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SCULPTING IDENTITY: CHANA ORLOFF AND HER PORTRAITS

by

Willi Naomi Mendelsohn

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the Master of Arts
degree in Art History in the
Graduate College of
The University of Iowa

May 2015

Thesis Supervisor: Professor Craig Adcock

Graduate College
The University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

MASTER'S THESIS

This is to certify that the Master's thesis of

Willi Naomi Mendelsohn

has been approved by the Examining Committee for
the thesis requirement for the Master of Art degree
in Art History at the May 2015 graduation.

Thesis Committee:

Craig Adcock, Thesis Supervisor

Dorothy Johnson

Wallace Tomasini

To the memory of my bubbe, Lillian Kotovsky, and to my parents who have taught me the importance of embracing my cultural heritage.

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ABSTRACT

Chana Orloff, a prolific sculptor during the first half of the twentieth century, completed hundreds of portraits of her contemporaries during her lifetime. Scholars have examined these portraits more generally within the overall context of her work. Still, however, the scholarly discourse on the artist herself is limited, lacking an extensive analysis on the portraits themselves. Utilizing a selection of Orloff's portraits, this thesis seeks to understand her work in terms of the reconciliatory role played by portraiture in expressing various aspects of the artist's own identity. In particular, this analysis hopes to better understand the artist's personal and professional contacts in Paris as well as in Palestine. As an artist, woman, and Jew, Orloff's portraits grant insight into her own relationship with these categorizations and alignment with various trends within a feminist discourse as well as French and Zionist political movements. As such, this thesis takes into consideration multiple methodological approaches, making use of a bibliographical, formalist, feminist, and social art historical perspectives. Ultimately, this investigation hopes to reveal a fundamental intersection between Orloff's self-conception and the characterization of her surroundings.

PUBLIC ABSTRACT

Chana Orloff, a prolific sculptor during the first half of the twentieth century, completed hundreds of portraits of her contemporaries during her lifetime. Scholars have examined these portraits more generally within the overall context of her work. Still, however, the scholarly discourse on the artist herself is limited, lacking an extensive analysis on the portraits themselves. Utilizing a selection of Orloff's portraits, this thesis seeks to understand her work in terms of the reconciliatory role played by portraiture in expressing various aspects of the artist's own identity. In particular, this analysis hopes to better understand the artist's personal and professional contacts in Paris as well as in Palestine. As an artist, woman, and Jew, Orloff's portraits grant insight into her own relationship with these categorizations and alignment with various trends within a feminist discourse as well as French and Zionist political movements. As such, this thesis takes into consideration multiple methodological approaches, making use of a bibliographical, formalist, feminist, and social art historical perspectives. Ultimately, this investigation hopes to reveal a fundamental intersection between Orloff's self-conception and the characterization of her surroundings.

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INTRODUCTION

“One could say that I accumulated the ‘handicaps’: foreigner, Jew, artist, woman, and now widow and mother at the same time.”¹ This is how Chana Orloff described herself. Born on June 12, 1888, Orloff spent her early years in Tzareconstantinovska, Ukraine.² In 1905, she immigrated to Palestine with her family, who settled in Petah-Tikva, one of the first Jewish colonies in the area.³ Only five years later, Orloff relocated to Paris, France, with the intention of becoming a dressmaker.⁴ It was not long before Orloff decided to pursue work as an artist, eventually with great success. Living and working in France up until the Second World War, Orloff came into contact with a vast network of artists, authors, musicians, and collectors. These connections are documented in Orloff’s oeuvre of almost 500 sculpted works, 259 of which were recognizable persons.⁵ Orloff’s portraits are a testament to the importance of identity and self-conception among the avant-garde in Paris. Her portraits also demonstrate the significance of identity formation and art in Palestine during this time. Overall, Orloff’s portraits reflect the artistic environment of Europe as well as of Palestine during the first half of the twentieth century. They also mirror Orloff’s place within that world as woman, Jew, and artist.

¹ Ariane Justman Tamir, Éric Justman, and Paula J. Birnbaum, *À la recontre de Chana Orloff: de la villa Seurat aux ateliers Chana Orloff; Chana Orloff, une vie de légende: sculpter comme une femme modern* (Paris: À vivre edition, 2012), 24.

² Felix Marcilhac, *Chana Orloff* (Paris: Les Éditions de l’Amateur, 1991), 14.

³ Cissy Grossmann, “Restructuring and Rediscovering a Woman’s Oeuvre: Chana Orloff, Sculptor in the School of Paris, 1910 to 1940,” PhD diss. (New York: City University of New York, 1998), ix.

⁴ Marcilhac, 16.

⁵ Tamir, Justman, and Birnbaum, 38.

Historiographically, Orloff has not received the art historical attention afforded many of her contemporaries, such as Pablo Picasso, Georges Braque, Marc Chagall, and Chaim Soutine. Several monographs have been published on the artist, the most recent in 2012. This last small volume was written in part by Orloff's grandchildren with a contribution from Paula J. Birnbaum, but it is not an extensive or interpretive art historical inquiry.⁶ In 1991 Felix Marcilhac published a more substantial volume on Orloff, but it is poorly documented and is methodologically formalist in its approach.⁷ Earlier, two monographs in Hebrew and French were published in 1949. The first monographs were published as far back as 1927, including one volume by Edouard de Courières and another by Leon Werth.⁸ Haim Gamzu, who contributed to one of the 1949 monographs also organized an exhibition catalogue the year after the artist's death in 1969 for her retrospective at the Helena Rubinstein Pavilion in Israel.⁹ There have been at least three dissertations that investigate Orloff's contribution to the art world, two of which concentrate solely on Orloff. The first was by Germaine Coutard-Salmon in 1980 under the

⁶ Paula Birnbaum is one art historian who contributes to today's research on Orloff. She is currently working on a larger monograph of the artist according to her personal webpage. See also Paula J. Birnbaum, "Chana Orloff: Sculpting as a Modern Jewish Mother," in *Reconciling Art and Mothering* ed., Rachel Epp Buller (Burlington: Ashgate, 2012), 45-55.

⁷ Marcilhac, *Chana Orloff* (Paris: Les Éditions de l'Amateur, 1991).

⁸ See Gabriel Talphir and Chana Orloff, *Ḥanah Orlof* (Tel Aviv: Ho'tsa'at Gazit, 1949); Haim Gamzu, *Ḥanah Orlof* (Tel-Aviv: Masadah, 1949); Edouard des Courières, *Chana Orloff et son oeuvre, Les Sculpteurs Français Nouveaux*, no. 6 (Paris: Librairie Gallimard, 1927); Léon Werth, *Chana Orloff* (Paris: Éditions Grès, 1927).

⁹ Haim Gamzu, ed., *Chana Orloff (1888-1968): Exposition Retrospective—120 Sculptures—Sixty Dessins*, exh. cat. (Tel Aviv: Pavillion Helena Rubinstein, 1969).

direction of Bernard Dorival.¹⁰ More recently, in 1998, Cissy Grossmann's dissertation has applied a feminist art historical approach to the artist.¹¹ Irina Kronrod's dissertation considers Orloff's Russian identity, her gender, and psychology as influences on her work. This dissertation also contains discussions of five other female artists: Marie Bashkirtseff, Maria Vorobiev-Stebelska (also known as Marevna), Marie Vassilieff, Hélène D'Oettingen and Dina Vierny.¹² Orloff is mentioned marginally in various texts that consider more broadly the School of Paris or the Circle of Montparnasse. She is also included in surveys of twentieth century Jewish artists more generally.

While many of these sources attempt to situate Orloff's work either with respect to her identity or her style, none focuses specifically on both the formal aspects and the subjects of her portraiture. The artist's identity, in many ways, defined the circles that the artist moved in, the portraits she created, and the impact she had on the art world more generally. Orloff's portraiture plays a major role in reconciling and documenting artistic, cultural, religious, political, and gendered identities of the period. It is also through her portraits that we can rebuild a picture of the artistic community surrounding Orloff and illuminate her personal contributions to the various circles of that community that have too often been ignored in recent times.

¹⁰ Haim Gamzu, Jean Cassou, Cecile Goldscheider, and Germaine Coutard-Salmon, *Chana Orloff. Théories et Pratiques Artistiques*, ed. Christian Parisot (Brescia: Shakespeare and Company, 1980).

¹¹ Grossmann, "Restructuring and Rediscovering a Woman's Oeuvre: Chana Orloff, Sculptor in the School of Paris, 1910 to 1940," PhD diss. (City University of New York, 1998).

¹² Irina Kronrod, "Russian Women of the French Avant-Garde: The I of the Other," PhD diss. (Columbia University, New York, 2005).

The following chapters will investigate portraiture within the bounds of the artist's own stated "handicaps." The first will look at Orloff's identity as an artist, outlining her place in the artistic community more generally in terms of subject matter, stylistic influences, and the nature of the forms she utilizes in her portraits. The second chapter will focus on her identity as a woman, which is tied to her opinions about gender equality and comradeship, and her role as foreigner and Jew. The conclusion of this inquiry will endeavor to reconcile these roles where they intersect in order to support the assumption that Orloff's portraiture was ultimately an expression of the artist's multiple identities.

CHAPTER 1: ORLOFF AS A PORTRAITIST

A Formalist Examination of Style and Influence

The utility and purpose of portraiture in Paris underwent a particular conversion during the first half of the twentieth century and moved away from more traditional subjects and likenesses.

While traditional portraiture before photography might be understood in terms of its documentation of a likeness, often of an elite patron, there began a prominent trend amongst the artists living in Paris at the turn of the century to portray their own friends, family, and colleagues.¹³ According to Kenneth Silver, portraiture was a way to define the enlightened elite of the avant-garde in Paris, which at around the turn of the century was the hub of various art movements including Fauvism and Cubism.¹⁴ In many ways portraiture functioned to express not just appearances, but interior characteristics like intellect and virtue.¹⁵ In Orloff's case, she used portraiture to make a record of her subject. This was not, however, just a visual record. Instead, Orloff sought to immortalize her subjects' innate qualities in tandem with their likenesses. As a portraitist and artist, Orloff ultimately established a document of the person's contribution to history. Orloff accomplished this documentation through a careful consideration of her subjects, their personalities, their beliefs, and their accomplishments. In doing so, she chose from a broad range of styles that would best reflect her subject. We can include in these styles both the classicism associated with the French academy, and the reduction of forms and

¹³ Kenneth E. Silver, *Paris Portraits: Artists, Friends, and Lovers*, exh. cat. (Greenwich, Conn.: Bruce Museum; New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008), 15.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

emphasis on the foreign that we find in primitivism, orientalism, and cubism. Orloff was also influenced by her contemporaries, especially Modigliani and Brancusi.

In this analysis of the stylistic aspects of Orloff's portraiture and her influences, it is necessary to examine how portraiture functioned in Orloff's past as well as in her present. Exploring these times will allow us to consider in what ways Orloff employed portraiture and for what reasons. At the turn of the century, many artists, including Henry Matisse, Pablo Picasso, and Fernand Léger, believed that portraiture had been superseded by the invention of photography.¹⁶ At the same time, some understood this invention as foreshadowing the death of portraiture. Léger argued that, "photography requires fewer sittings than portrait painting, captures a likeness more faithfully, and costs less. The portrait painter is dying out [...] not by a natural death but killed off by his period."¹⁷ Léger was both correct and incorrect. The nature of portraiture and the role of the portraitist had changed, but the portrait itself did not die out. While traditional, high-society portraiture only made up about five percent of exhibited works in Paris Salons during the 1930s, avant-garde portraiture in the form of the avant-garde flourished.¹⁸ As William Rubin has pointed out, portraits created during the early twentieth century were more

¹⁶ According to Picasso, "When you see what you [can] express through photography, you realize all the things that can no longer be the objective of painting. Why should the artist persist in treating subjects that can be established so clearly with the lens of a camera? It would be absurd, wouldn't it? Photography has arrived at a point where it is capable of liberating painting from all literature, from the anecdote, and even from the subject." Quoted from Pablo Picasso, conversation with the photographer Brassai, September 1939, in Brassai, *Picasso and Company*, trans. Francis Price (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, 1966), 46, 47; quoted by Silver, *Paris Portraits*, 16.

¹⁷ Ferdinand Léger, "The Origins of Painting and Its Representative Value," *Montjoie* (1913), in Léger, *Functions of Painting*, trans. Alexandra Anderson (New York: Viking Press, 1973), 9-10, as quoted by Silver, *Paris Portraits*, 16.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 16.

often of the artist's friends and family.¹⁹ The artist, in short, became the equal, and even sometimes, the superior of their subject. This circumstance opens up an opportunity to simultaneously investigate issues of identity and interior character.

We can see this especially in Orloff's portraits where we find the likenesses of her grandmother, her son, and her brother alongside those of her contemporaries, friends, and heroes. We might assume that the artist's choice of sitter was not wholly controlled by monetary concerns. The artist here had agency, and her choices hinged on her personal beliefs, influences, and overall identity. Orloff, in short, did not choose subjects or take commissions that she deemed unworthy; rather she handled her subjects in a manner that ennobled them by reflecting their inner character. In this sense, Orloff reflects contemporary attitudes towards portraiture, placing her squarely within her own epoch.

The origins of this particular trend in portraying interior virtue, however, may be found during the enlightenment period, coinciding with an increased emphasis on the importance of the individual. For example, the artists Jean-Baptiste Pigalle and Jean-Antoine Houdon were known for their portraits of France's intellectual elite: both chose to portray the philosopher, writer, poet and polemicist, Voltaire in the 1770s (figs. A1 and A2). Portraits of this nature were part of an artistic tradition that depicted the *grand hommes* (or *femmes*) of the contemporary age, often utilizing a classical artistic vocabulary, a vocabulary also found in Orloff's portraits. For example, we might note that her portrait of the painter Jacovleff (1921) (fig. A3) resembles in many ways the fragmented and heroic musculature of ancient sculptures like the ones in the Louvre (see for example the Torso of the "Diadumenus" type, fig. A4). We can see especially

¹⁹ William Rubin, ed., "Reflections on Picasso and Portraiture," *Picasso and Portraiture: Representation and Transformation*, exh. cat. (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1996), 18, as quoted by Silver, *Paris Portraits*, 16.

Orloff's rendering of Jacovleff's incomplete arms and the line of his bare chest and torso in this ancient fragment. It is very likely that Orloff would have encountered classical fragments like this one in her many visits to the Louvre.²⁰ It is also likely that she was aware of eighteenth-century portrayals of the *grands hommes* considering that the name of her late husband Ary Justman was inscribed on a wall of the Panthéon. This former church of Sainte Geneviève had been rededicated in the eighteenth century to the *grands hommes* of France.²¹

Artists like Orloff, many of whom were also foreigners in Paris, made similar references to France's cultural heritage. According to Silver, historical circumstance, especially the memorializing tendencies resulting from the First World War increased not only the number of portraits commissioned, but also motivated many foreign painters to show allegiance to France by emulating French portraiture and painting. As we have seen, references to classical portraiture abound. This connection can be seen in artists like Picasso, Braques, and Max Jacob, who emulate Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres and others. Even in 1926, we see this call to the French past in *Le Rappel à l'ordre* in which the critic, Jean Cocteau puts into writing the principles of this new movement of avant-garde artists towards classicism.²² It seems that Orloff also appears to make conscious decisions in her work to pay homage to the past while still maintaining various aspects of her own identity. She expresses this influence through her

²⁰ According to her granddaughter, Ariane Justman Tamir, Orloff spent most of her free time at the Louvre, making it a weekly habit to walk through the museum every Sunday; see Tamir, Justman, Birnbaum, 20.

²¹ The inscription below the neoclassical pediment that represents some of these "great men" reads "Aux grands hommes, la patrie reconnaissante" ("to the great men, the grateful homeland"), see Tamir, Justman, and Birnbaum, 24. On the Panthéon, see Jean-Claude Bonnet, "Le culte des grands hommes en France au XVIIIe siècle ou la défaite de la monarchie," *MLN* 116, no. 4 (September 2001): 689.

²² Silver, *Paris Portraits*, 25-26.

portraits of foreign, Jewish, and female artists and thinkers, drawing from various artistic trends in France in a way that celebrates the international and diverse artistic community thriving in Paris, and even Palestine during the first half of the twentieth century.

Orloff's portraits, drawn and sculpted, also demonstrate her ability to reduce a sitter to his or her most basic characteristics. Despite this simplification, and perhaps because of it, Orloff is able to depict the person's essentials. In some of her portraits, especially of artists, she adapts the style in which the portrait is rendered to reflect the sitters' own work. Take for example, the drawn portraits Orloff produced for Jean Pellerin and Gaston Picard's *Figures d'Aujourd'hui*.²³ In this volume, Orloff was commissioned to complete forty-one sketches of contemporary artists and writers, including the authors themselves. Orloff's miniature portraits are accompanied by text describing the artistic contribution and character of each person, something that Orloff conveys visually. Take for example her portrait of Fernand Léger (fig. A5). Here, Orloff has rendered the face using mostly sharp rectilinear lines. She shades certain areas of the countenance, such as the cheekbones and eye sockets, drawing additional attention to the series of fragmented shapes that make up Léger's features. While this certainly reveals the likeness of the sitter, as can be seen in photographs from this time, his square features, strategically parted hair, set jaw and mustache reference his own oeuvre (fig. A6). Léger's style has been called "tubist" because the mechanical forms in his early paintings were more cylindrical than rectangular.²⁴ We can see a sort of cubist fragmentation in Orloff's depiction of Léger, an approach that visually describes both his physical and intellectual characteristics. Orloff might

²³ Jean Pellerin and Gaston Picard, *Figures d'Aujourd'hui, illustrées de quarante et un portraits par Chana Orloff* (Paris: E.-F. D'Alignan, Éditeur, 1923).

²⁴ Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, "Fernand Léger," *Burlington Magazine* 92, no. 564 (March 1950): 64.

have borrowed her visual vocabulary from Léger's works mentioned in the portrait's accompanying excerpt in *Figures d'Aujourd'hui*, especially his *les Fumées* (fig. A7).²⁵

Orloff first encountered cubism through her participation in Marie Vassilieff's atelier early on in her artistic career. Here she would have met artists like Georges Braque, Pablo Picasso, and Fernand Léger amongst others. Marcilhac writes about Orloff's work in relation to cubism, observing that while Orloff played with cubist forms, her work was more of a simplification of the cubist tenets as opposed to a strict adherence to them.²⁶ Marc Chagall once said, "To me, they [the cubists] seemed to be reducing everything to a mere geometry which remained a new slavery, whereas I was seeking a true liberation, not a liberation of the imagination or the fantastic alone, but a liberation of form too." Orloff, in a similar way, sought through cubism to develop her own personal style, adapting various aspects of cubism with a degree of liberty.²⁷

This approach is obvious in Léger's portrait, but also in a number of Orloff's sculpted works from around the same time. In 1914-15, we can see a bit of this geometric fragmentation at work in her portrait of *Monsieur Kolpaktchy* and her *Portrait d'homme (comte Polonais?)* (figs. A8 and A9). Here both faces, whilst still entirely representative, are formed out of series of shapes coming together like puzzle pieces, with an overt emphasis on the linear joints of these

²⁵ Pellerin, who wrote this passage states that, "M. Fernand Léger aurait pu s'arrêter devant son oeuvre: *les Fumées*, limiter son effort." He is likely referring to Léger's series of works entitled *Les Fumées sur les toits* from the early teens in which he strives to move beyond cubism to "cylindrisme" or "tubism." Pellerin and Picard, 109.

²⁶ Marcilhac, 11.

²⁷ Edouard Roditi, *Dialogues on Art*, rev. ed. (Santa Barbara: Ross-Erikson, 1980), 8-31 quoted from an excerpt in Vivian B. Mann, ed., *Jewish Texts on the Visual Arts*, trans. Eliezer Diamond (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 147.

shapes. We can also see her experimentation with a more liberal application of cubist principles in her *Eve* from 1916 which features the elongated forms of a woman with her arms above her head whose anatomy has been reduced to geometric shapes and volumes (fig. A10).

We find a similar stylistic reduction of forms in the works of Constantin Brancusi from around the same time. In particular, Brancusi's works manipulate form through the gradual elimination of descriptive detail to the point that they do not appear to be representational. But Brancusi does not eliminate altogether the object's iconographical significance. Instead, he searches for the idea behind the form. One specific example of this kind of reduction can be seen in his series of sculptures of birds. His early, more detailed, sculptures of the subject become reduced and elongated over time, culminating in the *Bird in Space* where the form is manipulated to the point that only the idea of flight is conveyed through the form (fig. A11). Ultimately, Brancusi kept the most essential formal elements that still allowed the form to portray a specific meaning: not just pure abstraction, but a formal manifestation of a concrete concept, somewhere between abstraction and representation.²⁸

One might say that Orloff practices a similar reduction of form in her portraits, reducing her sitters to their most basic elements through the manipulation of forms. Further, Orloff would have known Brancusi's work due to his presence in Montparnasse starting in 1908 when he met many of those whom Orloff also came into contact with over the years. One of these contacts was Amedeo Modigliani.²⁹ We can establish Orloff and Modigliani's relationship through a

²⁸ Athena Spear, *Brancusi's Birds* (New York: New York University Press for the College Art Association of America, 1969), 14-15.

²⁹ Brancusi is credited with inspiring Modigliani's move into sculpture. See *L'École de Paris, 1904-1929: La Part de l'autre*, exh. cat. (Paris: Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris, 2000-2001), 328.

portrait that Modigliani drew of Orloff in 1916 (fig. A12).³⁰ Above her head he wrote in Hebrew “Chana, daughter of Raphael.”³¹ While Silver has interpreted this inscription to indicate Orloff’s involvement with idealism, the similarities between Orloff and Modigliani’s work demonstrates instead a mutual interest in non-European art in the form of primitivism.³²

Primitivism in particular refers to the influence of African art on the European artistic tradition. It was particularly appealing to those who sought to reject traditional European art that was more representational than conceptual. But, as Paloma Alarcó notes, primitivism was also often used in congress with these traditional forms.³³ It has already been pointed out that Orloff herself borrowed from the classical and idealized forms in the Louvre. She also used, as did Modigliani, Brancusi, and others, artistic forms from outside the traditional European canon. She often depicted a mask-like visage in order to challenge portraiture that simply portrayed appearance, placing more emphasis on ideas and concepts than visual likeness.

We can see this approach in Modigliani’s sketch of Orloff. The sketch, in fact, resembles the African masks found in French museums at the turn of the century. Take, for example, the *Fang Mask* from the Centre Pompidou (fig. A13). The various forms of the face here and in Modigliani’s portrait are centered in the middle of the sitter’s visage; the eyes are two blank almonds, the nose a long triangular projection, and the mouth a disproportionately small slit. We find Orloff also utilizing similar mask-like forms in her portraits. In particular, the same blank

³⁰ Kenneth E. Silver and Romy Golan, eds., *The Circle of Montparnasse: Jewish Artists in Paris: 1905-1945* (New York: Jewish Museum; Universe Books, 1985), 32.

³¹ Silver, *Paris Portraits*, 121.

³² Ibid.

³³ Paloma Alarcó and Malcolm Warner, eds., *The Mirror & the Mask: Portraiture in the Age of Picasso*, exh. cat. (Madrid: Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza; New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2007), 111.

eyes and distorted and simplified geometric features inform her works like *Tête de femme* from 1912. In this work we see similarly blank eyes and geometrically rendered nose with an unusually elongated neck (fig. A14). This piece recalls an even later work by Modigliani titled *Portrait of a Young Woman* where we might note an almost identical use of blank eyes and impossibly long neck in painted form (fig. A15).

CHAPTER 2: ORLOFF and the AMAZONES

In considering Orloff's oeuvre, and especially her portraiture, it is impossible to separate her artwork from her life. In this chapter, how her life and her art were shaped by her gender will be examined. It is perhaps because of her gender that so little has been written about her work. Only fairly recently have scholars called for increased attention to female artists, but even then much of the attention Orloff has received has emphasized her "maternal" character or her "instincts." The praise given to her "natural talent" invariably overlooks the artist's education, influences, efforts, and especially her intelligence. While the artist did consider her art an act of creating life in a maternal sense, it was certainly a belief that reflected not a "natural maternal instinct," but rather Orloff's education, intellectual curiosity, and especially her contact and involvement with feminist ideologies and discourse taking place in Paris between the two world wars. We find in her portraits, especially, the evidence of her engagement with these ideologies through her treatment of personages like Natalie Clifford Barney, Romaine Brooks, and many others who shared one important commonality: they were creators, often in solidarity with one another in promoting themselves as autonomous, modern women. We find, thus, another theme in Orloff's work: not maternity in a literal sense, but maternity in the sense of nurturing strong women and artists.

Most literature from this period has focused more heavily on male artists, largely situating female artists at the margins of the discourse. This marginalization could be, in part, because women did not have the same access to art institutions and training men did, and therefore there were not as many women who became artists in the first place. Still, those female participants in the arts at the turn of the century do not receive as much attention as their male counterparts. A lot of this neglect may have to do with the way these artists have been viewed.

We certainly see this bias when we consider the way in which Jewish women like Orloff have been viewed, as Juliet Bellow does in her essay “A Feminine Geography: Place and Displacement in Jewish Women’s Art of the Twentieth Century.”³⁴ According to Bellow, some authors like Griselda Pollock, understand feminism as threatening to the Jewish tradition. Others like Harold Rosenberg discuss Jewish women artists as producers of Jewish handicraft for ritual purposes (since he recognizes only ritual Jewish art and denies the existence of a Jewish style). Both simply relegate these artists to the realm of craftswomen and also, as Bellow notes, both mistakenly oversimplify Jewish women and their art.³⁵ In the process, they reduce their work to the domestic and corporeal realm.³⁶ Not only this, but oftentimes these female artists and their talents are described as more instinctual than learned.³⁷

In some writings about Orloff as a woman, we find similar references to instinctual naivety. Adolphe Gottlieb in *L’illustration juive* says that Orloff’s work appears “felt, lived, and exteriorized from the depths of *bodily* sensations.”³⁸ While Orloff in a 1935 interview has made statements to the effect that she worked from feelings, sensations, and attitudes more than theories, she also noted that with any artist, male or female, “nature is not enough, the painter has

³⁴ Juliet Bellow “A Feminine Geography: Place and Displacement in Jewish Women’s Art of the Twentieth Century,” in Larry Silver, Freyda Spira, and Juliet Bellow, eds., *Transformation: Jews and Modernity*, exh. cat. (Philadelphia: Arthur Ross Gallery; University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 35-55.

³⁵ Ibid., 35.

³⁶ Ibid., 36.

³⁷ Take, for example, Robert Delaunay’s description of his wife’s, Sonia Delaunay’s, work as “instinctual” even though it might be argued they produced work that was very theoretically and stylistically similar; *ibid.*, 39.

³⁸ Adolphe Gottlieb, *L’Illustration juive*, n.d. (c. 1930), Chana Orloff Archive, as quoted by Birnbaum, “Chana Orloff: Sculpting as a Modern Jewish Mother,” 50.

to study other men's canvases."³⁹ She makes no mention of her corporeal state and notes that "Art is art—It is neither masculine or feminine" and that "A woman must not and cannot approach her work from a deliberately feminine angle. She has to be guided by and master the particular medium like an artist if she is one"⁴⁰ This demonstrates that while Orloff believed that sculpting from sensation was a necessary aspect of breathing life into her own work, she also understood that, as an artist, studying others was essential.

Many statements about Orloff and other female sculptors overemphasize their instinct in gender-biased terms. One example is Haim Gamzu, an Israeli with a national interest in exhibiting and celebrating Orloff's work in order to recommend Israel as the institutional home for the artist's oeuvre.⁴¹ In an exhibition catalogue written in 1969, the year after Orloff's death, Gamzu, while praising Orloff, credits her first contact with artists of Montparnasse to her husband's connections rather than her own. Also, Gamzu describes the story of Orloff's discovery of sculpture as follows: "On a visit to a sculptor's workshop, she picked up a piece of clay, and without knowing what happened or how it happened, created her first sculpture."⁴² Adding to these statements, he refers to Orloff's treatment of line and mass as "maternal."⁴³

³⁹ Orloff was questioned about her work as a woman in the field of sculpture. She said, "I have no theories about sculpture. With me it is feeling, sensation that I translate into stone or wood. Theories do not matter; the attitude of the artist to life matters and if his work reveals a vulgar and trivial mind, then it is bad work." S.W. "From Petah Tikvah to Paris: Interview with Chana Orloff," *Palestine Post*, March 19, 1935, 4.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Birnbaum, "Chana Orloff: Sculpting as a Modern Jewish Mother," 51.

⁴² Gamzu, ed., *Chana Orloff (1888-1968) Exposition Retrospective—120 Sculptures—60 Dessins*, exh. cat. (Tel Aviv: Pavillion Helena Rubinstein, 1969). Amongst several contradictions, Haim Gamzu notes that Orloff's first sculpture was created strictly from instinct, but then, in his biographical notes includes the creation of Orloff's first sculpture "a portrait of her grandmother—from a photograph." If she was working from a photograph, this suggests

It is probably too easy to characterize Orloff as working from maternal instinct given that a generally recognized theme in Orloff's work is that of maternity. Paula J. Birnbaum is one scholar who has tried to explain this particular aspect of Orloff's work. She investigates mainly Orloff's multiple depictions of pregnant women like *Dame enceinte* (1916) or women holding infants as in her *Maternité* (1924) (figs. A16 and A17). In both, Orloff draws attention to a unique feminine ability: the ability to create and nurture life. This celebration of motherhood, however, could also be a reference to, and even celebration of women's abilities as creators in a more general and artistic sense. As Birnbaum has recognized, Orloff's depicting motherhood was as much a commentary on the artist's own individual experience as it was a way to ally herself politically, artistically, and ideologically with her surroundings.⁴⁴

Specifically, Orloff appealed to the new conception of the modern professional woman of the 1920s. We can see this attitude in the way she appears in a photograph taken for the 1924 edition of *Vanity Fair* by photographer, Therese Bonney (fig. A18). The artist is shown in her studio holding her son Elie next to various sculptures, including *Maternité* from that same year (fig. A17). She is wearing her work smock surrounded by the products of her labor, including her son who she holds protectively in her lap. As Birnbaum interpreted this image, Orloff was shown in this photograph taking on the dualistic role of a modern woman, professionally independent, as well as a mother. The artist herself once stated that she believed, "for me, a

some forethought as to the subject matter, while the story Gamzu tells about her first sculpture's spontaneous creation is inconsistent with the calculation suggested by his biographical note.

⁴³ In full, the statement reads, "Her sculptures [...] lack the element of scorn found in caricatures, and instead of this we find a decorative accentuation, which adds charm to the portraits by careful, appreciative, *maternal* styling of line and mass." Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

woman is especially and above all, a mother, and she does not live completely unless she experiences motherhood; also, I am convinced that for a woman artist [or “creatrice”], maternity is necessary because life is the most profound source of all art.”⁴⁵

If Orloff believed simply that one had to give birth to a child to be a good artist, then it seems a contradiction for her to celebrate her childless female contemporaries, immortalizing them in a variety of portraits. And yet, this is exactly what she did. While Birnbaum thinks that she is politically aligning herself with contemporary French pronatalism, it is plausible as well that she understood maternity in a more symbolic sense. For example, Marcilhac notes that Orloff’s depictions of maternity were less often portraits of specific people, than more generalized symbolic icons. Orloff once stated, “I want to create a living work of art.”⁴⁶ It follows that art and life for Orloff were inexorably tied together. In fact, art had the potential in Orloff’s mind to be a living thing. Her statements on the connection between art and motherhood do not seem antagonistic toward other female artists with whom she was close, because, even if they were childless, they were still creators, an ability that Orloff wanted to emphasize women were just as capable of being creative, perhaps even more capable than men. Ultimately, her portraits can be understood as a documentation of women’s artistic liberation and strength of ability. In her 1935 interview, she stated, “A woman must be more feminine; what you do is monumental.”⁴⁷ It appears Orloff embraced her “handicap” as a woman within the artistic community while still incorporating herself within the fabric of French society. Overall,

⁴⁵ Roumain, “‘*Toute femme a droit aux joies de la maternité*,’ soutient Mme Chana Orloff,” *Petit Journal*, August 8, 1935, as cited by Birnbaum, “Chana Orloff: Sculpting as a Modern Jewish Mother,” 48.

⁴⁶ S.W., “From Petah Tikvah to Paris,” 4.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

depicting female artists was just another way that Orloff defined herself and represented the character and richness of her surroundings.

The hypothesis that Orloff celebrated women as artistic creators in her work is supported by the women Orloff chose to represent. Orloff's portraits of these women became icons of specific ideologies concerning the new conception of the modern woman. We will look at several portraits by Orloff in order to confirm this trend in her work. Orloff demonstrated her connection to contemporaries who were similarly involved in defining a new feminism, especially in works that centered on feminine comradeship, love, and independence. Of these portraits, we can include Natalie Clifford Barney, Romaine Brooks, and many other women who we might define as "Amazons." These amazons were strong, self-sufficient women, and also creators whose art and lives were linked in many interesting ways.

Challenges and Opportunities: Education and Experience

In order to begin this investigation of feminine identity through Orloff's work, we must trace the artist's own journey from a feminist perspective, taking into account the challenges she and others faced in becoming artists. We will look at Orloff's journey to Paris, her education, and her involvement in various academies, schools, and salons including the Vassiliev Academy and Natalie Clifford Barney's school and salon.

The ways in which gender defined Orloff and her work included those aspects of society that restricted her, but also those communities that liberated her and her art. From the beginning, Orloff did not conform to traditional roles or duties. During her upbringing within a Jewish community in Russia, women were generally discouraged to formally study Hebrew or Torah. Although women were often given at least an elementary education, they were also limited to certain professions such as shop assistants or seamstresses and dressmakers. Very few artistic

opportunities were afforded to women, although some trades did require artistic skills including weaving, printing cloth, embroidery, and millinery. For those who did want to pursue various trades in the arts, it would have been necessary to leave the community to realize, study or even publish works of art or literature.⁴⁸ Even so, daughters were encouraged in the direction of the domestic sphere while sons were sent to school and then placed in apprenticeships. Orloff herself had to persuade her brother to teach her to read in secret. Afterwards, she took an apprenticeship as a seamstress in a neighboring town.⁴⁹ Upon her family's relocation to Palestine, Orloff's skills as a seamstress supported the family and eventually propelled her move to Paris in 1910.⁵⁰

Upon her arrival in France, Orloff took a room in the home of a friend of the family, Madame Rosenblum. At the same time, she began work at *chez Paquin*, a house of *haute couture*. In the evenings, Orloff attended professional development courses where one of her teachers noticed her talent for drawing, recommending that she enroll in art school. Orloff applied to *la Petite école*, later to be referred to as *l'Ecole des arts décoratifs*, and in 1911, was awarded second place in the entrance competition at this institution.⁵¹

It is important to note as well that the *Petite école* had only recently begun to teach young women.⁵² The *Grande école*, the only other state-funded arts institution in France, had also previously restricted enrollment predominantly to men, although women were allowed to audit

⁴⁸ Grossman, 8.

⁴⁹ Tamir, Justman, and Birnbaum, 19.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 19-20.

⁵¹ Gamzu, "Biographical Note," *Chana Orloff (1888-1968)*.

⁵² Tamir, Justman, Birnbaum, 20.

some courses.⁵³ Still, when the *Grande école* officially opened its doors to women in 1897, it continued to place limitations on female student's opportunities. Female students at this time could only attend a portion of the courses offered. Some of these courses were separated by gender, including modeling and drawing courses which women were only able to attend two days a week and for no more than two hours each time. Additionally, until the late 1920s, only one studio course per term was offered to female students—thus limiting the number of women in proportion to men who could study studio arts at the school.

Similarly, the *Petite école* also separated men's and women's courses as evidenced by the fact that while Orloff was in attendance there she went to class in the medical building, separate from the art school itself. Another institutional obstacle to female artists was that most private arts institutions were exorbitantly expensive, especially for women who were often charged twice as much as men to enroll in courses.⁵⁴ It is therefore fortunate, as well as impressive, that Orloff was accepted into the *Petite école* given the overwhelming institutional barriers preventing women from studying art in Paris. Her accomplishment is all the more significant when we consider that she had only just moved to France a year prior with a fairly rudimentary knowledge of French.⁵⁵

During her three years at the *Petite école*, Orloff received instruction in drawing and anatomy from Professor Bruneau and in the history of art from Paul Vitry.⁵⁶ In addition to her

⁵³ Before hand, they could only audit courses, which still restricted them from taking courses in art history, anatomy, and perspective. Additionally, they were previously unable to use library resources, apply for school funding, or participate in art competitions; Kronrod, 105.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 102.

⁵⁵ Tamir, Justman, and Brinbaum, 20.

⁵⁶ Marcilhac, 16; 19.

studies, Orloff continued her education independently through trips to the Louvre where she made drawings from ancient works.⁵⁷ As previously mentioned, her knowledge and study of classical works is evident in many of her pieces. Orloff's artistic education didn't end with the *Petite école*. She supplemented her formal education through the free atelier created by Marie Vassilieff, another female artist living in Paris with Russian origins. Vassilieff, alongside Tatiana Tolstoy, was one of only two women to found independent art schools in Paris.⁵⁸ Vassilieff and her school, the *Académie Russe*, were crucial influences on Orloff's work, and Vassilieff deserves further mention here as another woman in Orloff's circle whose accomplishments shaped the artistic community in Montparnasse during the first half of the twentieth century.

Vassilieff, an immigrant to Paris like Orloff, first visited France from Russia in 1905. She immigrated permanently in 1907 as an artistic correspondent. For some time, Vassilieff was a student of Henri Matisse.⁵⁹ Unlike other female students in France, Vassilieff, who received her schooling in Russia, was able to benefit from a more progressive atmosphere in the arts in Russia. In France, women still struggled to compete with men in gaining admittance and equality within the state sponsored and private art schools, whereas Russia's Imperial Academy of Arts in St. Petersburg had been admitting female students since 1871.⁶⁰ Vassilieff's involvement with the artistic community can be traced to meetings at her private studio that

⁵⁷ Ibid., 19.

⁵⁸ Kronrod, 105.

⁵⁹ Tamir, Justman, and Birnbaum, 56.

⁶⁰ Kronrod, 104.

became a significant attraction to artists, especially cubists, including Braque, Picasso, Marevna, Léger, Salmon, Matisse, Cendrars, Suzanne Valadon, and many others in 1908.⁶¹ These studio gatherings eventually transformed into the *Académie Vassilieff* in 1911, still at the same location.⁶² In November of the same year, Vassilieff founded *l'Académie Russe*, born from her *Académie Libre* from the previous year, informally called the *Académie Vassilieff* but not to be confused with her studio gatherings.⁶³ The school was a free art academy located at the center of the artistic community in Montparnasse. Here artists with a variety of backgrounds were able to, at little to no cost, attend as many studio art courses as they wished. This academy attracted many international artists and immigrants to Paris. It is here that Orloff likely encountered cubism as well as other forms of artistic experimentation taking place at this time.⁶⁴ It is also through private schools and academies like Vassilieff's that foreign women artists like Orloff were able to work and learn alongside male artists, often for the first time.⁶⁵ The success of Vassilieff's various informal institutions is perhaps due to their being very much in keeping with

⁶¹ Ibid., 107.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ The dates for most of Vassilieff's organizations are tentative, given that she was so involved and oftentimes her efforts overlapped. Marcilhac, for example, identifies the start date of the *Académie Russe* as 1908 and the *Académie Vassilieff* as 1909. In Tamir, Justman and Birnbaum's text we have two dates for the Russian Academy, 1908 and 1910, but the same date for the *Académie Vassilieff*, although it is uncertain whether they are referring to the *Académie Libre* or the official *Académie Vassilieff* founded in 1911. It is similarly uncertain from Kronrod's text whether these two Vassilieff academies are one and the same. For this paper, I am assuming they are not based upon location and purpose. For more, see Tamir, Justman, and Birnbaum, 47, 56; Kronrod, 106-107; Marcilhac, 19.

⁶⁴ Marcilhac, 19.

⁶⁵ Kronrod, 101.

French republican ideals. It thus might seem ironic that her academy catered predominantly to an international art community that did not originate in France.

In a statement by Vassilieff about her *Académie Russe*, she notes:

I founded a great academy of modern painting, commercial, in a sense, because it is very cheap to realize my ideal: to reunite all artists, that is to say, to found a society based on liberty, equality and fraternity, in short, the republican ideal.⁶⁶

It is this ideal that allowed for a great amount of exchange to take place in the artistic community of Montparnasse. Even in hard times, Vassilieff's academy dedicated itself to creating a forum for equal artistic exchange and comradeship. After the commencement of the First World War in 1914, Vassilieff adapted her atelier to become a canteen, particularly to serve as a hub for artists fallen on hard times because of the war. This gathering place brought together artists like Picasso, Léger, Friesz, Valadon, Modigliani, Picabia, and many others, all of whom Orloff came into contact with during her early years in Paris.⁶⁷

Orloff's involvement with Vassilieff's academy not only allowed her to make the acquaintance of various modern artists, but also afforded her the opportunity to observe and absorb the multiple tenets of modernist thought, not just concerning form, but also life more generally. As suggested earlier, Orloff's work reflects a very personal style in terms of, not only her refusal to adapt to one particular mode, but also her understanding and representation of the diverse personalities surrounding her. Although there is no known portrait of Vassilieff by

⁶⁶ "Je fondais une grande Académie de peinture moderne, commerciale, en ce sens, parce que très bon marché [...] pour réaliser mon idéal: réunir tous les artistes, c'est-à-dire fonder une société base sur la liberté, l'égalité, la fraternité, sur l'idéal républicain en somme." My own translation from *L'École de Paris*, 368 as quoted by Kronrod, 106.

⁶⁷ As previously noted, many of these artists had been involved with Vassilieff's activities for several years. Tamir, Justman, and Birnbaum, 22.

Orloff, we can still see Vassilieff's ideological influence in Orloff's work, particularly the appreciation and celebration of otherness in conformity with certain French ideals lauded by Vassilieff. Also, Orloff and Vassilieff likely connected in terms of their status as others: both of them Russian foreigners and female artists working in France.

While Orloff was involved with Vassilieff's school, she also moved in other circles that supported similar values. These activities put her into contact with notable female artists and intellectuals. This development worked because these alternative schools afforded more artistic opportunities for women and foreign artists alike. In particular, Orloff worked at the Académie Colarossi, sharing a studio with Jeanne Hébuterne, another female artist who is today better known for her tragic romantic relationship with Amedeo Modigliani than for her actual work.⁶⁸ In 1914, Orloff completed a portrait of Hébuterne with the title *Vièrge-Jeanne Hébuterne* (fig. A19).⁶⁹ Hébuterne is an example of Orloff's early portraiture. In this case, we have a full-bodied sculpture in plaster that conforms very much to Orloff's description of the woman herself.

She was like me, a pupil at the school of decorative arts. We called her coconut [...] skinny like a column-statue, two braids making landfall, the eyes blue and almond shaped, always silent, such as I presented her to my friends of Montparnasse. For many it was love at first sight, but she lived for Modigliani.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Ibid., 36.

⁶⁹ Tamir, Justman, and Birnbaum, 22.

⁷⁰ “Elle était comme moi élève à l'école des arts décoratifs. Nous l'appelions noix de coco [...] Mince comme une statue-colonne, deux nattes touchant terre, les yeux bleus en amande, toujours silencieuse, telle je la présentais à mes amis de Montparnasse. Pour beaucoup ce fut le coup de foudre, mais elle ne vit que Modigliani.” My own translation from Tamir, Justman, and Birnbaum, 22.

We can see in this description how Orloff's understanding of form was inseparable in many ways from her perception of the subject's character and personality. Everything about the sculpture conveys a sense of quite virtue—characteristics one might associate with the title Orloff assigned to the piece—"Virgin." Hébuterne's thin body is in many ways accentuated by her long braids that cascade downwards, blending together with the vertical lines of her dress. The curvature of her form is largely hidden, adding to the sense of height and solidity in her stature. It is evident that Orloff did not simply intend to create a formal likeness of her friend, but a portrait of her personality, one that is both strong and silent—evoking both the love and admiration felt towards her by her contemporaries.

Romaine Brooks and Natalie Clifford Barney

Orloff, as previously mentioned, completed portraits of many other female artists and intellectuals. Amongst these portraits we find a theme in her choice of female subject. More often than not, these women are further examples of the modern professional woman, often artists and writers, many also feminists and political activists. Orloff, as in her early work of Hébuterne, portrays them in a way that communicates their personality and intellectual or moral virtue as well as their physical likeness.

Another example of this is Orloff's portrait of Romaine Brooks from 1923 (fig. A20). Brooks is best known as a painter and portraitist. Orloff shows her as a standing figure. She wears what appears to be a fur lined coat and hat. Winter garments, exposing only her face, envelop her entire body. Her hands disappear into the pockets of the coat leaving the only indication of her gender given by her cinched waist that creates the illusion of skirts beneath her coat. Brooks's cap and what appears to be a scarf wrapped around her wide forehead hides her hair while simultaneously functioning to frame her elongated face, the features of which are

fairly serious and immobile. The mouth curves down in an arch while the eyes are wide and dark, shadowed by a high set brow raised to form an almost proud, if not haughty gaze. Her nose is small and straight, her chin stiff, her head held steady. Her shoulders are thrown back slightly, emphasizing a haughty chest that lends an air of dignity to the overall positioning of the figure whose proportions, though far from naturalistic, give a sense that the subject is somehow both strong and serious.

To understand this representation, we must also understand the figure and her relationship to the artist. Brooks, like Orloff, was connected with the Académie Colarossi, although it is perhaps unlikely that they met there since Brooks began her studies at the academy ten years prior to Orloff's arrival in France.⁷¹ Brooks was originally from the United States, born in 1874.⁷² The artist suffered a tumultuous upbringing, escaping her family to settle in Paris in 1895 where she initially intended to study music.⁷³ Instead, she found herself in Rome and Capri until 1905 where she studied painting. Afterwards, she returned to Paris where she became fairly well known for her portraiture. Brooks' was referred to as the "thief of souls" for her ability to

⁷¹ Brooks enrolled in the Académie Colarossi around 1900. Therefore, it is uncertain whether the two met there, but it seems likely that this placed them within similar circles. See Whitney Chadwick, *Amazons in the Drawing Room: The Art of Romaine Brooks* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2000), 15.

⁷² Jean Chalon, *Portrait of a Seductress: The World of Natalie Clifford Barney*, trans. Carok Barko (New York: Crown Publishers, 1976), 120.

⁷³ In particular, her upbringing has been considered conflicted because her mother treated her as if she were her maid, and not her daughter. Instead, the mother doted on her only son and Brook's brother St. Mar. Her mother once even briefly abandoned her as a child, placing her in the care of a housekeeper. Although her family was wealthy, Brook's mother left her impoverished with a pitiful monthly allowance while she was studying in Europe. It was only later in her career that Brooks inherited her wealth. Karla Jay, *The Amazon and the Page: Natalie Clifford Barney and Renée Vivien* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1988), 30.

portray people as they were, not idealized, but according to their inner self.⁷⁴ Her portraits, however, were not always flattering. The Marquise Casati, for example, complained to Brooks upon seeing her image, saying, “you haven’t improved me,” to which Brooks supposedly replied, “I have ennobled you.”⁷⁵ Brooks clearly sought to reveal a person’s character, not just to improve their formal image. Having money allowed her to choose her subjects at will, selecting most often from her circle of friends and acquaintances in the art world.⁷⁶

One aspect of Orloff’s portraiture that we find without fail is a similar tendency to represent the interior life and abilities of her subjects, achieving the most faithful conceptual and formal likeness possible. She too, ennobled her subjects, as did Brooks. One critic, Edouard des Courières, made a particular note of this quality in Orloff’s work, especially in her portrait of Mac Orlan from 1923 to 1924 (fig. A21).

Chana Orloff’s portraits remain one of the most precious testaments of our time. I would be very afraid to pose for Chana Orloff. She once did the portrait of Mac Orlan and, after that, Mac Orlan is nothing but the reflection of the real Mac Orlan created by the artist.⁷⁷

This ability that Orloff and Brooks shared ultimately results in a portrait of Brooks that reflects the artist’s own abilities of observation: and even aspects of her own painted portraits.

⁷⁴ It was, in fact, Robert de Montesquiou in his article “Cambrioleurs d’ames,” who first referred to Brooks in such a way, observing her ability to capture a person’s intangible being in their portrait. See Tirza True Latimer, *Women Together/Women Apart: Portraits of Lesbian Paris* (New Brunswick and London: Rutgers University Press, 2005), 44.

⁷⁵ Chalon, 120.

⁷⁶ Jay, 30; 33.

⁷⁷ “Les portraits de Chana Orloff resteront un des plus précieux témoignages sur notre époque. J’aurais grand’peur de poser pour Chana Orloff. Elle fit un jour le portrait de Mac Orlan et, depuis lors, Mac Orlan n’est plus que le reflet du vrai Mac Orlan créé par l’artiste.” My own translation from des Courières, *Chana Orloff et Son Oeuvre*, as quoted by Gamzu, “Extraits de Critiques,” *Chana Orloff (1888-1968)*.

We find this in the stillness of her portrait, but also its solidity. The wide eyes, and serious features, alongside a confident positioning make the sculpture appear as if it were contemplating, perhaps assessing something. She is an observer, but her own identity is somewhat mysterious, hidden beneath a heavy garment, she sees us but we do not see her. As some of her contemporaries had observed, “she’s a stranger everywhere.” However, at the same time, Barney once said, “she is of such integrity, of such spotless morality, that she makes the blemishes of others all the more visible.”⁷⁸

One major connection of Brooks’ was Natalie Clifford Barney. Barney and Brooks were actually romantically involved for most of their lives. Unfortunately, a great amount of the literature, especially on Barney, overemphasizes these two figure’s sexuality over their accomplishments, although it is impossible to fully separate their lives and attitudes towards gender from their work. It is, however, distracting and superfluous to sensationalize them as, for example, Jean Chalon did in his biography of Natalie Barney entitled *Portrait of a Seductress: The World of Natalie Clifford Barney*. This biography tends to characterize Barney as a conniving harlot through her various relationships, especially with her platonic male friend Remy de Gourmont whom he believed Barney consciously seduced, although it was never documented that the two ever had anything beyond an intellectual relationship. Still, Chalon writes,

In August, a decisive stage in her seduction plan, Natalie dared to do what no one in Paris would have had the nerve to risk: she plucked him from the hold of his books and surroundings, tearing the hermit away from his retreat for a nocturnal drive in the Bois de Boulogne.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Chalon, 120.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 102-103.

However, it is not a seductress that Orloff gives us in her portrait of Natalie Clifford Barney from 1920 (fig. A22). Her portrait of Barney is a simple wooden bas-relief in profile. Barney wears a rather unusual cap, almost like a helmet. It rides high and stiff on her head, her hair protruding as if an extension to it. The brim of her headpiece sweeps downwards across the face, mimicking the curved line of the figure's nose, accentuating its circularity and nobility instead of alternatively creating a caricature. The rest of the face is similarly rounded and plump, her loose jaw line revealing her age and experience, yet detracting little from the overall balance of the facial composition. Her lips, her chin and her cheeks are all smooth, full, and round. The expression is neutral, staring straight off into the distance. Combining the various aspects of the representation—the low relief, the noble features, and steady profile—the piece resembles images fit to appear on coinage. Although we cannot be certain of the artist's iconographical sources, it is fairly certain that Orloff, once again, was interested in representing the inner virtue of her subject, a virtue that we cannot fully understand without investigating the subject herself.

Natalie Clifford Barney was a multitalented, intellectual artist and professional woman, not unlike many of the female sitters for Orloff's other portraits. In her lifetime, she wrote twenty books, most of them in French, including poetry, essays, and portraits of her contemporaries.⁸⁰ Barney, like Brooks, was an American. Born in Dayton, Ohio, in 1876, Barney grew up as the daughter of a wealthy railroad company man, Albert Clifford Barney. Her mother, Alice Clifford Barney, was a portrait painter. As a result, Barney grew up within a privileged and cultured environment, traveling throughout Europe where she claims she and her

⁸⁰ Ibid., xi.

sister became feminists after observing gender inequality in Belgium.⁸¹ Eventually, her mother moved to Paris, and the girls were sent to boarding school. Her youth is often recounted in terms of her relationships with other women, including Evalina Palmer, a young heiress, and Liane de Pougy, an infamous courtesan. Indeed, it is her relationships with women like Liane de Pougy that added fodder to Barney's literary fire.⁸² Barney, like Orloff, demonstrated an understanding of art and life as sharing an essential and unbreakable connection. Barney eventually moved to Paris at the turn of the century, around the same time that she published her *Quelques portraits—sonnets de femmes* in 1900.⁸³ On her move to Paris, Barney characterizes her new home as “the only city in which one can express oneself as one pleases. In spite of harmful progress inflicted from abroad, it continues to respect and even to encourage personality.”⁸⁴

Barney was not the only artist who felt this way. Paris, and especially the burgeoning art community at the turn of the century, could be characterized as a land of exiles; and it was in this environment that Barney flourished. Similar to Vassilieff, Barney appeared wholly committed to nurturing an accepting environment within the arts community. In 1909, Barney moved into 20, rue Jacob, a property containing as some of its significant features a garden containing a Doric temple dating to the early nineteenth century. On this temple was a dedication inscription “to

⁸¹ As the story goes, Barney saw a woman pulling a cart alongside a dog while the man with her did nothing. Jay, 2.

⁸² Ibid., 3.

⁸³ This book in particular was highly criticized for its same-sex eroticism and was suppressed in part by Barney's father, limiting Barney's reach of influence not to mention making it particularly difficult to find an extant copy of the text. Ibid., 4.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 8.

friendship.”⁸⁵ The concept of comradeship was central to Barney’s life and work. Friendship, according to Barney was a “pact above passions, the only indissoluble marriage both by logic and excellence.”⁸⁶ For the express purpose of creating friendships within the arts community, she opened a salon in October of that year, holding various events in her new space, including theatricals. Each Friday the salon opened its doors to the artistic and intellectual elite of Paris.⁸⁷

Amongst the minority of studio artists in a crowd of writers that attended Barney’s Salon, we find Orloff. Evidence of this might be retrieved from *Les Aventures de l’esprit*, a publication of Barney’s from 1929 associated with her circle of friends. On the frontispiece are the names of those she welcomed into her “Temple of Friendship” between the years 1910 and 1930. Many of these were the subjects of Orloff’s portraits including Pitoëff, Fleg, Bernheim, Chareau, and Max Jacob (fig. A23).⁸⁸ Orloff was likely introduced to this circle by her friends Edmond and Madeliene Fleg, and found herself in the center of a vibrant artistic environment.⁸⁹

In the same year Orloff completed her portrait, Barney had published her *Pensées d’une amazone*, a volume that she dedicates to artistic collaboration and fraternity, especially to the support of women, and more specifically, the Amazons and women of letters that she champions.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 24.

⁸⁶ Natalie Clifford Barney, *Nouvelles Pensées de l’Amazone* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1939), 49, as quoted by Jay, 25.

⁸⁷ Jay lists, among others, regular attendees at the Salon including André Gide, Paul Valéry, Paul Claudel, Jean Cocteau, Gabriele d’Annunzio, Anatole France, Auguste Rodin, Rabindranath Tagore, James Joyce, Rainer-Maria Rilke, Isadora Duncan, Gertrude Stein, Salomon Reinach, André Germain, Edmond Jaloux, André Rouveyre, Oscar Milosz, and Max Jacob. See Jay, 25.

⁸⁸ Marcilhac, 66.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 61.

In the dedication section of her *Pensées*, Barney pays homage to these particular audiences, noting her indebtedness to “the friend, the eternal friend of the Amazon,” as well as to “the friend of *belles lettres* and of *belles lettrées*.”⁹⁰ In each of these phrases we should note Barney’s appreciation of friendship, but especially friendship directed towards women, and particularly intellectual, strong, and artistic women. This affiliation is more apparent in the French itself, than perhaps in an English translation, as *belles lettrées* is written in the feminine plural form to indicate female writers in particular. Returning to Orloff’s portrait, we might understand it not just as a likeness, but more thoroughly as an articulation of the sitter’s character. It reflects Barney’s dedication to friendship, and especially her commitment to creating gender equality. For example, the format of Orloff’s composition references to the kind of contemporary iconography one might associate with feminine power, and especially liberty, equality, and fraternity.

Consider a medal designed by Louis-Oscar Roty from around the time Orloff executed her portrait of Barney (fig. A24). On one side we have a female figure in profile. She stares straight into the distance, her head covered by a winged helmet. There are similarities in the shape of the hat and this helmet. Particularly, the curvature of the helmet and the hat are similar, even though the woman in Roty’s image wears a much more detailed helmet, including wings and what appears to be laurel or olive branches. This image is, in fact, one of many representing the female personification of the French Republic: Marianne.⁹¹

⁹⁰ Translated from the French, “l’ami, l’éternel ami de l’Amazone” and “l’ami des belles lettres et des belles lettrées.” ‘Belle lettres’ translated directly just means beautiful letters, but here refers to a category of writing including poetry, theatre, and so on. By association, the ‘belle lettrées’ are the poets, play writers, and other authors of ‘belle lettres.’ See Natalie Clifford Barney, *Pensées d’une Amazone* (Paris: Emile-Paul Frères, 1921), iii-iv.

⁹¹ Birnbaum, “Chana Orloff: Sculpting as a Modern Jewish Mother,” 49.

Birnbaum characterized the figure of Marianne as not just a reference to the French Republic, but as a symbol of French maternity favored by conservative critics who advocated pronatalism. Birnbaum, thus, dismisses Marianne as a symbol unfavorable to women artists, including Brooks and Barney who did not support the pronatalist agenda.⁹² Orloff's use of formal references to Marianne in a portrait of Barney would then seem unlikely. Further, even if Orloff herself supported pronatalism, it would go against the nature of her portraiture more generally to use iconography that did not aid in defining the characteristic traits and beliefs of her sitter. Moreover, in considering the iconography of Marianne from an alternative perspective, we see that Marianne's presence in Orloff's portrait of Barney is more than appropriate, and perhaps ideal.

From this alternative perspective, we should consider Marianne's significance more as an emblem of the French Republic than as of French motherhood. In Roty's medal, this relationship is clear through the inscription that accompanies Marianne's image: "Republique Francaise." As previously established, French republican ideals were not far from Barney's own. In the case of Orloff's portrait of Barney, Marianne appears to represent the French Republican ideals of "liberté," "fraternité," and "égalité." Given Barney's statements about the accepting environment of Paris and her attitudes towards friendship more generally, it is perhaps these French ideals that she hoped to nurture and emulate, not unlike Marie Vassilieff when she established her *Académie Russe*.

Also, representations of Marianne utilize a classical vocabulary deriving from images of Athena or Minerva. After the French Revolution, the image of Athena was adapted to represent

⁹² Ibid.

the new French Republic and the freedom associated with it. As material evidence of this development, a statue of Minerva was erected in the Place de la Révolution in Paris, symbolic of the city's role in the creation of the new government.⁹³ In the early twentieth century, this symbol of Athena was adapted into other imagery of the Republic. While her image has been understood in the past as just another part of a patriarchal pantheon, there is also the possibility that her image could be adapted as a Jungian-style icon of female power or matriarchy. In this sense, classical figures like this Athena might have appealed to Barney and her circle, which makes it an appropriate iconographical reference in Orloff's portrait of Barney herself. Using Roty's medal of Marianne as an example, we can see a winged figure inscribed on Marianne's armor: similar to depictions of the Nike Athena from the Acropolis. Additionally, in many representations of Athena she wears a helmet, although not quite exactly the one Roty gives us on Marianne. In any case, it is important to note not only these formal references, but also their symbolic significance. With her origins in ancient Greece and Rome, Athena or Minerva is the goddess of, amongst other things, strength, wisdom and the arts.⁹⁴

Thus, given both the significance of Marianne and Athena together as powerful women as well as their other attributes, it seems natural for Orloff to represent Barney as a sort of modern Marianne or Athena in her portrait. She is shown as strong, almost regal, whilst simultaneously embodying artistic liberty, fraternity, and most of all sexual equality through the associative promotion of her intellectual strength and wisdom. This interpretation of the portrait also reinforces this idea that Orloff looked to both the French past and present to celebrate otherness using a local vocabulary that appealed to French ideals.

⁹³ Susan Deacy and Alexandra Villing, eds., *Athena in the Classical World* (Leiden, Boston and Cologne: Brill, 2001), 5.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

Another unofficial portrait of Orloff's that we might connect with Natalie Clifford Barney, or at least the ideals she represented, is Orloff's *L'Amazone* from 1915 (fig. A25). Regardless of whether Orloff intended this work to represent Barney specifically, it demonstrates that Orloff was not exclusively a pronatalist as Birnbaum might lead us to believe. Instead there was another dimension to Orloff's understanding of female subjects. To reiterate, Orloff was more generally supportive of women's equality within the realm of French ideals. We find this attitude in her Amazon, as well as other works that celebrate a congruent ideal of female friendship, an ideal very much in keeping with the values of Natalie Clifford Barney and others in Orloff's circle.

Orloff's *l'Amazone* from 1915 represents at the most basic iconographic level, a woman on horseback. It was also a subject that Orloff returned to again in 1955 in her work *Ecuyère* (fig. A26). The horse and woman in her earlier version are articulated using smooth geometric forms that flow into one another. The woman appears to wear a long riding outfit, the skirts blending into the horse's tail. The horse stands on three legs with one of the front legs lifted delicately. The forms of the horse consist of mostly circular and oval shapes, making up its joints, its flanks, and its eyes. An interesting aspect of the sculpture is the manipulation of proportions through which the woman seems larger than the horse, to the point that if the figure were standing beside her steed, she would overwhelm it.

When we look into the title of the piece, *Amazone*, we might simply understand the word as just one way of saying "horsewoman" or "equestrian." But, the title could also have a double meaning. *Amazone* can be understood as a reference to the amazons associated with the ancient past. The Greek legend of the Amazons tells the story of a group of women outside the borders of the society of man. They are typically described as warriors, adept in archery and in

horseback riding.⁹⁵ We can already see how a woman on horseback, as in Orloff's sculpture, might refer to an ancient Amazon. However, given the contemporary dress of the figure, we are looking at an Amazon of Orloff's own epoch: perhaps those women like Barney who themselves looked back to these mythical women from antiquity in admiration of their qualities.

In fact, Barney received the nickname *l'Amazone* from her friend Remy de Gourmont. Around this time, Barney would often pay her friend regular visits after horseback riding in the Bois du Boulogne. Her dress was often a riding habit with a "little brimless hat" and can be seen in one photograph of her from that time (fig. A27). Gourmont supposedly rented the outfit from her for sentimental reasons. The two would often converse for long periods of time, after which point Gourmont would make a record of his interactions and thoughts inspired by those conversations, which eventually became his *Lettres à l'Amazone*. This work was published serially between January 1912 and October 1913 in *Le Mercure de France*.⁹⁶ The fact that Barney rode horses, paired with her ideals, was likely the source for Gourmont's choice of nickname. Barney eventually embraced this title as part of her identity, an adoption reflected in the titles she gave to her collection of poems *Pensées d'une Amazone* and also her later *Nouvelles pensées de l'amazone* from 1939.⁹⁷ Barney's biographers, including Chalon, have also used the term "l'Amazone" to refer to her specifically.⁹⁸ Romaine Brooks even did a

⁹⁵ Lorna Hardwick, "Ancient Amazons—Heroes, Outsiders or Women?" *Greece & Rome* 37, no. 1 (April 1990): 14.

⁹⁶ Chalon, 108-109.

⁹⁷ See Barney, *Pensées d'une Amazone* and *Nouvelles Pensées de l'Amazone*.

⁹⁸ Brigit Elliott and Jo-Ann Wallace, "Fleurs du Mal or Second-Hand Roses? Natalie Barney, Romaine Brooks, and the 'Originality of the Avant-Garde,'" *Feminist Review* 40 (Spring 1992): 27.

painted portrait of Barney entitled *l'Amazone* from 1920, in which we find Barney depicted with a tiny horse sculpture—clearly associated with her nickname and identifying her further as an *Amazone* (fig. A28).

Barney, in her written work, she also makes various references to the *Amazones* as a collective group of women, ancient and modern. This usage probably emanated from her interest in the matriarchs of history, a fascination she shared with her lover, Renée Vivien. Vivien was particularly concerned with re-writing masculine characterizations of historical and biblical women like Lilith, for example. She, in essence, tried to re-empower these women in order to both highlight and celebrate their strength and intelligence. Both Vivien and Barney were concerned with modeling their lives especially after the historical figure of Sappho, the female poet similarly defined by her relationships with other women. By emulating Sappho and re-living their version of her history, they hoped to legitimize creativity in women.⁹⁹ It might be argued that Barney tried to do a similar thing with her adaptation of the term *Amazones*. This term was significant in referring to a group of female outsiders like Barney and her friends, women who were independent from men and characterized by their strength, but also by their relationships with one another.

The importance of female comradeship in Barney's world is especially demonstrated by the formation of an Academy of Women in 1927. This Academy was meant as a challenge to the *Académie Française*, an academy that was typically misogynist, only accepting one woman in 1980. At this new academy, Barney organized gatherings specifically for women writers.¹⁰⁰ Her intention was to create a friendly, collaborative environment amongst these writers, allowing an

⁹⁹ Jay, 61.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 33.

open forum for talented female, as well as male, writers to review each other.¹⁰¹ Barney even made it so that works that might never have been published otherwise if it were not for a subsidy from the Academy. One writer and artist to benefit from this was Djuna Barnes who published her *Ladies Almanack* in 1928—essentially a *roman à clef* about Barney's salon work.¹⁰²

The cover of this book was originally illustrated with a woodcut by the author herself (fig. A29). In this woodcut, we find an image of five women, all on horseback. One of these women appears out in front of the others, sword raised, wearing a military jacket and hat, her horse in mid-gallop. She appears to be leading the charge of women behind her who display a banner containing the title of the volume it adorns. It is likely that the leader here, as it was in the salon, was Natalie Clifford Barney, and it is no coincidence that she appears again on horseback, as does the figure in Chana Orloff's *L'Amazone*. Although, the generalized nature of the forms in Orloff's depiction indicate not one specific Amazone, but perhaps functions as an icon of the collective experience of the modern Amazone. In this case, *l'Amazone* stands in as a symbol for not just Barney, but all artists, writers, and women occupying a similar position, including Orloff herself. All of these women form a collective entity as they are represented behind Barney in Barnes' illustration.

¹⁰¹ Interestingly, the academy did not exclude men, even though it consisted of mostly women. In particular, the Academy of Women supported the writer Ezra Pound, *ibid*.

¹⁰² *Ibid*. Djuna Barnes, *Ladies Almanack: showing their signs and their tides, their moons and their changes, the seasons as it is with them, their eclipses and equinoxes, as well as a full record of diurnal and nocturnal distempers/written & illustrated by a lady of fashion* (1928, Normal, Ill.: Dalkey Archive Press, 1992).

Strength in Fraternité or “Sororité”

Orloff’s dedication to supporting other women artists and writers can also be found in her other subjects. One of these works is her sculpture, *Ruth et Noémie* from 1928 (fig. A30). This sculpture, for which the artist did several sketches, represents two women. Both are striding figures shown with their arms around each other’s shoulders. One figure looks ahead while the other looks off to the side. Overall, the mirroring and connectivity of the two figures emulates a sense of comradeship and forward movement. It is almost as if one figure could not ambulate without the other, they are so inexorably connected.

This observation is supported by the title of the piece, which indicates two characters from a biblical narrative about female friendship and support. The story is that of Ruth and Naomi from the Old Testament. Naomi was a woman who followed her husband from Bethlehem to Moab with their two sons. When her husband dies, she raises her sons by herself. These sons eventually marry two Moab women, one of them named Ruth. Unfortunately, both of Naomi’s sons also pass on. Intent on returning to Bethlehem by herself, and unable to remarry, she tries to send her daughter-in-laws back to their parents’ homes. But her daughter-in-law, Ruth, refuses to abandon Naomi.¹⁰³ When Naomi tries to convince her to leave, Ruth replies:

Don’t urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if ever death separates you and me.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ Tamir, Justman, and Birnbaum, 49.

¹⁰⁴ *Holy Bible: New International Version*, Ruth 1:16.

This story likely appealed to the artist on a very personal level. Orloff also found herself widowed with a young child at the time she sculpted her *Ruth et Noémie*. In 1916, she had married Ary Justman, a young poet.¹⁰⁵ The couple welcomed a son, Elie, only two years later in 1918. Sadly, Justman contracted Spanish flu after the armistice, like his friend Guillaume Apollinaire, while working with the Red Cross. He died only eight days after his son's first birthday.¹⁰⁶ After the tragedy of her husband's death, Orloff's many close friends came to her aid. She published a book of wood engravings with eleven portraits meant to honor friends who had helped her through that difficult period. Ten of these engravings were of women, and one was of her son.¹⁰⁷ We can, therefore, see how this experience shaped her understanding of the artistic community, and especially her views concerning female friendship.

Orloff's own contribution to the cause of other female artists and activists was to ennoble them in her many portraits. Since it is not within the scope of this paper to go into detail concerning each and every one of these portraits of women, let it suffice to say that amongst her many portraits, we find a theme. Many of the women Orloff portrayed were artistic, creative, independent and successful. Many were also activists for women's equality. These included writers like Anaïs Nin, Claude Cahun, and the Eire de Lanux. Orloff inscribed her portraits of women as a part of the artistic elite and as equal contributors to their own epoch.

¹⁰⁵ Marcilhac, 35.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 51.

¹⁰⁷ Tamir, Justman, Birnbaum, 25; Marcilhac, 51.

CHAPTER 3: CHANA ORLOFF, ZIONISM and the CIRCLE of MONTPARNASSE

Defining Jewish Art: Historiography and the Prevailing Discourse

In order to situate Chana Orloff within a discourse concerning her Jewish identity, it is first necessary to examine the difficulty associated with defining Jewish art and even Jewish artists. Those scholars interested in the intersection between Jewish identity and art often concern themselves with defining and analyzing what they consider to be “Jewish art.” In evaluating any artist’s Jewish identity, we come across this particular issue of categorization. Although Orloff came from a specific religious and cultural background, it is uncertain whether or not to place her entire oeuvre under the label “Jewish Art.” In fact, art historians have struggled to define this term in general. Some even reject the term based on stylistic considerations. Specifically, according to Juliet Bellow, there is no Jewish style, but Jewish art could include anything used for a particular Jewish social or ritual purpose.¹⁰⁸ Vivian Mann goes on to list possible meanings for Jewish Art, including simply art produced by Jews or art depicting Jews or containing Jewish subject matter. The term could also describe art of Jewish ceremonial objects, metaphysical or ceremonial art, conceptual art that exists solely as Jewish art in the mind of the viewer, or finally, art of identity expression.¹⁰⁹

Another question investigated by some is why there have been no Jewish artists until the late eighteenth century. Although this question is based upon an assumption that there were absolutely no Jewish artists prior to this time, authors like Karl Schwarz, have tried to make

¹⁰⁸ Bellow, “A Feminine Geography,” 35.

¹⁰⁹ Harold Rosenberg, “Is there a Jewish Art?” *Commentary* 42, no. 1 (1966): 57-59, excerpted by Mann, 151-152.

sense of this supposed phenomenon.¹¹⁰ In his book, *Jewish Artists of the 19th and 20th Centuries*, he makes the case that Jews did not participate in cultural endeavors such as the arts until after the French Constituent Assembly recognized Jewish civil rights and citizenship on September 27, 1791.¹¹¹ Before this time, Schwarz asserts that Jews were completely cut off from the outside world, including from the arts. Their isolation, thus, brought about a particular mental attitude that was devoid of the sensuality associated with artistry. Although Schwarz mentions that this exclusion did not mean Jews were untalented, he still notes that “they had no inspiration and they did not know what it meant to be carefree and to fully enjoy life.”¹¹²

Schwartz’s theory created a picture of a Jewish world in which the entire population is defined by isolated social circumstances and limited artistic sensibilities. This position is a significant overgeneralization of an entire people, and it ignores the relatively wide dispersion of Jews throughout the world and the variances in their traditions and lifestyles. According to his view, although Jews were not incapable of artwork, all Jews are massed together into a singular group, cut short in their cultural development by the outside world, and left undeveloped. In short, it is as if the entire people and their artistic ability moved along a Hegelian trajectory as one solid body and not as many individuals with varying abilities.

Despite his explanation for the lack of Jewish artists up until the eighteenth century, Schwartz is not completely incorrect in his perception of an increase in Jewish artists at that time. As Larry Silver clarifies, however, in *Transformation: Jews and Modernity*, Jews were not

¹¹⁰ Karl Schwarz, *Jewish Artists of the 19th and 20th Centuries* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1949).

¹¹¹ Ibid., 1.

¹¹² Ibid., 8.

limited from being artists by their socialized abilities, but rather, did not enter *en masse* into the more conventionally understood European world of art until the nineteenth century.¹¹³ Prior to the emancipation that Schwartz considers, Jews did not have access to the traditional European artistic institutions, academic or professional.¹¹⁴ Accordingly, in moving from general isolation into the wider community, Silver suggests two reactions by Jewish artists. The first was to view one's past with a sort of nostalgia, embracing and depicting aspects of the religious and cultural experience of Jews in these previously isolated communities. The second was to fully integrate into the surrounding culture.¹¹⁵ Either they embrace their otherness, or they reject it entirely. Silver points to five male Jewish artists as his evidence: Camille Pissarro, Maurycy Gottlieb, Marc Chagall, Mark Rothko, and Ben Shahn.¹¹⁶

In consideration of Silver's understanding of Jewish artists and their work, this idea of a split response begs the question of whether a Jewish artist is capable of assimilating into their host culture while maintaining their otherness at the same time. The tension between two worlds is something similarly considered by Avram Kampf in the introduction to his book, *Jewish Experience in Art of the Twentieth Century*.¹¹⁷ It might be argued that Orloff was in fact an artist who navigated her Jewish identity in such a dualistic way. As we have seen, her style or subject matter oftentimes appealed to French nationalistic sensibilities while also celebrating

¹¹³ Silver, Spira and Bellow, 9.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 13.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 14-29.

¹¹⁷ Avram Kampf, *Jewish Experience in the Art of the Twentieth Century* (South Hadley, Mass.: Bergin & Garvey, 1984), 7. Also see Avram Kampf, *Chagall to Kitaj: Jewish Experience in Twentieth Century Art* (New York: Praeger, 1990).

simultaneously the individual identities represented by her self and her subjects, something which was often characterized by “otherness.”

These authors are only several examples that create the framework of a larger discourse on Jewish art. Margaret Olin in *The Nation Without Art: Examining Modern Discourses on Jewish Art* looks at the overall nature of scholarship concerning Jewish Art. She inevitably engages in the common discussion about the difficulty of creating definitions. Anti-Semitism within the field, according to Olin, is one of these problems. Additionally, it is not uncommon for the art historical field to tie visual culture to national identity. Thus, it is more common for an artist to be categorized according to their politically defined place of birth as opposed to their cultural heritage. We see this especially with Winckelmann’s theories about the connection between Greek art and government. Thus, the discipline of art history has largely excluded Jewish artists from consideration. Especially in the early development of European art history, before the nineteenth century, the literature that did consider Jewish art was argumentative on a racial basis to describe simply its absence. David Kaufmann was one of the first authors to officially combat these views with concrete examples from history. Some have also tried to equate Jewish art to Christian art, while others define it as something completely separate in order to oppose Anti-Semitic categorizations. Still, as stated by later authors, it was not enough to just prove that Jewish artists existed throughout history, because the shape of the thing considered is still indistinct, and thus no more liberated from the problems that confront it.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁸ Margaret Olin, *The Nation without Art: Examining Modern Discourse on Jewish Art* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2001), 89. Also, David Kaufmann was the first to really seriously consider Jewish art, refuting the theory that the second commandment restriction of graven images kept Jews from participating in the production of visual culture. Also, Kaufmann attempted to prove the existence of Jewish artist throughout history. For more on Kaufmann, see Olin, 83-85.

Given this difficulty, however, the most widely accepted definition agreed upon by various scholars in recent scholarship is that Jewish art is “what reflects Jewish experience.”¹¹⁹

In keeping with this definition, we will look at Chana Orloff’s portraiture as a reflection of Jewish experience in the twentieth century. This strategy will involve looking objectively at the individual artist and her Jewish background to understand in what ways she depicted Jewish experience in Europe, and especially Paris and Palestine. While others like Silver, in his book *Transformation*, have following this particular methodology, he also predominantly focuses on male artists. As previously mentioned, those among who have looked at Jewish Women artists and the intersection of Jewish, female, and artistic identities within the overall canon of Jewish art are Griselda Pollock in her *Rubies and Rebels* and the critic Harold Rosenberg in his writings.¹²⁰ However, recall that Pollock considers feminism a threat to Jewish tradition and Rosenberg relegates Jewish art to simply the realm of handicraft. As the latter defines Jewish art, it is only Jewish women who produce it, and only within the confines of the domestic sphere.¹²¹ Both of these interpretations of Jewish Women as artists essentially ignore their multifaceted nature and individuality. For this reason, Juliet Bellow calls for further research into the Jewish women in the arts during the twentieth century. She herself contributes to defining the “feminine geography” of several of these artists including Sonia Delaunay-Terk, Else Lasker-Shuler, Anni Albers, Helen Frankenthaler, Eleanor Antin, and Sophie Calle.

¹¹⁹ Vivian A. Mann and Gordon Tucker, eds., *The Seminar on Jewish Art* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1985), 10, as cited by Samantha Baskind and Larry Silver, *Jewish Art: A Modern History* (London: Reaktion Books, 2011), 8.

¹²⁰ Bellow, “A Feminine Geography,” in *Transformation*, 35.

¹²¹ Ibid.

This chapter on Orloff's Jewish identity and its connection to her portraiture is a response to Bellow's call for additional scholarship on Jewish women artists. Others have addressed these issues in their analyses of Orloff's work, most recently, Irina Kronrod and Cecile Grossman in their dissertations. Kronrod engages more with Orloff's otherness in terms of her Russian more than her Jewish origins. Grossmann is probably the only other author to really consider the influence of Orloff's Jewish identity on her artwork in considerable depth.¹²² In particular, Grossman seriously addresses the impact that Orloff's religion had on her life and her work.

Still, neither of these authors focus specifically on Orloff's portraiture in a concerted effort to reconstruct the artist's relationship to Judaism as well as to the artistic environment in Paris.¹²³ In this endeavor to make sense of "Jewish art," Orloff's sculpture provides a window into her own experiences as a Jew and suggests how her religious and cultural heritage was manifested in her work. Through her portraits, a picture of Orloff's connections with other Jewish artists and intellectuals emerges. Her portraits uncover the nature and scope of her interpersonal relationships. As a result, the artistic environment in Paris and diverse identities' role in its formation during the first half of the twentieth century and beyond reveals itself to us anew.

¹²² See Grossman and Kronrod.

¹²³ Although Grossman does discuss as part of a section of her dissertation Orloff's portraits, within which she addresses Orloff's relationships with other Jews, she is still just providing a general overview of the artist's portraits. It is my hope to go into further depth on how specific portraits of other Jews in Orloff's circle might have reflected a certain relationship to Judaism that the artist had while in Paris; possibly, this will present as evidence that the artist both embraced her otherness while simultaneously establishing herself into French society. See Grossman, 91- 113.

Early Life: The Influence of Jewish Communities in the Ukraine

Returning to Orloff's early life experiences, it is apparent that her religious and cultural heritage had an essential impact on her intellectual, artistic, and personal development. As previously mentioned, Orloff was born in Tzareconstantinovska, Ukraine, in the late nineteenth century.¹²⁴ Jewish communities that preceded the one Orloff grew up in were almost completely insular. In this particular region of Volhynia, formerly part of Poland, Jewish communities were characterized by their highly structured social and religious systems that helped to sustain the community.¹²⁵ Under Russian rule, Catherine II's specifically, Jews were further segregated into what is now called the "Pale of Settlement." This rule restricted Jewish communities from living in larger cities, and it also made them an easier target for governmental persecution including higher taxation, limited access to various occupations, and worst of all, the physical threat of violence in the form of pogroms.¹²⁶ Just before Orloff was born, in 1881, Alexander III came into power in Russia, resulting in the increased persecution of Jews in the form of pogroms and more frequent over-taxation.¹²⁷

These external threats and restrictions created a situation where Orloff and her eight siblings each had to work as a means for survival. Orloff's work as a seamstress is a product of

¹²⁴ Grossman writes the name of Orloff's birthplace differently from Marcilhac, with whose spelling I am taking to remain consistent. Grossman refers to this same place as "Staro-Konstaninov." Grossman, 1.

¹²⁵ These communities were not completely isolated from outside interaction. Many Jews who were forced to hold unpleasant occupations as tax or rent collectors for Rich Polish landowners, often interacted with the outside, but were still viewed as "others." Ibid., 1-2.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 4-5.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 2.

this circumstance and is arguably the beginning of her artistic education.¹²⁸ The other aspects of Orloff's early education were shaped by the internal restrictions of her community: a community that, while limiting women's opportunities in some respects, also revered their strength and self-sufficiency.¹²⁹ For example, although Orloff was not given access to the same education as boys in the community, she was still considered an equal contributor in terms of familial economics. Orloff was also taught both Russian and Yiddish, although just at a basic level.

It was common for women to have access to Yiddish literature and religious materials like prayer books and biblical narratives. Sometimes these materials were illustrated using woodcuts, which is another medium that we find Orloff working in later on.¹³⁰ For example, woodcut prints are present in the illustrations for the small volume, *Reflections Poétiques*, a collaborative project between Orloff and her husband, poet Ary Justman (fig. A31). Focusing on one example of an engraving reproduced for this publication, we can see Orloff's affinity to the materiality of the wood itself with the grains in the wood of the carving emphasized along with the shapes of the figure. It has been noted by other authors that wood was amongst Orloff's favorite materials. Marcilhac mentions that for her sculptures Orloff would use found wood from construction sites in her neighborhood and that she embraced the imperfections of this material.¹³¹ Haim Gamzu also recognized that Orloff preferred wood as a material because it was "warmer and friendlier" than other sculptural mediums.¹³² We find also that Orloff

¹²⁸ Ibid., 8-9.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 9-10.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 9.

¹³¹ Marcilhac, 48.

¹³² Gamzu, *Chana Orloff (1888-1968)*.

published a volume of woodcuts in her *Bois graves de Chana Orloff* in 1919 that included eleven woodcut portraits of close friends and family (fig. A32).¹³³

Although possibly aware of the influence of Japanese wood block prints at this time, Orloff produced prints that have very little in common with them in terms of emphasizing on the material of wood itself. Her prints are perhaps a better reflection of the illustrations she was exposed to in Yiddish books during her early education. Grossman also introduces an additional hypothesis in which she discusses the overall prevalence of woodcarving and the significance of wood as a material more generally within the Jewish communities of Ukraine. For example, most dwellings were constructed from wood, including synagogues. Grossman also mentions that Ukrainian Jews celebrated the natural environment of the forest during this period. This environment specifically inspired folk songs that related the tree and the forest to romantic notions of freedom and aesthetic charm.¹³⁴ Overall, in some respects, Orloff's woodcuts can be understood as a product of her exposure to certain visual elements during her childhood and adolescence in the Ukraine, elements that were eventually manifested in her later work.

Palestine and Zionist Influence

Orloff's artwork was also influenced by her experiences in Palestine, which aligned in many ways with her ideological exposure to Zionism. In particular, during Orloff's later years in the Ukraine, Zionist thought had become widespread throughout Europe. Reacting to anti-Semitism in large part caused by the Dreyfus affair, this local nationalist movement supported the establishment of a homeland for Jews, solving as well as creating issues associated with

¹³³ Marcilhac, 51.

¹³⁴ Grossman, 10.

national affiliation that were further complicated by emancipation in European countries, including France, who then demanded loyalty from its newly “freed” citizens.¹³⁵

Orloff’s father, Raphaël Orloff, was one of those particularly devoted to the Zionist cause in Russia. This cause sought to promote the relocation of Jews to agricultural settlements in Palestine. Before Orloff moved to one of these settlements with the majority of her family, her father had already established himself and his two sons there. While Raphaël planned to bring the rest of the family at a later date, their move to Palestine was accelerated when, as a consequence of the pogroms, the family’s home was sacked and burned.¹³⁶

Arriving in Petah-Tikvah in 1905, Orloff continued work as a seamstress. At this point, her perceptual ability to measure a person with just a glance was well developed. Her granddaughter, Ariane Justman Tamir writes that when working as a seamstress in Palestine, although it would make clients uneasy at first, using very few measurements, Orloff could make her cuts based on a quick visual assessment.¹³⁷ This ability seems to have translated seamlessly into her talent to gauge her subject in portraiture, a reflection of her keen sense of observation, not simply of the physical forms that make up a face or body, but also the personal characteristics in congress with these elements. Essentially, Orloff was a well-practiced observer before she even began her formal studies in art, and this ability likely had a lot to do with the way her early life was directed by her identity as a Jew and also a woman limited by circumstance to a certain profession.

¹³⁵ Olin, 76.

¹³⁶ Grossman, 10.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

Orloff's later success as an artist in Paris and her connections to Palestine made her a subject of interest for the Zionist promotion of culture. The early Zionists, not unlike any other organized political entity, expressed an interest in utilizing visual culture to create their own art history as a way to further substantiate their national claim.¹³⁸ In a speech given at the Fifth Zionist congress in 1901, Martin Buber expresses this particularly cultural aim, noting that "the most magnificent cultural document will be our art."¹³⁹ Even into the sixties when we read the Director of the Tel Aviv Museum, Haim Gamzu's exhibition catalogue for Orloff's show in Israel we detect a similar sentiment. In his introductory statement, Gamzu waxes poetic about the artist and her genius, but clearly does so in part to claim Orloff's art for Israel.

Many art critics in the world have sought the sources of her inspiration in her Russian background and ignored her Jewish family tree. In fact, she always represented herself as an Israeli in all things. It is true that the memories of her childhood were deeply rooted within her and no one could expunge the gold of the Russian autumn or the silver of the Ukrainian winter; but all her life she radiated the glow of the sun-drenched days and magic nights of Canaan that were woven into the fabric of her youth like deathless flowers never to fade.¹⁴⁰

There is, in fact, a substantial degree of truth to these statements, given Orloff's continuous involvement with the Holy Land. Orloff, for example, played a major role in the creation of the Museum of Modern Art in Tel Aviv, first exhibiting there in the Spring of 1935 to which she contributed portraits of other Jewish artists including Haim Nahman Bialik, 1926 (fig. A33), considered the father of modern Hebrew poetry, Chana Rovina, 1935 (fig. A34) one of the first women in Hebrew theatre, and the Jewish painter Reuven Rubin, 1926 (fig. A35) founder of

¹³⁸ Olin., 35.

¹³⁹ Baskind and Silver, *Jewish Art A Modern History*, 70.

¹⁴⁰ Gamzu, *Chana Orloff (1888-1968)*.

the style *Eretz Israel*.¹⁴¹ All three of these portraits reflect Orloff's continuous contact with Israel and her participation in promoting artists who were largely identified as pioneers in the establishment of a uniquely Zionist culture.

Still, it is interesting to note, especially in the case of Reuven Rubin, that Israeli culture derived a considerable amount of its content from European countries, including France. Reuven Rubin was born in Rumania, but eventually immigrated to Israel. In the 1920s, he sought to use a modernist vocabulary in order to depict his new homeland. He drew much of this new vocabulary from his studies in France where he was connected to other Jewish artists like Modigliani. Other French styles might be found in his paintings including aspects of Henri Rousseau and André Bauchant's work.¹⁴²

Orloff's portrait of Rubin stylistically reflects the French modernism present in Rubin's paintings. We can also see references to ancient near eastern sculpture—perhaps as a way to indicate both the sitter's location at the time, and also his contact with artists like Modigliani who elongated his figures in a similar way with darkened eye sockets. Reuven Rubin must have appreciated this portrait, painting Orloff's bust of himself into one of his own paintings, *The Zeppelin Over Tel Aviv*, in 1929 (fig. A36). Here, Orloff's bust of the artist appears in front of a window with objects associated with the Jewish holiday, Purim. We can tell that the location is Israel by the flags hanging from the buildings in the distance. It is impossible to ignore that both Rubin's and Orloff's work shows a certain measure of dualism, reflecting the multifaceted experiences of both artists in the Jewish world as well as the artistic environment of Paris. A

¹⁴¹ Tamir, Justman, and Birnbaum, 60.

¹⁴² Maurice Berger and Joan Rosenbaum, eds., *Masterworks of the Jewish Museum* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004), 50.

literal testament to this is in the manner in which Rubin signs his name in his paintings: a combination of Hebrew letters and roman numerals.

As we can see in her depictions of Hebrew artists, although Orloff always maintained a connection to Israel, traveling regularly to visit her family there, France would always be home to her. Even after the Second World War, Orloff returned to France from her exile in Switzerland to continue her work.¹⁴³ It is not surprising that in Orloff's portraiture of Jewish artists we find a Zionist purpose: the celebration of Jewish artists and intellectuals in the twentieth century. At the same time, however, it is important to recognize that these portraits were also the product of internationalist artistic trends in Paris and reflect stylistically Orloff's interaction with the French artistic past and present. In this sense, Orloff both embraced her otherness as a foreigner and Jew, while simultaneously showing her participation in French artistic culture and society. Ultimately, Orloff's portraits of Jews are meant to positively document Jewish experience during the twentieth century.

The Jewish Artists' Experience: Internationalism and The School of Paris

Orloff's connection to France was one she shared with many other Jewish artists and foreigners besides Rubin at the turn of the century. Before Orloff even set foot on French soil in 1910, Paris was quickly becoming an international city, attracting artists from various backgrounds: Belgian, Swiss, Scandinavian, German, and Russian amongst many others. A large number of artists also had Jewish backgrounds, with the majority emanating from Russia. Most Russian artists followed in the footsteps of Léon Bakst (1866-1924) who was a leading participant in what was called the World of Art movement (or *Mir iskusstva*). This

¹⁴³ Tamir, Justman, Birnbaum, 7.

movement originated in St. Petersburg around 1898 and was focused primarily on international art innovations to the West, including Art Nouveau. Bakst was best known for his work with the *Ballet Russes* centered in Paris, for which he designed elaborate costumes considered “exotic” in style.¹⁴⁴ Amongst those Jewish Russian artists who followed Bakst to Paris were Sonia Terk and Marc Chagall who were both interested in studying new modes of artistic representation including Cubism and Orphism.¹⁴⁵

Chagall, similar to Orloff, embraced the French internationalist aesthetic and Jewish subject matter. We can see this eclecticism especially in his *Self Portrait with Seven Fingers* from 1913-14 (fig. A37). In this portrait, the artist points to his location in Paris in both stylistic and literal ways. From the Eiffel tower, as seen through the window of the artist’s studio, we can pinpoint Chagall’s location. However, we can also see the influence of Parisian art movements in Chagall’s employment of the stylistic principles of Cubism and Orphism. We see these in both the fragmentation and bright coloring of the piece.

Not only does the artist make it known that he is working in Paris and absorbing these stylistic innovations of the twentieth century, but he also makes explicit reference to Judaism. For instance, one of his hands holds seven fingers while the other does not. The seven-fingered hand could refer to the seven days of the week in the biblical creation story, and also to the three patriarchs and four matriarchs of the Jewish faith.¹⁴⁶ There are also other aspects of the left side of the canvass that indicate Chagall’s Jewish heritage including what seems to be a window into Chagall’s memories that represents a Jewish shtetl. At the very top of the canvas, Chagall

¹⁴⁴ Baskind and Silver, *Jewish Art A Modern History*, 80.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 81.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 84.

includes the Hebrew letters that spell out “Russia” and “Paris.”¹⁴⁷ Overall, Chagall is representing the duality of his identity as an artist in Paris and as a Russian Jew, a duality that Orloff similarly engages in her portraits of Jews that she elevates, oftentimes engaging with modernist styles as well as classical and ancient modes. We also know that Orloff was connected to Chagall by the portrait she did of his daughter, Ida Chagall who was around seven years old at this time in 1923 (fig. A38).

Alongside Jewish artists in Paris, there were also rather prominent modern art collectors and critics. This group included Gertrude Stein and her brother Leo Stein. Jacques Lipchitz originally did a portrait of Gertrude Stein that reflected very similar aims as Orloff’s portraits (fig. A39). That is, the portrait was likely executed in the hope that Stein would purchase it, but also as an affirmation of her position in the modern art world as well as valorization of her character through allusions to oriental images of the Buddha. In many ways, to affirm one’s place in France, and especially within the artistic community was likely a concern of many Jewish artists trying to make it in the art world. This motivation is especially true given the amount of hostility there was towards the sudden influx of foreign artists into France. It is perhaps one of the purposes the members of what was called *The School of Paris*, to which Orloff belonged, to reassert themselves as being an international community, open to new ideas and concepts.

As one might assume, there were a number of Jewish artists within *the School of Paris* besides Orloff or Chagall. These Jewish artists eventually came to form a group called *The Circle of Montparnasse*. This group included artists Jacques Lipchitz, Amedeo Modigliani, Chaim Soutine, and Jules Pascin, as well as Moïse Kisling, Louis Marcoussis, and Oscar

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

Miestchaninoff. However, it is important to note that, while these artists interacted with one another, they did not limit themselves to this particular social circle. Rather, each moved in various artistic circles as they pleased as we have seen demonstrated by Orloff's contact with various academies and schools. Still, it is within this community of Jewish artists that we find connections to many of Orloff's models, influences, and close friends. It is through her representation of these subjects, similar to most of her portraits, that she elevates the sitter according to his or her characteristic attributes, often incorporating stylistic aspects that reflect his or her personality as well as work. Through examining her Jewish subjects from Paris, we might further understand Orloff's own attitude towards Jewish identity and the arts.

Orloff did not shrink from outwardly labeling her Jewish subject matter as such, as we can see from some of her earliest works such as *Les Deux Juifs* from 1912 (fig. A40) or her *Peintre Juif (Reisen)* from 1920 (fig. A41). Later representations of other Jews included not just artists, but also writers, doctors and psychologists. It is possible that some part of Orloff's motivation for documenting Jewish artists and intellectuals might come from a wish to combat anti-Semitism in France and other European countries that resulted from the influx of Jews and foreigners into Parisian and European cultural life more generally.

In Germany especially, representations of Jews at the turn of the century and leading up to the second world war emphasized physiological traits as a reflection of a corrupt inner character. Looking to images from the cover of the Munich-based publication *Simplicissimus* from 1903 we can see Jews here are depicted with hooked noses, long scraggly beards, and hunched, sickly posture: all meant to advance a sinister image (fig. A42). This visual construction of the corrupt Jew was perpetuated so much that later artists like Otto Dix depicted their own art dealers in such a manner, perhaps unknowingly. For example, Otto Dix's *The Art*

Dealer Alfred Flechtheim from 1926 shows to some extent the sickly, large nosed stereotype of the Jewish art dealer (fig. A43). This painting is uncannily similar to a drawing from *Simplicissimus* titled “Metamorphosis (fig. A44).” This cartoon was aimed at ridiculing Jewish art dealers who were becoming more prominent in German society, and arguably even in French society.¹⁴⁸ As noted, the recent influx of Jewish participation in European cultural life was something similarly experienced in France, causing some backlash in the form of increased anti-Semitism. We can see this especially amongst French art critics who expressed concern about the encroachment of Jews on the *École Française*. Oftentimes, these critics would make certain to differentiate Jewish and foreign artists from native French artists.¹⁴⁹

However, Orloff portrayed her subjects in ways opposite to contemporaneous portraits of Jews like Dix’s. Take for example, her sculpture entitled *Rabbi*. Here the Jewish religious leader is represented with a long beard and stern, strong features (fig. A45). However, in Orloff’s portrayal, the beard is not scraggly, and although the nose is curved, the face itself is filled with monumental nobility similar to ancient representations of the philosophers. This is uncanny, especially if we are to compare Orloff’s *Rabbi* to a marble bust of Epicurus in the Louvre (fig. A46). The wisdom of the philosopher is similar to that reflected in the furrowed brow, under-eye bags, nose, and full beard of Orloff’s sculpture. In this way, her portrait of a

¹⁴⁸ Robin Reisenfeld, “Collecting and Collective Memory: German Expressionist Art and Modern Jewish Identity,” in *Jewish Identity in Modern Art History*, ed. Catherine M. Soussloff (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1999), 117-120.

¹⁴⁹ Baskind and Silver, 94.

Rabbi takes some of the physiognomic traits from anti-Semitic representations and reverses their negative character, essentially undermining their association with evil otherness and replacing them with positive intellectual traits that are in keeping with the stylistic conventions of the French academies that looked to the ancient past.

It becomes a theme in Orloff's work representing the "other" in French society to borrow from all manner of stylistic innovation, but also from the ancient past, from primitivism and classicism, cubism and orientalism. In her portraits she chose the style most appropriate to represent both the interior and exterior likeness and character of the sitter. In her portraits of Jews, she did so in an ennobling way, perhaps in an attempt to commemorate their place in the cultural as well as socio-political environment of the twentieth century.

CONCLUSION

Not only did Orloff express through her portraits her relationship to her identity as Jew, Woman, and artist, but also she conveyed her hopes for the future. As a woman, she hoped for equal footing to be established between men and women, for gendered differences to be celebrated and embraced, and for equal opportunities to be offered in the professional world. As a Zionist, Orloff hoped to establish the foundation for future Israeli artists to build upon. This desire is particularly evident from her involvement with Zionism, but also in her dedication to promoting Jewish accomplishments, artistic or otherwise, through her support of the Tel Aviv museum and her rendering of members of the Jewish community and its supporters who surrounded her wherever she went. Whether it was in the Ukraine, Palestine, or Paris, Orloff found a way to draw into her portraits all aspects of her surroundings, placing within each of them a clue to understanding her own self-conception and how it was sculpted from the raw materials of her life.

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APPENDIX FIGURES



Figure A1: Jean-Baptiste Pigalle, *François-Marie Arouet*, 1776. Marble. 150 x 89 cm. Musée du Louvre. Paris, France.



Figure A2: Houdon, Jean-Antoine. *Voltaire Seated*, 1781. Terra-cotta. 120 cm high. Musée Fabre, Montpellier, France.



Figure A3: Chana Orloff, *La Piente Jacovleff*, 1921. Wood, 66.2 x 48.4 x 24.6 cm. Private Collection.

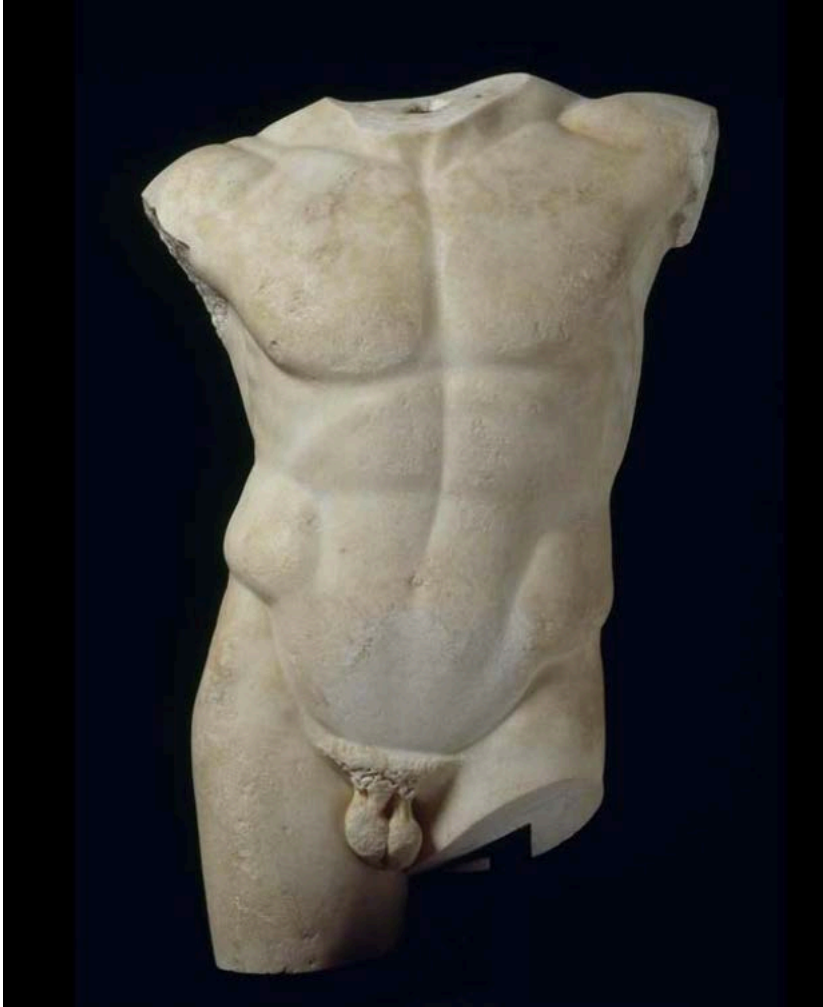


Figure A4: After Polyclitus (?), Torso of the “Diadumenus” type, Roman, Imperial first half of 2nd century CE. Marble. 85 cm in height. Formerly in the Campana collection and purchased in 1863 by the Musée de Louvre.

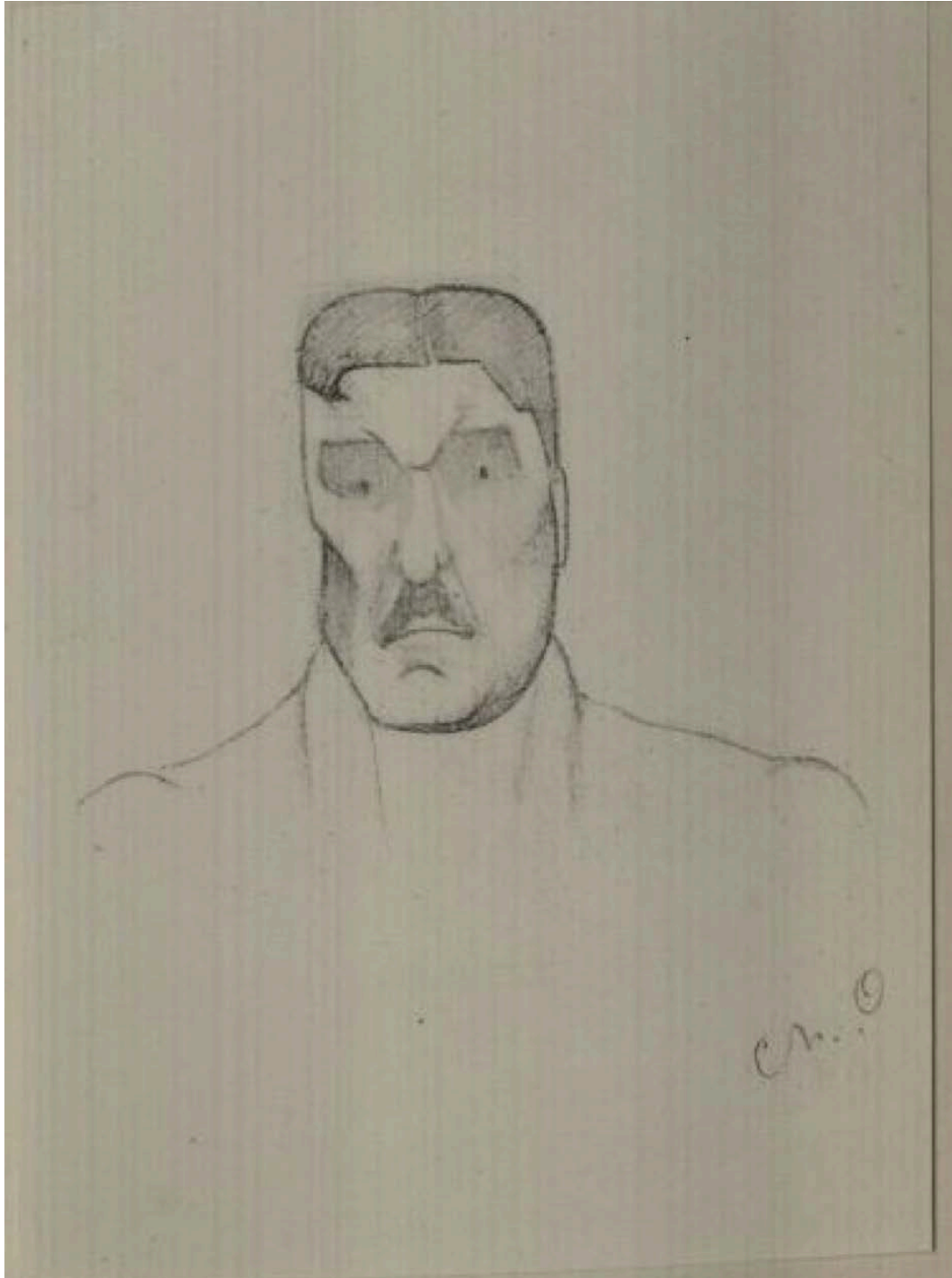


Figure A5: Chana Orloff, *Fernand Léger*, in *Figures d'aujourd'hui: illustrées de quarante et un portraits par Chana Orloff*, 1923.



Figure A6: Fernand Léger, c. 1916.



Figure A7: Fernand Léger, *Fumées sur les toits*, 1911. Oil on Canvas, 18 x 22 in.

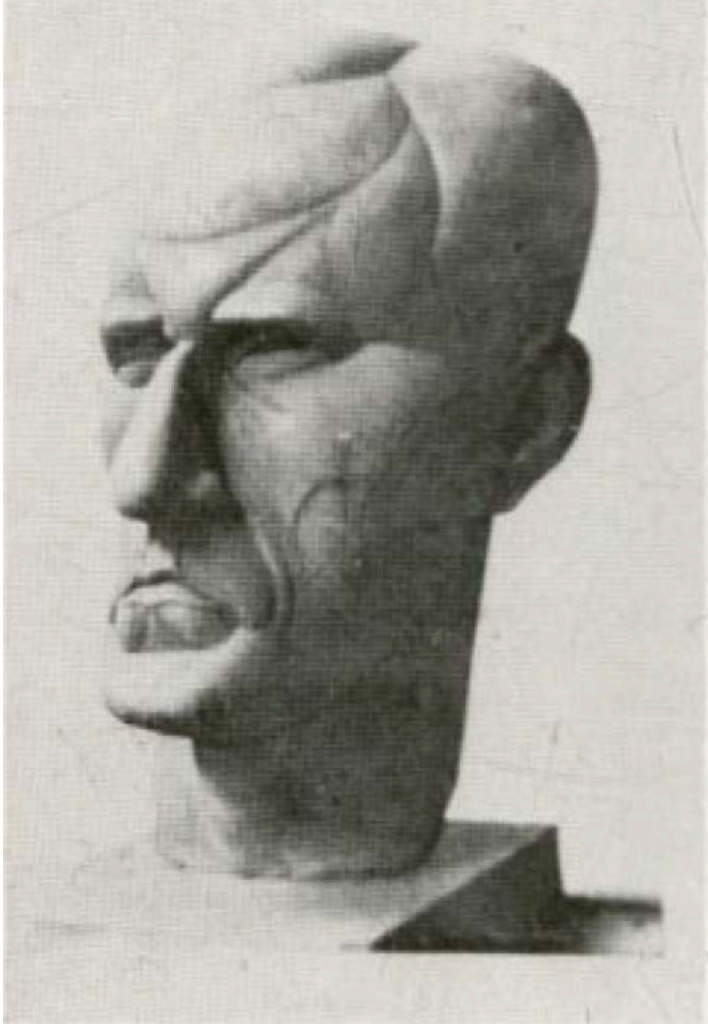


Figure A8: Chana Orloff, *Monsieur Kolpaktchy*, 1914-15. Plaster.

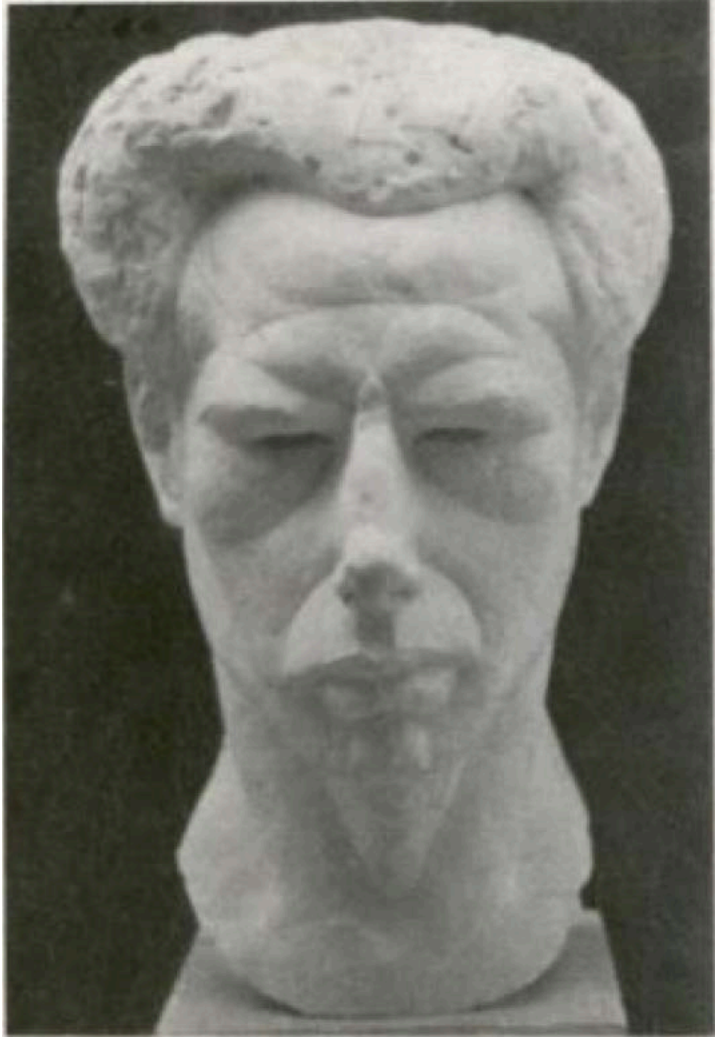


Figure A9: Chana Orloff, *Portrait d'homme (comte Polonais?)*, 1914-15.



Figure A10: Chana Orloff, *Eve*, 1916. Wood.



Figure A11: Constantin Brancusi, *The Bird in Space* (*L'Oiseau dans l'Espace*), 1941. Polished bronze, 193.4 x 13.3 x 16 cm. Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris.



Figure A12: Amedeo Modigliani, *Portrait of Chana Orloff*, 1916 (cat. no. 75). E. Justman Collection, Paris.



Figure A13: *Fang Mask*, Gabon, in France before 1906. Painted wood, 42 x 28.5 x 14.7 cm. Centre Pompidou, Paris. Musée national d'art modern/Centre de creation industrielle.



Figure A14: Chana Orloff, *Tête de Femme*, 1912.



Figure A15: Amedeo Modigliani, *Portrait of a Young Woman*, 1918-1919. Oil on canvas, 61 x 45.8 cm. New Orleans Museum of Art.

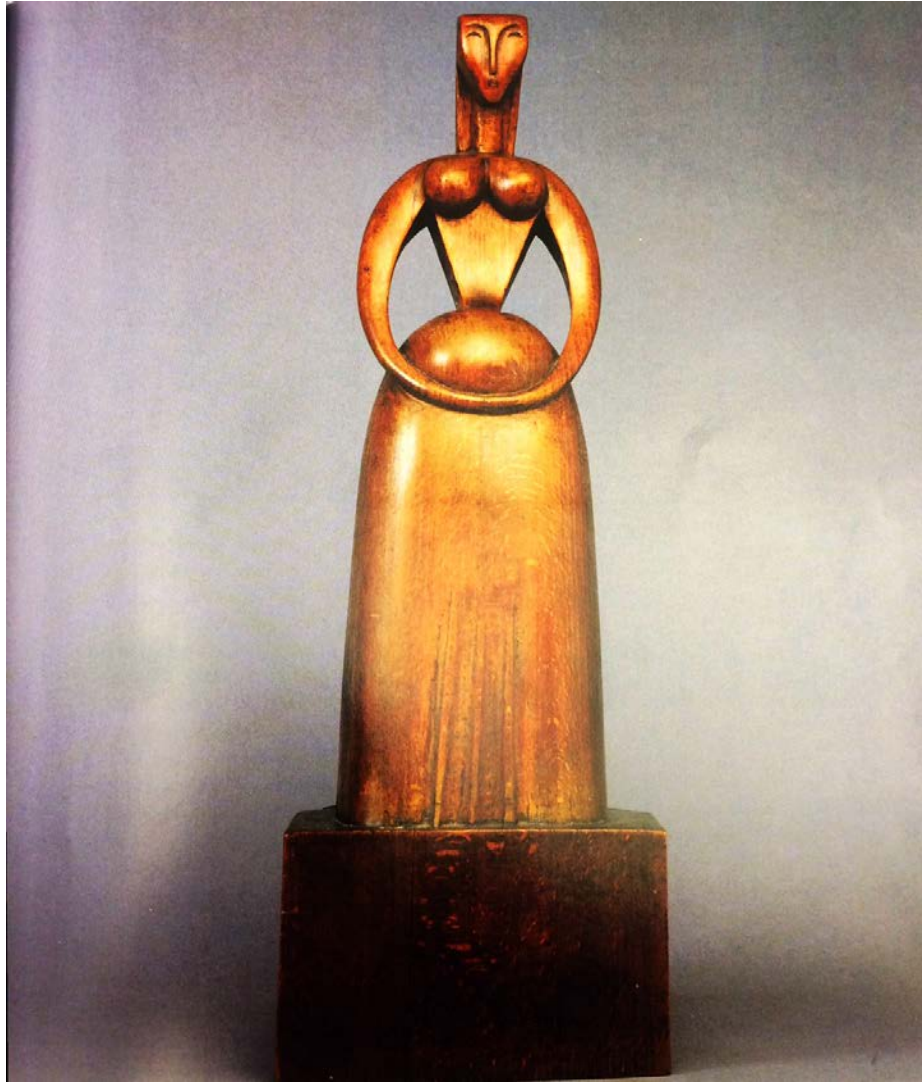


Figure A16: Chana Orloff, *Dame enceinte*, 1916. Wood. 57 cm x 25 cm x 19cm. Private collection.



Figure A17: Chana Orloff, *Maternité*, 1924. Study in clay. 62.8 x 38 x 31.5 cm. J.L. Magnès museum, California, USA.



Figure A18: Therese Bonney, *Chana Orloff and Her Son*, 1924. Photograph. Private Collection, Chana Orloff Estate, Paris, France.

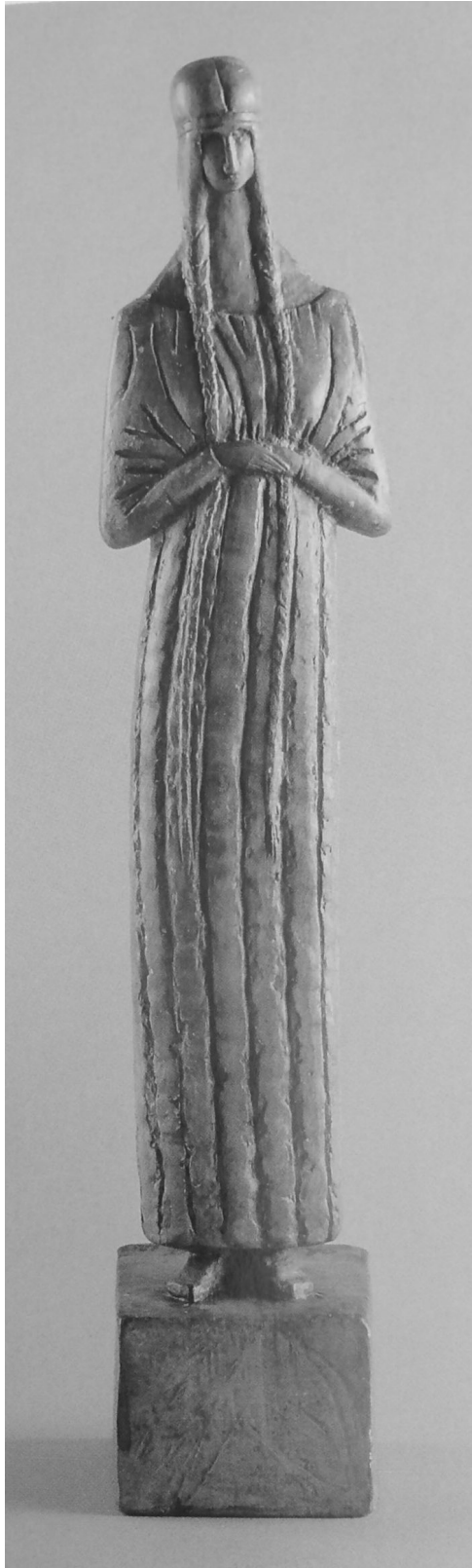


Figure A19: Chana Orloff, *Vierge-Jeanne Hébuterne*, 1914. Patinated plaster. 11 x 54 x 9 cm. Private collection.

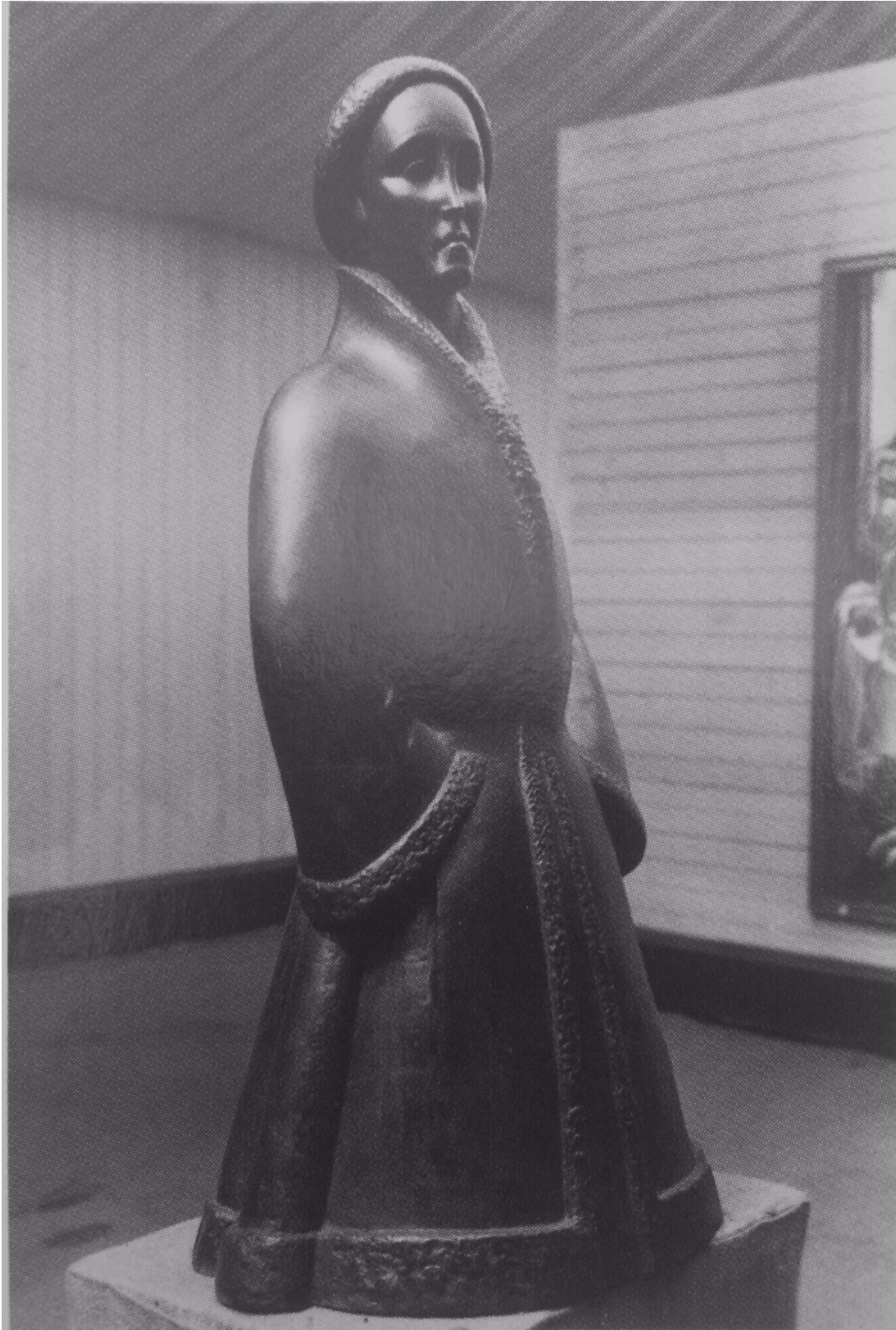


Figure A20: Chana Orloff, *Romaine Brooks*, 1923. Bronze. 132 x 63.5 x 50 cm.



Figure A21: Chana Orloff, *Pierre Mac Orlan*, 1923-24. Cement. 25 x 20 x 27 cm.



Figure A22: Chana Orloff, Miss Barney, 1920. Bas relief in wood.

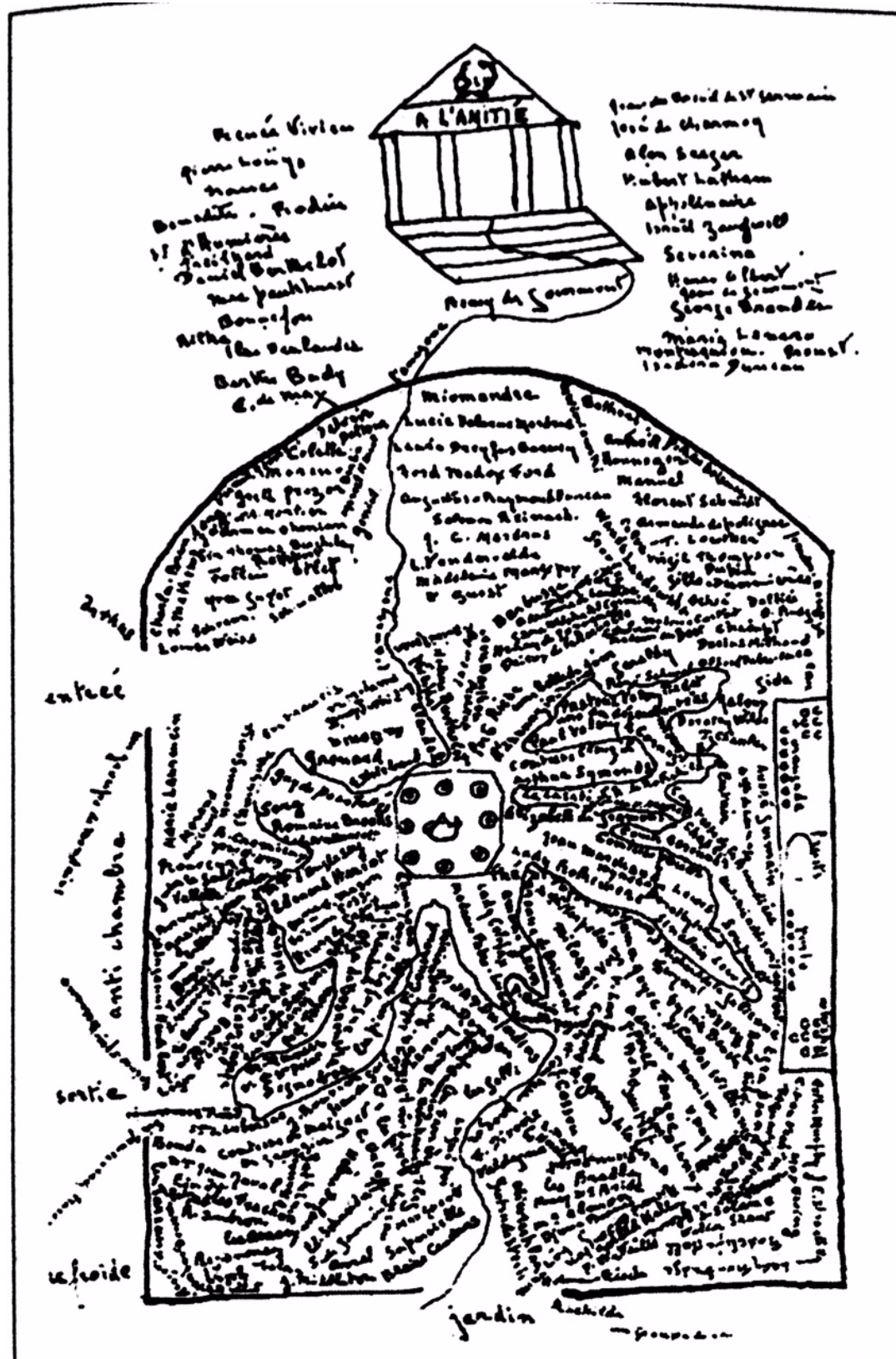


Figure A23: Natalie Clifford Barney, Frontispiece for *Les Aventure de l'esprit*, 1929.



Figure A24: Louis-Oscar Roty, medal, date unknown.



Figure A25: Chana Orloff, *Amazonne*, 1916. Wood. 23 x 75 x 54 cm. Private Collection.

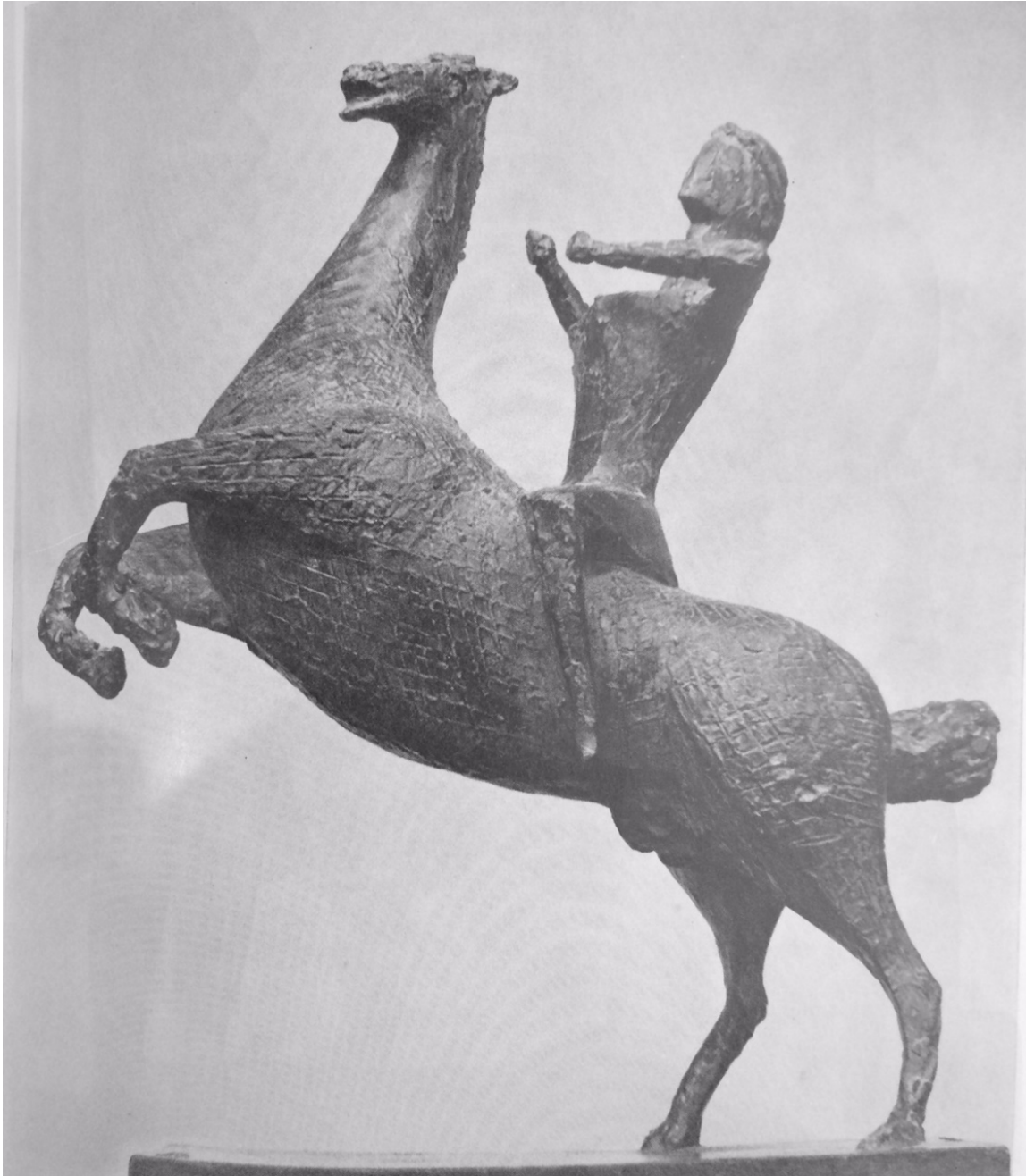


Figure A26: Chana Orloff, *Ecuyère*, 1955. Bronze. 50 x 24 x 30 cm.



Figure A27: Photograph of Natalie Clifford Barney in Riding Outfit.



Figure A28: Romaine Brooks, *Miss Natalie Barney, "L'Amazone,"* 1920. Oil on canvas.



Figure A29: Djuna Barnes, cover illustration of *Ladies Almanack*, 1928.



Figure A30: Chana Orloff, *Ruth et Noémie*, 1928.

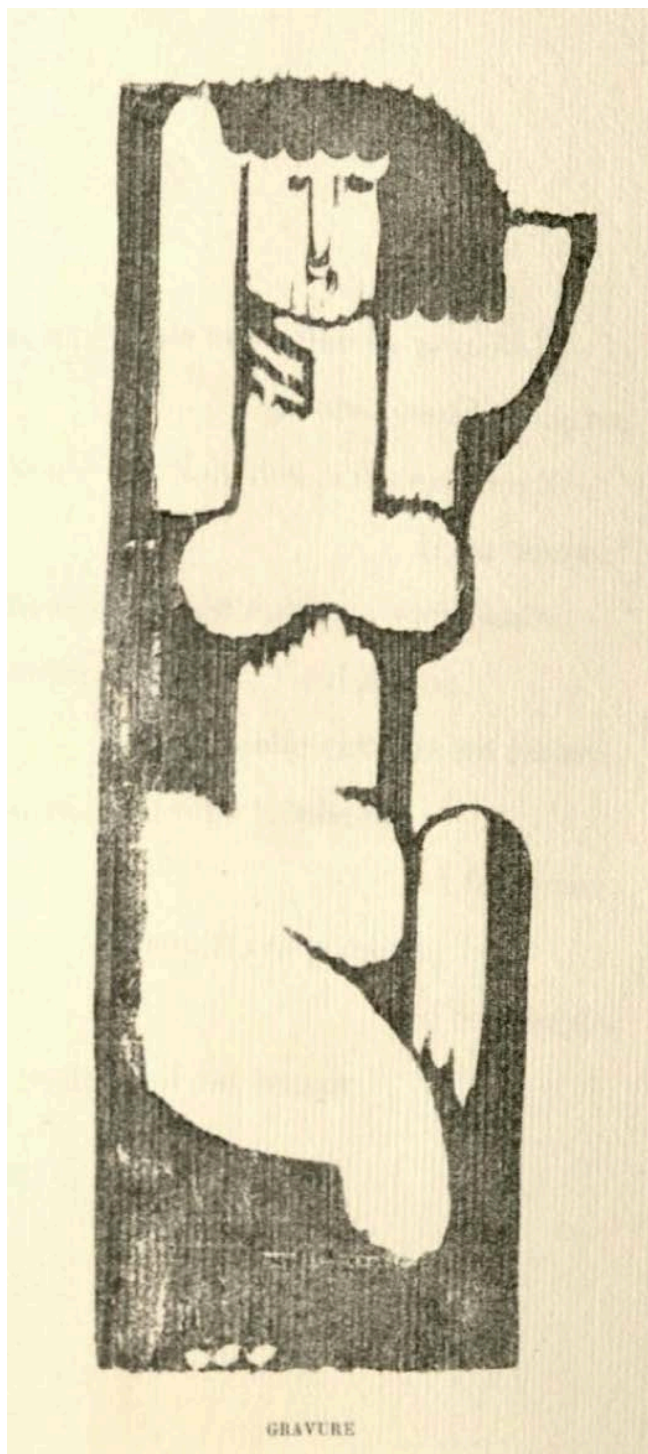


Figure A31: Chana Orloff, Illustration in *Reflections Poétiques* by Ary Justman and Chana Orloff, 1917. Woodcut.

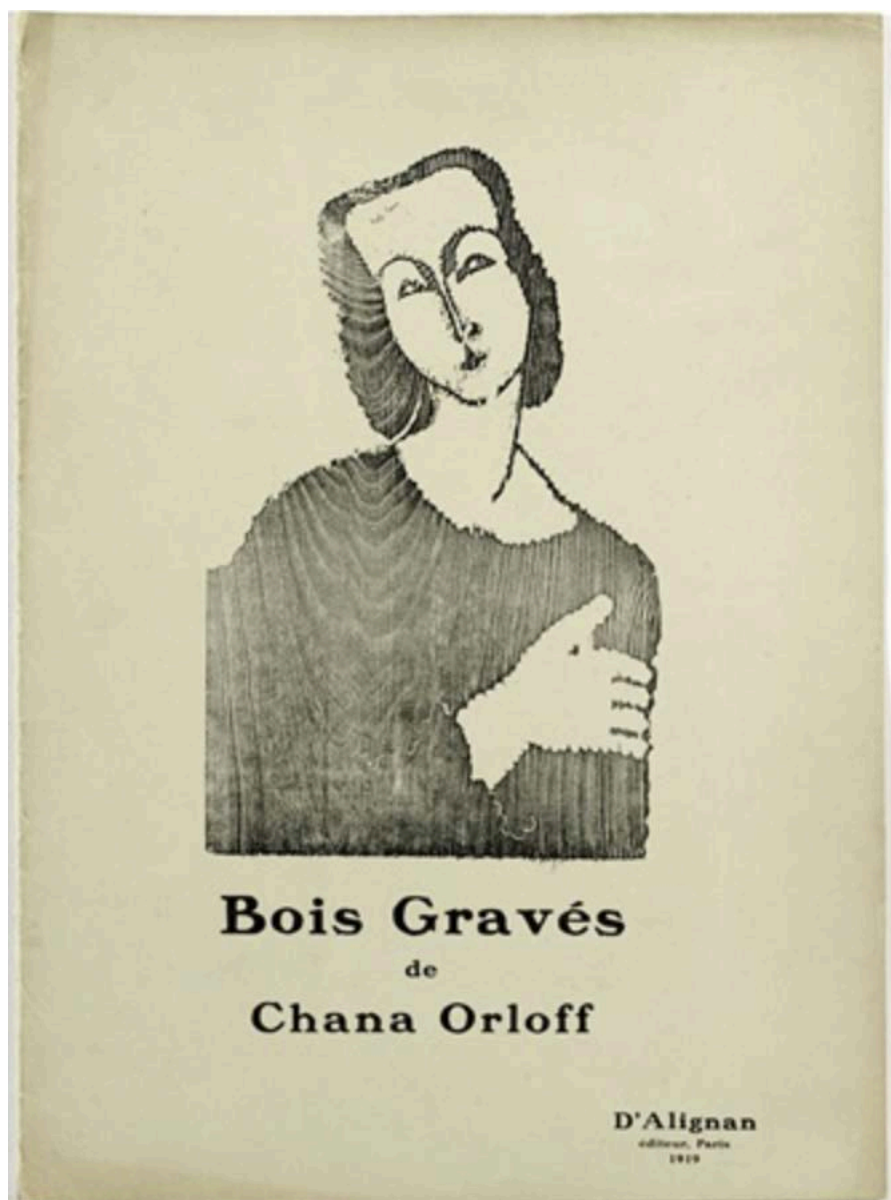


Figure A32: Chana Orloff, Cover of *Bois Gravés de Chana Orloff*, 1919.



Figure A33: Chana Orloff, *Haim Nahman Bialik*, 1926.



Figure A34: Chana Orloff, *Chana Rovina*, 1935.



Figure A35: Chana Orloff, *Reuven Rubin*, 1926.



Figure A36: Reuven Rubin, *The Zeppelin Over Tel Aviv*, 1929. Oil on canvas. 81 x 65 cm. Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Israel.



Figure A37: Marc Chagall, *Self-portrait with Seven Fingers*, 1913-14. Oil on canvas. 128 x 107 cm. Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands.



Figure A38: Chana Orloff, Ida Chagall, 1923. Bronze, h: 98 cm. Private Collection.



Figure A39: Jacques Lipchitz, *Gertrude Stein*, 1920. Private Collection. Estate of Jacques Lipchitz. Image from Marlborough Gallery, New York.



Figure A40: Chana Orloff, *Les Deux Juifs*, 1912. Bas-relief in plaster.

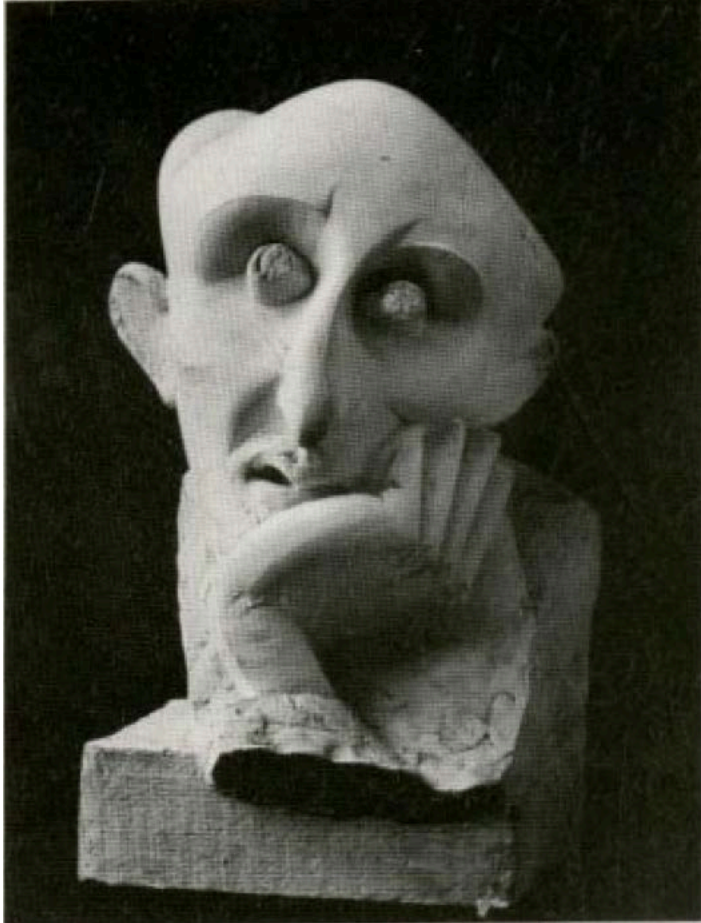


Figure A41: Chana Orloff, *Le peintre juif (Reisin)*, 1920. Plaster, 36 x 1.21 x 29 cm.



Figure A42: "The Polandization of West Prussia," from *Simplicissimus: Illustrierte Wochenschrift*, 1903.



Figure A43: Otto Dix, *The Art Dealer Alfred Flechtheim*, 1926. Oil on wood. Staatliche Museum, Berlin.

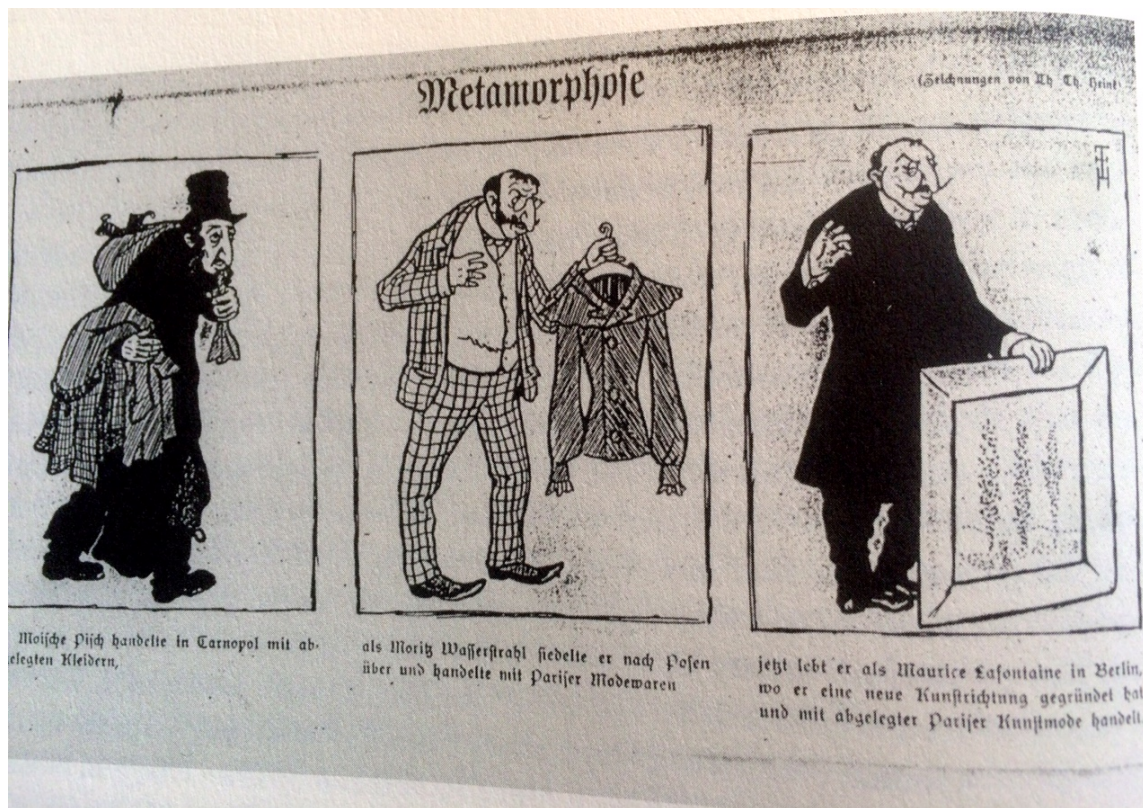


Figure A44: "Metamorphosis," from *Simplicissimus: Illustrierte Wochenschrift*, 1904.

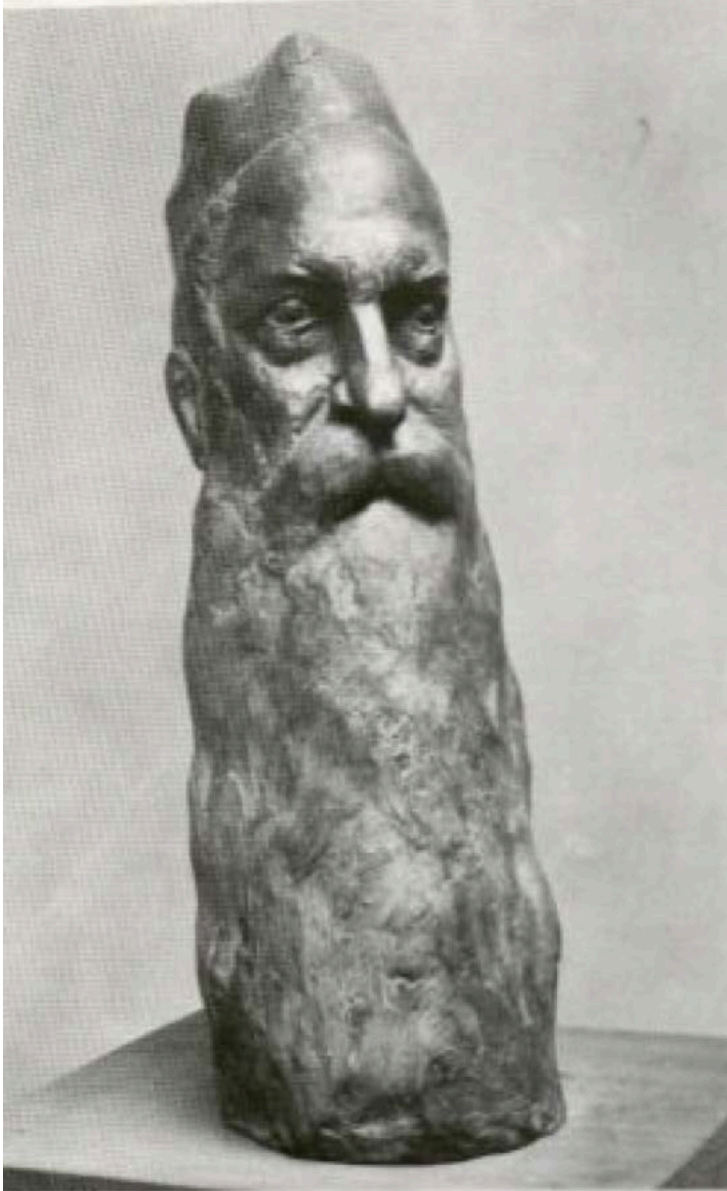


Figure A45: Chana Orloff, *Rabbi*, 1930. Bronze.



Figure A46: Detail of Epicurus from a Portrait of the philosopher Metrodoros back to back with one of his master Epicurus. Roman, Imperial (second half of the 2nd century CE). Pentelic marble, 61.5 cm high. Musée de Louvre, Paris. Discovered in Rome.