On the Road: Jewish Artists in Vichy France

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Modernist Paris attracted a significant influx of young Jewish artists in the first third of the twentieth century. Some of these artistic hopefuls arrived in the first decade of the century, but most came in the years surrounding the First World War, between 1909 and the mid-1920s. Two early arrivals, Amedeo Modigliani and Jules Pascin, were Sephardic Jews, but the great majority both then and later were Ashkenazi Jews coming from the Pale of Settlement in Eastern Europe, especially Poland, Lithuania, (what is now) Belarus, Ukraine, and the Hapsburg Empire. They were responding both to the push of repression in Czarist Russia and the pull of opportunities to learn and create that awaited them in Paris. Those painters and sculptors who arrived between 1909 and 1914 would have the best chance of attaining artistic success: Marc Chagall, Chaim Soutine, Sonia Delaunay-Terk, Chana Orloff, Moïse Kisling, Ossip Zadkine, Jacques Lipchitz and Mané-Katz, as well as Modigliani and Pascin. In *Modernist Diaspora: Immigrant Jewish Artists in Paris, 1900-1945*, I argued that these artists comprised the greatest artistic efflorescence in the long history of the Jewish people. These artists were integral to Parisian modernism insofar as cosmopolitanism was a vital aspect of the "École de Paris," as André Warnod termed this movement in 1925. Foreign-born artists were particularly preponderant in the left-bank artist colony of Montparnasse, which Marcel Duchamp called the most international ever to exist.[1] The French defeat of 1940 and the subsequent German Occupation would shatter this unique artistic confluence.

In my study, I organize the Jewish artists who faced the Fall of France into three categories: those who fled abroad; those who hid, mostly in the south of France; and those who were deported to concentration camps. I highlight some artists, including Marc Chagall and Jacques Lipchitz, who made it to the United States with help from Varian Fry and the New York-based Emergency Rescue Committee. Among artists who remained in France, I discuss Léon Weissberg, who hid in a village in southwest France until February 1943 when he was arrested and sent to Majdanek death camp; and Boris Taslitzky, who joined the communist resistance and was deported to Buchenwald. He, along with David Olère, was one of the very few deportees to survive and return to France. Back in Paris, Taslitzky immediately set to work painting the very large canvas, *The Little Camp at Buchenwald*, one of the most significant depictions of the Holocaust by a survivor.

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[1] Richard D. Sonn, *Modernist Diaspora: Immigrant Jewish Artists in Paris, 1900-1945* (Bloomsbury, 2022), 9.

In this essay, I take a closer look at Jewish artists who remained in France during the Occupation. I try to quantify where artists were most likely to go in order to survive, and when Jewish artists were deported, so as to establish a better sense of survivors versus deportees. While the safest course was to leave France, exile required connections, entry and exit visas, and money. For the majority who were unable to leave, which choices offered the best chance of survival?

Historiography

While research on artists under the German occupation is extensive, less attention has been devoted to artists under Vichy. The two major studies are Michèle Cone's *Artists Under Vichy: A Case of Prejudice and Persecution* and Laurence Bertrand Dorléac's *L'art de la défaite*, or *Art of the Defeat, France, 1900-1944*.[2] Cone's book is a revised version of her 1988 doctoral dissertation, which she completed relatively late in life (having been born in Paris in 1932).[3] She spent part of the war years in Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, the mostly Protestant village in central France that sheltered up to 5,000 Jews, and it is likely that she is Jewish.[4] Bertrand Dorléac published her own book a year later, dismissing Cone's as a "short study … larded with misinterpretations and inaccuracies."[5] Perhaps she was thinking of Cone's statement that the Gestapo rounded up 20,000 Parisian Jews on 16 and 17 July 1942, when in fact it was the French police that had arrested just over 13,000 Jews.[6] Bertrand Dorléac's own work is not without its errors. She claims that Moïse Kisling became a naturalized French citizen in 1914.[7] In fact, after fighting a well-publicized 1914 duel with Leopold Gottlieb, a fellow Polish-Jewish artist, Kisling volunteered for the French Foreign Legion, was wounded in 1915, and finally granted citizenship in 1924.[8]

For her part, Cone had criticized Bertrand Dorléac's own *Histoire de l'art: Paris 1940-1944: Ordre national, traditions, et modernités*.[9] In her preface, Cone writes, "I have

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[2] Michèle Cone, *Artists Under Vichy: A Case of Prejudice and Persecution* (Princeton University Press, 1992); Laurence Bertrand Dorléac, *L'art de la défaite* (Éditions du Seuil, 1993); and *Art of the Defeat, France, 1900-1944*, translated by Jane Marie Todd (Getty Research Institute, 2008).

[3] Michèle Cone, "Art and politics in France during the German Occupation, 1940-1944," PhD Diss., (New York University, 1988).

[4] There are several books about Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, and one very good film, *Weapons of the Spirit*, dir. Pierre Sauvage (Chambon Foundation and Pierre Sauvage Productions, 1987). Sauvage was born there in 1944 to Jewish refugee parents.

[5] Laurence Bertrand Dorléac, *Art of the Defeat, France, 1900-1944* (Getty Research Institute, 2008), 412.

[6] Cone, *Artists Under Vichy*, 164.

[7] Cone, *Artists Under Vichy*, 65.

[8] Sonn, *Modernist Diaspora*, 106, 115-118.

[9] Laurence Bertrand-Dorléac, *Histoire de l'art: Paris 1940-1944: Ordre national, traditions, et modernités* (Éditions de la Sorbonne, 1986).

hypothesized a far more complex network of French and German interests behind the art seen in Vichy France during these years than is found in Bertrand Dorléac's text. Neither collaboration nor the devastating impact of combined Vichy and Nazi policies on former participants in the French art world receives special attention in her work."[10] *Art of the Defeat* is a denser book that draws from a larger body of archival sources, but it is focused largely on popular propaganda and relations between the Vichy authorities and the German occupiers. Characteristically, it opens with a photograph of the French artists who traveled on a junket to Nazi Germany in October 1941 organized by Hitler's favorite sculptor, Arno Breker, and the German Ambassador to France Otto Abetz. Prominently featured were the former Fauves Maurice Vlaminck, André Derain, and Kees van Dongen.

Other studies have focused on artistic collaboration or at least compromise with the Occupation. Frederic Spotts's study, *The Shameful Peace: How French Artists and Intellectuals Survived the Nazi Occupation*, borrows its title from Jean Cocteau, who would have known about shame as he hobnobbed with Arno Breker and other well-placed Germans and collaborators.[11] Spotts's account is breezier, and he maintains that unlike the Germans, the Vichy regime mostly ignored artists. Spotts comments suggestively that if the 1914 war had been Cubist, the Phony War of 1939, known in France as the *drôle de guerre*, was Surrealist.[12] Other books focused on the French capital, such as Alan Riding's *And the Show Went On: Cultural Life in Nazi-occupied Paris*, tend to neglect the refugees who fled Paris for the unoccupied zone.[13]

Gaston Diehl, a French art historian born in 1912 who lived in Paris during the war and personally knew many of the artists discussed here, published his memoirs, *La peinture en France dans les années noires, 1935-1945*, in 1999.[14] The surprising range of years includes the rise of fascism and the Spanish Civil War. Picasso's *Guernica* impressed Diehl at the 1937 World's Fair in Paris. Diehl chose to divide artists not into collaborators and resisters, or those who remained versus those who chose exile, but rather into elders and youth. Under this rubric, Picasso and Matisse, both born in the nineteenth century, were elders while Diehl's own generation were the youth. Virtually none of the artists he discusses were Jews, though Otto Freundlich is included in a list of abstract artists. Delaunay is cited several times but, in all cases, the name refers to the French-born Robert and not to his immigrant wife Sonia. In any case, Diehl's title is misleading in that the "dark years" are only a backdrop for his memories of artists he interviewed during the war. That explains why none were Jews, though Diehl later wrote or edited books about

[10] Cone, *Artists Under Vichy*, xviii.

[11] Frederic Spotts, *The Shameful Peace: How French Artists and Intellectuals Survived the Nazi Occupation* (Yale University Press, 2010).

[12] Spotts, *The Shameful Peace*, 10. For the Cubist dimensions of World War I, see "The Cubist War," chapter 11 of Stephen Kern's, *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880-1918* (Harvard University Press, 1983, 2003), 287-312.

[13] Alan Riding, *And the Show Went On: Cultural Life in Nazi-occupied Paris* (Knopf, 2010).

[14] Gaston Diehl, *La peinture en France dans les années noires, 1935-1945* (Z'Editions, 1999).

Pascin and Krémègne. About the former Fauves who toured Germany with the Nazis, Diehl commented that he saw André Derain at the Maubert metro station in 1945 looking unshaven and pitiable.[15] Maurice de Vlaminck remained ebullient, while the Dutch-born Kees van Dongen was subdued to the point of "having lost the desire to paint,"[16] (unfortunately Diehl did not date most of his meetings). Several years later van Dongen was exhibiting again, rejuvenated by the birth of a new child (he died in 1968, aged 91).[17]

For my purposes, Cone's proved the more useful study as she divides artists into "avengers of decadence," who attacked modernist and Jewish artists, and "scapegoats of decadence," which includes an interesting chapter on French Resistance art as well as on Jewish victims and survivors. These chapters shed important light on Jewish artists under Vichy. Cone reports, for example, that Peggy Guggenheim sent Otto Freundlich one thousand francs in financial support in 1941, and that he received further aid from Varian Fry's Emergency Rescue Committee. She also cites a letter Freundlich wrote to the prefecture in 1942 admitting his Jewish roots, which she implies may have sealed his fate as the Gestapo arrested him in early February 1943 and took him to the Gurs internment camp and then to Drancy near Paris, from where he was deported. Cone concludes this chapter by noting that the free zone had ceased to exist by the time Freundlich was arrested, but his surveillance and the earlier arrest of Marc Chagall in Marseille and eviction of Varian Fry from that same city in September 1941 testify to Vichy's failures.[18]

Jewish Artists in Interwar France

Two key sources were crucial for comparing where artists relocated and where they were most likely to be caught and deported. In her *Histoires des artistes Juifs de l'ecole de Paris, 1905-1939*, Nadine Nieszawer, working with colleagues, compiled capsule biographies for 178 Jewish artists working in Paris, among the more than 500 such artists Nieszawer claims worked there in the years she covers. While her list is not exhaustive, and she is missing some important figures, including Sonia Delaunay-Terk and Boris Taslitzky, it provided a useful baseline for my study. To start, I excluded all the artists who died before 1940 from my list.[19] A second important source was *Montparnasse déporté: artistes d'Europe*, a book that accompanied a 2005 exhibition at the Musée de Montparnasse. It lists 143 deported artists, including figures not included in the Nieszawer volume (though it cites Nieszawer as a consultant). However, the editor, Sylvie Buisson, also includes non-Jewish artists, such as Max Ernst (who in fact went into exile

[15] Diehl, 70.

[16] Diehl, 71.

[17] Diehl, 72.

[18] Cone, 127-130.

[19] Nadine Nieszawer and Deborah Princ, eds., *Histoires des artistes juifs de l'ecole de Paris, 1905-1939* (Les Etoiles, 2020).

in New York), as well as Jewish artists such as Max Jacob and Chaim Soutine, who died during the war from natural causes. To sharpen our focus on Jewish artists who resided in France during the Vichy years, these sources must therefore be used selectively.[20]

While quantification can be useful, numbers alone cannot convey what it meant for Parisian-based Jewish artists to seek refuge in remote regions of France. The second part of this essay will highlight the different paths of three such artists—Sonia Delaunay-Terk, Otto Freundlich, and Oser Warszawski–each of whom fled to different areas in the unoccupied southern zone. Delaunay-Terk, a naturalized French citizen, survived while Freundlich and Warszawski, non-naturalized aliens, perished (Freundlich, as a German, was also considered an enemy alien). Born in different decades of the nineteenth century in different countries—Ukraine, Germany and Poland—they represent a cross-section of Jewish immigrants.

Of the 178 artists cited in *Histoires des artistes Juifs de l'école de Paris* as working in France from 1905 to 1939, I counted 153 still residing in France in 1940 (I added Delaunay-Terk, Taslitzky, and Oser Warszawski). I distinguished between those who lived in hiding and those who were deported. Among the survivors, seventeen remained in Paris and its suburbs, and two more lived in occupied France. Twenty fled to southeast France, including Provence and Savoie; four hid in central France; one in western France; and nine in southwest France. Of those who escaped France, eleven fled to the US, seven to Switzerland, three to North Africa, and one to Monaco. Of the eighty-two artists who were never exiled, arrested, or deported, seven died during the war and two in 1944-45 shortly after the end of the Vichy period. For example, the Czech-born Georges Kars made it to Switzerland but committed suicide in 1945 in despair over the Holocaust.

Comparing the two sources, I compiled a list of seventy-one artists who were deported, nearly all of whom were killed. Taslitzky, Olère, and Jacob Markiel returned to France. Olère survived not only Auschwitz but also forced work as a Sonderkommando in the crematoria. In the winter of 1945, he and Markiel endured and survived a forced death march. Like Taslitzky, Olère began painting haunting images as soon as he returned to Paris. Thirty-seven of the deportees had remained in Paris, while three more were arrested elsewhere in occupied France. Thirteen were deported from southwest France and ten from southeast France. Thirty were deported in 1941-42, nearly all from Paris; forty-one were deported in 1943-44, most from the now-occupied southern zone.

Two major events increased the danger for Jews who fled south: the German occupation of Vichy France in November 1942 after the Allied invasion of French North Africa, and the Italian withdrawal from Nice and Southeast France in September 1943 following the overthrow of Mussolini and the armistice declared by King Victor Emmanuel III and Marshal Badoglio. Jews who had been relatively safe were suddenly vulnerable. One thinks of Charlotte Salomon, a young woman from Berlin who sheltered

[20] Sylvie Buisson, *Montparnasse déporté, artistes d'Europe* (Musée de Montparnasse, 2005).

in Nice and produced a remarkable body of work until the Germans moved in and deported her and her husband to Auschwitz in the autumn of 1943.[21]

Looking at these figures, what initial conclusions can we draw? Given the high proportion of artists arrested and deported from Paris, it was dangerous to remain in the capital. Many were rounded up during the mass arrest of Jews on 16-17 July 1942. Most were taken to the Vél d'Hiv bicycle-racing track, then transported by bus to Drancy and other transit centers before they were put on trains to Auschwitz. The best chance of surviving was to go into hiding in the southeast; the region of Toulouse and the Pyrenees was relatively more dangerous. Why did more artists not flee across the border to safety in Spain or Switzerland? Most probably felt relatively safe in Vichy or Italian-controlled France—until they weren't. Crossing borders was always difficult and dangerous, especially the flight by foot over the Pyrenees, and borders were guarded. Even crossing the border between the occupied and unoccupied zones entailed risk.

If one compares the eighty-two artists who sheltered successfully or fled abroad versus the seventy-one who were deported, one realizes that 46% of these artists were sent to the camps. This figure is comparable to the percentage of foreign-born Jews who were deported from France: 41-45%. Far fewer French-born Jews suffered the same fate.[22] It is sobering to comprehend that nearly half the immigrant Jewish artists residing in France at the beginning of World War II were dead by its end.

Three Jewish Artists Under Vichy

The same mobility that brought Jews from all over Europe to work in the Left Bank quarter of Paris also helped many of them survive the combined onslaught of Nazi Germany and the collaborationist government of Vichy France. Once the July 1942 Paris roundup revealed how vulnerable they were as foreign-born Jews, many dispersed to locales that appeared to be safer. The best-known artists used their connections to obtain visas and escape abroad. A major exception is Chaim Soutine, who never gained French citizenship and was too personally disorganized to acquire the necessary documentation that escape required. Another prominent artist was Sonia Delaunay-Terk. Born Sarah Stern in Odessa, Ukraine, at the age of five Delaunay-Terk was sent to be raised by her prosperous uncle and his wife in St. Petersburg. Deeply assimilated into French culture, she had lived in France since 1905, married a Frenchman in 1910, remained in France, and

[21] See Mary Felstiner, *To Paint her Life: Charlotte Salomon in the Nazi Era* (HarperCollins, 1994); Charlotte Salomon, *Life? Or Theater* (Overlook, 2017).

[22] Susan Zuccotti, *The Holocaust, The French, and the Jews* (University of Nebraska Press, 1993), 207. The range of numbers depends on whether you count children born in France to immigrant parents as French or foreign. The Vichy regime treated them like foreigners, which accounts for the figure of 45%. By that estimation, only 9% of French Jews were deported– a striking difference.

survived. After fleeing south, her husband Robert Delaunay died from cancer in October 1941 in Montpellier. After Robert's death, Sonia moved to the Provençal town of Grasse where she lived and worked with other artists including Jean Arp and Sophie Tauber-Arp. After the war, they were included with other artists and exhibited as "the Grasse group."[23] In nearby Cannes in July 1944, she learned she was now considered a "métèque," or foreigner, when she was asked to show her identity card. She hurried off to Toulouse, where she made wound dressings for resistance fighters, and was proud that her son Charles, already a well-known expert on jazz, fought with the resistance. Sonia Delaunay lived until 1979, long enough to see major shows dedicated to her and to write her autobiography, *Nous irons jusqu'au soleil*, shortly before her death.[24] Unlike Chagall, who wrote his autobiography in Yiddish, Delaunay wrote hers in French.

The lives of two other Jewish artists who became victims of the Holocaust highlight the diversity of these artists and their experiences. Otto Freundlich was born in Stolp, East Prussia, then part of the German Empire (now Słupsk, Poland). He arrived in Paris in 1908 and befriended Picasso at the Bateau-Lavoir in Montmartre. Oser Warszawski came from a village near Warsaw, Poland and, twenty years younger than Freundlich and thirteen years younger than Delaunay, only arrived in Paris in 1924. He was in his forties during World War Two, while Delaunay was in her mid-fifties and Freundlich in his mid-sixties. Delaunay, Freundlich, and Warszawski represented different generations and different backgrounds, and all three headed to different regions of the unoccupied Vichy zone. Contrasting their fates will help to convey what Jewish artists had to face in this fraught time.

Delaunay and Freundlich shared an avant-garde sensibility. At a time when most artists could still be called representational, Delaunay and Freundlich were drawn to abstraction. They each worked in multiple media, Delaunay in painting and clothing design, Freundlich in painting, sculpture, and also stained glass. To underscore their aesthetic similarities, the Delaunays signed an appeal on Freundlich's behalf on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday in July 1938, noting his difficult financial situation. The appeal's opening paragraph argued that, "he deserves to be seen as one of the most important precursors of 'abstract' art and as a tireless seeker after new paths."[25] The signatories, which included Jean Arp, Sophie Tauber-Arp, Pablo Picasso, Jacques Lipchitz and Max Ernst,[26] launched a subscription to buy one of his paintings and donate it to the Jeu de Paume museum. Peggy Guggenheim purchased a Freundlich painting and brought it back with her to New York in 1941 (she also brought Max Ernst along and married him).

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[23] Tadeo Kohan et al., "Chronology, 1930-1944," in *Sonia Delaunay* (Tate, 2014), 185.

[24] Sonya Delaunay, *Nous irons jusqu'au soleil* (Robert Laffont, 1978).

[25] Laurence Bertrand Dorléac, "Confused Origins," in *Sonia Delaunay* (Tate, 2014), 212.

[26] "An appeal on behalf of Otto Freundlich," in Julia Friedrich, ed., *Otto Freundlich: Cosmic Communism* (Prestel, 2017), 200-01.

In Paris in 1912, Freundlich sculpted a cubist-inspired work in plaster he called simply *Large Head*. Unfortunately, the Nazis chose this work to adorn the cover of the catalog for the 1937 Degenerate Art Exhibition, renaming it *The New Man*.[27] Freundlich was patriotic enough to return to Germany in 1914 and fight in World War I (though he had little choice, unless he was willing to join the French Foreign Legion) during which he was wounded. After the war, he hoped for a revolution in Germany to match the one that had happened in Russia the previous year. He returned to France in 1924 and continued painting and sculpting.

As a German resident in France, Freundlich was interned after World War II began, from September 1939 to February 1940. His status became even more precarious after the armistice signed on 22 June 1940 stipulated that all Germans named by the Reich had to be handed over to them.[28] Despite being well-known in Parisian artistic circles and receiving support from refugee organizations, Freundlich was unable to immigrate to the US (his Marxism probably didn't help). He also refused to abandon his companion, Jeanne Kosnick-Kloss. As late as May 1941, in his last letter to his friend Pablo Picasso, he asked Picasso to pay the rent on his Paris studio. As a left-wing German Jew and an artist labeled as degenerate, he was targeted for persecution. He went into hiding in Saint Martin-de-Fenouillet in the eastern Pyrenees but was betrayed by an informer. Arrested in February 1943, he was interned first at Gurs and then at Drancy outside Paris. On 4 March 1943, he was deported to Sobibor death camp, one of 47,000 foreign-born Jews that included 7000 Germans and 2500 Austrians.[29] During his years in hiding, Freundlich wrote his memoirs, drew up a catalog of his works from memory, and even repainted some works he considered lost. Forty years later, an art historian was brought to the stable hayloft where Freundlich had lived in hiding and found his painting utensils still there.[30]

Primarily a painter and sculptor, Otto Freundlich was also a prolific writer and theorist. In "Confessions of a Revolutionary Painter," written in Paris at the end of 1935, he renounced individualism along with Renaissance perspective in favor of a new abstract art. He rejected naïve socialist realism in favor of what he termed a new collective and universal mythology.[31] In the 1930s, Freundlich and Kosnick-Kloss envisioned avenues of sculptures at Auvers-sur-Oise, where Vincent Van Gogh was buried, which would include a tower dedicated to peace and the seven arts. An Otto Freundlich Society has an ongoing

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[27] See Mandy Wignarek, "Faked Icon: The *Large Head* in the Propaganda Exhibition *Degenerate Art*," in Friedrich, 206-214.

[28] Wignarek, 203.

[29] Marie-Bénédicte Vincent, "Otto Freundlich: A German-French Trajectory in Context," *Otto Freundlich, 1878-1943, la révélation de l'abstraction (*Musée de Montmartre, 2020), 61.

[30] Vincent, 62.

[31] Otto Freundlich, "Confessions of a Revolutionary Painter," in *Otto Freundlich: Cosmic Communism,* 4-15.

project to build this avenue of peace.[32] This aged, erudite, German-Jewish Marxist artist stood for everything the Nazis despised. One can imagine their satisfaction in arresting the artist whose sculpture adorned the cover of their catalogue of "degenerate artists."

Primarily a writer, Oser Warszawski started painting when he arrived in 1920s Montparnasse and became an integral figure in the interwar artistic milieu. Warszawski was a significant and precocious figure in Ashkenazi Yiddish culture. At the age of 22, living in Warsaw in 1920, he published a novel called *Smugglers*, in which he described how Jews survived during World War I by smuggling goods such as homemade liquor, while avoiding detection by Polish Christians, the police, and the German invaders. Smugglers excelled at crossing borders and his novel of low-life transgression also crossed borders as an example of the new avant-garde Yiddish literature.[33] Warszawski completed a trilogy of novels about Jews in World War I, with a second novel set in a Polish village and a third in Berlin. In French the trilogy is known as *La Grande Fauchaison*, the great reaping or mowing. Translated from Yiddish into Hebrew and Russian, *Smugglers* sold a remarkable one million copies; it has only recently been translated into French. Warszawski settled in Montparnasse in 1924 and wrote brief studies of the Jewish artists he met there, including Pinchus Krémègne and Marc Chagall. His Chagall book included the felicitous subtitle "the shtetl and the magician." He took up painting and wrote and illustrated a book on the milieu in the 1930s called *L'Arrière-Montparnasse* (Behind Montparnasse).[34] Focusing on the down-and-out bohemian aspects of the artists' colony, he included watercolors, gouaches, and sketches. He also befriended the artist Léon Weissberg and his wife Marie; Marie Weissberg eventually became Marie Warszawski.

The Warszawskis fled Paris in the winter of 1941-42 and headed southeast. They initially stayed in the Provençal town of Gordes, in the house that Marc and Bella Chagall had vacated the previous spring when they moved first to Marseille and then on to America with the help of Varian Fry and the Emergency Rescue Committee. It is worth emphasizing these facts for two reasons: first, the Chagalls and Warszawskis were close enough that Marc Chagall offered his summer home as refuge; and second, while the Chagalls were able to emigrate to safety, the lesser-known Warszawskis were left to their fate. Later the Warszawskis moved to Grenoble, near the Swiss border, and then to Saint Gervais, in the alpine region occupied by the Italian army. As they moved, Warszawski wrote about his experiences in a text that mixed fact and fiction, called *Résidences* and

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[32] Sonn, *Modernist Diaspora*, 268. For the Freundlich avenue peace project, see www.strasse-des-friedens.com.

[33] Rachel Ertel, "Le désenchantement du monde ou Oser Warszawski d'une guerre à l'autre," in Oser Warszawski, *La Grande Fauchaison*, translated from Yiddish to French by Ertel et al., (Denoël, 2007), 727. This novel resonated with me because of a family story: my grandfather arrived in Chicago in 1912, and when war broke out my grandmother was left to support four children in Poland for the next eight years. She survived in part by smuggling goods; how or where was not specified.

[34] Oser Warszawski, *L'Arrière-Montparnasse* (Lachenal & Ritter, 1982).

subtitled "On ne peut pas se plaindre" (One can't complain). He recorded the precarity of life on the run and created a persona he named Naphtali Cheminère, which mixed a Hebraic name meaning hand-to-hand combat with a French name that signified being on the road: in short, the Wandering Jew.

In September 1943, King Victor Emmanuel II and Marshal Badoglio signed an armistice with the Allies, and the Warszawskis and other Jews who had found refuge in Italian-occupied France followed the Italian army to Rome, where they were required to register, including listing their residence. On 17 May 1944, the police came for him at curfew, just two weeks before the Allies entered Rome on 4 June. He was interned in Rome and then Modena, before the Germans deported him to Auschwitz in July, where he died in October 1944 at the age of forty-six. Marie was not on the arrest list and survived. After the war, she worked to preserve his memory; her daughter by her first husband, Lydie Lachenal, did the same for her deported father, Léon Weissberg.[35]

From Poland to Paris (via Berlin and London), and then to Gordes in Provence, Grenoble in the Alps, Saint Gervais in the Haute Savoie, and on to Rome before being forcibly returned to Poland by the Nazis, Oser Warszawski's peripatetic life and work testify to the challenges and dangers that Jews faced. He also showed the need to record those experiences and thus create works of art in the process. Otto Freundlich similarly combined intellect and artistry, standing for universalism in the face of racism and imperialism. He stated his values eloquently: "But the universal has stepped out of the framework of the myth, has become an active, practical potential, it is the meaning behind the human community, has become its collective law, it is recognizable and workable, it is active…. suffering is no longer a self-centered suffering but a collective suffering which does not resign itself."[36]

Conclusion

These three immigrant Jewish artists each fled to different regions of Vichy France: Delaunay-Terk went to Provence, Freundlich sheltered in the southwest Pyrenees, and Warszawski in the Haute-Savoie. These were resourceful individuals, yet two of them, despite their best efforts, ended up in German hands. Delaunay and Freundlich had lived in France for decades; Warszawski had arrived later but was hardly a newcomer. All were multi-talented. Sonia Delaunay-Terk painted and designed clothing in the avant-garde style she termed "simultaneous," and, at the end of her life, wrote an autobiography. Otto Freundlich was a painter and a sculptor, worked in stained glass, and also wrote proficiently, explicating his political and aesthetic stances in theoretical terms. A best-

[35] "Oyzer Warszawski, 1898-1944—The Family Legacy," 26 June 2016. https://arunsolwarszawski.wordpress.com; Ozer Warszawski, *On ne peut pas se plaindre, ou Résidences*, edited by L. Lachenal, A. Lévi, and M. Varshavski (L. Levi, 1997).

[36] Freundlich, "Confessions," 15.

selling Yiddish novelist while still in his twenties, Oser Warszawski developed his artistic talents only after arriving in Montparnasse in the 1920s. In his forties, while living on the run, he blended fiction and non-fiction to record in real time the travails that he and his wife Marie faced. In an earlier war, he had described how Jews adapted as smugglers; in this war they learned to smuggle themselves across borders.

While Delaunay-Terk's survival may have been due in part to luck, she was also married to a Frenchman and carried his non-Jewish name. As a woman, she may have stood a better chance of surviving, although surveying the artists listed by Nieszawer in *Histoires des Artistes Juifs* does not suggest that women survived at a higher rate. Nieszawer lists 138 male and seventeen female artists who were alive at the start of World War II. Of the seventeen women, eight were deported; of the men, sixty-five were killed. In both cases, nearly half the tabulated artists were killed[37] (I list the men as killed rather than deported because a handful of male deportees returned from the camps, and several others were killed in France rather than deported). In any case, while these numbers are only approximate, they suggest that Sonia Delaunay-Terk survived less because she was a woman and more because she was highly assimilated, spoke French, and had extensive contacts in the artistic community. On the other hand, Charlotte Salomon's fate was comparable to Oser Warszawski's: when Italy surrendered, her life was immediately endangered.

It is ironic that Jewish artists who had succeeded in their profession were happy to put down roots in France.[38] Sculptors Jacques Lipchitz, Chana Orloff, and Ossip Zadkine built studio-residences in Paris; Zadkine also owned a rural residence in Les Arques in the Pyrenees. Marc Chagall in Gordes, Moïse Kisling in Sanary-sur-Mer, and Michel Kikoïne in Burgundy all felt comfortable living and working in small French towns. All except Lipchitz, who remained in the US, returned to France after the war: Chagall settled in St. Paul de Vence in 1948, not far from Picasso; Pinchus Krémègne left Paris for Céret in the Pyrenees.

With the complicity of Vichy, the Germans had revived the mythical figure of the Wandering Jew as they drove Jewish artists and intellectuals to scatter across France and the world. Forcing Jews into the desperate guise of Naphtali Cheminère, they thereby reinforced the stereotype of Jews as rootless cosmopolitans.

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[37] Nieszawer and Princ, *Histoires des artistes juifs de l'ecole de Paris, 1905-1939*, passim.

[38] Michèle Cone also refers to this phenomenon in a chapter titled, "An Uncanny 'Return to the Soil,'" in *Artists Under Vichy*.