JEWISH ARTISTS, JEWISH IDENTITY 1917–1931

WORKS FROM THE MERRILL C. BERMAN COLLECTION

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Front cover adapted from:
Issachar Ber Ryback (author)
Cover of the book (in Yiddish): *Af di idishe felder fun Ukrayine (Sur les champs juifs de l'Ukraine; On the Jewish Fields of the Ukraina)*.
Paris: A. Simon and Company, 1926
Lithograph and letterpress
15 1/4 x 11 1/4" (38.1 x 28.6 cm)
See p. 157

Back cover adapted from:
El Lissitzky
Interior image from *Shest' povestei o legkikh kontsakh* (Six stories with easy endings)
Moscow-Berlin: Helikon, August 1922
Letterpress
7 7/8 x 5 1/8" (20 x 13 cm)
See p. 112

Table of Contents

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Contributors

Alla Rosenfeld, Ph.D. is Research Consultant for Russian and Eastern European Collection, Merrill C. Berman Collection. She has held academic and curatorial positions at the Mead Art Museum, Amherst College and at the Zimmerli Art Museum, Rutgers University. During her tenure at the Zimmerli, she organized many exhibitions and was an editor and contributor to numerous publications. She also worked as Vice President and Senior Specialist in the Russian Paintings Department at Sotheby's New York. Her major independent curatorial projects include the traveling exhibition *A World of Stage: Russian Designs for Theater, Opera, and Dance* presented at the National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, and the Metropolitan Teien Art Museum, Tokyo. Dr. Rosenfeld is a recipient of many research fellowships from, for example, the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., the Belvedere in Vienna, and American Association of Museums.

Noa Tsaushu, received her B.F.A in Fine Arts from the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design, Jerusalem and her M.A. in Yiddish Studies at Bar-Ilan University. She worked as a Media Director at the Museums of Bat Yam (MoBY) prior to pursuing her Ph.D. at Columbia University, where her dissertation, tentatively titled *Yiddish Art: The Desire for Cohesion among the Soviet Yiddish Avant-Garde*, considers Yiddish literature, plastic arts, and Jewish identity after the Russian Revolution. She has taught Yiddish at Columbia and at YIVO (Institute for Jewish Research).

Headnote

Transliteration of Russian into English

For this catalogue, we have adopted the system of transliteration employed by the Library of Congress. For artists and writers who were chiefly active in the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union, we have transliterated their names according to the Library of Congress system.

Surnames with an "-ii" ending are rendered with an ending of "-y" (e.g. Mark Antokolsky, Nikolai Lavrsky). Soft signs are not used in artists' names but are retained elsewhere (e.g. Natan Altman, not Natan Al'tman). Where the name of a Russian artist or writer has its own long-established spelling that variant is maintained (e.g. El Lissitzky, not Lazar Lisitsky).

We have retained the distinction in spelling between Russian and Ukrainian names, e.g Aleksandr (Russian) and Oleksandr (Ukrainian), except when they are well known in the West (e.g. Alexander Archipenko).

Rendering of Names and Titles

The name and surname of an individual are given in full when he or she is first mentioned in the essay. Subsequent references to the individual within that text carry only the surname. For brevity, in the text of the essay and artists' biographies we have used only first and last names of the artists and omitted patronymic names.

Titles of works of art, books, catalogues, journals and newspapers are italicized; titles of articles and manuscripts are in quotation marks; names of societies and institutions are not.

For brevity, in the captions for the illustrations in the essay we have used only translated titles; however, both transliterated and translated titles are used in the Plates section.

Transliteration of Yiddish into English

This publication relies almost exclusively on the YIVO (Yidisher visnshaftlekher institut; Yiddish Scientific Institute) guidelines of transliteration, except for words and names commonly appearing in English. The transliteration of Yiddish words of Hebrew and Aramaic origin, reflects their pronunciation in Yiddish, and not modern Hebrew.

Transliteration of Hebrew

We have followed the Library of Congress transliteration system.

Preferred Spelling and Nomenclature

People

The following list indicates the spelling of names of artists, literary, cultural, and political figures, and other persons mentioned in this publication, for whom alternate spellings are commonly encountered in the scholarship. Our preferred spelling appears in bold followed by alternate spellings and life dates.

Adler, Jankel (Jankl, Jakub, Jacob, Jacub, Yankel; 1895–1949)

Altman, Natan (Al'tman; Nathan; Isaevich, Isayevich [patronymic name]; born Nusen Iovshevich; 1889–1970)

Antokolsky, Mark (Marc; 1843–1902)

Aronson, Boris (Borukh, Boruch, Baruch, Borys; Solomonovich [patronymic name]; 1898–1980)

Arshanski, Ber (Orshansky; Boris Mikhailovich; 1884-1945)

Bergelson, David (Dovid; 1884-1952)

Bialik, Chaim Nachman (Hayyim; Nahman; 1873–1934)

Bohomazov, Oleksandr (Bogomazov; Alexander, Aleksandr; 1880–1930)

Broderzon, Moyshe (Broderson; Moshe, Moses; 1890-1956)

Chagall, Marc (born Shagal, Moyshe Zakharovich; 1887–1985)

Chaikov, Iosif (Tchaikov, Tchaïkov, Tshaykov; Yosef, Yoysef, Josef, Joseph; 1888–1979)

Dobuzhnisky, Mstislav (Dobujinski; 1875–1957)

Epshtein, Mark (Epstein, Epshteyn; Moisei, Marko, Marc; Tsalerovich [patronymic name]; 1899–1949)

Exter, Alexandra (Ekster; Aleksandra, Oleksandra; 1882–1949)

Granovsky, Aleksei (Granowski, Aleksandr; 1880–1937)

Greenberg, Uri Tsvi (Grinberg; Zvi; 1894–1981)

Higer, Hayyim (Khiger; Yefim, Efim)

Hofshteyn, David (Hofstein; Gofstein; Dovid; 1889–1952)

Kvitko, Leyb (Kwitko; Leib, Lev; 1890 [or 1893] –1952)

Lissitzky, El (Lysytskyi; Eliezer, Lazar; Markovich, Mordukhovich [patronymic name]; 1890–1941)

Mikhtom, Bentzion (Michtomas, Mikhton, Mikhtam, Mikhtan; Bension, Bentsye Bencionas, Bentsyem; 1901–1941)

Murashko, Oleksandr (Aleksandr; 1875–1919)

Pen, Yehudah (Yuri; 1854–1937)

Ryback, Issachar Ber (Riba; Yissakhar Ber; 1897–1935)

Sterling, Mark (Marc; 1895–1976)

Szwarc, Marek (Schwartz; Marc, Mark; 1892–1958)

Talpir, Gabriel (Talphir, Gabriel Joseph; 1901–1990)

Wischnitzer, Rachel (Vishnitzer; 1885–1989)

Yudovin, Solomon (Iudovin, Youdovine; Shloyme; Borukhovich [patronymic name]; 1892–1954)

Places

The following list indicates the language and spelling of names of villages, towns, and cities that we have used in this publication. Alternate languages follow in square parentheses, ex. [Yiddish], [Russian], [Polish], etc. This list prioritizes the national boundaries of the period, followed by today's situation if it differs.

The city of St. Petersburg was renamed Petrograd in 1914, Leningrad in 1924, and then St. Petersburg again in 1992. However, both the names Petrograd and Petersburg continued to be used freely in common parlance and in publications until 1924.

Chernihiv (Tsherniev [Yiddish], Chernigov [Russian]), Ukraine

Elizavetgrad, Kherson Province, Russian Empire (Yelizavetgrad [Yiddish], Elisabetgrad; Kirovograd; Kropivnitsky/Kropyvnytskyi); now Ukraine

Kyiv (Kiyev [Yiddish], Kiev [Russian]), Ukraine

Mohilev, Mogilev Province, Russian Empire (Molyev [Yiddish], Mogilev [Russian]); Mahilyow, Mahilyow [Belarussian), Mogilev, Molev, Mohylew, Mohilev, Mogiliovas [Lithuanian]), Mohylów, Mogilew, Mahileu, Mohilev, Mahiliou, Mogilyov, Mohliv, Mogilev–na–Dniepr); now Belarus

Nezhin, Chernigov (Chernihiv) Province (Nyezhin [Yiddish]); now Ukraine

Odesa (Odessa [Russian]); Ukraine

Podillya (Podolye [Yiddish], Podolia [Russian]); now Ukraine

Shepetivka (Shepetifke [Yiddish], Shepitovka [Russian]; Szepetowka [Polish]); now Ukraine

Vilna (Vilnius; Vilna [Russian]; Vilne [Yiddish]; Wilno [Polish]); now Lithuania

Vinnytsia (Vinitse [Yiddish], Vinnitsa [Russian]); now Ukraine

Volyn' (Volin [Yiddish], Volynia; Volhynia [Russian]); now Ukraine

Vitsyebsk (Vitepsk [Yiddish], Vitebsk); now Belarus

Warsaw (Varshe [Yiddish], Varshava [Russian]; Warszawa [Polish]); now Poland

Proper Names and Titles

The following list provides transliterations of Russian and Soviet institutional names (including art schools) and exhibition titles mentioned in this publication. It also provides a standard English-language translation of each, by which the list Is alphabetized.

Art Courses for Workers, Elizavetgrad (*Rabochie khudozhestvennye kursy*)

“Art of the Commune” (*Iskusstvo kommuny*)

“Art and the Jews” (*Iskusstvo i evrei*)

Association of Modern Ukrainian Artists, Kyiv, 1927–32 (*Ob”edinenie sovremennykh masterov Ukrainy*)

Association of Soviet Sculptors, Moscow, 1925–32 (initially known as *Obshchestvo skul’ptorov*; *Obshchestvo russkikh skul’ptorov [ORS]*)

Communist Workers’Club (*Rabochii klub Kommunist*)

Drawing School of the Imperial Society for the Encouragement of the Arts (*Risoval’naia shkola Imperatorskogo obshchestva pooshchreniia khudozhestv*)

Elizavetgrad Courses of Set Designers (*Elizavetgradskie kursy khudozhnikov–stsenografov*)

Exhibition of Pictures and Sculpture by Jewish Artists, Lemercier Gallery, Moscow, April 1917 (*Vystavka kartin i skul’ptury khudozhnikov–evreev*)

Exhibition of Works by Natan Altman, Marc Chagall and David Shterenberg. Paintings, Graphics. Kultur–Lige, Moscow, March–April 1922 (*Vystavka rabot Natana Al’tmana, Marka Shagala, Davida Shterenberga. Zhivopis’, grafika*) (also known as *The Show of the Three* [*Vystavka Trekh*])

First Exhibition of Jewish Painting and Sculpture, Białystok,1919 (*Pervaia vystavka evreiskoi zhivopisi i skul’ptury*)

First State Exhibition of Local and Moscow Artists, Vitebsk, 1919 (*Pervaia gosudarstvennaia vystavka mestnykh i moskovskikh khudozhnikov*)

Four Arts Society, Moscow, 1924–1931 (*Tvorcheskoe ob”edinenie “4 iskusstva”*)

Had Gadya (Khad gadya; One Little Goat or The Only Kid)

Jewish Art Exhibition of Sculpture, Graphic Arts and Drawings, Kultur–Lige’s Art Section, Kyiv, February–March 1920 (*Evreiskaia khudozhestvennaia vystavka skul’ptur, grafiki i risunkov*)

Jewish Art School, Kultur-Lige, Kyiv (*Evreiskaia Khudozhestvennaia shkola*); renamed Jewish Arts and Trades School (*Evreiskaia Khudozhestvenno–promyshlennaia shkola*)

Jewish Historical–Ethnographic Society (*Evreiskoe istoriko–etnograficheskoe obshchestvo*)

Jewish Literary Artistic Club, Kyiv (*Evreiskii literaturno–khudozhestvennyi klub*)

Jewish Society for the Encouragement of the Arts, Petrograd, Moscow, 1915–18) (*Evreiskoe obshchestvo pooshchreniia khudozhestv*)

Kyiv Art School (*Kievskoe khudozhestvennoe uchilishche*)

“Modern Jewish Graphics” (*Sovremennaia evreiskaia grafika*)

Moscow Association of Jewish Writers and Artists (*Moskovskoe ob”edinenie evreiskikh literatorov i khudozhnikov*)

Moscow Circle of Jewish Writers and Artists (*Moskovskii kruzhok evreiskikh pisatelei i khudozhnikov*)

Museum of St. Petersburg Jewish Historical-Ethnographic Society (*Muzei Peterburgskogo evreiskogo istoriko–etnograficheskogo obshchestva*)

Museum of the St. Petersburg Jewish Historical-Ethnographic Society (*Muzei Peterburgskogo evreiskogo istoriko–etnograficheskogo obshchestva*)

Museum of Jewish Visual Arts, Kyiv (*Evreiskii Muzei plasticheskikh iskusstv*)

“Old Jewish Ornament in the Illuminated Jewish Manuscripts” (*Drevne–evreiskii ornament po rukopisiam*)

Our Own (*Eygns*; alternate translations: To One’s Self; One’s Own; or Native)

Society for the Encouragement of the Arts, St. Petersburg, 1820–1929

1820–1882: *Obshchestvo pooshchreniia khudozhestv/OPKh*; *Obshchestvo pooshchreniia khudozhnikov*

1882–1917: *Imperatorskoe obshchestvo pooshchreniia khudozhestv* (Imperial Society for the Encouragement of the Arts)

1917–1929: *Vserossiiskoe obshchestvo pooshchreniia khudozhestv* (All–Russian Society for the Encouragement of the Arts)

“The Jewish Antiquarium” (*Evreiskaia starina*)

“A Suprematist Tale of Two Squares in Six Constructions” (*Suprematicheskii skaz pro dva kvadrata v shesti postroikakh*)

Vitebsk Art Institute (*Vitebskii khudozhestvenno–prakticheskii institut*)

Vitebsk People’s Art School (*Narodnoe khudozhestvennoe uchilishche*)

Vitebsk School of Drawing and Painting of Yehudah Pen (*Vitebskaia shkola risovaniia i zhivopisi Yu. M. Pena*)

World of Art group (*Mir iskusstva*)

Acronyms and Abbreviations

The following list standardizes acronyms and abbreviations of Russian, Soviet, and Yiddish organizations and institutions used in this publication followed by full name, translations, and, in some cases, dates of operation.

Bund (Der Algemeyner Yidisher Arbeter Bund in Lite, Poyln, un Rusland/*Vseobshchii evreiskii rabochii soiuz v Litve, Pol'she i Rossii*; General Union of Jewish Workers in Lithuania, Poland, and Russia)

Evsektsiia [alt. Yevsektsiia/Yevsektsiya]

Evreiskaia kommunisticheskaia sektsiia R.K.P.; [Rossiiskoi Kommuniusticheskoi Partii;] Jewish section of the Propaganda Department of the Russian Communist Party; 1918–1930)

GOSET (Yidisher Kamer Teatr; Gosudarstvennyi evreiskii kamernyi teatr; Yiddish Chamber Theater; 1919–24; after 1924 known as Gosudarstvennyi evreiskii teatr; State Jewish Theater)

INKhUK (Institut khudozhestvennoi kul'tury; Institute of Artistic Culture, Moscow)

IZOGIZ (Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo izobrazitel'nogo iskusstva; State Publishing House of Fine Arts)

IZO Narkompros (Otdel izobrazitel'nykh iskusstv Narodnogo komissariata prosveshcheniia; Department of Visual Arts of the People's Commissariat for Education)

Narkompros (Narodnyi komissariat prosveshcheniia; People's Commissariat for Education)

OZET (Obshchestvo zemleustroistva evreiskikh trudiashchikhsia; full name: Vsesoiuznoe obshchestvo po zemel'nomu ustroistvu trudiashchikhsia evreev v SSSR; The Society for Settling Toiling Jews on the Land in the Soviet Union or the Society for the Agricultural Organization of Working Class Jews in the USSR)

Svomas/SVOMAS (Svobodnye khudozhestvennye masterskie; Free State Art Studios)

TeRevSat (Teatr revoliutsionnoi satiry; Theater of Revolutionary Satire)

UNOVIS (Utverditeli novogo iskusstva; Affirmers of the New Art)

VKhUTEMAS (Vsesoiuznye khudozhestvenno–tekhnicheskie masterskie; Higher State Artistic and Technical Workshops)

VKhUTEIN (Vsesoiuznyi khudozhestvenno–tekhnicheskii institut; Higher State Art–Technical Institute)

Interwar Jewish Artists in Russia and East-Central Europe in Quest of Secular Modernity and Jewish Traditions

By Alla Rosenfeld, Ph.D.

Formulating contemporary ideas about the new aesthetic of modern Jewish art, the influential art critic Abram Efros (1888–1954) wrote in 1918: "Our first imprimatur is our modernism, our leftism, and our youth; our second imprimatur is our orientation towards the people, our traditions, and our old age."[1]

The beginning of the twentieth century to around 1930 were the most important years in terms of the achievements of Jewish artists. The Merrill C. Berman Collection features paintings, rare artist books and posters, and theater designs by a variety of significant Jewish artists, whose work have an intentional connection to the artistic languages and cultures of Eastern and Central European Jewish communities. Raising questions about the very definition of Jewish cultural identity and heritage, the Berman Collection reflects the experience of Jewish migration that marked Jewish life and culture in the twentieth century.

This essay provides an outline of this vast subject matter by presenting the works by Jewish artists against the background of broader historical and cultural developments, while focusing mostly on those artists whose works are included in the Berman Collection.[2] In particular, the essay discusses the affirmation of Jewish culture in Russia and Central-Eastern Europe as well as issues of assimilation, which a considerable number of Jews in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century regarded as the optimal practice. It also explores the crosscurrents that modernization inflicted upon artists of Jewish origins and shows that the national/international, national/European orientation of various avant-gardes are far more complex than a simple East/West division.

As the Berman Collection demonstrates, Jewish artists often existed "between two worlds," that is between their national traditions and the broader world.[3] Between the turn of the twentieth century and about 1939, Yiddish modernism gave rise to constellations of avant-garde artists in many cosmopolitan centers, including Berlin, Warsaw, Kyiv, and Vilna. In this vast territory, numerous artistic groups often shared similar practices, and their ideas and artworks circulated from one city to another by means of international exhibitions and publications. Yiddish-language artistic journals emerged in Eastern Europe including, for example, *Khalyastre* and *Albatros* in Warsaw and Berlin, *Shtrom* in Moscow, *Yung-yidish* in Lódź, and *Yung Vilne* in Vilna (now capital of Lithuania). These publications became an important forum for discussions about new systems of modern Jewish aesthetics. Artists living in East-Central Europe were receptive to many modern impulses coming from the West (France and Italy) and from Russia, and they adopted and re-examined various advanced artistic ideas. Consequently, the resulting works tended to be of a rather hybrid character and cannot be designated with one label alone.

"Is There a Jewish Art?" and "What is Jewish art?" are questions that were debated for many decades with various definitions suggested.[4] A leading scholar of modern and Jewish art, Avram Kampf (1920–2016), proposed that a Jewish artist is one whose works show traces of the "Jewish experience."[5]

As it is well known, Orthodox Judaism, to which the vast majority of Russian and East-Central European Jews used to belong, forbade (or at least restricted) representation of three-dimensional "graven images" to avoid the temptation of idolatry,[6] and therefore for centuries, Jewish art was limited to the religious sphere, including building and decorating synagogues, producing religious books, and creating ceremonial objects, such as silver menorahs and drinking goblets, embroidered Torah coverings, and wood carvings. As the art critic Yakov Tugenhold (1883–1928), a close friend of Marc Chagall, argued in his first monograph on the artist: "It was precisely in the flora and fauna ornaments that the decorative talents of Jewish art were expressed—decorative because another, three-dimensional, relation to the world was forbidden. Hence, its supernatural character, fully corresponding to the metaphysics that grew from the biblical consciousness."[7]

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Jewish artists and critics, patrons and art collectors appeared in many cities in Eastern and Central Europe, and artistic groups developed in Berlin, Vienna, and Paris. In Russia, ideas about Jewish art

evolved from about 1880 to 1920 in the writings of both Jewish and non-Jewish cultural figures.[8] These included, for example, the well-known Russian art critic and ideologist of critical realism Vladimir Stasov (1824–1906); the art historian Nikolai Lavrsky (Baranovsky); and the realist painter and sculptor Ilya Gintsburg (1859–1939). Such writings provided an important basis for later scholarship. Stasov enthusiastically supported national characteristics of art, urging contemporary Jewish artists to consider specific Jewish themes for their work. In 1886, in collaboration with one of Russia's wealthiest Jews, the philanthropist Baron David G. Ginzburg (1857–1910), Stasov compiled *Drevne-evreiskii ornament po rukopisiam* (Old Jewish Ornament in the Illuminated Jewish Manuscripts), an anthology of Jewish manuscripts of the eleventh to twelfth centuries, later also published in Berlin in 1905 under the title *L'Ornement Hébrue* (Jewish Ornament).[9] The 1915 monograph *Iskusstvo i evrei* (Art and the Jews) by Lavrsky was the earliest publication in Russia and Europe to theorize Jewish art in a book-length format.[10] Lavrsky stated: "Up until now, Jews and Jewish history served as subjects for [other] artists. Now the Jews have transformed themselves from the objects of observation […] into a generative force... The previous hopelessness and despondency that was noticed among the Jews […] is being replaced by confidence and vigor."[11]

Not only art critics but also Jewish artists themselves frequently discussed what, in their opinion, constituted Jewish art. They often associated Jewishness with eclecticism, abstraction, folk art, and melancholy. Indeed, the search for "the mystical and spiritual" was already present in the art of the Expressionists, but the Jewish artists from Eastern Europe put an even greater emphasis on it.[12]

Israeli scholar Hillel Kazovsky has pointed out that some Jewish artists also looked to ancient, oriental traditions for a solution. They believed that since Jews are people of Semitic origin, they are descendants of the great civilizations of the Near East.[13] Therefore, they based their art on the artistic traditions of the ancient Semitic peoples of Mesopotamia (Assyria, Babylonia) and of Egypt. Thus, El Lissitzky's (1890–1941) colophon for the 1917 *Sikhes khulin: A Prager legende* (Small Talk: The Legend of Prague) by Moyshe Broderzon (1890–1956), mentions that the artist's goal was to combine his style of illustration with the Assyrian style of writing. Similarly, images of Jews blowing a shofar and the ornamental motifs framing Lissitzky's covers of publications of the Jewish Music Society **[p. 111]** are reminiscent of Assyrian reliefs and stone carvings.

Ukrainian-born Jewish artists Boris Aronson (1898–1980) and Issachar-Ber Ryback (1897–1935) laid out their views on Jewish art in a co-authored, Yiddish-language essay entitled, "Di vegn fun der yidisher moleray: Rayoynes fun kinstler" (The Paths of Jewish Painting: Thoughts of an Artist). A Jewish artistic avant-garde manifesto, it appeared in the 1919 Kultur-Lige miscellany *Oyfgang* (Dawn).[14] Aronson and Ryback argued that the defining characteristics of Jewish folk art included flatness, ornamental design, the autonomy of the Hebrew letter, and symmetry: "Form is the essential element of art, whereas content is evil. The composition of a painting is more important than its idea, and the richness of color means more than the realistic rendering of objects […] Pure abstract form is precisely what embodies the national [ethnic Jewish] element. Only via the principle of abstract painting, free of any literariness, can the expression of one's own national foundation be achieved."[15] In their essay, Aronson and Ryback stressed the contributions of such artists as Natan Altman (1889–1970) and Marc Chagall, who, in the authors' words "[…] perceived the modern abstract form in [an] idiosyncratic manner."[16] According to Aronson and Ryback, a special place in the development of Jewish artistic identity was occupied by Chagall, who "[…] uncovered both his own painting style and national substance […]. He took up all modern achievements, including Futurism, and succeeded to incarnate them in a specific manner."[17]

In his full-length book on the subject, *Sovremennaia evreiskaia grafika* (Modern Jewish Graphic Arts) of 1924, Aronson continued to argue that the originality of Jewish art stems from its religious, transcendental and abstract character. He stated that the attraction to two-dimensionality and rejection of naturalism are caused by the absence of three-dimensional expression. Aronson concluded that Jewish graphic arts are an "ultra-modern" response created in the process of discovering modern art.[18]

In the 1922 article "Jewish Artists in Contemporary Russian Art" published in the third issue of *Milgroym*, Polish-born Jewish artist Henryk Berlewi argued that "it is impossible to speak of a fixed physiognomy in the work of Jewish artists, both in Russia and abroad."[19] He noted that Jewish artists "versatility," the "encyclopedic nature" of their art, "draws as much

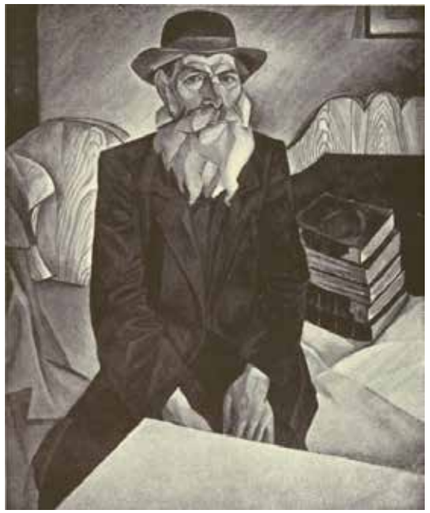

Fig. 1. Natan Altman. *Portrait of an Old Jew*, 1913. Oil on canvas. [Image source: Abram Efros. *Portret Natana Altmana* (Portrait of Natan Altman). Moscow: Shipovnik, 1922]

from a specific Jewish spirit as from the lack of well-established artistic tradition […]"[20] Berlewi considered Chagall "the only artist who has successfully brought together two entirely different artistic worlds." In Berlewi's opinion, Chagall "in his own metaphysical universe" has "transformed two supposedly disparate worlds into a powerful, harmonious, ringing chorus—oriental exoticism with all its mystical content and strict European monumental Cubism."[21] However, as many Jewish artists and scholars pointed out, what specifically constitutes "Jewish art" remains a perpetually unresolved issue.[22]

Some Jewish artists in the Berman Collection, including Altman, Aronson, Benzion Mikhtom (1909–1941), Ryback, and Solomon Yudovin (1875–1960) engaged directly with Jewish subjects from the very start of their artistic careers, depicting inhabitants of Jewish shtetls (Yiddish, *shtetlekh*)[23] in the Pale of Settlement,[24] and frequently incorporating references to Judaism in their work **[Fig. 1; pp. 90, 115, 123; 145, 166, 167]**.

Altman advanced his artistic career on many fronts, holding prominent positions in the early Soviet cultural establishment and as a maker of propagandistic proletarian art, while also creating works in highly experimental modes. As Berlewi pointed out, Altman's work "exhibits the sum of all the forms that have been

Fig. 2. Henryk Berlewi. *Neo Faktur* 23, 1923. Gouache and pencil on paper, 21 x 16 5/8" (53.3 x 42.2 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

achieved in recent years. Everything is there; nothing has been left out: abstraction, Picasso, realistic drawing, the portrait 'Lenin,' Jewish folk ornamentation and so on. Brilliantly eclectic, he wholeheartedly experiences these already existing forms, passing them through his own artistic prism."[25]

In his writing, Berlewi was determined to create a new Jewish secular culture under the umbrella of Yiddishism.[26] Yiddishism was opposed by the leaders of the Zionist movement, who considered Hebrew, the language of centuries' old literary traditions and the Hebrew Bible (the so-called "Old-Testament"), to be the language of national culture. According to Zionists, there were no acceptable conditions under which the Jewish people could exist in the diaspora, and the only place for their national renaissance was Palestine.[27]

Berlewi illustrated many Yiddish-language publications, exploring the possibilities of avant-garde syntax within Jewish cultural tradition. Similarly, most of Lissitzky's early works, prior to his arrival to Vitebsk in 1919, relate to the artist's active involvement in Jewish artistic life and the search for a national Jewish style. He grew up in the dual context of the broad post-Haskalah openness to the world of his father and the strict Jewish orthodoxy of his mother and

he knew, not only Yiddish, but also Hebrew. One of the most important books in his family's library was a Russian edition of *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, which was first published in 1910.[28]

Like other Jewish artists of their generation, both Berlewi and Lissitzky developed a dynamic relationship between traditional Jewish culture and the secular world. Both pivoted, however, undertaking a profound change in their artistic careers, and eventually become disinterested in connecting their artistic practice to their Jewish heritage and instead creating some of their most successful works in dialogue with the more forward-thinking of avant-garde movements. Berlewi became known as an early proponent of international abstraction and a leading figure of Polish Constructivism. During his period in Berlin from 1921 to 1923, the artist developed a radical form of abstract composition that he called *Mechanofaktur* [Fig. 2], which was exhibited at the gallery Der Sturm in 1924.

Lissitzky's achievements in typography had a powerful influence on many progressive artists in Europe and America, including Laszlo Moholy-Nagy (1895–1946), Karel Teige (1900–1951), and Jan Tschichold (1902–1974). Tschichold, the German typographer and design theorist, even identified Lissitzky as a precursor of the "New Typography."

Unlike his fellow artists Altman, Lissitzky, or Berlewi, Yudovin never embraced nonrepresentational art. He instead remained a figurative artist throughout his entire career. As a regular visitor of Belorussian shtetls, he tended to depict scenes of daily Jewish life, synagogues, and city views (mostly of Vitebsk) in an expressionist style. Yudovin's prints in the Berman collection are a part of a series of graphic works known as *Byloe* (Bygone Days), which the artist worked on intermittently between 1921 and 1940.[29]

Works by Jankel Adler (1895–1949) are also well represented in the Berman Collection. Adler's artistic activity spans several European countries and cultural traditions. Although Adler left the home of his Hassidic father in Poland at an early age and lived most of his life in a non-Jewish environment, taking an active part in the artistic art circles of Düsseldorf, Glasgow and London, his Jewish background continued to serve him as a major source of inspiration.

Fig. 3. Mark Antokolsky. *Jewish Tailor*, 1864. Wood, 14 3/8 x 12 1/4 x 4 3/8" (36.5 x 31 x 11 cm). The State Russian Museum, St. Petersburg

Historical Setting: The Modernization of Jewry and the Beginning of Jewish Cultural "Renaissance"

Jewish artists emerged in East-Central Europe only as a result of the process of modernization and emancipation of Jewry into European cultural and social life. Jewish communities were not only mostly excluded from many public spaces by the Christian majority, who considered them "aliens," but they themselves often maintained a distance from other, non-Jewish populations. During most of the nineteenth century, however, some European Jews struggled to integrate into their host societies. A movement known as the *Haskalah*, or the Jewish Enlightenment, which originated in Western Europe at the end of the eighteenth century and spread to Eastern Europe in the middle of the nineteenth century, contributed to the creation of Jewish centers of culture for the first generation of emancipated Jewish artists. The men of the Jewish Enlightenment, the *Maskilim*, believed that Jews should become fully integrated in existing societies, participate in secular education systems, change traditional ways of life, and in this way arrive at a new Jewish identity.[30]

In the Russian Empire, the first professional Jewish artists made a name for themselves during the second half of the nineteenth century.[31] Stasov's friend Mark Antokolsky (1843–1902) was one of very few successful Jewish artists in nineteenth century Russia. Thanks to the more liberal policies of Russian Emperor Alexander II (1818–1881), including removing some educational restrictions previously imposed on Jews, the latter got the opportunity to study in Russian higher educational institutions.[32] In 1862, Antokolsky was accepted at the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts in St. Petersburg as a non-matriculated student, and in 1864 he was awarded a silver medal for his wood carving *Jewish Tailor* [Fig. 3]. This was the first time in Russian art that an image of a Jew was presented in a dignified manner rather than confirming to a negative stereotype. Yehudah Pen (1854–1937) was another important Jewish artist of the period who succeeded at being accepted to the Imperial Academy of Art and studied there from 1880 to 1885. Pen was engaged in the creation of a truly major national-cultural movement. After settling in Vitebsk, where almost sixty percent of the population was Jewish and Jews were the major force in the city's rapid urban, industrial, and commercial development, Pen focused on painting the city's inhabitants and scenes from life of the Jewish Orthodox milieu [Fig. 4].[33] Pen's teaching at his private School of Drawing and Painting, founded by the artist in Vitebsk in 1897, greatly influenced his students.[34] Pen's school operated until 1918 and molded many Jewish artists' ethnic identity. Among Pen's most famous Jewish students were Chagall [Fig. 5], Lissitzky, Ryback, and Yudovin.

During the 1910s and 1920s, the issue of Jewish identity received unprecedented attention in Russia, inspiring not only the search for and rediscovery of the Jewish literary, musical, and artistic heritage, but also the creation of a new Jewish visual art.[35] A revival of interest in Jewish folk traditions was spurred by the Jewish Historical-Ethnographic Society, inaugurated in St. Petersburg in March 1908. The Society was instrumental in documenting the history of Jewish life and in studying Jewish folk art.[36] It aspired to construct a national Jewish culture based on materials of historical value, including manuscripts, personal recollections, communal records books, folktales, songs, clothing, and ritual objects. Among its most important activity was the publication of *Evreiskaia starina* (The Jewish Antiquarium) quarterly, the first two volumes of which appeared in 1909. This journal provided scientific treatment of Jewish history and ethnography primarily in Poland and Russia proper.[37] Jewish Historical-Ethnographic Society also launched the first major ethnographic expedition into the Pale of Settlement, including Volyn', Podillya, and

Fig. 4. Yehudah Pen. *Clockmaker*, 1914. Oil on canvas, 23 5/8 x 26 3/8" (60 x 67 cm). Vitsyebsk Art Museum, Belarus

Fig. 5. Yehudah Pen. *Portrait of Marc Chagall*, mid-1910s. Oil on canvas mounted on cardboard, 22 5/8 x 16 1/2" (57.5 x 42 cm). National Museum of Belarus, Minsk

Fig. 6. Semyon An-sky's Ethnographic Expedition. Left to right: Abraham Rechtman, Solomon Yudovin, An-sky, Sholem Aleichem, Olga Rabinovich, M.A. Ginsburg, n.d.
[Image source: Avrutin, Eugene M., Valerii Dymshits, et all. *Photographing the Jewish Nation. Pictures from S. An-sky's Ethnographic Expeditions*. Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press and Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 2014]

part of Kyiv Province. The Expedition's main goal was to explore, collect, and record religious and other artifacts of traditional Jewish shtetl culture in a scholarly and objective manner. Between 1912 and 1914, expeditions were led by the scholar, folklorist, and writer Semyon An-Sky (Shloyme-Zanvl Rapoport; 1863–1920), accompanied by his young nephew Yudovin and Yulii Engel (1868–1927), the well-known composer and music critic.[38] An-sky expedition bore the name of the financier and philanthropist Baron Horace Gintsburg (1833–1909), whose son, Vladimir Gintsburg, contributed financial support for its execution **[Fig. 6]**. *The Jewish Ethnographic Program* was divided into five main sections:1) The Child; 2) From the Kheyder (heder) to the Wedding; 3) The Wedding; 4) Family Life; and 5) Death.[39]

Yudovin drew and photographed Jewish religious objects and gravestones, copied ornaments of Jewish folk art and decorations in synagogues, and depicted Jewish people of the Pale of Settlement.[40] His photographs often lacked the "objectivity" associated with ethnography in favor of a certain emotional pictorialism.[41]

Yudovin would later become a distinct representative of "the Jewish Renaissance," one of the figures who helped to define the face of Jewish art of the first quarter of the twentieth century. His woodcuts, based on photographs taken during the An-sky expedition, have become emblematic of the images of the shtetl Jews. In some instances, Yudovin closely reproduced the subject of his photographs as woodcuts **[Fig. 7]**. In most of his later works, however, Yudovin intensified the emotional weight of his photographic images while using them as a basis for his woodcuts.

In Spring of 1917, all the materials collected during the An-sky ethnographic expeditions, which included about 700 household items found in Jewish towns and villages, over 100 authentic historical documents, and 2,000 photographs, formed the basis of the Museum of the St. Petersburg Jewish Historical-Ethnographic Society, where Yudovin was appointed curator. The Museum was intended for a broad public viewing, but in September of 1917 the revolution forced An-sky to close the exhibit, and only in 1923 did the Jewish Museum begin to function on a long-term basis. The collection remained there until 1929, when the Soviet government permanently closed the museum.[42]

Although not part of the original An-sky team,

Fig. 7. Solomon Yudovin. Left: Photograph of a Shoemaker, Polonnoe, 1912. Right: Woodcut of a Shoemaker, from the series *Byloe*, as reproduced in I. Ioffe, *Graviury na dereve* (Woodcuts). Leningrad, 1928.
[Image source: Eugene M. Avrutin, Valerii Dymshits, et all. Photographing the Jewish Nation. Pictures from S. An-sky's Ethnographic Expeditions (Waltham, Massachusetts: Brandeis University Press and Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 2014), p. 56].

Lissitzky together with Ryback in 1916 also took part in an ethnographic expedition to study the shtetls in Ukraine, Belarus, and Lithuania.[43] Lissitzky made copies of synagogue wall decorations in Mohilev, Dubrovno, and Druya (Druja). The wooden synagogue in Mohilev—one of the magnificent synagogues of Eastern Europe—was built in the first half of the eighteenth century and decorated with murals by Chaim ben Isaac Halevi Segal of Slutsk **[Fig. 8]**.[44]

Reflecting on the overarching question of what it means to create Jewish art, Lissitzky wrote in his 1923 essay "Vegn der Mohilever shul" (On the Mohilev Shul: Recollections): "A few pioneering Jewish painters had brought their craft up to the eastern border of the Pale of Settlement […] Just who are we? What place do we hold among the nations? And what is our culture as such? And how exactly *should* our art *be*? This all took place in some *shtetls* in Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine. From there the movement continued to Paris and reached its conclusion—not its beginning, as we thought at the time—in Moscow at the first exhibition of Jewish artists in 1916."[45] He also noted that Jewish artists, searching for their identity, "tried looking into the old mirrors," in order to ground themselves in the so-called "folk art."[46] As the artist pointed out, many peoples of the period followed a similar path. Lissitzky further commented: "[…] if the printed literature, newspapers and journals, theater, painting, music, etc., serve as the signs of a cultured people—we [Jews] have all of that. That is to say –we are also a people of culture […]. Today art is created through those who fight against it."[47]

Fig. 8. Detail of a decoration of the Mohilev synagogue in 1916, as reproduced in Rimon, no. 3 (1923): 8.

In addition to the Jewish Historical and Ethnographic Society, another important Jewish cultural organization in the Russian Empire was the Jewish Society for the Encouragement of the Arts (hereafter JSEA; 1915–1918). It was founded with the aim of uniting Jewish artists across the Russian Empire. By the start of World War I, Jews took part in a wide variety of Russian artistic groups and movements and the governing board of JSEA included representatives of different generations and artistic trends. The chief branch of the JSEA in Petrograd created opportunities for Jews to study art by offering monetary support to various Jewish artists and by connecting them to patrons and mentors. Between 1916 and 1917, branches of the society were organized in Moscow, Kharkiv, and Kyiv. The organization also mounted an impressive exhibition of works by its members in April and May 1916. In the spring of 1917, a second exhibition was planned for Petrograd, but the initiative was taken over by the Moscow branch of the Society which organized the exhibition *Vystavka kartin i skul'ptury khudozhnikov-evreev* (Exhibition of Pictures and Sculpture by Jewish Artists) at the Lemercier Gallery. Jewish identity prevailed over the stylistic consistency, with works by experimental artists such as Chagall and Lissitzky shown alongside those of artists who worked in a traditional academic mode. Lev Antokolsky's review of the Jewish art exhibition in Moscow in 1917 characterized Lissitzky as "a cultured, well-educated, and ardent champion of Jewish art, in love with olden times and longing for rejuvenation and joyful revival."[48]

Indeed, artists who turned to Jewish folk art did not limit themselves to literal copying or simple imitation of its samples. They inventively varied traditional motifs, exploring and reimagining them, and thus creating new original combinations of folk-art elements.
As early as 1901, Martin Buber (1878–1965), distinguished Jewish religious thinker who published in German and Hebrew, in his programmatic essay for *Ost und West*, entitled "Jüdische Renaissance" (Jewish Renaissance), called for a rebirth of Jewish culture based on a creative reconstruction of the past.[49] Indeed, modern Jewish art took part of a larger interest, at the time, in cultures and creations outside of the European tradition, so-called "Primitivism"—a cultural attitude that has informed diverse aspects of modern art. "Primitivism" was a trend among artists in the early twentieth century, in many countries, the aim of which was to invigorate the art of their own day by invoking stylistic elements of tribal objects and other

non-Western art forms. It offered artists a revitalized visual vocabulary that, it seemed, brought them closer to an "authentic" experience via simpler, often crude shapes and more abstract figures, in contrast to Europe's overly refined modes of representation.[50]

In his publication *Modern Jewish Graphic Arts*, Aronson divided Jewish art into three periods: following and copying; stylization; and (the current phase) individualization.[51] Lissitzky's text *On the Mohilev Shul* was illustrated by the artist's own watercolor copies of mural paintings as well as by those of Ryback. As Aronson noted: "Lissitzky approached the task of copying artifacts from a professional viewpoint; he exactly reproduced the synagogue decorations in Mohilev, Shklov, Druya, and Kapust [Kopys]. Similarly, Ryback worked on copying the tombstones in Orsha, in the provinces of Podillya and Volyn'[…]. Each of these artists became a researcher in the formal principles of the popular style."[52]

In subsequent years, images of Jewish religious and folk objects as well as portrayal of Jewish life in shtetls would serve as important source material for the work of various modern Jewish artists, including Altman's and Ryback's graphic cycles and Yudovin's woodcuts **[pp. 131, 165]**. As a case in point, the cover of the literary journal *Eygns* (Our Own) **[p. 120]**,[53] designed by Ryback and published by the Literary Section of the Kultur-Lige, is decorated with stylized multiple representations of stags and flowers, evoking the motifs of Jewish liturgical fabrics and tombstones. Ryback quoted this motif from an old stencil carving for tombstones, which he owned (now in the Israel Museum, Jerusalem). The letters spelling out the title of the almanac imitate the scripts of old Jewish manuscripts, while the table of contents resembles a handwritten *pinkas*, the name for a traditional record book of Jewish religious societies and community organizations.[54] The almanac *Eygns* occupied an important place in Yiddish literary history as a forum of the group of Yiddish writers, known as the "Kiev Group."

Aftermath of the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 and Some Major Developments in Jewish Cultural Life

The fall of Tsarism in 1917 followed by the collapse of the Empire caused massive upheaval in the life of Jews. Before the Bolsheviks came to power, Russian Jewry was largely excluded from Russian society. Legal restrictions on admitting Jews into state and military services, education, and local administration, were complemented by compulsory residence within the Pale. With the dissolution of the Tsarist Empire, the Provisional government introduced freedom of speech, press and assembly for all residents, therefore granting Russian Jews an array of political and civil rights and ending their decades-long social segregation. Revolution was linked to the dream of modernity and access to the wider world.

The Jewish artistic renaissance of the 1920s developed against the background of radical emancipation of Jews. In the decade immediately following the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, the Jewish population in Moscow grew from 10,000 to 120,000. Jewish schools opened, Jewish newspapers were established, and many Jews held important positions in the city's cultural life. By the mid-1920s, the Jews

Fig. 9. Mark Epshtein. Poster: *Gezerd mitglid! Helf mit farvandlen di yidishe horepashnikes in aktive boyer fun der sotsyalistisher gezelshaft* (OZET member! Help transform the Jewish toilers into active builders of the socialist society), 1932. Lithograph, 28 x 21" (71 x 53 cm). Private collection

constituted six percent of the Soviet ruling elite and ten percent of the leadership of all Soviet economic agencies; many Jews held important posts in the high echelons of the Communist Party and the Red Army command.[55]

Jewish intellectuals, writers, and cultural activists entered 1917 divided into two ideological camps, which came to dominate all aspects of the cultural life linked to the Jewish national movement: mutually opposed Yiddishists and Hebraists. Each of these camps claimed to represent Jewish national culture in matters of education and cultural production.[56] Throughout the 1920s, the Soviet State supported creating culture for Soviet minorities in their native language, but of all Jewish educational institutions, only Yiddish schools received Soviet government's support. The reason was the negative attitude of the Bolsheviks towards Zionism. In 1919 and 1920 Zionist organizations were driven underground as the Communist government favored assimilation over segregation and the opposition it represented. In the Bolsheviks' view, moreover, Hebrew was a language of the "class enemy" since it was mostly used by the Zionists, the clerics, and the bourgeoisie. It was primarily the written language of the Jewish religious library. Already in August 1919, Narkompros (the People's Commissariat of Education) prohibited the teaching of Hebrew in all educational institutions. Yiddish, to the contrary, was considered to be the language of the working masses. As historian Antony Polonsky has noted, some members of the Jewish community became attracted to Socialism in its

Fig. 10. Marc Chagall. Introduction to the Jewish Theater (detail), 1920. Tempera, gouache and white on canvas, 111 7/8 x 309 1/2" (284 x 786 cm). The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow

various forms because "of the vision it offered of a new world in which the old divisions of Jew and gentile would be subsumed by the creation of a new Socialist humanity."[57] **[Fig. 9]**.

Between February 1917 and the consolidation of Bolshevik power in 1919 and 1920, Russia and Ukraine became the sites of the most ambitious programs of Jewish cultural formation. With unprecedented support from private patrons and even public authorities, Hebrew and Yiddish literati in Moscow, Kyiv, and Odesa organized literary journals and published avant-garde anthologies and literary translations through dozens of publishing houses.

During this period, Yiddish children's books enjoyed an unprecedented period of flourishing. This phenomenon corresponds to the creation of network of Yiddish schools in East-Central Europe, and to questions about Jewish identity and transmission.[58] Major avant-garde writers (Moyshe Broderzon, David Bergelson, Peretz Markish, Leyb Kvitko) as well as eminent artists, including Ryback, Chagall, and Lissitzky, participated in this boom.

The rise of the Jewish national movement, advancement of literature in both Yiddish and Hebrew, and the idea of creating the new Jewish culture—all these factors had a significant impact on evolution of a new generation of Jewish artists. In July and August of 1918, the Moscow Association of Jewish Writers and Artists organized an exhibition of 233 works by forty-one Jewish artists.

After the Bolshevik Revolution, the two theater companies played a significant role in the flourishing Jewish theater movement in Moscow: Aleksei Granovsky's (Aleksandr Granowski; 1880–1937) Yiddish Chamber Theater, known as GOSET (The State Jewish Theater) since 1924, and HaBima (Habimah), a theater with performances in Hebrew.[59]

Granovsky had studied in Germany under the avant-garde director Max Reinhard (1873–1943), and he became thoroughly familiar with European theater. Granovsky's Yiddish Chamber Theater emerged as an important and influential force, and its leading actor, Solomon Mikhoels (1890–1948), became a national celebrity. GOSET employed many major Jewish playwrights and visionary artists, including Altman and Chagall, who began to create experimental designs **[Fig. 10]**. During the theater's European tour in 1928, Granovsky defected, leaving Mikhoels as its new director. Under pressure from the state, Mikhoels

reoriented the theater toward a repertoire of works by leading Soviet writers on contemporary themes. GOSET was often heralded by the Soviet government as a model of Jewish cultural achievement under the Soviet regime. By the 1930s, nearly twenty branches of GOSET existed in the Soviet Union, with major theaters in Moscow, Kharkiv, Minsk, and in the Birobidzhan Jewish Autonomous Region, staffed by graduates of a State Yiddish Theater School established in 1929.

The Habima theater had existed since 1907, but rose to prominence only after the Revolution, when the trope received the patronage of director Konstantin Stanislavsky (1863–1938) and Habima became one of the four studios attached to his Moscow Art Theater. Yevgeny Vakhtangov (1883–1922), Stanislavsky's most famous disciple, became Habima's director. The elevated style of Habima did not have the humor typical of Yiddish productions. While Habima fostered the Hebrew genre of high tragedy, GOSET mostly showcased the Yiddish genre of comedy.

Founding and Early Years of the Kultur-Lige in Kyiv

Kyiv was one of the most active multicultural cities in terms of the revival of Jewish culture in the immediate years after the Bolshevik Revolution. It was home to the largest Jewish community in the Russian Empire. Thus, when the Central Rada (Council) declared Ukraine's autonomy in 1917, it issued its proclamation in four languages: Ukrainian, Yiddish, Russian, and Polish. Seeking complete independence in 1918, the Ukrainian National Republic also introduced national autonomy for the minorities of Ukraine, including Jews. The city was also a major player in the dialogue and cross-pollination of ideas occurring between important avant-garde figures in centers such as Paris, New York, London, and Vienna.

In January 1918, the Kultur-Lige (Culture League) was founded in Kyiv to promote the development of Jewish secular culture by means of fostering all kinds of human creative endeavor, as well as the preparation of professionals for educating the new Jewry.[60] The motto of the organization stated: "The Kultur-Lige stands on three pillars: 1) Jewish "folks-bildung" (education of the masses) education; 2) Yiddish literature; and 3) Jewish art. Make our masses thinkers. Make our thinkers Jewish. This is the purpose of the Kultur-Lige."[61]

The Kultur-Lige oversaw coordinating activities related to Jewish culture and education and opened branches in a hundred towns and villages across Ukraine. It administered schools, opened kindergartens, evening courses for adults and libraries, and organized drama studios and music classes. The main physical hub of the art section was the art studio, which would later develop into the art school in its various phases. The Central Committee's first report of November 1919 mentioned an art studio—*"a studio far plastisher kunst"*—later referred to as a "*kunst sektsye*." By autumn 1918 the Kultur- Lige had seven sections: literary, educational, publishing, library, musical, theatrical, and artistic (visual arts).[62]

In July 1918, Boris Aronson, a son of Kyiv's Grand Rabbi Shlomo Aronson, became one of the founding members of the Kyiv Arts Section of the Kultur-Lige. Among other most prominent members of this section were Iosif Chaikov (1888–1986), Lissitzky, Chagall, Ryback, and Mark Epshtein (1897–1949) **[Fig. 11, 13–15]**.[63] Chaikov and Lissitzky arrived at Kyiv from Moscow at the end of 1918.[64] Yiddish literary author, critic, and playwright Yekhezkel Dobrushin (1883–1953) was appointed Head of the Arts Section. Chaikov and Aronson oversaw the Exhibition Committee, while Epshtein and Ryback taught at the art studio, now titled the "Jewish Art school of Kultur-Lige."[65]

Kultur-Lige artists tended to share the same pool of artistic ideas and trends as the key artists of the Ukrainian and Russian avant-garde. For example, many Kultur-Lige artists, including Aronson, Epshtein, and Ryback, became admirers of Cubism under the tutelage of an active member of the Russian and Ukrainian avant-garde, the Cubo-Futurist painter Alexandra Exter (1882–1949). In Spring of 1918, Exter opened her studio in Kyiv where she practiced innovative pedagogical methods that rejected academic training, while focusing instead on non-representational art. Having learned about Cubism firsthand in Paris, Exter often acted as an intermediary among the avant-garde artistic communities of Paris, Moscow, and Kyiv, acquainting the leading members of the Ukrainian and Russian avant-garde with the paintings of Picasso and other Cubists. This exposure to the international avant-garde was of immense importance to the further development of many Jewish artists' professional careers.

Fig. 11. Documentary photograph of Iosif Chaikov's lost plaster relief, *Seamstress*, 1922. Photograph: Private collection, Jerusalem
[Image source: Hillel Kazovsky. *Khudozhniki Kultur-Lige* (The Artists of the Kultur-Lige). Jerusalem: Gesharim, 5763 and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Bibliotheca Judaica; published in collaboration with Mosty kul'tury, Moscow, 2003.Kazovsky, repr. p. 173 (no. 38)]

Fig. 12. Mark Epshtein. *Joiner*, mid-1920s. Pencil, pen, and India ink on paper, 14 x 10" (35.5 x 25.5 cm). National Museum of Ukraine, Kyiv

Fig. 13. Iosif Chaikov. Exhibition catalogue: *Evreiskaia khudozhestvennaia vystavka skul'ptur, grafiki i risunkov* (Jewish Art Exhibition of Sculpture, Graphics, and Drawings), organized by the Kultur-Lige's Art Section, Kyiv (February–March [sic: the exhibition remained open until April 15], 1920 1920).

Fig. 14. Page spread and cover from the catalogue *Kultur-Liga. Vystavka rabot Natana Al'tmana, Marka Shagala, Davida Shterenberga. Zhivopis', grafika* (Kultur-Lige. An exhibition of works by Natan Altman, Marc Chagall, and David Shterenberg. Paintings, graphics), Moscow (March–April 1922).

Fig. 15. A group of Kyiv Kultur-Lige activists with two American delegates, May 1920. Front row, right to left: Zelig Kalmanovitch, Nokhum Shtif, Wolf Latzky-Bertoldy, David Bergelson, two American delegates, Bal-Makhshoves, and Elias Tcherikower. Second row, right to left: Mark Epshtein, Boris Aronson, Issachar Ber Ryback, Leyb Kvitko, and Iosif Chaikov. Institute for Jewish Research, YIVO

Fig. 16. El Lissitzky. Illustration for *Di hun vos hot gevolt hobn a kam* (The Hen That Wanted a Comb; in Yiddish) by Uncle Ben Zion [Ben Zion Raskin]. Kyiv-St.Petersburg: Idisher Folks Farlag, 1919. Published in the Kinder-gortn (Kindergarten) series. 4 3/8 x 5 7/8" (11 x 15 cm). Private collection

Fig. 17. El Lissitzky. Cover for the book *Arba'ah Teyashim* (Four Billygoats) by Ben Zion Raskin (Warsaw: Tarbut, 1923). Letterpress, 8 1/4 x 9 15/16" (20.9 x 25.3 cm). Private collection

Fig. 18. El Lissitzky. *Sikhes khulin : A Prager legende* (Small Talk: A Legend of Prague) by Moyshe Broderzon. Moscow: Shomir, 1917. Wood (hand-carved scroll case) and title page (lithograph and ink on paper mounted on canvas), 8 3/8 x 157 1/2" (22.1 x 400.1 cm). Private collection

The artistic language of Epshtein's works in Cubist style was mainly formed under the influence of Exter and Oleksandr Bohomazov (1880–1930). Bohomazov, another important Ukrainian avant-garde artist and theorist, wrote a groundbreaking, although unpublished, avant-garde treatise, *Zhivopis ta elementi* (Painting and its Elements) in 1914, in which he anticipated many ideas of nonobjective art later expressed by Kandinsky and Malevich. In the mid-1920s, Epshtein depicted typical Jewish townsmen as skilled craftsmen in such works as *The Tailor*, *The Carpenters*, and *The Joiner*, in which he combined mostly realistic rendering of the figures with highly abstracted background and geometric shapes **[Fig. 12]**. Epshtein, who actively collaborated with Kultur-Lige from 1918 to 1931, was also one of the leading artists of Kyiv Jewish publishing houses. Among his designs for periodicals was his abstract cover for the *Freyd* (Joy), published by Kultur-Lige between 1922 and 1925 **[p. 109]**.

Kultur-Lige leaders and ideologues declared the organization's intention to follow the "modern trend" and saw it as their mission to develop the aspects of national culture that required "exploration and experimentation."[66] In 1919, Berlewi and Adler curated *Pervaia vystavka evreiskoi zhivopisi i skul'ptury* (The first exhibition of Jewish painting and sculpture) organized by the Polish branch of the Kultur-Lige in Białystok.[67] The exhibition included works by members of the Yung-yidish (Young Yiddish) group and artists from Warsaw who gathered around Berlewi. The first show of Jewish art in Kyiv—*Evreiskaia vystavka skul'ptury, grafiki, i risunkov* (Jewish exhibition of sculpture, graphics, and drawings) took place from February 8 to April 15, 1920, and was organized by the Kyiv Arts Section of Kultur-Lige **[Fig. 13]**. Aronson oversaw the exhibition committee. The exhibition catalogue's unsigned essay stated that the Jewish graphics "[…] stem from several sources: 1) engravings from the period when Jewish communities thrived in Spain, Italy and Holland; 2) primitive engravings from Galicia and Lithuania; [and] 3) the picturesque graphics which are a result of research by the modern painter, and which are based on the play of black and white." The main source of Jewish graphics, according to the essay article, is "the Hebrew letter and the ornament of old Jewish prayer books and religious artifacts."[68]

Aronson helped to find some examples of Jewish folk art for the collection of the Kultur-Lige's Museum of Visual Arts, which officially opened in Kyiv in September 1921. He combined administrative work for the museum with teaching in the Kultur-Lige's art studio and establishing the League's art library, and was also one of the organizers of the Jewish Literary Artistic Club in Kyiv, where Jewish artists and writers presented lectures and discussed Jewish art.

El Lissitzky's Early Jewish Books and his Turn to Suprematism

In contemporary culture, adherence to which was central to the ideology of the Kultur-Lige, illustrated books were one of the most important spheres for the synthesis of the arts and artistic experimentation.[69] It was due to the initiatives of the Kultur-Lige, that Kyiv ranked among Eastern Europe's major publishing centers for Yiddish books in the early 1920s. The Kultur-Lige also had publishing branches in Białystok, Odesa and Vilna.[70] In addition, the Kultur-Lige founded a bookstore in Kyiv with a distributing center for libraries, alongside the Jewish People's University.

For Lissitzky, as for many other Jewish artists of the period, book design constituted one of the main creative spheres.[71] In various questionnaires and autobiographies, Lissitzky mentioned his Jewish books as being among his most important works. From 1916 to 1919, he created around thirty works in the field of graphic arts, exploring the possibilities of avant-garde syntax within the Jewish cultural tradition **[Fig. 16, 18]**.[72] These included individual drawings, book covers and illustrations, sheet music, exhibition catalogues, and posters. In these works, Lissitzky employed the tradition of Jewish folk art, devoting much time to a study of its stylistic characteristics and playing a key role in developing an updated manifestation of it for contemporary circumstances. Subsequent generations of Jewish artists often drew on Lissitzky's work, sometimes even copying the style he introduced in his illustrations. As Lissitzky scholar Igor Dukhan has pointed out, "[the] Jewishness of his 'Jewish- style' works contains formative impulses of universality."[73]

Fig. 19. El Lissitzky. Cover and illustrations in *Had Gadya* (One Little Goat), Yiddish and Aramaic. Kyiv: Kultur-Lige, 1919. Lithograph, 11 x 10 1/4 (28 x 26 cm). Private collection

Lissitzky's first major work in the field of book design was *Sikhes khulin*: A *Prager legende* (Small Talk: A Legend of Prague) by Broderzon, a Yiddish-language story based on old Jewish folklore of Prague, which was published in an edition of 110 numbered copies in the spring of 1917. Twenty copies were created in the form of hand-colored scrolls encased in wooden boxes resembling that of a Megilah **[Fig. 18]**, the other ninety as bound books. The text was written by a professional scribe, who normally wrote Torah scrolls. Although he made use of the traditional form of a scroll, Lissitzky adapted it to the new purpose of a modern story. He also used the decorative device of slightly curved vertical rules separating column text, which was refined five years later for Lissitzky's and Ilya Ehrenburg's avant-garde journal *Veshch, Gegenstand, Objet* (Object).

Lissitzky illustrated many children's books, including a Yiddish translation of Kipling's *Elfandl* (The Elephant's Child; 1922) and Yiddish books such as *Yingl tsingl khvat* (The Mischievous Boy; 1918) by Mani Leib, *Had Gadya* (One Little Goat; 1919) **[Fig. 19]**, and *Arba'ah Teyashim* (Four Billygoats; 1922) by Ben Zion Raskin **[Fig. 17]**. Lissitzky's early children's book illustrations demonstrate his initial dependence on the works of Chagall. As Aronson noted: "Young artists have grown up on the elements of his [Chagall's] art, and, therefore, Chagall's influence is traceable in the work of each of them. And if the elements of Chagall's art became the banner of the artistic revival, and if they became a cliché, Chagall should not be blamed. Because these elements, later to become a synonym for Jewish life, are indeed discovered and created by Chagall."[74]

Among the most notable of Lissitzky's books was *Had Gadya*, the Aramaic song that closes the Passover Haggadah.[75] In each verse, the song introduces a new character who destroys the character from the previous verse, beginning with a young goat. This continues until, at the end, God slays the Angel of Death to end this cycle of violence. The song is an allegory for the hardships of the Jewish people in their exiles in Babylon and Egypt. While creating his illustrations for *Had Gadya*, Lissitzky was inspired by medieval Jewish illuminated manuscripts as well as by the imagery in painted old wooden synagogues. His illustrations include the arc of ribbons crowing the images, suggesting synagogue arches inscribed with sacred texts. The artist chose Yiddish for the song's verses but introduced each verse with an Aramaic phrase, written in the Hebrew alphabet.

Lissitzky's *Had Gadya* exemplifies the artist's search for a modern Jewish national style. His earliest watercolors for it were created in 1917. He finished another version in gouache in early 1919, and on its basis made a lithographic portfolio in an edition of seventy-five copies. Unlike his earlier sketches for the *Had Gadya*, which are narrative and figurative, in the 1919 version geometric shapes dominate the imagery attesting to Lissitzky's interest in Cubist and abstract forms. As Aronson pointed out, the second period of copying the folk style was "that of stylization," when "the elements of folk art were adapted to a modern idiom," as exemplified by *Had Gadya.*[76]

In 1919, Lissitzky moved from Kiev to Petrograd, where he met Chagall, who convinced him to relocate to Vitebsk which, during the period of 1917 to 1922, was the center of an impressive explosion of artistic and intellectual life. Chagall invited Lissitzky to teach architecture and graphic arts at the Vitebsk School of Art, opened by Chagall in January 1919. The school became a creative laboratory for the radical avant-garde after Kazimir Malevich (1879–1935), the inventor of Suprematism, arrived in Vitebsk in October of that same year. Lissitzky switched his allegiance from Chagall to Malevich and, like many other former Chagall students, joined the UNOVIS (Affirmers of the New Art) group, becoming Malevich's disciple.[77] Rather than continuing to be Chagall's faithful follower, from the fall of 1919, Lissitzky abandoned all figuration in his art under the tenets of nonobjective Suprematism **[Figs. 21]**.

Lissitzky's famous children's book *Suprematicheskii skaz pro dva kvadrata v shesti postroikakh* (A Suprematist Tale of Two Squares in Six Constructions;

Fig. 20. El Lissitzky. Proun 5A. One of eleven prints from the first Proun portfolio, created in Vitebsk, printed Moscow, 1920. Lithograph on vellum, 17 7/8 x 14 5/8" (45.4 x 37.2 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

hereafter *Of Two Squares*) [Fig. 21] was conceived in Vitebsk in 1920 while the artist was lecturing on typography at the Vitebsk School of Art and was a working member of Malevich's UNOVIS.[78] The book, however, was not printed until 1922, in Berlin. From 1921 to 1925, Lissitzky was based in Germany and Western Europe, situated at the very epicenter of the European avant-garde art scene. In his book

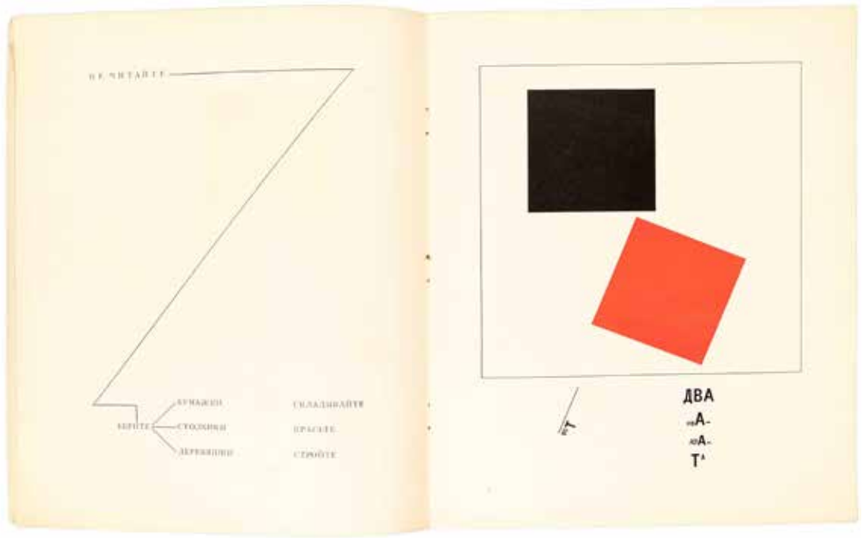

Fig. 21. El Lissitzky. Book cover and spread (in Russian): *A Suprematist Tale of Two Squares in Six Constructions*. Berlin: Verlag Skythen, April 1922. Letterpress on paper, 11 1/8 x 8 7/8" (28.2 x 22.5 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

designs created during this period, Lissitzky used geometry and typography innovatively, often violating the boundaries between image and text by creating images out of letters, symbols, and signs [p. 112].

The concept of Lissitzky's *Proun* (Project for the Affirmation of the New) had already made its appearance in Lissitzky's *Of Two Squares*. In this book, axonometric constructions and architectural renditions of Suprematist planar rhythms are united with elements of typesetting and combinations of lines. Lissitzky's illustrations for *Of Two Squares* might be viewed as a bridge from Malevich's two-dimensional Suprematist painting to Lissitzky's own *Prouns*, a total world-constructing project [Fig. 20]. The concept of Prouns was based on integrating architectural devices with principles of geometric abstract painting, thus transcending the boundaries of both. Proun was both the title of each individual work and the term denoting the system as a whole.[79] Along with many artists born in traditional Jewish families, Lissitzky looked to avant-garde art as a means to escape from the insular, conservative religious circle and to participate in a new, far-reaching, secular culture. Like many progressive Russian artists of the time, Lissitzky identified with the general outlook of the political revolutionaries and enlisted his art in support of the radical new regime. After the Revolution, he became a member of the state commission for art,

which gave him a great deal of influence on the development of cultural policy in the Soviet Union.[80]

Lissitzky's diversity of work hints at the overlapping complexities in his identity: Jewish, Russian, and Revolutionary. His international education, multilingualism, and messianic view of the Revolution all contributed to his final embrace of the international avant-garde. As art historian Igor Dukhan has rightly pointed out: "Lissitzky is always between—between a Jewish search for style and cultural identity and the universal language of Suprematism, between Suprematism and Constructivism, between Malevich's concept of abstract non-objectivity and De Stijl, between 'Constructivism' and Dada, and last, between the world of Vitebsk, the west-Russian provincial center—and Darmstadt, Moscow, Kiev, Berlin, Hanover […]."[81]

For Lissitzky, as for other artists of the Jewish Renaissance, book design served as an optimal format to express their complex, multi-faceted identities, across a spectrum of political beliefs and artistic trends.

Representation of Jewish Pogroms in the Art of Issachar Ber Ryback

Rising pogroms (anti-Jewish violence) disrupted the bond that modern Jewish artists had attempted to establish with traditional shtetl culture.[82] Instead, Jewish artists now witnessed the devastation left in the wake of the Russian civil war (1918–1921) and pogroms, as evident in Ryback's *Pogrom* series, created as early as 1919 **[p. 129]**. The pogroms that occurred during the Civil War were unprecedented in terms of their cruelty and scale.[83] From 1918 to 1920 more than 1,500 pogroms took place in over 1,300 cities, villages, and towns in Ukraine alone.[84] One of the most ferocious pogroms of 1919 took place in Elisavetgrad (now Kropyvnytskyi), a city located in central Ukraine in the north of Kherson province. During a three-day assault on May 15–17,1919, some 3,000 Jews were brutally robbed, raped and tortured, and 350 murdered. Ryback's father was murdered in that pogrom by Ataman Grigoriev's (1884–1919) troops.[85] Various scholars have noted that the rendition of massacres in Ryback's works can be likened to the genre of pogrom literature whose main representative at the time were bi-lingual author Chaim Nachman Bialik (1873–1934),[86] and a younger generation of Yiddish authors whose work responded to most recent wave of calamities: David Hofshteyn (1889–1952), Leyb Kvitko (1890 [or 1893]–1952), and Peretz Markish (1895–1952).[87] Another literal source of Ryback's *Pogrom* cycle appears to be the testimony of the pogrom of Lysyanka village, written by Joseph Tolchinski and published by Elias Tcherikower in his book *Anti-Semitism and Pogroms in Ukraine in the Years 1917–18.*[88]

The artistic treatment of synagogue images in some of Ryback's works reflected the sense of ruin and total devastation after the Jewish pogroms. As the scholar Evgeny Kotlyar has noted, "[…] synagogue images in artistic works illustrated the ongoing drama, as synagogues—the key locus of Jewish life—were being destroyed in front of one's eyes."[89] While preserving the ethnographic accuracy of details, Ryback used the current artistic language of Cubo-Futurism, Expressionism, and *lubok* to capture the drama of this time. As the tragic events of the pogroms unfolded, the transformations of the image of a synagogue in Dubrovno corresponded with Ryback's increased emotional anguish and its depictions in the artist's paintings and graphics.

Later Manifestations of the Kultur-Lige: Other Jewish Groups and Periodicals

The operation of the Kultur-Lige was eventually assumed by the Soviet institutional leadership and it lost its independence.[90] By 1922, all branches throughout Ukraine had been subordinated to the *Evsektsiia* (Jewish Sections of the Communist Party), whose members saw their main task as the communist education of the Jewish masses, which aligned with the broader communist anti-religious policies in advocating the closure of synagogues and defaming Jewish clergy.[91] If initially the Bolsheviks supported aspects of the Kultur-Lige's work, such as university and theaters, during this period, the *Evsektsiia* was far less tolerant, accusing the Kyiv Kultur-Lige of being a "Jewish nationalist" organization.

When at the end of 1920 Kyiv Kultur-Lige came under Bolshevik control, some of its members left and replicated the organization in other cities and countries.[92] Many Jewish intellectuals, including activists of the Kyiv Kultur-Lige, abandoned Kyiv and moved to Kharkiv, the new capital of Ukraine, or to Moscow, or emigrated to the West. In spite of its short existence, the Kyiv Kultur-Lige achieved great successes, including the development of a network of Jewish schools throughout Ukraine, a flowering of Yiddish literature, and the creation of an artistic avant-garde that achieved international attention.

Aronson followed his mentor Exter, who moved from Kyiv to Moscow, where she worked as the principal designer for Tairov's Kamerny (Chamber) Theatre. Exter engaged Aronson as her assistant, having him create scale models for Tairov's 1921 production of *Romeo and Juliet*. Aronson was shaped by the modernist revolution in Jewish theater in Moscow and he maintained close ties with the Moscow branch of Kultur-Lige.

Following Soviet suppression of Jewish culture in Kyiv, the Warsaw section of the Kultur-Lige, where its leaders moved the bureau in 1921, gained additional importance by the late 1920s.[93] The members of the Polish branch included Marek Szwarc (1892–1958), Adler, and Berlewi. These artists were also members of *Yung-yidish* (Young Yiddish), an artistic and literary avant-garde group active between 1919 and 1921, based in Łódź, a city which emerged as another prominent center of the Jewish artistic avant-garde almost simultaneously with Kyiv and Moscow.[94] The Yung-yidish group's journal of the same name, which appeared in 1919 **[p. 53]**, sought to define a new model of Jewish art. Despite the emphasis on Jewish language and tradition, the art of the Yung-yidish was also strongly influenced by Futurism, Expressionism, and Cubism, and the members of the group operated in an international milieu (Paris, Berlin, Dresden, Moscow).

The manifesto of the Yung-yidish stated: "In our symbolism, in our turning to Impressionism, Expressionism, Cubism, or the primitives—to which, nota bene, we don't appeal—we embrace all the above styles and call them […] by the single name Futurism."[95] The first issue of the group's eponymous journal was published in February–March 1919. Like Russian Futurist publications, the linocut reproductions combined elements of poetry and graphic arts, in equal parts, fusing words and images. The blurring of the boundaries between the visual and verbal realms was proclaimed in the periodical subtitle *Lider in vort un tseykhenung* (Poems in Word and Drawing). The gray paper on which *Yung-yidish* was printed reflected the industrial reality of the town of Łódź. This journal became a model for later Jewish periodicals including *Albatros* (1922–1923) **[pp. 54–57]**, *Ringen* (1921–1923), and *Khalyastre* (1922–1924).

Khalyastre (or Khaliastre; The Gang), the leading Yiddish Expressionist and Futurist poets of the literary and artistic Warsaw-based group formed in 1922 by some members of the Yung-yidish group, sought Berlewi's designs for their verses throughout the 1920s. The group's membership included prominent literary figures such as Markish, Uri Tsvi Greenberg (Zvi Grinberg, 1894–1981), and Melech Ravitch (1893–1976). Berlewi's radical experiments with Jewish calligraphy, and his Expressionist style of drawing, corresponded well with the fragmented language of the *Khalyastre* poets, who preferred rhythmic tautness and explosiveness to rounded, melodious verses. Greenberg, a co-publisher of the *Khalyastre* journal, met Berlewi in Warsaw, and in 1922 Berlewi's portrait of Greenberg smoking a pipe appeared on the cover of the poet's first Expressionist book *Mefisto* **[p. 100]**.

As Berlewi later recalled, it was under the influence of Lissitzky that he made the shift from Jewish tradition and lyrical Chagall-inspired symbolism to non-representational design. Berlewi met Lissitzky at Warsaw's branch of the Kultur-Lige in 1921, where Lissitzky had stopped in Warsaw en route to Berlin, where he had been sent as an informal ambassador of the Soviet government.[96] Lissitzky and Berlewi, who shared many experiences, became friends: both were Jewish, both had spent much of their lives in the Russian Empire, and both had devoted themselves to illustrating Jewish folklore. Now they were both increasingly concerned with creating a universal artistic language stripped of any national connotations.

The Jewish Bund, a union of Jewish Socialist groups, gradually claimed exclusive control over the Jewish-Polish cultural sphere, and the Kultur-Lige in Poland essentially became the Bund's "Department of Culture." Apart from Ukraine, Russia, and Poland, branches of the Kultur-Lige Arts section were also active in Lithuania. In the interwar years, Jewish life flourished in Vilne (Yiddish for Vilna or Vilnius, now Lithuania), which was often seen as the capital of Jewish scholarship (the "Jerusalem of Lithuania," or *Yerushalayim D'Lite*). The city held authority in the Jewish cultural world giving its standing as the capital of Lithuania and role in preserving cultural traditions of the Jewish diaspora for several centuries.[97] As early as 1913, a Jewish museum was established in Vilna. Both ethnic Lithuanian and Jewish artists studied at the same art schools, participated in joint exhibitions, and often belonged to the same artistic societies. However, more Jewish artists than Lithuanians studied

abroad, particularly in Paris, and therefore played a significant role in shifting Lithuanian interwar art in new direction through their receptivity to modern artistic ideas and styles. Benzion Mikhtom (1909–1941) was the first visual artist to join the important Yiddish literary group *Yung Vilne* (Young Vilnius), which committed itself to political activism.[98] Mikhtom, who created the emblem for the group **[p. 117]**, is best known for his portraits and scenes of Jewish life in "Litvakia" often depicting ordinary people at work **[p. 115]**.[99]

It was mostly poverty, the aftermath of the Revolution, and especially the waves of brutal pogroms that pushed millions of European Jews to flee their home countries. By the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, nearly two million Jews had moved westward, mostly to America but also to France, England, Germany, and other parts of the West.[100] This group of Jewish emigres included Aronson, who left Russia in 1922 and traveled first to Poland and then to Germany, settling briefly in Berlin. In November 1923, he arrived in New York, where he first worked for New York City's Yiddish theaters, and then Broadway. From 1930 onward, Aronson became one of the most prominent and influential figures in theater design, winning eight Tony Awards.

Transnational Avant-Garde: Berlin and Beyond, Jewish Art as the Expression of Modernity

In the first decades of the twentieth century, Berlin hosted many Jewish artists from the territories of present-day Russia, Ukraine, and Poland, and was one of the key centers on the cultural map of transnational avant-garde movements. Diverse publishing opportunities promoted Jewish literary and artistic activity in Berlin. For a while at least, the city offered freedom of expression (often suppressed in Poland, Ukraine, and Russia), low publishing costs (the result of post war inflation), as well as first-rate printing technology. These factors conspired to make Berlin one of Europe's leading producers of Jewish books and periodicals.[101] In the *Khalyastre* journal, Markish proclaimed that Berlin had become "a new territory of the Jewish spirit," and, as "the center of Jewish culture in Yiddish," it was destined to "become 'the new Jerusalem,' and the Kultur-Lige will become the Third Temple."[102]

For Yiddish writers and artists, journals became an important site of artistic experimentation and exchange. In November 1922, Uri Tsvi Greenberg (Zvi Grinberg), editor of the *Albatros*, a journal devoted to new expressions in poetry and art **[pp. 54–57]**, fled Warsaw to avoid prosecution when the Polish censors banned the first issue.[103] In Berlin during 1923, Greenberg published the two more issues of this journal.

Other contributing authors, including the *Khalyastre* poets, proclaimed the journal the organ of extreme individualism in poetry. Berlewi's 1923 final issue of *Albatros* (no. 3-4) exemplifies the artist's new graphic approach: the cover is a typographical composition, with Hebrew characters occupying the diagonal center of the title page, while geometric forms (circles and squares) are placed symmetrically, dividing the script of the table of contents into separate units.

A sophisticated manifestation of Jewish publishing in Berlin was *Milgroym* (Pomegranate), a highbrow, lavishly illustrated Yiddish periodical with a Hebrew counterpart entitled *Rimon* **[p. 58–60]**.[104] The journal appeared in Berlin from 1922 to 1924 in six issues. It hoped to heal the breach caused by divisive Yiddish-Hebrew language politics by publishing in both languages.[105]

It aimed to draw the Jewish intelligensia to an appreciation of Western high culture by merging the forms of each. While *Albatros* was overtly political, *Milgroym* cultivated a more universal view for a global Jewish audience by translating European essays. According to the later recollections of its co-publishers, Mark Wischnitzer and Rachel Wischnitzer-Bernstein, they aimed "to reach out to the Jewish groups in America and the growing Jewish community in Palestine, rather than the local Yiddish-speaking Jews who were passing through and living in Berlin at the time."[106]

Milgroym and *Rimon* were intended to introduce unknown and underappreciated Jewish art from medieval to modern times to non-specialist readers. The covers of *Milgroym* and *Rimon*, designed by German-Jewish artist Ernst Böhm (1890–1963), included the imagery of the temple in Jerusalem, fantastic creatures and birds, all inspired by traditional Jewish imagery drawn from medieval illuminated manuscripts and Ukrainian and Polish synagogue paintings. Franzisca Baruch (1901–1989), a former student of Böhm at the Kunstgewerbeschule Berlin (School of applied arts), designed and hand-lettered the titles of the Hebrew magazine's first two volumes and its masthead, as well as designing other books for Rimon's publishing house such as *Ketina kol-bo* **[p. 62]**.[107] Rachel Wischnitzer commissioned Baruch to design the logo as a combination of modern and medieval elements in one visual image. As an inspiration for her design, Baruch used the historical materials of medieval Ashkenazi letters such as those contained in the Prague Haggadah of 1526.[108]

Occupying a sensitive, ideological middle ground, the journal attracted much criticism from writers and artists associated with the Yiddish Left, because it represented much that the builders of Soviet Yiddish culture detested, from its perceived engagement with the elites (evident in its luxurious paper, full-color reproductions, and embrace of Hebrew), to its refusal to (overtly) engage in the politics of the period.[109]

The Yiddish novelist and dramatist David Bergelson (1884–1952), one of the literary editors of *Milgroym*, was particularly active in the cultural life of the Eastern European Jewish community in Berlin. In 1922, he organized Kultur-Lige branch in that city. In addition to Lissitzky and Berlewi, many other influential figures of various Kultur-Lige branches moved to Berlin in the early 1920s, including Adler, Altman, Chaikov, and Chagall. In 1921, Ryback also moved to Berlin where he became a member of the Novembergruppe, the German union of radical visual artists, among whose aim, as paraphrased by Adolf Behne in 1919, was "to bring the new art and the proletariat together."[110]

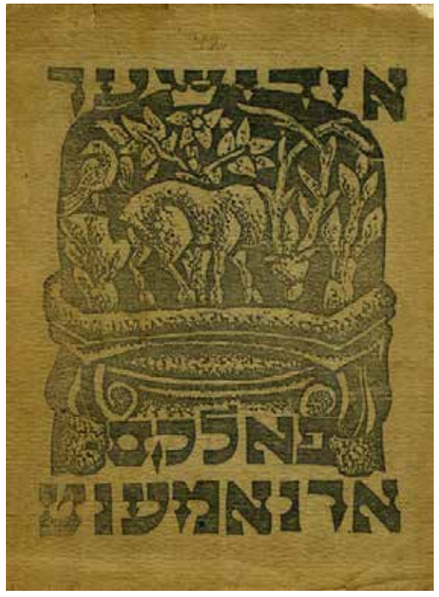

Fig. 22. Solomon Yudovin and Mark Malkin. Cover for *Idisher folks-ornament* (Jewish Folk Ornament). Vitebsk, 1920. Linocut, 10 x 7 1/4" (25.6 x 18.5 cm). Private collection

In 1922, Ryback illustrated seven Yiddish-language books, six of which were children's books **[pp. 148–156]**. Among the latter were three books by Miryam Margolin (1896–1968), a teacher employed at the preschool education department of the Jewish Section of Narkompros. Margolin's stories were intended for young children learning to read. Sources of inspiration for Ryback's playful illustrations for Margolin's stories included children's drawings, Ukrainian folk tales depicting birds and animals, popular prints, and some motifs from Yudovin's *Jewish Folk Ornament* **[Fig. 22]**.[111] While working on his illustrations, Ryback relied on the theory formulated by Dobrushin, Head of the Kyiv Kultur-Lige Art section, in his 1919 article "Jewish Artistic Primitivism and Artistic Books for Children" published in Yiddish in the journal *Bikher-velt* by the Kultur-Lige.[112] As Dobrushin argued:

> There is no doubt that the foundation, the cornerstone upon which art books for children should rest is Jewish artistic primitivism, the so-called *lubok* (popular print). The visual arts possess their own folklore—artistic primitivism, that is, a fairy tale, a myth of fine arts, a folk phase in painting, sculpture, or graphics. In this sphere of fine arts, too, the kind of folklore that we have long been using in the literary arts must be used as material for children and in children's literature.[113]

Nonetheless, Ryback freely interpreted primitivist prototypes, creating his own original work. While in Berlin, Ryback also published two important lithographic albums, *Shtetl: Mayn khorever heym, a gedekhenish* (Shtetl: My Destroyed Home, A Recollection) in 1923 and *Jüdische Typen aus der Ukraine* (Jewish types of Ukraine) in 1924 **[p. 136–145]**. *Shtetl: My Destroyed Home, A Recollection,* a cycle of graphic works created by the artist between 1917 and 1921 depicts various scenes from the daily life in Ryback's hometown before a devastating pogrom took place there in 1919. Some of Ryback's drawings are reminiscent of Chagall, but the mood

is mostly more somber and tragic. These images, depicted in a Cubist and Expressionist mode, also display the profound influence of Ukrainian and Russian folk art.

Due to the runaway inflation of 1923, numerous publishing houses and art projects in Berlin were shut down, and many Jewish cultural figures, who were mostly emigrants, migrated further—to Paris and to other cities. In December 1924, Ryback returned to Moscow at the invitation of the Jewish Studio of the Byelorussian Theater to create stage designs. Soon after that, he was commissioned to create an album on the the Jewish agricultural settlements of Southern Ukraine, Kherson province, and Crimea **[Fig. 9]**. He took a prolonged journey through these areas, funded by the American Agro-Joint company, which founded and funded the colonization project. The result was the album *Af di idishe felder fun Ukrayine* (*Sur les champs juifs de l'Ukraine; On the Jewish Fields of the Ukraina*) **[p. 157]**. In this album, Ryback sought to depict his fellow Jews not as petty salesmen or humble craftsmen, but as new genre of fierce and joyful Jews that had accomplished great work in the collective farms. Ryback's album was published in Paris, where Ryback relocated in early 1926. He began to play a noticeable role in the artistic life of the city, frequently exhibiting in Parisian galleries. Ryback lived in the French capital until his sudden death in 1935 at the age of thirty-eight.

Like Ryback, Adler was at the center of the artistic avant-garde of the 1920s. After settling in Germany in 1920, Adler joined the activities of left-wing groups in Berlin, Cologne, and Dusseldorf, participating in many major German and international art exhibitions between 1922 and 1933. At this time, he also continued to play an active role in the artistic life of his native Poland, which he left at an early age, but to which he returned many times over the years continually renewing his close ties to Polish culture. Adler's friend Szwarc later recalled that Adler "brought the mood of German Expressionism" and information about it to the artistic community of Łódź.[114]

In 1922, Adler, together with Ryback and Berlewi, represented Jewish artists from Eastern Europe at the Congress of the International Union of Progressive Artists in Düsseldorf. The Congress was intended to boost transnational cooperation between the artists. In his review of the *I. Internationale Kunstausstellung Duesseldorf* (First International Exhibition in Dusseldorf), Berlewi noted: "The internalization of art—art belonging to the whole of humanity—turned out to be an unavoidable necessity."[115]

Only a few works have survived from Adler's early period. In these works, Adler created typified portraits of Jewish people, depicted scenes from life of the Hassidic community, as well as monumental figures from the Hebrew Bible in an ecstatic expressionistic style with mystic overtones. Between 1918 and 1919, when the artist was still in Poland, he was fascinated with Jewish mysticism and folklore. He often depicted deformed, elongated figures of Jews in the spirit of El Greco, to enhance their impact. Some of Adler's Jewish figures project uncertainty and fear and convey a deep sense of loneliness.

In the first half of the 1920s, Adler combined themes and motifs drawn from Jewish folk art with stylistic aspects originating in modern European art. He often used Yiddish on surfaces in the background (see, for example, **[p. 69]**. Sometimes the artist's comments are used like Baroque "emblemata" with a didactic intent. Adler was praised by critics for "having successfully blended the mathematical clarity of the Talmud with the mysticism of the Kabbalah."[116]

Already in the early 1920s, distinct Cubist elements were apparent in Adler's work. Like the Cubists, he was exploring the tension between abstraction and naturalism. Objects in his paintings were often observed from different angles, and planes in the compositions were tilted parallel with the surface of the painting. In his 1926 interview with the Yiddish periodical *Literarishe bleter* in Łódź, Adler commented: "Common to all the new directions in art is that they are all a reaction to Impressionism. We are tired of cold observation and what is called 'objectivity' […] How do I myself work? Firstly, it is hard to find an "ism" for it. I hope my work is useful […] I want to make art positive, it must be every day, a real part of the people's assets."[117] In another interview of 1929 in the same periodical, Adler stated that while Chagall's work "derives from Sholem Aleichem," his own work "derives from Peretz."[118] Adler further noted that Jewish artists must borrow from folklore, but not to be mere copyist of folk art. He pointed out that "photography has now reached such technical perfection that it is pointless for a painter to try reporting something or tackle literary themes."[119]

Between 1920 and 1933 Adler worked in Dusseldorf and was also in contact with the radical left-wing group *Die Aktion* (The Action). He contributed to the

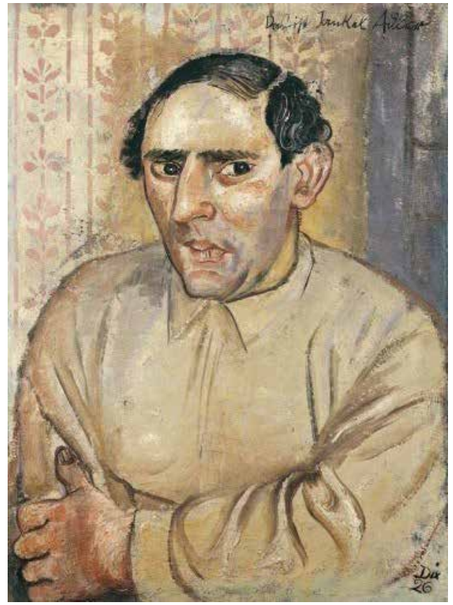

Fig. 23. Otto Dix. Bildnis Jankel Adler (Portrait of Jankel Adler), 1926. Oil and mixed media on canvas, 25 1/4 × 18 3/4" (64.1 × 47.6 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

group's literary and political magazine, a leading organ of the Expressionist movement in Berlin that featured original prints by Expressionist artists on its covers and interior pages. Adler also played a vital role in Das Junge Rheinland (The Young Rhineland; 1919–1933), an exhibiting association formed to provide a platform for artists working in Western Germany, who had been overlooked in Berlin. It included leading avant-garde artists such as Otto Dix and Max Ernst **[Fig. 23]**. He also became a co-founder and member of the Gruppe progressive Künstler (Group of progressive artists) in Cologne, whose socialist ideas of bettering the world touched upon his own convictions. Adler's painting *Aus einem Wandbild* was reproduced on the cover of the initial issue of the group's journal *a bis z* and he retained an affiliation with the group until it was disbanded by the National Socialists.

Gliding stylistically between movements, in the early 30s, Adler's work had an affinity with both the realist German *Neue Sachlichkeit* (New Objectivity) and the non-objective French *Abstraction-creation* group. Although until the mid-1930s, Adler was primarily a figurative painter, in the later part of his artistic career he became less concerned with traditional subject matter. He gradually absorbed the recent artistic achievements of Western modern art, and his mature work reflects not only the strong influence of Cubism, but also Constructivism, and, to some extent, Surrealism. However, while some of Adler's contemporaries came very close to pure abstraction in their paintings, his works would seldom become completely non-figurative. As he declared: "Abstract painting can very easily become ornamental. Thus, it is always a good thing to have in mind a realistic *point de depart* […] This reality is a guide by which the painter may avoid losing himself in ornamental play."[120]

Conclusion

The flowering of Jewish culture in the Soviet Union was short-lived, and as the 1920s progressed, it was gradually stamped out. In 1929 and 1930, many Jewish religious leaders were arrested, exiled and shot to death. In 1930, the *Evsektsia* was dissolved. Although it had previously served to undermine Jewish religious life and to fight Zionism, its dissolution led to the disintegration of Jewish secular life as well. All Jewish cultural and educational organizations gradually disappeared. Jewish schools, teaching in Yiddish, were shut down *en masse*.

Joseph Stalin's efforts to consolidate power and eliminate opposition culminated in the Great Purges of 1936–1938. Thousands of Jewish cultural figures and political leaders were among the millions of Party and non-Party members who were tried, exiled and murdered on various pretexts. The leadership of the *Evsektsiia* was liquidated, and many members of this organization were arrested and exiled.

In 1939, the State Museum of Ethnography in Leningrad organized the exhibition *Evrei v tsarskoi Rossii i SSSR* (Jews in Tsarist Russia and the USSR). At least eighteen artists were involved in creating the panels, dioramas, maquettes, paintings, drawings and sculptures exhibited there or used in the design of this Jewish exhibition. Yudovin played a special role in organizing this exhibition, and many elements of the exhibition design were made according to his sketches. About ten engravings and drawings by this artist were included in the show. *Jews in Tsarist Russia and the USSR* was the last official exhibition devoted to Jewish culture in the Soviet Union.

Approximately 1,5 million Jews from the pre-1939 USSR were killed in the Holocaust and another 200,000 died in combat. In 1948, the

Soviet government launched a campaign against "Cosmopolitanism" which was generally directed against Jewish intellectuals and professionals. The reprisals against "rootless cosmopolitans," as the Communist Party leaders referred to them, first in theater criticism, and then in other areas of art, culture, science, and public life, came at the peak of the struggle against the so-called "Jewish bourgeois nationalists." The destruction of Soviet Jewish culture in Yiddish was completed by the end of the 1940s—early 1950s.

As this essay has discussed, many Jewish artists born within the Russian Empire emigrated to Western Europe and the United States, where they absorbed local influences and contributed to the cultural thriving of metropolises, from Berlin to Paris to New York. While the work of Jewish artists in the Berman Collection discussed in this essay is remarkably diverse, and these artists embraced a variety of styles and aesthetic predilections, they still shared some important "Jewish experiences." As immigrants, they shared a sense of cultural displacement, as well as the aspiration to assimilate into the cultures of their host countries. Their work often shared similar themes, references to Jewish shtetl tradition, and iconography referring to the Old Testament. As their artistic careers demonstrate, it was the synthesis of the old and the new, national and universal, that was to become the most important strategy for the creation of the modern Jewish culture.

Jewish artists' international contacts and the radical views expressed in their artistic statements were deeply enmeshed in the broader ethos of what we now think of as high modernism. These artists felt no dichotomy between their Jewish identity and participation in the objectives of the international avant-garde. Taken together, wide-ranging works by Jewish artists in the Berman Collection showcase the achievements of national art within a global context.

1. A. Efros, *Lampa Alladina* (*K vykhodu v svet kapital'nogo izdaniia S.A. An-skogo Evreiskaia narodnaia khudozhestvennaia starina*) (Aladdin's Lamp [On the Publication of S.A. An-sky's Major Work *Jewish Popular Artistic Antiquities*]), in *Evreiskii mir*, book I, A. Sobol and E. Loiter, eds. (Moscow, 1918), pp.297–310. This quote is from p. 310.

2. Indeed, in the past two decades scholarship on modern Jewish art has developed a critical mass of literature, and this essay is intended only as a brief introduction to this broad topic, without claiming to do more than summarize the results of work done by many distinguished scholars. For a thorough review of the literature on modern Jewish art, see Larry Silver and Samantha Baskind, "Looking Jewish: The State of Research on Modern Jewish Art," in *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, vol. 101, no.4 (Fall 2011): 631-652.

For English-language readers, many studies are available about the history of the Jewsish people in general, and of those who lived in Central and Eastern Europe in particular. This essay builds on various in-depth studies by such scholars as Ruth Apter-Gabriel, Matthew Baigell, John E. Bowlt, Igor Dukhan, Gennady Estraikh, Zvi Y. Gitelman, Benjamin Harshav, Avram Kampf, Hillel Kazovsky, Evgeny Kotlyar, Aleksandra Shatskikh, David Shneer, Yonahan Petrovsky-Shtern, Kenneth B. Moss, and Seth L. Wolitz. For various dimensions of the Jewish history and cultural ideas in Russia, Soviet Union, and East-Central Europe, see the Selected Bibliography in this volume.

3. Initially, the phrase "between two worlds" was made famous by the German novelist and dramatist Karl Ferdinand Gutskow (1811–1878) in the subtitle of his play *Uriel Acosta* (1846). It was meant to describe its hero's dilemma of being caught between the religious and secular.

4. The scholar Alina Orlov has argued that there are three types of engagement with the idea of Jewish art: statistical, theoretical, and analytical. Starting in the 1950s and spearheaded by Cecil Roth, the statisticians catalogued facts about Jewish participation in the fine arts, driven by a nationalist fervor to prove Jewish accomplishments. Over the course of the next three decades, the theorists resisted grouping Jewish artists together under the banner of a Jewish movement. Joseph Gutmann summed up the theorists' conclusions best in his essay "Is there a Jewish Art?," a question he answered negatively. See Joseph Gutmann, "Is there a Jewish art?" in *The Visual Dimension: Aspects of Jewish Art*, Clare Moore, ed. (San Francisco: West View Press, 1993), pp.1–21. According to Orlov, some analytical critics, including Benjamin Harshav, Avram Kampf, and Hillel Kazovsky, working at the close of the twentieth century "abandoned the search for one, all-encompassing theory of Jewish art" and instead began investigating "specific niches of modern art," creating localized definitions of Jewishness. This group of critics focused on a particular Jewish context in certain works. See Alina Orlov, "First There Was the Word: Early Russian Texts on Modern Jewish Art," in *Oxford Art Journal*, vol. 31, no 3 (2008): 383–402, this particular discussion appears on pp. 386–387. Key scholars debating the central notion of Jewish iconophobia include: Richard I. Cohen, Kalman P. Bland, Margaret Rose Olin, and Vivian B. Mann. See bibliography.

5. See Avram Kampf. *Jewish Experience in the Art of the Twentieth Century* (South Hadley: Bergin and Garvey Publishers Inc., 1984).

6. Jewish laws of visual representation are reflected in the second commandment, which states: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Though shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow thyself to them, not serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God…" Exodus, Chapter 20:3-5 (King James Bible).

7. A. Efros and Ya. Tugenhold, *The Art of Marc Chagall* (Moscow: Helicon, 1918). Translated and quoted in Benjamin Harshav, "Chapter Seven: The First Book on Mark Chagall, 1918" in *Marc Chagall on Art and Culture. Including the first book on Chagall's art by A. Efros and Ya. Tugendhold (Moscow 1918)* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2003), p. 181.

8. The terms Russia, Imperial Russia and Tsarist Empire are used interchangeably here, denoting the political and geographical entity governed by the Romanov dynasty. The Soviet Union was founded in 1922; it can be also referred to as the USSR or Soviet Russia.

9. D. Gunzburg [Ginzburg] and V. Stassof [Stasov]. *L'Ornement Hébrue.* Berlin: S. Calvary &Co., 1905); The earlier Russian edition *Drevne-evreiskii ornament po rukopisiam* (Ornementation des anciens manuscripts hébreux de la Bibliotheque Impériale Publique de Saint Pétersbourg (St. Petersburg: Gunzbourg, 1886). Stasov's luxurious album of ornaments included, among others, manuscripts from ninth century Syria and eleventh century Cairo.

10. Nikolai Lavrsky. *Iskusstvo i evrei* (Art and the Jews) (Moscow: Iskusstvo i zhizn', 1915).

11. Ibid, p.8.

12. See Marina Dmitrieva, "Traces of Transit: Jewish Artists from Eastern Europe in Berlin," in *Osteuropa*, vol. 58, no. 8/9 (August-October 2008), Special issue: Impulses for Europe: Tradition and Modernity in East European Jewry, p. 147. Dmitrieva notes that the French art critic Waldemar George in his contribution to the catalogue for the exhibition *Jewish Artists of Our Time* (25 July–20 August 1929), argued that an "expression judaïque" could be identified in modern art.

13. Hillel Kazovsky, "Eto bylo vremia, kogda nachali illiustrirovat' evreiskie knizhechki": Evreiskaia literatura, iskusstvo i izdatel'skoe delo v sozdanii novoi evreiskoi illustrirovannoi knigi" in *Zerkalo-Literaturno-khudozhestvennyi zhurnal* (2011): http://zerkalo-litart.com/?p=917. This, and all websites cited in this essay, were accessed on July 18, 2023. For further discussion of the stereotype of the oriental Jew in art history, see Margaret Rose Olin, *The Nation Without Art: Examining Modern Discourses on Jewish Art (University of Nebraska Press, 2001).*

14. Boris Aronson and Isaachar Ryback, "Di vegn fun der yidisher moleray: Rayoynes fun kinstler" (The Paths of Jewish Painting: Thoughts of an Artist), in *Oyfang* (Kyiv: Farlag Kultur-Lige, 1919), pp. 99–124. Reuben Szlowin's English translation of the final part of this Yiddish-language article (pp. 119–124) appears in Apter-Gabriel, Ruth, ed. *Tradition and Revolution: The Jewish Renaissance in Russian Avant-Garde Art, 1912–1928*. Jerusalem: The Israel Museum, 1988, p. 229.

15. Aronson and Ryback, "Di vegn fun der yiddisher moleray," in *Oyfang*, No1 (1919): p. 3. Quoted in translation from Yiddish in John E. Bowlt, "Ethnic Loyalty and International Modernism: The An-sky Expeditions and the Russian Avant-Garde," in *The World of S. An-sky: A Russian Jewish Intellectual at the Turn of the Century.* Gabriella Safran and Steven J. Zipperstein, eds. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), p. 319.

16. Aronson and Ryback, "Di vegn fun der yidisher moleray," 1919, as translated from the Yiddish in *Tradition and Revolution*, p. 229.

17. Ibid.

18. See Aronson. *Sovremennaia evreiskaia grafika* (Modern Jewish Graphic Arts) (Berlin: Petropolis, 1924), pp. 51, 55, 60.

19. Henryk Berlewi, "Jewish Artists in Contemporary Russian Art (Upon the opening of the Russian Art Exhibit in Berlin, 1922)" in *Milgroym* 3 (1923), originally composed in German, translated into Yiddish by Moyshe Kleinman; translated into English by Rachel Field *In Geveb: A Journal of Yiddish Studies*. https://ingeveb.org/texts-and-translations/jewish-artists-in-contemporary-russian-art. The article also appeared in Hebrew (also translated by Moyshe Kleinman) in *Rimon* [Pomegranate]*: A Hebrew Magazine of Art and Letters*, no. 2 (1923): 15, 16, 19.

20. Ibid.

21. Ibid.

22. Many leading Western critics also discussed the subject of Jewish art. Although separated by both time and place, it is interesting to note that the American writer and art critic Harold Rosenberg (1906–1978) took up the subject in his 1966 essay "Is There a Jewish Art?" In

search of a definition, he wrote: “first and most obviously, Jewish art might mean art produced by Jews.” It might also be “art depicting Jews or containing Jewish subject matter.” It might mean Jewish ceremonial objects with Jewish iconography, or folk art evoking the daily life of Jewish communities. Or metaphysical art, which grapples with Jewish mysticism, probes the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, or attempts to express some aspect of the Jewish conception of reality. Jewish art “may exist in the negative sense of creating objects in the mind […].” Harold Rosenberg, “Is There a Jewish Art?” in *Commentary* (July 1966): 57-60. See also Avram Kampf. *Jewish Experience in the Art of the Twentieth Century* (South Hadley: Bergin and Garvey Publishers Inc., 1984).

23. The Yiddish, term for town, *shtetl* commonly refers to small, rural market towns with a large Yiddish-speaking Jewish population. Shtetls were in the territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and later Russian Pale of Settlement. While there were great variations among these towns, a shtetl connoted a type of Jewish settlement marked by a compact Jewish population distinguished from their mostly gentile peasant neighbors by religion, occupation, language, and culture. See: Samuel Kassow, “Shtetl”, in *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*: https://yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/shtetl. See also, Yonahan Petrovsky-Shtern, *The Golden Age Shtetl: A New History of Jewish Life in East Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014).

24. The Pale of Settlement was the area of Tsarist Russia in Poland, Lithuania, Belorussia, Ukraine, Bessarabia, and the Crimea to which Jews were confined by laws of 1791 and 1835. For reasons both religious and economic, the Russian state from the late eighteenth century to the middle of the First World War refused to allow Jews to move from these provinces of the Russian Empire to the interior of Russia itself, to live among the ethnic Russian population. Life in the small towns (shtetls) was centered around synagogues. The Jews in shtetls usually worked as traders, peddlers, grocers, and administrators of property owned by nobility. Set apart from Christian society by Yiddish or Hebrew languages and religion, they faced varying degrees of restriction and persecution. 1881 and 1882 saw a series of brutal *pogroms*—an outbreak of mass violence directed against a minority religious, ethnic, or social group, in this case the Jews.

Tsar Nicholas II was forced to concede reforms that transformed Russia from an autocracy into constitutional monarchy, and many of the legal restrictions pertaining to the Jews were modified. During the First World War, a large part of the Pale of Settlement formed the center of military action and anti-Semitic circles spread the accusation that Jews were spying for Germany and Austria-Hungary. Therefore, another series of pogroms broke out in a number of places. The tsarist military government took the view that Jews should be expelled to those parts of the Pale of Settlement not touched by the war. In August 1915, the government abolished the Pale and allowed Jews to settle in other regions. See: Brian Horowitz, *The Russian-Jewish Tradition: Intellectuals, Historians, Revolutionaries* (Brighton, MA: Academic Studies Press, 2017).

On March 20, 1917, the Provisional Government in Petrograd declared the “abolition of all class, religious, and national restrictions,” which meant that Russian Jews received equal civil and national rights with the rest of the population. See the declaration “Postanovlenie Vremennogo pravitel'stva ob otmene veroispovednykh i natsional'nykh ogranichenii” (Decree of the Provisional Government on the abolition of religious and national restrictions) in the special issue *Evreiskaia Nedelia* (Jewish Week) (March 26, 1917): 12–14.

25. Henryk Berlewi, “Jewish Artists in Contemporary Russian Art. (Upon the opening of the Russian Art Exhibit in Berlin, 1922),” in *Milgroym* 3 (1923), translated by Rachel Field *In geveb: A Journal of Yiddish Studies* (January 2018).

26. See Hillel Kazovsky, *The Artists of the Kultur-Lige* (Jerusalem: Gesharim; Mosty kul'tury, Moscow 2003, and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Bibliotheca Judaica), p. 112, n. 24.

27. For further reference on the aesthetics and ideology that are identified with each movement, see: Eugeny Kotlyar, “Bezalel versus the Kultur-Lige: Approaches to Jewish Revival,” in *Jewish Artists and Central-Eastern Europe: Art Centers, Identity, Heritage from the 19th Century to the Second World War*, Jerzy Malinowski, Renata Piątkowska, Tamara Sztyma- Knasiecka, eds. (DiG, 2010): 305–12.

28. Artur Kamczycki. “El Lissitzky, his *Beat the Whites with the Red Wedge* and their Jewish Inspirations,” in *Russian Émigré Culture: Conservatism or Evolution?*, Christoph Flamm, Henry Keazor and Roland Marti, eds. (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), p. 89.

29. See Ruth Apter-Gabriel, *The Jewish Art of Solomon Yudovin (1892-1954): From Folk art to Socialist Realism*, exhibition catalogue (Jerusalem: The Israel Museum, 1991).

30. See Horowitz, *The Russian-Jewish Tradition,* pp. 119–120.

31. As scholar Michael Stanislawski noted, there were essentially no Jews in the Russian Empire until the 1720s, except for travelers and migrant merchants. After Catherine the Great colluded with Prussia and Austria to divide and annex the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth (1772,1793, 1795), the Russian Empire included the largest Jewish population in the world. The vast majority of Jews did not live in ethnic Russia itself but in the Ukrainian, Belorussian, and Lithuanian provinces of the Russian Empire, and in the Kingdom of Poland, a region controlled by the tsars but not formally annexed to the Empire (*The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*: https://yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/russia/russian_empire).

32. At the Russian Empire, the so-called “Jewish quota,” a discriminatory quota, severely restricted Jewish matriculation at various institutions of higher learning. The assassination of Alexander II in 1881 brought his son Alexander III to the throne and ushered in an era of repression and reaction. Numerus Clauses was enacted in 1887, stating that the share of Jewish students should be no more than 10 percent in cities where Jews were allowed to live, 5 percent in other cities, and only 3 percent in Moscow and St. Petersburg. These limitations were removed in Spring of 1917, after the tsar's abdication during the February Revolution of 1917.

33. The city of Vitebsk was a provincial capital for nearly 130 years, from 1796 to 1922. It then became part of the Soviet Russian Federation and was transferred to the jurisdiction of Belorussia and demoted to district status in 1924. On the city of Vitebsk and its art scene see Aleksandra Shatskikh. *Vitebsk. The Life of Art* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007). Besides Jews, the other population of Vitebsk included Poles, Latvians, Germans, Belarusians, and Russians.

34. On Yehudah (Yuri) Pen, see Shatskikh, “The Life and Work of Yuri Moiseevich Pen,” in Shatskikh, *Vitebsk. The Life of Art,* pp. 9-19. In 1918, Chagall would use Pen's private School of Drawing and Painting in Vitebsk as a base for his newly founded People's Art School.

35. The growing sense of national self-determination was part of the broader context of subordinated minorities in the Russian Empire. One example is the Ukrainian-Jewish compression, as discussed in Myroslav Shkandrij, *Avant-Garde Art in Ukraine, 1910-1930: Contested Memory* (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2021).

36. According to the Society's mission: “The Jewish Historical Ethnographical Society has the goal of (a) the study of all fields of Jewish history and ethnography and (b) a concern with theoretical questions of historical and ethnographic scholarship. For the attainment of this aim, the society:(a) organizes meetings of its members for scientific exchange; (b) organizes public readings on questions of Jewish history and ethnography with proper permission; (c) publishes books, collections, and journals…;(d) proposes tasks and for their accomplishment offers monetary awards and stipends. The expanse of the society's activity is the entire territory of the Russian empire.” Originally published: “Izvlechenie iz ustava istoriko-etnograficheskogo obshchestva” (Excerpts from the Statute of the Jewish Historical Ethnographical Society), in *Evreiskaia starina* 2 (1910): 64-66; Quoted in Brian Horowitz. *The Russian-Jewish Tradition*, p. 33.

37. See Horowitz. *The Russian-Jewish Tradition*, p. 33. The journal *Evreiskaia starina* came out regularly from 1909 until 1915; the last issue appeared in 1930. Chronologically, its articles spanned the period from the early Middle Ages to the present, covering such topics as economics, politics, education, and culture.

38. David Roskies, “S. Ansky and the Paradigm of Return,” in *The Uses of Tradition: Jewish Continuity in the Modern Era* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1992), pp. 243–60 offers an important paradigm for understanding the topic of Jewish cultural renaissance as a whole, by discussing, among other things, An-Sky's debt to the Russian ethnographic practice of the time.

39. Eugene M. Avrutin, Valerii Dymshits, Alexander Ivanov, et al, eds. *Photographing the Jewish Nation: Pictures from S. An-sky's Ethnographic Expeditions* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2014), p. 14.

40.As An-sky reported, his expedition had taken “more than two thousand photographs of old synagogue and their internal decorations, Jewish historical buildings, ethnographic types, scenes from daily life” and recorded “more than 1800 folktales.” S. An-sky, “Pis'mo v redaktsiiu (o rabotakh etnograficheskikh ekspeditsii)” (Letter to the Editors about the work of ethnographic expedition), in *Evreiskaia starina* 8 (1915): 239.

41. See Alexander Ivanov. “The Making of a Young Photographer: From Ethnography to Art,” in *Photographing the Jewish Nation,* pp. 30–33.

42. “The museum's collection was dispersed to various museums and archives in Russia and Ukraine. At present a small portion of objects from An-sky's collection can be seen in the Russian Ethnographic Museum.” Eugene M. Avrutin, et al., eds. *Photographing the Jewish Nation*, p. 193.

43. Kampf and Apter-Gabriel speculate that the ethnographic expedition of 1916, like the one of 1911–1914, was sponsored by the Jewish Historical and Ethnographic Society. However, Alexander Kantsedikas disagrees with this assessment and argues that the 1916 expedition was Lissitzky's and Ryback's private enterprise. See Alexander Kantsedikas, *El Lissitzky: The Jewish Period* (London: Unicorn Press, 2017), p. 18 (n. 30). In a book that appeared two years after Ryback's passing, his wife mentions two expeditions: one to Belarus, which took place during 1915–1916 that was self-funded, and another, in Ukraine, that took place sometime before the revolution and was funded by the Jewish Historical and Ethnographic. See: Ryback, Sonya. “Zayn lebns veg,” in *Yissakhar ber ribak: Zayn lebn un shafn, 7–28* (Paris: Komitet tsu fareybikn dem ondenk fun Yissakhar Ber Ribak, 1937).

44. Marc Chagall was born Moyshe Shagal in Vitebsk, in the northeastern corner the Jewish Pale of Settlement. Answering a question regarding the difference between his “crippled Mohilev great-grandfather Segal who painted the Mohilev synagogue” and himself, Chagall wrote in his memoirs: “The difference is only that he [Segal] took orders for signs while I studied in Paris.” See Benjamin Harshav, ed. *Marc Chagall on Art and Culture* (2003), p. 40.

45. “Vegn der Mohilever shul” (On the Mohilev Shul: Recollections) by El Lissitzky first appeared in Yiddish and Hebrew in 1923 in the Berlin bilingual journal *Milgroym—Rimon* (Pomegranate), no.3: 8-13. Republished in English translation: El Lissitzky. “On the Mogilev Shul: Recollections.” Translated by Madeleine Cohen. *In geveb* (July 2019). https://ingeveb.org/texts-and-translations/mogilev-shul.

46. Ibid.

47. Ibid.

48. L. M. Antokolsky, “Evreiskaia khudozhestvennaia vystavka v Moskve” (The Jewish Art Exhibition in Moscow), in *Evreiskaia nedelia* (Jewish Week), (9 July 1917), no. 27: 38–39.

49. Martin Buber. “Jüdische Renaissance” (Jewish Renaissance), *Ost und West* 1:1 (January 1901) translated in Gilya G. Schmidt, *The First Buber. Youthful Zionist Writings of Martin Buber* (New York: Syracuse University Press), 1999, p. 31. Buber also used the phrase “Jewish Renaissance” in his 1901 address to the Fifth Zionist Congress, where it referred not simply to a form of Jewish cultural renewal, but to a historical consciousness reflected in music, literature, and art. This speech, titled “Address on Jewish Art,” is also translated in *The First Buber*, pp. 46–64.

50. As Lissitzky and other Jewish artists found their inspiration in Jewish folk and ceremonial art, in a similar vein, such Russian artists as Natalia Goncharova, Mikhail Larionov, Kazimir Malevich, Aleksandr Shevchenko, and other representatives of the Russian avant-garde of the 1910s and 1920s, drew their inspiration from Russian folk art, including *lubki* (popular prints) and peasants' crafts, as well as in Russian icons. For a laudable recent consideration of the topic, see Samuel J. Spinner, *Jewish Primitivism* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2021).

51. Aronson. *Modern Jewish Graphic Art*, p. 67.

52. Ibid., p. 68.

53. “The title of *Eygns* was not accidental. As a noun, *dos eygns* means possession. It can also function as an adverb, *eygns*, meaning own. This polyvalent title defined the conscious wish and will of the editors to create a secular Yiddish, indeed Jewish, culture with all its implications for national cultural autonomy. Its program was subsumed under the title.” Seith Wolitz, “The Kiev-Grupe (1918–1920) Debate: The Function of Literature”, in *Studies in American Jewish Literature (1975–1979)*, vol. 4, no. 2 (Winter 1978). Modern Jewish Studies Annual II: 97–106.

54. Hillel Kazovsky, “The Jewish Art of Issachar Ber Ryback (1897-1935),” in *Issachar Ber Ryback* (Paris: Editions Le Minotaure, 2022), p. 85.

55. Benjamin Pinkus. *The Jews of the Soviet Union: The History of a National Minority* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 83.

56. While most fell one either side of this division, it must be noted that some Jewish cultural figures belonged to both the Yiddishist and Hebraist camps simultaneously. As the scholar David Shneer points out, in 1919 Yiddish was declared the official language of Soviet Jewry, and from that year until 1948, when Stalin initiated the anti-semitic, anti-cosmopolitan campaign that wiped out Soviet Yiddish culture, state-sponsored Soviet Jewish cultural production took place in Yiddish. Soviet authorities suppressed Hebrew publishing almost entirely between 1918 and 1920 and brought Yiddish publishing under Communist Party control. On the elevation of Yiddish to the status of the official language of Soviet Jewry, see David Shneer, “Yiddish Becomes Queen: Ideology and Jewish Language Politics,” in *A Revolution in the Making: Yiddish and the Creation of Soviet Jewish Culture*, Ph.D. Dissertation (Berkeley: University of California, 2001). On the suppression of Hebrew, see Yehoshua Gilboa, *A Language Silenced: The Suppression of Hebrew Literature and Culture in the Soviet Union* (New York: Herzl Press, 1982).

57. Antony Polonsky, “Fragile Coexistence, Tragic Acceptance. The Politics and History of the East European Jews.” in *Osteuropa 2008*, Impulses for Europe, p. 13. See also: Kenneth B. Moss, *Jewish Renaissance in the Russian Revolution* (Harvard University Press, 2010) and David Shneer, *Yiddish and the Creation of Soviet Jewish Culture: 1918-1930* (Cambridge University Press, 2004).

58. See Gennady Estraikh and Mikhail Krutikov, eds. *Children and Yiddish Literature from Early Modernity to Post-Modernity* (Cambridge: Routledge/Legenda, 2016).

59. For discussions of the development of Jewish theater, see: Jeffrey Veidlinger, *The Moscow State Yiddish Theater: Jewish Culture on the Soviet Stage* (Indiana University Press, 2006) and Harshav, Benjamin. *The Moscow Yiddish Theater: Art on Stage in the Time of Revolution* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008).

60. The idea of the organization of Kultur-Lige belonged to Zelig Melamed (1886–1946), a Yiddishist socialist. Among the founders of the Kultur-Lige were Yiddish language writer David Bergelson (1884–1952), Yiddish writer, critic and playwright Yekhezkel Dobrushin (1883–1953), and Nakhman Meisel (1887–1966), a literary critic and editor in Yiddish and Hebrew. The poet Peretz Markish (1895–1952), one of the leaders of the Yiddish literary avant-garde, also participated in the founding original Kultur-Lige in Kyiv but left it in 1920 after the Soviet takeover.

61. Originally published in Yiddish as *Kultur-Lige (A sakhakl). Zamlung. Oysgabe fun tsentral-komitet* (Kyiv: November 1919), pp. 1-2. Quoted in Ruth Apter-Gabriel, ed. *Tradition and Revolution: The Jewish Renaissance in Russian Avant-Garde Art, 1912–1928* (Jerusalem: The Israel Museum, 1988), pp. 34–35.

62. "Di kunst sektsye by der Kultur-Lige," *Kultur-Lige. (A sakhakl). Zamlung* (November 1919): 4–5, 35-38. On the Kultur-Lige see two important studies: Hillel Kazovsky, *Khudozhniki Kultur-Lige* (The Artists of the Kultur-Lige) (Jerusalem: Gesharim, 2003 and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Bibliotheca Judaica; published in collaboration with Mosty kul'tury, Moscow, 2003); and Gennady Eistraikh, "The Yiddish Kultur-Lige," in *Modernism in Kyiv: Jubilant Experimentation*, Irena R. Makaryk and Virlana Tkacz, eds. (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2010), pp. 197–217.

63. Other members of the Kultur-Lige included artists Iosif Elman, Robert Falk, Inger Gersh, Lev Halperin, Zfania-Gedali Kipnis, Polina Khentova, Shulim Kotkis, Aleksandr Labas, Khaim Mastbaum, Solomon Nikritin, Isaak Rabichev, Isaak Rabinovich, Mark Sheikhel, Nisson Shifrin, Sarah Shor, and Aleksandr Tyshler.

64. While still in Moscow in 1917–1918, Chaikov and Lissitzky belonged to the Circle of Jewish National Aesthetics and Moscow Circle of Jewish Writers and Artists.

65. In 1924, the Jewish Art School was renamed the Jewish Arts and Trades School, where Epshtein continued teaching a new generation of Jewish artists until 1931, when the school was shut down and the artist moved to Moscow.

66. *Kultur-Lige. Builleten numer 2. Oysgabe fun tsentral-komitet* (in Yiddish) (Kyiv, Yuni-yuli 1920): 34. Quoted in Hillel (Gregory) Kazovsky. "Da zdravstvuet natsional'nost'!' Khudozhniki-evrei v russkkom avangarde" (Long Live Nationality! Jewish Artists in the Russian Avant-Garde) in *Sovremenniki budushchego. Evreiskie khudozhniki v russkom avangarde,1910-1980* (Contemporaries of the Future: Jewish Artists in the Russian Avant-Garde, 1910–1980), Ekaterina Allenova, Alexander Izvekov, and Sarah Crowther, eds. (Moscow: Jewish Museum and Tolerance Center, 2015), p. 16.

67. Jews lived in Białystok for many centuries. By the end of the nineteenth century, it accounted for seventy-five percent of all residents of the city. The Kultur-Lige branch in Białystok was formed in the summer of 1918, immediately after the organization was established in Kyiv. This branch of Kultur-Lige had a huge network of institutions, a publishing house, Jewish teachers's courses, and a separate school section. By 1921, there were ten Yiddish schools in Białystok, a polytechnical school, and one of the largest school libraries (after those in Warsaw and Vilna), containing a total of about 7,500 books in Yiddish. See Viktoriia Alekseeva, "Istoriia Kultur-Ligi i problema rasprostraneniia evreiskoi kul'tury na idishe v nachale XX veka" (History of the Kultur-Lige and Aspects of the Development of Yiddish Culture in the Early Twentieth century), in *Evreiskii mir Ukrainy* (Jewish World of Ukraine), Artur Rudzitsky, ed. (2018–2021): ju.org.ua/ru/publicism/367.html#_Toc450836507.

68. Quoted in Marina Dmitrieva, "From Ethnography to Aesthetics," in Hillel Kazovsky, *Kultur-Lige: khudozhnii avangard 1910–1920-kh rokiv* (Artistic Avant-Garde of the 1910s and the 1920s) (Kyiv: Dukh i Litera, 2007), p. 56.

69. Hillel Kazovsky, "Book Graphics of Kultur-Lige's Artists," in *Knizhkova grafika mitsiv Kultur-Ligi* (Kyiv: Dukh i Litera, 2011), p. 5. See also: Kerstin Hoge, "The Design of Books and Lives: Yiddish Children's Book Art by Artists from the Kiev Kultur-Lige." in *Children and Yiddish Literature from Early Modernity to Post-Modernity*, G. Estraikh and M. Krutikov, eds. (Cambridge: Legenda, 2016), pp. 49–76.

70. Ibid., p. 8.

71. See Barbara Mann, *The Object of Jewish Literature: A Material History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2022).

72. See Peter Nisbet, "Summary Catalogue of Typographical Work by El Lissitzky," in Peter Nisbet, *El Lissitzky, 1890–1941: Catalogue for an Exhibition of Selected Works from North American Collections, the Sprengel Museum Hanover, and the Staatliche Galerie Moritzburg Halle* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Art Museums, Busch-Reisinger Museum, 1987) and Alexander Kantsedikas, "'Looking in Old Mirrors': El Lissitzky's Jewish Period," in *Lissitzky,* Ruth Addison and Ekaterina Allenova, eds. (Moscow: State Tretyakov Gallery and Jewish Museum and Tolerance Center, 2017), p. 28.

73. Igor Dukhan, "El Lissitzky—Jewish as Universal: From Jewish Style to Pangeometry," in *Ars Judaica* (2007): 1.

74. Aronson, *Sovremennaia evreiskaia grafika*, 1924, pp. 71–72. These excerpts are quoted in the chapter "Commentaries Published During the Lifetime of El Lissitzky," in Alexander Kantsedikas, *El Lissitzky: Jewish Period 1916–1919* (London: Unicorn, 2018), pp. 158–159. English translation by Luba Freedman, as abridged by Malka Jagendorf in Aper-Gabriel, ed. *Tradition and Revolution*, pp. 235–238.

75. On this important publication, see Arnold J. Band, ed. *Had Gadya (The Only Kid): Facsimile of El Lissitzky's Edition of 1919*. Translation from Aramaic and Yiddish and an introduction by Nancy Perloff (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2004).

76. Ibid.

77. Lissitzky had already been introduced to Malevich in 1917, when both artists worked for the Moscow Soviet of Workers' Deputies, and it was Lissitzky who initiated the invitation to Malevich to teach at the Vitebsk School of Art. See Angela Lampe, ed. *Chagall, Lissitzky, Malevich: The Russian Avant-Garde in Vitebsk, 1918–1922*, exhibition catalogue (Paris: Centre Pompidou; Munich: Prestel Verlag, Paris, 2018).

78. This and another children's book, *Chetyre arifmeticheskikh deistviia* (Four Arithmetic Operations) of 1928, exemplify Lissitzky's adaptation of Suprematism and Constructivism in his typographical work.

79. See Tatyana Goryacheva, "The Proun Station," in *El Lissitzky*, Tatyana Goryacheva, Compiler, Ruth Addison and Ekaterina Allenova, eds. (Moscow: State Tretyakov Gallery and Jewish Museum and Tolerance Center, 2017), pp. 30–47. It is important to note that Lissitzky studied architecture at the Technische Hochschule in Darmstadt, Germany, from 1909 to 1914. He also studied at the Riga Politechnical Institute from about 1915 to 1917. This education could be perceived as a link to his ideology behind Proun, which handles the making of two-dimensional art as if it were three-dimensional. A major part of Lissitzky's architectural training was a study of axonometric projection, frequently used in architecture, in which receding lines remain parallel and do not meet in a vanishing point.

80. The specifics of this work have been the subject of much recent scholarship and, especially for Ewa Bérard, of revelatory archival discovery. See: Christina Lodder, 'El Lissitzky and the Export of Constructivism," in *Situating El Lissitzky: Vitebsk, Berlin, Moscow* (Getty Research Institute: Los Angeles, 2003), Nancy Perloff and Brian Reed, eds., pp. 27-46; Maria Mileeva, "The Artist as a Cultural Emissary across the Borders of Interwar Europe: The Case of El Lissitzky," in *Der Künstler in der Fremde: Migration, Reise, Exil*, Uwe Fleckner, Maike Steinkamp, Hendrik Ziegler, eds. (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co, 2015), pp. 219–240; and Ewa Bérard. "The 'First Exhibition of Russian Art' in Berlin: The Transnational Origins of Bolshevik Cultural Diplomacy, 1921–1922" in Contemporary European History, vol. 30 (2021), Special Issue 2, European Cultural Diplomacy in the Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919–1939, B. Martin and E. Piller, eds.: 164–180; and Ewa Bérard, "Exhibition Items from a Sealed Train: The First Exhibition of Russian Art in Berlin, 1922: A Documented History," *Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie*, no. 4 (August 2021), pp. 103–128 (in Russian with English synopsis).

81. Igor Dukhan," El Lissitzky—Jewish as Universal: From Jewish Style to Pangeometry," in *Ars Judaica* (2007): 1.

82. Pogroms assumed a mass character during the events of the Russian Revolution of 1905 to 1907. During the period of Russian Civil War (1918–1921), more than 1,500 pogroms took place, in which more than 200,000 Jews were wounded and between 100,000 and 200,000 were killed. For a detailed history of pogroms see John Klier, "Pogroms," in The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe: https://yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Pogroms. See also, Oleg Budnitskii, "Chapter 6. In the Shadow of the Holocaust: The Pogroms of 1918–1920," in *Russian Jews Between the Reds and the Whites, 1917–1920* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2021), pp. 216–274, and books by Eugene M. Avrutin, Elissa Bemporad, and Jeffrey Veidlinger in the bibliography.

83. For a bracing and lucid discussion of the widespread, brutal violence against women as a performative "message of domination, of absolute power and superiority," see Irina Astashkevich, "Inventing Vengeance: Who and Why Punished the Jews," in Irina Astashkevich, *Gendered Violence: Jewish Women in the Pogroms of 1917 to 1921* (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2018), pp. 53–76.

84. See Oleg Budnitskii, *Russian Jews Between the Reds and the Whites*, p. 216.

85. There is uncertainty about the dates and numerical statistics. Brendan Mcgeever dates the pogrom May 15–19, and estimates that at least 1526 people were murdered. See: Brendan McGeever, "Red Antisemitism: Anti-Jewish Violence and Revolutionary Politics in Ukraine, 1919," *Quest: Issues in Contemporary Jewish History* (July 31, 2019), https://www.quest-cdecjournal.it/red-antisemitism-anti-jewish-violence-and-revolutionary-politics-in-ukraine-1919/. Elais Heifetz estimates that 2,000 people were murdered. See: Elias Heifetz, *The Slaughter of the Jews in the Ukraine in 1919* (New York: Seltzer, 1921). "Ataman" (or Otaman in Ukrainian) was a title for the supreme military commander of the Cossack armies. Grigoriev may appear as Grigorieff, Hryhoriv, or Nykyfor.

86. Haim Nachman Bialik's poem *In the City of Slaughter*, was written in Hebrew (*Be-ir ha-haregah*) and in Yiddish (*In shkhite shtot)*, and is a powerful statement of anguish written in response to the 1903 Kishinev pogrom. It was probably one of the inspirations for Ryback's cycle. Some of Ryback's individual scenes presenting victims of the pogrom and the violence of soldiers look like literal renditions of verses from Bialik's *In the City of Slaughter*, in which the poet lashes out at both the cruelty of the oppressors and the passivity of the Jewish populace. See Małgorzata Stolarska-Fronia, "Apocalyptic City Versus Apocalyptic Shtetl: The Experience of Catastrophe in the Work of the Jewish Expressionists," in *Centropa* 15.3 (September 2015): 242–254. See also Haim Nachman Bialik, "The City of Slaughter," in *Complete Poetic Works of Hayyim Nachman Bialik*, Israel Efros, ed. Translated by Abraham M. Klein (New York, 1948), pp. 129–43.

87. The major contemporaneous pogrom cycles by these authors are: David Hofshteyn, *Troyer*, with illustrations by Marc Chagall (Kyiv: Kooperativ farlag Kultur-Lige, 1922); Leyb Kvitko, *1919*, with cover by Iosif Chaikov (Berlin: Idisher literatisher farlag, 1923); and Peretz Markish's *Di kupe* (The Mound), which appeared in two editions illustrated by Henryk Berlewi (Warsaw: Kultur Lige, 1921) and Tchaikov (Kyiv: Kultur Lige, 1922), see related image [p. 99]. For an overview of literary responses, see David G. Roskies, *Against the Apocalypse: Responses to Catastrophe in Modern Jewish Culture* (Syracuse University Press, 1999).

88. The book was published in German by Ostjüdisches Historisches Arhiv in Berlin. For more details on Tcherikower, see an important study by Ukrainian art historian Vita Susak, "Laocoon: or the Limits of Pogroms Representation in Visual Arts (First Third of the 20th Century)," in *Art in Jewish Society*, Jerzy Malinowski et al, eds. (Warsaw: Polish Institute of World Art Studies and Tako Publishing House, 2016), pp. 219-230. As Kazovsky argued, Ryback would have had the possibility of seeing Tcherikower's book in manuscript form prior to publication. See Hillel Kazovsky, "The Jewish Art of Issachar Ber Ryback (1897-1935)," in *Issachar Ber Ryback* (Paris: Editions Le Minotaure, 2022), p. 91 and footnote 131.

89. Evgeny Kotlyar. "Evreisk'e mistetstvo" (Jewish Art)," in *Judaica Ukrainica* 6 (2017): 51–78.

90. Even after the Soviet takeover, many aspects of the Kultur-Lige work continued, sometimes under other names. The Kultur-Lige's Jewish theater began working in Kharkiv in 1924, and the publishing house continued using the Kultur-Lige's name until the end of the 1920s. Of the Kultur-Lige's various branches, the artistic studio in Kyiv, reformed in 1924 and renamed the Jewish Arts and Trades School, initially continued to follow the principles proclaimed by the Kultur-Lige. The real finale came with a pogrom at this school in 1933, when, at the height of Holodomor (the Great Famine in Ukraine, 1932–1933), several men broke into the building, smashing sculptures and cutting up canvases.

91. The Evsektsiia was at the forefront of the anti-religious campaigns of the 1920s that led to the closing of various religious institutions, the breakup of religious communities and the further restriction of access to religious education. Yiddish schools, Jewish cultural institutions, newspapers, magazines, and publishing houses came under the Evsektsiia control.

92. The Kultur-Lige in Kyiv was the strongest in the years 1918–1920, and it provided the model for the Kultur-Lige developments elsewhere. As Kazovsky notes, organizations modeled on the Ukrainian Kultur-Lige appeared at the end of 1918 and the beginning of 1919 outside Ukraine, in Petrograd, Crimea, Minsk, Grodno, Vilna, and Białystok. In late 1919, Kulture-Lige organizations were also founded in Moscow, Rostov-on-Don, Chita in the Soviet Far-Eastern Republic, and Harbin. In addition to Warsaw and Berlin, where the Kultur-Lige branches also opened in the 1920s, other branches were created in Riga (Latvia) in 1922, New York and Chicago in 1926, Bucharest in 1931, and Mexico and Argentina in 1935. According to Kazovsky, there is no evidence of Kultur-Lige activities in the USSR after 1924. The Kultur-Lige Press was shut down in 1931. See Hillel Kazovsky," Kultur-Lige" in *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe:* https://yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Kultur-lige.

93. The Kingdom of Poland, also known as the Congress Kingdom of Russian Poland, was created in 1815 by a decision of the Congress of Vienna, which set up a new post-Napoleonic European order. The Kingdom of Poland became the most modern, industrialized, and fastest-developing area in the Russian Empire. For several decades in the nineteenth century, Warsaw was home to the largest Jewish community in the world. Already in the 1870s, it counted more than 100,000 registered Jewish inhabitants. The number of Jews moving to the capital of the Kingdom of Poland, part of the Russian Empire, grew rapidly after the emancipation legislation of 1862, abolishing all settlement restrictions. The influx of Jews increased in the 1890s following the expulsion of Jews from Moscow. By 1900, Warsaw was the Jewish capital of the Jewish Renaissance in late Imperial Russia. The highest percentage of Jews in Warsaw was reached shortly before World War One, when around forty percent of Varsovians identified as Jews. The Jewish Bund (General League of Jewish Working Men), established in 1897, gradually claimed exclusive control over the Jewish-Polish cultural sphere. The Kultur-Lige in Poland essentially became the Bund's "Department of Culture," functioning as such until World War II. A union of Jewish socialist groups, this party was the first to lobby for general political demands as well as the interests of Jewish workers.
For an overview of the history of Jewish Warsaw, see Antony Polonsky, "Warsaw", YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe, vol. 2 (New Haven, Conn., London: Yale University Press, 2008), pp. 1993–2004. See also: Glen Dynner and Marcin Wodzinski," The Kingdom of Poland and her Jews," in Polin Studies in Polish Jewry, vol. 27, *Jews in the Kingdom of Poland, 1815–1918*, Glenn Dynner, Anthony Polonsky, and Marcin Wodzinski, eds. (Oxford. Portland, Oregon: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2015), pp. 1–44; and Gennady Estraikh, "The Kultur-Lige in Warsaw: A Stopover in the Yiddishists' Journey between Kiev and Paris," in *Warsaw. The Jewish Metropolis: Essays in Honor of the 75th Birthday of Professor Antony Polonsky,* François Guesnet and Glenn Dynner, eds. (Leiden, Boston: BRILL, 2015), 323–46.

94. In the 1820s, the small town of Łódź was transformed into the center of the textile industry. The town grew very quickly and attracted an ever-growing number of Polish, German, and Jewish settlers. In 1897, Jews represented over thirty percent of the population, and in 1910 they even reached over forty percent. By the first decade of the twentieth century, one in four Jews in the Kingdom of Poland lived either in Warsaw or Łódź . Dynner and Wodzinski," The Kingdom of Poland and her Jews," in *Jews in the Kingdom of Poland, 1815-1918*, p. 31.

95. Unsigned manifesto, published in *Yung-yidish* 2-3 (1919): 2.

96. See note 80 above.

97. The Yiddish term "Litvak" (pl., Litvakes), describes the geographic origin of Jewish people from historical or "greater" Lithuania, but it also described religious, institutional affiliation and ideology. The Litvak territory of origin is significantly larger than the borders of both the independent Lithuanian Republic of the interwar period (1918–1940), or the contemporary state of Lithuania. Lite (Yiddish for Lithuania; Hebrew Lita) includes large swaths of northeastern Poland, northern and Western Belarus, southern Latvia, and northeastern Prussia. For more information see: https://yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Litvak; https://yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Misnagdim).

98. *Yung Vilne* (Young Vilnius) group, which existed between 1927 and 1943, published three issues of eponymous journal-almanac in 1934, 1935, and 1936, and organized literary evenings and art exhibitions. During the WW2 the group continued their activities in Vilna ghetto. In 1941, Mikhtom was slaughtered in Ponar by Wehrmacht troops.

99. The term "Litvak" describes Jewish origins, which stem from the cultural tradition of the Great Duchy of Lithuania corresponding with contemporary Lithuania, Belarus and part of the territories of Northern Ukraine.

100. See Cristiana Facchini, "Modernity and the Cities of the Jews," in *Quest: Issues in Contemporary Jewish History, Journal of Fondazione CDEC*, no. 2 (October 2011). www.quest-cdec-journal.it/index.php?issu=2

101. Yiddish publishers actively publishing of the work of major Soviet-Yiddish writers resident in Berlin included Wostok (East), Shveln (Thresholds), Funken (Sparks) and Idish literarisher farlag (Yiddish Literary Publishing House).

102. As quoted in Hillel Kazovsky, *Kultur-Lige: khudozhnii avangard 1910–1920-kh rokiv* (Artistic Avant-Garde of the 1910s and the 1920s) (Kyiv: Dukh i Litera, 2007), p. 24.

103. On *Albatros*, see Avidov Lipsker, "The Albatrosses of Young Yiddish Poetry: An Idea and Its Visual Realization in Uri Zvi Greenberg's *Albatros*," *Prooftexts* 15, no. 1 (1995): 89–108.

104. Both titles translate as Pomegranate, the fruit that in the *Song of Songs* symbolizes the beauty of the beloved woman. The *Song of Songs* has often been used as an allegory for the love between God and the people of Israel.

105. As Naomi Brenner notes, "Even with the growing tensions between the languages and their ideologues, virtually all European Hebrew readers could read Yiddish, given the deeply ingrained internal bilingualism of East European Jewish culture. But the reverse was not necessarily the case; Yiddish readers without strong traditional education likely would not read a Hebrew periodical." Naomi Brenner. **"***Milgroym* and *Rimon*, Fraternal Twins," *In geveb: A Journal of Yiddish Studies* (June 2018), **https://ingeveb.org/blog/milgroym-and-rimon-fraternal-twins**. See also: Naomi Brenner, "Mylgroym's Cultural Context," *In geveb: A Journal of Yiddish Studies* (February 2018), https://ingeveb.org/blog/milgroym-s-cultural-context and Ishai Mishory, "Molded Inexorably by the Times: Rachel Wischnitzer's and Franzisca Baruch's Collaboration on the Headlines of Rimon/Milgroym," *In geveb: A Journal of Yiddish Studies* (December 2019), https://ingeveb.org/articles/rachel-wischnitzers-and-franzisca-baruchs-collaboration.

106. See Rachel Wischnitzer-Bernstein, "From My Archives [b]." *Journal of Jewish Art* 6 (1979): 7.

107. See: Ada Wardi, ed. *New Types: Three Pioneers of Hebrew Graphic Design [Moshe Spitzer, Franzisca Baruch, and Henri Friedlaender]*. Jerusalem: Israel Museum, 2016.

108. Brenner, **"***Milgroym* and *Rimon*, Fraternal Twins."

109. An example of one such attack appeared in the Soviet Yiddish literary journal *Shtrom* (Moscow, 1922–1924), where the artist Iosif Chaikov blasted *Milgroym* as an "elitist cemetery for passé Jewish art." Cited in Brenner, "Mylgroym's Cultural Context," *In Geveb*.

110. *German Expressionism: Documents from the End of the Wilhelmine Empire to the Rise of National Socialism*, Rose-Carol Washton Long, ed. (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1993), p. 210. The Novembergruppe was founded in Berlin in December 1918 in response to Germany's November Revolution. Its rhetoric and goals parroted Soviet collectives with the objective of bringing art to the people and of serving Germany's hoped-for socialist future.

111. This book included twenty-six engravings representing floral motifs, animals, and stylized Hebrew letters adorning tombstones or objects of worship. The engravings were executed by Yudovin from photographs taken during the Jewish ethnographic expeditions of 1912–1914.

112. Y. Dobrushin, "Yidisher kunst-primitiv un dos kunst-bukh far kinder," in *Bilher-velt* (Kyiv), no. 4-5 (August 1919): 16–23.

113. Ibid., pp. 16–17. Quoted in English translation in Hillel Kazovsky, *The Book Design of Kultur-Lige Artists* (Kyiv: Dukh i litera, 2011), p. 24.

114. Marek Szwarc,"Posthumous Homage to Jankel Adler," in Ulrich Krempel, *Jankel Adler 1895-1949* (Düsseldorf: Städtische Kunsthalle, and Cologne: DuMont, 1985), pp. 59–60. This quote is from p. 60.

115. Henryk Berlewi, "Miedzynarodowa Wystawa w Düsseldorfie," in *Nasz Kurier* (August 2, 1922); translated as "International Exhibition in Düsseldorf" in Timothy O. Benson and Éva Forgács, eds., *Between Worlds: A Sourcebook of Central European Avant-gardes, 1910-1930* (Los Angeles, California: Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Cambridge: MIT Press, 2002), pp. 397–400.

116. Quoted in Alfred Werner, *Jankel Adler* (New York: Galerie Chalette November-December 1959), n.p.

117. Quoted in Krempel, *Jankel Adler 1895-1949,* p. 24.

118. Ibid., p. 26.

119. Ibid., p. 31.

120. Quoted in Werner, *Jankel Adler* (1959), n.p.

PLATES

WORKS FROM THE
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PERIODICALS

Reprint and translation (into English and Polish) of periodical (in Yiddish): *Yung-yidish: Lider in vort un tseykhenung* (Young Yiddish: Poems in Word and Drawing). Łódź, 1919. Complete in three issues. Marek Szwarc, Moyshe Broderzon, and Jankel Adler, eds.
Łódź: Museum Miasta Łódźi, 2009

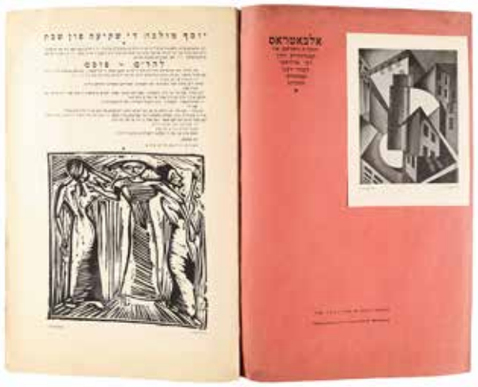
no. 1 (Warsaw, 1922)
Cover by Ze'ev Władysław
Weintraub
Woodcut, 14 1/8 x 9 1/4" (35.8 x 23.5 cm), closed

no. 2 (Warsaw, November 1922)
Cover by Marek Szwarc
Linocut, 12 7/8 x 9 1/4" (32.7 x 23.5 cm), closed

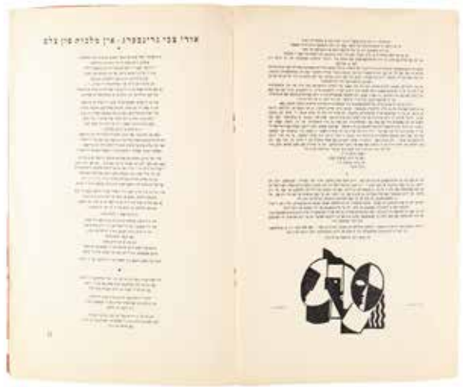
no. 3-4 (Berlin, 1923)
Cover (front and back) by Henryk Berlewi
Lithograph
15 x 10" (38.1 x 25.4 cm), closed

Periodical (in Yiddish): *Albatros: Zhurnal far dem nayem dikhter un kinstler oysdruk* (Albatross: Journal for new poetic and artistic expression). Uri Tsvi Greenberg, ed. Warsaw and Berlin, 1922–1923. Complete in three issues.

All spreads from this issue that include tipped-in plates or letterpress reproductions appear on the following pages.

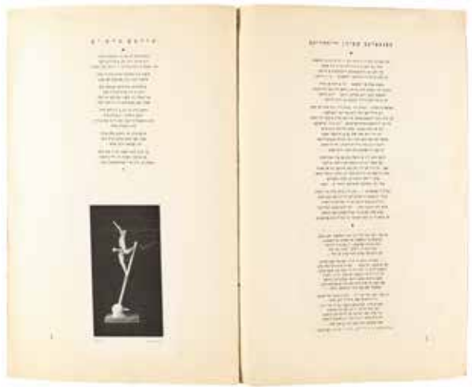


Marek Szwarc Leyb Lozovik



Henryk Berlewi

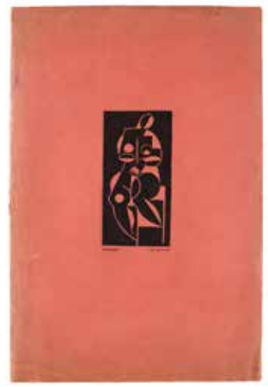
Mark Sterling



Iosif Chaikov

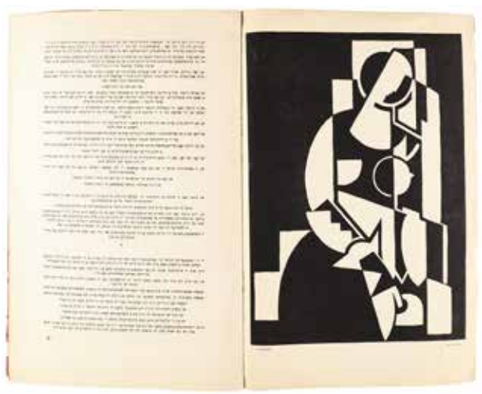
Iosif Chaikov

Yosef Abu Ha-gelili



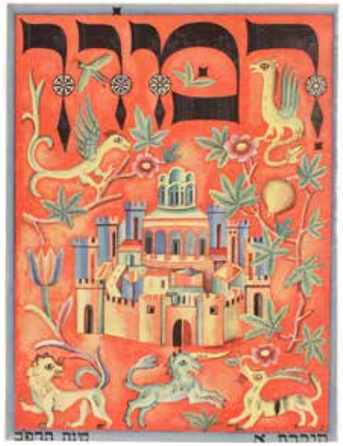
Henryk Berlewi

Issachar Ber Ryback

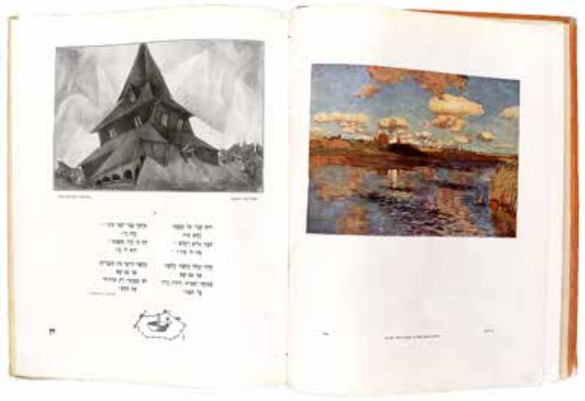


Henryk Berlewi

* Pictured here left to right, but reads right to left.



no. 1 (1922)
Franzisca Baruch and Ernst Böhm



Issachar Ber Ryback

Isaac Levitan

no. 2 (1922)
Franzisca Baruch and Ernst Böhm

Henryk Berlewi

Covers and spreads from the periodical (in Hebrew): *Rimon*
(Pomegranate): A Hebrew Magazine of Art and Letters. Berlin, 1922–1924.
Complete in six issues. Mark Wischnitzer, editor; Rachel Wischnitzer, art editor; with Moshe Kleinman, Baruch Krupnik, rotating eds.
Letterpress and lithograph
12 x 9 3/4" (30.5 x 24.8 cm)

no. 3 (1923)
El Lissitzky

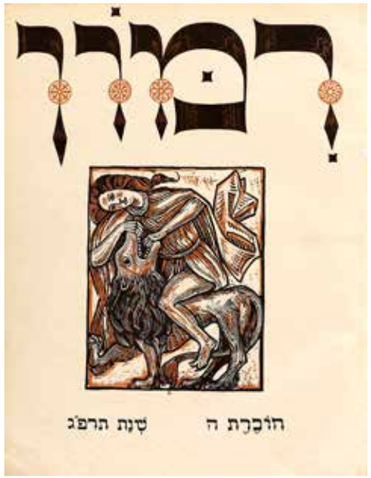
Natan Altman

El Lissitzky

no. 4 (1923)
14c Haggadah (British Museum)

Boris Aronson

* Pictured here left to right, but reads right to left.



no. 5 (1923)
Ernst Böhm

Marc Chagall

no. 6 (1924)
Ernst Böhm after antique gilded glass

Max Band

Ernst Böhm (covers and pages shown here), Rachel Shalit Marcus (title and last page not shown here), and Franzisca Baruch (letter design)
Chaim Nachman Bialik (author), *Ketina kol-bo* (Tom Thumb Anthology)
Berlin-London: Hotsa'at Rimon, 1923
Lithograph (not the luxury edition)
12 3/16 x 9 1/4" (31 x 23.5 cm)

Note: The Rimon publishing house existed between 1922 and 1924. It was founded by Russian Jews living in Berlin: Rachel Wischnitzer (née Bernstein), a pioneer scholar of Jewish art, her husband, Mark Wischnitzer, a historian of Jewish history, and Alexander E. Kogan, a member of the Russian publishing elite and editor-in-chief of the contemporaneous *Zhar ptitsa* (The Firebird). Elija Paenson, a Jewish benefactor, provided the initial funds. In addition to the six volumes of the twin Yiddish/Hebrew journals *Rimon/Milgroym* (Pomegranate), it published a total of seven titles.

ARTISTS

Jankel Adler (Tuszyn, a suburb of Łódz, Kingdom of Poland, then client state of the Russian Empire [now Poland], 1895–Aldbourne, Wilts, Great Britain 1949)

Jakub Adler was born the eighth of twelve children to Elias Adler, shopkeeper, and his wife Hana Laja, née Fiter. Jankel, as he was called by his family, grew up in the world of Hasidic Jewry. He was educated at religious schools in Łódź and then, when his family moved there, in Warsaw. In 1912 he studied engraving and worked as an engraver for his uncle in the Serbian postal service in Belgrade. He attended a Hilger's private school in Barmen (now part of Wuppertal), and also studied drawing. He continued his art studies under Gustav Wiethuchter at the Barmen Kunstgewerbeschule (School of Applied Arts). During the First Word War, he joined the Russian army and was captured by the Germans, but was soon released. In 1918, he became close to the avant-garde artists and thinkers who gathered around Berlin's *Die Aktion* and *Der Sturm*. In 1918 and 1919, Adler lived in Poland, where he became a founding member of the Yung-yidish (Young Yiddish) group of painters and writers [p. 53]. In 1920, he moved to Germany, where he met Marc Chagall in Berlin.

In 1922, Adler settled in Dusseldorf. The same year, he became close to the Dresden-based painted Otto Dix. Adler exhibited two paintings in the Polish section of the important *I. Internationale Kunstausstellung Duesseldorf* (First International Exhibition in Dusseldorf), on view from May 28 to July 3, 1922, and participated in the *Kongress der Union Internationaler Fortschrittlicher Künstler* (The Congress of International Progressive Artists), which was organized to coincide with the exhibition 's opening. Between 1922 and 1933, Adler was an active member of numerous avant-garde artists' groups in Berlin, Cologne, and Dusseldorf, including the Gruppe progressive Künstler, Novembergruppe, Das Junge Rheinland, and Rheinische Sezession.

Adler's achievement was recognized by the city of Dusseldorf, where he received a commission for a series of murals for a planetarium in 1925; was awarded a Gold Medal in 1928; and, after an extended period of travel in Spain and Mallorca in 1929 and 1930, was appointed to teach at the venerable Kunstakademie (Art Academy) in 1931. During the March 1933 Reichstag election campaign, Adler, together with other left-wing artists and intellectuals, published an "urgent appeal" against the policies of the National Socialists and left Germany. Two of his pictures were included in the National Socialist exhibition *Kulturbolschewistische Bilder* (Images of cultural Bolshevism), that took place at the Kunsthalle Mannheim in 1933. Four more would be exhibited in the notorious *Entartete Kunst* (Degenerate Art) exhibition in 1937.

From 1933 to 1940, Adler lived in France. In 1935 he traveled to Warsaw on the occasion of a large monographic exhibition of his work, organized by the Warsaw Committee to Aid Exiles. Over the next two years, Adler traveled in Italy, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, and the Soviet Union, returning to France in 1937. During the "Degenerate Art" campaigns, the Nazis removed twenty-five of Adler's works from public German public collections; a tragic testament to the success and respect he had achieved in Germany.

In 1939, Adler joined the Polish army in France and was evacuated to Scotland with Polish artillery in 1940. In 1941, he was released from the army on medical grounds. He settled in London in 1943 and joined a circle of refugee artists. At the conclusion of the Second World War, Adler learned that many of his relatives died in the Holocaust. He refused to exhibit his works in Germany and ended his days in England.

Jankel Adler
Mädchen und Katze (Young woman and cat), 1924
Drypoint
21 x 16 1/4" (53.3 x 41.3 cm)

Transliteration of Yiddish inscription (printed in reverse):

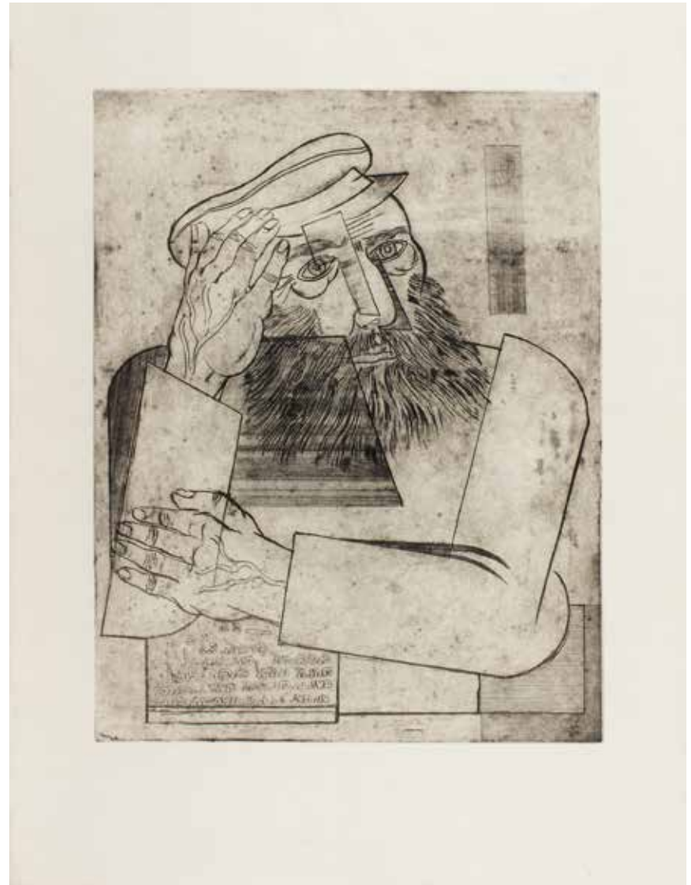
Oy far di zind vos mir leydn,
far di tribe teg, di finstere
veln tsayten kumn—likhtige
mir vartn—lomer zikh.

-P. Sh (initials)

Translation:

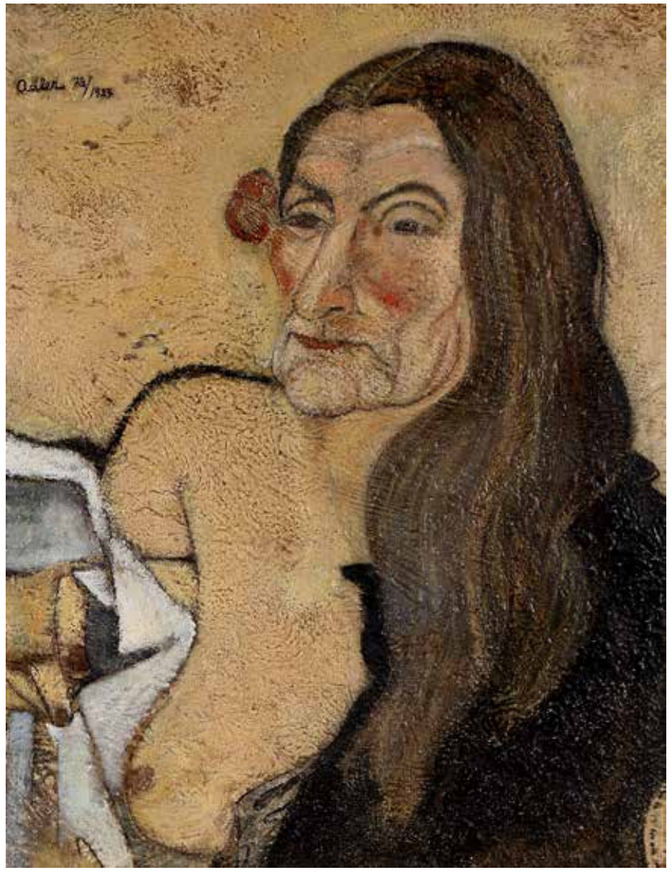
Oh for the sins, for which we suffer,
For the dreary days, the dark ones,
Bright times will come,
Let us wait.

Note: This transliteration reflects the original text, which is written in a non-standardized Yiddish.



Jankel Adler
Bärtige Jude mit Mutze (Bearded jew with hat), c. 1926 (possibly printed later)
Drypoint
21 x 16 1/4" (53.3 x 41.3 cm)

Jankel Adler
Untitled (Old woman in the shtetel), 1925
Oil on board
16 1/2 x 12.4” (42 x 31.5 cm)



Jankel Adler
Untitled (Old gypsy woman), 1927
Oil and mixed media on paper laid on board
20 1/2 x 16 1/8” (52 x 41 cm)

Jankel Adler
Untitled (Woman), 1928
Watercolor, gouache, sand glue, and gesso on cardboard mounted on panel
24 1/4 x 17 7/8” (61.5 x 45.5 cm)

Jankel Adler
Artist, Dusseldorf 1927
Oil and sand on canvas
39 1/2 x 25 1/2" (100.4 x 65 cm)
Currently on loan to the Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge, MA
See plate, p. 77.

"Adler is not a gentle artist," wrote the art historian Louise Straus on the occasion of the artist's major retrospective in Poland in 1935, "he does not make access to his pictures easy."[1] This is certainly true for this large-scale painting, titled in quotation marks on its verso "Artist" (see p. 77). Here is a figure of unsettling proportions: a large head, grotesquely thick neck, block-like hands, and an impossibly slender waist. Dressed in a bowler hat, loose-fitting jacket (or shirt), and belted pants, he bares more flesh than might be expected. The exposure of his body—from torso to hips, including navel—is less sensual than vaguely exhibitionist; it as though the viewer is offered an x-ray of what lies beneath his clothes. Indeed, the body itself is rendered less as flesh than as an anatomical study of muscle, bone, and tendons. Tinged with blue, red, and brown, the brushstrokes describing the musculature rhyme, somewhat perversely, with the stripes of the sitter's jacket. Body and fabric together seem to vibrate with tense, nervous energy. By contrast, the sitter's face appears frozen, almost mask-like; he stares out at the viewer from expressionless eyes with a heavy, joyless intensity.

Alongside the word "Artist," Adler inscribed his name and address "Düsseldorf / Liststr. 26" on the work's verso. Having no reason in this period to use English, we can assume that the Polish-born painter, who had been living and exhibiting in Dusseldorf since 1921, titled the work "Artist," in the German sense.[2] A false friend to the English word, in German "Artist" does not describe a painter or sculptor, but rather a performer, an acrobat, say, or trapeze artist. In 1927, the year this work was painted, Adler, a painter deeply embedded in the avant-garde scene of his time, is said to have seen August Sander's photographic inventory of human "types," *Menschen des 20. Jahrhunderts* (People of the Twentieth Century), displayed at the Kölnischen Kunstverein. Sander's series, which categorizes subjects by profession, included various images of "*Zirkus Artisten*" (Circus Artists), such as **[Fig. 1]**. It is possible that Sander's series prompted Adler to offer his own image of such an "artist" in paint. This would explain the taught musculature, the uninhibited bearing of flesh, and the artifice (the colorful jacket; the hat with flower). If this was Adler's painted answer to Sander, the effort seems to have been anomalous, a one-time experiment. At the Berlin *Juryfreie Kunstschau* of 1927, Adler exhibited eight paintings with either overtly Jewish themes or with generic subjects.[3] Like *Artist*, many of these works evidence the impact of Cubism—shallow pictorial space; collage-like juxtapositions of architectural elements (moldings, doorframes, walls); and materiality (sand; combed paint)—but none represents a general "type," in Sander's sense.

One would imagine that such a large, declarative painting as *Artist*, would have been intended for public display, but evidence of its inclusion in exhibitions in Germany between 1927 and Adler's departure for France in 1933 has yet to emerge.[4] It is equally possible that this painting was not intended for public display. Close observation of Adler's facial features—his heart-shaped face, almond-shaped eyes, pouty mouth, and dimpled chin—as captured in Sander's *Maler* (Jankel Adler) of 1924 **[Fig. 2]**, suggest that the work may be a self-portrait. Even more closely related is a photograph of Adler taken by Sander in 1926 at the MaMuKuBa (Ball der Maler, Musiker und Künstlerfreunde), a fancy dress ball held during Carnival week in Cologne, in which Adler is seen wearing a top hat and thick makeup on one eye **[Fig. 3]**.

If *Artist* has elements of a self-portrait, it would not have been Adler's first or only such image. In a self-portrait of c. 1924 **[Fig. 4]**, he employed a more fractured, Cubist approach, in which the composition is divided into rectilinear planes. Adler's face, volumetrically rendered at right, is intersected at left by one such plane, which seems to enact a kind of x-ray (to again use the metaphor): here essentializing the facial features into a simple contour drawing. The name "Adler" is inscribed in Yiddish at upper right.

In *Artist*, it is possible that we are presented with a doubling, a layering of identity, in which the artist (Künstler) presents himself as the performer (Artist). In other words, that Adler pictured himself in costume, disguised as a performer of some kind, an exhibitionist-type, in any case someone who he was not. Perhaps this is Adler taking license during the one week in February when it was the norm to adopt a masquerade, to shed one's everyday identity and to play at another. Carnival is the week, one might say, in which people were encouraged to defy typologies, to temporarily suspend fixed identity based on criteria such as profession, nationality, class, even gender. It is a week when a painter is no longer a painter; a coal miner no longer a coal miner. In Adler's case, enacting masquerade surely ran deeper. Within his experience, it might even be considered a Leitmotif. To be a foreigner, a Pole, and a Jew, in Germany was to live in a perpetual state of negotiated identity. To fashion himself as a painter, a cosmopolitan, an avant-garde artist was one layer of shedding identity (old-world, foreign) and adopting another (new, international). To add "performer" was to add yet another layer. This painting may even have been an attempt to thematize the operation of play-acting, masquerade, the adoption and shedding of personas. Considered in relation to his exhibited portraits of Rabbis, Hassidic Jews, and other inhabitants of the world he grown up in and abandoned, *Artist* is a painting in which Adler may both represent himself and someone else; in which he both reveals himself (quite literally, in the flesh) and conceals himself (in costume as someone else). It is a work in which Adler seems to address his perpetual state of negotiated identity head-on. As such, it stands out as both exceptional and exemplary in the artist's oeuvre, as his major, defining statement of a Jewish artist reinventing himself within the western European avant-garde.

—Adrian Sudhalter

1. Lou Ernst, Preface (in Polish), *Jankel Adler, retrospektywna wystawa obrazów 1920-1935*, exhibition catalogue (Warsaw: Wystawie Klubu Artystów Polskich, 1935): n.p. [3]. Translated to English in *Jankel Adler* (Cologne: Dumont, 1985), p. 69. Louise Straus, Max Ernst's first wife, wrote under her married name and knew Adler through groups such as Das neue Rheinland.

2. Adler would emigrate to Great Britain in 1940 and could have titled it then, but it is unlikely that he would have inscribed his Dusseldorf address at that time, which appears in the same paint.

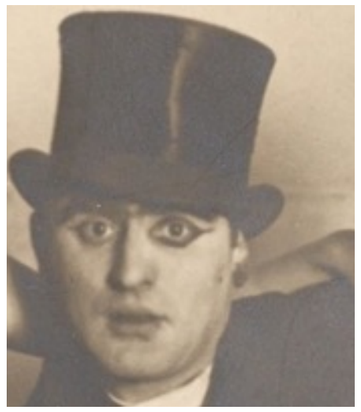
3. He exhibited five Jewish subjects: *Jüde im Bäde* (Bathing Jew), *Jüde mit Buch* (Jew with Book), *Der Chassid* (The Hassidic), *Synagogendiener* (Synagogue Worker), *Jüde mit Hahn* (Jew with Chicken); and four generic ones: *Liegende Frau* (Reclining Woman), *Stilleben* (Still Life), *Die Familie* (The Family).

4. A label on the work's verso with the number "1069" may indicate that it was exhibited. One might expect that the work would have been included in the artist's 1935 retrospective in Warsaw (and Łódź), which covered the years 1920 to 1935 (see footnote 1), but it was not among the works listed in the catalogue.

detail

Fig. 1. August Sander, *Zirkusartistin* (Circus Artist), 1926, printed 1977. The Metropolitan Museum of Art (1979.521.2)

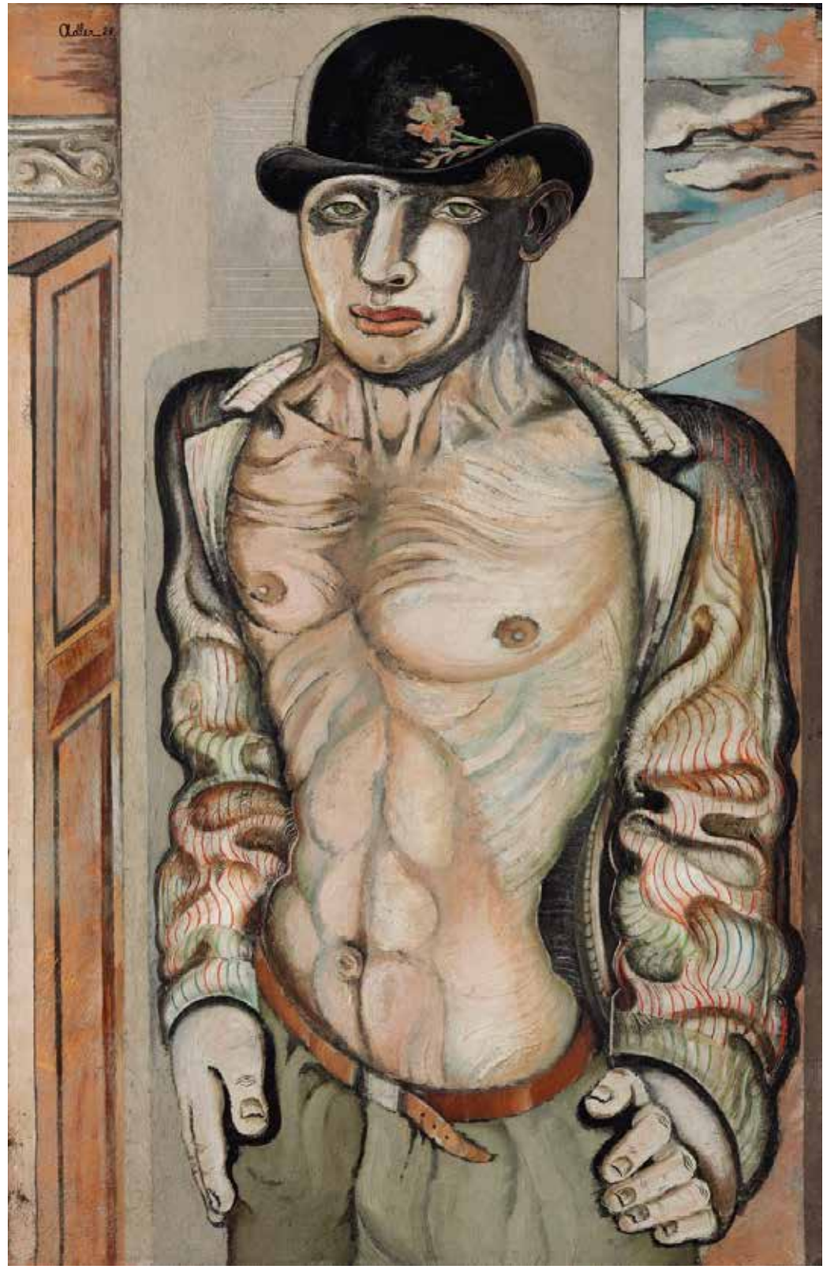
Fig. 2. August Sander, *Maler* (Jankel Adler), 1924. The Museum of Modern Art, New York (472.2015.428).



detail

Fig. 3. August Sander, *MaMuKuBa im Zoo* (Agnes Arntz, Jankel Adler, Frau Grobel, Marta Hegemann, Anton Räderscheidt), 1926. Private collection.

Fig. 4. Jankel Adler, *Selbstbildnis* (Self-Portrait), c. 1924. Oil on canvas on wood, 27 x 22" (68.5 x 56.5 cm). Von der Heydt-Museum, Wuppertal



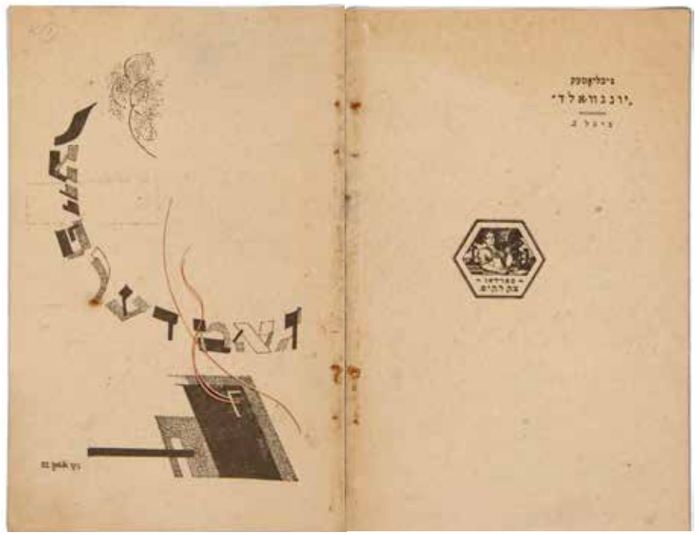
Natan Altman (Vinnytsia [now Ukraine], then Russian Empire, 1889–Leningrad 1970)

Altman studied at Odesa College of Art from 1903 to 1907 and in Paris at the Marie Vassilieff's Académie Russe (1910–1911). He was one of the first Jewish Artists in Russia to turn to folk art. He created his Evreiskaia grafika (Jewish Graphics) series based on the tombstones he copied in Shepitivka in 1913 and contributed to the second edition of the Futurist book *Vzorval'* (Explodity). In 1915, his work was included in the landmark *0,10* exhibition in Petrograd, and he became one of the founders of the Jewish Society for the Encouragement of the Arts. Altman was also one of the pioneers in creating Jewish children's books incorporating elements of avant-garde visual vocabulary, including his illustrations of Fanny Shargorodska's *Alef-Bet* (ABC) in Hebrew in 1916.

Altman was a member of the Art Section of the Kultur-Lige in Moscow. Between 1918 and 1921, he was a member of IZO Narkompros (Visual Art Section of the Commissariat of Education), was involved in the production of its journal, *Iskusstvo kommuny* (Art of the Commune), and taught at SVOMAS (Free Artistic Studios). In 1918, in honor of the first anniversary of the Revolution, he created decorations for Uritskii (Palace) Square in Petrograd. He was commissioned to design the first Soviet postage stamp. Altman was also commissioned to create an official sculptural portrait of Lenin. In 1921, some of his sketches for this project were published in a book *Lenin: Risunki* (Lenin: Drawings). In 1922, Altman was a member of the organizing committee for the landmark *Erste Russische Ausstellung* (First Russian Art Exhibition) in Berlin. At this exhibition, he was represented by almost twenty paintings, sculpture, and works on paper. In 1922, Altman's designs for Moscow's flourishing Jewish theater scene Constructivist sets for GOSET's (The State Jewish Theater) production of Karl Gutzkow's *Uriel Acosta* and HaBima's Hebrew-language production of Solomon An-sky's play *The Dybbuk*. In 1928, Altman accompanied GOSET on its European tour and stayed abroad until 1935.

In the 1920 and 1930s Altman collaborated with a number of publishing houses in Kyiv, Berlin, and Moscow, illustrating books and designing book covers of Jewish authors in both Yiddish and Russian. One of Altman's last works illustrating a Jewish edition was a series of illustrations to the Russian translation of the collection of Sholem-Aleichem's stories that was prepared for publication in 1948 but published only in 1958.

For a publication on the complete holdings of Altman's works in the Merrill C. Berman Collection, see: Alla Rosenfeld, "*Brilliantly Ecclectic": Natan Altman Between Tradition and Modernity, 1910-1935*. Rye: Merrill C. Berman Collection, 2022.

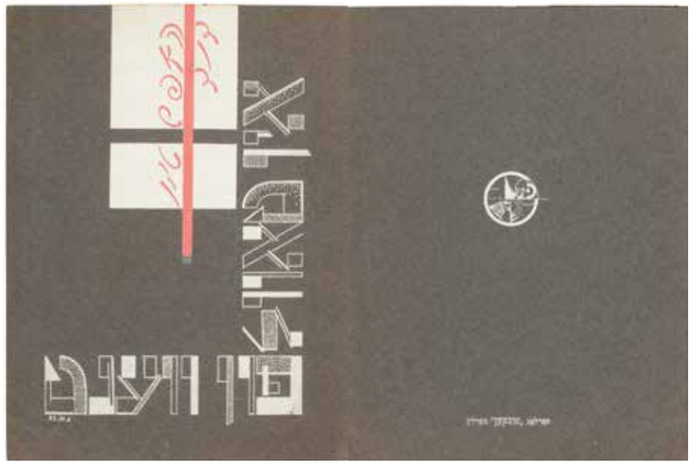


Yehezkiel Dobrushin (author), *Got der fayer* (God the Fire) Moscow: Yungvald, 1922.

Above: Book cover design (in Yiddish) Pencil on paper
8 11/16 x 6 3/8" (22.1 x 16.2 cm)

Below: Book cover (front and back; in Yiddish) Lithograph (32 leaves) 7 1/8 x 4 1/2" (18.1 x 11.4 cm)

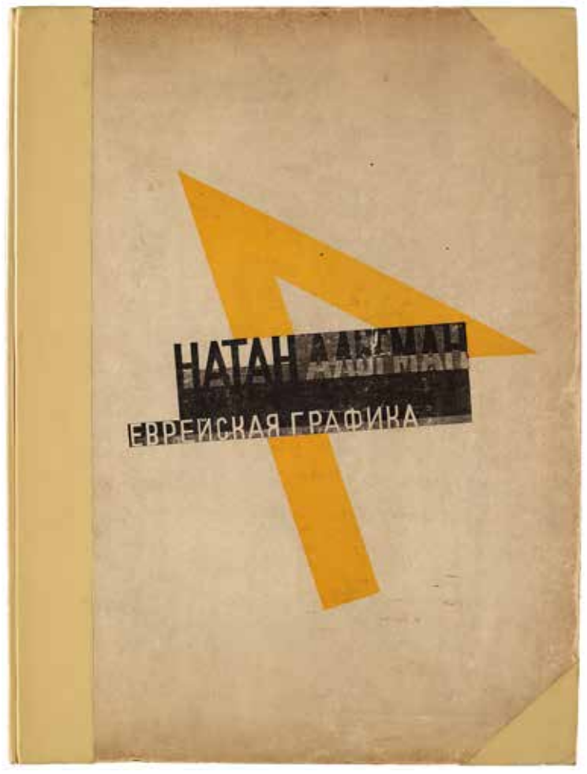
Book cover design (in Yiddish): David Hofshteyn (Hofsteyn; Hofstein; Gofstein) and Arn Kushnirov (Aaron Kushnirov) (authors), *Shtam: Azkore* (Stem: Memorial) Moscow: Farlag “shtrom,” 1922
Pencil, ink, and gouache on paper, mounted on board with glassine
9 3/16 x 6 1/4” (23.3 x 15.9 cm)



David Hofshteyn (author), *In tovl fun vent* (On the Tablet on the Wall). Berlin: Farlag “funken,” 1923

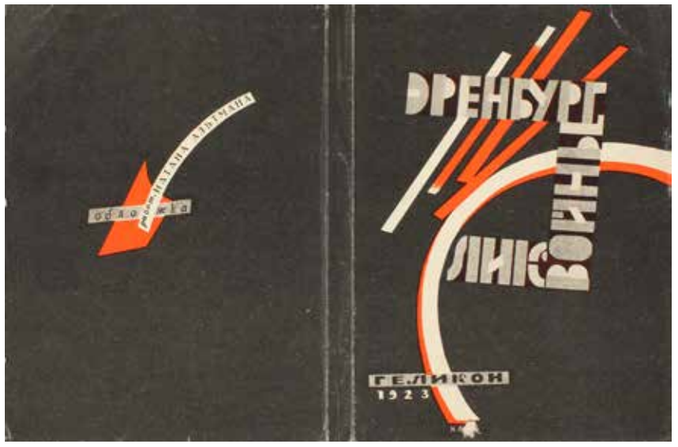
Above: Book cover design (in Yiddish)
Gouache, ink, and cut paper on paper
10 1/8 x 7 7/16” (25.7 x 18.9 cm)

Below: Detached book cover (front and back; in Yiddish)
Lithograph
12 3/8 x 7 3/4” (31.4 x 19.7 cm)



Book cover (in Russian): Max Osborn (author), *Evreiskaia grafika Natana Al'tmana* (The Jewish Graphic Art of Nathan Altman)
Berlin: Petropolis, 1923
Lithograph and letterpress
19 1/8 x 14 1/2" (48.6 x 36.8 cm)
No. 79 of an edition of 250 numbered copies 21 numbered pages; 10 plates.

Note: As reproduced in the book, the plates appear within decorative frames, which have been eliminated here.



Ilya Ehrenburg (author), *Lik voiny* (The Face of War) Berlin: Gelikon, 1923

Above: Book cover (in Russian) Lithograph
7 1/2 x 5 1/2" (19 x 14 cm)

Below: Detached book cover (front and back; in Russian) Letterpress mounted on paper
7 1/2 x 5 1/2" (19 x 14 cm)

Left: Book cover design (in Yiddish) Sholem Aleichem (Aleykhem) (author), *Mayses far Kinder* (Stories for Children)
Moscow: Shul un lebn, 1927
Ink and gouache on paper
9 x 6" (22.9 x 15.2 cm)

Note: The network of Yiddish schools in Poland known as TSYSHO (Central Yiddish School Organization) established a publishing house called Shul un lebn (School and Life). It printed books for teachers and children and, in 1925, united with Kultur-Lige.

Right: Detached book cover (in Russian): Isaac Babel (author), *Istoriia moei golubiatni: Rasskazy* (The Story of My Dovecote: Stories) Moscow-Leningrad: ZIF (Zemlia i fabrika), 1926 or 1927
Letterpress
7 1/2 x 5 3/4" (19 x 14.6 cm)

Film program (in Russian): *Evreiskoe schast'e* (Yidishe glik; Jewish Luck) Aleksandr Granovsky's silent film, with Russian intertitles, based on the writings of Sholem Aleichem. Text by Viktor Shklovsky. Moscow: Kinopechat', 1926
Lithograph and letterpress
11 15/16 x 8 15/16" (30.2 x 22.7 cm)

Film poster (in Russian): *Evreiskoe schast'e* (Yidishe glik; Jewish Luck) Aleksandr Granovsky's silent film with Russian intertitles based on the writings of Sholem Aleichem, [1926]
Lithograph
40 3/4 x 28 15/16" (103.5 x 73.5 cm)

Boris Aronson (Nezhin, Chernigov Province [now Ukraine], then part of the Russian Empire, 1898–New York 1980)

Boris Aronson was one of ten children of Solomon (Shlomo) Aronson (1863–1935), the rabbi of Nezhin, and his wife Dvoira Turovskaia. In 1903, the Aronson family moved to Kyiv, where Aronson had been appointed the city's Grand Rabbi. Until the age of 12, Boris received a traditional Jewish education in the heder (Kheyder, in Yiddish). In 1909, he visited Moscow where he saw the art collections of Sergei Shchukin (1854–1936) and became aware of the latest modern French paintings. Between 1912 and 1916, Aronson attended the Kyiv Art School and took lessons at the private studio of Oleksandr Murashko (1875–1919).

In 1918 Aronson became a founding member of the Kultur–Lige Art Section in Kyiv. That same year he began his studies at the Kyiv workshop of Alexandra Exter (1882–1949) and worked for the government of Kyiv on conceiving and executing decorations and posters for street festivals and pageants. In 1919, together with Issachar Ber Ryback (1897–1935), Aronson published a manifesto on Jewish avant-garde art titled "Di vegn fun der idisher moleray: Rayoynes fun kinstler" (The Path of Jewish Painting: Thoughts of an Artist) in the Kultur-Lige miscellany *Oyfgang* (Dawn).

Aronson acted as manager of the Kultur-Lige's exhibition committee for the *Pervaia evreiskaia khudozhestvennaia vystavka* (First Jewish Art Exhibition) that took place in Kyiv in February and March 1920, to which he also contributed works. Also in 1920, Aronson worked as Exter's assistant, creating the scale models for Aleksandr Tairov's 1921 production of *Romeo and Juliet* at the Kamerny (Chamber) Theatre in Moscow. In 1921 Aronson helped to find objects of Jewish folk art for the collection of the Kultur–Lige's Museum of Jewish Art in Kyiv. He taught at the Kultur-Lige's art studio and helped form the Kultur–Lige's art library.

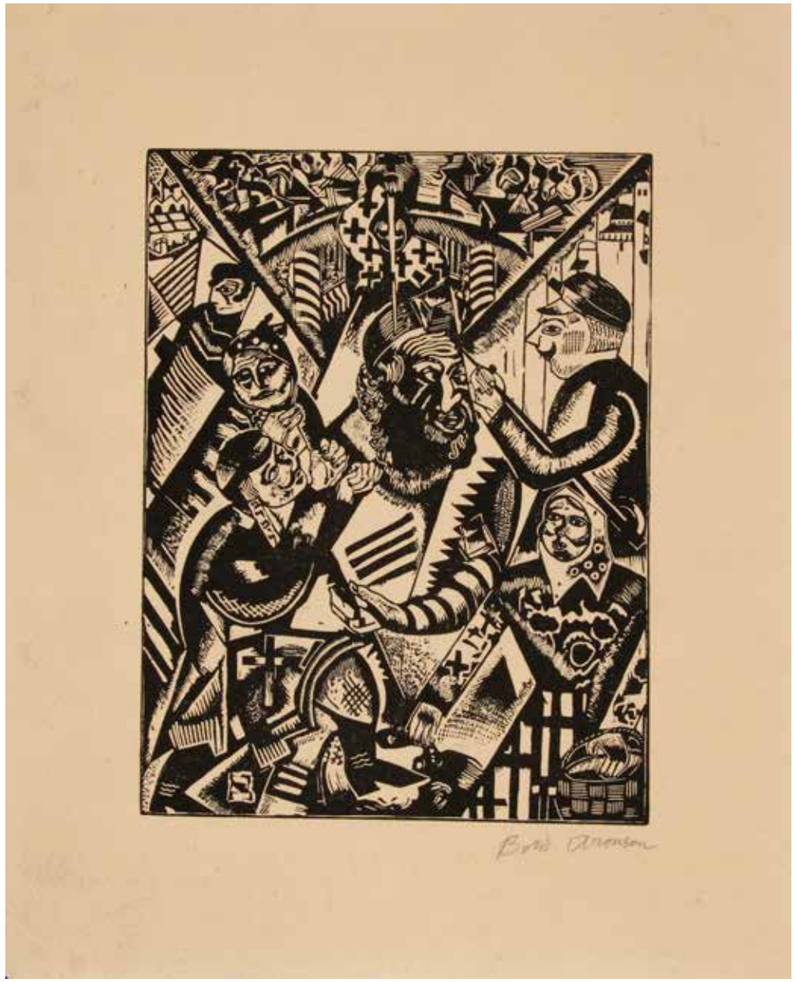
In the Fall of 1921, Aronson moved to Moscow, where he attended classes in VKhUTEMAS (Higher State Artistic and Technical Workshops). In 1922 he traveled to Poland and Germany. While in Berlin, he studied etching under German–Jewish graphic artist Herman Struck (1876–1944) and displayed three woodcuts at the *Erste Russische Kunstausstellung* (First Russian Art Exhibition).

In 1923, Aronson published an early critical study of the work of Marc Chagall and created costume designs for the dances of Baruch Agadati (Boris Kaushansky; 1895–1976), a pioneer of Jewish avant-grade choreography. In 1924, he published in Berlin his book *Sovremennaia evreiskaia grafika* (Modern Jewish Graphics).

For a publication on the complete holdings of Aronson's works in the Merrill C. Berman Collection, see: Alla Rosenfeld, From the *"Pale of Settlement" to Broadway: The Work of Boris Aronson from the 1920s to the Early 1930s*. Rye: Merrill C. Berman Collection, 2022.

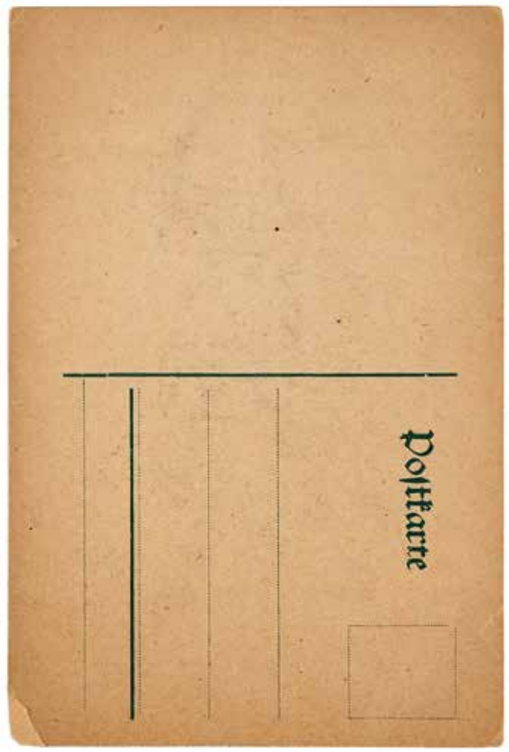
Boris Aronson
Documentary photograph of the print: *Ornamentika k stikham Shneera* (Ornamental decoration for poems by Zalman Shneur [Shneour, 1886–1959]), 1920
Gelatin silver print mounted on board
5 5/8 x 4 1/2" (14.3 x 11.4 cm)

Boris Aronson
Mestechko (A Shtetl), 1920
Woodcut
6 3/4 x 8 1/2" (17.1 x 21.6 cm)

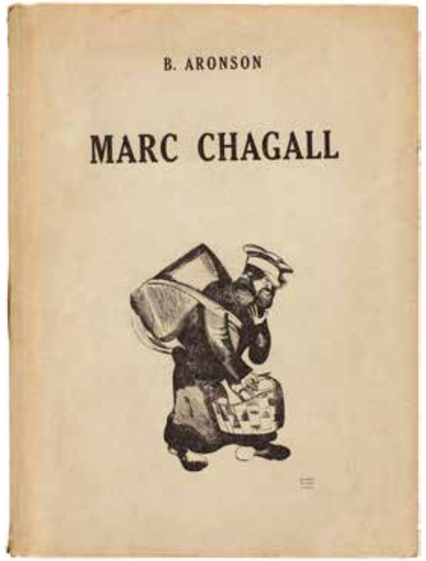


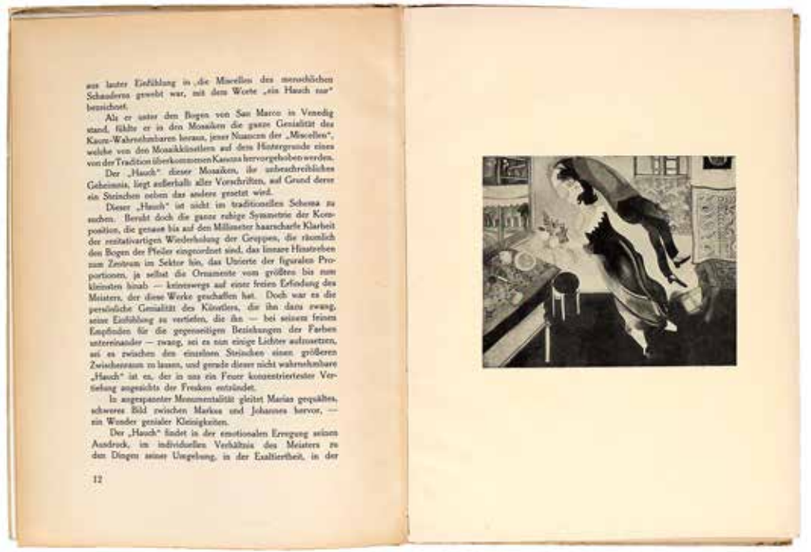
Boris Aronson
Untitled, 1920
Woodcut
10 x 7 7/8" (25.4 x 20 cm)

Boris Aronson
Interieur (Interior), 1921–1922
Woodcut
8 5/8 x 10 1/4" (22.9 x 26 cm)



Boris Aronson
Postcard: Boris Aronson's costume for the dancer Baruch Agadati (pseudonym Boris Kaushansky, 1895–1976), c. 1923
Lithograph
5 7/8 x 4" (15 x 10 cm)




aus lauter Einfühlung in die Mirellen des menschlichen Schauderns gewebt war, mit dem Worte „ein Hauch nur" bezeichnet.

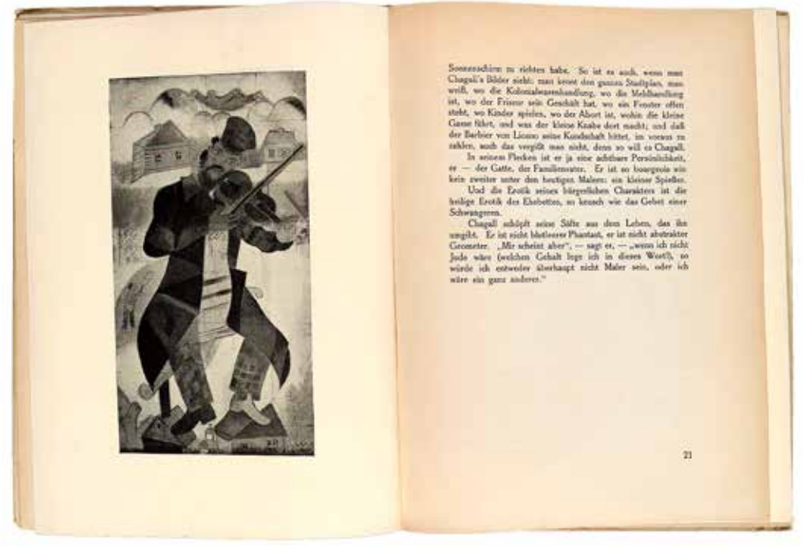
Als er unter den Bogen von San Marco in Venedig stand, fühlte er in den Mosaiken die ganze Genialität des Kaum-Wahrnehmbaren heraus, jener Nuancen der „Mirellen", welche von den Mosaikkünstlern auf dem Hintergrunde eines von der Tradition überkommenen Kanons hervorgehoben werden.

Der „Hauch" dieser Mosaiken, ihr unbeachtbares Geheimnis, liegt außerhalb aller Vorschriften, auf Grund deren ein Strichen neben das andere gesetzt wird.

Dieser „Hauch" ist nicht im traditionellen Schema zu suchen. Beruht doch die ganze ruhige Symmetrie der Komposition, die genaue bis auf den Millimeter haarscharfe Klarheit der reliefartigen Wiederholung der Gruppen, die räumlich den Bogen der Pfeiler eingeordnet sind, das linare Hinstreben zum Zentrum im Sektor hin, das Unterte der figuralen Proportionen, ja selbst die Ornamente vom größten bis zum kleinsten hinab — keineswegs auf einer freien Erfindung des Meisters, der diese Werke geschaffen hat. Doch war es die persönliche Genialität des Künstlers, die ihn dazu zwang, seine Einfühlung zu vertiefen, die ihn — bei seinem feinen Empfinden für die gegenseitigen Beziehungen der Farben untereinander — zwang, sei es nun einige Lichter aufzusetzen, sei es zwischen den einzelnen Strichen einen größeren Zwischenraum zu lassen, und gerade dieser nicht wahrnehmbare „Hauch" ist es, der in uns ein Feuer konzentriertester Verbindung angesichts der Fresken entzündet.

In angepaßter Monumentalität gleitet Marias gequältes, schweres Bild zwischen Markus und Johannes hervor, — ein Wunder genialer Kleinigkeiten.

Der „Hauch" findet in der emotionalen Erregung seinen Ausdruck, im individuellen Verhältnis des Meisters zu den Dingen seiner Umgebung, in der Exaltiertheit, in der



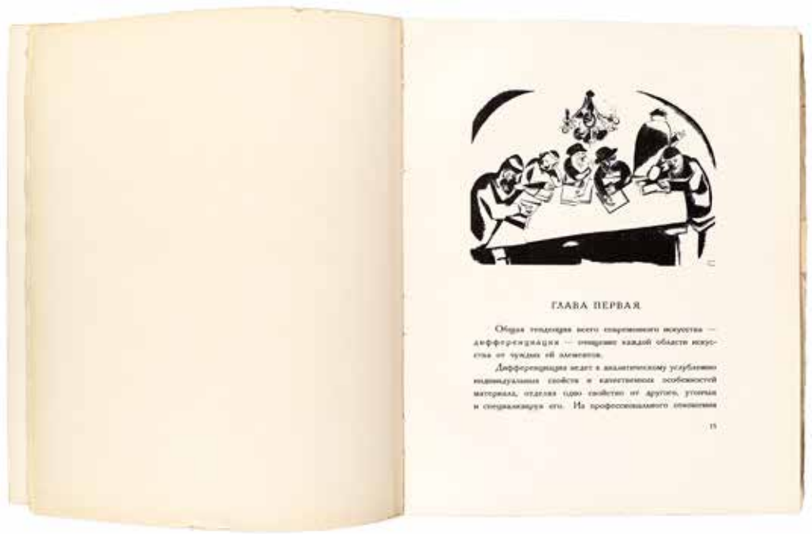
Sonnenschirm zu richten habe. So ist es auch, wenn man Chagall's Bilder sieht: man kennt den ganzen Stadtplan, man weiß, wo die Kolonialwarenhandlung, wo die Metzhandlung ist, wo der Friseur sein Geschäft hat, wo ein Fenster offen steht, wo Kinder spielen, wo der Abort ist, wohin die kleine Gasse führt, und was der kleine Knabe dort macht; und daß der Barbier von Licuzo seine Kundschaft hütet, im voraus zu zahlen, weiß man vergißt man nicht, denn so will es Chagall.

In seinen Flecken ist er ja eine achtbare Persönlichkeit, er — der Gatte, der Familienvater. Er ist so bourgeois wie kein zweiter unter den heutigen Malern: ein kleiner Spießer.

Und die Erotik seines bürgerlichen Charakters ist die heilige Erotik des Ehebettes, so keusch wie das Gebet einer Schwangeren.

Chagall schöpft seine Säfte aus dem Leben, das ihn umgibt. Er ist nicht blutleerer Phantast, er ist nicht abstrakter Geometer. „Mir scheint aber", — sagt er, — „wenn ich nicht Jude wäre (seelischen Gehalt lege ich in dieses Wort!), so würde ich entweder überhaupt nicht Maler sein, oder ich wäre ein ganz anderer."

Boris Aronson
Cover and selected spreads from the book (in German): Boris Aronson (author), *Marc Chagall*
Berlin: Razum- Petropolis-Verlag, 1924 (translated by Reinhold von Walter from the original Russian in 1923)
Lithograph and letterpress
10 x 7 1/2" (25.4 x 19.1 cm), closed



ГЛАВА ПЕРВАЯ

Общая тенденция всего современного искусства — дифференциация — отщепление каждой области искусства от чуждых ей элементов.

Дифференциация ведет к аналитическому углублению индивидуальных свойств и качественных особенностей материала, отделяя одно свойство от другого, уточняя и специализируя его. На профессиональном отношении

15

ГЛАВА ТРЕТЬЯ.

Boris Aronson
Cover and selected spreads from the book (in Russian): Boris Aronson (author),
Sovremennaia evreiskaia grafika (Contemporary Jewish Graphics)
Berlin: Petropolis, 1924
Lithograph
12 7/8 X 10 1/4" (32.7 x 26 cm), closed

Henryk Berlewi (Warsaw 1894–Paris 1967)

From 1906 to 1909 Berlewi studied at the School of Fine Arts in Warsaw. In 1909 and 1910 he continued his studies at the School of Fine Arts in Antwerp, Belgium, and then went to the Ecole des Beaux–Arts in Paris in 1911. He returned to Warsaw in 1913, and for the next three years he attended Warsaw School of Drawing where he studied under the direction of Jan Kazimierz Kauzik (1860–1930). Berlewi would later stress the decisive role of "Formism" in his works—an umbrella term embracing the Futurists, Cubists, and Expressionists in Poland. In 1919, Berlewi was one of the organizers of the *First Exhibition of Jewish Painting and Sculpture* in Białystok. The exhibition, sponsored by the Art section of the Kultur-Lige, included works by members of the Yung-yidish (Young Yiddish) group and artists from Warsaw who gathered around Berlewi. Throughout the 1920s, the leading Yiddish Expressionists and Futurist poets of the Khalyastre (Yid., "The Gang") group sought out Berlewi's designs for their verse.

In 1920 and 1921, Berlewi designed posters and sets for the Vilna Troupe's Warsaw productions of *Uriel Akosta* and *The Dybbuk*. In 1921, Berlewi met Lissitzky and under his influence made the shift from Chagall-inspired symbolism to non-representational design. During his stay in Berlin from 1921 to 1923, Berlewi actively participated in local avant-garde exhibitions and publications, exhibiting in the Novembergruppe section of at the landmark *Grosse Berliner Kunstausstellung* (Great Berlin Art Exhibition) alongside Lissitzky, Moholy-Nagy, and others in 1923. In 1922, together with Jankel Adler, Berlewi represented Jewish artists from Eastern Europe at the Congress of the International Union of Progressive Artists in Dusseldorf. He designed the third and final issue of the literary–artistic journal *Albatros*, vol. 3–4, published in Berlin in 1923 [p. 55–57].

Berlewi returned to Warsaw in 1923 and co-founded the Constructivist group Blok with Władysław Strzemiński and Katarzyna Kobro. In an effort to underscore correlations between art and machine, he presented his *1a Wystawa Prac Mechano = Fakturowych* (First Exhibition of Mechano-Facture Works) at the Austro-Daimler Salon in Warsaw in March 1924. The same month, his manifesto on Mechano-Facture was published in Polish and one of the works was reproduced in the first issue of the journal *Blok*. In July 1924, Berlewi presented his Mechano-Facture works at a one-man exhibition at Galerie Der Sturm and published a German translation of his treatise in the journal *Der Sturm* in September 1924.

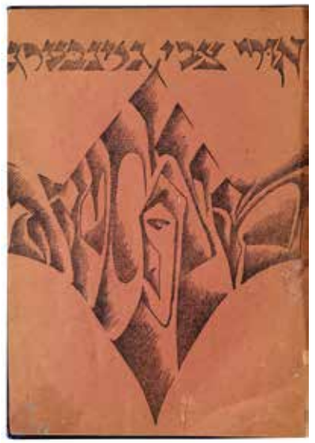
In 1924, Berlewi also founded Reklama-Mechano, an advertising company, which introduced new typography and functional print into trade advertisements. He continued to illustrate Jewish books, creating cover designs for, among others, *Mi–ma'amakim* (Out of the Depths), a bilingual (Hebrew-Yiddish) volume of 1924; Gabriel Talpir's long poem entitled *Legion* of 1925; and a periodical devoted to the Jewish theater in 1927.

In 1928, Berlewi left Warsaw to settle permanently in France. In 1942, he left Paris to take refuge in Nice, where he joined the Resistance between 1943 and 1944. In 1957, Berlewi was included in an exhibition dedicated to *Précurseurs de l'art abstrait en Pologne* (Precursors of Abstract Art in Poland) organized by the poet Julian Przyboś at the Galerie Denise René, Paris, an event that led to the rediscovery and newfound appreciation of his work in the context of Op Art in the 1960s.

For a publication on the complete holdings of Berlewi's works in the Merrill C. Berman Collection, see: Alla Rosenfeld, *Hendryk Berlewi (1894–1967)*. Rye: Merrill C. Berman Collection, 2019.

Henryk Berlewi
Cover of the book (in Hebrew): Gabriel Talpir (author), *Ligyon, po'emah* (Legion, Long Poem).
Warsaw: Peratsim, 1925
10 7/8 x 8 3/8" (27.6 x 21.3 cm), closed

Note: In addition to being a poet, Ganriel Talpir (1901–1990) was an art critic, and, in 1932, founding editor of *Gazit*, an art periodical in Hebrew devoted to the plastic arts.



Cover of *Mefisto*: Chaim Wolf Weintraub

Title page: Uri Tsvi Greenberg
Portrait of Greenberg: Henryk Berlewi

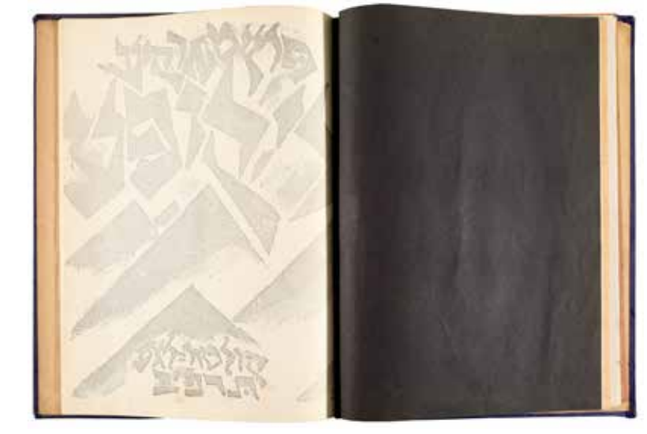
Two volumes in a single binding:

Left, book (in Yiddish): Uri Tsvi Greenberg (author), *Mefisto* (Mephisto), Warsaw: Literatur fand [Funduszu Literacklego], by the Association of of Jewish Writers and Journalists in Warsaw, 1922.

Right, book (in Yiddish), Peretz Markish, *Di kupe* (The Heap), Warsaw: Kultur-Lige, 1921.

Both: lithograph 12 1/4 x 9" (31 x 23 cm), closed

Cover of *Di kupe*: Henryk Berlewi



* Pictured here left to right, but reads right to left.

Marc Chagall (Vitebsk [now Vitsyebsk, Belarus], then Russian Empire, 1887–Saint-Paul-de-Vence, France 1985)

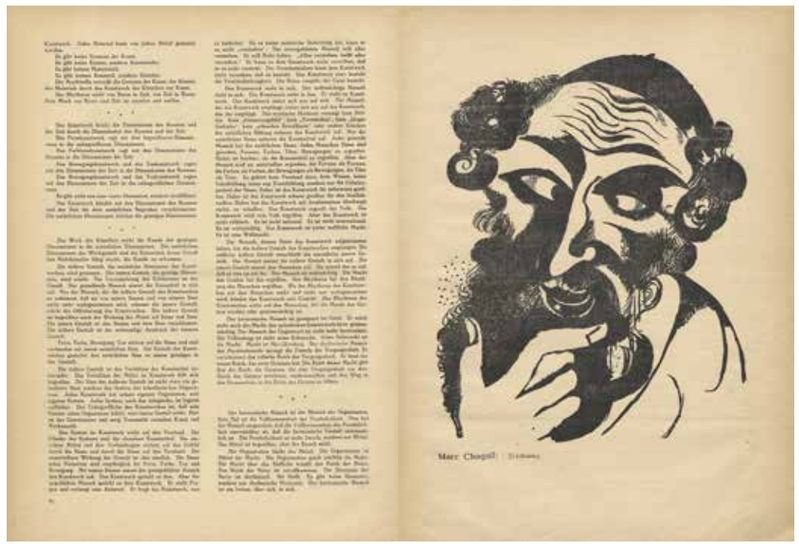
Marc Chagall (born Moyshe Shagal) was the eldest of nine children. In the 1890s he received a traditional Jewish education in the heder (Kheyder, in Yiddish), studying Hebrew biblical texts, and sang in a synagogue. At age eleven he entered the local Russian high school. He began his artistic training in 1906 under Yehudah Pen (1854–1937) at the Vitebsk School of Drawing and Painting. In 1907 Chagall went to St. Petersburg and attended the Imperial Drawing School for the Encouragement of the Arts. From 1908 to 1909, he continued his studies in St. Petersburg at the Elizaveta Zvantseva School of Art, under the important *Mir iskusstva* (World of Art) group members Léon Bakst (1866–1924) and Mstislav Dobuzhinsky (1875–1957).

Between 1910 and 1914, Chagall lived in Paris, eagerly absorbing modern European artistic trends. When he arrived in Paris in 1910, he became close friends with the Russian art critic Yakov Tugendhold (1883–1928), who lived in the French capital between 1905 and 1913. Tugendhold provided important contacts for Chagall in Paris and was one of the first to write about him. During the winter of 1912, Chagall settled in at La Ruche (The Beehive), a complex of more than a hundred artists' studios. He attended the Académie de La Palette and frequented the Académie de la Grande Chaumière. In 1912–13 he exhibited at the Paris Salon des Indépendants. French poet and art critic Guillaume Apollinaire (1880–1918) introduced Chagall to Herwarth Walden (1878–1941), founder of the Berlin's Galerie Der Sturm and the leading force in promoting German Expressionism and the international avant-garde. Walden organized Chagall's first comprehensive one-man show in Der Sturm in 1914, including some 240 works. At the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, Chagall returned to Russia, where he remained for eight years. During this period, his home city of Vitebsk became a favorite subject for the artist.

In 1915, Chagall moved to Petrograd, where he began to work for the Military Industrial Committee. In 1916 he became a member of the Jewish Society for the Encouragement of the Arts and in 1917 he returned to Vitebsk. Anatoly Lunacharsky (1875–1933), People's Commissar for Education, who knew Chagall from Paris, invited him to establish Vitebsk People's Art School. Appointed Commissar of Art and Culture in Vitebsk in 1918, Chagall invited major Russian avant-garde artists, including Kazimir Malevich (1879–1935) and El Lissitzky (1890–1941), to teach at his school. He also established an art museum, and designed the stage sets for all ten productions of the TeRevSat (Theater of Revolutionary Satire).

When Malevich joined the school in November 1919, promoting the non–objective, radical art of Suprematism, Chagall lost students to him. In the summer of 1920, Chagall moved to Moscow. The art critic Abram Efros (1888–1954), who began writing about Chagall as early as in 1915, brought the artist to the newly created GOSET (State Jewish Theater) in Moscow, of which Efros was one of the founders. Chagall painted murals for this theater and created stage designs for both important Jewish theaters—GOSET and the HaBima. Between 1920 and 1922, the artist actively participated in Jewish art life as a member of the Kultur-Lige Art Section. He designed the cover of the Kultur-Lige's magazine *Shtrom* (Stream), published in Moscow in 1922–1924. He also taught art and Yiddish literature at a Jewish orphanage in Malakhovka, near Moscow. In 1922, Chagall exhibited together with Natan Altman (1889–1970) and David Shterenberg (1881–1948) in Moscow. That same year he left Russia and took part in the *Erste Russische Ausstellung* (First Russian Art Show), exhibiting three paintings, at the Van Diemen Gallery in Berlin.

From 1923, Chagall lived in France and was prominent in the French art establishment, yet he also kept contacts with the Jewish cultural world. In 1931, he advised on the establishment of the Jewish Art Museum in Tel Aviv. He also spent almost three months in Palestine, visiting kibbutzim. In 1937, he was able to secure French citizenship. Fearing persecution from the Nazis when they invaded France in 1941, Chagall moved to the United States where he lived for seven years. In 1948, he returned to France and worked in theater, book illustrations, stained-glass windows, and painting. After 1950, the artist devoted himself primarily to large-scale mural painting and work as a graphic artist.



Der Sturm, 8 Jg., Heft 2 (Berlin, Mai 1917), repr. p. [21]
Universitätsbibliothek Heidelberg

Marc Chagall
Untitled (Native of Vitebsk), c. 1917
Lithograph
12 1/2 x 9 3/8" (41.6 x 23.8 cm)

Note: This print, possibly published by Der Sturm around the same time that the work was reproduced in the journal *Der Sturm*, reproduces Chagall's drawing *L'homme à la barbre* of c. 1913, today in the collection of the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris.

Iosif Chaikov (Kyiv 1888–Moscow [1979])

In the late 1910s and early 1920s Iosif Chaikov offered radical interpretations of Impressionism, Cubism, and Futurism. He was especially known for his experimental sculpture and for his illustrations in Yiddish books and journals.

Until 1908, Chaikov lived in Pinsk with the family of his grandfather, a *sofer* (sopher) or a scribe of Jewish religious texts. In 1908, Chaikov served as an apprentice in an engraving workshop in Kyiv. In 1910, with the help of the Jewish sculptor Naum Aronson (1872–1943), who was born in Kreslavka, Vitebsk province (today Kreslava, Latvia), but who settled in Paris in 1891, Chaikov was awarded a fellowship to study in Paris. Between 1910 and 1912, he studied with Aronson and at the École des Arts Décoratifs (School of Decorative Arts). In 1912 and 1913, Chaikov continued his studies at the Ecole des Beaux–Arts in Paris. In 1912, Chaikov became a founding member of the Parisian group Mahmadim (Precious, or The Praised One), which was united around the visual art periodical of the same name. In 1913, he exhibited his sculpture at the Salon d'Automne in Paris. During World War I, Chaikov was mobilized to the Russian-German front, but later returned to Kyiv. After the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, he participated in the decoration of Soviet revolutionary holidays, creating propaganda posters and decorating agit-trains. He played an active role in the execution of Lenin's Plan for Monumental Propaganda in Ukraine, creating monuments to Karl Marx and to the German socialist Karl Liebknecht in Kyiv in 1919–1922.

In 1918, Chaikov was one of the founders of the Kultur-Lige Art Section in Kyiv. He illustrated Yiddish books and taught sculpture at the Jewish Art School of Kultur-Lige. In 1918 and 1919, he headed Children's Art studio. Chaikov exhibited at the *First Jewish Art Exhibition of Sculpture, Graphics and Drawings* (Moscow 1918); *Kultur-Lige* (Kiev 1924); and the *Exhibition of Painting and Sculpture by Jewish Artists* (Moscow 1917 and 1922). In 1921, Chaikov published a short, Yiddish-language essay on *Skulptur* (sculpture) as part of the *Kleyne bibliyotek* series (Kyiv: Melukhe farlag, 1921), in which he discussed the place of the medium in the new Jewish art (the essay was subsequently published in *Khalyastre*, no. 1 [1922]: 50–52). He also voiced his ideas on modern art in the Yiddish collection, *Kunstring almanakh* (Kharkiv, 1920[?]), co-authored with El Lissitzky and Marc Chagall. The literary miscellany *Evreiskii literaturnyi sbornik* (Kyiv, 1923) with Chaikov's illustrations, and the two issues of *Baginen* (Beginning; Kyiv, 1919), played a major role in the promotion of the Jewish modernist Renaissance.

In 1922–1923 the artist lived in Berlin, where he took part in the *Erste Russische Kunstausstellung* (First Exhibition of Russian Art) of 1922, with four book illustrations, and exhibited in the Novembergruppe section *Grosse Berliner Kunstausstellung* of 1923 (for an example of a work of this period, **[Fig. 11]**. Chaikov's exposure to the German art scene, including Neue Sachlichkeit, left a formative influence on his artistic development, veering the artist towards the more reductive style of his later industrial and sports figures.

Between 1920 and 1930, Chaikov taught sculpture at VKhUTEMAS (Higher State Artistic and Technical Workshops)/VKhUTEIN (Higher State Art–Technical Institute), and was appointed dean of the sculpture department. He had a one-man show in the 1924 *First Discussional Exhibition of the Association of Active Revolutionary Art*, organized by VKhUTEMAS in Moscow. Chaikov became a member of ORS (Obshchestvo russkikh skul'ptorov; the Association of Russian Sculptors) in 1925, an active participant in its exhibitions from 1926 to 1931, and, from 1929, the organization's president. In 1926 he became a member of the Moscow artistic association The Four Arts.

In the late 1920s, Chaikov returned to Realism and soon became a champion of the Soviet monumental style. Beginning in 1928–1929, sports themes became paramount in Chaikov's work. Embraced as an official representative of the Soviet Russia, Chaikov was among the sculptors who designed bas reliefs for the Soviet pavilion at the 1937 *Exposition Internationale des Arts et Techniques dans la Vie Moderne* (International Art and Technology Exhibition in Modern Life) in Paris. He designed the USSR Coat of Arms for the façade of the Soviet pavilion at the 1939 New York World's Fair. His large sculptural group *Futbolisty* (Soccer Players) was exhibited in the Soviet pavilion and then graced the main entrance of the State Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow for many years.

Iosif Chaikov
Cover of sheet music (in Yiddish): Y. L. Peretz and Moshe Milner (composers),
Vokal-syuite: *Tsen kinder lider far shtime mit pyano* (Vocal suite: Ten children's songs for voice with piano)
Kyiv: Kultur-Lige, melukhe farlag, 1921.
Lithograph
13 1/2 x 10 1/2" (34.3 x 26.7 cm)

Mark Epshtein (Bobruisk, Minsk Province [now Belarus], then Russian Empire, 1899–Moscow 1949)

Born into a Jewish tailor's family, Mark Epshtein received a traditional Jewish education in the Kyiv heder (Kheyder, in Yiddish). From 1911 to 1918, at the age of twelve, he studied sculpture at the Kyiv Art School under the Ukrainian sculptor Fedir Balavenskyi (1864–1943). Epshtein also attended classes in the private studio of the avant-garde artist Alexandra Exter (1882–1949).

In 1917, Epshtein became a member of the administration of the Kyiv branch of the Jewish Society for the Encouragement of the Arts. In 1918, he took part in the Exhibition of Paintings and Sculpture by Jewish Artists in Moscow, and in the summer of that same year he was also one of the founders of the Kultur-Lige's Art section in Kyiv, as well as of the Jewish Art Museum. He was among the organizers and participants of the Kultur-Lige Art section's exhibitions of 1920 and in 1922 in Kyiv, and was appointed Head of the Art section in 1923 **[Fig. 15]**.

In the 1920s, in cooperation with the Kultur-Lige, Epshtein designed the series cover for the "School Library" (books in Yiddish for high school students), as well as a cover designs for the children's journal *Freyd* (Joy; 1922–25). He developed designs in the Hebrew alphabet for Jewish newspapers in Kyiv and illustrated many books by Jewish Soviet writers and poets including Ezra Finiberg's *Poems* (1924), Eliah Spivak's *Play and Work* (1925), David Bergelson's *The Rebel (*1927), and Sholem Aleichem's *Moshkele the Criminal* (1927).

In 1925, Epshtein became a member of the Association of Modern Ukrainian Artists and took part in its exhibitions. From 1919 to 1931, he taught at the Kultur-Lige's Jewish Art School (later renamed the Jewish Art and Trades School) and, from 1923 to 1931, acted as the school's director. He was also a prolific theater designer, executing stage designs for a variety of plays in the Ukrainian branch of the GOSET (State Jewish Theater) in Kharkiv, and the Kunst–vinkl Theater in Kyiv. In 1932, the artist moved to Moscow, where until 1937 he headed a landscape architectural brigade. He was also a Consultant for IZOGIZ (State Publishing House of Fine Art) and headed the consulting board of the Jewish drama studio at the Communist Workers' Club.

Mark Epshtein
Cover and table of contents of the journal (in Yiddish): *Freyd: Zhurnal far kinder* (Joy: journal for children), no. 1 (Kyiv; November 1922).
Lithograph
10 7/8 x 8 1/2" (27.6 x 21.6 cm)

Note: This monthly journal was published by the Kultur-lige in Kyiv from 1922 to 1925; editorial collective.

Freyd was primarily intended to carry out educational and propaganda work among Jewish children aged twelve to fourteen, but it also contained materials for younger children.

The journal included poems, short stories, and fairy tales by popular European children's poets and writers, including translations of literary works by Jack London and H.G. Wells. It also focused on the life and work of leading ideologists of the Communist movement such as Vladimir Lenin, Karl Marx, Karl Liebknecht, and Rosa Luxemburg. For this reason, *Freyd* enjoyed state support in the form of financial assistance from the People's Commissar of Education of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic.

Despite its modest circulation, *Freyd* was so popular that its subscribers included children from republics of the Soviet Union beyond Ukraine.

El Lissitzky (Pochinok, Yelnya district, Smolensk Province, Russian Empire [now Smolensk region, Russia] 1890–Moscow 1941)

The artist's mother, Sarah Leibovna Lissitzkaia, strictly adhered to Jewish religious traditions. His father, Mark (Mordukh) Zalmanov Lissitzky (1863–1948), a tradesman, was an educated man who knew several languages and translated poetry from German, Hebrew, and Yiddish, and it was he who inculcated in his children a taste for literature and art. In 1899, Lissitzky moved in with his Jewish orthodox grandparents in Smolensk, where he enrolled in the Municipal Grammar School No. 1. In 1903, while staying with his parents in Vitebsk, he visited the studio of Yehudah Pen (1854–1937).

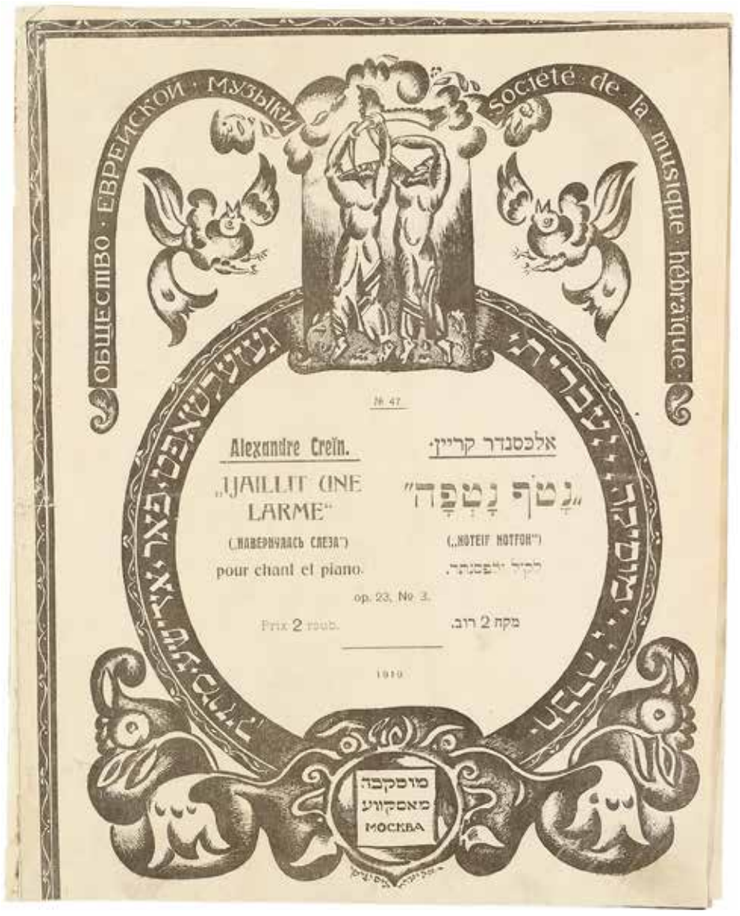
In 1909, after failing to be accepted to the St. Petersburg Academy of Fine Arts, he went to Germany and enrolled in the Darmstadt Technische Hochschule (Polytechnic Institute), where he studied engineering and architecture for five years. In 1911, Lissitzky sketched various Jewish monuments in Germany, including the interior of the eleventh century synagogue at Worms. In winter of 1912, he traveled to Paris and Belgium, visiting museums and artists' studios. In March and October of that year Lissitzky visited Russia, where he met various artists and poets who championed avant-garde trends. In 1913, he undertook a tour of Italy and created drawings of architectural monuments. In 1915, he lived in Moscow and participated in exhibitions. Lissitzky attended the Riga Politechnic Institute from 1915 to 1917, resuming his engineering and architecture studies. In 1916, he worked in the Moscow architectural office of Boris Velikovsky (1878–1937) and served as assistant to the architect Roman Klein (1858–1924). In 1916, together with fellow Jewish artist Issachar Ber Ryback (1887–1935), Lissitzky participated in an ethnographic expedition to explore the synagogues along the Dnieper River. He also produced his first cover design, for *Solntse na izlete* (Spent Sun), a book of poems by Konstantin Bolshakov.

In 1918 and 1919, he was a member of the Art Section of the Kultur-Lige in Kyiv, and between 1917 and 1923, he illustrated Yiddish and Hebrew books for various publishing houses in Kyiv and Petrograd. Among the most notable were *Sikhes khulin*: *A Prager legende* (Small Talk, A Legend of Prague) of 1917 by Moyshe Broderzon and *Had Gadya* (One Little Goat) of 1919 **[Fig. 19]**. In April 1919, Lissitzky published his earliest known article in Yiddish, "Proletaryat un kunst" (Proletariat and Art) in the *Folkstsaytung* (People's Paper) of Kyiv. In May 1919, at Chagall's invitation, he moved to Vitebsk where he taught architecture at the Vitebsk People's Art School. He became an adherent of Kazimir Malevich's Suprematism, joined the UNOVIS (Affirmers of the New Art) group, and developed his Prouns (a neologism for Projects for the Affirmation of the New). In 1920 and 1921, he exhibited at UNOVIS exhibitions in Vitebsk and Moscow and designed propaganda posters. In 1921, he became a member of the Moscow INKhUK (Institute of Artistic Culture) and, in 1922, he adopted the nickname "El," a short form of his Hebrew name, Eliezer.

Between 1921 and 1925, Lissitzky lived in Berlin, where he published such typographical milestones as *Suprematist Tale of Two Squares in Six Constructions* (1922) and Mayakovsky's *For the Voice* (1923) and became a central force in the postwar avant-garde. In 1922, he participated in the landmark *Erste Russische Ausstellung* (First Russian Art Show) at Berlin's Van Diemen Gallery, for which he also designed the catalogue cover. The same year, together with Ilya Ehrenburg, published the influential, tri-lingual journal *Veshch–Objet–Gegenstand*. He collaborated extensively with leader members of the avant-garde such as Kurt Schwitters and, in 1925, published the synthetic volume *Die Kunstismen / Les Ismes de l'Art / The Isms of Art* with Hans (Jean) Arp.

After his return to the Soviet Union in 1925, he lectured at the VKhUTEMAS/VKhUTEIN (1925–1930) and designed various Soviet displays and pavilions at international exhibitions (1927–1930), including, most notably, the Soviet pavilion at the *International Press Exhibition* (*Pressa*) in Cologne in 1928. In 1932, he published an article "On the Mogilev Shul: Recollections" in the journals *Rimon* (Hebrew) and Milgroym (Yiddish). His later work included the design of various journals, including *SSSR na stroike* (USSR in Construction), and a catalogue (in English) for the Soviet Pavillion of the 1939 New York World's Fair, published with Moscow's Scientific Publishing Institute of Pictorial Studies. Lissitzky died of tuberculosis at age fifty-one.

For a publication on the complete holdings of El Lissitzky's works in the Merrill C. Berman Collection, see: Adrian Sudhalter, *El Lissitzky*. Rye: Merrill C. Berman Collection, 2018.



El Lissitzky
Cover design for sheet music series (in French, Russian, Yiddish, and Hebrew) of the *Société de la musique hébraïque* (Society of Jewish Music),
This example. no. 47: *Ijaillit une Larme / Noteif Notfoh* (Natof natfah [Hebrew]; A Tear Welled Up) by Alexandre Creïn (Alexander Kreyn)
Moscow: Obshchestvo evreiskoi muzyki, 1919
Sheet music, two folded sheets (four pages)
12 1/8 x 9 5/8" (32 x 25 cm)


ВИТРІОНЪ

ТЕМЪ: окошко въ стѣнку. Только дырка совсѣмъ — большая, съ голову. Бѣловъ пробовалъ печку ставить. То есть печку ему обѣщала перетуп-петь Марья Ивановна — полотеркина, изъ Госснаба — ей большую партійную поставили. Обѣщала за двадцать копѣекъ. А послѣ обѣдала Бѣлову Доберъ — вѣрный человѣкъ. Должность бѣсъ Бѣловъ только желаетъ культурить: трубы дымятъ, нѣтъ трубами норъ, рабочій — одно мускуловъ, главное привлечь къ мускулу — протягивать духу середину. Середина, конечно, средній, не въ томъ суть. Подпись соотвѣтствующая:

„НЕСИТЕ КАРТОФЕЛЬ".

Бѣловъ старался — печка. Но вмѣсто трубъ — палочки, вмѣсто мускуловъ — размарѣвшія занятія. Подпись сама: Идолъ и тотъ не проститъ. Бѣловъ же, скорѣй всего, только предчувствовалъ. Не будетъ картошки. Но и печки не будетъ. А дырку одну пробилъ. Все равно — сѣчку больше. Порой

9

АКЦІОНЕРНОЕ ОБЩЕСТВО
„МЕРКЮРЪ ДЭ РЮССИ"

ЧАСТЬ ПЕРВАЯ

1

СНАЧАЛА — вечеръ. Сирая рѣдкая трава. Мечеть — пыль, звонъ — гвоздь. Все — само собой. Пригодно для людей, не забудей, но исторгнетъ воспоминаній. Хоть бы курганчика какого, хоть бы баббаки, хоть бы надежды найдешь прошлаго барина — вечеръ. На сверхъ — далеко двинешься въ чемъ, въ снѣгъ Санктъ-Петербургъ. Даже бородавки на подбородкахъ благополучно и тѣ изъ деревянаго граната. На югъ — Гурзуфъ, мухи, карантинъ, турецкія бородавки, лежа на веранде, читаетъ газету „Петербургъ", романъ. 33 печатныхъ листа. Есть еще востокъ и западъ — Империя. Здѣсь просто — Хальмеръ, яма и плавающая земля. Какъ тихаль — баранъ и тотъ до яйцеръ не ходилъ.

2

Въ Петербургѣ, въ Гурзуфѣ — часы, отрывные, настольные, карманные календари, годы, эры. Въ

ВЪ „Комитетѣ помощи жертвамъ погромовъ" счета и смѣты. Сколько?
Въ Фастовѣ 5 погромовъ
Въ Бѣлой Церкви 3
Въ Жмеринкѣ 3
Въ Елисаветградѣ 4
Въ Житомірѣ 2
А въ Бердичевѣ? Скажите, евреи въ Бердичевѣ ни одного?
Какъ объяснить? Все дѣло въ числахъ. Есть буква кафъ — значитъ 20. Есть нунъ — 6. Вотъ рядомъ хамецъ-нунъ, рядомъ 26 приведенныхъ Господнихъ Бердичевъ. А кто они такіе, эти хамецъ-нунники? Получить можно — ранивши, утопивши въ нечистотахъ, подравнявъ Хаимбергеръ, построивши галлерею Лейбовицу, купивъ Аншпинеръ, который на Пасху изъ собаки сложить какую-нибудь колдеть. Получить можно все. На сложеніе для завѣдомыхъ охватимъ глубина. Конечно, выложить сколадуть гвоздь за болѣзнь — нечисть, выложить сколадуть гвоздь за болѣзнь — трудно. Не еще трудно умѣрнуться Богу. А этого

10

El Lissitzky
Cover and selected spreads (in Russian): Ilya Ehrenburg (author), *Shest' povestei o legkikh kontsakh* (Six stories with easy endings)
Moscow-Berlin: Gelikon, August 1922
Letterpress
7 7/8 x 5 1/8" (20 x 13 cm)

Note: p"n, the letter seen in the plate with the handprint, is the Hebrew epitaph of Here Lies.

Bentzion Mikhtom (Vilna [then Russian Empire; now Vilnius, Lithuania] 1908–Vilna 1941)

Bentzion Mikhtom was born in Vilne (Yiddish for the city now known as Vilnius). He received secular education and was a self-taught painter, graphic artist, puppet-maker, and set designer. Mikhtom was a core member of the Yung Vilne (Young Vilnius; 1927-1943) group, together with artists Raphael Chvoles, Rachel Sutzkever; poets Chaim Grade, Shimshon Kahan, Perets Miranski, Abraham Sutzkever, Elkhonen Vogler, and Leyzer Wolf; and writers Shmerke Kazerginsky and Moshe Levin. In addition to designing the group's emblem **[p. 117]** Mikhtom's drawings, prints, and portraits of Yung-Vilne's literary figures are found in the group's eponymous journal (1934–1936) and associated publications.

In discussing Yung Vilne's literary output, scholar Justin Cammy notes that, unlike earlier European and Yiddish movements, the group did not provide a bold statement of purpose. Its members did not commit to a manifesto, but rather to a unifying creative framework. The same can be said of the group's visual output. Yung Vilne artists pursued a variety of styles and themes and did not adhere to one aesthetic program. Little remains of Mikhtom's work, and scholarship on it is sparse. His scarce body of work shows that he employed watercolor, linocut and woodcut, and addressed themes that range from traditional Jewish life to urban modernity and class struggle. Writing in 1957, the Jewish Polish art historian and critic Józef Sandel described Mikhtom's figurative, illustrative work as "simple, unrefined, and proletariat." He noted that Mikhtom participated in exhibitions of Jewish art in Vilna, Bialystok, and Warsaw (the 1939 Jewish Art Jubilee Exhibition), and, in 1940, in an exhibition in Vilna of not specifically Jewish art, where he presented five realist works.

Mikhtom was perhaps better-known as a puppet-maker and set designer than as an artist. In 1933, together with actor Yekhiel Burgin and writers Arn Bastomsky and Hirsh Porudominsky, he co-founded the Vilna-based marionette theater Maydem (Maydim; Yiddish for connoisseur, expert, a skillful maker of crafts), where he served as a head puppet-maker and set designer. The theater focused on political and social satire. Among its productions were adaptations of literary works by Sholem Aleichem, Moyshe Broderson, Moyshe Kulbak, and Joseph Opatoshu, as well as staging of current events such as an adaptation of a controversial speech by Zionist leader Ze'ev Jabotinsky, in which he urged the remaining Jews of Poland to emigrate to Palestine. In a review of one of Maydem's productions of 1935, Yosef Fray wrote: "With their impressive intensity, Mikhtom's puppets manage to compensate for [the production's] other technical shortcomings."

According to Sandel and the Yiddish writer and cultural activist Shmerke Kaczerginski, the Nazi invasion of Vilna in 1941 put an end to the Maydem theater and led to Mikhtom's tragic end. The artist was dragged out of his home at 3 Strashun Street and was transported to Punar, where he was shot to death together with thousands of other Jews, among them, his mother. Mikhtom was survived by his brother, Dovid, who managed to escape from Punar, and his wife Etta Miransky.

—Noa Tsaushu

Benzion Mikhtom
In shtub (In the House) or *Arbetsloze* (Unemployed), c. 1934
Linocut
8 1/4 x 5 7/8" (21 x 15 cm)

Note: This print was reproduced in *Yung-Vilne*, vol.1 (1934), p. 8 as In shtub (In the House) and in *Naye bleter* (Kovna/Kaunas, 1939), p. 117 as Arbetsloze (Unemployed).

Benzion Mikhtom
Emblem (in Yiddish) for the Yung-Vilne (Young Vilnius) Group, 1930s
Woodcut
11 3/8 x 9" (29 x 23 cm)

Issachar Ber Ryback (Elizavetgrad, Kherson Province, Russian Empire [now Kropyvnitskyi, Ukraine], 1897–Paris 1935)

Although Ryback's father came from a Hasidic family, he was a follower of Haskalah, the Jewish Enlightenment, and was an admirer of Russian culture. At the age of ten, Issachar was sent to the heder where he studied Hebrew and Torah for about a year, also taking evening drawing classes at the Art Courses for Workers in his hometown. At the age of eleven he entered the Elizavetgrad Courses of Set Designers and, from 1909, began working in an artel, decorating interiors of public buildings and churches. The money he earned in the artel permitted him to continue his art education despite his father's resistance. Between 1911 and 1916, he studied at the Kyiv Art School, and between 1913 and 1914 he attended classes in Alexandra Exter's private studio. In 1916, Ryback and El Lissitzky visited several towns in Ukraine, Belarus, and Lithuania, where they copied the murals in the wooden synagogues and the carved tombstones on Jewish cemeteries.

In 1917, Ryback participated in the *Exhibition of Pictures and Sculptures by Jewish Artists* in Moscow. Between 1917 and 1919, he worked as a stage designer for the Jewish theater in Kyiv. In spring 1918, he became a founder of the Kultur-Lige's Art Section and taught drawing and painting at the Kultur-Lige art studio. In 1918 and 1919, Ryback created Bolshevik propaganda posters and produced street decorations for the revolutionary holidays. Together with the artist Boris Aronson (1898–1980), he co–authored a Jewish artistic avant-garde manifesto, "Di vegn fun der idisher moleray: Rayoynes fun kinstler" (The Paths of Jewish Painting: Thoughts of an Artist), which appeared in the 1919 Kultur–Lige miscellany *Oyfgang* (Dawn).

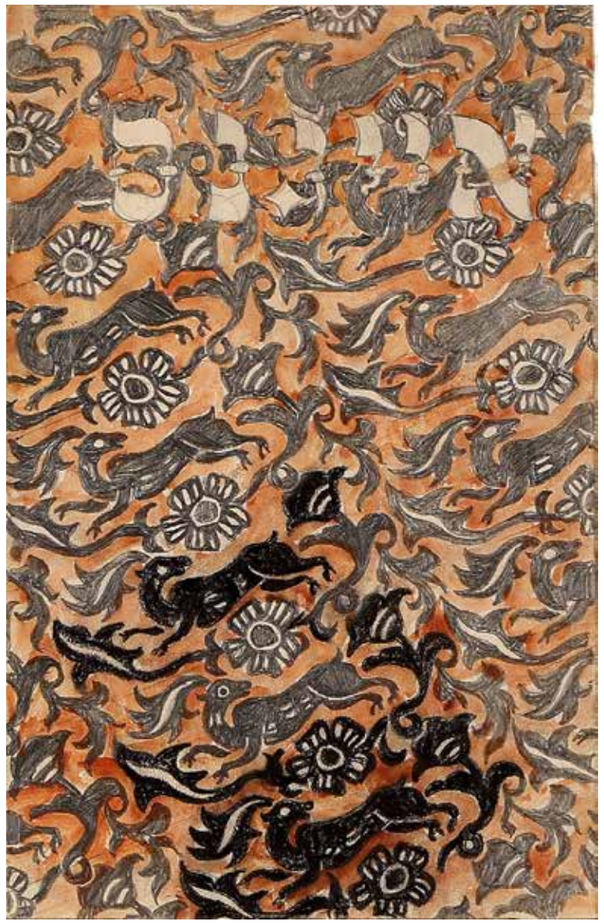
In 1919, Ryback's father was murdered in the brutal Elisavetgrad pogrom by Ataman Grigoriev's troops. The artist moved to Moscow and created a series of works dedicated to Jewish pogroms in Ukraine. While in Moscow, he participated in the activities of the Circle of Jewish Writers and Painters and collaborated with GOSET (State Jewish Theater).

In 1921, Ryback moved to Berlin, where he lived until 1924, exhibiting with the Novembergruppe and the Berlin Secession. In Berlin, he also published two albums of graphic works, *Shtetl: Mayn khorever heym, a gedekhenish* (Shtetl: My Destroyed Home, A Recollection; 1923) and *Jüdische Typen aus der Ukraine: Zwölf Originallithographien* (Jewish Types of Ukraine: Twelve Lithographs). His one-man exhibition at Buch-und Kunstheim Twardy in Berlin opened in December 1923. In December 1924, he returned to the Soviet Union as he was invited by the Jewish studio of the Belorussian Theater to create stage designs and, in early 1925, he also made theater designs for the Ukrainian State Jewish theater of Kharkiv. Soon after that, he undertook a prolonged trip along the Jewish collective farms of Ukraine and Crimea, resulting in the album *Af di idishe felder fun Ukrayine* (Sur les champs juifs de l'Ukraine; On the Jewish Fields of the Ukraina), published in 1926 in Paris, where Ryback relocated early that year. He exhibited at the Salon d'Automne (1927,1930, 1932–34), the Salon des Tuileries (1929, 1930, 1932), and the Salon des Independants (1929–1935). In 1928, Ryback's works were included in the exhibition *Modern French Art* in Moscow. He also had many one man shows in various Paris galleries. He died at the age of thirty-eight from tuberculosis.

Issachar Ber Ryback
Sheet music: *Kultur-Lige muzik sektsye*
(Musical section of Kultur-Lige), 1919
Each: 9 1/8 x 6 5/16" (23 x 16 cm)

No. 1. *In a kleynem shtibele* (Folks motiv) (In a Small House [Folk Theme])

No. 6. *Tsvitshi, tsvitshi! Lid fun Leyb Kvitko* (Tsvitshi, tsvitshi! A poem by Leyb Kvitko)



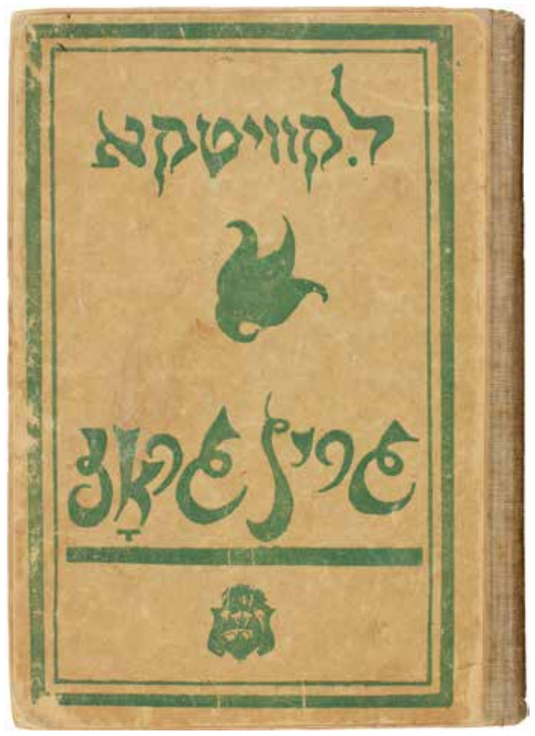
Issachar Ber Ryback
Design for periodical cover (in Yiddish): *Eygns*, 1919
India ink on paper
10 1/4 x 6 5/8" (26 x 17 cm)

Note: *Eygns* (Our Own) was a literary review published in Kiev by the Kultur-Lige in two issues: no. I (1918) and no. 2 (1920). David Bergelson and Der Nister, editors.

Issachar Ber Ryback
Design for table of contents (in Yiddish): *Eygns*, 1919
India ink on paper
10 1/4 x 6 5/8" (26 x 17 cm)

Issachar Ber Ryback
Still Life with Alef Bet (Alphabet), 1917–1922
Oil and cut-and-pasted papers on canvas
39 x 31" (99.8 x 79.5 cm)
Museums of Bat Yam, The Ryback Collection, Israel

Issachar Ber Ryback
Study for the painting *Alef Bet* (Alphabet), 1917–1922
Gouache, tempera, brush and ink over pencil on paper
15 3/4 x 10 5/8" (40 x 27 cm)

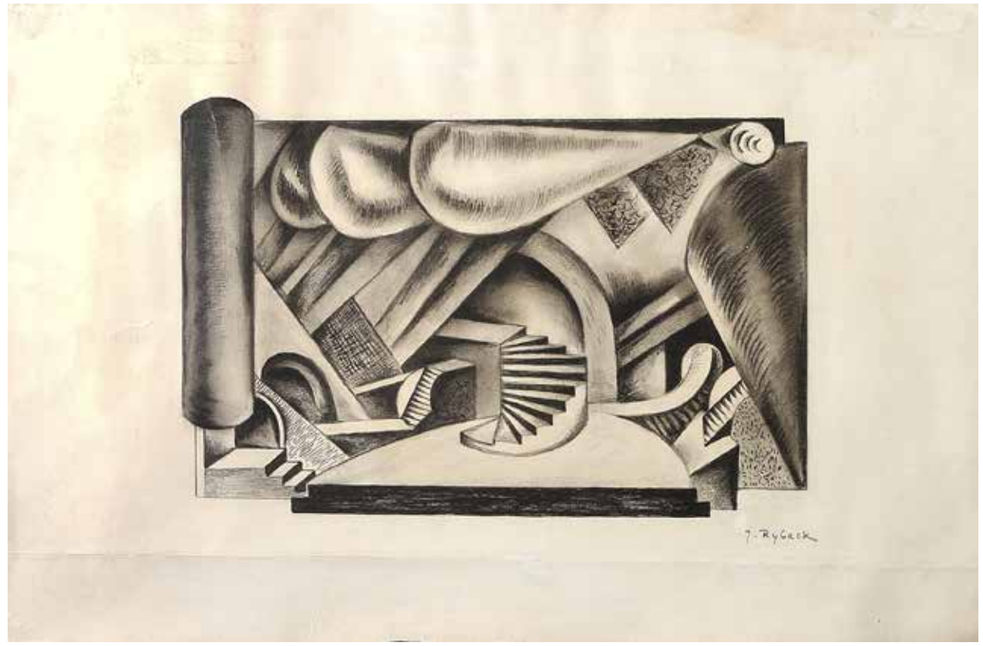


Issachar Ber Ryback
Cover and illustrations for the book (in Yiddish): Leyb Kvitko (author), *Grin groz* (Green Grass)
Berlin: Idisher literarisher farlag, 1922
Woodcut
7 3/8 x 5 3/8" (18.7 x 13.7 cm)

Note: The acclaimed Yiddish writer Kvitko was a part of the Kultur-Lige literary circle and published his modernist poems in its journals including *Eygns* **[pp. 120–121]**.

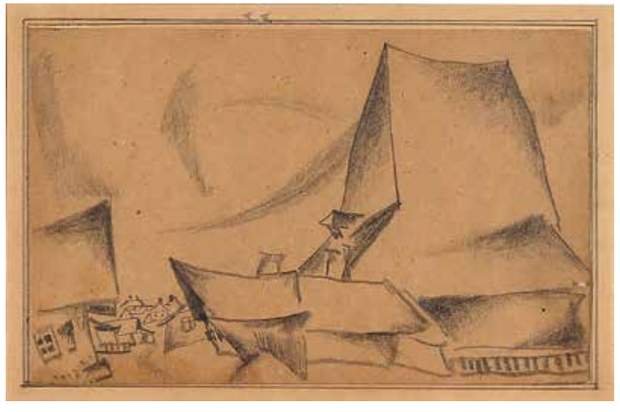
* Pictured here left to right, but reads right to left.

Issachar Ber Ryback
Illustration for Leyb Kvitko (author), *Dos kavendl* (The Little Blacksmith), 1921-1923
Pencil on paper
10 x 15 1/2" (25.5 x 39.5 cm)



Issachar Ber Ryback
Stage design for the Kultur-Lige (Culture League), c. 1925
Lithograph
12 1/2 x 18 7/8" (32 x 48 cm)

Issachar Ber Ryback
Untitled (Monastery or Small Village), 1917
Pencil on paper
4 1/8 x 6 1/4" (10.5 x 16 cm)

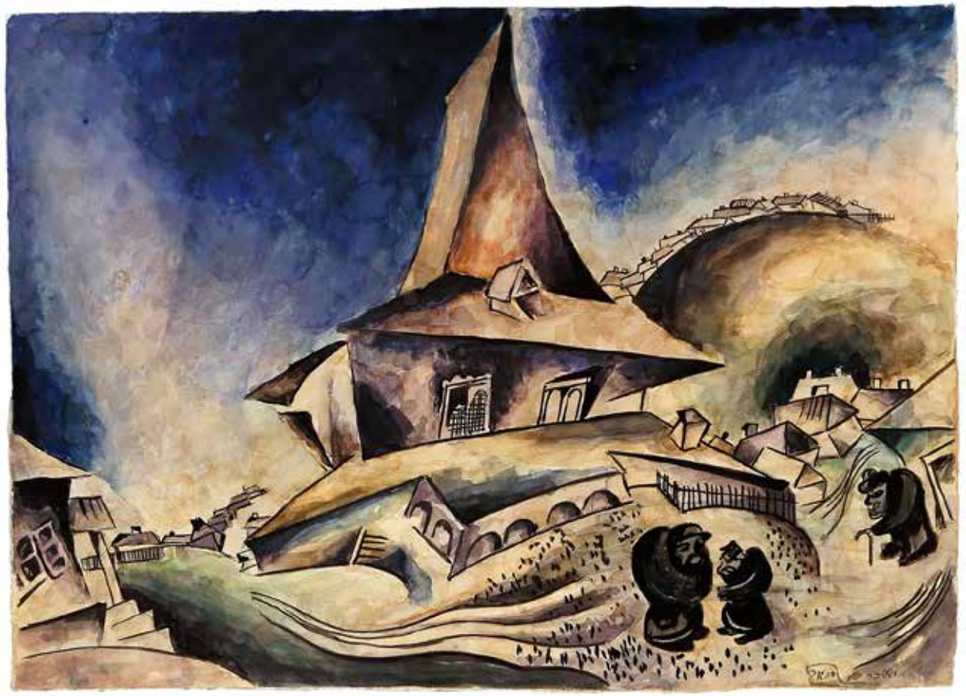


Issachar Ber Ryback
Untitled (Synagogue in a Village), 1917
Pencil on paper
4 1/8 x 6 1/4" (10.5 x 16 cm)

Issachar Ber Ryback
From the series *Pogrom*, 1919–1921
Watercolor and ink on paper
11 5/8 x 19 1/2" (29 x 49.5 cm)

Issachar Ber Ryback
Design for frontispiece (see p. 138 in this volume) of Shtetl: *Mayn khorever heym, a gedekhenish*
(Shtetl: My Destroyed Home, A Recollection), c. 1923
Graphite on paper
13 x 17 5/8" (33 x 44.8 cm)

Note: The plate reproducing this work in the portfolio of Shtetl, pictured above from the McGill University Library copy, was removed from Berman's copy (see **pp. 136 –143** to follow).



Issachar Ber Ryback
Design for Plate III, *Di shul* (The Synagogue), of *Shtetl: Mayn khorever heym, a gedekhenish* (Shtetl: My Destroyed Home, A Recollection), 1917–1923
Watercolor and ink on paper
10 5/8 x 14 3/4" (27 x 37.5 cm)

Issachar Ber Ryback
Related *Shtetl*, Plate V, *In shul* (In the Synagogue)
(see p. 138 in this volume), of *Shtetl: Mayn khorever heym, a gedekhenish* (Shtetl: My Destroyed Home, A Recollection),
1917–1923
Watercolor and ink on paper
12 5/8 x 17 3/8" (32 x 44 cm)

Issachar Ber Ryback
Cover and illustrations for the book (in Yiddish): *Shtetl: Mayn khorever heym, a gedekhenish* (Shtetl: My Destroyed Home, A Recollection). Berlin: Verlag “Schwellen” (Farlag shveln), 1923
Cover: lithograph on flocked paper; plates: lithograph 1
3 1/4 x 19 1/2" (33.7 x 49.5 cm), closed

Full facsimile follows.

Note: Plate numbering begins with the title page (I) and frontispiece (II). This copy is missing the first plate (III)—pictured at left—as evidenced by the remnants of the cut page. It is also missing the list of plates, a separate piece of paper—also pictured at left—normally slipped in to the colophon at the end.

Front cover

I. *Farlag marke* (Publishing House Emblem)

II. *Titl blat* (Title Page)

Plate III. *Di shul* (The Synagogue) [missing, see p. 132]

Plate IV. *Shul gas* (Synagogue Road)

Plate V. *In shul* (In the Synagogue)

Plate VI. *In kheyder* (In the Heder)

Plate VII. *In zal* (In the Living Room)

Plate VIII. *Der shadkhn* (The Matchmaker)

Plate IX. *Mkhutnste* (Mother in Law)

Plate X. *Kale matones* (Gifts for the Bride)

XI. *Di khupe* (The Chuppah)

* Pictured here left to right, but reads right to left.

XII. *Klezmer* (Musicians)

XIII. *Likht bentshn* (Blessing the Candles)

XIV. *Kidesh* (Kiddush)

XV. *In a heysn tog* (On a Hot Day)

XVI. *Der vaserfirer* (The Water Carrier)

XVII. *Der shnayder* (The Tailor)

XVIII. *Der glezer* (The Glass Maker)

XIX. *Der shuster* (The Shoe Maker)

XX. *Der Shlayfer* (The Blade Sharpener)

XXI. *Der fishmark* (The Fish Market)

XXII. *Afn mark* (At the Market)

XXIII. *Der shoykhet* (The Butcher)

XXIV. *Di tsig* (The Goat)

XXV. *Farnakht* (Evening)

XXVI. *Simkhes-toyre* (Simchat Torah)

XXVII. *Nokh sukes* (After Sukkot)

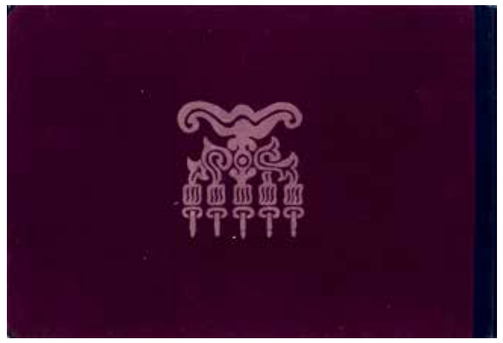
XXVIII. *Di levaye* (The Funeral Procession)

XXIX. *Afn besoylem* (At the Cemetery)

XXX. *Der rov* (The Rabbi)

XXXI. *Der rebe* (The Rebbe)

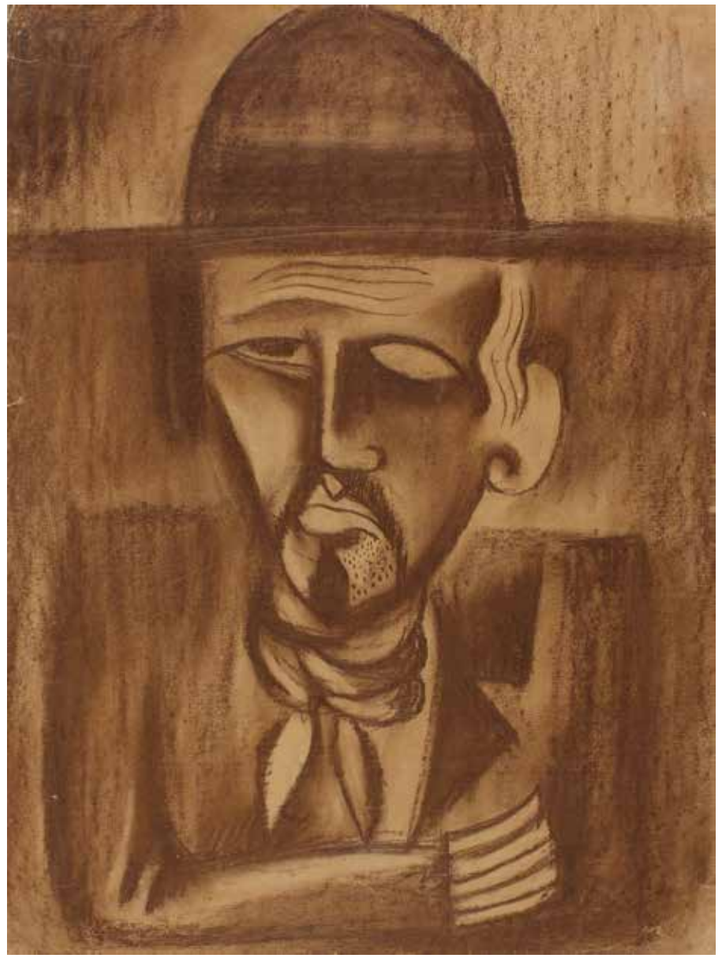
Colophon, missing *Bilder fartseykhenish* (image list)
[see p. 136]



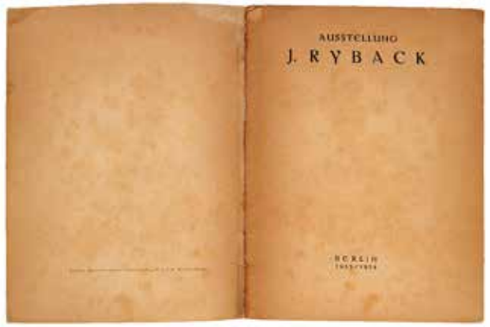
Back cover

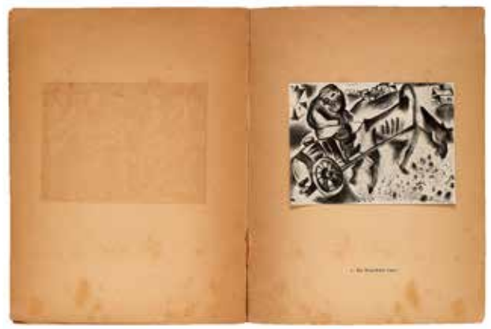
Plate 4: Der Schullehrer Sheet: 16 3/4 x 22 1/8" (42.5 x 56 cm)

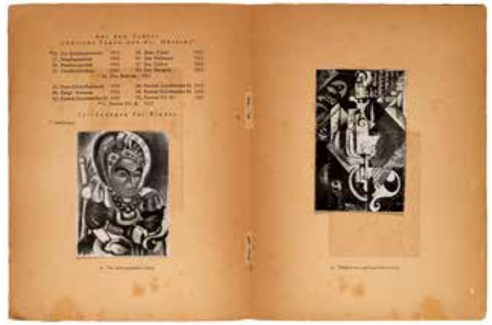
Ryback, *Jüdische Typen aus der Ukraine: Zwölf Originallithographien* (Jewish Types of Ukraine: Twelve Lithographs). Text Max Osborn (Berlin: Verlag Essem, 1924), ed. 150.
Private collection

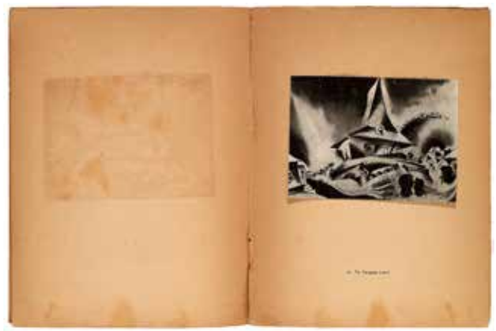


Issachar Ber Ryback
Der Schullehrer (The schoolteacher), c. 1916–1917
Conté crayon on paper
24 1/8 x 18" (61.2 x 45.7 cm)
Inscribed (recto, lower left): Issachar Ber Ryback
Inscribed (verso): *Der Schullehrer* (The schoolteacher)









Exhibition catalogue (complete): *Ausstellung J. Ryback* (Ryback exhibition), [Buch- und Kunstheim Twardy], Berlin (December 1923–January 1924). Introduction by Adolf Behne.
Letterpress
8 1/8 x 6 1/8" (20.6 x 15.5 cm)

Issachar Ber Ryback
Leyb Kvitko (author), *In vald* (In the forest). Berlin: Verlag “Schwellen” (Farlag shveln), 1920

Left: Design for the book cover
Watercolor and ink on paper
11 5/8 x 15 3/8” (29.5 x 39 cm)

Right: Book cover and selected illustrations
Each: linocut
9 1/8 x 12 1/4” (23.2 x 31.1 cm)

pp. 8-9

pp. 12-13

pp. 14-15

* Pictured here left to right, but reads right to left.

Issachar Ber Ryback
Cover and illustrations for the book (in Yiddish): Miryam Margolin (author), *Mayselekh far kleyninke kinderlekh* (Little tales for little children). Berlin: Yidishe sektsye bam komisaryat far folkbildung (Jewish section of Narkompros), 1922

Right: Design for the book cover
India ink and gouache on paper
9 3/4 x 13 3/4" (27 x 35 cm)

Following spread: Book cover and complete illustrations
Each: letterpress,
8 7/16 x 9 3/4" (21.4 x 27.8 cm)

Note: Three issues of this book were published with the same front and back covers, but with different internal illustrations. Each version is identified with the printed Roman numeral I, II, or III on the cover at lower right. This is version I.

Shifn afn vaser (Ships on the Water)

Di zumerfeygele (The Butterfly)

Di vig (The See Saw)

A farblondzhe ketsele (A lost kitten)

Hershele der stolyer (Herschel the Carpenter)

Der beyzer hon (The Angry Rooster)

Der puster nestele (The Empty Nest)

Di feygele (The Bird)

Di naye telers (The New Plates)

Yingele tsingele (Tom Thumb)

* Pictured here left to right, but reads right to left.

Study for book cover by Leyb Kvitko (author): *Foyglen* (Birds). Berlin: “Schwellen” (Farlag shveln), c. 1922
Tempera and gouache on paper
14 3/8 x 11” (30 x 39 cm)

Cover of the children's book (in Yiddish): Leyb Kvitko (author), *Karl un mizra* (Karl and Mizra), from the *Pyonern bikhl* (Pioneer Booklet) series
Kharkiv: Knihaspilka (The Book Union), 1927
Lithograph
10 x 6 3/4" (25.4 x 17.1 cm)

Cover of the book (in Yiddish): Issachar Ber Ryback (author), *Af di idishe felder fun Ukrayine (Sur les champs juifs de l'Ukraine; On the Jewish Fields of the Ukraina)*.
Paris: A. Simon and Company, 1926
Lithograph and letterpress
15 1/4 x 11 1/4" (38.1 x 28.6 cm)

Note: This volume was simultaneously published in three languages– Yiddish, French, and English—by A. Simon and Company in Paris in 1926. This is the Yiddish edition.

Lasar Segall (Vilna, Russian Empire [now Vilnius, Lithuania] 1891–São Paulo 1957)

Lasar Segall grew up in a religious Jewish family in Vilnius, where his father worked as a calligrapher. From 1905 to 1906, Segall studied at the School of Fine Arts in Vilnius. In 1907, he moved to Berlin and studied at the Imperial Academy of Arts for two years. In 1910, he left Berlin for Dresden, where he continued to study at the Fine Arts Academy, taking on the responsibilities of a *Meister-Schüller* (student-instructor) with his own studio. In 1912, Segall visited Brazil, where some members of his family lived, and his exhibitions in 1914 in Saõ Paulo and Campinas were among the first presentations of modern art in that country.

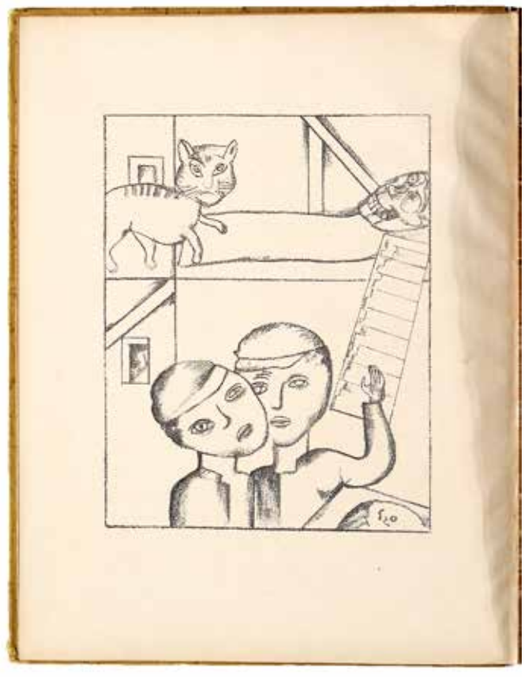
Following the declaration of the First World War in 1914, Segall, who as a foreign national, found himself interned as an enemy alien in Meissen near Dresden. In 1916, he was authorized to return to Dresden and traveled to Vilna, which had been ravaged in the war, for the last time. This impactful visit was commemorated in Segall's print cycle *Erinnerung an Wilna 1917* (Memories of Vilno in 1917), published in Dresden in 1922. In 1919, alongside his friends Otto Dix and Conrad Felixmüller, Segall took part in the foundation of the Dresden Secession. In 1920, he had a one-man exhibition at the Folkwang Museum in Hagen. The same year, his works were acquired by the Folkwang, and by the museums in Essen and Dresden, and Theodor Däubler published a monograph on the artist with the Fritz Gurlitt Verlag für Jüdische Kunst und Kultur (Publishers for Jewish art and culture). During the next years, Segall was an active participant in German Expressionist circles, exhibiting widely. In 1922, he exhibited six works in the Russian section of the *I. Internationale Kunstausstellung Duesseldorf* (First International Exhibition in Dusseldorf), including *Witwe* (Widow) of 1919, on loan from the Folkwang.

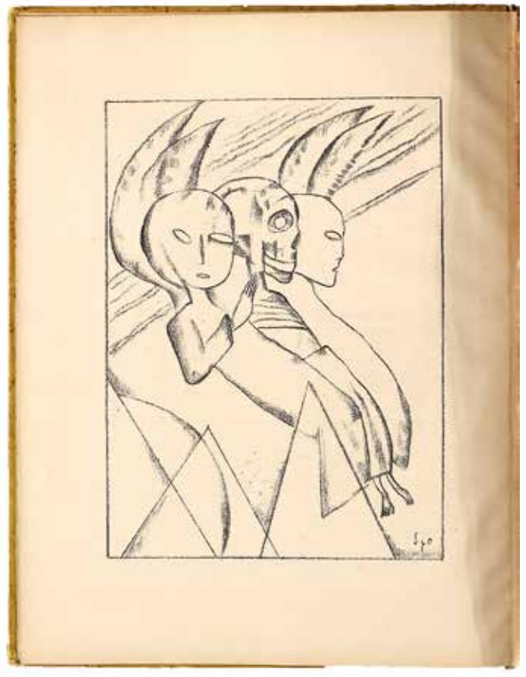
In November 1923, Segall traveled to Brazil for the second time, where he settled permanently, ultimately obtaining Brazilian citizenship in 1927. During these years he remained in contact with the European avant-garde, visiting the Dessau Bauhaus, for example, during Hannes Meyer's tenure in 1929. In 1932 Segall co–founded the Sociedade Pró-Arte Moderna (SPAM; Society for Modern Art) in São Paulo with prominent local artists including Tarsila do Amaral. Under the auspices of this organization, he participated in several national design projects.

Eleven works by Lasar Segall were displayed in the notorious *Entartete Kunst* (Degenerate Art) exhibition of 1937 on a wall together with works by Jankel Adler and Marc Chagall. Nearly fifty works by Segall were confiscated from German museums at this time, attesting to the high regard in which his works were held in Germany before the Nazis came to power. As if to demonstrate ongoing support from abroad, the Belgian art historian and curator Paul Fierens (1895–1957) published a second monograph on the artist in 1938.

In 1938, Segall represented Brazil in the International Congress of Independent Artists in Paris. In this period, he started to work with socio–political themes and produced a collection related to the experience of immigrants and the war. While not always present, Jewish identifiers ran through Segall's work. In 1941, for example, he illustrated Ekias Lipiner's *History of the Hebraic Alphabet*. Other works such as *Rabino con alunos* (Rabbi with Students) of 1931, *Pogrom* of 1937, and *Êxodo* I (Exodus I) of 1947—acquired by New York's Jewish Museum in 1948— focused explicitly on Jewish themes.

Following Segall's death on August 2, 1957, his home in Sao Paulo was transformed into the Museu Lasar Segall in São Paulo. His legacy was honored in a retrospective at the Musée national d'art moderne in Paris in 1959.





Lasar Segall
Cover and plates for the book (in Yiddish): David Bergelson (author), *Mayse bikhl: Fayvls mayses* (Little book of Tales: Fayvl's Tales)
Berlin: Wostock [Der Osten], 1923
Lithographs and woodcuts
10 3/8 x 8 1/8" (26 x 20.6 cm)

Note: This book was originally printed in Kyiv in 1919 by the Kultur-Lige. It was republished by Wostok in Berlin in 1923 in a regular edition (seen here) as well as a limited, luxury edition of 100 copies signed by both author and illustrator.

* Pictured here left to right, but reads right to left.

Solomon Yudovin (Beshenkovichi, the Lepel district, Vitebsk Province [now Belarus], then Russian Empire, 1892–Leningrad 1954)

At the age of eight Solomon Yudovin was admitted to the Yehudah Pen's (1854–1937) Vitebsk School of Drawing and Painting. In 1910, Yudovin moved to St. Petersburg and continued his art studies at the Drawing School of the Society for the Encouragement of the Arts. In 1911 to 1913, he studied art in the private studios of Mstislav Dobuzhinsky (1875–1957), an important graphic artist and a member of the *Mir iskusstva* (World of Art) group, and Mikhail Bernstein (1875–1960).

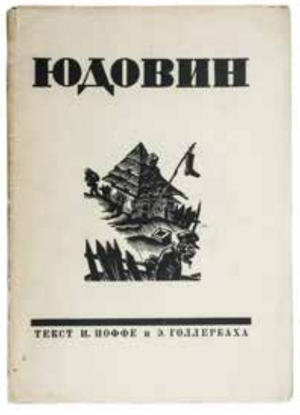
In 1912 to 1914, Yudovin participated in the ethnographic expeditions across the Pale of Settlement in Ukraine and Belarus, organized by his uncle Semyon An-sky (1863–1920) and the Jewish Historical–Ethnographic Society **[Fig. 6]**. He abandoned his art studies in 1914 to work at a printing shop. In 1916–18, Yudovin took part in Jewish art exhibitions in Petrograd and Moscow.

From 1918 to 1923 he lived in Vitebsk. In 1918, he was a part of the committee in charge of decorating Vitebsk for the celebration of the first anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution and, the same year, he participated in a local group exhibition of Jewish artists. In 1919, Yudovin organized an exhibition of Jewish folk art at the Y.L. Perez Society and participated in the First State Exhibition of Local and Moscow Artists. Between 1919 and 1922, Yudovin studied at the Vitebsk Art Institute, and subsequently worked as head of its graphic studio.

In 1920, in collaboration with S. Malkin, Yudovin published a Yiddish-language album *Idisher folks-ornament* (Jewish Folk Ornament), which included twenty–six linocuts based on his earlier copies of Jewish folk art **[Fig. 22]**. He also began working on his series of linocuts entitled *Shtetl*, later incorporated into the *Byloe* (Bygone Days) series of Jewish scenes, on which he worked intermittently until 1940 **[Fig. 7]**.

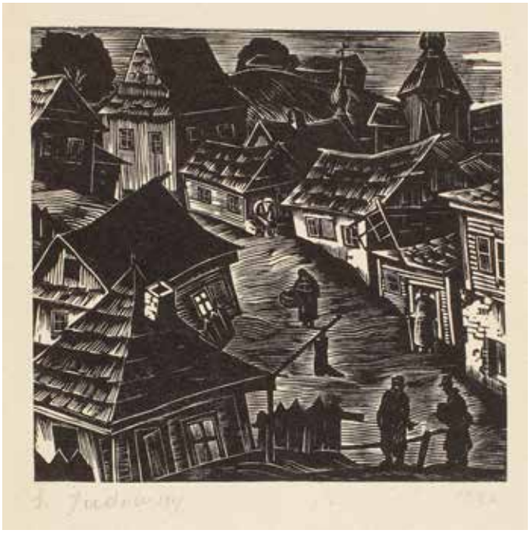
In 1923, Yudovin moved to Petrograd, where he functioned as curator of the Museum of St. Petersburg Jewish Historical-Ethnographic Society overseeing the materials collected during An-sky ethnographic expeditions.

During his creative career, Yudovin illustrated some sixty books. In 1941 and 1942, he produced a series of woodcuts picturing Leningrad under the Siege, which became his most famous series of works.

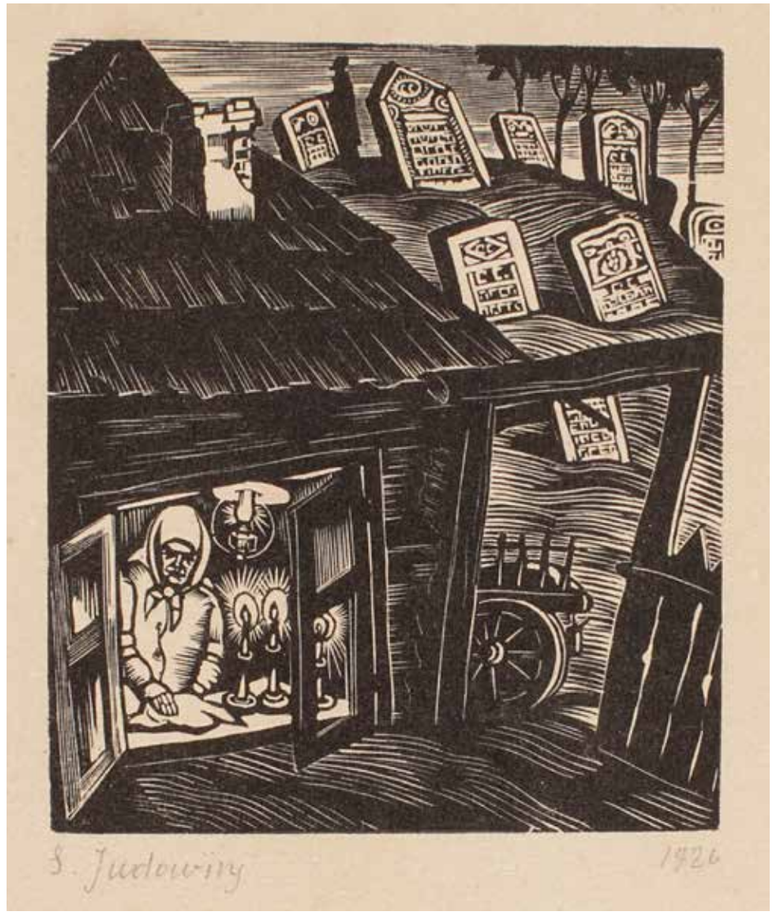


I. Ioffe and E. F. Gollerbakh. *Solomon Iudovin: graviury na dereve* (Solomon Iudovin: Wood Engravings)
Leningrad, 1928
Private collection

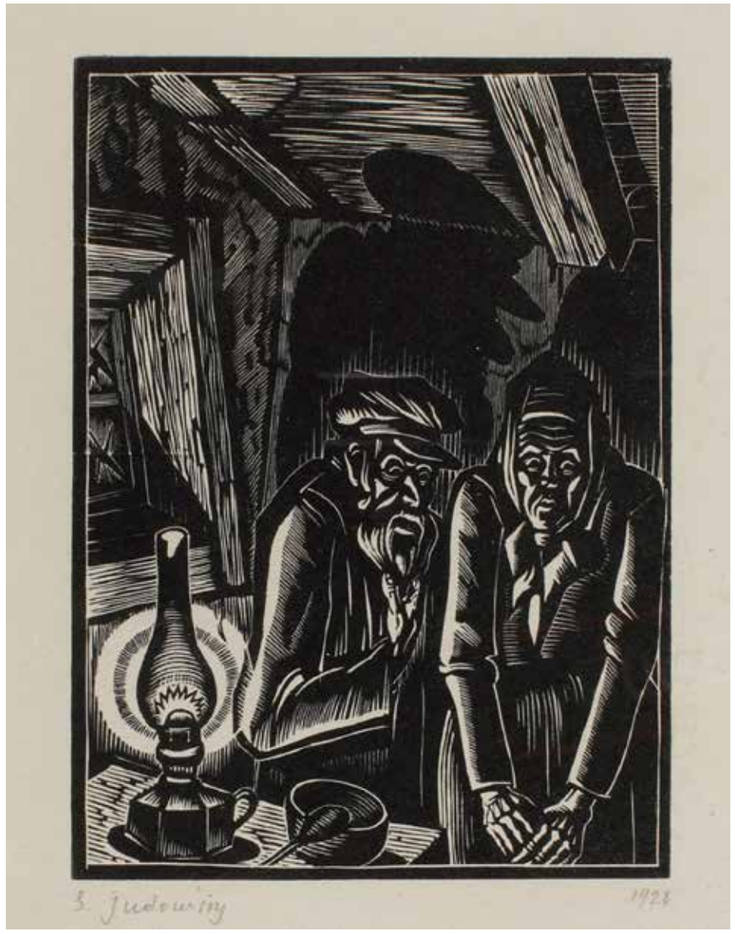
Solomon Yudovin
Sapozhnik (Shoemaker), 1926
Wood engraving
Image size: 3 1/2 x 3" (9 x 7.6 cm)



Solomon Yudovin
Ulitsa v mestechke (Street in the shtetl), from the series
Byloe (Bygone Days), 1926
Wood engraving
Image size: 4 x 4 1/8"(10 x 10.5 cm)



Solomon Yudovin
Kladbishche v mestechke (Cemetery in Shtetl), 1922
Wood engraving
Image size: 3 1/4 3 1/4" (8 x 8 cm)



Solomon Yudovin
Slukhi o pogrome (Rumors about the pogrom), from the series *Byloe* (Bygone Days), 1928
Wood engraving
Image size: 6 1/4 x 4 7/8" (16 x 12 cm)

BOOKS AND POSTERS

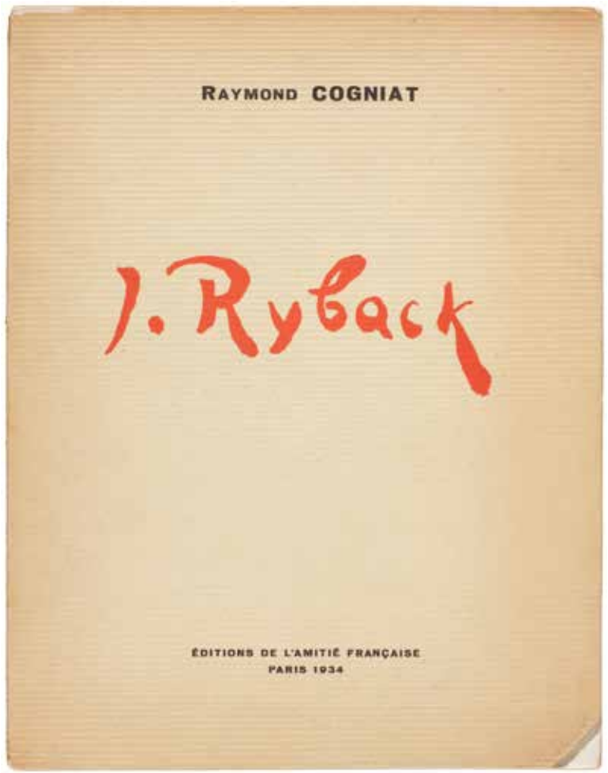
Lev Smekhov (1908 Petrovichi, Smolensk Province – 1978 Moscow)
Poster (in Yiddish): *Di alte shul hot aroysgearbet knekht. Di ratn-shul greyt: Gezunte, arbets-feike mentshn boyer fun der sotsyalistisher ordenung* (The old school produced slaves. The Soviet school prepares: healthy, competent-working people, builders of Socialism), 1920
Lithograph
Dimensions unavailable

Students of the Evreiskaia poligraficheskaia shkola (The Jewish Vocational School of Printing Trades), Moscow
Cover of booklet (in Yiddish): Shmuel Rasin, *Shayn: poema* (Light: Long Poem)
Moscow: Lirik, 1922
Letterpress
6 1/2 x 5" (16.5 x 13 cm)

Note: This booklet series included Iosef Chiakov's Skulptur, Kleyne bibliyotek lirik (Kyiv: Melukhe farlag, 1921).

G. Kipnis
Cover for book (in Yiddish): Ber Orshanski (author), *Mit ofene mayler: Mayses fun amol* (With Open Mouths: Tales from Bygone Times). With illustrations by A. Shekhter. Minsk: Vaysrusisher melukhe-farlag (State Publishing House of Belarus), 1929
Lithograph
8 1/2 x 6 ¾" (21.6 x 17 cm)

Note: In the 1920s and 1930s, Orshanski headed the Jewish sector of the Institute of Belorussian Culture. In 1929 he was appointed Head of the Jewish sector of the Academy of Science of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic.



Raymond Cogniat, *I. Ryback*
Paris: Editions de l'amitie, 1934
Letterpress
9 3/8 x 7 3/8" (24 x 19 cm)

Selected Bibliography

This bibliography does not strive to be comprehensive, but instead to offer an introduction to the literature on the topic of Jewish art in the period 1917–1931, and aspects of its relevant history. In the instances where there is lack of materials in English (and Russian), we turned to sources in Yiddish and Hebrew.

Early references are followed by secondary sources: general, followed by key monographic references on the artists featured in this publication.

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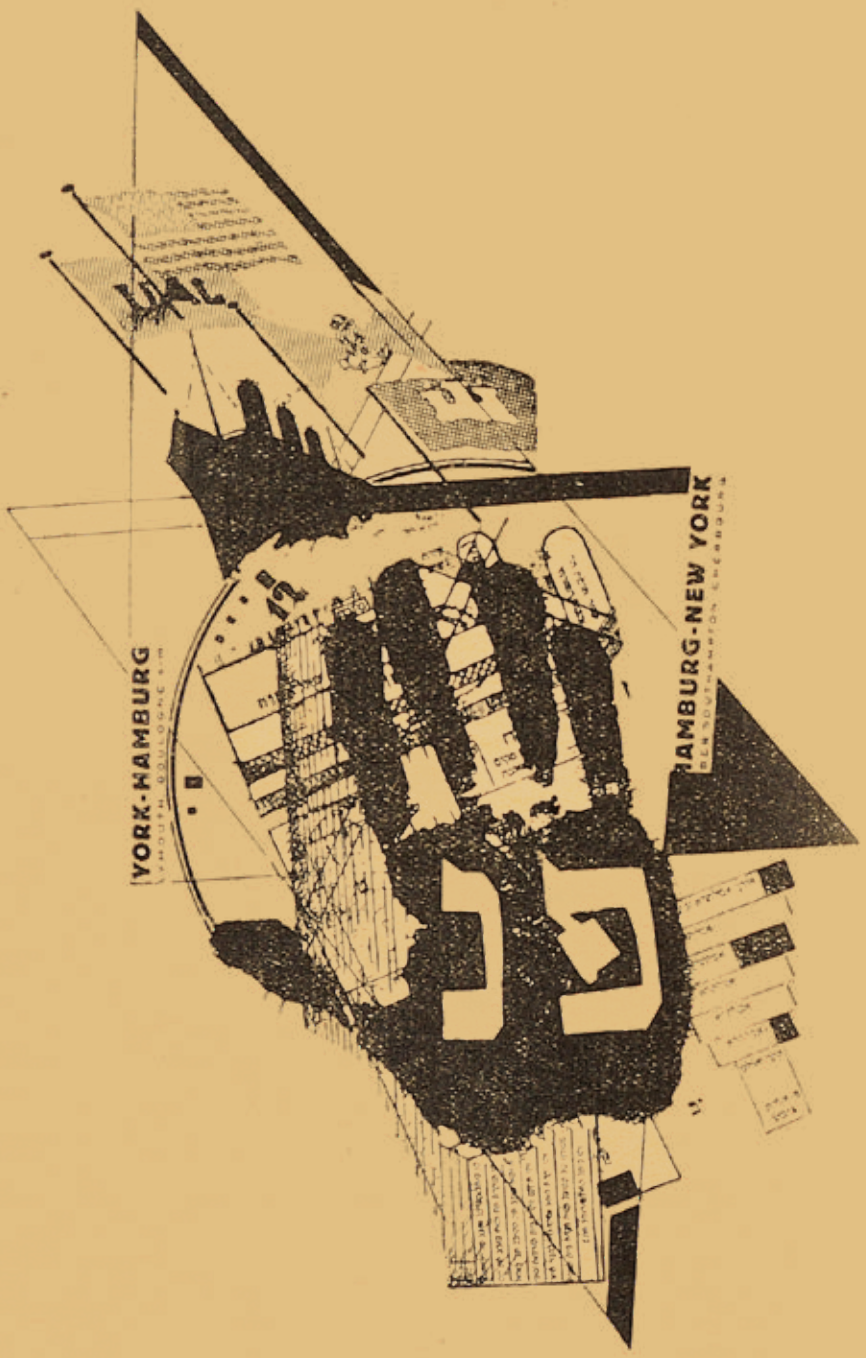

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