Goats".

Liebermann turns pleinairiste and convinced impressionist. Of course, the French reject his impressionism since it is too "conscious" for them.

However, due to his having been reared in Germany,

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and, by settling in the parental home in the 80's, having made a permanent tie with Berlin, his whole nature was permeated with such a strong dose of Teutonism that he was just the right person to translate the Dutch world of ontology and emotionalism and French idiom into the blunter German, thereby providing German art with new, life-giving blood and continuing the development of Menzel's heritage.

This, then, was his achievement: that he who "obeyed only the rules of his artistic conscience opened the eyes of German art and won it European recognition", according to the document giving him the freedom of the city of Berlin. Over a number of years that was his fame, and finally it proved to be his undoing.

Liebermann's knowledge and ability were fabulous, and made him a teacher and guide of unique style. The synthesis of Jewish heritage and adopted Teutonism was profitable for him as it was for no other artist.

Although he finally realized with bitter disappointment that he was wrong in his ideology—for which he cannot be blamed—nevertheless his lifework was an extraordinary feat that will never be forgotten.

* * *

Pissarro, Israels and Liebermann were the three most prominent Jewish artists of the 19th century. Their lives ran fairly parallel, and all three lived to a ripe old age.

They belonged to three different nations and, accordingly, their art came from different sources and developed in different directions.

But, besides that, they also differed completely in their intellectual and artistic talents so that the question seems justified as to whether they have anything

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in common, or whether a similarity can be ascertained as a consequence of their Jewish descent.

In the preceding chapters an attempt was made to explain the character and work of each of these three artists, with an indication of certain Jewish traits. But going beyond that, we think we can recognize in two particular qualities a synthetic note that may be traced to their blood heritage: they are the most important graphic artists among their contemporary painter-colleagues, and they gave their art not only pictorial expression, but philosophical-literary expression as well.

Somehow they all had an urge to communicate themselves, and the manner in which they did so helps us to judge their personalities and their characters as manifested in their artistic works.

Pissarro did not write for the public. He expressed his opinions on art in intimate letters to his eldest son, whom he advised in a fatherly and companion-like fashion, and to whom he communicated his personal troubles. These letters contain a lot of useful advice, observations and criticisms of other artists, and are the product of clear thinking.

Jozef Israels wrote a book—a very charming and uncomplicated book—in which he chats sociably and expansively about his trip to Spain. Some passages are reminiscent of his pictures; they are sentimental paintings. One likes to re-read them several times because they put one in such a pleasant mood—just as his pictures affect heart and soul.

Liebermann wrote no books—merely treatises and characterizations, rejoinders and addresses. He wrote to be read and to achieve as far-reaching an effect as possible. He enjoyed writing, and employed a style that was sure, calculating, clever and pointed; the latter

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sometimes even to an extreme. He wrote just the way he spoke, waxing sarcastic and caustic and causing confusion by making comparisons.

One can hardly imagine a more dissimilar application of writing than is to be found among these three. Each one attempts to express himself on the subject of his art and to explain it. They have the typically Jewish impulse to communicate themselves and are not satisfied with just portraying. What their purpose is, and how they go about it, is of no concern and, as we have seen, is a matter of temperament.

The situation is similar with respect to graphic art for which, as already mentioned in the introduction, the Jew was especially gifted. The graphic arts are akin to writing. The word itself indicates that fact, for "graphic" comes from the Greek γραφεῖν. The picture is written down, thereby becoming less official.

The painted picture addresses the spectator, as it were, with the formal "you" while the black and white sketch immediately greets him with the more familiar "thou", for it appeals to him personally. One handles it like a book and looks at it in contemplative leisure.

When these three Jewish painters took up etching, this phase of art was not yet practiced by painters as generally as was the case later—partly spurred on by their example. Pissarro was the only one of the impressionists to employ etchings, as was Israëls in Holland. Liebermann's graphic work is on the same level as his painting production.

Just as a drawing grants us a glance into the workshop of an artist, thus enabling us quasi to eavesdrop on him at work, so, too, are graphic sheets, because of the manner of their creation, usually especially inform-

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ative testimony of his creative process. Depending on their nature and temperament, each of the three masters has a different working procedure.

Pissarro considers the etching a purely artistic-technical discussion. He wants to clarify certain problems of illumination and often corresponds with his son in regard thereto. He experiments in the manner of a scholar and executes his engravings himself in order to investigate all possibilities that can be achieved in one way or another. After busying himself with etching for ten years, he also tries lithography.

His systematic working method finally leads him to a style of his own, particularly in the 24 etchings completed in Rouen. In this style he is able to impart to the fairly small sheets a pictorial tinge that places them on the same artistic niveau with his paintings.

Israels is not so much concerned with graphic art, a fact that is attested to by his having made only 37 etchings. The little plates which he executed with great care in the beginning, and which he also printed himself, give us an insight into his treatment of the light and dark, and the imbedding of objects in veiling shadows. Some of these sheets intensify the intimacy which, in paintings, is occasionally disturbed by the coloring.

An order led Liebermann to graphic art, and again this is characteristic of the ambitious artist who is mindful of material success. The first attempt miscarried, and no second try was made until seven years later. After another four years he began to take up etching more seriously.

His creations of the 90's are all somewhat heavy and dismal, but the work is carried out with the greatest care. Here he comes closest to Israels in substance

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and mood. A picture such as the young goatsmaid sitting in the fields could well be taken for a work by the Dutchman.

Toward the turn of the century the pages grow brighter, the drawing becomes lighter and looser. The artist changes from plane-toned modulation to sketch-like strokes. The portrayal becomes more lively, the themes vary, portraits and sport pictures occupy a broad space; and then lithography is added. Thus several hundred sheets were completed during the course of years.

In this field Liebermann's extraordinary artistry in portraiture achieves amazing results by virtue of his accurate characterization, especially of intellectually prominent personalities.

He reproduces the entire person with uncompromising exactness, sometimes with just a few bold strokes. The smooth beauty of a woman's face is not to his taste, since he does not care to use flattery. He sees beauty in absolute truthfulness and unvarnished naturalness.

His graphic portraits bring him many orders for oil portraits, of which his work contains a great number in addition to self-portraits.

The artist was enormously successful with his etchings. He understood how to enhance his success and extend his popularity by including illustration in his program. This gave him the chance to flash his esprit in small, lightly jotted drawings which he then had others make ready for use in books and, occasionally, complete as a woodcut.

Liebermann gained widespread popularity for the graphic arts in Germany, and re-introduced them to

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his colleagues. One can see how he deliberately developed his talents in all directions, profiting by them and thereby attaining the status of virtuoso and teacher.

LIEBERMANN'S FOLLOWING

PROOF OF Liebermann's leadership is given by the great number of artists who, during the last decade of the 19th century and the first decade of the 20th century, formed a close and extended following of his. The picture would be incomplete, therefore, were we not to mention some of those who, attracted by the art atmosphere which he created, settled in Berlin and thereby contributed to an expansion of artistic life that had never before been so active.

Among all these were several Jewish artists who played a not unimportant part.

Ernst Oppler

Via Munich, London and Holland came *Ernst Oppler*, a mature man when he reached the whirlpool that was Berlin. He was the scion of a well known artist family. His father, a prominent architect, had built many public structures. He was also a prolific writer in the field of artcraft, and was a passionate collector of old paintings and valuable artcraft. In the cultured environment of the parental home in Hannover, the son received the artistic stimulation that determined his career as a painter.

He first studied in Munich, together with his brother Alexander, two years his junior, who became a well known sculptor. After completing his course at the academy, he went to England.

In the salons of high society in conservative London,

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the glorious tradition of the elegant portrait was still considered the great fashion, along with the cultivation of home and garden. Here Oppler found inspiration for a style of painting in tastefully subdued tone.

After several years, however, he fled from an aristocracy that was too impersonal to suit him, and went to Holland. Settling in the quiet atmosphere of Sluis, he studied the land and its people. He found a different kind of aristocracy here, one that freed him of his restraint, for he sensed everywhere the living spirit of Vermeer and Terborch that governed the cheerful atmosphere of the well cared for peasant homes.

His special interest being thus directed toward the lovely pottery and solid furniture, the ingenious commodes and sideboards, his father's collector instinct awoke in him and, with the help of some select pieces that he collected with loving care, he continued his development as a sensitive interior painter.

Reared in the solid tradition of two countries of culture, the painter now joined the progressive circle of Berlin colleagues whom Liebermann had gathered around him in the secession movement shortly before.

The master's example drives him to intensive pursuit of the landscape, for which he clears a wide space next to his portraiture.

Just as when he was in London, his courteous, self-assured bearing gains him access to all social circles as the perfect gentleman.

It is chiefly the theatrical world that gives him new inspirations, and when the celebrated Russian Ballet comes to Berlin, the incredible rhythm and the display of colors unleashes a passion in him that leads him to top achievements with the brush and crayon. He sur-

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renders completely to the intoxicating play of light and lines in the scenery.

With taut attention he holds fast the hovering and floating of the figures, and the charm of the graceful movements, employing all possible variations; and he finds altogether new means of expression in etchings of exquisite delicacy and admirable technical perfection. In these etchings he masters with the sheerest strokes the magic contrast of deepest black and most dazzling white, as well as the elegance of line.

With these unique creations of brush and etching point, Oppler gained wide popularity that carried his name as that of a particularly cultured artist even across the oceans.

Several other artists belong to the same circle. Like Oppler, they reflect the active art life of Berlin in which the Jewish mercantile class that had attained prosperity and respect, and many representatives of the official and scientific world who had originated in that class, played a considerable part.

The wealthy houses of these people were filled with all sorts of art treasures. Because of them, Berlin gained European importance as a collector's center; the art trade, in many instances in the hands of Jews, was attractive to the artists who began to gather there in even larger numbers.

Josef Oppenheimer

Josef Oppenheimer, originally from Wuerzburg, had already achieved success in England and America in his younger years in the field of the representative society picture. He was now much in demand as portraitist. His sprightly portraits of women and children, always in good color taste, earned him great populari-

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ty. Even today, after having been forced to flee to England by the political upheavals, he is an active and noted painter.

Eugene Spiro

Many talents joined forces in the secession movement; among them an astonishingly large number of Jewish artists. We will, however, mention only one of them here, and that is Eugene Spiro. The son of a noted cantor in Breslau, he received his training in Munich and Italy. Then he went to Paris and lived there a number of years, teaching at the Academie Moderne. He came to Berlin fairly late, and became a professor at the Academy of Arts.

Thanks to his activity, which he also displayed as organizer of the Berlin Secession, he won quite some fame. He was particularly noted for his portraits of important men and for his sketches from the concert halls. In 1929 he returned to Paris, and from there went to New York where, in spite of his advanced years, he created a new sphere of activity.

With the rise of the National-Socialistic regime the art life of Berlin, which until then had been in full bloom, broke down. Whoever had the chance to flee, did so, usually leaving all property behind. A rich world was destroyed. Liebermann, the top director, saw the collapse coming; the huge structure of his work came crashing at his feet.

LESSER URY

WHEN THE ART of our days will no longer be subject to contemporary criticism, but will be described from a more distant viewpoint that is re-



PLATE 21

JULES PASCIN: Chinese Girl (Drawing) *Priv. Coll. Paris*



PLATE 22

CHAIM SOUTINE: Street in Cagnes (Oil) *Museum Grenoble*



PLATE 23

MARC CHAGALL: Jew with Tora-Scroll (Oil)
Museum Tel-Aviv



ISSACHAR RYBACK: The Synagogue (Drawing)
From the Ryback-Memorial-Book, Paris, 1937

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moved from the personal battle of opinions—then, and not before will a matter-of-fact, historical review give many an artist the just appreciation that was begrudged him during his lifetime.

A stepchild of fate was Lesser Ury. All his life he was an outsider although, on the strength of his artistic talents, he could well have been a leader. Since from childhood on he was not destined to enjoy one ray of happiness, he withdrew more and more from the world. He grew to be a recluse, his solitude tortured by morbid thoughts that drove him from one extreme to another.

He had no friend and no confidant, for he trusted no one. He had never known love—not the love of parents or brothers and sisters, nor the true love of a woman; and so his heart had remained cold and did not find the approach to people.

He barely knew his father, for his parents had separated early. His mother, who was poorly situated, tried to put him to work in a store, and he ran away from her. He had a brother who was a total stranger to him. When, finally, in later years he did form an attachment to him, the brother suddenly passed away and Lesser was not able to get over the loss of his sole relative.

Only once did he enter into closer relationship with a girl; a poor, uneducated seamstress who attached herself to him with all her might and made thirty years of his life a veritable hell.

He had no connections whatever with his colleagues. An unfortunate clash with some of them in his younger days caused him to avoid all further contact with artists inasmuch as he sensed envy and animosity among all of them.

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Because nobody helped him in the bitter poverty of his youth, he came to be a misanthropist and felt only disdain for his fellow creatures. He saw an enemy in every person. Thus he segregated himself entirely, would have no part of the world and grew increasingly distrustful and hermitic.

He was often lost in dull brooding, and was constantly driven by a persecution complex to such an extent that he allowed almost nobody to enter his studio, did everything himself and for years lived in a wild confusion of disorder and neglect.

And this pitiable, helpless man, whose misunderstood artistry and unfortunate traits turned his life into a drama without equal, was a genius and pathfinder in art. Sometimes he was packed by a visionary delirium of creativeness during which he was capable of portraying the beauties of the universe in inimitable works. In such creative hours there was a flare within him, so strong and powerful that the wings of ecstasy carried him beyond all suffering. Then he must have been possessed by a God-given sensation of bliss that compensated for many of the things that life had otherwise denied him.

Lesser Ury was an outsider and a phenomenon. As a man and as artist he went his own way with tenacious willfulness. With all his might he felt the urge to paint, and no obstacle could dissuade him from it.

He ridiculed all traditional customs, would have none of the academic schooling, and never stayed long with any teacher. Being entirely without means, he wandered on foot from Duesseldorf to Brussels. There he worked for a while with Professor Portaels, who was fond of him and gave his talented pupil free rein.

Then Ury went to Paris for a short sojourn where he

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was less interested in the problems of the impressionists than in the lighting phenomenon of the city that radiated in such soft, delicate light by day, and in such magic illumination at night. And here, unmindful of art life that was bustling about him so mightily, he turned discoverer.

He saw and sensed things differently than the other artists. Rather than approach them in cool observation, he absorbed them intuitively and so, instead of painting color dazzling in the sunlight, he painted the light that flashed out of the darkness of night. This was something altogether new, something never before presented; yet nobody considered it anything out of the ordinary.

Because of his extreme poverty—he was so poor that he often lived on stale bread and dried cheese, and occasionally suffered from hallucinations caused by hunger—he could not stay in the city for any length of time. He moved to a Belgian village, Volluvet, where he rapidly developed into a naturalistic-impressionistic landscape painter of distinction.

One should not really use the word “development”, for the works produced in those two years are finished masterpieces.

Although only 22 at the time, he manipulated the brush in a manner so self-confident and bold as hardly any one else of his era could.

Since he was not able to sell any of his pictures, he had to relinquish his rural solitude. He hoped to find life easier in Munich, but could not acclimate himself there and so only Berlin was left where, just a few years before, Liebermann—likewise coming from the West and Munich—had settled and won quick success.

Armed with a letter of recommendation to the famed

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colleague, 14 years his senior, he, too, settled down in the metropolis. Liebermann, amazed at his extraordinary ability, at first received him kindly. But instead of furthering the artist, who was urgently in need of help, he left him to his misery; a fact that Ury never forgave him and one that caused the most bitter animosity between them.

In Berlin, Ury continued with increased ardour what he had started in Paris. He began to paint life in the metropolis in portrayals never before risked by any other painter. The observations that he had made in Paris were condensed in Berlin to veritable visions which he pursued with a fanatical partiality.

Picturesque beauties were revealed to him that made him the discoverer of a new world. He was the first to recognize the peculiar illuminative effects of a street light in a rain-drenched street, and the human silhouettes and dark masses of vehicles blending into the veils of fog and rainy mists.

The heavy air in the cafes, saturated with perspiration and tobacco smoke that enveloped the figures; color cascades that gave the effect of rockets lighting up the nocturnal darkness; the fluctuating drift, the turbulent crowding and restless motion of the metropolis—all this he flung onto the canvas in bold color dabs.

After two years he held his first exhibit. And then the whole ridicule of the critics and the derisive clamour of all the artists discharged itself against him. Cornelius Gurlitt, the omnipotent art critic, termed the pictures "naughty arrogance". Others called them wild daubings and color scribbling. Thus was sentence passed upon him, and Ury was stamped an outsider.

He fled into seclusion. After this shock and disap-

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pointment he experienced something new in the environs of Brandenburg, at the Baltic Sea and in Thuringia and, above all, at the lakes in Northern Italy: calm. A solemn, inaccessible quietness. And he invented a style of his own to express it.

Instead of the brush, he frequently employed the soft crayon. By pulverizing it and applying it with his finger, he was able to produce the most subtle nuances of color and tone.

He painted fantasies of light and color, in which the sun radiates with an intensity never before seen in a picture. These are pictures in which the brightness of the light dazzles, pictures of the most delicate lyric and majestic grandeur. "These landscapes", Martin Buber once remarked, "are so ethereal, so visionary, that they can only be seen and felt, but not discussed."

These pictures are not landscape paintings in the ordinary sense of the word; they are, rather, landscape adventures, astonishing and fascinating because of the boldly chosen views and the pictorial treatment.

Ury is without a doubt the most important pastellist of the 19th century. He leaves the French masters far behind, for he augments the color scale to the highest possible degree.

Color and light are the two inseparable factors of his art. He is like a man possessed concerning both. His impetuous, explosive temperament always drives him beyond the limits of normalcy. He can work only when in ecstasy, only "when the spirit moves him", as it were. In such moments his achievements reach the peak, but he spends himself to such an extent that he subsequently falls into a state of utter exhaustion.

Thus it goes all through his life. Periods of feverish work are followed by periods of physical and mental

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collapse. He hides in his studio like a frightened animal, broods, neglects himself, has no interest in anything and won't allow any one to come near him.

As his originally so-condemned metropolitan pictures—especially the streets in rainy weather, and the cafe scenes—are increasingly in demand by collectors, he makes copies of them and sometimes reproduces them from memory, one after the other, while keeping the originals concealed. He wants to hold them for the days when he will no longer be capable of working. The memory of his starvation years causes him to fear that they might repeat themselves when he is old. The many mediocre paintings thus produced and sold did great damage to his reputation.

But always his exceptional artistry erupts again, and he creates works in which he surpasses himself. Among some of his most glorious creations are his flower pieces. On the occasion of his 60th birthday, his usually drab atelier was transformed into a veritable flower garden. He was so enchanted by the blending of the color tones that during the night he painted three huge pictures!

Truly miracles of jubilating colors, of radiant beauty, they look so alive that when glancing at the flowers one imagines that one can smell their intoxicating fragrance.

Every once in a while he suddenly disappears from Berlin, and after several weeks he returns, laden with new pictures. Such trips are always a surprise, for the new harvest invariably means an enrichment of his artistic work. One of the most astounding results comes from a trip to London. After spending a fortnight there, he brings back 30 finished paintings!

He saw London in the fog that occasionally envel-

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ops it in such a peculiar shroud. The new light phenomenon intrigues him, he works himself into a frenzy and paints to the point of exhaustion. Monet's famous London impressions are pure descriptions of nature; Ury's pictures are adventures in nature. He portrays the battle of the elements as the racing fogs cover the sky while the sun tries to force his way through.

The struggle between light and dark is the basic theme of his whole work and life. Paris, Berlin, London—each of these three great cities provides him with a new expression for it. But even his pure landscapes and his flower still-lives owe their artistic importance to that perception. It is the same struggle that constantly besets his soul as his restive and tortured spirit is thrust from one extreme to the other.

Out of this mental conflict, he succeeded in obtaining several self-portraits although he lacked all the qualities that make a portraitist. He was not an analytical artist, and was no judge of men. Several attempts to portray others are among his weakest performances. However, his self-portraits owe their existence to very special circumstances; in reality they are born out of the same cognition and experience as his other great achievements.

After a serious illness he suddenly sees his thin face in a mirror. The eyes are sunk deep in their sockets and weirdly dark. His nose, peaked from long hours of deep suffering, cuts off the light that strikes one side of his face, darkening the opposite side. His white hair flutters in untidy tangles. His whole appearance denotes tumult, terror, fright. In a wild premonition of death he feverishly grasps the brush and paints himself—or rather this apparition—in a somnambulant urge to create; just as previously he had created the three

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flower paintings in the dead of night. In its elemental eruption, the optical experience becomes unconscious recognition of his own self.

From his youth, Ury also occupied himself with large compositions of biblical themes that seem to show his work from a totally different side. In reality, though, they come from the same source as his other works, namely the visionary. But while it leads to topnotch achievements in purely optical visions, it fails here. He possesses neither the compositional faculty nor the ability to arrange his thoughts, which is necessary to give expression to the dark affliction of his uneasy heart. Franz Servaes claims it was a "Michelangelescan aspiration" that drove him.

But we think we recognize something altogether different in these visions: the subconscious longing and anxious questioning of his Jewish soul. We recognize the same spring that fed his ecstatic outbursts in light and color and that was responsible for his whole make-up as man and artist. Add to this the unevenness of his personal temperament that reacted only to emotions and would not permit the orderly formation of an idea.

The unchecked passion on the one hand, and the lack of physical sensation on the other are by no means incongruous; in Liebermann's case we termed it the Jewish components of his art. Often brothers and sisters show very different characteristics which, nevertheless, can be traced to their parents; except that in the descendants they take effect in varying degrees of mixture. That is exactly what we find in the case of these two dissimilar artists. May we just point out here our introductory explanations, in which we tried to analyze the origin and the formation of Jewish mentality.

If we would do full justice to Lesser Ury, mention

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must be made of two of his colossal paintings. They are not wholly without faults, for his formative power was not equal to such gigantic proportions. Still, in the paintings "Jeremiah" and "The Dying Moses", these defects are outweighed by the pictorial vision that envelops both these pictures in a magic veil. Instead of the figures projecting corporeally, they blend into a unity with a cosmos steeped in mysterious color harmony.

Ury died as he had lived. He suddenly collapsed in the midst of his anxiously guarded works. An acquaintance who happened to be present could do nothing more than close his eyes. Just a few days before his 70th birthday he was put to rest. The celebration that had been planned in honor of this day turned into a funeral rite for the great master.

* * *

Ever since the day of the Sun King, Louis XIV, Paris was not only the center of all French personalities famous for their intellect; it was the universal magnet for all who came there to learn and to disseminate in their country the knowledge gained there. The influence that Paris had on modern culture the world over was reflected everywhere. A mysterious fluid emanates from the unique atmosphere of that city that communicates itself to every one who comes within its charmed sphere.

How the individual is influenced, and to what extent it affects him; whether it benefits him, re-forms him, whether it impairs or awakens the individuality—is an indication for the respective intellectual power.

None of the four last named artists would have become what he was without Paris; but neither would he have become a master without the strength and ingeniousness of his personality, by virtue of which he

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was able to re-coin the values received so that they became something new, something newly created by him. The importance of genius does not merely consist in the work as such, but is based as well on the final echo that his example evokes.

Two other Jewish painters who went through the Paris school at approximately the same time became pioneers in their distant homeland. Although they both enjoyed only a short period of work, they made an unforgettable name for themselves in the art history of those countries. One turned out to be the reviver of modern Swedish painting, the other Russia's greatest landscape painter.

ERNST JOSEFSON

THE ENTERPRISING seal engraver and merchant Aron Isak, from Buetzow in Mecklenburg, was the first Jew to succeed in establishing himself in Stockholm. The year was 1774, and he also received permission from Sweden's enlightened King Gustav III to have additional families follow. Since that time the Jews in Sweden lived in far greater freedom than their brethren in other countries. This led to quicker assimilation, facilitated by numerous inter-marriages, so that their relatively small number enjoyed comparative prosperity. They also had access to high society circles which were untouched by anti-Semitism.

From such a family came the painter Ernst Josefson, born in 1851.

Two of his father's brothers had already gained prominence in the artistic field. One was a famous musician, the other a well known dramatist and manager at the Royal Theatre in Stockholm. The milieu was decisive for the young painter's attitude toward

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art. During his student years at the Stockholm Academy he followed the Swedish narrative style that was practised there.

The naive boldness of his impulsive nature made an immediate impression and showed the strength of his talent. This talent manifested itself especially in Josefson's development of a more brilliant and shining vigour, in contrast to the cool color sense peculiar to the nordic character.

When he left his homeland at the age of 25, his open mind absorbed with great alertness the new impressions that came his way in various other countries.

In Holland and Italy, he first tried by diligent copying to get to the bottom of the color treatment of the old masters. After that he settled in Paris in order to find new nourishment at the lively gushing spring of art. The result shows at once in the brightening of his palette. Still, he preserves his individuality in the formation of the composition.

Realizing his true talent, he cultivates the portrait; and we would like to remark at this point that his best achievements are portraits of persons who come from his Scandinavian homeland. He understands how to instill in these likenesses a non-posed naturalness that gives them an aristocratic dignity and quiet grandeur. They are reminiscent of some old master, rather than giving the impression of having been created in the midst of a Parisian art life that was striving for different goals.

Nevertheless, the portraits are absolutely modern, particularly because of the occasionally decorative-lively surroundings in which they are set. Likewise in the coloring, in which he adds to the native blue the warm tones of brighter hues.

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A journey to Spain leads him to the genre picture. In this field he is not so sure of himself so that in style as well as composition he falls into a certain degree of dependency, with the result that he finds himself in a naturalistic atmosphere alien to his character.

While still in Paris, he had been impressed by Courbet, who had passed away shortly before. Now it was the much more powerful, classical Velazquez who influenced him; and the effect shows only too clearly in "The Dwarf" and "The Smithy". The spontaneous rhythm of Spanish life is particularly well expressed in the picture "The Dancing Cigaret Girls".

However, Josefson was too much of a romanticist—both by origin and by nature—to be diverted from his course by something of a different character. Quite the contrary is true, and it serves as an indication of his artistic individuality: he accomplished the great feat of combining the color depth and bright light of the south with the tradition in which he was reared, and forming a unit thereof, thereby becoming the creator of a new style of art expression.

Under the radiant southern sun, in the midst of an advancing world, and among the confusing art activities of an eternally lively Paris, the ancient myths of the north awaken within him. He hears the roaring of the waterfalls in the ravines, and it becomes a mighty melody inside him. Thanks to the strength his art has gained, he is able to give expression to the wildness and incoherence of his agitated fantasy.

He is gripped with irresistible power by the theme of "Neck", the naked god of streams, whose sinister song echoes in the wilderness. He paints it with all the audacity of a man possessed by an idea. But the first version does not satisfy him. After an additional two years of

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the most strenuous work, the second version is completed, and Josefson has created his greatest masterpiece.

He exhibits it in his native country, where it is flatly rejected. This gives him his first deep pain. Inclined as he was to go from one extreme to the other, he begins to lose balance more and more. Full of resentment, he retires to the Bretagne.

The man who once appeared in radiant vigour; he of the many talents, who had been prominent as musician, singer, actor and lyric poet—now falls into an increasingly gloomy moodiness. At 37 he falls prey to an incurable mental illness. In the same year—1888—there is a second exhibit of his work, and he is celebrated as Sweden's greatest painter. But the jubilation is beyond his comprehension.

He continues to live in a state of mental twilight. He forms the thoughts that are torturing him into eccentric—bizarre drawings until, in his 54th year, death releases him from a life that began so gloriously and was prematurely destroyed.

ISAAC LEWITHAN

HIS FATHER was a teacher who barely made a living with private lessons. Life was desolate in a desolate Lithuanian hamlet near Wirballen. The land was desolate, barren flatland, not a tree or a bush as far as the eye could see.

This impression must have been indelibly engraved in the heart of young Isaac, for it never left him even though he spent only his early childhood there.

He shares a remarkable quality with the Slav peasants; a quality that is particularly inherent in the eastern-born Jews: an undying love binds him to the soil

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upon which he was born. Regardless of how sad and painful his memories of the place; no matter if he has been banished from there—his heart remains attached to it and he always longs to go back.

Nothing can move him as deeply as the memory of the spot where his cradle stood. With the lullaby that his mother once sang to him, the melody of which echoes within him, there awakens in his soul the song of the earth, a feeling of nostalgia.

Therein lies a certain sentimental reverie to which the Jew has always been prone. The real, the original homeland was so distant, so inaccessible; it was a part of his eternal longing and prayers, which saw in the return to the land of his fathers the salvation from the suffering of Galuth. He transferred to the present his recollection of an unknown past and his longing for an unknown future.

This sentiment found nourishment because it was in the nature of the people in whose midst he had lived for a long time and from whom he had adopted many customs in the course of the years.

Although in Moscow poverty did not forsake the house of Lewithan either, the father did everything in his power to give his son a fairly good education, even permitting him to study at the Academy.

After four years there, the 19 year old boy made a picture of an autumn day that caught the attention of the well known art collector Tretjakov. He purchased the picture and granted the young artist a scholarship to study art in Paris.

It was the one and only time that the painter left Russia. He came to a completely new world, a world of light and colors, of a liberal and lively spirit of art, of an interchange of ideas; a world of luxurious and pleasur-

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able living. He saw an entirely new mode of painting that was light and bright, and that, favored by a sunny sky and a brilliantly colored nature, conjured up within him strange harmonies. It must have been a tremendous experience for him; one that shook him to his very depths with a force that we can not possibly imagine.

He returns after a short stay. However, it had been long enough to sharpen his artistic eye and to provide his innate sense of painting with new nourishment. Now he is able to express his sentiment and experience.

He brought back from France a new conception of the color harmony of a picture in its entirety. But he is able to add his own personal touch insofar as he transfers to the plain, unaffected and natural uncomplicatedness of the Russian character everything that appears abroad in radiant light and somewhat glittering.

Therein lies the effect of his art: he finds the purest and most profound expression for whatever it is that binds the Russian to his soil and upon which, on the other hand, the melancholy sensitivity of the Russian soul is based.

No artist before his time experiences the Russian landscape as deeply and sincerely as he does. The simplest form, with an almost banal effect; the barren expanse of a furrowed field, or of stubble extending endlessly; the low distant horizon; the monotonousness that keeps spreading further and further and acts so enervating and desolate; and that so unreal reality that appears so grand, so inaccessible and gigantic in its mysterious calm, canopied by such a heavily and gloomily arching heaven—that is the land. And the land molded the man: that heavy, melancholy, sentimental, taciturn Russian type. His soul resounds in the restrained melodies of his songs.

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Lewithan was privileged to find the pictorial expression for all this. It is of no great consequence that he portrayed the Russian landscape; but *how* he presented it—with which means and in which form—is important. Even the external form is important. He limits himself to a small format; to be exact, he uses the oblong shape. Only a very few pictures are square. And he is a landscape artist exclusively, interested only in the landscape, that quiet, self-sufficient landscape that requires no figures.

Not a human soul, nor an animal on these pictures; just simply solitary homes, huts and barns. And in this limitation lies his greatness. He does not require anything to make his pictures effective, nor does he want anything to detract from the uniformity of effect.

All his pictures extend depthwise; in most of them the eye is led across a wide expanse. Yet the object portrayed does not occupy more than one-third of the canvas; by far the largest part is covered with sky. And the sky plays no less a part when it comes to the mood content.

Lewithan is a past master in the reproduction of the atmosphere; he is a cloud painter par excellence. It is as much his love of the soil as his love for the air that enables him to shape artistically the complemental harmony of the whole.

In that respect he is reminiscent of the few landscapes of Hercules Seghers. As a matter of fact, there exists a certain kinship between him and the Dutch landscapists of the 17th century. These painters likewise wanted to render a portrait of their land; they, too, were entirely without pathos, merely wanting their small pictures to express their love for their country.



PLATE 25

MAX BAND: "Ecce Homo 1939" (Oil)
Coll. Mrs. E. Fasal, Sydney, Australia



PLATE 26

MAX WEBER: Talmudists (Oil)
Jew.-Hebr. Seminary of America, New York



PLATE 27

MAURICE STERNE: Bali Bazar (Oil)
At the artists' studio



PLATE 28

LOUIS LOZOWICK: New York (Oil)
Courtesy, the artist

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They, too, painted the countryside as a small strip, leaving the balance of the canvas to the sky.

But while their work is the joyous confession of a serene nature, Lewithan's pictures represent the melancholy depression of the country. And in pictorial formation he surpasses the 17th century painters insofar as he was able to expand his naturalism by virtue of his knowledge of the impressionistic style which he had picked up in France.

Following his short stay in Paris, he bursts into almost feverish activity at home. Although attention is soon focused upon him, he is still received with some skepticism. The Russian is slow and deliberate in his thinking; he is conservative, and needs a certain amount of time before he is willing to accept something new.

At 37 Lewithan becomes a member of the Russian Academy of Arts, and director of the department for landscape painting. At 40 his life suddenly ends as a lung ailment carries him off.

He left more than a thousand pictures. At his grave, Count Lvov said: "He was a painter-poet; there is something out of the ordinary in his pictures. Not only do we see them, and are filled with admiration, we also feel them".

Isaac Lewithan, the Jew, was Russia's greatest landscape painter. Even the extremely anti-Semitic "Novoya Vremya" had to admit that fact. Its obituary reads: "This full-blooded Jew understood, as did no one else, how to teach us to know and love our land and our country".

Three Masters of Graphic Art

ALTHOUGH IN the foregoing chapters the graphic accomplishments of most of the painters mentioned therein were pointed out, they occupy only second place in the artists' total production. Usually the graphic talents resulted from pictorial works, and the connection between the two was casual.

It is a different story in the case of those artists where the black-and-white art forms the bulk of their work even though they are also occupied with painting. In such instances, however, the painting is of lesser rank.

There had been Jewish etchers long before there were Jewish painters. It has already been pointed out in the introduction that interest in etching was derived from an adeptness at calligraphy. Calligraphy was already practised by the ancient Jews. The "sofer" was not merely a scribe, but a calligrapher as well. The Scriptures had to be written in accordance with certain calligraphic rules. This bred a special predilection for clean and exact characters, proof of which can be found in Hebrew publications as long as they were produced by ambitious artisans.

The path to graphic arts was thus indicated. It is not surprising, therefore, that we come across good results at a relatively early stage. In the meantime, however, graphic arts in general developed to increasingly higher levels of expressive art and there were masters who rank in the same class as the great virtuosi of color.

As we have seen, some of the modern Jewish etchers may be counted among the great of their era. Still, it

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seems noteworthy that, in addition to names such as Liebermann., Oppler, Pissarro and Israels, general recognition was given to several others who, because of their convinced Jewish attitude, to give expression to a consciously Jewish note. They not only possess certain qualities as a result of their origin, but their Jewishness is so strong and pronounced that it acquires visual shape in their artistry.

To what extent they are successful is another question. At any rate it is something new that manifests itself in the sense of responsibility of that artist who not only *is* a Jew but *feels* and *professes* to be a Jew.

They are master etchers insofar as each one of them contributed toward expanding the general aspect of graphic arts; in other words, the work of each of them consists not just in his own production but, going beyond that, possesses values that point to the future.

HERMANN STRUCK

THE STUDIO at 33 Brueckenalle in Berlin was the meeting place of colorful gatherings in the years preceding the first World War. Famous artists, authors, actors, elegant women and interesting men from the most divers camps and countries got together there, for it was common knowledge that one was always welcome at Hermann Struck's, and that one found stimulating company.

At thirty, the artist had already made a name for himself with his etchings. He was considered an authority in his field and was consulted by artists and art patrons alike. As artist and as strictly orthodox Jew and confirmed Zionist he is equally impressive, and the courteous, adroit manner of the good-looking elegant man earns him special esteem in all kinds of circles.

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Struck is not just orthodox, he practises his religion in far-reaching welfare work. He is available to any one, and receives every "schnorrer" (beggar) with human dignity.

From early morning he is in constant action, and his rooms are filled with all kinds of visitors. In one room several young artists are working at their etchings under his supervision; in another Zionist matters are being discussed, while in a third room a secretary is taking care of his huge correspondence. Struck barely finds time for his own work.

In the afternoon these rooms assume a more social character. The artist serves tea; his prints are passed around, and there is a discussion on art. The vortex of the war year 1914 puts an abrupt stop to all this.

Herman Struck came from a well-to-do Berlin merchant's family of strictest religious observance. He attended Gymnasium and the Academy, and started traveling quite early. His was a precocious talent. He was exceedingly perceptive and skillful, with the result that he quickly achieved success.

In Holland he attached himself to Jozef Israels, who became his true teacher. He visited Israels annually thereafter, for they had various characteristics in common.

The dean of Dutch art, five decades his senior, is equally conscious of his Jewishness, and his art is based on a disposition similar to that which speaks out of Struck's early works. But while artistry predominates in Israels' work, Struck's whole being is so saturated with Jewishness that his art is determined by it in every respect.

In the beginning it seemed as though he were destined—because of his brilliant technique in etching—to

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enhance his artistic qualities to achievements by virtue of which he would become a master of special magnitude. Some of his early works justify that belief.

And actually, at an age when most artists are searching for the right path, young Struck comes to the fore with several prints that may be counted as the master works of an artist who has something absolutely new to offer, something entirely his own.

"The Polish Rabbi" is not the genre head of an eastern Jew as presented in the usual pathetic style of portrayal, which confused emotion with sentimentality and concealed true value under an imitation superficiality. This was an artistic experience, a soul reflection of destiny which an artist is able to express with every stroke if the same tones vibrate within him. It is a frank and bold confession of the Jew, and he underlines it proudly by signing this work for the first time with his Jewish name in Hebraic letters: Hajim Aaron ben David.

The second print, which no subsequent work was able to surpass, is the etching "Habdala". It shows a young Polish Jew quite absorbed in the prayer ritual. The flickering candlelight enhances the magic-mystic mood of genuine religious experience.

It is not a situation that is caught here, nor is a lyrically sensitive tone sounded. The impression makes one forget the artistic virtuosity of the execution and the sure technical ability to which the artist owes his universal popularity in the ensuing years. The many portrait etchings of noted persons offer proof of his technical prowess. Here, too, the early prints are the best, and those of some Jewish scholars the most impressive.

Success increases his assiduity, and his folios fill rapidly with new creations. He travels through many countries, visiting England, Sweden, Italy, Switzerland

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and Paris; in later years he also came to America, visited Cuba and Egypt. He was the first artist to visit Palestine.

From all these places he brings back landscape sketches which he transforms into etchings at home. Among them are a great number of fine, artistically very valuable works.

The Palestine journey and his artistic loot, especially the Herzl portrait which he created at that time, are a triumph for the young artist. His reputation as a great Jewish master is well founded. The quantity of his production is enormous, his mastery of all technical difficulties amazing. No wonder that he is soon considered an authority on graphic arts, that colleagues consult him; that in London the "Royal Society of Painters, Etchers and Engravers" make him a member and that the publishing house of Paul Cassirer in Berlin commissions him to write a popular book of instructions, "The Art of Etching".

Struck discharges this task with the same skill and charm that he displays in his social manner. The book enjoyed five editions and contributed essentially toward his fame.

However, holding "court" over a period of years exhausts him artistically. He becomes a sort of fashion etcher. He gets lost in technical routine and the limitations of his talent show themselves. At first he and his many admirers are unaware of them, but the critical observer recognizes them early.

Aside from a series of early "direct hits", Struck is master technician rather than master artist. He is artist only in good hours during which, to be sure, he is fortunate in his creations. One such, without question, is the great etching adopted from Israels' painting "A

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Son of the Ancient People", which is a masterpiece of reproductive art.

At the outbreak of war, Struck volunteers immediately. He advances to the rank of lieutenant amazingly rapidly; due to his knowledge of Jewish and Hebrew he is sent to Polish occupation territory. As liaison officer between the Eastern Jews and the Prussian authorities, he is able to engage in activities that prove a blessing to his fellow Jews.

Following the war he draws the consequence from his professed and proven position as Jew and Zionist, and settles in Palestine.

Since the war his Jewish-social welfare and political activity takes the upper hand over his artistic occupation. Of course, he continues working constantly, and produces an enormous quantity of new prints. His war harvest in the artistic field consists of innumerable lithographs which can be evaluated only as hasty sketches.

In Palestine he takes pains with the portrayal of the landscape. He wants to capture the sunny, bright, radiant and brilliant aspect of the country, and attempts it in aquarelles as well as in delicate etchings. But instead of his colors being light and bright, they become pale and colorless. Although he occupied himself with painting at an early stage, his pictures were always merely proof of his impotency in colors. He just was no painter, not having the necessary visual sensation nor the perceptive talent.

But even in his graphic work he no longer achieves the mastery he formerly had shown.

From his beginner years we have landscape etchings, among them a whole series of snowscapes. In their delicate lines—executed mostly with a diamond—they

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are to be counted as some of his best achievements. Now his line grows increasingly sketchy and hasty.

The elan that originally drove him, together with success and approval led him from achievement to achievement and braced his powers. But they did not hold fast.

His artistic failing may have had various causes. During the war, and especially after his emigration to Palestine, he was claimed more and more by political and social work. His home in Haifa had again become the rendez-vous of all Jewish groups, and less and less time was left for his own work, although he did continue with it as soon as he found leisure.

In the meantime, having grown more mature and deliberate, he may have waxed doubtful about himself. This is apparent mainly from his constant repetition of the same subject, from his renewed attempts and from a certain irresoluteness. The chief cause, though, seems to lie in the fact that the slow poison of his illness had begun to sap his strength years before it erupted visibly. All the more admirable was his outward appearance which he preserved frequently under great torture. Thus a life that began so victoriously and brilliantly ended with grave physical and emotional suffering.

All in all, Hermann Struck made a name for himself as artist and as Jew. Many a creation, and a knowledge that fostered understanding of the graphic arts, testify to his artistry. The consistency of his strong personality made him effective as man and as Jew.

JOSEPH BUDKO

HIS WAS a modest, withdrawn, quietly working nature. A man who never stood out as a genial art-

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ist, he was always positive and realistic; taciturn rather than loquacious, severe rather than affable and courteous. But behind this exterior was concealed an energy-charged, glowing soul; a devotion to his art that is prepared for self-sacrifice; extraordinary self-discipline and absolute purity of mind. Only few really knew him, for he revealed his true self to only a few.

Budko came to Berlin from the Vilna art school at the age of 22. He was born in the small Jewish town of Plonsk, the son of a little tailor. His initial education had been acquired at the cheder of his home town.

He was an artisan and wanted to perfect himself in the metal branch. The new impressions, fostered by the artistic aura surrounding Hermann Struck, made him decide to turn to the graphic arts. With great pains and untiring thoroughness he soon developed a style of his own for which his mental attitude and his Jewish mentality in particular qualified him exceptionally well. This style was a synthesis of real Jewish tradition and modern artistic shaping.

And here we have the first point of his significance. No Jewish artist before him understood so well, and revived, the decorative-symbolic values that slumber within us and that were almost completely buried. He gave back to us the handsome Jewish book and created a new, modern book illustration that joins the old spirit to the new sentiment.

Budko is the first modern Jewish artist to whom ornament and symbol meant living content. He possessed the faculty for reproducing with miniature-like precision and delicacy an abundance of ideas. They are executed with loving care to the most minute detail, and a fusion of line and form, rhythm and harmony imparts to them a typical style all his own. These prints

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have since become common property of Jewish literary art.

His Ex libris form a special category. They are the only real Jewish Ex libris in existence to date. In them he exploits for the first time the monumental effect of the Hebrew characters which he uses as keynote of the composition, thereby emphasizing the character of the bookmark as a sort of trademark.

A comparison with the prints of *Ephraim Moses Lilien*, which were received with particular enthusiasm in the circles of a just awakening Zionism, shows the essential difference between misdirected formalism and true artistic form.

Lilien, son of a turner from Drohobycz, uses solely ancient Jewish motives as models. He then re-composes them in a youthful style that is totally alien to them. Lilien is an illustrator of the artcraft decorating type. It was his intention to give expression to the idea of Jewish national re-birth in a stressed Jewish style. But he stuck fast in an ingenious and, in our opinion, absolutely devious journalism.

Joseph Budko's graphic work shows a uniformity of constant development and artistic formation, backed by a strong personality. It is interesting to observe that the individuality of his art is already noticeable in his initial works, and that it matures and expands in astonishing consequentialness.

From a metal engraver he turns into an etcher. At first he practices with the etching point in prints of very small formats, and reaches the peak of perfection therein. The conscientious exactness and the distinctive finesse that he uses for the most minute execution of every stroke proves him a born master of miniature etching.

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From there he goes on to larger sizes and, accordingly, to a freer and broader technique, frequently employing the shaving method in order to achieve the best possible surface effect.

He soon goes over to engraving in wood, and follows the same procedure: starting with the more familiar small format in most delicate lines, he works his way through to the true monumentality of big prints.

With his Passover Haggadah, Budko presented us with the first beautiful modern Hebrew book. Unfortunately, it exists only in a middling edition, of which one has to see the sample copies in order to appreciate its full value. In this Haggadah, the Hebrew letters are presented for the first time as individual types, initials and edges in traditional, yet newly developed ornamentation. They are enhanced to the point of independent picture effect, and the illustrations, no larger than a stamp, are combined so skillfully with the text that the whole forms an artistic unit.

This masterpiece is followed by additional series: 12 small mezzotints, representing the Jewish holidays; 12 woodcuts illustrating Genesis, as well as woodcuts for Psalms and poems by Bialik.

Budko was able to portray the lot of the Jew as no other artist could. He had been reared in the old tradition, had his first instruction in cheder and in his native town had personally experienced the whole burden of the galuth: the misery and suffering of the unprivileged, the shabby life of drudgery, and the sorrowful atmosphere of hopelessness. Then he came into the cultured atmosphere of Western Europe, in which he was able to develop artistically, and finally he came to Palestine.

In the meantime, he had made attempts at painting and, true to his principle, first endeavored to acquire

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mechanical skill. He is not interested in making large pictures for his aim is not to produce dazzling effects but solely to penetrate the essence of things and to describe true experience. In that respect those pictures possess a certain value. Like his graphic prints, they are filled with the most profound subjectivity such as can be expressed with so much unpathetic genuineness and impressiveness only by some one as much at peace with himself as Joseph Budko.

When Budko came to Palestine, he was aware from the start that here he would first have to fathom new, partly undisclosed conditions in order to work successfully. He did not want to simply continue his path as an artist from the galuth, but wished to give independent expression to the new.

Accordingly, he started at the beginning, used the crayon in order to be clear about every detail and to prepare himself. He never got much beyond these beginnings, which were done in all quietness and with his usual thoroughness. His time was running short.

Something entirely new came his way though. A new sphere of activity was opened to him as he was charged with directing the newly founded Bezalel School of Arts and Crafts in Jerusalem.

Here he demonstrated his extraordinary qualities in a new and unexpected manner. His self-discipline and the consequentialness of his work; the rigid technical training and his great sense of responsibility, which he had proved on himself—all these made him a teacher whose pedagogic and organizatorial faculties suddenly came to the fore. The "New Bezalel" is his work; the development of the school, his achievement. As a model teacher, he was the right man to bring up a new generation of artists and artisans.

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That he succumbed, much too early, to a grave ailment was probably the most severe loss sustained by our art.

Joseph Budko died in Jerusalem on July 16, 1940, in his 52nd year.

JACOB STEINHARDT

JACOB STEINHARDT, who today lives in Jerusalem, gained his reputation chiefly on the strength of his woodcuts. In earlier years, when they both lived in Berlin, he was friendly with Budko. They had much in common, as far as fate and experience was concerned; but in Steinhardt's work the artistic expression therefor is altogether different. Both are characteristic representatives of Jewish mentality and of an art that has its roots imbedded therein. Steinhardt, too, belongs to the renewers of Jewish graphic art.

Steinhardt was born in Zerkow, a small place at the Polish-Russian border of Prussia. He spends his early youth in the environments of old Jewish tradition characteristic of a typical Jewish village, where tired old age dominates and dull prayers drown out the laughter of youth.

At the age of nine he goes to a school in Berlin, but always spends his vacations at home. In 1906 he attends an art trade school, the following year he studies with the painter Corinth and again a year later he goes to Paris.

Returning to Berlin, he is drawn into the vortex of the battle raging between the various art trends.

The war, in which he participates at the eastern front, shows him the fate of the Jews in all its frightfulness. He collapses under the weight of what he has

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experienced. In dismal visions he re-lives everything he has seen; his portrayals are imbued with a weird mysticism.

The etchings created at that time are of dramatic incoherence. The emergence and vanishing of a figure is expression of mental agony that only gradually becomes calm and balanced. His frenzied nerves finally find an outlet when he occupies himself with purely formal problems, and he devotes himself entirely to the study of nature. His style changes too, at this point, and in addition to monumental individual prints, he creates series of woodcuts with biblical content through which he achieves mastery of the large form.

And here he proves himself a born graphic artist. As painter he is and remains the constant searcher; his graphic development, on the other hand, takes place with self-assurance following an inner law.

After several attempts at etching he finds his true calling, the woodcut. He explores the piece of art in the given surfaces and layers, in the rhythm of the grain and in the counterbalance of light and dark. He knows how to grade his color scale from the most glaring white to the deepest black. He knows how to take advantage of the wood structure and of its fibre, and he masters the art of guiding the knife, the chisel and the needle as they are used in wood engraving.

In 1923 Steinhardt completes his monumental Pass-over Haggadah, the first modern Haggadah with woodcuts. It is an epochal work, and one that gains the artist admission to the ranks of the universally accepted artist of graphic art.

The pictorial presentations are unique in their powerful, modern formulation. Text and picture appear to be made from one cast. In order to achieve this effect,

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the text is not typeset. Instead, it was written in lithography directly on the stone by the excellent calligrapher Francisca Baruch. This resulted in an artistic uniformity that had not been attained since the famous Prague woodcut Haggadah of 1526.

This work represents a milestone in the history of the Hebrew book, and is followed by illustrations to the Book of Jonah and Jesus Sirach, as well as by the great single prints of the ten plagues.

In 1933 Steinhardt settles in Jerusalem. The decaying rubble and tired appearance of the ancient stones tell him of the grey days of yore; they lead his thoughts back to his native village where he had his first experience with millenarial Judaism.

In Jerusalem he again meets the stooped figures in the streets of the old city, where the houses crowd together and the light darts through the arcs and curves. He sees ancient Jerusalem and senses the irrevocable Jewish lot that remains the same here as in galuth.

In the new Palestine, too, Steinhardt lives in the past rather than in the present. His new woodcuts confirm that impression. The old Jew is exactly the same as the one in Zerkow; he squats in a corner of the stone wall just as he did in cheder at home, and he moves with the same measured step through Mea Schearim as he did in the eastern town. And even the young are old and have none of the usually so vitalizing freshness of our Palestinian youth. They are biblical figures—the song and lament of the very ancient Jewish nation.

Steinhardt sees the world around him *sub specie aeternitatis*. He is an absolutely conservative, reserved person; in himself he represents a special Jewish type, but in his character of artist he is quite a sovereign master of the woodcut.



PLATE 29

WILLIAM GROPPER: "De profundis" (Oil)
Courtesy, the artist



PLATE 30

RAYMOND KATZ; Stained Glass Window.
Temple Anche Emet, Chicago



PLATE 31

ZEEV BEN ZVI: *The Sower* (Cement statue at the Levante Fair) *Tel-Aviv*, 1934, *Dismantled*



PLATE 32

TRUDE CHAIM: Kneeling Boy (Terracotta)
Priv. Coll. Tel-Aviv

The Plastic Artists *The Predecessors and Medallists*

IN THE CHAPTER about Mark Antokolsky, the first Jewish sculptor, we have already formulated the artistic qualification of the Jew for sculpture. The trail that he follows in his further development runs fairly parallel to the one in painting, except that it is more troublesome and takes longer. It has to overcome bigger internal and external obstacles, and therefore it takes approximately one generation longer before freer creations of his own invention come into being.

We could let the sculptors appear onstage in the same sequence of acts as we did with the painters. However, we would risk the danger of repeating ourselves too often in the characterization of a number of artists whose names became better known, for they move at about the same level as those mentioned under the heading "Eastern Jews as delineators of milieu".

Two of Antokolsky's pupil were *Elias Ginzburg* and *Boris Schatz*. While Ginzburg enjoyed public success with his pleasant and skillfully done children's busts, he is of little interest to us in his academic insignificance. Boris Schatz, on the other hand, did become famous and can not be neglected so easily.

Boris Schatz

However, in order to set his real importance in the proper light, one must first differentiate between two totally divergent moments in his work—namely, his artistic achievement and his accomplishment as a Jew.

Boris Schatz, the Jew, was a personality animated by

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fanatical—one could almost say prophetic—enthusiasm and an indestructible optimism. He was the first Jewish artist who wanted to create a Jewish national art and to liberate Jewish art from the chains of foreign guardianship and show it the way to a spirituality of its own. It was a grand, a powerful idea; but its realization miscarried for a number of reasons. Neither his intellectual powers in general, nor his artistic faculties sufficed to give this gigantic plan a livable basis.

Still, his courage alone, his energy and the devotion with which he gave himself to the Jewish cause assure him a grateful and honorable remembrance.

Boris Schatz, the artist, on the other hand, belongs in the ranks of those who cannot be freed from a gradual process of evolution and whose accomplishments have to be judged accordingly.

He was the son of a poor melamed (teacher) and spent his childhood in the cheder of his hometown, Kovno, until he was able to attend the school of drawing in Vilna. There Antokolsky discovered him and took him along to Paris as his pupil and assistant. During his six year stay in Paris, he created the great bronze statue of the old "Mattathias". Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria was so delighted with this statue that he invited the artist to Sofia and assigned him to establish the Academy of Art in that city.

Schatz was active there for ten years, and kept himself extremely busy by making many bas-reliefs of Bulgarian type important people and, above all, of Jewish genre types. He thought he was giving these portrayals symbolic significance by imbuing them with accentuated soulfulness. They are characteristic of his artistry, which is wholly preoccupied with the galuth world.

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This fact becomes most obvious in the great "Maccabi Statue" which, in reality, is nothing but a pathetic knick-knack that displays an over-constructed pose but is neither great nor impressive.

And if this work was lauded as an "ancient Hebrew epic", and it was said that "Schatz herewith found the trail that leads from galuth to Judaism", then such remarks prove how unclear and vague were the opinions concerning the accomplishments of our Jewish artists. Accordingly, it is understandable and excusable that Jewish artists, intoxicated by applause, themselves believe that they are creators of true Jewish art.

Going out from this sentiment, Boris Schatz conceived the idea of founding a new Jewish art in Palestine, and this idea grew to be his new purpose in life. The "Bezalel" in Jerusalem is his work. He believed he could produce on a folklore-tradition basis that which only a real bond between a people and its soil can produce in the course of time. He thought he could anticipate this development, for he was driven by love for his people and enthusiasm for national reconstruction.

However, of necessity his work had to remain in its infant stage, since he was missing the true foundation. Schatz was an artist rich in ideas, but he was not enough of an artist to translate his ideas into great art.

Henryk Glycenstein

From the same environment as Schatz comes *Henryk Glycenstein*. The beginning is identical: the father a poor melamed, the son drilled in cheder and the yeshiva until he is 17. Then he flees to Lodz, starves as an artisan until he finds shelter and understanding help from the family of the painter Hirszenberg.

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At the Academy in Munich he makes rapid progress, is awarded the Rome Prize and thus reaches the ancient city of art, which becomes his permanent abode.

His talent, driven by an exuberant temperament, together with his great technical skill causes a sensation. His works are awarded prizes at exhibitions; he portrays the pope, the king and Mussolini, and several of his statues are placed in museums.

He masters all materials, works in stone, marble, bronze and wood, is also active as painter and etcher. Also, his style changes from impressionism to archaism; from a severe naturalism to an easily flowing lineal rhythm.

His is the nature of an artist who is completely instinctive, untroubled, endowed with rich gifts. Only discipline and persistence are lacking in order to accomplish great feats. Artistically, he is by far the most important of his contemporaries, while intellectually he is on the same level as they.

In Paris two other Jewish sculptors from the East, traversing the same path through a youth of privation, attain prominence and prosperity through technical skill rather than on the strength of true artistic achievements.

Leopold Bernstamm

came from Riga. He spent over 50 years in Paris, and during that time completed an endless number of portrait busts that are amazing in their striking resemblance. Among others, he portrayed many notables, including Dostojewsky, Rubinstein, Flaubert and Zola.

Naum Aronson

progressed from marble cutter to fashion artist. He was an auto-didact, and soon created a sensation with his

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work which, ranging from small, delicate figures to large marble blocks, were executed with great elegance.

Many such talents have been highly praised, even overestimated, although they were of little consequence as artists and were merely endowed with great skill.

* * *

There was yet another category of Jewish sculptors who cultivated a speciality field out of a convinced handicraftsmanship. It was an art more closely related to Jewish mentality than free standing sculpture, and it is mentioned here because, firstly, it is the continuation of a traditional Jewish art practice and because finally, it leads from the constraint of handicraft to free and important achievement.

The qualification of the Jew for coin and stamp cutting and for the engraving of medals as well, is derived from the same tendency that gave him his early talent for calligraphy.

The coin and medal art has a certain kinship with etching inasmuch as the intimate-contemplative quality, which is predetermined by the size, demands a quiet meditation during production. Accordingly, it is not the spontaneous conception of intuitive creation that prevails here, but the more sensitive pondering over, and gradual development of, the picture form.

Thus we find a number of excellent masters in various countries, some of them even occupying official positions. *Jakob Abraham*, for instance, was employed for more than 50 years by the Prussian mints, while his son *Abraham Abramson*, residing in Berlin, became one of the most prominent medallists of his time and created almost 250 medallions.

The three brothers *Wiener* achieved quite some fame in Belgium. *Jacques*, the eldest, created the first Bel-

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gian postage stamp; his brother Leopold, eight years his junior, became court engraver of Belgium, while Charles wrought coins for England and Portugal.

In the neighboring Netherlands, *Salomon Cohen Elion* and his son Jacques were active as medallists at about the same period.

Jean Henri Simon, who settled in Paris, was such a skilled lapidary stone cutter that many of his creations were thought to be original antiques.

Mention should be made of *Avenir Griliches* and his son, Abraham, both of whom became head medallists of the imperial mint in Petersburg; also of *Victor David Brenner*, who had emigrated to America from Lithuania. He played a part in the battle to improve the American mint, did Theodore Roosevelt's head for the Panama medal, and it was he who engraved the Lincoln portrait for the one cent coin which made it famous.

Arthur Loewenthal, born in Vienna, spent a long time in Berlin and then in London. Unfortunately, we lost track of him during the war. He closes this series as the artistically most excellent and versatile master. His allegoric cameos and portraits, cut in topaz and other precious stones, go far beyond virtuosity in handicraft. He re-discovered the art of glass-cutting, which was known in ancient times but which had been doomed to oblivion. For this, he should be counted among those whose artistic power entitles them to an important position in the ranks of the universally accepted masters of modern sculpture.

The Mature Sculptors

ARNOLD ZADIKOW

THIS NAME opens the series of the mature sculptors although so far it had been less known than the names of those who follow. But it means protecting him from oblivion or, at least, from not being sufficiently remembered; for he, as well as the largest part of his work, fell victim to the war.

But this is not the sole reason why the name of Arnold Zadikow heads the list; in their versatility, his creations embrace all types of modern plastic form of portrayal.

He gave the impression of a gnarled tree. Short-set, muscular, his face was typically Semitic, his sharply cut features stamped with iron energy. He was an artist of many aptitudes. The thoroughness with which he perfected himself was particularly characteristic of him. He was never satisfied with what he had accomplished; always looking ahead, exploring, he digested all aspects of life with the whole force of his very alert mind and critical eye.

He had extensive knowledge and was interested in everything: music, history, literature and natural science kept him busy continuously. He was a nature enthusiast who knew every bird and every flower. He was especially fond of the mountain regions and could sit quietly in one spot for hours to absorb their whole majesty.

He possessed the glorious quality of being able to

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enjoy fully and without reserve anything and everything: a piece of art or a phenomenon of nature; a song or the twittering of a bird; the roaring of a storm or a child's laughter, a woman's beauty or the rhythm of a dance, a good wine or some fine food.

But he could just as easily forego things—which is also an enviable quality—and, without complaining, adjust himself to the most primitive conditions. He could, and often had to, live extremely modestly, as he barely had the most necessary nourishment. He was so rich in himself, so full of ideas and visions that the outside world could never disturb his emotional balance. Even under the terrible conditions of concentration camp he retained his serenity at work.

A result of this wealth of intrinsic values was his modesty, his averseness to being conspicuous. By no means was he a recluse who turned his back to the world. He was modest because he was not so with himself and made great demands of his own person; he was never sufficiently satisfied with the results of his work to proudly present them to the world. In reality, though, he was a finished master; a virtuoso in the most diversified fields and one of the best of our age.

Arnold Zadikow, son of a noted cantor who had come from Lithuania, was born in the Baltic resort town of Kolberg. First he was a mason, then he attended the school of architecture in Posen and at 18 became a master builder in Berlin.

Some designs which he had made for himself caught the eye of Max Liebermann, who made it possible for him to study at the Academy. However, after a year he fled the dry school machinery and went to Munich. Here, he was rejected by the anti-Semitic director of the Academy, Hahn, whereupon he immediately became

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master pupil of Professor Waderé, director of the Commercial Art school.

Now he created his first independent compositions: a silver figurine 10 cm. in height; several silver encased plaques and, after that, a number of terra cotta statuettes. Technically they were all excellent accomplishments, but he soon went on to bigger plastic compositions and portrayals.

The war interrupted his work. He volunteered for the army, was gravely wounded and taken prisoner and did not return until 1919. While in captivity he had cut many plaques in slate relief. These works are distinguished by compositorial richness and a fine swaying musical rhythm. Music was in his blood anyhow as paternal heritage, and music, which he practiced on all types of instruments, accompanied him all through life.

Now began a period of rich activity. The first product is a magnificent, monumental Menorah (Chanukah candle) in brass with hand encased medallions in pierced work. There follow several war memorial tablets and a number of tombstones that were made especially effective by the beautiful Hebrew script which he commanded so well and which he knew how to exploit ornamentally. They were also distinguished by traditional fashioning, and are among the best modern Jewish tombstones. In their simple monumentality and excellent stone workmanship, which he executed personally; they are exemplary.

His work program expands considerably. A new item are the cast medals. His early plaques of small format were either engraved or cut; the handicraft quality still clings to them. Now, however, he moves on to plastic figures that are less restrained and more liberal.

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The larger format demands a different treatment. A number of very vivid picture medallions in bronze are the result. In quick succession, and with ever increasing mastery of the form, he completes a large statue in bronze of young David, and various life-size busts, likewise in bronze.

But the modeling and constructing and composing of an object, and the developing of the form in the soft, pliable clay is not yet the final means of expression for his incredible pictorial vision which, incidentally, no Jew had ever developed to such a degree of purity. His artistic fantasy, in which a work exists before it is given material form, finds the ultimate solution in the hard stone block. From it he makes the form arise in what might be termed self-creative manner, for it takes shape under his hand.

From a block of the hardest stone, a light brownish Untersperg marble, he builds a group which, in its undramatic, uniform shape became his most important creation and is one of the most prominent achievements of modern sculpture.

He calls the group "Motherhood", and it consists of a mother holding her baby in her lap. The things that can be done with a theme like that! Mother love and affection, intimate embrace and caress, stroking and fondling and playful toying—one can endow it with lyricism and sentimentality, and can be either anecdotically gay or epic and dramatic.

One is easily tempted to be garrulous at this point. The multitude of emotions are gathered by the sculptor into a uniform vision, and this again is expressed in the form and rhythm of the material. Not the mother and her child—i.e. the objective correlation of the two—is his theme; rather he visualizes it as a concept, a form

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of existence. And that is how he fashions his "Motherhood".

The rich, yet calmly and softly flowing form play of the artistically counterbalanced and interlocked limbs results in a harmony that unites the whole to plastic oneness. The stylistic simplification seems to have grown out of the stone as a matter of course, thereby elevating the portrayal to the point of monumentality.

Zadikow has matured to a sculptor of statues. He goes to Italy, where he continues to perfect himself in the stone technique. He wins a prize consisting of a studio in Villa Massimo in Rome, and works there at several large statues. The fruits of his stay are an exceedingly noble half-statue of a woman, and the statue of a youth, "Il Giovinello", in glistening, snow-white marble. They are works of classical poise and beauty.

Returning to Munich, he executes several portrait busts that prove his mastery of all technical media.

The sureness with which he chooses the material best able to produce a desired expression, and the manner in which he employs it are also proof of his virtuosity. In a number of sharply featured men's heads he chisels the deep furrows of facial wrinkles, while he molds the delicate lines of womanly beauty in harmonious surface work.

A statue in silver-plated bronze a little over three feet high indicates the shyness of a young girl just blossoming into womanhood. In contrast thereto he creates a wildly agitated wrestling group in which he has concentrated such incredible power that it presents a fortissimo of dramatic action.

Political conditions in Germany in 1932 induce the artist to go to Paris, and here he spends another four years of productive work. He is busy preparing for

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several large works, including a number of biblical themes: a blinded Samson, a Judith and a Job group. Just then he receives a call to be art director of the Moser glass works in Carlsbad, whereupon he departs from Paris rather hastily, leaving all his works in his studio. There they remained, to become, like their creator, a victim of war.

Rigid inquiries have now established beyond a doubt that the Germans, on February 28, 1942 deliberately destroyed every one of his big statues, including "Motherhood", and almost all his bronze works!

Let us remember this date, for it commemorates not merely the loss of some art pieces such as was caused by the war all over Europe a thousand times over; more than that, it represents the destruction of practically the entire life work of a great artist and thus an irreparable loss for our art.

In the Cluny Museum in Paris, Zadikow had come across the collection of old glass work. He began to occupy himself with the technique of cutting glass and crystal, of engraving by means of the diamond, of etching and so-called glass grinding. He studied the ancient methods and finally developed a technique of his own. On the occasion of a visit to his atelier, the director of the Carlsbad factory saw the interesting experiments and invited the artist to continue with them in Carlsbad.

The glass and crystal vessels completed in the ensuing two years are some of the noblest products in this field and show the artist from a different side. Going out from the receptacle form, he evolves the adequate stylistic decor, thereby attaining a lightly swaying rhythm and elegance of line. There is no end to the new notions produced by his rich imagination.

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Suddenly he is torn out of this world of luxuriant invention and formation. He falls into the hands of the Nazis and is deported to the concentration camp in Theresienstadt. And there his life ends.

The true greatness of the human spirit manifests itself in the cheerfulness of his work, which he retained no matter in what situation life placed him. Under the most dreadful conditions that made his life an indescribable torture; when everything was taken from him, and, especially, when he was deprived of freedom and nature; when, as far as the eye could see there was not a tree or a bush to be found and not even a flower relieved the desolateness: in the midst of this utter hopelessness, and with only a few sheets of paper at his disposal, he gave expression to his ever alert fantasy in masterly sketches to the very end.

Untouched by all the misfortune he experienced, his artistry fades out victorious and proud.

As previously mentioned, Arnold Zadikow's importance is based on a versatility coupled with self-assurance such as no other artist could boast of. He is master of the large form as well as of the small; of subtlety in delicate work and monumental formation alike. He knows the various materials intimately, and completely masters them technically. Although in the beginning it seemed as though he were better gifted for artcraft, nevertheless, in a quite logical evolution he finds the way to liberal creation.

The independence of his artistry is already proven in his early plaques and medals. He rejects a priori the method of mechanically reducing a sketch designed in large proportions. The size of even a medallion is of itself decisive for the whole plan. Zadikow works with wax or he himself produces the negative. In that case,

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he uses slate tablets as he did when he was a prisoner of war. Casting from a negative mold assures each piece its originality. When the medallion is struck, the stamping press replaces handiwork and, while it makes possible any number of identical copies, it also means de-personalization and industrialization. In this laborious but highly artistic technique he counts among those artists who made new friends for the ancient, almost forgotten art branch of casting medals.

BENNO ELKAN

WITH HIS extensive activities Benno Elkan made a name for himself that became widely known.

He was a merchant until he reached the age of 21; then he ran away from the clothing store in Antwerp where he was employed, in order to study painting at the Academy in Munich.

After four years of study, he changed over to sculpture, went to Paris and worked there independently for himself. He had personal connections with Albert Bartholomé, whose great "Monument aux Morts", erected just then in the Père Lachaise Cemetery, made the latter one of the best known Parisian sculptors, and these connections were not without influence upon his further development.

Bartholomé had invented a sculptural form style of his own by combining large and simple stone architecture with bronze-sculptured ornamentation, and had executed this style in a number of tombs. His example made school, and Elkan, too, followed his pattern in many mausoleums that he was to create later in Germany, thereby in turn influencing the German trend in tombstone art.

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However, it was a different movement in art that was really of decisive import to him. This was a trend that resulted in the artistic revival of the portrait medallions which had already been created with great perfection by the Italian masters of the Renaissance.

Even though much was accomplished in the field of the struck medallion, and while there were always a number of renowned masters (including Jews) to be found there, still it had sunk more and more to just a technical routine.

The first to renew the fight for the cast medal was Jules Clément Chapleïn, and he was joined by Louis Oscar Roty, who was several years younger than he. They managed to elevate the medallion to the point where it again became a personal work of art. The inclusion of writing as a part of the artistic conception contributed essentially to the enrichment of its formation; it was chiefly Roty who made out of it a poetic work of art that invited an intimate enjoyment of contemplative observation.

Elkan had exhibited his talent for portraiture in an excellent bronze mask of the painter Jules Pascin. He now turned to relief for his portrayals in accordance with the French example, greatly assisted by the experiences gained during his painting years. The medallions of Fallière, Loubet and Clemenceau, which he created in Paris, were the foundation for his reputation as one of the best masters among the younger generation.

These works are modeled all in wax straight from life, in the original size of 8½ cm., and are distinguished by their likeness and keen characteristics. Elkan knows how to make full use of the effect of light and shadow in order to vitalize the subjects and enhance the plastic

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impression. With the help of extremely exact and delicate treatment of the detail work he imparts to his medallions a serene uniformity and astonishing monumentality.

Finally, after an eight year absence from Germany, Elkan settled in an idyllic little place called Alsbach. By this time he was already an established sculptor, so that commissions of all types came his way in abundance. In rapid succession he completed over 30 big tombstones and just as many miniatures, as well as a number of busts. Of these, some of the best are the character head of Walter Rathenau, and that of Alfred Flechtheim, which, in its obtrusive ugliness, is particularly interesting.

Elkan was a quick and skilled worker, always full of ideas and enterprise. His medallions, considered exemplary achievements of modern casting technique, were accepted in all museums.

Following the first world war, he moved to Frankfurt and was commissioned by the city to create the monument honoring the victims of war. It was later removed by the Nazis, but is again standing in its former place in the center of the city.

Mourning for the sons lost in battle is symbolized in a life-sized figure of a slouching woman in deepest black. Here the artist gives plastic expression to a frame of mind caused by suffering, at the same time eliminating all time restrictions. The emotion is not supposed to speak out of the gesture; it should result rather from the form play of all the limbs which governs the total appearance. The multiplicity of the individual motives should unite in uniform grandeur. This idea is fulfilled by the complete silhouette of the crouching figure.

Especially impressive is the calm top outline which



PLATE 33

MOSHE ZIFFER: Nude (Mahogany Wood);
Priv. Coll. Tel-Aviv

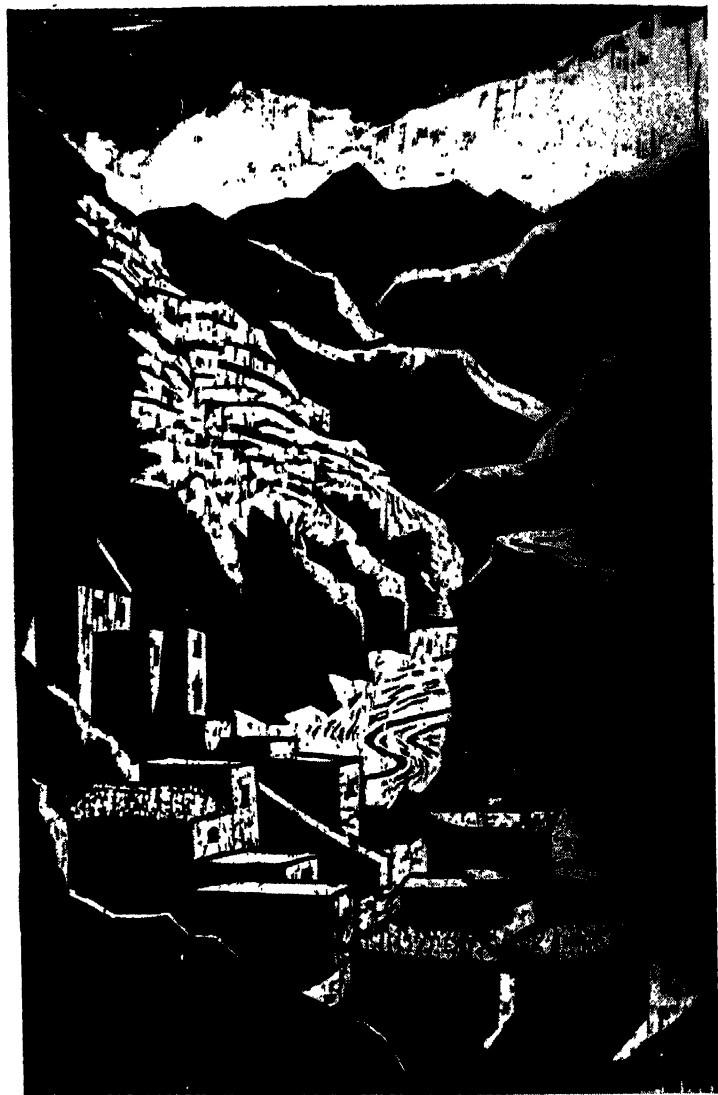


PLATE 34

JACOB PINS: In the Carmel Mountains (Woodcut)

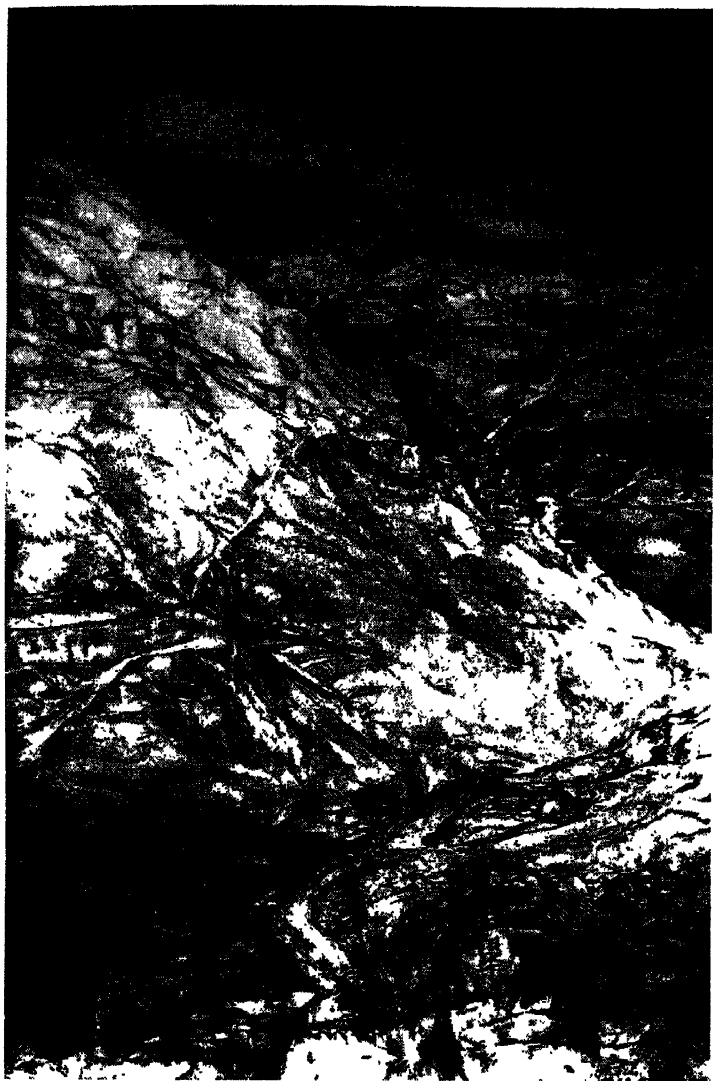


PLATE 35

ANNA TICHO: Siloah, near Jerusalem (Drawing)
Priv. Coll. Jerusalem

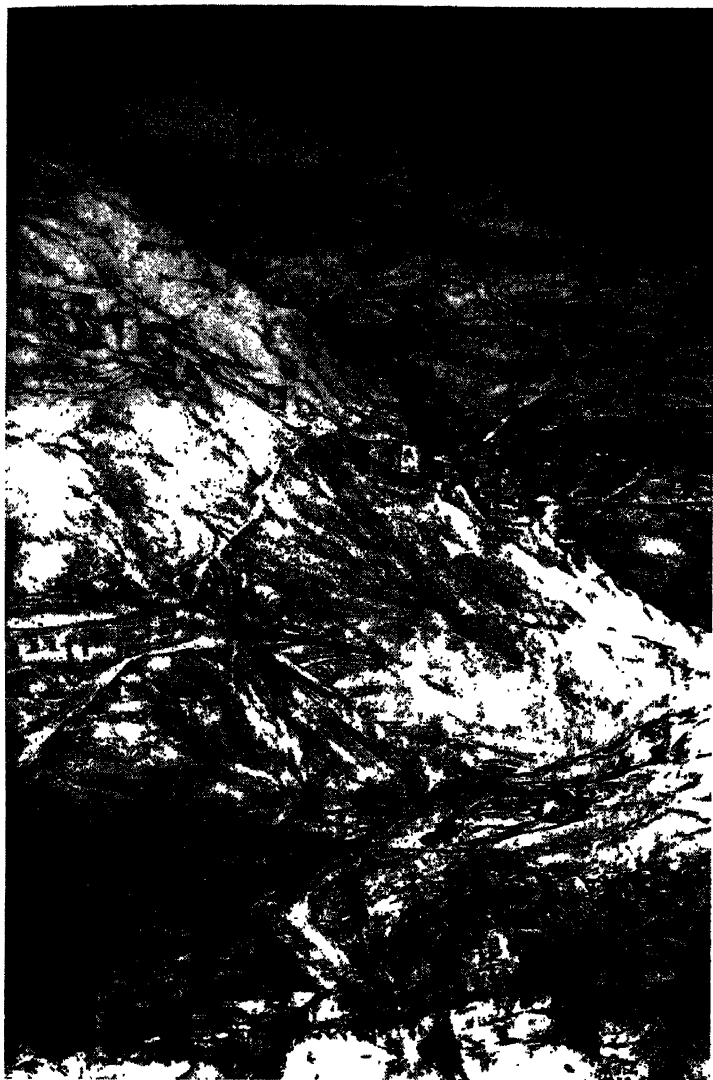


PLATE 35

ANNA TICHO: Siloah, near Jerusalem (Drawing)
Priv. Coll. Jerusalem



PLATE 36

LUDWIG SCHWERIN: Near Sichron-Yakov (Drawing) *Priv. Coll. Tel-Aviv*

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permits the drooping, the earthbound quality and the heaviness to give the forceful initial effect of the monument.

Elkan proves here on a large scale what he had indicated in small work in his master plaques and his portrait busts to be his particular forte: the extraordinary power of expression. His tombstones have a certain grandeur and unity, but it consists in the architectural construction rather than in sculptural ornamentation.

He achieves the vivid expression of his portrait busts by grasping every face wrinkle, following heights and depths minutely and giving them motion. Life, to him, is always motion, not just existence. This explains his impressionistic method of working and the occasionally pictorial treatment of the material. For this reason he is the master of the medallion. The inclusion of relief into the round form, and his compositorial sureness in exploiting ornament and writing make each piece a work of art.

It also explains his extraordinary gift for the decorative. To this circumstance we owe a whole series of special works with which Elkan enriched modern sculpture.

Enduring many years of toil, he wrought the composition of a bronze candelabrum, two meters in height and two and a quarter meters across. It is formed like a tree, the branches of which consist of many individual candlesticks, each one surrounded by a group of figures representing a biblical event. The groups are composed of small figures, about 20 cm. high, precisely executed, that fit rhythmically into the total construction.

This work is reminiscent of the bronze molds of the Old German Peter Vischer, since whose era nothing of that type had been created.

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When Elkan left Germany in 1934 and settled in England, he took the candelabrum along. It caused a sensation there and immediately made the artist known. Lord Lee acquired the candelabrum and presented it to Westminster Abbey. Elkan was commissioned to work a second one as its counterpart, with figures from the New Testament.

The latter seems to us to be artistically the better, since in its total composition it appears lighter and loftier, and the figures blend even more into the entire rhythm.

This honoring order leads to others, so that within the past few years a number of such figured candelabra were completed for Cambridge, Oxford and Devonshire.

The appreciation accorded him enhanced the artistic prowess of the master, who was now also achieving increasing success in the field of the portrait bust. The likenesses of James de Rothschild, Claude Montefiore and Lord Keynes—to name just a few of those which Elkan made in England—are of an entirely new magnanimity of form and monumental simplicity.

Benno Elkan's impulsive creative energy makes it possible for him to master any material. Not so long ago he completed a gigantic group of bears for the London Zoo. Prior to that he created several statues in stone and colored marble. One of these is a life-size "Persephone", composed of greenish Cipollino marble, white Carrara marble, yellow-brown Tyrolese onyx and alabaster.

Maturity enabled him to create increasingly powerful works that made his name known everywhere.

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MOYSE KOGAN

MOYSE KOGAN is a master of plastic miniature. His art is the outlet of a delicate lyricism and of a quiet, dignified, almost shy reserve. It is characteristic of his whole nature that in addition to sculpture, he devoted special care to graphic art.

Altogether, he was a person who lived his own life, in all modesty and satisfied with very little. He enjoyed quiet observation, avoided all noisiness and shunned the crowds, yet without being in any way unsociable.

He was most charming within a small, intimate circle. He was a delightful entertainer, witty, imaginative and gay. His appearance was always neat and well groomed, and his small, very modest studio looked like a jewel-case.

Although he lived in Paris for more than thirty years, he had not adopted any of the Bohemian customs of the city of art. Everybody who knew him loved and revered him, especially his art colleagues since they appreciated his intellectual superiority.

He was just as exceptional in his art as he was in life. And since every one of his works, no matter how small and inconspicuous, bore the stamp of his character, it, too, was genuine and great. A little sketch, hastily jotted down, was just as compact as the completed production; it breathed, and acquired life, and thus acted convincing.

His collective art utterance embraces but one sphere: the rhythm of the human figure. Motion, rhythm, dance; soaring, turning and twisting, free of the earth, Dionysian in the sense of the ancient allegory, following faint melodies that sound from afar: that is his world.

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It is a quiet, blissful world; a living turned to form, the pure and melodious expression of which is the language of his fantasy. The human being, or, rather, the human figure, is only his model, it is absolutely timeless. Always he tries to avoid all details in order to find the simplest form. His figurines are reminiscent of those found in Tanagra. The fineness and fragileness also control the size, for this is an intimate art and its proper plastic form is that of relief and figurine, just as in painting it is the line. It is not surprising, therefore, that this born sculptor was also a graphic artist of special quality.

Kogan's artistic significance lies in his wonderful comprehensiveness. That he sings only the one tune (involuntarily the comparison with music comes to mind in connection with each of his works) is not one-sidedness or a limitation; on the contrary, that is his greatness. True artistry is recognizable by the fact that it is able to give adequate expression to an idea born from the artist's sensibility.

Which form of expression he chooses for that purpose is of complete indifference, as long as it is genuine. Kogan finds it in the small form; he is the most genuine master of miniature.

Logically enough, he begins with the medallion and small reliefs in archaic style. These are followed by terracotta figures and then figurines and delicate women's heads in limestone, marble and wood.

In graphic art there are wood and linoleum cuts as well as lithographs. They consist either of contour lines alone or, like silhouettes, are treated as black surfaces against a white background. The abundance of motion themes is amazing; it is an inexhaustible rhythm, always newly invented, envisaged and formed.

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And so, until the start of his seventh decade, the life of this artist runs on in all quietness and privacy until it is forcibly destroyed.

Moyse Kogan was Roumanian born. Until he was 24 he was a chemist and then, in Munich, he devoted himself entirely to art. During a seven year stay he developed autodidactically, designed embroideries and other products of artcraft, and created a number of medallions.

The director of the Folkwang Museum in Hagen, Osthaus, appointed him teacher there. After two years he went to Paris, where he came to the attention of Rodin and Maillol. It was Maillol, in particular, who furthered him. Then came the war years 1914-18, which Kogan spent in Ascona, after which he returned to Paris.

The esteem that was accorded his art in all art circles becomes evident by the fact that in 1925 he was elected vice president of the Salon d'Automme. This is an extraordinary distinction for a non-French artist.

Paris became his home. Occasionally he would go to Amsterdam, where he had a lot of friends and admirers, and spent a short time there. Paris was his life element, and there he found thousandfold inspirations for his art. But Paris also turned out to be his misfortune. The Nazi hordes seized him there and dragged him to a concentration camp where he disappeared forever.

WILLIAM ZORACH

HIS MEMORIES reach back to earliest childhood, to the night when part of the small Jewish town in Lithuania went up in flames. Wild hordes of Cossacks plundered the village and abducted young boys for

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military service. They also burned the lighter, the only possession and means by which the father could provide for his family of twelve. It was impossible to remain in Jurburg. The father went to America, intending to let the family follow as soon as he had saved money for the passage.

So, at the age of four, the boy came to Cleveland, but there were no changes in the family's impoverished circumstances. For four years William had to contribute to their support by delivering newspapers. At 13 he was looking for any kind of a position, changed from one job to another until, at last, he landed with the big Morgan Lithographic Institute which needed helpers for clearing away debris after a big fire. This chance was decisive for his future destiny.

The artistic work in this business delighted him, and he tried to make himself indispensable by diligently helping with mixing colors, cleaning machines and doing other chores until, finally, he advanced to apprentice.

For three years he learned the lithographic trade, attending art school in the evening to perfect himself in drawing. During this time he saved up enough money to enroll in the Academy in New York. There followed a period of study during which he suffered great privation, and he was finally forced to return to his old firm. By this time, however, he was an expert lithographer and earned enough to be able to devote himself entirely to art. As his first step, he went to Paris.

In Paris William Zorach turned painter, having been introduced to modern art for the first time. He saw Cézanne, Van Gogh and Gauguin, and spent the summer in the south of France painting landscapes in

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glowing colors. After two years in Europe he returned to America.

His first exhibit was a failure. Nevertheless, he continued to work patiently, together with his young wife, who was likewise a talented painter and whom he had met in Paris. He tried in every conceivable way to get ahead, even working on graphics and plaques. An acquaintance of theirs put an old farm house at their disposal where they were able to live modestly and continue their work.

Here he created a number of wood cuts and one day used the wood from an old drawer to cut a bas relief. Shortly thereafter a ceramics man visited him and suggested modeling to him. Together they made a number of ceramic experiments, and these diverted his whole attention to plastic portrayals.

Zorach was 32 when he made his first plastic works. He was then already a matured artist whose paintings were gradually becoming successful. But now his true art calling came awake.

What he had done so far seemed to him only a preparation, a gradual evolution. It was a rise from graphic handicraft to graphic independence; from the study of drawing to the field of painting.

Now it came over him like a liberation, like a challenge. Plastic experience, plastic forming and fashioning—that was really what set his whole being aflame and stimulated his powers in a way he never thought possible. Every slab of wood immediately takes on a plastic face. With a simple pocket knife he cuts little figures out of any piece of wood whose grain happens to please him. He discovers the real, natural plastic sense in the primitive woodcuts of the African Negroes,

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and studies the early Chinese Buddha statues in the Metropolitan Museum.

As his self-assurance grows, he advances from the small form to larger figural portrayals. His first creation in stone was a life-size head of his small daughter in white Italian marble.

This work engendered in him a great love for hard stone and ultimately awakened in him the longing for the monumental, for the absolute formative and the form-bound in which all sculptural fantasy and all ideas find their loftiest, most refined expression.

As though under a spiritual charm, he develops the logic of this intuitive conception step by step. His construction goes ahead with almost divinatory assurance. His strength increases with the media, his forms improve, his formative sense is enhanced from one instance to the next, it grows ever greater, more simple and calm, and his creations acquire a timeless purity of style.

The theme "Mother and Child" goes back to the time when he was occupied solely with painting. It is interesting, incidentally, that we come across the subject of the two closely clinging figures in the works of practically all sculptors.

His first attempts were not satisfactory. Soon after starting his sculptural activities he carves a mahogany group 90 cm. high. Five years later he models a clay sketch of about 50 cm. height for a bronze cast. In the same year he starts on a life-size portrayal in pink marble, and works on it for three years. And he finally finds ultimate expression in a massive granite block which turns out to be one of his most grandiose achievements, and the most forceful in sculpture so far.

The same progress could be observed in a long series

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of portraits in wood and various stone types, in which grandeur of expression grows in steady degrees hand in hand with simplification of form to find its conclusion in the powerful head of the prophet in black granite.

Then we also have a whole group of cat portrayals. Cats were always one of his favorite motifs, a fact that is very significant for his artistic sense of form, Zorach is constantly surrounded by cats. Hardly any other animal permits of such fine observation of movement as these supple felines that roll up into a ball, stretch and lie down so gracefully.

Zorach studied them in all imaginable poses, sketched and modeled and portrayed them plastically in every possible material. A hard, green, egg-shaped piece of granite gave him the inspiration for a cat all curled up. Then again he uses a piece of granite found in a quarry and, retaining the original form as best he can, he portrays a cat sticking its head out. And, finally, he produces a cat supporting herself on her front paws out of a square Swedish granite about 45 cm. in height.

His virtuosity lies in the continuity of his work. It made him one of the most important living plastic artists, and the greatest American sculptor.

But his significance goes even far beyond as he acts an important part in today's art life being an inspiring teacher and writer. For many years he has been instructor at the Art Student's League of New York, and recently he has published a most informative book in which a sovereign master explains as the result of life-long experience what sculpture means and how it is made.

Zorach is one of the most magnificent examples of how the powers of genius expand within a person. He

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can rightfully say of himself: "A true artist is he, under whose creative hands any kind of material comes to life".

CHAIM GROSS

I HAVE BEFORE me an interesting manuscript. It is the childhood story of the children of a Jewish family in Kolomea, a little town in the Carpathian Mountains.

Although the story is the same as those we have heard about from innumerable reports on the life and sufferings of the Eastern Jews during the past decades, it is nevertheless so graphic that it gives us a particularly vivid picture of the spiritual atmosphere that produced so many people who were talented in so many fields.

Naftali Gross, the author, writes about the years of his youth and those of his sisters and brothers, and especially about his brother Chaim who today is one of the prominent sculptors in America.

This story is of particular interest to us because it reveals the source from which the artistic experience of this master (and we confer upon him this title despite his youth) gets its nourishment.

The Carpathian woods have a charm all their own. The foliage and pine trees crowd together to form dense thickets, and a mysterious whispering runs through the branches. This is where fairy tales take shape, especially in the autumn when glorious colors cover the quiet fields.

But most magnificent is winter, when the snow hangs in the pines and the other trees stretch out their naked limbs in ghostly fashion. A strong, intoxicating fragrance emanates from the woods.

This forest poetry is the paradise in which the children grow up. And what's more, it is the land of the

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“picture carvers”. In their leisure hours the peasants sit in front of the door and with their pocket knives carve little figures from a piece of wood. How skilled these people are! They are accustomed to this kind of carving from childhood, for they have watched their parents and their grandparents doing it. In the course of time, an old tradition developed into a peculiar folk art.

The boys try to imitate these people; they fool around with pieces of wood, but they are not successful. So, they try a different way: they draw and paint and tell one another stories from the woods. They live in a happy, fairy-tale world which is suddenly destroyed by war.

The Russians invade Kolomea, burning and plundering as they go. Blood flows everywhere. Chaim, ten years old, runs away, horrified, wanders around and finally gets as far as Budapest where an older brother lives. There he continues to draw until a painter friend sends him to an art school.

After the war he has to return to his native village, where he finds his family living in poverty. In 1921 his brother Naftali, who had migrated to America, has him come over.

Seventeen years old, he enters the Education Alliance Art School on East Broadway. Here he meets many comrades who, like himself, had come from the darkness of their Eastern homes.

He makes close friends with the twin brothers Soy-er. He draws and paints like the others and just manages to get by.

But one day he disappears and cannot be found for months. Poverty had driven him from school and from the city, and he had fled to the mountains in an attempt

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to pull himself together, for life threatened to crush him. Not that he fared any better after his return. Slave work in a grocery store, a lace factory and as newspaper boy allowed him only very few hours for his art.

However, out in the open air, in the calm of nature, his true artistry had first awakened. The memory of his childhood came alive, his love for the woods flared up anew. The rustling of the trees, the pithy fragrance coming from their branches—all this takes him back to the fairy-tale years spent in the Carpathians. At that time he had begun to carve figures as the peasants did.

Now he looked at all this with schooled eyes, and with artistic senses that were more aware. He took up the wood again, and in every piece of this nature-made formation he discovered a different rhythmic melody.

Chaim Gross came back a changed man; he had found his world. Now he knew his way and his destination. The hard battle of life held no terror for him any longer.

Only one thought held him occupied now: how to give artistically shaped life to the material that was whispering its mysterious beauty to him. He is a born sculptor, for he feels the form growing out of the material. Under his fingers it arises quite logically out of the original substance, and he has the natural gift for molding it rhythmically and dynamically.

No artist before him showed such profound understanding and differentiated delicacy of feeling for the treatment of wood. He is one of the best connoisseurs of the various types of wood, and he collects them with a passion bordering on fanaticism; he sees in each piece a different structure that inspires him to new work. His work to date includes no less than 30 different kinds.

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As he himself says: "I am chiefly a sculptor in wood. The harder the wood, the more I feel challenged to give it the desired form with the knife."

The hardness of the material, and his enjoyment of its treatment was bound to lead him to stone sculpture. And so we find among his new creations some of marble and onyx. But his real love belongs to wood, and there he is master.

Occasionally the choice of his subjects may seem peculiar, for he prefers to portray dancing figures and groups, ballerinas and acrobats. But the artist has an answer for this too. He states that dancing figures or acrobats per se do not interest him, only the combination of two or three figures as they give him a chance to link forms and intertwine them, which results in a blending of one form into the other.

This attitude of the artist is not narrow-mindedness, but rather an intentional limitation and concentration, and it proves the resoluteness of his actions. It was this that made possible his surprisingly early success. His talent was recognized quickly, private collectors began to be interested in his works, and the museums started to acquire various pieces.

The rhythm of his figures is always born out of the respective type and nature of the wood he uses. This gives them amazing vitality despite severe fashioning, inasmuch as the grain of the wood takes over the function of forming the details. Add to this the different methods of treating the material, for instance that of the longitudinal cut, or by using finer knives, or roughing up some places with the chisel or the punch. Polishing the surface in certain types of wood often serves to produce an extremely delicate play of light. The uniformity

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of the total plastic appearance is enhanced by the plinth being included in the composition.

When he held his first exhibit in New York, his senior colleague, William Zorach, greeted him in the preface of the catalogue with these words: "Chaim Gross is young and temperamental; he treats his figures with understanding form feeling and he has the knack for the light and humorous that is so rare among sculptors. He has all the inborn qualities of a true sculptor since he combines the sense of plastic form with an imaginative and creative conception of life."

No greater praise could have been bestowed upon the beginner than this recognition by the expert.

And in placing Chaim Gross in the foremost rank of modern sculptors despite his youth—today he is 43—we are certain that his further work will justify this opinion in the future.

JACOB EPSTEIN

JACOB EPSTEIN can boast of being the most assailed artist. Never has art been disputed so violently in public as has been the case during the last thirty years whenever one of Jacob Epstein's large works has made its appearance.

His name has become a kind of shibboleth in the most bitter battles of opinion as to whether the artist has the right, and to what extent, to fashion works meant for the general public solely according to his own judgment, without consideration for the public's viewpoint.

Jacob Epstein is at once an artist unafraid and immune to influence, and a fighter. He goes his own way, and is equally capable of using the written word to defend himself against all attacks. In a vividly written

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book, "Let There Be Sculpture", he told about the origin of his works and the polemics they evoked. He also set down his view on art. One has to read these candid assertions in order to understand him.

A Chinese writer of the 12th century once wrote: "When I was young, I praised the artists whose pictures I liked; but when my judgment matured, I praised myself when I liked what the artists had created in order to please me".

These words of the old sage have particular meaning in view of the often problematical art of our days, and they seem to be especially noteworthy in regard to Jacob Epstein's artistic work, for it must first be understood before it can be enjoyed.

It is impossible to explain here the complexity of ideas in each individual work that induced the artist to use this form or that one, or what visions inspired him while working. One cannot simply reject the creation of a serious master because one doesn't like it or even, as is the case in some of Epstein's monuments, because at first sight it is repulsive. Our eye and our other senses must first be educated to look at modern art production without prejudice. Nor ought we forget that every great artist is a pioneer who is capable of producing new sensations, thereby becoming an educator.

Jacob Epstein is a serious artist and a strong personality, and therefore a creator destined to be an educator.

He proved his independence at an early age. Epstein's parents were Polish immigrants who settled on the east side of New York. There he was born, and there he spent his youth, until he reached the age of 22. In the meantime his parents had prospered, but when they moved to a better neighborhood, he refused to

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leave the modest surroundings of Hester Street. The life and types down there, especially of the old-Jewish world, intrigued him to such an extent that he was driven to the most extensive study of art.

He painted and drew in the Arts Students League, worked in a bronze foundry and then went to Paris to study. After remaining there for five years, he went to London, and that city became his permanent abode.

Here, barely 27 years old, he was given his first large public commission, which at the same time initiated an outburst of violent newspaper attacks.

For the building of the British Medical Association on the Strand, he completed eighteen, bigger-than-life nudes in sandstone. The "Evening Standard" protested against exhibiting naked figures in public. The "Times" came to the defense of the artist, and the battle subsided. Then, in 1935, the government of Southern Rhodesia acquired the building and wanted to remove the offensive statues. The storm broke out anew, with Richard Sickert, Kenneth Clark and Muirheard Bone taking the artist's side.

The "Manchester Guardian" claimed that the owner of a piece of art had no right to dispose of it at will. The argument ended when, two years later, the stone began to crumble due to weather influences, giving the owners a good reason for removing the figures as a menace to safety.

Meanwhile the artist had spent three years working at Oscar Wilde's tombstone in the Père Lachaise in Paris. It consisted of a titanic stone slab presenting a demonic angel in full flight. The style was severe, reminiscent of Egyptian statues.

The police declared the work to be indecent and had it covered with a big cloth that remained spread over



PLATE 37

PINHAS LITWINOWSKI: *The Donkey-Drover* (Oil)
Museum Bezalel, Jerusalem

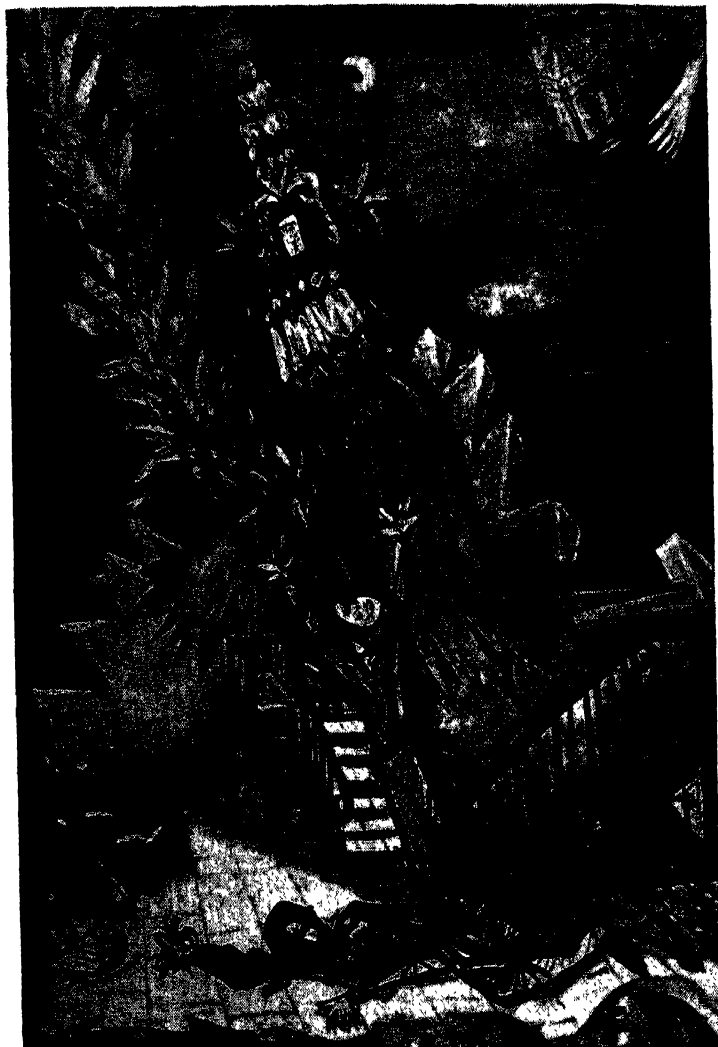


PLATE 38

MOSHE CASTEL: "The Hurvah-Synagogue in Flames"
(Oil) *Courtesy, the artist*



PLATE 39

REUVEN RUBIN: Tiberias Fisherman (Drawing)
Priv. Coll. New York



PLATE 40

LEO (Arieh) KAHN: Shepherds Near the Well
(Watercolor) *Courtesy, the artist*

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the figure under constant police surveillance until the war broke out.

At that time George Bazile wrote a violent article in "Comoedia". Under the heading "Oscar Wilde, prisoner of the Prefecture of the Seine", it assailed the defamation of a piece of art that, although novel, was nevertheless significant. The article closed with the words: "It was left to France to be the setting for this new assault upon the freedom of art."

During his stay in Paris for the completion of the monument, Epstein came in close contact with Picasso, with Modigliani, who was just creating his bizarre head sculptures; with the sculptor Brancusi and the other artists of the Montmartre group. Through them he learned of the endeavors in abstract art.

Experimenting in this field, he executed the "Rock Drill". This was a symbolic construction of a machine-like robot figure in bronze. He meant it to symbolize our age of decay which is subjected to dynamic forces.

In reality he rejected a purely abstract art. As he expressed it: "In an effort to broaden the sphere of sculpture, we are misled into extravagances and childishness". And when Marinetti attempted to propagate his doctrine of futurism in England, Epstein called him and his followers "Italian charlatans exercising tomfoolery".

It would be a complete misconception of Epstein's art were he to be considered a revolutionary innovator. Just the reverse is true, for he is a realist through and through, perhaps the most radical and the least compromising. True, he does not accept tradition in either direction; for on the one hand he reduces realism to its originally most natural and therefore simplest form, and on the other hand he seeks new means which at

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first, like everything that is new and strange, is neither understood nor approved.

Thus, when he created a statue of Christ during the war years, and attempted to have this work express his religious and humane views, he touched upon a territory in which he was most difficult to follow. And yet, just here, and in a number of monuments born from a similar philosophy, he is most forceful. To be sure, this Christ statue is something so unusual, an undertaking never before ventured, that we will let Epstein's own words speak in lieu of a further explanation:

"What did I intend to portray in this figure? It stands there and accuses the world because of its meanness, its lack of humanity, its cruelty and bestiality; because of the world war and all other wars. It is not the early Evangelical Christ of Byzantium and Rome, nor the condemning Apollonian Christ of Michelangelo; not the sweet rising blessing Christ of Raphael. This is the living, modern Christ, compassionate yet accusing. It is the Jew, the Gallilean who condemns war and admonishes mankind that the word 'Shalom' (Peace) must always be the watchword."

If the artist had not given this quiet, in expression and posture reserved figure, the name "Christ", it most certainly would not have caused such a commotion. Other works of his had a much more challenging effect.

Each new monument created in the ensuing years led to more embittered arguments. But the master would not be intimidated; no defamation could hurt him, not even an attempt to degrade him by calling him a sensation seeker.

Epstein's sculptural genialness manifests itself most distinctly in his monumental creations, inasmuch as the

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idea is born from the material. Every one of them is stone, and chiselled directly from the block. "True sculpture is always formed material; not a portrayal like in a wax cabinet".

Out of a huge block of marble, so hard that he had to exert his utmost strength to work on it, he carved the monstrous figure of a fettered aborigine which was angular in its sharp contours, brutal in the forms and terrorizing in its total appearance.

A slab of alabaster was lying in his studio for years, until in his sculptural fantasy its form began to take shape, and he expressed it in the allegory of the first man. The grippingly magnificent statue "Consumatum Est" came to life in the same manner. In its simplicity and serene grandeur it has a most powerful effect. It is the artist's most perfect solution for a new creation, re-born out of the material of a vision received from nature.

Epstein's chiselled works are effective because of their almost primitive naturalness. That this effect is accepted reluctantly by most people is the fault of our poorly educated optical faculty, which is not accustomed to bring the optic impression in direct accord with sensual feeling.

However, the word primitive should not be misconstrued. If we are enthused by the primitive wooden figures of the Africans today, it has a deeper meaning. For in them the primitive people reveal their primitive religious, magic-mysterious, superstitious and ghostly feelings of terror, fear and despair, but likewise their frenzy and savagery. In other words, they express their natural, instinctive feelings.

When we understand the meaning of these works by the men of nature, and do not try to imitate them

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in purely external form as do so many of the modern artists, then we will be able to give the conception of the primitive the same interpretation that Jacob Epstein expresses in his works.

Epstein is not primitive in a barbaric sense. In presenting the first man as a sort of aborigine in a work such as his "Adam", he very intentionally deviates from the traditional view that God created man in His image, i.e. as the handsome young man.

To the artist the act of creation consists in giving birth to the living strength of the human being out of lifeless stone; or, to put it differently, he believes that the material releases forces through which it creates a new energy. In this hour of birth is born not an individual man, but all mankind.

Epstein's sculptural prowess is not bound to any definite style. In a manner of speaking, he works by instinct according to his mental disposition and his artistic feeling. His symbolic monuments owe their existence to sudden inspirations that flash up like lightning visions.

His numerous portraits, on the other hand, are the result of a thinking process in which fashioning is subject to different rules.

To many, Epstein is known only as portraitist whose busts are distinguished by a spontaneous vitality and keen characterization. In these works he employs—in contrast to the creations born of the material—the technique of modeling since here an impressionistic effect is the primary factor, i.e. an impression received by the eye.

In such a case the process of artistic creation is based on the feel of the subject which is already in existence.

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However, to combine this optical perception with the inner conception in order to give it spiritual content and express its essentialness in the form means, in this instance, the formative creation of something new. Epstein is a master in this art of expression, and knows how to fix the most intimate emotional strain indicated in every muscle or by the slightest quiver.

We can distinguish here between three parallel categories: the portraits of noted personalities, studies of expression on models, and the heads of children.

The portrayal of famous persons first requires an exact study and analysis of the characteristics of the model in question, and of the intellectual powers that mark them. The artist must, therefore, undertaking the actual work, establish direct contact with his *vis-à-vis* and "become thoroughly acquainted with him" so that, as a result of such knowledge, he can embrace sculpturally the most characteristic moments and form them.

Among Epstein's many familiar works are some that are of particular eminence. The troubled surface treatment of the bust of Jacob Kramer, the painter, transmits the nervous restlessness of agonized tension. The portrait of Joseph Conrad, on the other hand, completed just a few months prior to his death, is a magnificent rendition of the morosely introspect old sea lion. In the languishing features of Moishe Oyved is expressed the whole romantic reverie of the poet, while the portrait of Bernard Shaw is pervaded with the sardonic smile of the indestructible literary warrior.

The use of a model is left to the free choice of the artist. In such a case the artist's contact is pre-existent, which does not mean that in the course of work it cannot be essentially condensed.

Generally it is some attitude or expression that fas-

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cinates or inspires the artist, so that a work is created that is based on this one very particular mood, withal leaving the artist plenty of leeway for psychological penetration.

Epstein frequently uses exotic Oriental types because, unlike the civilized European who shows too much self-control, their gesture language is less inhibited and more candid.

He likes the non-artificial, the natural; he wants the elemental expression so that he can work the most powerful expression out of the archetype. The half-figure of a weeping woman, and the life-size standing statue which he entitled "The Visitation" are the most important examples of the most forceful soul expression.

The weeping woman is almost exhausted in her grief; her eyelids, tired out from the flow of tears, are lowered; the mouth, from which just a slight sobbing escapes, is half open. Her arms are lightly pressed against her, her hands are clasped. The artist very rarely employs the motif of the hands in his busts and half figures; but these hands stress the expression of sorrow. The position of the arms and the light forward inclination of the head are plaintively beseeching.

The standing statue of a woman is altogether quiet submission, resigned expectation, unassuming acquiescence. Here again, it is the position of the arms and the wonderful, gentle folding of the hands that brings out the inner emotion in the total bearing.

And there is yet another sculptural motif with which the artist adds the most perfect touch: the uninterrupted flow of the long skirt folds which, reaching to the floor, cover the feet and thereby enhance the calm of the solemn moment.

And finally, let us cite a third example, a work that

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is full of dynamic tension and sensual awareness. The bronze bust "Oriol Ross" is a symbol of a youthfully fresh and positive outlook on life; the pose offers a slightly bold challenge, every muscle seems to be tensed and set in motion and a quivering runs through every limb. The flowing locks of hair, the distended nostrils and the slightly pursed lips express lust. From the proudly held head and the slender neck, a ripple pulsates across the shoulders like an electric current down into the arms and the nervously active hands right through to the thin, long fingers.

Epstein has the rare faculty of getting along with children, and of playing and frolicking with them. For hours on end he can watch them, and nothing is more alluring to him than the rendition of the little creatures who, in their unconscious play of expression are often so funny, and so awkward in their as yet uncontrolled movements.

Yet there is hardly anything more difficult for an artist to portray than children. Not only does the constant change of motion and expression demand a lightning-fast comprehension, but the unburdened, naively shining soul of children demands that we understand them correctly. Only few succeed therein, for the language of children has become a foreign one to them and they no longer find the way to a paradise that forever remains closed to them.

Epstein, however, does possess that gift. In countless variations he portrayed his small daughter Peggy-Jean, beginning when she was but a few months old; the adoring eye of the father could never get enough of the child. Mostly he portrayed only her little head, casting the round baby forms and the snub nose, and, later, the unruly curls, in sculpturally fluid forms.

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Yet with all this the master's program is by no means complete. Just as a chance glance at a stone slab arouses in him the idea for its artistic shaping, so too, does he take up with almost instinctive enthusiasm any other subject that happens to fascinate him. During a stay in the country he is playing with his little daughter, and she brings him some freshly picked flowers. The sight intrigues him and he begins to paint, finishing 100 flower pieces in short order.

He made hundreds of drawings pertaining to the Old Testament. Then again he plunges into the illustration of Baudelaire's "Les Fleurs du Mal", exhibits the 60 drawings in London and goes through the same experience as with his monumental sculptures. The "Daily Mail" exclaims: "An outrage and abjectness, without aesthetic feeling". Epstein himself calls these sheets "one of my best works and my greatest failure".

Within the last years things have quieted down around him. He continues to work with undiminished strength in his London studio, but the critics are silent—for the time being, anyhow. Who knows, though, what Epstein may still have in store for us?

* * *

It has always been a fact that the work of a truly great artist was never immediately accepted without opposition, for he is a creator, which means he wants to create something new. The artist who works without consideration for applause and success, merely because of an inner urge, lets his work express his thoughts and sentiments. And since he is a being and a creation of his time and environment, his work of necessity is also a time creation. The stronger his personality, the more comprehensive and sensitive his absorption of its mental oscillations, thereby making him their interpreter.

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Modern art wants to be understood, not enjoyed. The artist wants his creative power to be known, he wants to be taken seriously. The times of gay fantasy are over. Today we do not consider beautiful that which pleases a priori, but that which is true and genuine. Our apparatus of sentiments and senses reacts to altogether different sensations, for life is serious, sober non-sentimental and disillusioned. Its purport is the production of forces; not a simple acceptance of facts but a constant re-birth from inner experience. Nothing exists without the motive energy from within, which battles for utterance. Man carries his world within himself. The important thing is to recognize this world. The artist wants to give it shape; he wants to give expression to the disorganized and frequently unconscious energies via his imagination, and to elevate them to a visual symbol of the human mind.

Modern art comes from a different world of vision than the art of former centuries. Accordingly, it must be appraised differently. The terms naturalism and expressionism are opposite signs, indicating both directions simultaneously. Modern art opposes naturalism as an object of sensationalism, and replaces it with productive self-manifestation. The latter, in turn, can derive its creative power from two sources, one of which is real, the other, unreal. The real expressionism gets its impulse from the surrounding world, which it endows with a new, meaningful, concrete form. Jacob Epstein's monumental works are excellent sculptural examples of this art.

Unreal expressionism, however, rejects even this contact with the world of existence; it recognizes no objectivity, solely the energy of expression in abstract form. It repudiates all sentimentality and all resembl-

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ance to real forms, replacing them with purely conceptual forms (for without any form at all there is no art portrayal). Its source is mathematics, the formula, transmuted into dynamics, rhythm and motion.

Abstract art seeks to express these fundamental conceptions in the simplest basic forms, and to enhance them to pictorial beauty. It is not immediately lucid to the spectator, any more than real art is. It demands in greater measure—and this is indeed the challenge of modern art altogether—the willingness to accept it.

When we will have finally found the approach to these art expressions (which may seem strange to us, but which, in reality, are part of the world of idea active within us) then we shall understand their artistic value. The more we occupy ourselves with these products of art, and absorb their effect upon us, the more will we discover therein the dynamic tension and dramatic excitement of our own ego, and the more will we appreciate the creators of abstract art as interpreters of our age.

JACQUES LIPCHITZ

JACQUES LIPCHITZ was one of the first advocates of this trend. There are few dates to mark his life, and his achievement is difficult to describe. His works affect the purely sensual to such a degree that they cannot be explained by words. In the face of such creations one senses the hopelessness of rendering artistic perception by the medium of language, for language can only transmit ideas, and cannot disclose the experience.

Lipchitz was born in 1891 in a little Polish village, attended the art school in Vilna and came to Paris at the

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age of 18. He studied sculpture at the Ecole des Beaux Arts and the Academie Julian. In 1912 he had his first exhibit, and in 1920 he caused tremendous excitement with a showing of his new works. Since that time he is considered one of the leading masters. He lived in Paris until the outbreak of World War II, and then came to New York. His art won immediate recognition in America, too, and today is represented in all collections of modern art.

Jacques Lipchitz' achievement lies in the fact that he is a discoverer. He is the first artist who musters up enough courage to take the decisive step into the abstract in sculpture.

After two years in Paris he appears with some busts which might very well be placed beside works of Maillol and Despiau. But the following year he already deviates from naturalism. Apparently stimulated by the new ideas used by Picasso in his early paintings, he begins to rhytmatize his figures analytically, whereby he relinquishes individuality in favor of generalization. He permits muscular motion to become form motion, and tries to express in the play of light of bronze what painters purport with color, namely, to utilize light instead of color as a constructive medium.

The logical progress from one work to the next is astonishing, and then, only a few years later, drawing the last consequence, he creates from the material independent formations of his own as non-objective documents of conception and feeling.

His forceful personality speaks out of every one of his works, for they appear to be the very crystallization of the inner powers driving him. Because of their monumentality, compactness and not-to-be-misrepresented

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form they have an immediate effect. One has the impression of an electric current, with the sparks flying over to the onlooker.

Those curves and surfaces are no dry constructions, but spiritualized complexes that derive their right to existence from some mysterious will. They are no dead formations, but energy-laden demonstrations; unsentimental, unreal, yet somehow existing beings, neither beautiful in the usual sense, nor ugly either. But in their collective appearance they offer a wholly new sensation to the eye; the longer it rests upon them, the stronger the emotion grows.

Lipchitz works with immense concentration. Many sketches precede the final version, until every chance is eliminated and the form has been worked out to the most minute clarity and simplicity. The original idea may arise out of a sudden emotion and grow quite spontaneously as a first sketch. But the shaping hand and logical fantasy does not rest until finally absolute clarity has been reached.

Abstract art is much more adamant than any other art style; it won't stand for anything superfluous or diverting, and it demands severest discipline and top economy. Standing before Lipchitz' works, one always has the feeling that everything has been said; and yet, one has only to compare the various versions of the same theme, to which he keeps returning, in order to realize how infinite are the possibilities of varying his expression, and how every single creation releases a very definite mood harmony; also, that it is born out of a particular frame of mind and new experience.

From the preceding definitions it should be apparent to everyone that there is a kinship between abstract art

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and music. In order to illustrate the world of abstract ideas, one often had to borrow terms from the music vocabulary. Music is the most unobjective of all arts; tone sequences and tone combinations are its organ, sounds that vibrate invisibly and arouse our sensibility. Plastic art, especially sculpture, must first transform these tones into forms which then, of their own accord, release the new, life-giving vibrations. Abstract instrumentation, therefore, resembles musical instrumentation in many respects.

Because he is the most consequential, Lipchitz is one of the most interesting masters of abstract art. And he is the most easily understood and most impressive because he does not push us into a whirlpool of emotional excitement, disorder and distress (see, for instance, Picasso's "Guernica"); instead, he tries to create harmonies so that the mobility of his formations is not convulsive in appearance, but resolves in rhythmic vibrations.

It is difficult, in a characterization, to do justice to the work of a man who is still in the prime of life and who, as is especially the case with Lipchitz, unfolds his vitality further with each new work. How much more difficult, then, to utter a closing word about an art that is just at the starting point of its development and the further paths of which, like our destiny and the more remote attitude of the human mind, lie in the darkness of an unknown future. The eyewitness and contemporary is always prejudiced since he lacks the necessary remoteness of calm, temperate judgment. His capacity is affected by the personal to such a degree that when he comes upon something new and unaccustomed, he finds his bearings only with difficulty.

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The contemporary artist is always exposed to the battle of opinion regarding the most contradictory conceptions. The stronger, the more individual and the more visionary he is, the more will he be opposed. But that which is true and great remains and succeeds, regardless of when the hour of recognition may strike.

The School of Paris

JUST AS the French Revolution introduced a complete change of social conditions at the turn of the 18th century, so, too, about a century later, did all intellectual life experience a change the likes of which history had never before seen.

The world had exhausted itself in the continuation of traditional views. Occasional attempts had been made to recoin tradition by utilizing the experiences gained from advancing sciences. However, there occurred such a surfeit and satiety of human society toward all order that the storm signals of violent discharges (which were finally set off by the pistol shots at Serajewo) made themselves noticeable a long time ahead in overstimulation and aimlessness. Art, that most delicate of intellectual seismographs, was the first to be affected.

French painting in the course of the 19th century had evolved from traditional academic studio art to naturalism, which finally flowed over into impressionism. Actually, impressionism is the final link of an art that was adhered to since the 14th century; an art that aspired to a true-to-life reproduction of all phenomena.

While the impressionists now considered valid only the purely optic-visual experience, attempts at optic legitimacy were already becoming noticeable within their own ranks. The first incentive came from Seurat with paintings that resolved in points. Van Gogh's nature rapture gave new significance to light per se; Gauguin tried to find a synthesis with color surfaces.

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But the pioneer for a simplified, generously decorative seeing, and, with that, founder of a new conception, was Paul Cézanne. While Courbet had still claimed: "I paint what I see", Renoir, who for a while had kept company with the plain-air-painters, had expressed himself to the effect that he "paints with the brain, nay, with his senses". Cézanne sought certain laws for that, and recognized them in the reduction of all visible phenomena to their cubic-mathematical content. The color construction had to be deduced from the lawfulness of the form.

When, shortly before his death, Cézanne's paintings were shown for the first time in a retrospective exhibition (Paris, 1904), that was the signal for the definite breach with naturalism.

It was a radical breach with all heretofore existing views on art and life. While one group of artists—the so-called neo-impressionists—were still seeking to develop form and rhythm further, as direct heirs of Cézanne, the storm that was now breaking swept away all traditional order. It was no longer the visible exterior world that resulted in the true work of art, but solely spiritual and emotional experience.

The search was on for new forms of expression, inasmuch as one also sought a new purport in life. The bourgeoisie of the 19th century had believed faith in the surrounding world to be the sole reality. The artist was the servant of nature, whose laws he was obliged to adhere to.

The reaction was a flight into a formation of fantasy that was to be interpreted symbolic-like; a formation that was not bound to any rule but depended merely upon the individual temperament of the artist. The important thing was to lend rhythmic expression to this



PLATE 41

ISIDOR ASCHHEIM: Jericho 1946 (Oil) *Courtesy, the artist*

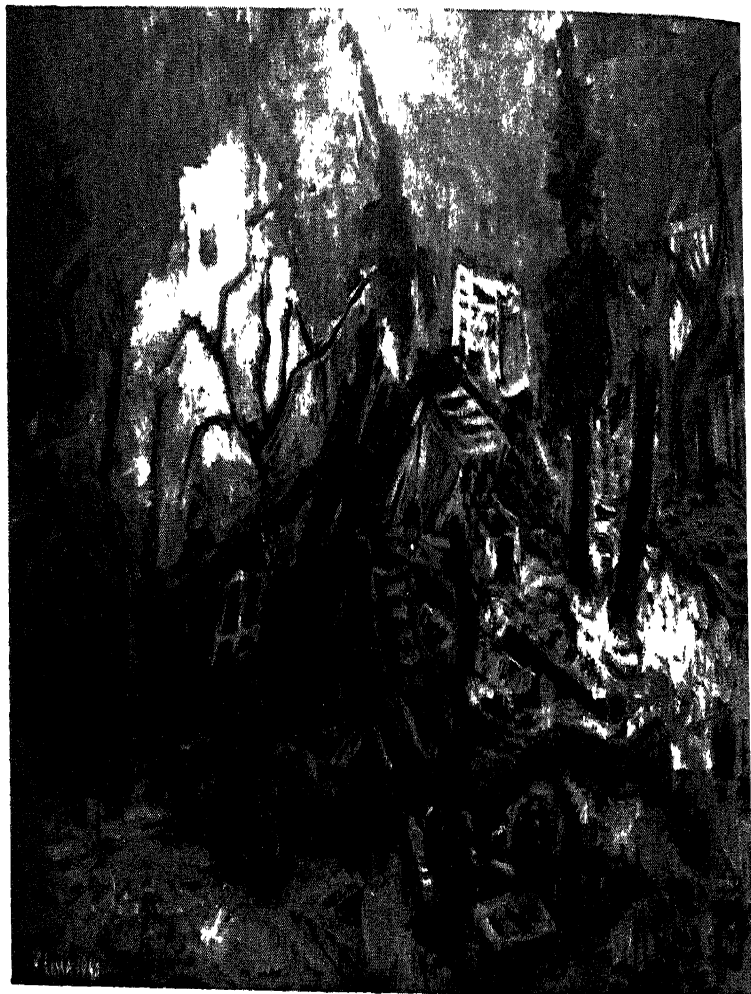


PLATE 42

MIRON SIMA: After the Bombardment of Tel-Aviv in 1940 (Oil)
Courtesy, the artist



PLATE 43

ISSAI KULVIANSKY: *The Sand-Cart* (Oil), *Museum Tel-Aviv*



PLATE 44

MORDECHAI BRONSTEIN: Har Hazofim, Jerusalem (Oil)
Museum Bezdell, Jerusalem

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abstract world. Form and color were completely revaluated. Form turned increasingly ornamental, color became the carrier of psychological reaction.

Wherever the old society order began to shake, new art trends would arise and champion special doctrines. Russia, Germany and France experienced similar processes of fermentation, but Paris still remained the magic magnet where were arbitrated the battles of the various, more or less radical, doctrines that sailed under the flags of the different "isms".

But—Paris of the 20th century was in every respect different than what it had been. Even externally, her art life took on a new face. The art that, at the beginning of the 19th century had swept away the officially representative tradition had, in its further development, grown to be a civilian affair. It belonged to the social order of daily life.

Now, however, it turned its back intentionally and would have nothing to do with the "bourgeois".

The impressionists had still held their meetings in a cafe near the great Boulevards. Now the artists established themselves in a special section of the city, where they led their own lives. Montmartre and—after the war—Montparnasse became playgrounds of an artistry comprised of the most varying French and international elements.

They tried to drown their worries about their daily bread in wild art battles and excessive alcohol orgies. In their whole attitude toward life they were expression of an era that refuted the world of yesterday, and in their search for new forms of life and expression they never found a satisfactory answer.

It was a time of storm and stress which naturally started out somewhat unruly, for although they were

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aware of the direction they were supposed to follow, they could not come to an agreement because of the narrow-mindedness attendant upon every battle.

The war called away some of the artists, with the result that the art debates calmed down somewhat. However, as soon as arms were laid down, the debates were resumed. It turned out, though, that some of the radical smaller sects had already run into a blind alley, and a number of truly great personalities were gaining more and more ground. As had been the case in former times, there arose once more a "school of Paris" which included artists of world fame (we name here only Matisse, Picasso, Rouault and Braque, in order to indicate the trend). Still, the name has special significance in the further course of our contemplation insofar as within this circle was gathered a Jewish enclave with a character all its own.

* * *

So far we have spoken about Jewish artists who made their appearance here and there, and it was not quite unintentional that we had them appear on the world's stage individually. Connections, with the exception of a very few personal ones, were fairly loose, and it can be said that the Jewish artist almost always is an isolated figure in an environment that is actually foreign to him. It is never more than a collegial friendship that binds him to the others.

In the new century the number of Jewish artists streaming from East to West increases rapidly. All of them have one goal: Paris. Some of them stop enroute, most of them come straightaway. In proportion to the huge crowd of artists living there they are, and always will be, of course, a dwindlingly small group. There are hardly more than half a hundred at a time, and we

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are speaking only of those who settle permanently in Paris, not even mentioning those who come there for a short time to study.

Yet the oddity occurs that this minority of foreigners soon begins to play a role of its own which is so conspicuous that one now talks about a Jewish school of Paris, and this special designation has penetrated universal art literature.

The Jewish artists form a community there. In many cases the reasons for it may have been purely external ones: the common language, the absolutely comprehensible affinity to a fellow countryman whose customs one knows and in whose presence one is less self-conscious than toward a total stranger. It is a well known fact that people who at home never knew each other, or were barely interested in one another, suddenly act like old friends in the outside world. The earlier arrival gladly welcomes the newcomer, for he remembers how forlorn and helpless he felt when he arrived.

But there is more involved here. There is a spiritual tie that not only brings these people together as fellow tribesmen, but holds them together; for they are not here by accident, but have come with the same intention, the same urge, and in search of the same great unknown factor: art. And they come into a confusing whirlpool. New impressions and conceptions storm in on them.

Many of them view here for the first time the great masters in the museums, and have their initial meeting with great art. And then there is the upheaval in daily life. The conglomeration of people and types; the art school in which the disciples work and argue; art life changing from one studio to another; the atmosphere, charged with idealistic and fantastic ideas, which, as we

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have seen, was so explosive during these first decades of the century; the successive bursting of the most varying opinions, doctrines and philosophies, fighting amongst one another, one day granting the one party, the next day a different party the seemingly sole right to exist—is it not natural, then, that a common chord was struck in these blood relations, and that their essential difference becomes more marked in comparison with the others?

The Paris school produced quite a number of noted Jewish artists who because of their peculiarity as Jewish artists, are not considered Parisian artists. Despite the fact that Paris reared them, and that they owe much to this instructress, since it was only here that they could attain such maturity, still, by preserving this very peculiarity they prove their genuine and specific artistry.

It is no coincidence that the Jew reached his artistic maturity at the very moment when universal art turns from external reality and seeks an internal attitude. It is a phenomenon that is easily explained and, as we have tried to outline in the introduction, has its psychological cause in the whole mentality of the Jew.

Throughout the ages the Jew never directed his eye toward the outside world. He always sought his world within himself, listening to the voice of his heart and his tortured soul that was crying for delivery. He lived in dreams and promises that were conjured up by visions, since earthly life denied them to him. His intellectualism had been raised on his spiritual vision. The material beauty of nature was alien to him, he recognized it only conditionally, for he had no faith in it.

Now the world around him had changed. When, at the start of the century, its gates had first been opened

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to him, he came upon a strange class of society everywhere, a society that lived in a self-satisfied bourgeoisie. In the meantime, however, this society had outlived itself and was facing collapse. Voices were raised that called them to their senses. The ghastly signs of this Menetekel appeared all over, causing a turmoil among the intellectuals. The Jew, too, is affected. He takes note of it, and replies in his own way.

Now he can participate, can express himself. Now that the world, too, turns its glance inward and art struggles for new forms of expression, he can throw his weight into the balance and see to it that the new world order, in the process of being shaped, recognizes him as an equal factor in art.

Paris had always attracted artists from all countries and nations; many had come and gone again without leaving any traces. They were intelligent pupils and took along inspirations that they utilized at home. Zuloaga had remained a Spaniard in spite of Paris. The Mexican de Rivera, who had come via Spain and had originally been affected by the Parisian influence, was just a passing figure, as were a number of German painters.

Then there were others who selected Paris as their permanent residence and grew French to such an extent that no mention is ever made of their former homeland. A few cases in point are the Flemish van Dongen, the Japanese Foujita and, of course, Picasso, the Spaniard, who developed into the leader of French art.

In the case of the Jewish artists, the story is different. Although they choose Paris as their new home, they keep to themselves. They belong to the school of Paris per se, but they express their specificity so strongly

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that, for the first time since Jews have appeared as artists, a Jewish school of special significance develops.

What does this specificity consist of? It has its deep psychological causes. The Jew is mentally much more encumbered than the others, and far from being happy about it, he suffers under this fate. He desires not only to escape the material narrowness of the ghetto, but also aspires to intellectual liberation. He looks for it everywhere. Thus far the result is unsatisfactory, although some have achieved success. As long as the world obeyed the old order, such success was limited only to a few individuals. But things had changed now. Art had been charged with a new mission, it struggled for expression, for liberation of the soul.

The Jew had his own answer for this. Paris, the new Paris, offers him the practical tools, as it were,—but no more. He makes his own choice. He rejects the absolutely abstract; constructivism in the sense of logically arranged construction remains alien to him. He is too sensual for that, too much a man of sensibility, too unorganized, too impulsive and too explosive. For his soul trembles, it suffers from visionary longing. His emotional world always moves between weeping and laughing. His weeping is a loud outcry, and his laughter is full of bitter sarcasm.

These are the opposite poles around which his life revolves. He wants and has to give expression to them so that his soul may be freed of its nightmare. And he finds this expression in art. That is, a very few find it. They are the masters who give the Paris school its character.

In the year in which, for the first time, a group of French painters got together at an exhibition in order to demonstrate against impressionism, two 20 year old

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Jewish artists came to Paris. It was 1905, the year following the big Cézanne exhibit, that Rouault, Matisse, Derain, Dufy, Braque and Vlaminck appeared jointly. They called themselves "Les Fauves"—the wild ones—which was quite a fitting designation for the untamed will of the new generation opposed to all conventions of yesterday.

Pascin and Modigliani more or less formed the Jewish vanguard, although various less important artists had already settled there. Pascin, a Bulgarian, was already known for his drawings in the *Simplizissimus*; Modigliani was a novice from Italy. At the same time, Eugen Zak settled there permanently, having previously studied with Gerome for five years and, later, in Italy and Munich.

The next arrival was 26 year old George Kars, from Prague. The Russian Adolf Feder studied under Matisse in 1909, and in the following year Kisling, Chagall and Soutine made their appearance. During the war years most of them were absent, but they returned, bringing with them many others, such as Mané Katz, Max Band, Menkes, Ryback and Leopold Gottlieb, a late-born brother of Mauricy Gottlieb. These are just a few of the better known artists. All of them were in their twenties when they came to France; Soutine was only 17, Kisling and Katz 19—all of them just youngsters.

Of the other artists who became leaders of the new trend at that time (1905), Bonnard was 38, Matisse 36, and Picasso, Braque and Léger 24. Cézanne died the following year, while Dégas, although blind, lived until 1917. Renoir spent his declining days at the Riviera, until 1919, and Monet died in 1926 in his 86th year.

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This, then, is the collective picture in which some of the Jewish artists are pre-eminent.

AMEDEO MODIGLIANI

MODIGLIANI'S LIFE is one of the greatest tragedies in art. Licentiousness prematurely ruined a great talent before it was ever able to develop fully.

A highly gifted person, but a weakling who burned the candle at both ends; who could not tame his desires; who wasted a great part of his days senselessly and idly; who started much and finished little; who destroyed most of his own work in a mood of disgust and finally had to peddle his creations like a miserable beggar, just to get a few morsels for his bare existence—his life, begun with so much pride and conceit, ended at 35.

Modigliani was born in Livorno. The family was poor, but had prosperous relatives so that the boy, whom several serious illnesses had left with a delicate constitution, lacked nothing. He attended gymnasium, showed signs of tuberculosis at 17 and spent the winter on the Isle of Capri.

At 19 he came to live with an uncle in Venice, where he studied art somewhat superficially since he preferred to indulge in pleasure. In 1905, well equipped with money by his uncle, he went to Paris. The first thing he did was to take a luxurious apartment and lead the life of a dandy.

He looked with contempt upon artists devoted to serious studies, for without any work or trouble on his part he won the student prizes at the Colarossi School. After his money was squandered, he moved to Montmartre, where his first friend was Utrillo.

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Utrillo was the son of the painter Suzanne Valadon, who later became famous. At that time she was still working as a model and left the boy to his own devices. He gadded about the streets of Montmartre and soon fell prey to alcohol. His artistic ability showed itself occasionally, between spells of drunkenness, but he frequently had to be placed in institutions, from where he then made his re-appearance in Montmartre.

It was unfortunate that Modigliani had to come across this young man who, although greatly talented, was equally lacking in willpower, and who now induced him, too, to partake of alcohol.

He did do some work, inspired particularly by Picasso, who had recognized his talent at once. But since his alcohol escapades devoured more money than he had at his disposal, and he was not able to sell his pictures, he soon sank to the level of a drunken loafer who hung around the artist taverns, had no studio of his own and found shelter with one or the other of his colleagues. Sometimes he just lay in the bars in a drunken stupor.

Finally, when alcohol no longer produced the desired effect, he took stronger intoxicants and became addicted to hashish. As a consequence, he lost all feeling for any kind of regulated life and work. On the other hand, the poison sometimes drove him to sudden art achievements that caused amazement because of their bizarreness. His women portraits with the strangely elongated swan's necks, the ethereal look and fragile lines were created in this manner.

Modigliani had become a figure known all over the city. Since he was exceptionally handsome and, as long as the intoxicants only stimulated him, his company was amusing and he was a clever conversationalist, he was

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the darling of all the women, and they were his at will. Thus he went from one love affair to the next, senselessly dissipating his living and working strength here as well.

When part of the artists moved to Montparnasse, the Café de la Rotonde and Café du Dome became Modigliani's pastures. He dawdled around there constantly, once in a while making a few quick sketches so he could sell them for a few francs.

He continued to drink more and eat less, so that increasing tuberculosis made him take to bed. To recuperate, he went to his mother's in Livorno for a few months, but he was hardly back in Paris than he again succumbed to his old vices.

In addition to drawing, he had taken up sculpture, but he never had enough perseverance to finish a work once started. Since he had no money with which to acquire material, he would collect stones from a building site. He worked on them superficially, but even the rough sketch gave insight into his originality and his particular sense of style. The sculptor Brancusi had directed his attention to Negro sculpture and the primitive type of stone cutting. But in his drunkenness he destroyed the greater part of such works, so that only a few pieces are in existence. One of those interesting woman's heads is in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

Modigliani could just as well have become a great sculptor, had this richly gifted artist not lost himself in a life of lust.

When he exhibited his first painting, in 1910, the poet Leopold Zborowski, who later turned art dealer, was so charmed by it that he did everything in his power to save the artist, in whom he recognized one of

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the greatest talents. Without this devoted friend and helper, Modigliani would have gone to ruin much sooner. Zborowski gave him shelter, provided him with painting materials and went with him to Nicè for a time in order to tear him away from the vagabond life he was leading in Paris.

During those years Modigliani devoted himself increasingly to painting and created his best works. He painted solely women's heads and nudes, developing therein his peculiar decorative style. The figures are strangely contorted and haggard, with long necks and oval faces, exaggeratedly sharp noses, almond shaped eyes and exceptionally small mouths, the head framed by dark hair treated like arabesques in ornamental fashion.

Modigliani was chiefly a drawing artist; even in his paintings color plays but a minor part. Light and shadow are barely indicated and the forms are produced by lines.

At first it was Toulouse-Lautrec who made a deep impression on Modigliani, until he recognized his master in Cézanne, whose constructivism exerted a lasting influence on him. A peculiar rhythm gives life to the silhouette-like figures—especially the nudes—and reminds one occasionally of early Italians, of Simone Martini, the masters from Siena and of Botticelli.

His whole art has something primitive, shyly restrained; mostly it is dreamily serious and indicates a certain degeneration which, nonetheless, has an expression that is tastefully tempered; for, after all, they are creations of an artist who is innately gifted but one who became completely disorganized and finally succumbed to his excesses.

Modigliani died of pneumonia. The woman who

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devoted herself to him to the very end with the utmost love and care jumped out of the window the day after his death. They lie side by side on the Père-Lachaise. Their tombstones read:

Amedeo Modigliani

Pittore

Nato a Livorno il

12 Luglio 1884

Morte il

24 Gennaio 1920

Quando

Giunse alla gloria

Jeanne Hebuterne

Nata a Parigi il

6 Aprile 1898

Morte a Parigi il

25 Gennaio 1920

Di Amedeo Modigliani

compagna

Devota Fina al-

l'estremo Sacrificio

The entire art colony accompanied him to the cemetery with all pomp and grandeur. What life had denied him came to him in death. The appreciation of his works knew no bounds. They were worth their weight in gold, and his name gained world fame.

JULES PASCIN

THERE IS a certain parallel to Modigliani's life in the destiny of his contemporary, Jules Pascin. He, too, is devoted to the questionable enjoyment of an exaggerated eroticism, and his art, too, is completely onesided in its captivation of a theme that holds him in wild ecstasy. He, too, is a highly gifted artist with peculiar characteristics; an artist who is able to produce masterworks with the greatest of ease, and whose whole life consists of one wild orgy. There is a difference insofar as, being physically stronger, he can stand it longer, but in the end it ruins him as well. Pascin lived just ten years longer than Modigliani.

His real name was Pincas, and he came from Bul-

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garia; his parents were Serbian-Spanish. His native village, Vidin, was one of those infamous places infested with the most undesirable Balkan elements.

At 16 he met the owner of a bordello who attracted the always busily drawing boy, and this decided his fate. He became the portrayer of vice. He sent some of his rakish drawings to the *Simplizissimus* in Munich, and was engaged at once. He worked in Munich for a while, then in Berlin, Vienna and Budapest and finally, almost simultaneously with Modigliani, he came to Paris where he spent the next eleven years.

His fascinating personality captivated everyone and, together with his never failing generosity, soon made him one of the best known and most popular figures. Everybody gathered around him and they led a gay life of wild orgies. Wherever Pascin went, he was always the central figure: in the famous cabaret "Lapin á Gill", in the Cafè de la Rotonde, where Picasso, Derain, Vlaminck, Kisling, Zadkine, Braque and Foujita met almost every evening; also in the Dome across the street, which was headquarters of Rudolf Levy, Fiori, Augustus John and Jacob Epstein, and the meeting place of all the Bohemians, grisettes and models, poets and authors; and in the most select restaurants, at vaudeville shows and, chiefly, in the bordellos.

One of the most interesting female types of Montmartre was a mulatto woman of exquisite beauty. Aicha Goblet had been a circus rider in a wandering cabaret. One day Pascin saw her riding a white horse and was completely fascinated by the charming sight. She became his model and his mistress and the world famous leader of the revelries held in his studio. Pascin always had ample funds at his disposal, since he earned a lot

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of money, but he squandered it recklessly and finally knew no bounds in his lecherous mode of living.

During the war he went to America, where he continued with the same kind of life, and he soon became equally famous for his cunning erotic art and for his eccentricities. Whether he was in New York or in Florida or Louisiana, in Cuba, Tunis, Portugal or Spain, he led a loose life of wandering, knew all amusement centers and all places of vice.

In Central America he was fascinated by the negro population, the colorful activities in the harbour taverns, the slave market in Charleston and the licentiousness of the black underworld in New Orleans.

After seven years he returned to Paris, greedier and more untamable in his lusts. Thus he spent his life until, finally, his strength left him, his physical and mental condition deteriorated and he was disgusted. In a fit of depression he ended his life by slashing his wrists and hanging himself in his studio.

So did this artist's earthly wanderings find a tragic ending. Again an exceptional talent had been destroyed by wantonness. For Pascin was, in spite of his one-sidedness—or, perhaps as a consequence of it—a master of a special kind. He possessed faculties in which nobody equalled him. He enhanced his drawing ability with cunning technique to the point of insurpassable perfection.

The pointed stroke, the delicacy of line, and the curves that twist in capriole-like designs possess an extremely graceful buoyancy such as can be found only in a Constantin Guys, or Gavarni and Toulouse-Lautrec. They are reminiscent of the very finest chinoiserie.

Nervous and hasty, yet with incredible sureness, Pas-

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cin threw the strokes onto paper, usually only indicating the outlines and not going into details. In this manner he completed many book illustrations, sarcastic, light aperçus that were elegant and entertaining.

The charm of his aquarelles is enhanced still further by the delicate and tasteful color harmonies in the most pastel pink, gossamer blue and a barely intimated gray. Actually, they are colored drawings, because the line almost always gives the contour and it retains its specific value.

Of particular interest and exceptionally alive, due to sharp lighting contrast, are a number of landscapes, harbour and mass scenes from Central America.

However, his principal theme is the female body, the young, barely developed girl; one might say, young flesh, for he was interested in the purely carnal; also, the description of erotic vice and sensual intoxication and all imaginable perversions. But he imparts to them such refined expression, and so much charm, that he never appears obscene or repulsive. The lack of restraint and the naturalness with which he gives free rein to his sensuality and sex impulse in his art is a reflection of his decadence.

And like their master, so, too, are his figures. The young creatures portrayed by him have nothing gay or alive about them; they never laugh, wear a melancholic expression and their bearing is oppressed. These prostitutes do not know what true love is, just as they get no real pleasure out of life. For the artist they are merely subjects.

In his paintings Pascin developed more slowly. At first they are influenced by the somewhat dry and heavy northern expressionism. Then, in America, he distributes the surfaces according to cubic laws. Later, how-

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ever, he achieves a style of his own in fine tones as delicate as mother-of-pearl and in the fashion of Cézanne, whose compositorial principals and rhythmic construction he follows, albeit in somewhat modified manner. However, a sensitive nervousness marks it as his personal signature.

He invents expressive means of subtle polish for his oil technique just as he did in his aquarelles. Just as in the latter the colors appear cobweb sheer, so does he let the colors in his paintings blend gently by using a clever mixture of turpentine and varnish and by working only with medium tones. This enables him to portray in his female nudes the slight swelling of the flesh that seems to rise and fall in flickering candlelight.

Pascin and Modigliani, two artists who were exceptional in their individuality, became victims of their personal foibles. But behind these weaknesses was concealed artistic grandeur and strength, so that they could do no damage to their creative work.

MOISE KISLING

WHEREAS MODIGLIANI and Pascin represent the decadent side of Parisian art life during the first decades of the century, the third in this group is the exact opposite. Moise Kisling, too, enjoyed the lighter side of young artistry, but without being hurt by it. As a matter of fact, he was the center of the escapades in Montparnasse, especially during the pre-war years. He was one of the loudest and merriest, but also the healthiest and most resistant. He never lost himself to such an extent that his work—which from the start was purposeful—had to suffer.

Florent Fels writes: "he was the fun maker at all our



PLATE 45

AARON KAHANA: Tel-Aviv (Oil) *Courtesy Gal. Billiet, Paris*



PLATE 46

S. SEBBA: Sheep-Shearing in the Kibbuz (Oil in different piles) *Courtesy, the artist*



PLATE 47

MARCEL JANGU: Arab Cafe (Tempera) Courtesy, the artist



PLATE 48

JOHANAN SIMON: Life in the Kibbuz (Oil) Courtesy, the artist

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parties. His studio reverberated with the songs of the poets and the screaming of the bacchantes. Max Jacob and Reverdy were to be found there, as were André Salmon and Dérain, Picasso and Braque, Modigliani and Per Krohg and the artists from the four main centers: London, Marseille, New York and Berlin”.

It was a motley company that was trying to deceive itself about the worries of life and the problems of their art by carousing. Perhaps Kisling was the only one among them who had no problems, for his sane instinct showed him the proper direction.

At 19 he left his native town, Cracow, where he had gone through art school, and came to Paris. Here his beauty attracted so much attention that the women turned around to look after him. No wonder that he was everybody's darling, and he could select the women as he pleased. And he did pick the most interesting among the midinettes as his models.

For a time one of his principal models was Kiki, who became so famous in Montparnasse. She was an illegitimate child and had spent a horrible youth. She finally landed as professional model and learned so much from the artists that one day she herself took up painting. After the war she had a showing of her works which turned out to be a huge success.

One of her friends persuaded her to write her memoirs. She did, and they were published with a preface by Foujita, who had discovered her painting talent. The book was even translated into English, and the girl who started out as char-woman and news vendor acquired world fame with it.

That Kisling should use her as a model is characteristic of him; he needed “interesting models”, exotic beauties or types who had something musical about

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them, or from whose face spoke some spiritual or emotional note; or else a suffering somewhat melancholic-meditative expression; but he did not like anything decadent or purely animal.

He saw life and mankind much too real. He was passionately absorbed in his art, so much so that he worked as though in a fever, trembling with excitement. Yet he never lost his dispassionate judgment, and labored with a tremendous perseverance. Nothing in his pictures is superficial or incidental, nor does he improvise. Everything is so planned and worked out, to the last detail, that he finds the ultimate and, therefore, the most natural and impressive simplicity.

When Kisling reached Paris, the most violent waves of opposing art trends were just billowing. He soon became friendly with Picasso, Braque, Juan Gris and Dérain. He observed the works of the impressionists, studied with a great deal of interest the new creations of the "Fauves", and realized at once that only by maintaining strictest self-discipline would he be able to find his way in this chaos. His healthy artlessness and blithe cheerfulness rejected anything that was speculative. He was a realist.

At first he was most strongly impressed by the landscapes of Dunoyer de Segonzac. This combination of Daumier and Cézanne, which reduced nature to the simplest elements of composition, was his first model, followed by Vlaminck's vigorous coloring and, finally, by the severe, broad painting style of an early Dérain. Then the far superior Picasso gained the upper hand, a fact that is attested to clearly in a few early landscapes. Kisling's style can best be described as semi-abstract.

He aspires to supreme simplicity and quickly reaches

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solutions of his own for constructive composition and formation with the help of his particular color technique.

A picture by Kisling is never to be forgotten; it impresses itself on one immediately by means of its form and color. The emotional expression of his portraits is so penetrating—(bearing and motion are reduced to the most simple rhythm and the whole condensed into a musical harmony)—that one can speak of a very personal Kisling style.

His color has an enamel-like lustre and a radiant brilliancy; occasionally the effect is too metallic, but in its orchestral arrangement it sounds so balanced that the over-all impression is pleasant.

This final result is the fruit of extremely careful consideration and exact detail work. His portrayals of nudes have a wonderful rhythm and discrete-delicate color harmony, his figure pictures a distinguished carriage. No wonder that he was especially esteemed as a portraitist.

The whole soul of his models speaks out of their eyes. He had a preference for a slightly melancholic look, for a restrained dreaminess and shy reserve. Such calmness of expression determines the rhythmic-picturesque effect of the total composition.

Among hundreds of pictures one will immediately discover a Kisling. He has his own language, just as he has his own position as human being, too. He can make merry with the others to the point of wantonness; he is one of the best and most helpful comrades. But he knows his limits and knows how to husband his strength. He possesses the necessary self-discipline and is capable of making rapid decisions. In life as in work, he is a realist.

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When war broke out in 1914, he was the first to volunteer. He returned the following year, seriously wounded and decorated with the Medal for Bravery.

After his recovery, he resumed his work with undiminished ardour. His fame as an artist grows international, and he is much in demand as a portraitist. In Paris and London, in Stockholm, Christiania, Berlin and New York he exhibits with great success. During the second World War he was in America, and Hollywood had offered him a new and very lucrative sphere of activity.

He returned to France recently, and is considered one of the most noted painters there.

EUGEN ZAK

IN THE cemetery of Montparnasse, a wonderful monument by the master hand of Charles Despiau adorns the resting place of an artist whose short wanderings on earth passed quietly and little noticed, and who only posthumously was granted justice and recognition.

Eugen Zak was a late romanticist. A gentle, dreamy lyricist, he was so unsuited for the wild turmoil of a battling world of artists that it is difficult to picture him taking part in the Round Table discussions of the Dome or the Rotonde.

He liked to listen to the others, but he was no disputant. He observed and followed with interest the new products of art. But he had a taste of his own, and his own form of expression. He moved in a world of art so at peace with his inner self, and his self-discipline was so imperturbable that nothing could budge him from his course. Accordingly, his work shows such uniformity that the pictures give the impression of having been created simultaneously.

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This uniformity is enchanting in a way; it is a world all by itself. It is a unreal, a friendly, light fairy world, enlivened by a gay fantasy. And although this art seems to be very remote from all other art happenings of that time, it is, nevertheless, timely and modern.

The color scheme, consisting of delicate blue, pink and grey, blends with a severe form. The pictorial construction is followed through with intent. The action motifs are calculated rhythmically fine. Such lyric, born of sentiment and fantasy, may be conceived in a romantic vein, but it is fashioned in modern form.

Varying currents flowed into the soul of this artist. He was born in Russia of Polish parents, spent his childhood in Warsaw and came to Paris when he was only 16. A year of the most old-fashioned academic drill under the then 76 year old Gérôme—one of the most questionable remnants of the pre-impressionist era, and the fanatic hater of all progress—left no mark on him. But two years of Rome and Florence and, above all, the quiet Tuscan country, contributed a great deal to his uniformly delicate coloring.

Then we find him back in Paris, where he is affected by the early Picasso.

During a five years stay in Poland necessitated by the war, he becomes acquainted with the ancient Polish art, and then, after returning to Paris once again, Cézanne's revelations disclose themselves to him. However, he had already been a finished artist long before that, so that during and after his years of travels new things could impress, but not influence him.

And, as though driven by the premonition of an early end, he works uninterruptedly for the remaining four years of his life, creating one work after another

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until, suddenly, a heart attack carries him off in his 42nd year.

His loyal, highly cultured wife, herself an art expert, arranged for a big exhibit of his life production, with the result that the entire world of art took note of the artist who until then had been little known. The museums of Paris, Frankfurt, Duesseldorf, Hamburg, London, Cracow, Chicago and New York, and many other galleries acquired his works. His admirably energetic widow opened an art salon in Paris which was dedicated to the cultivation of fine art as well as to her husband's memory. In this way many of his creations reached the hands of the most important private collectors. The Zak Art Salon was a vital center until the German hordes destroyed it. With their usual brutality they murdered the woman who, to the last, stood guard among her priceless treasures.

* * *

In looking over the circle of Jewish artists in Paris in retrospect—in other words, from the viewpoint of the historian—several periods of its development may be ascertained.

In a previous chapter we had designated Pascin and Modigliani as the vanguard. In reality, all those who came during the first decade of the century are a part of that vanguard. Those whom we have described thus far show a fairly rapid acclimatization to the French atmosphere in life and art. Still, it must be remarked that in spite of all outward Frenchification, Modigliani and Pascin, in particular, never became French. A Frenchman would have reacted differently in their stead. The excessive merrymaking and exuberant living would have been reflected in his works, in which *joie de vivre* and laughter would have echoed.

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Not so the two Jewish artists. Their dissolute life is quasi a counter reaction to their repressed soul. But in their art they are not able to free themselves of the inherited incubus; their work is distorted, unorganized, joyless. It does not echo laughter, only turbulence. In no way does it reflect the frivolity and carefreeness of Paris; as a matter of fact, in that respect it is not Paris at all, neither in expression nor in formation. By no means is it intentionally unorganized or unrhythmic, as aspired to by some of the new Parisian "isms", but it is elementally ragged.

The dissimilarity is less apparent among the others of the first group, but it does exist in one way or another.

One thing is common to all Jewish artists from the beginning: they reject the absolute abstraction, which many of the French painters conceded to be the sole logical development. Entirely alien to their nature are constructivism and cubism, those most extreme trends that negate every kind of objectivism and go as far as the machine form, as represented by Léger, for example.

The artistic work of the Jew always originates in an emotional impulse, never as a result of cool intellectualism. This is where an unbridgeable chasm separates the outsiders.

Two other painters now make their appearance. Thanks to their geniality and personal magnitude, they manifest their artistic potentialities in such full measure that through them is first created what we can designate as Jewish art.

Soutine and Chagall are the most forceful exponents of a conception never before depicted, and they are able to give shape to the artistic inclination of the Jewish mind that struggles for expressionism.

These two masters, totally different in disposition and temperament, represent two quite opposite poles. The only thing they have in common is the fact that they both come from the same soil and that their roots are fed by the same source. Although their mother tongue is the same, they use it differently. They sing the same songs, but whereas one signs it in major, the other sings it in the minor key. This language resounds so strongly in the souls of both Soutine and Chagall and thanks to their genius it has assumed such a powerful tone, that it emerges as a new song.

*The war was soon to disperse the group of Parisian artists, but after its termination they reassemble and grow steadily during the next two decades with new contingents joining them.

Many young artists arrive, especially from the East and congregate around the two masters. The group of Jewish artists in Paris gains increasing importance. It develops into a school through which go many who only absolve a certain period of apprenticeship. Hardly one of the Jewish painters living in any of the various countries today—and their number is exceedingly large—has not been in Paris for a longer or shorter period. Hardly one has remained untouched by the Paris school. Today, America and Palestine are the melting pot of our artists. The second World War has again rent asunder the Paris center. But in the period between the two wars its activity was so great that what had been evolved there became an endowment that continues to be effective in the new centers of Jewish artists.

CHAIM SOUTINE

SOUTINE WAS a mere 17 when he came to Paris. Of all the arrivals, he was the youngest. First he at-

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tended the painting course given by the old historical painter, Fernan Cormon, in the Ecole des Beaux Arts, and became friendly with Modigliani. Despite the difference in his philosophy, he appreciates the impetuous man, for he recognizes the great artist in him. They share quarters for a while inasmuch as Soutine, in spite of his dire poverty, is always willing to help. Through Modigliani he makes the acquaintance of the Polish art enthusiast, Zborowski, that altruistic helper who saves him from ruin.

Soutine lives in Montmartre among the other artists. He associates with them, but does not take part in their wild orgies. He is small, unattractive and weakly; he has stomach trouble, is rather shy but always courteous, sometimes stubborn as a child, even flying off the handle. He is less disposed to merrymaking than to meditation. He does not appear poised, but his work shows his self-assurance. From his movements and his irregularly hewn features, it becomes apparent that a continuous turmoil rages within him and that he is beset by a nervous restlessness that permits him to think of only one thing: his work.

He had been this way since early childhood. His art obsession had been occasioned by grave experiences during his youth, the memories of which never left him and were so strong that they shaped his whole artistry.

The story of most artists is identical. Instead of learning the boy fills his books with pictures, he utilizes every second to draw. Some visitor sees the pictures and discovers the artist. Some Maecenas is found who makes it possible for the boy to study art. The start toward artistry is made.

Soutine's story was different. Waldemar George related Soutine's childhood story in detail according to

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the verbal report of Zborowski. Inasmuch as it is essential in order to understand Soutine's art, we will give a brief summary of it.

Soutine as a boy also wants to draw, but he doesn't even own a pencil. In the strictly orthodox home of his parents, learning is all that matters. His desire grows to a fanatical longing. He dreams of nothing but pencils or a few crayons. The thought almost drives him mad. He can stand it no longer. Taking some household article, he sells it and gets himself the crayons. His father hears about it, beats the boy till he draws blood and locks him in the cellar for days without food. Noticing his absence in school, they ask about him and are informed of the misdeed. Aha, a thief! And he is expelled from school.

The entire village is indignant about the outcast, the evil son of such a pious man. Terrified, the boy wanders aimlessly, for his parents have disowned him. A man in the village has pity on him, takes him in and even permits him to draw his portrait. These are the boy's first happy days. He draws, and realizes now that he wants to be an artist.

When his hideout becomes known, the sons of the rabbi lie in wait for him and attack him one day as he leaves the house. Covered with blood, and seriously injured, he drags himself to the nearest hospital, where he collapses.

Now the attackers are fearful of a legal aftermath should the boy recover and tell the true story. They offer him hush money.

During his long siege in the hospital, only one thought is in his mind: to get away, out of this hell in which he is tortured and tormented as though he were an outlaw. He accepts the sum offered—25 rubles—and,

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barely recovered, he flees to Vilna. There, completely exhausted, he is given shelter by a doctor.

Although he is only 14 years old, he is admitted to the art school because they realize that it is a matter of life or death for the almost desperate boy. He begins to work feverishly now, paints like one possessed and has only one aim in mind: to become a real artist. It is the doctor who finally makes it possible for him to go to Paris.

That is the childhood drama of Chaim Soutine. Its terrible scenes are indelibly impressed in his soul, so much so that for the rest of his life there is no escape from them, and every stroke of the brush gives evidence of them.

Any other person would have succumbed to such a struggle; in his case it released unsuspected energies, steeling him to such an extent that nothing is able to change him. And here is the secret of his energy: he is actually a finished artist; an artist who has found his expression and his art language. What he learns is practically only technical skill.

When the shy boy came to Paris at the age of 17, it was his initial meeting with the great world of art. But instead of being confused by the hustle and bustle, and being torn between and betwixt the feuding trends—which, incidentally, would have been understandable in view of his youth and lack of experience—he remains unresponsive toward all influences. He is and remains his true self, painting in the same manner and using his own expression and style.

It was believed that van Gogh's influence could be detected. There are similarities that seem to justify this opinion, but they are merely of external nature. Van Gogh's untamed, wild stroke is the result of his mal-

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adjusted nervous system. Soutine's pictures are much more distorted and dramatic, but also, they are more genuine, for they are the outcry of his soul.

Soutine was a man possessed. Just as the boys were after him that time, and attacked him in their zealous rage, so, too, is he pursued by his ideas. Yet he is not mentally ill, but a genius, an artistic genius. And for this reason he is able to give such incredibly forceful expression to what is going on inside him. He was privileged to burst forth explosively, as it were, with all the suffering and misery, longing and torment, dreams and fantasy, willpower and hate, that had accumulated in the Jewish soul through the ages. For it is the lot of the Jew that is the cause of his personal suffering, he is the victim of his Jewishness! And since both these factors—Judaism and ego-ism—form a unit within him, his art is real Jewish expression.

Soutine is a virtuoso in a mechanical sense too, and is completely self-reliant and independent here as well. His color energy surpasses that of all others. His color scale seems unlimited, for it extends from the dazzling heights of shining brightness to the deepest abyss of mysterious darkness. He is a virtuoso of construction and corporeal formation, and therefore can risk the boldest destruction of all form without causing the piece of art *per se* to suffer.

The essence of his art is disorganization and exaggeration. Everything is jagged and convulsive; he does not know peace and equanimity, or else he rejects it intentionally. He does not recognize traditional rules, since he obeys only his own laws.

The intended disorder manifests itself in violent contrasts; the exaggeration in wild color cataracts. He

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paints for the sake of painting, in order to unburden his soul.

His greatest masterworks are some still lifes. "The Slaughtered Ox" in the museum of Grenoble is a fearful color outcry of such violence that the red color seems to be the dripping of real blood.

Soutine reaches the suggestive power of Rembrandt. Such brutality is to be found elsewhere only in works by the German Lovis Corinth, who had spent his youth in a knacker's yard.

In another still-life he renders a ray like a terrifying ghost; in a third, a dead pheasant hanging on a hook as though on a gallows. The spine chilling death cry seems to be still tearing from its opened beak.

Even some gladioli in a vase spread like dreadful talons and whip back and forth wildly. When he paints a landscape, it is not peaceful but lashed by a tempest; the trees bend in a tornado and their leaves are wind-blown. Never does he produce a calm expanse of land; always the roads and paths are twisted and tortuous and climb up ragged cliffs. The houses look as though they would collapse in their rottenness. The limbs of his human figures are contorted; their movements appear convulsive, their faces violently distorted.

All this represents himself, the eminent artist, but it also depicts the martyred Jew. For his brush speaks in the tongue of his people, but with meaningful exaggeration, as a cry of despair.

All the points enumerated here as characterization of his art originate in his Jewish mentality, and only the latter can explain them. Soutine is the most impetuous interpreter of this Jewish mentality, and as a result of such impetuosity, he is onesided. However, since his impulsiveness is genuine, and it is his fate

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to have to express himself this way, therefore he is great.

It would be a complete misjudgment of his personality were we to present him as a grotesque and pathological artist—which is what one prominent art historian did—or were we to gainsay the quality that entitles him to be considered the representative of the "Hebrew spirit in art". He is not its sole and exclusive representative, for he lacks some characteristics which, while they are peculiar to the Jew, are not compatible with his nature. He knows only grief and terror, not being limited to just quiet misery and suffering. He only knows the dark sides of being Jewish, but then he is able to portray them most powerfully and impressively.

And by this one-sidedness of his artistry he exercised—although quite unintentionally—great influence upon the colleagues of his immediate environment, and even today he is a model to many.

The name of Soutine has become a watchword. Many try to emulate him, and we will take up this point later, in a different connection. They recognize his greatness and imitate him, but they are without the fury that drives him. True, they feel the spirit that emanates from his works, but they don't own it themselves. For Soutine is inimitable, he alone had the gift to portray in such a manner an experience that made an artist out of him from the very depths of his being.

His life was dedicated only to his work. Neither material need nor physical suffering, both of which remained his constant companions, were able to hamper him. Incessant unrest and instability continually drove

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him on, and undermined his frail constitution more and more.

In his flight from the Germans, he had concealed himself in the province of Touraine. There his old stomach ailment suddenly becomes serious. He is taken to Paris for an operation, but it is too late. He dies of intestinal hemorrhage on August 9, 1943, 47 years old.

* * *

The Jewish spirit and the Jewish soul do not exhaust themselves merely in sadness and grief, and it is not lament alone that escapes the heavy heart. Certainly the Jew is closer to crying than to laughter, and real happiness is rarely his. Ever being a stranger among nations, he feels himself unfree and is afraid. He has no faith in happiness on earth. All the more is his hope and longing directed toward the hereafter, and he seeks his pleasure in God.

And for him there is a special gladness in God, a gladness that comes from deepest inner enthusiasm that can reach the heights of ecstasy. He can dream of the pleasures that are denied him on earth, and can fabricate them. And that is why he likes to hang on to his dream, and he forms legends and fables from it. The heavy, dismal minor melodies of his fervent prayers brighten and become hymns of divine power and are heightened to joyous songs. They grow increasingly rapturous and ecstatic, until they take hold of his whole being; his limbs shake and he launches into a wild dance. And the gaiety outshines the everyday darkness with happy songs and dancing. For a short time the shadows of life retreat before an animating merriness during which one can even jest and laugh and forget one's troubles.

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This gay side of Jewish life exists too. It is not the universally established one nor does it find its expression everywhere. Yet it exists as a special ingredient.

There are among the Jews learned and wise men who preach the doctrine of godly devotion to be practiced during life, and these are revered as though they were princes. They hold court, and the devout are entertained there and join in singing and dancing. Where the sad lot of ghetto existence imposes the heaviest bonds upon the Jew—that is exactly where these “zaddikim” can usually be found heralding a message of joy.

Minsk and Witebsk are not far apart on the map. In Minsk reigns the severe zealotry of fanatical orthodoxy; there they have only fasting and weeping, and no ray of light is permitted to penetrate this narrow world. The provincial town of Witebsk, situated on the Dwina, in which the Jewish element predominates, has a different character. Shipping brings livelier traffic with the outside world, so that the Jews, too, are not entirely isolated among themselves.

The families have contact with those of other villages. And they have chassidim, and occasionally zaddikim come there and the holidays are celebrated with songs and dancing. This, then, is where one finds the gay side of Jewish devoutness.

From the narrow walls of Minsk fled the boy Soutine, and the harm that was generated there persecuted him all through life. Witebsk is the home town of Marc Chagall, the most important Jewish painter of our time, and the harbinger of a color-gay Jewish world.

MARC CHAGALL

MARC CHAGALL calls Witebsk the “city that is sad and glad”. In his autobiography he talks about

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his religious father, his nine brothers and sisters, his chassidic grandfather and uncle, both of whom were butchers, and whom he often visited in nearby Lyozno.

Every evening his uncle would take up his beloved violin and fiddle chassidic tunes. The family was a large one, with lots of uncles and aunts, and they told one another many strange stories that they had heard from the zaddikim. Thus the boy's imagination found plenty of nourishment. And since Chajim ben Isaac Eisik Segal, creator of the beautiful murals adorning the synagogue of Mohilew, was supposed to have been his ancestor, it is small wonder that after finishing school he desired to become a painter. At 17, he went to Petersburg to finish his education.

His first known picture was made in 1908, and is entitled "Candles in the Dark Street". In it, the 19 year old paints several childhood impressions in a curious juxtaposition, indicating the peculiarity of his fantasy.

A corpse, surrounded by candles, lies on the street, through which a loudly lamenting woman is running; behind her appears the street cleaner with measured steps. And atop the gable of the house across the street sits a man playing on his violin.

In his biography, Chagall speaks about the various events of which his recollections induced him to paint the picture.

The intermingling of unrelated incidents, and the partly naturalistic portrayal, with intentional over-emphasis of the perspective, give the effect of an uncontrolled illusion.

A year later he paints a bridal procession with marionette-like figures. But the heavy, dark coloring envelops the picture in a joylessly oppressive mood that

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is typical of the little Jewish village, and goes beyond a genre style.

In these first works Chagall already proves himself to be an expressive artist of specific character; he is driven, apparently quite intuitively, to emphasize the spiritual substance in his pictures by employing certain exaggerations and distortions.

Moving to Paris, he comes in contact with the environment that is to decide his future development.

In Paris Chagall becomes a real painter. He finds sanction and stimulation in a circle of like-minded friends. The painting "I and the Village", which has since become famous and which hangs in the Museum of Modern Art in New York, shows the change in Chagall after only one year.

In thought and spirit the artist remains bound to his homeland. But color and form have obtained new values, and with these he constructs his picture. It assumes a rigidly constructive partition, with large forms emphasized by bright colors, that is interspersed with various detailed descriptions conforming to the artist's trend of thought.

The pictures completed in the ensuing years grow increasingly exclusive in construction, and absorb more cubist elements.

Chagall becomes bolder and more passionate in color and rhythm. In some works he finds his own specific synthesis which could be designated a new Chagallian picture language, comprised of Western syntax and Eastern expressionism; for like a dream he always has his home before his eyes.

War recalls him to Russia. The sight of the familiar surroundings causes him to feel the real world with such force that he reproduces his impression in a number

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of the most magnificent pictures. In them he first returns to naturalistic portrayal. What vigorous expression he put into the portrait of the rabbi of Witebsk; how great and self-assured, how earnest and proud is the appearance of the bearded Jew, wrapped in his prayer shawl!

Chagall's Jewry is not the lamenting, weeping, fanatically gloomy people of the persecuted and despairing, that cries out in its misery. Chagall loves his Judaism and is proud of it. That is what makes him the great Jewish artist that he is. Thus far he is the only one who is able to portray in such inimitable artistic manner the Jewish world and Jewish life as seen from a positive angle.

Chagall does not caricature the Jew. And in giving him unreal form and shape, and occasionally placing him in spheres which are not unequivocally explicable, he merely wishes to give stronger utterance to his emotionalism. Thus he stresses the spiritual substance and arrives at the visualization of purely psychic incidents and otherwise unimaginable mythical-mystic depths. He becomes interpreter of dreams and portrayer of legends and fables.

He paints an aged rabbi with yellow beard and greenish face; a darkly dressed Jew in a snowscape, holding a shining red Torah in his arm; a grinning, red-bearded fiddler with a small yellow violin in his hand; another in a green coat who fiddles merry tunes while sitting on the rooftops. Another picture is that of a Jew standing in front of his door, dressed in his prayer shawl and holding the Sukkoth palm; on his head, looking like a little doll, stands another man in his Tallith.

He repeatedly portrays his native town of Witebsk with its many bulbous church towers, the crowded

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houses and wooden huts, the market and the cemetery in which the tombstones are scattered about wildly as though an earthquake had hit them; he has a Jew hovering above the roofs and an ox-team riding through the air. He is inexhaustible in his variation of themes and motifs.

He marries shortly after his return, and now gives fanciful expression to his happiness. He portrays himself, radiant with joy, raising his arm and extending his hand to his wife, who floats down to meet him. He paints his young wife in a white gown, while he squats on her shoulders, lifting a glass of wine. Both times the panorama of the town of Witebsk appears as background, indicating, as it were, that here, in his native village, he had found his happiness.

He spends the war years in Moscow. Shortly after the outbreak of the revolution, Granowsky founds the Jewish Theatre in Moscow and has Chagall decorate the house with murals and make the sets for Scholem Aleichem's "Gratulationen". Previously, Chagall had made some theatrical designs for a Gogol festival in Petersburg in his capacity as official war painter. But now, unhampered, in his home atmosphere, he could give his fantasy free rein.

Then he leaves Russia and, enroute to Paris, makes a nine month stop-over in Berlin, where, shortly before the war had started, Harry Walden had exhibited his works in the "Sturm". This show made Chagall's name famous there. During his stay in Berlin, Chagall created a number of etchings for his autobiography. "My Life".

After an absence of eight years, he returns to Paris. The mild, ingratiating air, and the light after the dark, cold winter months of the East, together with the gay,

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unrestrained life, have a new, releasing effect on him. Life itself assumes new meaning. He has his lovely, talented wife and his child with him. He is comfortably settled, gathers his friends around him and is a recognized master.

A great *joie de vivre* takes hold of him. From now on his art serves affirmation of life. During his first sojourn in Paris he was often beset by homesickness, and his mind was preoccupied with wistful recollections. Now he frees himself of all pressure. True, he never forgets his native land, and it is always alive within him, but it gains positive values. Everything inside him grows lighter, brighter, more radiant, and freer.

In travels to the Riviera and the Pyrenees, nature in bloom turns into a new experience for him. From that time on flowers are his favorite subject. They inspire him to such an extent that, as Triade expresses it, he not only "sees the world through a bouquet of flowers", but he unfolds the whole magic of their color and—even more than that—he lends them a soul language of their own. Chagall's flowers do not merely exist, they speak. They do not serve him just as color expression and element of composition; he vitalizes them anew through the prowess of his brush. He puts the whole fire of his sentiment into them and lets them rejoice, jubilate and sing. Cézanne's flowers exist, Matisse makes them lustrous, Chagall breathes life into them.

For no other painter do flowers and animals play such a role as for Chagall. We find animal portrayals by artists of all times and countries. The Potter bull, for instance, acquired world fame. Horses were the favorite subjects of many masters; Hondecoetter was the portrayer of feathered creatures—to give just a few examples.

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But in Chagall's pictures the animal assumes symbolic character. He painted animals from the very beginning. Even in his 1911 picture, "I and the Village", and then in almost all paintings of his first years in Paris, cow, horse and mule play a part. And now that flowers impart a special note to his art, the animal similarly gains in importance.

At the request of Ambroise Vollard, he illustrates La Fontaine's fables, and starts out with a series of gouaches. The Jewish painter from the East competes with the French poet. Chagall does not illustrate him in the sense that he places the picture against the printed word; rather, the word inspires him to a fable tongue of his own which, as we know, was always a component part of his art. Chagall's animal realm can not be explained in words. A portrayal such as "The Jay with the Peacock Feathers" is a scene of jealousy without equal. It is followed by a series of circus pictures in which animals and clowns parade in like manner; and, finally, by the large number of compositions consisting of chickens and cocks and other creatures, some of which were done in recent years and which grow more colorful and fantastic all the time.

The increasing frequency of the two themes: flowers and animals, in conjunction with life and stage, fable and legend, dream and reality, is a characteristic of his unique art. This art is unique because it speaks a self-coined language which is neither forced, learned or copied. It is the perfect expression of his genius, which thrived on its own strength. It is perfect in accordance with our conceptions of today because its master remained inviolably loyal to his specific nature, even cultivating it with pride.

Chagall is the greatest Jewish artist. For everything

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that gains world prominence for his creations—not making them famous merely from the Jewish view point—can be explained as coming from his being Jewish, from being different than the others because of his Judaism. He is the first artist upon whom his heritage does not rest as a burden and a hindrance, but who is able to give positive and joyous expression to his Judaism. Chagall gladly accepts from life whatever it offers him

He admits that it was chiefly France that became “his second home”. There he finds nourishing soil for his art: the color, light, rhythm and the whole propensity toward gayness and frivolity. But whatever he receives, he does not utilize as strange or borrowed property; he recoins it with his own stamp and blends it with his temperament.

The song that was hummed at his cradle, and the melodies that resounded all through his youth, re-echo his whole life long. But he knows how to transpose their wistful minor tones into the joyous major key.

The chassidic dreams and fables are illuminated by his own imagination; he liberates the tortured soul from its trembling anxiety and its misery and depression and shows it the way to revive the strength that had been existing there but which had been submerged.

His life and his work prove how strong and deeply rooted is his will for such positive expansion of power. During his years in Paris his art had continued to unfold more richly all the time. In addition to the many paintings he completes innumerable graphic works. He creates close to 100 etchings to Gogol’s “Dead Souls”; besides the gouaches, he makes 100 etchings to La Fontaine’s fables. He undertakes extensive trips to Egypt,

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Palestine, Holland, Spain, Poland, and Italy. For years he is busily engaged with biblical illustrations.

Here again is proof that the thought of the world from which he came never leaves him. He never spent so much patience and intensive study with any other undertaking. Within a period of eight years, more than 100 big etchings are made; again and again he seeks and finds new solutions for the same portrayal, and he continues to extend them further.

Then the war drives him away from his work, and he has to leave the place he came to love so dearly. He finds a new sphere of activity in America, but here fate deals him a hard blow. His wife, the essence of his life, the "muse of his art", as he calls her, his happiness and his strength, dies suddenly, and he collapses. For months he is like paralyzed, incapable of uttering a word. But then, having buried his misfortune deep inside himself, he pulls himself together. He is not a man of grief—and this is the symbol of his great artistry—but a man of action; he belongs to life, not to the past. He plunges into work and, sorrow having made him even more mature, richer and more sensitive, he creates works in which his virtuosity surpasses itself.

He spends some months in Mexico where he meets a whole new world of phenomena hitherto unknown to him. The people in their color-gayness and carefreeness; the luxuriousness of nature which, in wealth and intensity of color surpasses anything he had seen or experienced in Europe, give his regained strength a new impetus.

His formative fantasy submerges completely in the realm of dreams and fairy-tales, everything appears to him as an allegory in light and rhythm, color and motion. Where but on the stage can he express him-

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self with so much unrestraint? This world of unreal reality and the symbolic muse offers him the chance to give new form and content to the inexhaustible wealth of his artistic visions. Thus we have, as the latest fruits of his work, the magnificent scenic designs for the ballet "Aleko" and for Stravinsky's "Fire Bird".

The maturity of years today assures the artist of independence, in which his genius always finds new ways for intellectual expansion.

ISSACHAR RYBACK

HAD HE LIVED longer, Ryback would probably have occupied second place to Chagall. For what he accomplished within 37 years indicates such an evolutionary power that the work which ended so prematurely already shows the budding genius.

Ryback and Chagall have much in common. It is not based on any kind of influence on the part of the man who is Ryback's senior by eight years, but is the result of similar impressions in youth, and of characteristics.

Ryback's childhood impressions are more immediate, and his experiences more severe than Chagall's. Naturally, this affected the further formation of his character, and he died before he was able to detach himself from these influences sufficiently to find the inner balance that only maturity of years can bring.

They also have in common the will to see the positive side of life. However, only Chagall succeeded therein, Ryback having passed on just as the gates of a freer and brighter world were being opened to him. Chagall's life and work is fulfillment; that of Ryback remained but a promise.

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Issachar Ryback's home is the Ukraine. He was born in 1897 in the chassidic community of Elisabethgrad.

The boy grows up in the religious atmosphere of chassidic customs; but their mystic-gay songs and dances mingle with the cries of fear and grief caused by the pogrom terrors that he experienced at the age of eight.

In Kiev he had his first instruction in art, learned from a companion about the new French art trends and saw works by Picasso and Braque. He became interested in Jewish folk art and in the Jewish theatre. When the revolution of 1917 came with its general upheaval, the Central Committee of the Jewish Cultural League in Kiev appointed him, a mere boy of 20, as drawing teacher. He was commissioned to design billboards and street decorations, and thus began his independent artistic activities.

Two years later he was called to Moscow as instructor in art. Here he spent the awful years of the White Terror, suffering the greatest hardships.

The years from 1921 to 1924 were spent in Berlin. Then he returned to his native country for a short while and finally reached Paris in 1926. Here he found his first chance to work in peace.

His main works prior to his Paris epoch originate during the years of the revolution in Kiev. They refer almost exclusively to life and suffering in his Jewish home. The people attending to their modest trades; the rabbi and the zaddik; life in the streets, in the home and in the synagogue—all this is condensed to visions within him; visions in which the agitated figures reappear in pictures that are nervously perturbed. For example, there is the portrayal of the old synagogue: its gable roof shooting sharply up into the clouds seems

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like a human outcry that awakens the quietly slumbering village.

In a series of pogrom pictures he unleashes the most awful spectre of terrorism. Chagall's fantasy was fecundated by the ancient legends and myths; Ryback witnessed the brutal reality himself: his father was killed by the Peltjura hordes.

The visions of these days of horror appear in his pictures. Out of the pillars of flame coming from the burning houses rise the ghastly grimacing faces of wildly gesticulating, dancing Cossacks with drawn sabres, upon which the severed heads of their victims are impaled. Or, armed with long lances, they come galloping along like the apocalyptic riders. In one painting the architecture of the synagogue has become a convulsive mass of horrified masonry.

In Berlin his frayed nerves begin to be calmer, and he is chiefly occupied with the illustration of some children's books.

When next he sees his homeland, it has become a different world. In the wheatfields of the Ukraine the Jews work as peasants. Instead of the tired, old people, he is met by a new, proud, industrious generation. "I myself have seen him", Ryback writes, "the new Jew, the sunburned peasant who goes to the fields, singing, and who gave up and forgot his stall. For me, who grew up in the shadow among the pale, exhausted faces, these suntanned men and women, steeled by the wind, were a joyful adventure that revealed new colors to me".

In the face of this new reality, Ryback's art assumes a positive note; it grows happier, stronger in color, and brighter. In these figures he sees the representatives of his people, a new generation resurging from misery.

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True, fate and the experiences of old suffering have chiselled their signs into the features of these people, but a decisiveness and assurance of bearing can be discerned that had never been there before.

In Paris his creative power blossoms out in surprising manner. The environment, so rich in life, art and nature, works wonders for him. The heaviness and cumbersomeness leaves him, and his art develops an increasingly magnanimous style and monumental form language. He takes his easel into the fields and paints pictures in the sunlight that are gay with color.

He especially likes to portray animals, free-running horses, grazing sheep and little mules in all sorts of situations. He paints carnival masks, letting a tragic irony peer from under their grotesque grimaces.

France enriches him artistically, but does not deprive him of his personal touch. He is and remains the other, the Jew with his spiritual heritage which he displays with pride and fortitude.

The early memories keep coming to mind, and he paints them anew: the activities in the hometown market, the old fruit peddler and the man with the chickens. And then he creates a series of etchings, "In the Shadow of the Past". These are magnificently moving scenes in which he etches direct into the plate the figures that flash up in his mind's eye. What a difference between these graphic prints and the earlier portrayals that were so restively disturbed, so melancholy and so mystically dismal!

Everything here is light, saturated with light and occasionally even gay. The paintings of his last years bear the same signs of spiritual liberation and artistic open-mindedness. His art expands in the use of expressive means; the color flows broader and softer and acquires

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a new radiance. Everything grows more balanced and harmonious. It would seem as though the sun of France had aroused a new vitality in him, for his horizon broadens in every direction and he is aware of a zest of living that he never knew before. It drives him to work feverishly, so that his production accumulates in an incredibly short time.

And now, at last, after years of struggle, isolation and rejection, success seems to be coming his way. He is extended an invitation to come to England, and there he finds a great deal of recognition. With renewed courage he returns to Paris to prepare for a new exhibit, but an ailment that had long been developing puts him in a sickbed. While his last creations are being admired at a large special exhibit in the Galerie des Beaux Arts by many who predict a great future for the master, the doctors are at the bedside of the artist who is wrestling with death.

In the last December days of 1935 he went to his eternal rest.

MAX BAND

TWO YEARS before Ryback, another young painter had arrived in Paris. He was a quiet, meditative man who paid little heed to the art activities.

Max Band was 24 when he came to the art metropolis after three years of studying in Berlin. While his colleagues engaged in violent art debates and sought feverishly for new forms of expression, he studied with reverence the treasures of the Louvre and admired the pale blue of the sky and the delicate light that embedded everything in such soft tones.

From childhood he had been shy and introspective. At the age of three he had lost his father; two years later

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his mother had died and he was reared in the joyless, grave house of an aged grandmother. The people he saw, the small, quiet hamlet, and the oppressive, dismal monotony of the Lithuanian country—all this cast a shadow over him and left its mark on his sensitive soul. These experiences of his youth were the deciding factors in his art, and are so today yet.

His artistic achievement is characterized by his consequentialness. He stayed unchanged from the beginning, indicating purposeful energy and strict self-control.

He develops technically; his pictures gain in harmony and color values, their composition is more relaxed and freer, their expression more varied. Yet it is always the same melody that accompanies him throughout his work. It is a religious-meditative, self-contained harmony.

His art is without pathos; it is elegiac and unobtrusive. His colors do not appear hard or very brilliant; they seem to be mellowed by a patina that grows ennobling through the years. A noted critic used an appropriate phrase: they warmed one like aged wine. And indeed, they do possess an intrinsic fire, for they reflect the glow in the artist's soul, a glowing that is generated by true experience. His color scale extends from deepest black to clear brightness, but it remains tonally bound in an equalizing light.

Max Band is not modern by the norm of his contemporaries because, instead of aspiring to new form values, he seeks a consciously realistic art of expression. He is not a naturalist, since he considers only the color as the form-determining element. And in that respect he is absolutely modern.

In the beginning, his work is primarily concerned with the portrayal of the human being, whereby the

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form becomes the receptacle for symbolically interpreted mood. His figures are always pensive and depressed, encumbered, somehow, and passively silent. There is something mysterious in their dark black, improbably large eyes. Their look bespeaks their lot, his lot, the lot of his past. They are the eyes of his child that have such an abysmal lustre; the melancholy, noble features of his lovely, delicate wife; it is his own look, peculiar to all those who come from the East. The world of laughter and gaiety is not his world. Neither the liveliness of Paris nor the sunny Orient can deliver him from his incubus. Wherever his path leads him—he remains the same, always a man resigned; he looks at everything with those big questioning eyes.

Max Band is not an ingenious painter, but he is an artist whose works are imbued with a touching note that leaves an unforgettable impression.

He paints landscapes in France, Italy, Palestine and America. Light and sunshine do brighten his palette, to be sure, but his colors stay subdued. They are not lustrous, but seem to be covered by a light veil. This imparts a mysterious touch similar to his figure portrayals. He paints St. Mark's Place in Venice in a light haze; the panorama of ancient Jerusalem ascends like a vision in mystifying illumination, and the blossoming fruit trees of a California orchard are covered with a delicate film.

Band paints floral pieces that are extremely delicate, but never radiant. Everywhere we find the same reserve. He can never let go of himself, and never resorts to loud emphasis.

Band lived in Paris from the time he was 24 until he was 41. During that period he undertook extensive trips, paying several visits to his native country as well.

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I met him frequently, the first time when he was just starting in Berlin. When I saw him again in Paris several years later, he was exactly the same, except that his colors had a more harmonious effect. We met again in Palestine and, once more, after a lapse of a few years, in Paris. He had just returned from Lithuania and had brought with him a number of landscapes. I was struck by them because they displayed exactly the same timbre as the works created twenty years previously. Never had I observed a like uniformity and straightness of line, all purely pictorial progress notwithstanding.

For the past seven years Max Band has been living in California. The hustle and bustle of the new world left him completely untouched—he remains unchanged. The fateful events that have hurt his people burn in his soul. The world remains the same to him wherever he is, he looks at it through melancholy eyes. But he has grown within; he has become even more simple, and thus greater.

A figure such as the insignificant Jewish laborer, standing motionless, his arms hanging limply, his mouth silent and his tired eyes staring into space; this man, whose mere existence indicates him to be carrying the whole fate of Jewry inside him, is the ultimate in expression and is the most profound, most intrinsic artistic confession of a master whose total production to date may be captioned with the title of the picture just described: *Ecce Homo!*

* * *

In the years between the two World Wars, Paris exhibits an art life that is so abundant as to be confusing. The main achievements of the artists mentioned thus far fall into this period. They are joined by many newcomers; a great number of them, coming from the East,

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settle in Paris, others stay only temporarily. They come from all countries, and gather around the great masters.

There are many interesting figures among them, artists of peculiar character who have something to say on their own but who, in general, follow the trend indicated by the leading elements. Accordingly, the collective picture changes but little. Especially the Jewish artists, even though they form a vital factor of art activity, remain a closed group. For while they enrich their knowledge and expand their artistic horizon, they nevertheless preserve their individuality and are able to express it stronger and more consciously as their artistry grows.

One of the most remarkable symptoms can be found in the fact that hardly any of the Jewish painters follows the radical modernists who would have only absolute abstraction. They reject the purely intellectual attitude of cubism. They do accept the real expressionism, even giving it their personal touch as a consequence of their unswerving hereditary nature. The most prominent and most characteristic example therefor is Chagall, whose art during his first stay in Paris shows strong tendencies toward abstract cubism. However, he stops short just before the borderline and, making an interesting compromise, he finally blazes his own trail. In his art the Jew is not purely objective, his intellectuality is not coolly detached but is somehow always guided subjectively. In the case of every artist whom we discussed in detail here, we were able to establish very definite factors of heritage and experience that form his mental and artistic potency. These are the factors that mark him as that which he is and always will be: the Jewish artist.

At the same time that Paris is playing such a big part, new Jewish art centers are developing in two other

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continents. During the last ten years of peace Parisian art has reached a certain stability. The various factions have gradually settled their disputes, recognized masters have taken their positions and are governing the field of art. The many others are crowded around them. Each year many of them forsake the place of learning. They have studied, have acquired knowledge and experience and have become more mature.

Some go back whence they had come, for good prospects await them there. America's activity develops forces hitherto unknown, and, accordingly, also offers artistic possibilities. And while Europe is sick unto death of general exhaustion, America is the land of the future.

The others have a different aim. They are not lured by the prospects of success and they do not know how their future will unfold. But longing drives them, and an inner voice calls them there. For to them, Israel is the Land of Promise.

America

AS THE ship moves slowly up the broad Hudson bay, after a long sea voyage, the traveler is greeted first by the huge Statue of Liberty on Bedloe's Island. The ocean liner slides past it, for it is not yet at journey's end. And then the real landmarks of the new world arise before the amazed eye of the newcomer. They emerge like giants, towering higher and higher, crowded close together, taking one's breath away: these are the skyscrapers of New York.

This is America, the America of today, the symbol of ceaseless activity and continued progress; it is the sign of our age, of the world of today and tomorrow—of the uncheckable advance of human destiny.

This land, the last of the nations to achieve world power, was destined to assume world leadership. At a time when the nations of the old world were at the peak of their culture, its early history was being made by accumulating strength and consolidating their forces into a powerful union.

Now, however, as Europe has spent itself after almost 2000 years of intellectual fertility, the new world steps in its place with fresh activity and leads the way into the future.

And the vibration of life and strife produces young artists with new ideas. New discoveries and inventions give the world a new look and turn the wheels of progress incessantly under the watchword: dynamics.

It was late when America arrived at art. Not until the Revolutionary War leading to the founding of the

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Republic did some historical painters make their appearance. Two such were Trumbull and Allston who, following in the footsteps of Michelangelo, Rubens and the Venetians, failed artistically. Some artists went to England and stayed there. The only one who came back from there a skilled portraitist was Charles Wilson Peale. Among his creations were 14 likenesses of George Washington.

At the start of the 19th century there were a few landscapists who cultivated a sort of native art in the Duesseldorf and Munich style. They became known as the "Hudson River School".

Some dates out of the 19th century are not wholly without interest since they indicate without any further commentary the artistic development—or perhaps we should say the lack of such development as compared to European countries.

In 1870 the first two museums were established; one in Boston, the other in New York. Six years later the first showing of European art took place in Philadelphia. The "Society of American Artists" was founded the following year, but until the turn of the century their work was merely an imitation of foreign impressions.

Buildings were constructed in the classic style, many public monuments were erected, portraits were painted and, above all, landscapes à la Barbizon.

A former miner in Pittsburgh, John Kane, painted panoramic landscapes, and Louis Eilshemious did sentimentally soft landscapes.

America paid little attention to art activities in Europe. But growing wealth, which led to an amassing of huge fortunes such as had never been known before, encouraged private collecting, and in this way the most valuable antique art works were acquired. Collectors

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like Morgan, Vanderbilt, Altman, Widener and Marquand and many others presented their treasures to the museums, thereby rapidly making them the most magnificent sources of art education.

As early as 1888 Henry G. Marquand donated 53 paintings of old masters to the Metropolitan Museum. Benjamin Altman, who had begun his collection in 1882, likewise bequeathed to the same museum 51 works of old masters in 1913; there were no less than 13 Rembrandts among them!

To mention just a few of the big Jewish collectors and Maecenases: Hugo Reisinger, who presented his collection to the Metropolitan Museum in 1914; Joseph Pulitzer, who died in 1911 and who, in addition to numerous Italian masterpieces, provided the museum with a fund for permanent purchases; Michael Friedsam, who died in 1931, and George Blumenthal and Albert Bender, both deceased in 1941. Bender left 200 paintings by modern masters to the San Francisco Museum.

The accumulation of such huge private and public art treasures naturally aroused universal interest. The country grew more receptive to art, and modern art finally reached America as a matter of course. Art industry gave the impetus, and the collectors followed through by beginning to buy the works of the French impressionists.

In the ensuing years, and especially during the first world war, everything that could possibly be acquired poured into the country.

In 1908 a group of realistic painters began to occupy themselves with everyday life. The "Ashcan School" in Philadelphia, also known as "The Eight", painted street and coffee house scenes in various cities of the

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States. It appeared as though under the leadership of painters like John Sloan and the even more forceful George Bellows this honestly meant provincial art would endure as a somewhat antiquated inheritance of Courbet and Manet.

It was a special event, though, that occasioned a turn in the general art trend of America. At a giant exhibit in 1913, there was a first showing of 1100 works of European art, beginning with the early 19th century and including the expressionists and cubists. The exhibit became known as "The Armory Show", and met with the most violent censure in New York and Boston; however, it was received with great interest in Chicago. At any rate, it was the incentive for American art which, from then on, developed in unprecedented manner.

Of course it needed time to orient itself, and there ensued a period of uncertainty and probing. But America bethought itself. Greater interest was centered on foreign masters in order to get one's bearings. Alfred Stieglitz held special exhibits of Matisse, Rousseau, Cézanne and Picasso in his gallery, and included, as the first important American painter, Max Weber.

One began to take sides about the various styles, and turned self-creative. A general activity in art set in which, as in other fields too, produced a mighty and continually increasing number of entirely new forces, especially during the last 15 years. And while Europe has spent itself in all its manifestations of life, the sky above the new world is tinted with the rays of the coming day.

One has to proceed from the facts; they are no coincidence, but the result of logical development. America is the mightiest power today. Thanks to its wealth, it has at its disposal all potentialities. It is not encumbered

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with an antiquated tradition and can, therefore, apply its forces without restraint wherever they will serve the present and the future.

America grew to be what it is today by hard and relentless work. It knows no sentimentality. Gertrude Stein characterizes the American with these fitting words: "The Americans, unlike the Europeans or the Orientals, require no religion and no mysticism, nor do they believe in a reality. For reality to them is not a given fact—and therefore they build skyscrapers".

It is a law of physics that wherever power accumulates, it demands expansion in proportion to the strength it has gathered. Today, America also expands its forces in art. Mostly they are still young forces which push ahead and seek new paths. The overall picture is confusing, inasmuch as everything and everybody cooperates here. And, as already mentioned in connection with the accumulation of the great fortunes and the art collecting that went with it, the Jewish element plays a significant part.

* * *

Not only are the Jewish artists well represented in number, but they have a prominent place in the development of art to date. Since the days of the Armory Show, many of them are considered to be leading figures. Max Weber, Abraham Walkowitz and Bernhard Karfiol were among the initiators and to this day are known as the deans of modern American art.

Peter Blume and Maurice Sterne were co-founders of the Society of Independent Artists. And when New York had an exhibit of the 33 most prominent American modernists, in 1930, no less than eleven Jewish artists were represented.

Although the greater part of the Jewish artists active

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in America today come from the East, their relation to the general art of the country is a different one from that of Jewish artists in Paris which we described so explicitly in the preceding chapters. For, whereas the latter always remained foreigners and retained their specific traits abroad, here they are so completely Americanized—with just a few exceptions—that their art belongs absolutely to the new world.

This may seem puzzling, but can be explained by the circumstances of their lives. The Jewish artists in Paris had all spent their youth in their respective homelands, where they had experienced the difficult lot of the Jew; in other words, they had grown up under the immediate effect of such impressions, which were indelibly stamped in their minds.

The American artists, on the other hand, had for the most part reached these shores as children with their immigrant parents, so that their recollections of an earlier life were either non-existent or only very vague. And while they still learned the old traditions at home and in a Jewish environment, they nevertheless had contact with the American world and language at the same time. The country itself—i.e. the landscape and the climate—was a deciding factor. They spent just those years in the new atmosphere in which a young person is most impressionable.

In the art institutes they met with their American colleagues, so that they had no need to bridge the big gap that at first separated the others from the non-Jewish world and which they were able to traverse only with ineffable efforts. Their studies ran parallel with those of their classmates; they had the same teachers and—what was more important—they had the same aims. And since there was no American tradition to

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which their Jewish tradition was opposed, they had the chance a priori to develop freely.

The Jews play an important part in the over-all cultural life of America. They have already been mentioned as collectors and patrons. The sons of two German rabbis were prominent as architects. Dankmar Adler (1844-1900) was a boy of ten when he came to America. He was considered the greatest expert in theatrical construction and, in association with Louis Sullivan, he erected many of the most famous modern structures in Chicago, including the huge complex of the "Auditorium", the opera and the Stock Exchange.

Albert Kahn (1869-1943) likewise was brought to America as a child by his immigrant parents. At 26 he was on his own, and was gaining world fame through his gigantic constructions, which revolutionized modern industrial architecture. In 1929 he was called to Russia to put into production the five-year plan of construction. Stalingrad, which became so famous during the last war, was built according to his designs. Returning to the States, he created the gigantic airplane plants of Curtiss & Wright, and the Buick Motors and Ford factories.

One of the academic sculptors whose many monuments and portrait busts made him famous is Moses Jacob Ezekiel (1844-1917) who lived in Rome for a number of years. Here, in the *Thermae* of Diocletian he had established himself in one of the most original studios.

Others were Ephraim Keyser (1850-1937) and Jo Davidson, born in 1883, who was the official portraitist of the statesmen and generals who grew to fame during the first World War, and of other noted personalities.

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But modern sculpture in America achieved real prominence through the excellent accomplishments of William Zorach and Chaim Gross, two masters whom we have discussed fully in a previous chapter. The painter Maurice Sterne should be added to these two names. Jacob Epstein spent his first twenty years in America, but then he transferred his artistic activity to Great Britain, and has become a real Englishman.

Mention of these names in the divers fields of art is merely for the purpose of indicating the position of the Jewish element in general. This position is symptomatic of the possibilities for artistic-intellectual development and expansion in an age and environment in which certain inhibitions that existed in the old world cease to be a problem. It shows that the new constructive idea that puts art in a different relation to life, acts productively wherever a strong will knows how to assert and sustain itself.

America is the country in which everything surges ahead; the land that accepts everything without prejudice and upholds all potentialities that serve the future. Therein, however, lies a certain danger for the Jew. For, though his ability to adapt himself is an advantage, he is easily liable to lose his Jewish individuality. We have here a process of assimilation and amalgamation such as the Jew had never been successful in anywhere else and which, at least for the time being, marches on.

MAX WEBER

MAX WEBER was born in Bialistock in 1881 and was brought to Brooklyn by his parents when he was ten. At 24 he went to Paris and soon felt at home in the group of the post-impressionists. First he

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met Henri Rousseau and Marquet. Then, after a year, he interrupted his stay in Paris in order to see Spain and Italy, and finally become a pupil of Matisse.

Returning to America in 1910, he brought with him the latest methods of painting and caused the most violent reaction at his initial showing in the Stieglitz Gallery; nobody wanted to see such "brutal, vulgar and ultra modern pictures". But Weber stuck to his path and in the following years adopted cubism, which in the interim was developing more strongly under Picasso's leadership.

The "Armory Show", which he helped prepare, then shows him in company with the French artists, and from then on he becomes one of the leaders of American modernism.

For ten years he does not exhibit at all, and his only activity is giving lectures. He is a teacher at the Students League and publishes various essays on art. "One of the chief evils in modern culture is the lack of see-ability", he writes in one instance. "Correct seeing is not a process of the eye objective; it is soul impression, effect upon the senses, a matter of intelligence, sensitivity. Seeing is not limited to the physical and the existing. The seeing of unmeasurable dimensions is visionary seeing."

This was the first time that the Americans heard such radical art statements. But his writings and lectures had great influence and were convincing.

For a while he worked entirely in the abstract style. An example for this type of work is the painting "Chinese Restaurant", done in 1915 and hanging in the Whitney Museum. Then he approaches a realistic expressionism, and occasionally returns to the Cézanne style in still lifes and landscapes that are broadly paint-

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ed in strong colors. All his works are imbued with immense force and energy, and his various exhibits in the '40's still prove him to be one of the most powerful exponents of the modern trend.

A number of his works concern themselves with Jewish themes. Their mystic expressiveness is particularly effective. In 1919 he paints three men seated at a table, arguing. Viewed directly from the front, one of the three is raising his hands entreatingly. This black-bearded man with uplifted eyes displays a monumental ecstasy of tremendous grandeur.

In 1934 Max Weber creates the great painting "The Talmudists" that is on exhibit in the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York. This picture portrays in matchless fashion the whole gamut of religious zeal from quiet meditation to wild agitation. In the same year he presents in a portrait head the marvelous transfigured expression of a rabbi.

These pictures—and there are quite a few of them, in which he mainly varies the theme of dispute—are probably the most effective documentations of Jewish soul expression. This effectiveness is achieved through the medium of dynamics, which becomes distinctly recognizable here for the first time. These dynamics have their foundation in the personality of the master, but they are also to be interpreted as expression of the new-born design of the age.

The others cannot measure up to the original power of Max Weber.

ABRAHAM WALKOWITZ

WAS IN PARIS at the same time as Max Weber, belonged to the same circle and was one of the pioneers of the "Armory Show". From the start he

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leaned toward a greater harmony. He is more reserved in color, and more polished in expression. He adheres more to Cézanne's line, and distinguishes himself particularly in drawings in which he can let rhythm have its play, for example in the cycle of his dance portrayals of Isidora Duncan. He paints the heads of Oriental women, and nudes as well as colorful street scenes.

Also to be mentioned here is

SAMUEL HALPERT

who took the same path but died at the early age of 47. He started out as a pupil of Bonnard with realistic portrayals in the style of the impressionists. But then he went over to Cézanne and Dérain, and in extensive travels through France, Italy, Portugal and Spain, he created landscapes, still lifes and figure paintings.

MAURICE STERNE

BEGAN HIS studies in New York and went to Europe at the age of 27. He spent the first three years in Paris and then started a life of wandering that lasted several years and led him to Greece, Italy, Egypt, India, Java and Bali. Here he was supposed to stay only two weeks, but he was so fascinated by the country, the people and the life and action that seemed to step right out of a fairy-tale, that he stayed two years instead, returning to America only after the eruption of the first World War. However, he soon went back to Italy and settled in Anticoli, leaving it once a year to visit America for a few months.

Sterne is skilled in many fields. He began with graphic works, then turned to painting and is also active as sculptor. Not only thematically does he show a resemblance to Gauguin, in his presentations of primitive

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tribes and of the beautiful women of Bali with their wonderfully flexible bodies; in the pictorial treatment as well, and in his simple color and surface distribution he follows the post-impressionists, except that he develops a greater spontaneity.

His rhythm is more alive and flexible despite a quiet, somewhat dreamy lyricism that he intimates, especially in a series of pictures portraying young girls. He also proves himself an excellent technician in plastic portrayals—expressive character heads in the style of Maillol—and a master of absolutely modern perceptions.

BERNHARD KARFIOL

CAME TO Paris when he was a mere 15. His initial training was obtained at the Académie Julian, and in the beginning he shared quarters with Samuel Halpert and Jacob Epstein. In the house of Gertrude Stein, which was open to all young artists, he met Picasso and Matisse, but he was impressed most by Rousseau.

He returned to New York after a six year absence, but had to make his living with art instruction, and another five years passed before he was able to sell his first picture.

He is by far the most delicate and poetic painter in this first group of Americans who brought back the modern French painting culture. And although he does not go much beyond a post-impressionistic realism, he nevertheless shows himself to be a master of form in his portrayals of nude women in delicate colors and by virtue of his uniformly severe rhythm.

During the last decade he made extensive tours to Cuba, Jamaica and Mexico and brought back from

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there works that are interesting for their picturesqueness, such as landscapes, flower and figure paintings on a large scale.

* * *

The five artists mentioned thus far have contributed in no small measure to the expansion of modern art in America, and have every right to be considered leading figures. Many others now make their appearance next to them. Their number increases tremendously within a short period, so that just naming the really prominent artists would fill a long list. Accordingly we must confine ourselves to a selection of just a few, thereby merely indicating the significance of the Jewish element in the realm of modern American art.

Morris Kantor

Morris Kantor, had been deeply impressed by Rousseau and Chirico in Paris in 1927, and had joined the Society of Independent Artists quite early. He cultivated a realism reminiscent of the former provincial landscapists, and presented life in New York and scenes from New England in a very personalized style. His pictures are endowed with a quality that is intimate, peaceful and idyllic, especially his interiors with the view through the window or the open door into the landscape. He is a bit of an outsider in an otherwise turbulent drift.

Louis Lozowick

The exact opposite is *Louis Lozowick*. He trained as painter and etcher in New York, Paris and Berlin, studied at various universities and traveled through Europe. An excellent author on art, he wrote numerous essays about Jewish artists and in 1925 also wrote a book about modern Russian art.

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About his own art he says the following: "Out of the immense abundance of objects that our complicated and tradition-laden civilization offers the artist, I have chosen that which seems to correspond to my ability and my temperament. Let me formulate it this way: Industry is in the service of man for the benefit of mankind. This, to be sure, is not art in itself, but merely the material, just as religious zeal provided the material for the artist of the *moyen age*, worldly contentment for the Renaissance and the inexhaustible diversity of the visual world for the artist of the 19th century—material that has to be worked and shaped into art."

With these words Lozowick not only characterized his own work, but one of the main artistic impulses of the new America. Lozowick's pictures, rather than being descriptions, are the artistic interpretation of our dynamic era. The machine rattles, the wheels whirr and the pistons pound. The factory chimney rises ominously, and the mighty skyscrapers of New York rub elbows. The sea of houses, interspersed with bridges and foot-paths, are crowded close together. The light pours magically through the illuminated windows. Dead forms turn to lively images, material becomes matter; rhythm, conscious motion.

* * *

That is the credo of today's art. The purely visual can be registered much better and more exact by the camera than by the eye. We owe much to photography since it made us aware of many things we did not grasp before. It also taught us to distinguish between seeing and recognizing. Photography has grown to be an indispensable instrument; but it can never be art, no matter in what form. Art only begins where technique leaves off.

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The Americans are great technicians and, thanks to the means at their disposal, they have accomplished tremendous things in all fields. They realize the significance of technique for life. Lozowick's words can be paraphrased here to state: technics in the service of man for the benefit of mankind. But the Americans are also the ones who know how to appreciate this new phenomenon of our age properly, and how to raise it to the expression and experience of modern man. They made a social art out of their architecture by finding a synthesis of space and space event. Today's artist no longer stands apart from life, but right *in* life, he develops out of the spirit of his time.

Two special forms of art owe their revival and further cultivation to this attitude. However, the real soaring up to the unprecedented flowering of American art dates but from the beginning of the thirties when a new impulse came from the south.

In 1922 a group of revolutionary artists in Mexico had proclaimed the idea of creating a modern art with the purpose of admitting everybody by explaining to them the beauty contained in everyday life; this idea stressed the social mission of the artist as creator of an art that belongs to, and is appreciated by, the whole nation. It was first put to practical use in a number of fresco paintings on government buildings and soon thereafter reached North America with the help of the two greatest masters that Mexico ever produced.

In 1930 José Clemente Orozco and Diego Rivera received simultaneous orders for murals in the State of California. These, together with a number of additional works completed by them in New York during the next few years, in which the spirit of the new era was given gigantic expression, acted like a torch. Both

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Orozco and Rivera are two of the mightiest figures of creative power since the days of a Giotto and Michelangelo.

Their frescoes ultimately induced the United States government to put into effect official action on a large scale, in adorning public buildings with murals and charged the Treasury Department with procurement of the funds simultaneously giving American artistry the chance to develop most extensively an art that would benefit the entire cultural life of the country. Today America is the richest country in public art works. Here, art belongs to every one—the great social relief work turned out to be at the same time the most powerful cultural educational project.

At the same time another art form, no less strong, came forth from the artists. The modern artist is no longer satisfied with the portrayal and interpretation of life, he sees his mission in the critique as well. He no longer obeys the whims of princes and patrons, but wants to maintain his independence even though he is bound to definite problems or themes, as, for instance, when executing commissions under the Federal Art Project.

In this respect, too, the Mexicans were leading. While Orozco's primitive power first provoked general horror because he placed before the eyes of the people the world of today, the age of the machine and the effects of modern education in positively ghastly looking visions, Rivera went beyond all known limits in his sarcastic ridicule of the class conflict. The frescoes ordered for Rockefeller Center in New York led to such a violent political controversy between capitalism and proletariat that they finally had to be removed.

The artist takes an active part in life. As socially

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conscious factionist he creates works that will serve propaganda and enlightenment. He becomes a fighter against the ruling class, against corruption, hypocrisy and all outgrowths of political life. Honoré Daumier, today still unsurpassed as master satirist of human society had been able even to shake the throne of a Louis Philippe with his innumerable lithographs.

Now the artists recognized once more the extraordinary importance of the graphic arts as an instrument that reached the broadest masses. The black-and-white art and—likewise an achievement of modern technics—the illustrations in newspapers that flood the country in millionfold editions become a mighty factor of the formative arts.

And just as the South American masters had indicated the trend, some German artists now became the models and caused a sensation the world over with their graphic prints. Kaethe Kollwitz had pictured with shocking urgency the suffering of the nonprivileged proletariat, while Otto Dix had described bare reality with just plain brutal naturalism. George Grosz, who has been living in America since 1932, had castigated with biting irony the corrupt condition of the caste system, of vice and sword-rustling militarism. It was chiefly Grosz who, using his adamant crayon as a weapon, turned against the decadence of society. "I drew and painted out of opposition", he wrote. "I wanted to show my contemporaries the reflection of their own grimaces, and prove to the world that today's society is sick, canting and arrogant."

Another side of life captures in increased measure the interest of the graphic artist: Propaganda in a peaceful sense, as advertisement. And in that field a powerfully developing America offers him the greatest chances. For

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not only administration and industry made use of it; other fields, such as sports and the health and transportation systems offer entirely new problems. Advertising has become a separate branch of art, and some of the most noted artists have applied themselves to it; economic reasons not being the least important.

However, even from the artistic-aesthetic viewpoint, advertising is a remarkable factor inasmuch as completely new conceptions of beauty make their appearance and new style forms seem to be developing.

The participation of Jews in all the branches of modern art enumerated here is exceptionally large. Many public structures in various cities were decorated by them with frescoes under the auspices of the WPA, and among such works are a number of creations that are important artistically as well as thematically.

And just as Jewish artists come to the fore as pace-makers of American modernism, so, too, do they assume leading positions among those who follow the political and practical demands of the time.

WILLIAM GROPPER

WILLIAM GROPPER'S name is known all over America today, for the works of no other artist were as widely circulated as his. His art speaks a language that is universally understood; it is fascinating, enchanting, even gripping. His pictures are penetrating; they are so powerful and convincing that nobody can escape them. They are true experience. Their frequently wild impetuosity is elemental eruption, just as grimness and ridicule, irony and grimace are derived from genuine boldness and fearlessness.

Gropper experienced the hard school of life in all its phases. Slowly and laboriously he worked his way up

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from the depths of misery and the sweat shops of meanest factory work. He met up with the suffering and wretchedness and torment of the unprivileged; he knew the terrors of war, the reckless raging of unleashed passions and brutal force, and he was steeled by all that he had experienced, suffered and lived through.

"De Profundis" is the title of one of his pictures. It shows an emaciated, skeleton-like old Jew, wrapped in his prayer shawl, lifting his eyes to a sky darkened by storm clouds. The head, framed by a long, unruly white beard, with sunken eye sockets, sharp nose and half-open mouth, resembles a skull. The thin hands are clasped over his chest. Below are the words of the psalmist: "From the depths I call Thee."

An artist who is capable of expressing so symbolically with a single figure the plaintive helplessness of a people hard hit by fate, has at his disposal all the registers to portray in timeless documents the trembling and anxiety, the longing and desire and wild resentment of the human soul.

He repeats the above described theme in all kinds of variations. It won't release its hold on him, it burrows in him and drives him to ever new utterances.

Gropper was born 50 years ago in the Jewish slum district of New York. His mother sewed for factories; as a child he carried the heavy bolts of cloth, and from his 14th year he worked in one of those infamous Bronx sweatshops. At night he would draw.

He finally succeeded in attending evening courses at the Ferrer School and in being admitted to the National Academy of Design. For a while he had instruction from George Bellows, who had come from the group of "The Eight" and who was one of the most forceful,

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true American talented painters. It is unfortunate that he died so young.

At 22, Gropper became caricaturist for the "New York Tribune", and with that began his climb up the ladder. His sprightly drawings, striking in their biting sarcasm, appeared in all the large radical and communistic papers. A collection of his political drawings, published under the title "The Golden Land" made his name famous everywhere.

In 1937 the Russian government invited him, together with Theodore Dreiser and Sinclair Lewis, to participate in the Conference for Cultural Communal Work of the Soviet Union. As a result of the impressions gathered there, Gropper issued a book entitled "56 Drawings from the USSR".

In the meantime an additional sphere of activity presented itself to him. The Schenley Liquor Company had ordered a fresco painting for their new factory building, and this order was soon followed by further official commissions to paint the post-offices in Freeport and Detroit.

Gropper was 39 when he first appeared before the New York public with oil paintings. Until then he had been accumulating his pictures at home over a period of 15 years. The exhibit was a huge success, so that from then on he appeared annually with new pictures, and each new showing contributed to his fame.

The year 1941 became the milestone of his fame. Several oil paintings and a series of lithographs entitled "The Senate" overshadowed anything that had thus far been created in political satire in America. Gropper's portrayals are the sharpest whip ever swung against an existing legislative system since Daumier's "Le Ventre Législatif."

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An eminent designer and an artist familiar with the modern form language achieves powerful picture concentration with large surface and substance disposition; expression and gesture are reduced to greatest simplicity. Repose and motion, brightness and darkness are placed in direct contrast. These are no cheap caricatures, but torches that illuminate with a glaring light the real masks of "Bonzentum"; they are a declaration of war on a clique of block-heads.

When these pictures appeared, the guns were already booming in the distance and storm clouds were gathering threateningly over America. And the people understood the artist and gave him unstinted applause. Shortly thereafter came the attack on Pearl Harbor!

In 1943 Gropper went to Europe to see with his own eyes a world aflame, and an exhibit in New York after his return showed the result of his experiences. Involuntarily, the name of Goya comes to mind here. For the title which the Spaniard had chosen for his series of war pictures, "Los desatros della guerra", can be applied with even greater justification to these creations, which were artistically conceived with a primitive forcefulness never before attained.

They are not reports of a war correspondent who renders the horrors of war with gripping words; neither are they the sort of descriptions the camera records and which we watch with breathtaking awe in the movies. Here the genius of an artist gave form to the catastrophe of a war fury that destroys everything, to the most horrible work of destruction that man ever undertook against man.

The significance of these works is not the choice of themes, but the form in which the artist gives expression to his ideas. A picture that reproduces a certain event

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or serves a special purpose can easily appear banal, and even unartistic. Caricature is usually art with a purpose. For many years Gropper worked only as a caricaturist, but he always escaped the danger of being unartistic. To what extent he is an artist, and always is an artist first, is proven by his war portrayals. They are not naturalistic reproductions, but events that turned into new visions by means of the artist's creative process, through organizing rhythm and the effective construction of the color masses. This is not art with a purpose, but it is symbolic art. True, an art born of timely experience, but valid beyond all time.

BEN SHAHN

ART AS expression of actual life and reflection of modern man; translation of real activity into artistic vision: that is Ben Shahn's theme. He pursues goals similar to those of Gropper, but with other, positive means, which does not mean that he is a primitive artist. Occasionally he is much more realistic and bound to his subject. But in the formative structure he inclines toward cubism, and manages to achieve a strong effect by using the colors as material contrast.

There exists a certain parallel between him and Gropper insofar as both obtained the most important and effective impulse for their artistry from social motives. Their early lives run a similar course.

Ben Shahn, one year younger than his colleague, was born in Kowno. He came to America at the age of eight, grew up in the slums of Brooklyn, worked with a lithographer during the day and attended evening courses until, at 24, he came to the National Academy of Design.

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His life in a small coastal town of Massachusetts passed calmly enough until the Sacco-Vanzetti process, that political miscarriage of justice, made him sit up and take notice. His conscience revolted, his artistic fantasy caught fire. Within seven months he painted 23 gouaches which, when exhibited in New York in 1932, created a tremendous sensation.

These pictures are effective by virtue of their laconic reserve; without caricaturing, they condemn with great sharpness the ruling system in a biting sarcastic satire. To achieve this, the artist employs a totally new form language all his own; he over-emphasizes reality by using superfine lines and shrill colors.

In a second series of small gouaches treating the Tom Mooney case, Shahn goes even further in his expressive form of presentation.

Diego Rivera saw these works and engaged Ben Shahn to collaborate with him on the fresco paintings for Rockefeller Center. This opened up a new path to him. First he executed eight lesser portrayals for the prohibitions campaign as a government commission, followed by a large fresco painting ordered by the Farm Security Administration in Roosevelt, N. J. In the latter he reproduced the Textile Industry in realistically viewed sectors; but in the artistic construction and in the symbolic conception he employed the Rivera style of material formation.

Thirteen large frescoes for the Bronx Post Office in New York are the result of extensive travels, during which he became closer acquainted with land and people. In them, Shahn presents individual portrayals in interesting comparisons, such as agriculture and industry, and factory and farm workers.

Realistic reproductions of almost photographic exact-

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ness are liable to surprise one, occasionally, especially in his easel pictures. This is largely due to the fact that he goes out from drawing. Inasmuch as he frequently works as designer of advertising posters, he knows just how to evaluate the total effect achieved through the line and its importance in catching the eye, its accentuation and limitation.

The construction of his compositions derives a special rhythm from his own specific use of architectural elements. With it, he combines a very emphatic expressionistic coloring and color disposition, displaying a preference for light and radiant colors, such as golden yellow and bloody red.

His art is always gay and happy, he loves music and dancing, also sports, young folks and mainly children. His is a refreshing art, documentation of a positive philosophy.

* * *

William Gropper and Ben Shahn are but two of the many Jewish masters who characterize the various modern art trends. A further selection places the author in an embarrassing position, since he is liable to be accused of bias.

A great number of them were recipients of prizes for special accomplishments; others received government commissions for the adornment of public buildings. Let it be said here that the orthodox Loop Synagogue in Chicago was the first Jewish house of worship in America to be decorated with frescoes. The artist was A. Raymond Katz, who made these abstract designs of the Decalogue. Katz, who developed a Jewish symbolism of his own, also designed decorative glass windows for Temple Anshe Emet in Chicago.

Painters such as Ben Kopman and Boris Deutsch

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painted Jewish types and Jewish life in an expressionistic style similar to that of Chagall and Rouault.

Among the graphic artists were likewise some who treated Jewish themes, while others took part in the last war as war correspondents. David Fredenthal, for instance, was on MacArthur's staff in the Far East. Joseph Hirsch was in the East with some airforce divisions, also at the Italian front. And Georges Schreiber was stationed aboard a submarine.

The majority of Jewish artists came to this country at a very early age, and became completely Americanized. As we have seen, they gave the new country their best in strength and ability, but they lost their most specific quality: their Judaism.

Several artists sought refuge in America from the persecutions of the last war. Some of them, such as Chagall, Kisling, and Mané Katz, went back to France. Others, among them Max Band, Joseph Floch and Zygmunt Menkes, Julius Schuelein, Susanne Carvallo, Eugene Spiro, and Gustav Wolf remained here and are continuing their activities successfully and gainfully.

A Growing Palestine

TODAY JUDAISM is experiencing the gravest hour of fate in its entire existence. Not only its material stability is at stake, but the development of its spiritual life as well. Palestine has become a fact that can no longer be dismissed with discussion. Not *that* it exists, but *how* it exists—that is the question that concerns not only those of us who live here, but millions of Jews all over the globe.

It is a sophism to believe that the Jew outside Palestine is able to arrange his life at will and continue it as a Jew among other nations. The past century and a half have proven distinctly enough that there can be no emancipation of a minority without subordination under the laws of the majority, and that all assimilation goes hand in hand with a renunciation of the hitherto existing specificity. Emancipation was a Trojan horse that we accepted much too credulously.

The Jewish people had lost their historical judgment in the course of time, partly because they were blinded by the achievements and successes of individuals. They did not realize that all assimilation was only a personal matter that benefitted just the individual, and that not only did Jewish culture not profit from it but, on the contrary, was bereft of valuable forces.

A stronger awareness, awakened by renewed suffering, finally brought the realization that a Judaism living solely on its inheritance must gradually exhaust itself and perish if it is not able to activate its own resources.

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For this, however, it requires independence and "Lebensraum". That is the tendency of the new Palestine.

And that, too, is the aim of our artists. We have proved our ability everywhere. Now we want to continue our development from within ourselves, to test ourselves and to create our very own from our own perception. And that can only happen here! For art can not be learned or desired, nor does the style or the method make the work of art. Art resembles the flower that sprouts from the earth and is given the soil's sap to grow on. So far we could only harvest the fruits that were planted in foreign soil and fed by foreign springs. But only the seed that flourishes in one's own earth really belongs to one.

Our land is still barren; we have to fertilize and plough it to make it productive. We must first become re-acclimated and must weld together our scattered forces. We will first have to place brick upon brick to build our house.

A land and a nation that is coming into being—that is all the artist finds when he first gets here. Everything that he already had outside he must first create for himself. He, too, is a pioneer who must first make the earth arable from which his harvest is to blossom forth.

The number of those who devote themselves to art here is exceedingly large. But their accomplishments have to be judged by special standards, and we will be obliged to take into consideration the circumstances under which an art emerges which, despite its youth, expresses itself in so versatile a fashion.

In the first place, this art is in a state of genesis. One can not yet speak of a "Palestinian Art". For the time being it lacks the patina, which forms only very gradually and which, as in every type of construction,

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must cover the seams uniting the various parts of which it consists in order to make the whole appear as a unit.

As yet there is no Palestinian art, and it will take a long time—perhaps several generations—before there will be one. For one can create a work of art, but not an art; that is, art as expression of a nation and a country and its essential peculiarities, in short, as manifestation of its soul.

Such a thing can not be forced; it can only develop from the homogeneity of a nation whose people have found their own form of existence in nature, in the sun and the light and the air; in the products of the land, in mutual relations and habits, in customs and rites, in their entire culture. Our Jewish men and women must first become Palestinians before our art can be Palestinian art.

The second factor is the versatility—or rather, complexity—of the artistic achievements. To a certain extent it has a connection with what was just said. Inasmuch as everything here is strange and new to the artist, and a confusing abundance of unaccustomed impressions storms in upon him, he must first find his bearings. And since he must rely upon himself to achieve that end, he has to first search and experiment.

Most of the artists had their training abroad, and bring their experiences with them which, however, are useless here because the new, so different conditions demand their own experience. Thus are engendered purely individualistic accomplishments that are predisposed by temperament and disposition. And thus, too, it is easily understandable that here, just as outside, style and methods as well as forms and means clash, and the artists are engaged in the same kind of disputes.

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The exhibits of Palestinian artists are hardly different from those in other countries. But once in a while one comes across tendencies pointing to a direction that may lead to new results.

And then there is a special circumstance that should not be overlooked if we would recognize the full extent of the problems with which the artists are confronted here. That is the problem of existence proper. For although it would appear as though art life were already quite active here, it is just the lack of a so-called "art atmosphere" that makes it difficult.

Everything is so very new, and came into existence so quickly, that no tradition can endure as yet. An incentive from art institutions is lacking, and there are neither private collections nor art patrons. And the official authorities are not yet in a position to play promoter of the fine arts. Although there is great wealth, there are no art collectors and, accordingly, no art market.

Life itself is much too practical and business-like. Unfortunately, the remark can be heard quite often that as yet there is no room for art and that there are more urgent tasks to be attended to before one can afford such "luxury".

Accordingly, the artist must more or less rely upon himself and must seek other means of making a living in addition to his art. Since the growth of the cities in the most recent years, the situation has improved for some of the artists; but many of them were obliged to start as simple *chaluzim* and had to earn their livelihood with hard work as masons and bricklayers, in road construction and agriculture.

Thus one can speak of an heroic struggle in which the artists are engaged so that they can persevere. We

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should not wonder that among them we do not come across any personalities as firm in their development as those in other lands.

With all due recognition of achievements gained under such aggravated conditions, it must be stated that we cannot claim credit for them as belonging to a local art, even though they may be highly valuable as independent creations in accordance with their artistic quality. They are still the result of experiences that were not gained in this country, but were brought in from the outside.

We do not wish to make more of ourselves than we really are; we are well aware that what is created today in the various spheres of culture still requires fashioning through the influence of a milieu that is gradually being unified. Until that time arrives, we shall very modestly add brick upon brick in the firm belief that in the course of time here—and only here!—will be born that which is the ultimate goal of our pains: an art of our own that is engendered of our own strength.

* * *

As small as the land is, it is equally multiform. Town and country present two totally different aspects; so different, in fact, that the people have nothing in common. Tel-Aviv, Jerusalem and Haifa are super-modern cities with all the luxury and vice that goes with it. In the rural districts things are scarce, the kibbuzim are for the most part still very primitive. A lot of work is being done everywhere. Activity in business and factory is tremendous. The people perform exceptional feats, usually under the most difficult conditions.

The new Palestine demands the utmost exertion in strength of every one, regardless of where he stands and what he does. Not even the mental worker can lead a

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quiet life of certainty. And as hard as all this is, it is made even more difficult by the fact that these people, despite all their good intentions, have to first find their bearings and the way to one another. After all, they come from all points of the compass and are still marked by their former milieu—including their faces, their clothes, their whole outlook on life.

Here, everything is still imported, even the cultural assets, and everything needs to be revamped in order to be uniformly stamped in temperament and character by the conditions of the land.

Such diversity makes itself felt in every aspect and, of course, in artistic achievements as well. The diligence and energy put forth is no small matter, and the result should not be underestimated. But the standard by which we must take measure here—and we must now apply our own, new standard—is high! For only if we are strict and adamant with ourselves, demanding more and better things: when we shall become conscious of ourselves and replace with our own formative will everything foreign,—only then will we forge the chains that are to link the future generations. But today—and let us be clear about that—we can only make a survey of what exists so far and place the individual phenomena in loose juxtaposition. For the time being there is only a collecting of various forces, an addition and summation.

It is no coincidence that there is much that is reminiscent of Paris, and one sometimes has the rather embarrassing feeling that it is a slightly servile and misconceived imitation. A number of the younger artists had studied in Paris for a while and, as was already explained in an earlier chapter, they congregated chiefly

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around Soutine. The vigour and the inimitable color glow of his brush, as well as the deeply moving quality of the Jewish experience in him overshadowed everything else. So this was the way one had to paint in order to be a truly Jewish master!

So, they painted like Soutine without realizing the uniqueness that entitled him alone to express himself as he did. They digested the powerful impression of his art, took it along as a sort of painting mission and began to work along its lines abroad. Inasmuch as one was removed from a regulating art atmosphere in Palestine, the living legacy thickened to a dry recipe. And since there were no leading masters, the colleagues took recourse to arguing amongst themselves.

True, they had argued in Paris too, but there it was done within the scope of the most divers activities. That was missing here; there was only the news from outside, one heard only of new theories, and instead of surrendering to the new phenomena—even though they were very strange and difficult—and trying to accept them without bias and to master them, they employed only what they had learned and copied from others. Soutine is just one example, but it is the one that is most conspicuous.

The mystic and heavy Rouault is the second. Then, when the news came of Chagall's huge success in America, the artists thought they had to follow in his footsteps too. Too many years of isolation from the rest of the world was bound to lead to a stagnation of local art. Now, however, it appears that this condition has been overcome and that regained freedom of motion will also have its effect on art.

Another phenomenon of a special kind becomes noticeable here, and it is one that leads to interesting

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observations. It is an interest in, and demand for, art in the kibbuzim that is growing stronger continuously. The experience of these people, (most of whom are suddenly transplanted into a completely new world and who begin a new life in every respect is often so strong and revolutionizing that a whole metamorphosis takes place in their convictions as well as in their tastes. No longer do they only "see" the new in which they take an active part, but they actually "live" it. And they are impelled to express it somehow.

The whole mode of living; the solidarity and equality, both within work and outside of it; the purposiveness and will-power; congruity with animals and plants; the mysterious charm of the landscape; the dazzling light, the glowing sun, the whispering of the night and the animation in nature; the budding and the sprouting, and also the violence of the tempest: all this, with which they feel themselves one, seems so great to them, so powerful, that they cannot bury it within themselves. They want to portray it, and make an attempt in one way or another. Often it is only a primitive stammering. But every child stammers before it masters the word.

It seems that something new can be created here, and it appears that talents are budding that can revive art in a new direction. Much will depend on whether these people are given the opportunity to acquire further training, and to that end ways and means already seem to be presenting themselves.

The Hashomer Hazair, for example, formed an art section from members of the kibbuzim who are gifted in art. This group works together for several weeks each year under the direction of suitable artists. Of course, this is merely an emergency measure to give the young folks some encouragement until the projected creation

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of an art center can be materialized. This center is supposed to be located in a kibbuz—which is quite important—so that the people remain in that environment.

But there is more to the further development of life in a kibbuz: the future generations have to be considered too. A new generation is being born there, and every kibbuz has a steadily increasing number of children. There is a need for schools and instructors, and in order to train them for that task, a few years ago, a seminary was established at which teachers in all subjects of learning (including artistic intuition and drawing) along quite new methods are perfected, so that within a short time we will have a staff of suitable teachers.

* * *

A complete perspective of today's art life in Palestine cannot be confined within the scope of this book. In order to explain the situation even fairly well, it would be necessary to become quite expansive and to unroll the development of the past decades in the various branches of art from the time the initial attempts at art were made here.

A special chapter on artcraft and handicraft would have to be inserted inasmuch as a great deal was accomplished in that field that was essential in promoting the artistic evolution of the country. Handicraftsmanship was able to link itself to ancient tradition, something the other branches of art could not. In this field there was a certain foundation already in existence, upon which one could continue to build and because of which definite limits were set.

Painting and sculpture, to which we have to confine ourselves here, are based on different principles, al-

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though, naturally, all cultural efforts are correlated and a reciprocal pollination takes place constantly.

The first experiments in painting were undertaken by young people whom Zionist idealism had brought to Palestine from Eastern Europe and who first had to wage a battle for their bare existence, which left them little time or strength for art. During the first decade following the World War, many newcomers arrived, most of them also from the East via Paris; however, during this period there were no great changes either in the standard of living or of art.

It was the immigration from the West of Europe, beginning in 1932, that first gave new impulses to art. Almost all of the arrivals were already matured artists who brought with them good training and experience. Prosperity also set in at that time and proved beneficial to the artists too. They could occupy themselves with more ease and make themselves known through exhibits. Tel-Aviv became the art center of the country, due, chiefly, to the incentives and efforts of the founder and mayor of this first all-Jewish city, the farsighted promoter of all cultural endeavors, Meir Dizengoff.

We would have to enumerate many were we to mention all whose artistic activity results in the colorful picture of modern art in Palestine. Accordingly, the author stands before the difficult task of making a selection, and thereby becomes vulnerable to accusations of bias. But even with this unavoidable danger in mind, we shall name and characterize with a few words those artists who are to be classed as the chief exponents of the situation today.

* * *

Sculpture is a stepchild among the arts practiced here because Jewish traditional law imposes far-reaching pro-

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hibitions upon it. Since perpetuation of a hero in stone or metal is unknown to the Jew, Palestine is a land without monuments. And inasmuch as the public hand as giver of commissions does not exist, and since the tombstone art practiced elsewhere is confined to tectonic and ornamental tasks and since, besides, modern architecture is much too plain and usually rejects sculptural ornamentation because of the concrete casting employed, the sphere of activity is quite limited for the plastic artist.

There is the additional difficulty of obtaining material. Except for the beautiful, but very hard Jerusalem marble, there are no serviceable stone types. Rather small blocks of wood are available only by chance, and there are yet no facilities for bronze casting. This leaves nothing but terracotta, which is suitable for smaller works only, and the so-called art stone, which is usually an ugly admixture of ground stones and cement.

Nevertheless, there are a few noteworthy sculptors, and it is hoped that the more progressive influence of the kibbuzim will gradually result in a chance for them to execute monumental works.

At the Levant fair in Tel-Aviv in 1934, the giant figure of a sower had been erected by *Zeev ben-Zwi* as symbol of the Palestinian farmer. However, it was only temporary and was later removed.

The artist had created a number of over-lifesized portrait busts of Bialik, Schmarjahu Lewin, Dizengoff and others which were sharply accented in large planes and cubic forms. His sower had been a good example of a symbolic monumental sculpture.

Several similar attempts, undertaken by others, were not as successful, and further large commissions have,

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for the time being, been denied our sculptors. This is the more regrettable since the necessary talents are available. Moshe Ziffer and Trude Chaim, both of whom had the best of training abroad, are sculptors of high rank.

Trude Chaim studied in Berlin with Jakimow. Years before migrating to Palestine she worked there in friendly collaboration with Kaethe Kollwitz, whose interest always was centered in plastic art and to which, although she was best known as the famous graphic artist, she devoted the last 15 years of her life. The two women were as one in emotional and artistic harmony: in the motherly warm sensibility and understanding of the children's soul and in the strong formative power of plastic fashioning.

In the twelve years that Trude Chaim has lived in Palestine, she has created a goodly number of important works, including graceful statuettes, children's heads and expressive portrait busts. She has also proved herself an excellent pedagogue in art, directing, among other things, the drawing class for training kibbutz instructors.

Moshe Ziffer had come to Palestine when he was only 17, and had been working as a road laborer for six years when, one day, he started to use his knife on a piece of olive wood. That aroused his desire to be a carver.

He left Palestine again and went to Vienna, where he studied for three years at the school for handicraft. From there he went to Berlin. I remember some of his first creations, shown me by a friend at the time, and I was able to observe the remarkable progress made by him during the succeeding five years while studying at the Academy.

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By the time he returned to Palestine, he was a finished artist. Once more he left the country to spend a year in Paris. For the past ten years Ziffer lives here, much too secluded, unfortunately, working for himself rather than for the public. I like above all the figures that are held in a fine, swaying rhythm, and the delicate female torsos, so full of grace. Some of these, small pieces executed in wood, are among his best works so far.

Aron Priver, too, is one of those quiet workers. His nudes, in softly intertwining forms, seem to give off a musical tone. He had faltered a long time between being a musician or a sculptor. He had studied the violin, and when he came to Palestine in 1922, he had been a pupil of A. Melnikoff for a while. Melnikoff, at that time the foremost sculptor, has been living in London for a number of years now.

The compactness and dignified reserve of Priver's works are the products of a double talent that finds complemental harmony in the performance of two arts.

And finally, we have an exponent of abstract art in Palestine in the person of *Moshe Sternschuss*. For a long time Sternschuss had remained loyal to the academicism of Boris Schatz. He had continued his training at the *École Nationale des Arts Décoratifs* in Paris. In the beginning he proved his technical prowess in many naturalistic statues and true-to-life portrait busts, but he gradually changed his style and turned to more expressionistic forms, which at times are highly reminiscent of Hugo Belling and of Archipenko. His latest works consist of pure action motifs, which suffer frequently because they are executed in an art stone that is too dull and as heavy as a block of cement.

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Thus far the graphic arts were not able to get a foothold in Palestine, although in this field especially there was no lack of suitable artists. The three artists who were discussed so extensively in the chapter "Master Etchers" actually belong to the Palestinians. However, inasmuch as their chief accomplishment, namely, the revival of Jewish etching, existed before their immigration, and the major portion of their work was completed in Galuth, we seemed justified in placing them within the ranks of the European artists.

Still, *Hermann Struck* has to be mentioned here once more, since he was Palestine's senior artist. *Joseph Budko*, too, who unfortunately had but a few years to live in this country, became a leader in spite of the short time allotted to him, and his example continues to bear fruit here.

Jacob Steinhardt brought with him the knowledge of the woodcut, and practices it both creatively and instructively.

One of his pupils deserves to be mentioned here. *Jacob Pins* migrated to Palestine from Germany, worked in a kibbuz for five years and did not turn to art until six years ago. In amazingly short time he developed into a woodcut artist of note. In miniature carvings and wood engravings for book illustrations, as well as in large individual prints that emphasizes the plane form, he demonstrates his special gift of differentiation in black and white rhythemics.

That so little is created in the field of graphic arts can be blamed chiefly upon the dearth of technical equipment. For instance, there is to date no usable copper-plate printing press in the country, and good apparatus for printing lithographs has only recently become available. Expansion of the Hebrew book and

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printing trade will undoubtedly provide a new stimulus. In the meantime, though, our artists are more or less limited to the pen and the crayon.

Anna Ticho made an international name for herself as landscape artist with her pen and pencil drawings. They are reminiscent of the old German "Kleinmeister" (Little Masters); clean-cut and precise, they treat the details with infinite care. She understands how to reproduce the specific character of nature, be it alive or inanimate, and, in particular, the hilly scenery around Jerusalem. In these consciously naturalistic prints she reveals intimate knowledge of every single aspect, as well as a profound artistic understanding for harmony with nature at large.

Just the reverse as a drawer is the architect *Leopold Krakauer*, whose mighty creations are simply landscape visions. All he does is render in commemorative pictures the impressions gathered from nature. In the eerie silence of the mountainous region around Jerusalem, interspersed with stones and boulders, he sees the land of the Bible. He shapes the images of his fantasy into massive, occasionally dramatically agitated works of art, achieving a gigantic effect by using powerful strokes of coal and chalk in order to produce strong contrasts of light and dark.

The last two mentioned artists have lived in Jerusalem for more than twenty years, both having originally hailed from the luxurious-charming atmosphere of Austria. The more admirable is their ability to adjust themselves to such severity in nature, for the mountain world of Jerusalem, which is in such contrast to the other joyously-vivid and colorful parts of the country, is loath to divulge itself to man, and it is only the truly gifted artist who manages to grasp its taciturn grandeur.

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Ludwig Schwerin experienced a different transformation here. Within a few years he developed from an illustrator and caricaturist to an artist of serious conception. In his comfortable and somewhat philistine home in southern Germany, he had evolved as an illustrator in the style of an intimate late-romanticism at which his eminence in drawing had equipped him to execute miniature-fine portrayals.

Eight years ago he made a similar beginning here with anecdotal and sometimes rather funny descriptions, especially of Tel-Aviv city types. A visit to a kibbutz gave him contact with the land and the people out there, and impressed him so much that he returns there frequently. The broad areas and gentle slopes in the radiant light, as well as the rhythm of the work, life and labor itself—all this affects him as being so strong and so great that he tries to free himself of all that is mean and paltry.

The stroke of his pen and crayon grows more powerful, and his portrayals increase in expressive force. Schwerin develops into a vivid describer of this heterogeneous present, he is more and more enthused by its polyphony, and his sheets acquire more power in format as well as through the use of richer media. He enhances his art from the pen-and-ink drawing to the broadly flowing stroke of the brush, from black and white to color display; and, with ever increasing self-assurance, he changes the form of portrayal in order to capture the respective characteristics of a situation or a mood.

A highly talented self taught draughtsman is *David Hender* who emerged from a quarryman into a skilled artist—it is the story of the Chaluz who, originating from an orthodox chasidic family in Kiew, comes to the country in his twenties, has to endure years of mis-

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ery and hard work until finally his passion for art drives him to devote himself to it in spite of new and never ending privation—and who today ranges with the few who have developed a style of their own. His little sketches in pen and ink, mostly with some light touches in water color, are very charming impressions full of life and bright sunlight.

Another master of pen drawing, but exclusively engaged in the field of caricature, is *Arieh Navon*, who restricts himself to pure lines but who with a few nervously placed dashes succeeds to create startling and drastic effects.

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The number of sculptors and graphic artists is relatively small as compared to that of the painters. This fact, as previously mentioned, can be traced to special circumstances. The painters form the principal contingent, and among them are exponents of all trends. That, however, is of no great consequence. But it is the degree to which a reaction toward local conditions makes itself felt—in other words, how much these artists contribute toward Palestinian art development—that is important. Of those who worked here before the 1932 wave of immigration there are only a few who are of importance in that respect.

Pinhas Litwinowski is probably the most interesting personality among them insofar as his development took place without any direct outside influence. He came here with the first ship to reach Palestine after the war, in 1919. He had already begun his studies at the Bezalel School when he was 16, seven years previously. However, the war had taken him back to Russia. He was a soldier till 1916, spent some time in Petersburg and then, after several years of adventure in the Crimea

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and Constantinople, he returned here. Since then he has gone his own way, paying little heed to the others.

He is a strange individual with a forceful character; a taciturn man who knows what he wants, he developed into one of the most powerful painters entirely on his own initiative. His early works, especially portraits of pronounced characteristics, measure up to a Renoir in their quiet color harmony. Always they are the result of many preliminary studies and the most accurate sketches which he finally reduces to the utmost simplicity in the total effect. A likeness of Miss Szold, completed ten years ago, is done entirely in dark green, and is one of his most important creations of that type.

He has changed a great deal since that time. He wields the brush with a sure bravour, and every stroke seems to have been flung onto the canvas. Sometimes he applies thick color in broad areas, using only the spatula, and paints color visions of immense power. One can actually sense the boiling and bubbling inside him. Each of his works seems like a volcanic eruption. Mostly his compositions are very brisk and are held in dark tones. Here and there a color speck shows up, frequently in a bloody red. All of them are directed toward a dynamic expressionism, with which he gives utterance to his experience of Palestinian rhythm.

It is not the heaviness of the European sky that acts oppressive here; it is, rather, the immense intensity with which a storm sometimes rages here; it is the magic flash of the Palestinian sun that bursts forth with a force unknown elsewhere, and compared to which all other color values disappear in darkness and the figures appear in spectral motions.

There are a few other artists who deserve to be mentioned next to Litwinowski. They began at an early

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stage, but a sojourn in Paris for purposes of study gave their work a more or less deciding trend. Temperament and nature of the individual play a big part, of course, in determining to what extent that which they learned is digested and becomes their spiritual property, or whether it is merely borrowed goods and consequently remains a foreign substance.

As was explained previously in detail, France is the instructress of all modern painting and our art, too, owes her a great deal. But the greater a master, the more dangerous is he as a model. For only few of his pupils can follow him to the extent of becoming his heirs, while most of them merely emulate him.

Moshe Mokadi had arrived here early after training in Zurich. He had been in this country several years before going to Paris. A six year stay, most of it spent in the environment of Soutine, gave his art the decisive trend, and he has followed it to this day. Mokadi absorbed the inheritance of his master. The heaviness and melancholy inherent in Soutine echoes in his work, to be sure, but only insofar as it forms the basis for his melodies, which are elegiac rather than tragic; for he is absolutely individualistic as an artist, living entirely in his own dream world of mysticism.

It is a matter of indifference to him where he lives, whether here or in some other country; possibly he receives some impulses of an emotional nature here. For he paints imaginary compositions; and phantom-like figures enveloped in a light blue-green and green-brown mist which gives them a slightly puzzling effect at times; nevertheless, they originate in genuine artistry.

Genuine in a different sense is *Moshe Castel*, one of the very few native artists. He is the descendent of a Sephardic family long established here. He grew up in

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ancient Jerusalem and learned at the Bezalel School. His lineage is attested to by his portrayals, which are carried out in deep, full tones and a trinity of crimson, blue and green that is quite his own; also by his interiors and landscapes, which display an Oriental tendency in their disposition of light and space arrangement.

However, this inborn talent lost in originality because of what he learned and adopted during a 12 year stay in Paris. The angelic figures that soar across the heavens or enter the room that is decorated for the sabbath and is magically illuminated by the light of flickering candles—such figures do not belong to Safed, they come from the Witebsk of a Chagall. The same applies to the bizarre heads, they being the spiritual property of Rouault.

If Castel had not succumbed to these influences, he might have turned out less brilliant as far as painting technique is concerned, but his expressionism would have been stronger and more real. Fortunately, after a time of transition, he has found his way back to himself and now again he speaks his mother tongue without the admixture of foreign words and even with more expressive meaning. His pictures contain a certain something that only he can express in such a manner because it is in his blood.

He does not need to borrow from any one to give expression to the mystic, and it is quite sufficient when he renders the cabbalistic atmosphere of Safed with his media, his colors and his ingenuity; for it is his atmosphere, his true homeland which he alone is able to comprehend and present in such a manner.

In 1923 Ruben Zeilikovitz, from Galatz, settled here, substituting his family name with the artistic pseudonym

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of *Rubin*. Only 29 years old, he had already had an active past. At the age of three he had been registered at cheder, and at 15 had launched upon a business career, beginning as wine agent and following up with a job in a fur shop and then in a leather factory. He had come to Palestine when he was 19 in order to study with Boris Schatz. However, he and his teacher got into an argument and he forsook country and art.

Once again he tried his hand at business, this time in a porcelain store and as a wheat salesman. Another attempt at art, this time in Paris, ended as the first one had. Then, traveling in Italy in his capacity as leather salesman, he visited the museums instead of the customers, and his employers called him back quickly. He had to spend four additional years in Falticeni until, finally, he fled from the hated profession, and began painting in Czernowitz.

There, he met a painter Kalnic who gave him his first instruction and with whom he went to New York. After only one year he had a showing in the Anderson Gallery which turned out to be a success. Via Paris he then reached Palestine for a permanent abode.

His wakeful agility and skilled sensibility enabled him to absorb rapidly all inspirations that came his way, and thus we see him changing his style constantly. He starts out with purely superficial, thin-colored paintings in the decorative manner of Rousseau; then he follows in the footsteps of van Gogh and Dufy, is influenced by Vlaminck and, in particular by Chagall, adopts the ornamental-decorative rhythm of Japanese woodcuts and, in Palestine, after a great deal of experimenting, acquires a painting method of his own.

This energetic, poised man of the world knew how to make his name famous everywhere. No Palestinian artist

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is as well known outside the country as he. He possesses great faculties and knows how to make effective use of them with the help of eminent technical ability; he has extensive knowledge and experience.

In the 17 years of his living here, he has given the best created thus far in rhythmic portrayals as artistic expression of the country, especially in lively aquarelles and generous as well as clever drawings with quill and brush. This is where he proves his penetration into, and comprehension of, this world, and he gives something new and unique.

In his landscape paintings, however, his appeal is based to a larger extent upon technical effects that occasionally incline toward a decorative formula. His virtuosity proves strongest where he is able to use such means more freely as in brilliant, expansive flower pictures.

In his most recent works, which he completed largely in America during the war years, he frequently gives his admiration for Chagall rather obvious expression. While both artists meet on the mutual basis of their chassidic origin, Chagall proves himself the imaginative and unique genius wherever he sounds his spiritual heritage in his works; Rubin, on the other hand, remains no more than a talented and extremely skilled painter.

But, as we have already remarked, Palestine's artistic mien assumed a broader and more extensive aspect with the arrival of a number of artists after 1932.

Leo Kahn had worked in Germany and Holland for years and was then active in France for seven years, especially in the more intimate circle around *Dérain*. When he came here, at 43, he was a mature master.

Only after lengthy, quietly conducted preparations

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did he show the aquarelles created here. They demonstrate his pictorially differentiated sensitivity, inasmuch as he is capable of rendering with the simplest of means the peculiar glistening and the transparency of the sun-drenched atmosphere in his large, light and colorful watercolors. In the application of color he develops a rich scale of nuances, ranging from cobweb sheer to heavy dark, thus finds the approach to the difficult problems that confront the painter here.

The painting of *Isidor Aschheim* also acquires brilliancy of color very quickly, and he develops it in broad compositions that stress the large form. A strong rhythm begins to permeate his work and is quite a contrast to his former unwieldiness. The action grows light and winged, and one imagines that one can detect in it the pulsation of a new life. Simultaneously, the color assumes a freshness and vitality that seems to emanate from every pore of his portraits.

Miron Sima came from the Dresden Dix School, that revolutionary German art group that sponsored naturalistic simplicity and employed it as a weapon against the decadence of society. With merciless accuracy this realistic art gives powerful expression to its social ideology, especially in the drawing.

Sima took the same road in Palestine and created a number of interesting pictures with a tendency, as well as sharply accentuated portraits. But then he turned to the pictorial problems that confronted him here and, in the course of time, formed his own style by combining expression of design and color.

His most recent pictures—whether they be landscapes, still lifes or portraits—are constructed rhythmically and are severe in form, saturated with pictorial fire. They are the works of an artist who absorbed his lessons from

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the North and the South and made them his own in a happy combination.

Difficult to interpret, and not to be put aside with a short explanation is the art of *Issai Kulviansky*. His versatility led him to the most varying fields, and he masters them all. He started out as a sculptor in wood, learned stone carving from the excellent marble sculptor Professor Hugo Kaufmann in Berlin, and also at the *École des Beaux Arts* in Paris.

However, after a while he turned to painting entirely, and soon became a prominent member of the radical Berlin November Group. By way of neo-realism he came to Corinth, at that time the strongest painting genius as far as progressive post-impressionism was concerned, and evolved as a color artist of rustling visions. He perceives the phenomena quickly and surely, and translates them into compositions that are saturated with light and color.

With great skill he makes use of the aquarelle as suitable material for sketches, and of oilpainting for large scenic pictures. Sometimes he somersaults in wild storm and stress and is driven forward by a feverish restlessness that frequently doesn't permit him to go beyond the first plan of a picture.

Now comes a period that might be termed the days of his master aquarelles. Certainly they are the best pictorial achievements of his created here to date. They are sheets of large format, in which the sunlight trembles in the vapourous atmosphere; occasionally their tones are diaphanous and delicate, then again they radiate in powerful color glory—a rich scale of expressive values.

Suddenly he deviates from all this and makes a new start. He applies himself solely to sculpture, which he recognizes as his true calling. He feels the urge to create

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something monumental, some huge architectural structures with sculptural embellishments, and he makes gigantically planned designs. For the time being they are just miniature models, but already they bear the stamp of the coming grandeur. Kulviansky is sculptor and painter; his artistic talent unfolds in both directions and it is impossible to tell as yet in which field he is stronger.

Mordechai Bronstein approaches the problem that is Palestine in quite a different way. He constructs his pictures in color masses. Their application in peculiar, thick layers gives them a glassy lustre that imparts a mysterious strength to these dramatic visions. In their spiritual conception Bronstein's color symphonies resemble Krakauer's drawings, inasmuch as he, too, gives utterance to a nature that is timeless in its majestic greatness. One gets the impression of a curtain rising to reveal a stage scene, for the light does not seem to fall upon the performance direct and to illuminate it from outside; it shines from within the color, which radiates its own aura.

Aaron Kahana is an interesting example illustrating the efforts of an artist who seeks to re-orient himself. He begins with naturalistic landscapes which differ from his dark-toned European works by a strong brightening of his palette. They show a rapid comprehension of the new light effects and the resulting color values.

He has the courage to want to capture the glaring sunlight and succeeds in expressing the contrast, characteristic of the Palestinian landscape, between the azure sky and the countryside that reflects the light so much brighter.

Recently Kahana has turned to a more constructive

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realism by emphasizing architectonic values, to which he endeavors to impart a specifically Oriental rhythm. The works of the last years showed remarkable results, with new harmonies in the coloring also coming to light.

The greatest talent in the direction of strictly anti-impressionistic picture formation is *S. Sebba*. He is equipped with profound mathematical and architectural knowledge, which he acquired at the University of Berlin; he is experienced in the most diversified branches of artcraft, is versed in stage designing and picked up a good deal of education in his travels through many countries. He is a virtuoso in his mastery of all art media.

He sets about work with unremitting severity and without sentimentality. The greatest possible simplicity and clarity in the form, and a rhythm that is accurately controlled, are the aims of his art, regardless of what material he uses. Every one of his works, all of which are based on lengthy observation and often on hundreds of detailed studies, is absolutely plain. He eliminates everything that is incidental; the color scale is reduced to extreme economy, but it is arranged in such a way that every nuance has its specific value in the joint harmony.

To achieve his end, he makes use of the most varying means. For example, by stratifying several color planes, he obtains a plastic effect of depth. A special method of his, one of many, is the laying on of one each color upon a thin plastic plate and then superimposing several of these plates. The incidence of light from a sideward angle increases the plastic effect.

Sebba's works represent a wholly new type of objectiveness; for just as soon as he is able to re-interpret

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the naturalistic aspect, thereby giving reality an enhanced effect, he has found a new formula of art expression.

Marcel Jancu moves along different lines. He has been known in the world of art for 30 years already. As early as 1916 he had appeared among the "Dadaists". This was a group of the most radical extremists which tried to protest against the collapse of the exhausted cultural world by instigating a campaign of sabotage against all order and logic. They opposed all tradition by trying to ridicule it, and drowned out all clever theories with confused childish stammering. Thus was born the name "Dadaism".

Within this circle Jancu, 21 years old and originally from Bukarest, was one of the most zealous. He had been a pupil of Iser, the Jewish painter and caricaturist who had migrated to Paris from Roumania; however, he had soon fled from the dry academic instruction and had gone to Zurich, where his colleagues gladly accepted the gifted artist.

Dadaism soon spread to various countries, Berlin becoming its second center. Jancu was active here too, particularly in the circle around Klee and George Grosz, before going to Paris. There he remained a loyal supporter of the revolutionaries until, with the ending of the general war hysteria, the anarchism of art also cooled off.

Jancu stayed in Paris until 1926 and then returned to Bukarest. Here, however, he employed the knowledge acquired in ten years of art confusion in an entirely new field. In the ensuing years he became a leader of modern architecture in Roumania and was successful in his activity of an architect in cubist style until the eruption of war suddenly drove him away.

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So, finally, he came to Palestine in 1940 and went back to painting. The impressions of the Orient provided a new stimulus for his art and imbued it with such a typically Oriental flavor that one could think he, who had been the last to arrive, had been at home here for a long time.

With gay carefreeness, which occasionally gives a glimpse of his trait as a caricaturist preserved from earlier days, he re-forms real phenomena into decorative abstracta. They are illustrations rather than paintings, for in paintings, too, the strongly stressed linear rhythm plays the main role against color.

For Jancu, Palestine is the conception of action, for which he has found his own constructive form. But his colors also show an absolute Oriental accord: bright and shining when he uses them to animate his pen-and-ink drawings; peculiarly dull but at the same time transparent in the decorative-superficial arrangement of his paintings. Jancu shows us a totally new Palestine, a Palestine that thus far had not become aware of itself in this form. His matured and polished artistry is capable of changing nature into abstractions that are rich in ideas, and of interpreting it in his language.

Especially noteworthy, finally, is the work of *Johanan Simon*, who came to this country at the age of 30 after good training in Germany and France. Since he was healthy and strong, he considered it his duty to help reconstruct the land by living in a *kibbuz*, lending a helping hand wherever he was needed.

The work and the spirit that marked this community life, together with the love that bound him to the soil—all that was an event for him. All that for which he had been searching in vain in Spain and America, the free work of a free man, he found here.

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In his leisure hours he took up painting again. He was the first among his kibbutz comrades to occupy himself with art, and he served as an inspiration to the others. What many of them felt, but were unable to express properly, he was capable of uttering successfully, thanks to his experiences and knowledge.

By the interest that he found among many, he recognized the necessity for a systematic supervision of these art devotees, and organized the institution of Hashomer Hazair, which we mentioned earlier.

None of the other artists living here is so attached to the land as Johanan Simon. His pictures sing a new tune: a song of the new Palestinian life and the heroics of the conscious human type. In strong, vigorous colors he constructs the compositions which he envisions on a large scale. He feels the urge to create something in large format, something monumental. First he paints the walls of the children's house with happy everyday scenes from life in a kibbutz, and then he does the same in the dining room. These experiments lead him to the idea of fresco painting. However, that requires special technical knowledge.

The first requisite is the quality of the material, since only clay color can be used. It develops that Palestine has a clay equal to the Siena, and Cyprus furnishes an excellent green. Everything else has to come from outside the country. The greatest obstacle, though, is the correct preparation of the wall surface with a lime that must be absolutely salt-free, and of which only such an amount may be applied at a time as can be painted within eight to ten hours. And since every line upon the wet surface is irrevocable, the whole procedure demands exceptional training.

That Simon has such training is attested to by the

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frescoes in the new Administration Building of the "Shemen" Company in Haifa, which he executed as the first genuine fresco painting in the country.

Until now it was believed that the climate here, as well as the building material used, would not permit a direct painting upon the wall. The many experiments undertaken by Simon, supported by the personal directions of the foremost among fresco painters, Diego Rivera, have proved that with exact technical knowledge it is quite possible to create monumental murals. This opens up a new vista, rich in potentialities, for Palestinian art. This new sphere of activity gives the artists the chance to leave the confines of the studios and exhibitions, and to appear before the wide public.

The example of Mexico and America has taught us how much universal interest can be affected and stimulated if art is brought to the public everywhere. Murals in public buildings, in factories, in auditoriums, school-rooms, etc. are particularly suited for that purpose. Besides, the realization that art belongs not only to those who can afford it, but that everyone can take part in it, leads the people to art, and the artist to the people.

* * *

Culture and art in Palestine have taken a mighty upswing. New forces brought extensive knowledge and inspirations along, and now the important thing is to fuse this manysidedness into a unit. When one sees the feverish efforts with which brick is laid upon brick to reconstruct the land—despite all obstacles and with the greatest sacrifices—one cannot withdraw from the belief that in the course of time the so richly strewn seed, nourished by the juices of the soil and strengthened by the reviving rays of the sun, will blossom forth in a Palestinian art.

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