

8. Postwar Paris and Mexico

8.1. PARIS

In April 1920, Charlot was still stationed in Landau and anticipating his return to Paris in about a month; he had received his voter card in March. Charlot had also been writing poems about his experiences of disappointment, isolation, and disorientation on his leaves in April 1919 and from late December 1919 to early January 1920. In late April, Charlot apparently made a short visit to Paris where he painted two pencil and gouache portraits that, given his regular practice, must have been from life: *Portrait of Louis Goupil, profile* and *Louis Goupil's Hands*.¹ In my opinion, Charlot was returning to the model who, since the death of Henri, represented for him his family ties. Charlot was using visual analysis to reestablish his mental and emotional contact with his family, his background, and his former life.

The portraits are transitional in style as well as emotion: they are related to Charlot's gouache portraits *Michel* and *Bihain* of February 1920, but also look forward to his post-demobilization work. First and foremost, they are over life-size in scale, far larger than any works Charlot produced while in the military, and suggestive of his now primary desire to produce monumental murals. Accordingly, the expression is broader: the areas into which the face is analyzed are larger, and the washes freer. Reserves, unused in *Michel* and *Bihain*, are as prominent as they are in fresco as well as watercolor. Finally, the overall style is more reserved with no striking distortions. Charlot will continue to innovate, but his main tendency will be towards a style appropriate to monumental and public art. These portraits accord the general postwar mood of the *rappel à l'ordre* 'recall to order,' felt by many artists, which resulted in the Neoclassical movement. When Charlot discussed *Portrait of Louis Goupil, profile* in 1972, he emphasized that aspect of the work:

I came out of my bath in academic art with good drawing in many ways. I think this portrait of my grandfather is an example of the severity, of the acceptance of the rule, that I had learned at the Beaux-Arts and in the Louvre. (March 8, 1972)

Nonetheless, the means of expression are more innovative and abstract than they appear, as will be seen below. That is, Charlot was developing a style in which advanced means of expression could be absorbed into a general impression that would not repulse a general public.

The two portraits are connected, I believe, to the large pencil drawing, *Louis Goupil, three-quarters*, dated later by Charlot "1920?".² Goupil looks the same age and is wearing the same clothes as in the gouaches. The sheet has been torn along the left edge from a sheet of the same paper as the two larger portraits. The style is similarly transitional, using the heavy, soft-pencil background shading found in the Occupation portraits and the large scale and prominent reserves found in the two gouaches being discussed. Charlot is analyzing Goupil's face as he did those of *Michel* and *Bihain*, but the familiarities of its features assert themselves even as Charlot looks at them anew, and his pencil begins to move quickly and with great assurance, taking pleasure in a large variety of strokes. The portrait emphasizes Goupil's pain, age, and strength. His brow is knit. The bags under his eyes are heavy, one eye looking

down in pensive fatigue, the other up at something that has penetrated Goupil's quiet. But the nose surges forward, recalling Goupil's famous vigor, and the mouth tightens obstinately as if holding in the last energy that Goupil needs to survive. As Goupil's physical power ebbs, the strength of his character surfaces ever more forcefully in his face. Returning from the war, Charlot appreciates old age.

Portrait of Louis Goupil, profile is less psychological: Goupil is a monument. His scale bespeaks his importance, and the age of his face, the years required to attain it. Charlot focuses on Goupil's eye and the area around it, the depiction increasing in broadness and abstraction with the distance from the focal area. The head appears realistic, but the means of expression are surprisingly abstract. The head is analyzed into areas that, in shape and distinctiveness, cannot all be connected to the realities of musculature and skeleton; the side of the head between the eye and the ear could be isolated as an abstraction. The analysis reveals a knowledge of Cubism, but Charlot had been doing such analyses before and through the war, sometimes using Goupil as his model. Moreover, Charlot's idea of Cubist analysis was sharp faceting, which he adapted in his *Self-Portrait, Cubist Style* of January 21–24, 1919. In contrast, the analyzed areas of *Portrait of Louis Goupil, profile* are composed as flowing shapes that reach a dynamic balance. The pictorial area of flow is framed by the comparatively straight lines of the cap, shoulder, and collar. These lines are slanted, opening like a fan from behind Goupil's head. This opening creates a forward movement that supports the forward surge of Goupil's cheekbone, nose, and chin, and draws the viewer's attention towards the profile. Moreover, the slanting lines behind Goupil meet beyond the edge of the sheet, a traditional device for increasing the mental impression of the space of the picture. Similarly, Goupil's heavy body extends in vertically slanted lines beyond the bottom edge of the sheet. This geometric composition both frames the flowing quality of the head and expands the space and thus the monumentality of the image. Finally, the light gouache colors, just like the drawing, are unnatural but appear realistic. Charlot has honored Goupil with the highest artistic means at his disposal, but the portrait is none the less emotional. In the focus on Goupil's tired eye can be sensed Charlot's loving personal concern; Goupil's cap is a reminder of the one he wore during the illness of Henri; and the Aztec character of the jaw line reveals for Charlot the family genealogy. The oldest surviving member of an extended family, Goupil is painted as a person and a lineage.

Charlot will later combine the monumentality of this portrait-head with his Cubistic sharp faceting in his first oil paintings in Mexico:

looking at those people, I didn't think of them as flesh but as hard matter, hard obsidian and so on. That is, a faceting that the French had used without any sense of weight or texture, I would say, in early Cubism, with me became a way of changing the flesh into hard stone. And I think that already is Mexican. (Interview May 18, 1971)

In those paintings as in this portrait, artistically sophisticated means are used to strengthen an image that would be recognizable to the general viewer, while the means themselves remain subliminal.

Although the sheet is the same size, the scale of *Louis Goupil's Hands* is even larger. Emerging from his warm robe, the hands are crossed, right hand over left, on Goupil's lap. The primary impression

of the hands is their strength, their age being indicated mostly by their rest. The fingers of the left or lower hand extend forward, looking elegant as well as strong; their thick nails, cut square, impress also with their finish. In contrast, the right hand rests heavily on the left, the fingers bent and twisted almost to distortion by a long life of hard physical activity. Charlot seems to be contrasting the inner and the outer man, the younger and the older. Charlot had studied hands since childhood, and they would become one of his primary means of expression. *Louis Goupil's Hands* reminds me of Charlot's remark that Vincent Van Gogh could show the whole tragic life of a peasant in a painting of his shoe, whereas Edvard Munch needed to introduce all sorts of dramatic elements to make a similar point (Tabletalk May 1978).

Despite all his fears, worries, and negative emotions, Charlot returned to Paris with firm ideas and resolutions about his future life:

retour de Landau 31–5–20.

Vie à organiser :

jours de repos : Dimanche

“ “ amis : Samedi

jours de travail : lever : 7 h quand je vais à Paris. a)

7 h 1/2 quand ici. b)

Messe 7 h 1/2 a). 8 h b)

méditation : à l'Église—et métro (ou lecture) a)

ici après lecture. (au lever). b)

travail du matin : quand rien de pressé. travail d'après nature : fleurs, étoffes etc...

(Si possible nu).

Déjeuner : bénédicité. rendre grâce.

A. M. travail dev. d'état : ~~exécution~~ réalisation en vue de [?].

Dîner : comme déjeuner.

Soir : repos. musique. lecture de repos.

coucher 9 h.

Dimanches : quand libre : musée—expositions.

Maman famille

sténographie : Messe 8 h...dans le courant journée : lecture méditée et pensée à garder.

amis : cultiver. M^r Cadart.

Gilde Huré, Arroux

Pierre.

Legendre.

Chio. (à écrire).

recevoir ici avec affabilité

tenir compte de :

méditations.

travail (carnet bleu).

~~critiques et dessins.~~

mon argent (*Ludwigshafen Notebook*)

return from Landau, May 31, 1920

Life to organize:

days of rest: Sunday

“ “ friends: Saturday

work days: rise: 7 AM when I go to Paris. a)

7:30 AM when here. b)

Mass 7:30 AM a). 8 AM b)

meditation: in church—and subway (or reading) a)

here after reading. (on rising). b)

morning work: when nothing urgent. nature study: flowers, textiles, etc. (If possible
nudes).

Lunch: Grace before meals. give thanks.

AM. work, duties of station in life : ~~execution~~ realization in view of [?].

Dinner: like lunch.

Evening: rest. music. restful reading.

to bed 9 PM

Sundays: when free: museum, exhibitions.

Mama family

Mass 8 AM...through the day: meditative reading and thoughts to keep in
mind.

friends: cultivate. Father Cadart.

Gilde Huré, Arroux

Pierre.

Legendre.

Chio. (to write to).

receive here with affability

keep in mind:

meditations.

work (blue sketchbook)

~~criticisms and drawings.~~

my money

Without a regular job, Charlot wanted to maintain the disciplined life he had led in the army, with its fixed hours and work-centered schedule. He was dividing his days—and his scheduling—between those spent at St. Mandé and those in Paris. Regular religious devotions are prominent: daily Mass, meditation time, and prayer before meals. His artistic work is divided between ongoing studies—based on the observation of nature and man-made objects—and special projects; he mentions specifically his use of sketchbooks, several of which have survived. Curiously, Charlot crosses out “critiques et dessins” ‘criticisms and drawings’ although both are important in his activities at this time. Recreation is confined to the evening, family to Sunday (as well as normal domestic relations, like the evening music-making of his mother and sister), and friends to Saturday. Charlot determines to “cultivate” certain friends, revealing the special effort he needed to make in order to avoid the characteristic solitariness that continues to be expressed in his poems such as *Jeu* of October 12, 1920:

Je songe, tandis que seulet
je parcours ce pays barbare

‘I dream, while alone
I pass through this barbarian land’

Again, the ordinariness of normal life seems inadequate:

restent chez eux, cultivent leurs
choux et se mettent en ménage.

‘they stay at home, grow their
vegetables, and set up housekeeping.’

Behind such emotions is the practical awareness of mortality imposed by the war. Charlot creates a new bookplate for himself at this time, with the inscription: “Jean Charlot me crut sien. p.p.l.” ‘Jean Charlot thought me his. Pray for him.’

Charlot’s list of chosen friends includes Pierre Marquet, with whom he had made puppet theatres as a child. From the Gilde, he chooses Father Cadart, who may have been his confessor, and Marguerite Huré, even though he had been hurt by her during their meeting on his previous leave in Paris, as seen in his poem *Elle m’a dit des choses désagréables* of March 11, 1920, discussed in the last chapter. Arroux or Arrou is perhaps the person he mentions as a popular literary stylist in several poems. G. Chio is the captain for whom Charlot had created a woodcut ex libris (Morse number 9); apparently, he did not live in the area because the friendship would have to be maintained by correspondence. The newest friend is Legendre, who will be a key to Charlot’s activity during this period and the subject of his most important painting, *L’Amitié*. In general, Charlot wants to be more affable, that is, to restrain the negative feelings found in his poems and that could express themselves in prickly sarcasm even into his later life.

Finally, Charlot needed to address the financial problems he and his family were facing, problems aggravated by the growing postwar inflation in France. As explained in chapter 5, Charlot and his mother were selling the family possessions to support themselves; a contract of December 15, 1920, survives in which Anne Charlot consigns a stock of feathers for sale. An undated letter from Charlot in

German should probably be placed in this period; it would not have been written while his father was still functioning or during the war. The letter indicates that Charlot was seeking work as a representative of a German firm, perhaps a contact from his father's prewar network:

In Beantwortung auf Ihren Vorschlag mir 1% commission zu gewaehren bedaure ich antworten zu müssen dass ich nur bei 2% Ihre Vertretung aufnehmen könnte und bei den in meinem Briefe gegebenen Bedingen [*sic*] die den hiesigen Sitten und Gesetzen entsprechen

In der Hoffnung Ihrer Genehmigung Verbleibe ich mit Hochachtung Ihr ergeben

M Charlot

'In answer to your proposition of granting me a 1% commission, I regret that I must answer that I could undertake your representation only with 2% and under the conditions given in my letter, which conform to the customs and laws here.

In the hope of your consent, I remain most respectfully yours,

Mr. Charlot.'

Given Charlot's incapacity as a businessman, his only realistic hope was to succeed as an artist. From his demobilization in May to his decision at the end of 1920 to explore the possibility of moving to Mexico, Charlot would work energetically in three directions. First and foremost, he would work on a mural commission for a parish church. Less characteristically, he would work as a commercial artist and attempt to enter the secular and even fashionable art world: "I found a few, well, jobs, call them odd jobs, like those we spoke of in fashion design and so on," (Interview October 18, 1970). For this new initiative, he was relying on his new friend, recorded only with his last name: Legendre.

Legendre was a member of Charlot's generation in a family with a long history in modern art and many contacts in the fashionable world:

And he was from a family who had had a lot to do with, well, the great painters. His father, I think, had been—his grandfather mostly had been a friend of Degas. Degas had represented members of the family and so on, and he was quite in the know. I'm not sure what his mother did, but she was more or less around that circle of fashion and fashionable people... (Interview October 18, 1970)

Legendre had very interesting—it must have been his grandfather who had been a close friend of Degas. In fact, he *is* in some of the pictures of Degas. And the family had some very nice, I could say intimate mementos of that friendship with Degas, and so on, and it was an extremely cultured family. I think you'll find, probably, it in some of the footnotes about the letters of Degas, and so on. (Interview May 14, 1971)

Charlot met Legendre during one of his leaves in Paris—probably the last—at an art school in which they were drawing nude models:

Well, I think we were working together at the two academies, the Colarossi and the Grande Chaumière, which had been there already for generations in Paris. You didn't

have to enroll yourself as a student. You went in, and you could sit down and pay for your *séance*. There were models, professional models, and in the old days I think my mother had gone to the Grande Chaumière and besides having her formal studio work with Gérôme, and so on. So I went in my turn to Grande Chaumière, and I think we just engaged in conversation and from then on... He said he was looking for a place where we could have a model, so I had my own studio in St. Mandé, and we had there a few drawing *séances* with the model. (Interview October 18, 1970)

What we did was getting together from time to time with a model to draw and paint.

He had a little more freedom, somehow, to work from the model in my studio in St.

Mandé, and that is one of the ways we got together.³

Legendre is listed as a friend to cultivate in Charlot's "Vie à organiser," and they spent time together apart from their work in the studio. Charlot noted on his poem *il en est qui se font eunuques pour l'amour* "Montmartre Café Place Clichy avec Legendre." The strength of Charlot's friendship for Legendre is indicated by the fact that he used it as a subject for his religious meditations:

sur amitié. le détachement (1) dans l'amitié (2)

1 divin 2 humaine.

spécial : pour Legendre.

dans la Transfiguration Dieu seul ami stable (*Ludwigshafen Notebook*, August 7, 1920)

'on friendship. detachment (1) in friendship (2)

1 divine 2 human

special: for Legendre.

in the Transfiguration God is the only stable friend'

Just as with his pet dog Mousmé, Charlot wanted to adjust his always strong feelings of human friendship with his religion. An even stronger indication is that he started painting Legendre's portrait with the title *L'Amitié* 'Friendship': "And I wasn't too keen on just drawing and drawing from the model. I think I did actually, I began actually, that big gouache on friendship. While he was drawing from the model, I was already composing that big picture" (Interview October 18, 1970).

Unfortunately, Legendre ended the relationship on Charlot's return in the summer of 1921 from his exploratory trip to Mexico. That Charlot felt the break keenly is revealed in his "Essai sur mon état actuel" of September 25, 1922, in Notebook C:

b) *relations amitié* : douloureuses excessivement depuis 14 : Saletés succession.

régiment : Toupillet etc. depuis : Legendre Leal Diego. **STENOGRAPHIE**

les 3 ~~dernières~~ suffiraient pour toute une vie

'b) *relations, friendship*: excessively painful since 1914: Filthinesses in succession.

Regiment: Toupillet, etc. since: Legendre Leal Diego. **SHORTHAND**

the last three would be enough for a whole life'

Charlot wrote also in his Ludwigshafen Notebook, coupling Legendre with an earlier army companion:

je ne vous parle point de ces créatures—Petit l'ivrogne et Legendre léger—que j'ai aimés de mon cœur et qui restèrent étrangers. (September 1922)

'I don't speak to you at all of those creatures—Petit the Drunk and Legendre the light—whom I loved with my heart and who remained strangers.'

When I pressed Charlot in my interviews on the reason for the break, he was uncomfortable and evasive:

Well, of course, he didn't go to the Americas, and I went to the Americas, and that's about it. I remember that from my first trip to Mexico, I chose something for him, and what I chose didn't please him too much. I had been dazzled by a shop that had, in Mexico City, importations from the United States, and I thought that a certain straw hat with a very loud ribbon—I had never seen anything like that before; I think it was a boater they called those things, but with a loud ribbon, as loud as a flag—would please him very much. When I brought it to him, I'm afraid it displeased him very much. But we stayed friends, of course, but we had to get together to go on being friends, and I haven't seen him now for fifty years.

I think we ended on a very nice note.⁴

There was no breaking of anything...And I know that you would like to inject a little drama, but there was no drama in the thing...And there may have been a sort of tapering off between the first trip and the second trip. There was no "break" at all. (Interview May 14, 1971).

Legendre may have been unhappy with Charlot's portrayal of him as an extreme esthete in *L'Amitié*. Indeed, that title may have been substituted for the name of the portraitee, when Legendre disliked the image Charlot was making of him. In fact, in Charlot's notes planning the exhibition, he refers to the painting as "Legendre." If Charlot did change the title to *L'Amitié*, the act would be a poignant indication of his need for friendships and his tendency to idealize people he thought would prove the kind of friends he wanted and needed. Charlot felt that Lincoln Kirstein broke with him in the mid-1930s because he did not like the portrait Charlot painted of him as Adam in the painting Kirstein commissioned from him, *Adam and Eve*.⁵ Whatever the reason for the break, Charlot completed *L'Amitié* and exhibited it in the 1921 Salon d'Automne of 1921.

During their friendship, Legendre acted as a patron for Charlot, who all his life craved such support and protection. He provided introductions to Elizabeth Arden and Paul Poiret—for whom Charlot worked through 1920—and Charlot, in all likelihood, based on him some of his hopes for a career. However, the break-up with Legendre occurred after Charlot returned from Mexico and was, therefore, not a factor in the decision to leave France. As will be seen below, that decision was the result primarily of the worsening financial situation of Charlot's family and of the failure of Charlot's project for a mural in a parish church. Before that move, from May to the last part of 1920, Charlot made a determined effort to make an artistic career in Paris and support his family with it.

8.1.1. STUDYING ART

Charlot continued to study art widely with his characteristic approach: close observation of the work itself, attention to technique and technical problems, critical attitude even towards admired artists, and focus on elements useful for his own work. Charlot seems to show an increased interest in the relation of the art he is studying to the modern art movements developing around him. Indeed, whereas before, Charlot placed himself in the context of the whole history of art, now, for the first time, he seems to be defining himself more against contemporary movements and interests. His study thus reflects his artistic experimenting during this period.

The postwar Paris Charlot visited on leave and finally returned to was the center of a great release of artistic energy. Cubism was widely available to the public for the first time and was being adopted by more artists. New movements were being launched, like Dada and Purism. Individual artists, in order to express the experience of the war, were experimenting in unusual directions: avant-garde artists were exploring traditional means of expression and conservative artists were trying avant-garde discoveries.⁶ Picasso and others were moving towards the Neoclassicism that would eventually dominate the scene and art-historical narrative. The tentative beginnings of abstraction or nonrepresentational art could be found as well.

Charlot's reading and viewing can be followed only spottily through the documents, although those do reveal how he was looking at art and the thoughts it was stimulating in him. For instance, Charlot's first surviving extended writing on Cubism is from June 1921, but he had looked at Cubist works since his youth and done a series of Cubist analyses of eighteenth-century prints earlier that year. Similarly, Ingres was important to Charlot from his childhood, but his mid-1921 response to an exhibition reveals him clarifying his ideas on the artist. Charlot could have for years a number of general and unsystematized ideas about a subject, and the date he defined them is not necessarily the moment he first encountered the subject. As described earlier, Charlot even studied many subjects first in a preliminary way and focused intensely on them only later. Moreover, Charlot certainly saw and read much more than contemporary records reveal, as seen in the amount of firsthand information he used in his later writings and lectures. For instance, no contemporary reference survives to Dada, but Charlot lectured on that movement later in life and later owned a copy of Jean Vinchon's important *L'Art et la Folie*.⁷ Further directions are suggested by Charlot's copy of Abanindra Nath (*sic*) Tagore's *Art et Anatomie Hindous* (1921), which he recommended I read to learn a different esthetic and view of art. Although evidence is lacking that Charlot read the book at this period of his life, his doing so would fit the breadth of his explorations. His acquaintance with nonrepresentational art is confirmed by his rejection of it in his 1922 essay "Conseils du Peintre à un Client Possible." Charlot's studies clearly embraced many subjects at the same time and lasted in some cases for years and even for life. Accordingly, I will discuss in this section evidence from the Occupation through his trips to Mexico.

Charlot continued his study of Cézanne; among his drawings of 1920, he lists "copie Cézanne" (Ludwigsheim Notebook). He also read books that related Cézanne to the development of modern art. In his collection have survived three books he bought in Germany and studied there: Julius

Meier-Graefe's *Cézanne und sein Kreis: Ein Beitrag zur Entwicklungsgeschichte* (1920),⁸ Max Raphael's *Von Monet zu Picasso: Grundzüge einer Ästhetik und Entwicklung der Modernen Malerei* (1919), which Charlot bought the year it appeared,⁹ and *Neue Französische Malerei* (1913). In France, he bought Ambrose Vollard's *Paul Cézanne* (1919).¹⁰

The above writings emphasize the continuity of much contemporary French art, especially Cubism, with the Classical tradition, following the example of Cézanne's differences from the Impressionists. Charlot's describes the process of Cubism as he did that of Classicism: composition based on experience seeking a geometrical vision continually enlarged through observation:

In the same way, when Cubism was in fashion, people asked artists why they did cubes. There's a tremendous reason why we should paint them. We are born and die in cubes. A room like this is the cubic space in which we are accustomed to live. So just as in the Dufy episode, it is inside cubes that people have been laughing at Cubists. We all walk on horizontal floors. We all look at vertical walls and horizontal ceilings. If we didn't have horizontals to hang on to, we would feel we had lost our sense of orientation. So it is not astonishing that people, who by their physical nature need the vertical and the horizontal and the cube to live, should start looking in nature for affinities to that shape. It is after all a kind of portraiture of themselves. (Disney lectures I)

This view contrasts with that of later critics, who see more disjunction in Cézanne's work and consider Cubism an "aggressive break" with the past.¹¹ The evidence is, however, overwhelming that Cubists as well as their friends and enemies felt the continuity of their work.¹² The Futurists even accused the Cubists of "masked academicism."¹³

An important book for Charlot was Albert Gleizes's *Du Cubisme et des moyens de le comprendre* (1921), which he bought during his short return trip from Mexico in mid-1921 (Tabletalk February 1972). In reaction against Dada, Gleizes (1881–1953) emphasized the Classical character of Cubism (Silver 1989: 312 f.). For Gleizes, Cubism had rediscovered the eternal, impersonal laws of painting by which the individual transcends the self towards a suprahuman universal (Gleizes 1921: 6, 11, 32, 38 f., 43 f., 48). These rules of art belong to all people because they are human. Moreover, the proper internal structure of a painting corresponds to natural organic formations of minerals and vegetables, which revives "la notion religieuse" 'the religious idea' that inspired art as prayer (32 f., 41 f.). Cézanne was the "flèche indicatrice" 'direction arrow,' turning artists back from Impressionism (7, 13 f.).

Charlot underlined several passages in the book that reveal his particular interest in the classical rules of painting.¹⁴ Gleizes's ideas were not new to Charlot; rather, they reinforced his earlier influences and personal thinking. For instance, Gleizes's formulation of painting and the laws of beauty resembles the famous one of Maurice Denis: "La peinture c'est l'art d'animer une surface plane" 'Painting is the art of animating a plane surface.'¹⁵ Charlot related Cubism to the paintings he had studied at the Louvre, like those of Uccello: "Cubism was using some of the same problems, semi-geometric problems used by the Old Masters" (Interview September 17, 1970). Charlot always said that he was attracted to Cubism

by its rationality: “That’s why I’m still a Cubist in a way, because they were the most reasonable.”¹⁶ In his autobiographical lecture, “An Artist Looks Back” (March 8, 1972), he stated unequivocally:

I told you that I was born as a painter roughly at the time that Cubism was born. Among the Cubists I had people that I loved perhaps more than others. They were people who represented for me the *rule*, that is, I could not see, literally could not see, a conflict between the art that I had learned at the Beaux-Arts and in the Louvre—Old Masters and academic art—and Cubism. In fact I loved Cubism because it seemed to me that it exhibited very clearly the rule, the same rule that I had learned by looking at Poussin.

At this time, Charlot felt nearest to the later generation of Cubists, who were emphasizing this character of the movement: André Lhote (1885–1962), Jean Metzinger (1883–1956), Juan Gris (1887–1927), and Gino Severini (1883–1966).¹⁷ Speaking of his Cubist gouaches, discussed below, Charlot once went so far as to exaggerate: “I was more influenced by Purism probably than Cubism proper.”¹⁸ Charlot’s notes on an exhibition of Lhote express the point of attachment:

Lhote après avoir parcouru les théories s’est formé une discipline objective : Recherche de la ligne avec tendance à la géométriser. Etude des valeurs surtout à leurs points de jonction. Couleur sobre au thème choisi arbitrairement. (*Notebook C*, “Lhote”)

‘After going through theories, Lhote formed for himself an objective discipline: research into line with a tendency to geometrize it. Study of values especially at the points of juncture. Sober color with theme chosen arbitrarily.’

Charlot would later identify the earliest period of Cubism as its greatest, and would soon stick an exclamation mark on his claim that Lhote’s *La Femme au Madras* was a “*chef-d’œuvre de la peinture actuelle*” “*masterpiece of today’s painting*.” But in these years, he was feeling strongly the differences in generation between himself and older artists. In his 1924 article, “D. Alfaro Siqueiros,” Charlot would refer to “les peintres de ma génération” ‘the painters of my generation’ as opposed to “nos aînés (génération Diego Rivera)” ‘our elders (the generation of Diego Rivera).’

Picasso for Charlot was an older painter who had already a long history behind him. Charlot obviously knew Picasso’s work and even squared and analyzed an illustration of one of his paintings in Gleizes’s *Du Cubisme* (in JCC). In June 1921, Charlot attended the Picasso retrospective at the Galerie Paul Rosenberg, which followed the painter through thirty-nine paintings from his Rose Period to his latest Neoclassicism in order to explain and justify his transformations, especially his latest (FitzGerald 1995: 114–119). Charlot’s note, “de Picasso” (*Notebook C*), is a response to the exhibition and a defining of his general thoughts on the artist. Subjectively, he begins by rejecting any esthetic complication or art for its own sake. Objectively, he traces Cubism back to the Impressionists. He claims they have influenced Picasso in the practice of decomposing objects on the canvas and leaving them to be recomposed by the viewer. Charlot finds Impressionist influence also in the arbitrariness of the use of

color and point of view. This opinion goes against the received view, towards which Charlot himself would move later. Impressionists influenced Picasso negatively in his rejection of improvised, virtuoso brushstrokes and variegated color. Cézanne, on the other hand, taught Picasso geometric composition. This early period had a positive influence, as Charlot wrote later:

la période “marron” du cubisme fut une fructueuse purge que Picasso administra à la peinture. Il la guérit ainsi un peu rudement des indigestions d'arc-en-ciel qui la congestionnait et lui réenseigna un régime plus normal. Exemple qui mérite d'être suivi, ne serait-ce que par hygiène. (1924–1925)

‘the “brown” period of Cubism was a fruitful purge that Picasso administered to painting. He thus cured, a little rudely, the rainbow indigestions that congested it and retaught it a more normal diet. An example that merits following, even if only for hygiene.’

Charlot divides Picasso’s work into periods according to their modification of vision by theory. The first is *Cubisme Physique*, in which the object is deformed by geometry, color is arbitrary, and the subject can disappear because it is not the point of the painting.¹⁹ In *Cubisme Abstrait*, only the title and a few fragments still suggest a subject; the canvas is in fact “une construction géométrique abstraite, offrant des plans et valeurs imaginaires” ‘an abstract geometric construction, displaying imaginary planes and values.’ In this category, Charlot sees Picasso going much further towards nonrepresentational art than most other critics did; in fact, the contemporary nonrepresentational artists did not consider him one of their own. But Charlot’s remarks on these first two periods do resemble those of Maurice Denis’ two “vagues” ‘waves’ of Cubism in an article of 1916 (1922: 28–31). Indeed, Denis’ formulation is more judicious: “la peinture a évolué vers les limites de l’abstraction” ‘painting has developed towards the limits of abstraction’ (31).

In the third period, described as “sujet suggéré expressément” ‘subject suggested explicitly,’ Picasso returns to subject matter but describes it by suggestive means; for instance, fragments of an object are used to suggest the whole. Relief is deemphasized while modeling through values is replaced by flat areas. The sensual attractiveness of the previous period disappears in a new appeal to the mind of the viewer. Charlot is astonished at the deliberately poor technique of the paintings:

sa technique est absolument pauvre : parties de toile non couvertes, teintes posées lisses comme d’un peintre en bâtiments. dessin grossier au trait non recouvert.

‘his technique is absolutely poor: parts of the canvas not covered, color laid down flat like house painting. crude drawing and uncovered lines.’

Picasso’s frequent sloppiness would continue to astonish Charlot. In the 1950s, I visited with him a New York gallery in which several very large Picasso oils were displayed: figures in the middle with a summary background brushed in roughly and not reaching the edges of the canvas. Charlot exclaimed, “You see Picasso does that—he just leaves the edges unfinished. He doesn’t bother with them.” Charlot seemed disapproving, puzzled, and intrigued at the same time.

The fourth period is the most important for Charlot at this point in his life, and I quote in full:

4) PLANISME sujet entrevu.

puis P. supprime toute représentation physique de volumes : le tableau présente une série d'à-plats à limites géométriques dont les rapports de couleur et de forme suggèrent le *volume*, l'état d'esprit, (gaieté, tristesse etc.) et l'ordonnance d'un sujet entrevu cérébralement plutôt que connu. La technique est soignée : contours nets, pureté de couleur.

Le tableau existe physiquement comme une décoration agréable.

Quelquefois la toile n'a que ce but décoratif, sans sujet recomposable.

'PLANISM subject glimpsed.

then P. suppresses all physical representation of volumes: the picture presents a series of flattened surfaces with geometric limits whose relations of color and form suggest the *volume*, the state of mind, (gaiety, sadness, etc.) and the arrangement of a subject glimpsed cerebrally rather than known. The technique is finished: neat contours, purity of color.

The picture exists physically as an agreeable decoration.

Sometimes the canvas has only this decorative purpose, without a recomposable subject.'

Charlot is describing a flat or flatter Cubist style used by a number of artists during the war.²⁰ I have not found the term *Planisme* used elsewhere, and it may be Charlot's own coinage, although he does seem to use it later as a recognized term: "I also had many ideas concerning modern art: the Cubist and the Planists and all the existing schools..."²¹ Charlot at this time was concerned with the use of values to create contour—as seen in his underlining of passages in Max Raphael's *Von Monet zu Picasso*²²—and apparently formed the idea that the practice should be abandoned as another vestige of illusionism. He had wanted Lhote to "balayer toute la lie impressionniste" 'sweep away all the Impressionist dregs,' but felt he had not gone far enough: "il est encore un peu jardin de Bérénice. Quel homme sera assez puissant pour *assassiner les nuances*" 'he's still a little *Garden of Bérénice*. What man will be powerful enough to *assassinate the nuances*.' Charlot's reference is to Barrès' 1891 estheticist novel. Charlot himself will produce two Planist pictures: *Music* and *Bullet*, discussed below, that will illustrate this style. In his later writings, on the contrary, Charlot will celebrate the fact that early Cubism: "was actuated by no scruples about musing up the actual plane of a picture, no Byzantine taboo that would make the painting flat as a carpet" (AA I 82).

Having described the periods, Charlot evaluates them as a viewer. He appreciates the appeal to the mind of the viewer and the use of intellectual laws in the first and third periods. But in the third period, the abstract play with objects is not worth the effort and the impoverished technique is "désagréable aux sens" 'disagreeable to the senses.' Charlot prefers the second and fourth periods:

le côté sensuel de la peinture est éliminé au maximum. Elle s'adresse aux facultés spirituelles sans alourdissement d'objet (cf. musique. cf. Mallarmé : prose à des Esseintes). il y a là délectation pure.

'the sensual side of the painting is eliminated to a maximum. It addresses itself to the spiritual faculties without being weighed down by the subject (cf. music. cf. Mallarmé: *Prose à des Esseintes*). there is pure delectation there.'

Although he stresses the intellectual in this passage, his own delectation must have been caused in part by the fact that in this period "La technique est soignée" 'The technique is careful.' The term *delectation* is taken from Poussin's definition of painting and thus very important for Charlot. That is, Cubism and Picasso at their best attained one of the highest goals of painting. Charlot emphasizes the high quality of this delectation:

repos éminent (comme aux vers de Mallarmé) détendant les facultés nobles (raison, sens commun {cf. Bossuet}) sans les amoindrir.

'eminent repose (as in the verse of Mallarmé) relaxing the noble faculties (reason, common sense {compare Bossuet}) without diminishing them.'

Nonetheless, for Charlot, such delectation was not enough "pour un catholique" 'for a Catholic,' although it might be an end in itself for someone else. Because the liturgical artist had to face the problems of subject matter, such a moment of esthetic delight could only be for him "*un repos entre 2 actes*" 'a rest between two acts.' For the liturgical artist, the subject matter had to be more than the "Sujet-départ" 'Subject-point-of-departure' (Gleizes 1921: 28). This same problem would be faced by the muralists of the Mexican Renaissance.

Finally, Charlot raises the widespread and long-lived question of Picasso's sincerity, "question arbitraire de pure curiosité" 'arbitrary question of pure curiosity':

P. me semble aussi "sincère" au sens commun du terme : un mensonge de 20 ans suppose un avantage. Or les *profits* eurent été "humainement" plus grands si art courant (Ses arlequins suffisaient). Seul un profit spirituel pouvait l'inspirer. Geste aussi noble que celui d'un Mallarmé rompant avec son milieu pour soi seul.

'Picasso seems to me also "sincere" in the common sense of the term: a lie of twenty years supposes an advantage. But the *profits* would have been "humanly" bigger if [he had been doing his] current art (His harlequins would have been enough). Only a spiritual profit can have been inspiring him. Gesture as noble as that of a Mallarmé breaking with his milieu for himself alone.'

Charlot always connected good art to holy poverty, but the reference to harlequins forebodes Picasso's Neoclassicism, which would create an unparalleled commercial success.²³ Charlot continued to lavish praise on Picasso's Cubist Period and appreciated the Negro Period. But he found the Blue and Rose Periods "terrible," mere examples of general work being done at the time in Barcelona. After Cubism,

Charlot felt Picasso declined; Cocteau pushed him into his Classical Period to show Picasso could do such art. Picasso's work became all artifice and wit, and he finally petered out as an artist, being ultimately more important as an initiator of new movements and an influence on other artists than for his own work.²⁴ Nonetheless, Charlot followed Picasso through his career and felt his influence occasionally. For instance, he had Picasso in mind while painting *The Massacre* (Charlot February 4, 1952). Also, while Charlot was in Mexico, he was given a copy of Pierre Reverdy's *Pablo Picasso* (1924), in which he found an illustration of *La Soupe* (17, 1903). Charlot told me that he had been very impressed by it and had used the relationship of the mother and daughter in his own *First Steps*.²⁵

Charlot's view of Cubism was based characteristically on his own fresh look at the artworks themselves. As usual, Charlot had an independent stance in regards to other critics, agreeing or disagreeing with them according to his own perceptions. Charlot did, however, adopt the terms *analytical* and *synthetic*—which were used to distinguish periods in Cubism—to discuss in a different way his own work: *analysis* was used to study a new subject, and *synthesis* then to create a final image.²⁶ As seen in his "Cubism R.I.P.," Charlot's view of Cubism moved nearer to his general tendencies. He came to prefer the solidity of its earliest stages, its geometric forms, and its "tobacco-juice" coloring. That Charlot expressed a preference for the opposite qualities in postwar Paris reveals one way he was using Cubism: as an alternative to his usual ways of painting and thinking.

However, Cubism was primarily a reinforcement of Charlot's earlier artistic tendencies. Cubism made more overt the geometric, structural qualities of the art that Charlot had been studying since his childhood. Indeed, a criticism of Cubist paintings was that they resembled compositional sketches that should have led to finished works in which the overt geometry would have been absorbed into the final image. Accordingly, Charlot could use Cubism as a means of studying the composition of non-Cubist works, as he did with a painting by El Greco and eighteenth-century prints, discussed below. Charlot apparently felt that this study and his Cubist experiments increased the rigor and geometry of his own work. For instance, he regularly downplayed the geometric composition of his *Chemin de Croix*, although it is in fact an essential element of that series. Charlot's Cubist studies and experiments of this time mark, therefore, an intensified effort towards a more thorough and complicated geometric composition.

Cubism was not, however, the only influence in this direction. Because geometric composition was universally human, it could be found in other traditions. Charlot often said that he found the figures of the Aztec codices and Maya hieroglyphics "more Cubist than the Cubists." He told me:

you know enough about the Aztec drawings and the Aztec conventions of drawing, and so on, both in people and landscapes, to know that those are much more Cubist than anything that the Cubists ever did. So in a way, Cubism was something that I could compare with things that I was very familiar with and that very few people were familiar with. (Interview September 21, 1970)

The human profile was fitted closely into the severe cube of the miniature Aztec house. The Maya hieroglyph fitted several significant elements into its rectangular cartouche just as Picasso would suggest an

object by separated pieces of it or by various points of view “superimposed in a composite glyph which stands for the object” (“De Picasso”; *AA* I 77). For both the glyph and the painting, “L’esprit reconstitue l’ensemble” ‘The mind reconstitutes the whole’ (“De Picasso”). Charlot could have chosen his examples from other art traditions. For instance, in the relief on the northern wall of the enclosure of Notre-Dame de Paris, in the scene of the Adoration of the Magi, the figure of Joseph is tightly enclosed in tall architectural recess emphasizing the columnar quality of his body. The stated connection to Mexican art is, therefore, personally significant.

Similarly, Charlot could have found in many traditions the device of combining small images as symbols to express a message, but he privileged “idéographie aztèque et Gleizes” in that note of 1921 and in his preparations for the gouache *Bullet*, discussed below. For Charlot, Cubism was a modern Western style that could be joined with others through the universal laws of composition. The resulting combination could combine advantages: for instance, Cubism could help create striking and recognizable symbols, and Mexican Indian art could contribute its millennial heritage of using abstracted images for storytelling purposes. Charlot’s *Bullet* was apparently intended as the first of several such works: a Cubist idiom used for narrative.

For Charlot the historian, the Mexican Mural Renaissance was the absorption of Cubism into an esthetic language that was both rigorously artistic and universally comprehensible. He traced a moment of that process of absorption in his “Diego Rivera in Italy” (*AA* II 213–230). Charlot himself would achieve that absorption in his monumental gouache *L’Amitié* of 1921 and in his further Mexican stylistic developments. Even more, Charlot found a fundamental relationship in purpose between Cubism and the Mexican Mural Renaissance. Some Cubists had shown an interest in murals—or at least unusually large canvases—even on socially conscious subjects.²⁷ Some Cubists had even worked communally and anonymously like the medieval ideal.²⁸ Gleizes expressed clearly the potential benefits of Cubism: Cubism would provide the “construction souterraine” ‘underground construction’ for all art (1921: 49). Cubism would be part of a larger social revolution in which the individual artist would no longer be a star catering to snobbish museums and a rich élite, but would work in traditional ateliers making cheap, reproducible art that would spread to the public (49–55). Ultimately, Cubism would join with contemporary architecture, creating “la grande peinture décorative” ‘high-art mural painting’ (55). Charlot echoed these points in his 1938 article “Cubism R.I.P. (*AA* I 68–85; also, 86 ff.) and surely remembered them in Mexico. Charlot also knew and appreciated the desire of Cézanne and Juan Gris to do *grande peinture* and remembered Gris once writing, “I may not be doing good painting, but I’m doing *grande peinture*” (Tabletalk July 29, 1971). Charlot felt Picasso’s *Guernica* was a good work because Picasso himself had taken it seriously: he had found a subject he really felt and put his art at its service:

Picasso in an unselfish mood. I think it is the only time in his life where he had that emotion, and that sense, that art should say something to the people...His language—he’s a little obscure—people have been writing books about what the bull represents, what the horse represents; his intention, however, is unselfish and very close to the intentions of Goya, commenting on the French getting into Spain. (June 9, 1965)

But the promise of Cubism—so eloquently expressed by Gleizes—was fulfilled not in Europe, but in the Renaissance of muralism and the graphic arts in Mexico (AA I 83 f.).

Several of Charlot's other subjects of study can be described from his contemporary notes. A major event was the retrospective of Ingres at the Hôtel des commissaires-priseurs from May 7 to June 12, 1921, a manifestation of his increasing influence on the now-classicizing avant-garde (Silver 1989: 245–258). However, Ingres had never disappeared, and his work was treasured by both conservatives and innovators. His work was constantly displayed in the Louvre, and his works had been shown in major exhibitions in 1911 and 1913.²⁹ Artists like Signac, Denis, Degas, and Cézanne had preceded Picasso in their admiration (Lapauze 1921: 191), and Denis, among others, had used him as a basis for his earlier return to classicism. Since his childhood, Charlot had studied Ingres along with the other great classical French painters and had discussed him critically in “Nous les Jeunes !” of 1916. In that lecture, Charlot's criticisms of the artist were part of his rejection of classicism as the model for liturgical art, for which he himself sought a broader base.

In 1921, critics divided between those who used Ingres to polemicize against modern tendencies and those who claimed him as an ancestor of the development of art through Cézanne to the Cubists. Lapauze connected the interest in Ingres to the “retour à l'ordre” of young artists: “On parle volontiers de reconstruction, d'ordre, de discipline” ‘One speaks willingly of reconstruction, order, discipline.’³⁰ Léonce Bénédite (1921: 327 f.) wrote that in these disordered times, people were looking to Ingres for “une direction et une règle” ‘a direction and a rule’; he warned, however, against the already manifest danger that this should be done “sans retour à l'imitation ou au pastiche” ‘without returning to imitation or pastiche.’ He could accept Cézanne's being in the line of Ingres, but not the Cubists (336). The modernist view was represented by Roger Bissière (1888–1964), then a Cubist and later an abstractionist. He agreed that after the war, painters felt the need for models who represent “de certitude, d'ordre, de pureté, de spiritualité” ‘certitude, order, purity, spirituality’ (1921: 266 f.). However, only the modernists in the line of Cézanne can understand Ingres, who far from being a realist, distorts nature to fit the rules of a picture, which is a world of its own with its own life and laws.³¹ Echoing Denis without acknowledgment, Bissière claims for modernists the proper understanding of Ingres:

le tableau demeure une surface inflexiblement plane où les plans éloignés sont violemment ramenés en avant, afin de donner à l'ensemble son maximum de poids et d'expression et par des moyens *propres à la seule peinture*. (1921: 275)

‘the picture remains an inflexibly plane surface where the distant plants are violently brought forward in order to give the ensemble its maximum weight and expression by means *proper only to painting*.’

Bissière lauds Ingres' rejection of the sketchy and his domination of emotion by intellect; “il y a gagné en humanité” ‘he gained there in humanity’ (1921: 275). The works of both Cézanne and Ingres are “les fruits de la méditation et de la volonté” ‘the fruits of meditation and will.’ Not only Ingres' “géométrie vivante” ‘living geometry’ but also his coloring connects him to the Cubists, and his patient and meticulous execution recalls Chardin and Cézanne (1921: 276). Charlot could agree with many of Bissière's points.

Charlot recorded his own impressions in “Exposition Ingres” in *Notebook C*. Since those impressions conflicted among themselves and with received views of Ingres, he was forced to develop and finalize his own opinions, which he does through the length of the notes. For instance, Charlot began by stating that Ingres had two “parties” ‘parts’: realism and the application of his theories. Charlot’s formulation of the first part coincides with that of conservative critics: “Ingres reproduit directement la nature (mines de plombs)” ‘Ingres reproduces nature directly (plumb lines).’ But Charlot’s discussion of Ingres’ application of theory makes clear that a realistic depiction of nature was only within Ingres’ capabilities, something he was capable of doing; it was not what Ingres in fact achieved.

For Charlot, the first characteristic of Ingres’ application of theory was subjective distortion, which presented a challenge to those who claimed him as a realist, like Lapauze (1921: 191). Léon Bérard attributed the distortions to Ingres’ models, as if the *Odalisque with Slave* of 1839 really did have extra vertebrae (1921: 222, 224 f.)! Léonce Bénédict described Ingres as a realist without imagination but criticized those who claimed to be his heirs for falling into “les déformations arbitraires” ‘arbitrary distortions’ (1921: 336; see also 328, 332, 334 f.). In his notes, Charlot began by noting such distortions: “étude pour Virgile lisant (main hors proportion)” ‘study for Virgil reading (hand out of proportion).’ This led him to his view that Ingres’ depiction of nature was essentially subjective:

Tous les portraits au crayon. Ingres a un esprit essentiellement déformant. Exagérer les traits caractéristiques. Obtenir l’expression par asymétrie faciale. déplacement en oblique des horizontales yeux, nez, bouche, les 3 droites concourants en un point rapproché du visage (O). Ce qui sauve le sérieux de ces portraits c’est leur petitesse. Agrandis au naturel, on aura des *caricatures* absolues. Là-dessus un modelé expressif par minimum de moyens. Le trait (figure et vêtements) subjectif au possible. Ces dessins sont neufs de conception. Au lieu de tendre au type Ingres tend au caractère. Exemple d’individualisme à outrance.

‘All the pencil portraits. Ingres has an essentially deforming mind. Exaggerates the characteristic traits. Obtains expression by facial asymmetry. oblique displacement of the horizontals eyes, nose, mouth, the three fleeing towards a point brought close to the face (O). What saves the seriousness of these portraits is their small size. Enlarged to natural size, one would have absolute *caricatures*. On top of that an expressive modeling through a minimum of means. The line (figure and clothes) as subjective as possible. These designs are new in conception. Instead of tending towards the type, Ingres tends towards the character. Example of extreme individualism.’

Charlot connected Ingres’ distortion to the expression of individual character as opposed to ideal type. This view was clearly inadequate; the distortions he mentioned are stylistic devices as well as depictions of character. But Charlot was reserving general stylistic means to his section on the “objective” dimension of what he called Ingres’ theory, which is discussed below. That is, Charlot was led by his distinction of “subjective” and “objective” to split apart stylistic elements that were cohesive in Ingres’ work. Bissière’s

view is superior: Raphael worked from the abstract to the concrete whereas Ingres and the French portrait tradition work in the opposite direction (1921: 272 f.), a view Charlot later adopted. In fact, Charlot was at first uneasy about Ingres' use of distortion:

Ingres manque (est-ce volontaire?) du sens proportion : travail acharné des esquisses : main d'un Virgile 3 fois plus grande que le bras. bras d'1 muse épais 2 fois nature. seins attachés sous l'aisselle. crânes inexistant. yeux de 3/4 sans attache au crâne, etc. dans toutes les études le trait est lourd, traîné, grossier. usage des calques. Ingres semble avoir autant de *réticence naturelle* au dessin que Cézanne par ex.

'Ingres lacks (is it by choice?) the sense of proportion: intense work on sketches: hand of a Virgil three times bigger than the arm. arm of a muse twice as thick as in nature. breasts attached under the armpit. nonexistent skulls. eyes in three-quarter perspective without attachment to the skull, etc. in all the studies, the line is heavy, dragged, crude. use of tracing. Ingres seems to have as much *natural reticence* in drawing as Cézanne, for instance.'³²

However, by the end of the notes, Charlot concluded that Ingres' distortions were conscious and expressive and thus true precursors of modernism:

L'Ingres des dessins remplaçant le modèle par un succédané plastique jugé plus expressif, autorise toutes les théories expressionnistes (Matisse par ex.) actuelles.

'The Ingres of the drawings replacing the model by a plastic substitution judged more expressive, authorizes all the contemporary expressionist theories (Matisse, for instance).'

Indeed, Charlot had long been using expressive distortion in his art and had discussed it in his *Traité de Peinture* of 1920. Charlot continued to be intrigued by this aspect of Ingres, pointing out to me in the early 1950s how an extra vertebra had been added to the back of *Odalisque with Slave*, creating a strong effect for the viewer, who would not notice the distortion.

As opposed to subjective distortion, the "objective" character of Ingres' theory resembles Cézanne's advice to reduce forms to abstract geometric shapes: Ingres "Ramène toute chair au cylindre, toute ligne à la droite ou courbe connue" 'Brings back all flesh to the cylinder, all line to the straight or known curve.' Charlot sees this tendency as dependent on nonclassical sources:

Parti de "la nature" (David), Ingres s'en éloigne préoccupé (empoisonné) des primitifs (pas de modelés intérieurs. ne pas étudier l'anatomie. faire rond).

LA SIMPLIFICATION. Il la retrouve au travers de toute l'école muscle (de M. Ange à Boucher et David) dans les primitifs et les Grecs (Giotto, vases grecs).

'Starting from "nature" (David), Ingres distanced himself, preoccupied (poisoned) by the primitives (no interior modeling. no studying anatomy. make round).

SIMPLIFICATION. He refinds nature—by crossing through all the muscle school (Michelangelo to Boucher and David)—in the primitives and the Greeks (Giotto, greek vases).’

Charlot’s position coincides unconsciously with that of the nineteenth century writer Théophile Gautier:

quoiqu’il puisse sembler classique à l’observateur superficiel, ne l’est nullement : il remonte directement aux sources primitives, à la nature, à l’antiquité grecque, à l’art du XVI^e siècle... (1921: 236)

‘although he can appear classical to the superficial observer, he is in no way that: he goes back directly to the primitives, to nature, to Greek antiquity, to the art of the sixteenth century...’

Charlot also was viewing Ingres as an artist who had developed his classical base with intensified geometric abstraction and expressive distortion, and enriched it with non-Classical influences. That is, he was finding in Ingres his own tendencies.

Ingres’ stringent application of theory demonstrated his strong artistic will, and his painstaking execution revealed his devotion to his craft:

D’où Ingres dans ses réussites n’est qu’un effort de volonté. volonté basée sur une théorie, aboutissant à un travail physique acharné. Ingres *mal doué* fait des chefs-d’œuvre. Ingres n’est pas un “surhomme” mais *un grand exemple humain*.

‘Thus Ingres in his successes is only an effort of will. will based on theory, resulting in intense physical work. Ingres, *poorly gifted*, creates masterpieces. Ingres is not a “superman” but a *great human example*.’

Other French critics praised Ingres in much the same terms, revealing intellectuality and craftsmanship as touchstones of the French humanistic tradition.³³

Ingres’ coloring remained a problem for Charlot. From the beginning, he particularly noted the use of strong colors rather than Ingres’ more recognized monotony: “Bonaparte en rouge” ‘Bonaparte in red,’ “tableau historique dans les rouges” ‘historic painting in reds,’ “Napoléon trônant de face en ivoire et lie de vin” ‘Napoleon enthroned from the front in ivory and purplish red,’ “femme en robe à ramage” ‘woman in dress with floral pattern’:

l’Empereur 1806 manteau lie de vin au noir dans l’ambre trône à boule ivoire, face empereur ivoire, tapis à aigle ocre cerné bleu et vermillon. c’est “beau” comme une image d’Epinal, tant c’est faux.

‘the Emperor 1806, purplish red cape with black in the amber; throne with the color of an ivory billiard ball; emperor’s ivory face; carpet with eagle design, ocher ringed with blue and vermillon. it’s “beautiful” like an image d’Epinal, it’s so false.’

Admiring Ingres' drawings, Charlot still regarded color as "La faiblesse d'Ingres" 'Ingres' weakness': "Ingres élude autant que possible la couleur : noirs, marrons, gris, + un rouge franc" 'Ingres evades color as much as possible: blacks, maroons, gray, plus a pure red.' The incoherence of these points—along with the uncharacteristically slighting reference to the Images d'Epinal—reveals that Charlot had not yet understood Ingres' color sense, which he would later learn to appreciate. Indeed, other critics wrote more perceptively.

Charlot's predominant interest in muralism provided a major perspective from which he could view Ingres' work and potential. At one point, he notes: "aquarelle style fresque" 'watercolor in fresco style.' Most important, Ingres' geometric composition and artificial lighting are more appropriate to murals than to easel paintings:

un éclairage artificiel distribué en intensité proportionnelle au rapprochement des surfaces à ombrer. La *théorie* prime tout. Méthode apte à la décoration (*Ingres tend à la fresque*). mais peu agréable dans un tableau de chevalet.

'artificial lighting distributed in intensity proportionate to the nearness of the surfaces to be shaded. *Theory* takes precedence over all. Method appropriate to architectural decoration (*Ingres tends to fresco*). but little agreeable in an easel painting.'

Ingres did not paint murals, but his work had mural potential: "Dans Ingres existe en puissance P de Chavannes. Celui-ci réalise l'Ingres—" 'In Ingres, Puvis de Chavanne exists in potential. He it is who realizes Ingres.'³⁴ Charlot would later discuss *The Martyrdom of St. Symphorien* as a mural and modify his views on Ingres' color to accord with his appreciation of Ingres' "éclairage artificiel" 'artificial lighting'; this position had already been articulated by Théophile Gautier: the *St. Symphorien* had "la teinte mate sobre et forte des fresques des grands maîtres" 'the mat coloring, sober and strong, of the frescoes of the great masters' (1921: 237).

Charlot's notes on the Ingres' retrospective represent a further step towards his ultimate appreciation of that artist. They reveal Charlot observing Ingres' work closely and critically and struggling to achieve some understanding of it beyond his own earlier views and those of the general public. They also demonstrate how he absorbed other artists into his own problems, interests, and direction. Charlot would continue to study Ingres all his life and painted, I believe, his *Nude, back* of 1926 as a contrast to Ingres' *Baigneuse de Valpinçon* (1808).³⁵

Charlot apparently traveled to Beauvais and took the opportunity to view the exhibition *L'Atelier de F. Desportes*, held from June 4 to October 6, 1921, on which he wrote the notes "atelier de Desportes."³⁶ The works exhibited were the informal sketches of Desportes (1661–1743), and Charlot noted, as did the reviewers, the freshness of color and the combination of closeness of observation and sketchiness that anticipated Corot and the Impressionists. Charlot undoubtedly used his visit to tour the monuments and exhibitions of the city.

In the cathedral, he studied the series of tapestries on *The Acts of the Apostles* designed by Raphael and executed around 1694 to 1698 by Philippe Béhagle (Floruit 1684–1704), the head of the famous tapestry works of Beauvais. He recorded his thoughts in "Beauvais : cathédrale. Actes des

Apôtres tissés par Ph. Behagle vers 1680, d'après dessins Raphaël—.” Charlot’s preoccupation with murals forms his first reaction, which is to the placement and “l’effet décoratif” ‘the decorative [or mural] effect.’ The style also is based on “plans énormes” ‘enormous surfaces,’ proper to murals. Charlot’s interest in color—seen in other writings of this period—prompts a paragraph of detailed observations similar to those he wrote on Grünewald; indeed, his comparison of the style to that of Dürer reveals his continued reflection on the German art he had been studying during the Occupation. Most interesting for Charlot’s thinking at this time is his specific response to Raphael’s Classicism. For Charlot, it conveys the idea of “Beauté *classique* de l’homme possesseur du monde” ‘Classical beauty of the human being as possessor of the world.’ That is, the Classicism that is near to the Greek ideal projects an image of the human being that is essentially different from Charlot’s own Christian view. Similarly, Raphael’s style results from a “Transposition d’abstrait en concret” ‘Transposition of the abstract into the concrete,’ considered by Charlot and some French critics to distinguish Italian art from the more observational French, which moved in the opposite direction. The concrete human figure in Raphael, therefore, carries the burden of the message; the result is “la rhétorique violente du geste théâtral” ‘the violent rhetoric of the theatrical gesture.’ That Charlot admires the style is clear from his comparison “aux tragédies de Racine, aux Sabines de Poussin” ‘to the tragedies of Racine, to the *Rape of the Sabine Women* of Poussin.’ The style, however, is not Charlot’s own. The gestures portrayed by Charlot—for instance, in his mural project for the parish church—would be more natural and thus more modest, and the message of the work would be conveyed equally by all its components, not just by the human figures. The result is a more accurate expression of Charlot’s Christian thinking: the human being is within God’s universe, which in its entirety and wholeness expresses His providential thought.

In 1921, the Louvre bought and installed *La Mort de Sardanapale* (1827) by Eugène Delacroix. Charlot took the opportunity to study the mural-sized painting and wrote “première fois que je le comprends” ‘first time that I understand it.’ He diagrammed and described the composition, which is established largely by color. Charlot’s appreciation contrasts with that of an anonymous critic, who wrote: “Certes la composition en est confuse dans l’ensemble et, par endroits, un peu vide” ‘Admittedly, the composition is confused as a whole and, in places, a little empty’ (“Le Carnet d’un Curieux” August 1921: 445). Charlot connected the painting to contemporary modernist ideas:

dessin : très *faux* (genre Renoir) cernant avec exagération les belles courbes (bras d’homme au poignard). Vraiment monstrueux et donnant au tableau son existence propre, sans le souvenir du modèle.

couleur : hardiesse, richesse mais tempérée par des partis-pris rigoureux (cheval blanc dans l’ombre). L’impression générale *plate* éloigne toute idée de *représentation*. L’obtenu est la *suggestion* du sujet dans une grande beauté décorative.

‘drawing: very *false* (type Renoir) turning with exaggeration the beautiful curves (arm of man with dagger). Really monstrous and giving to the painting its own proper existence, without recalling the model.

color: boldness, richness but tempered by rigorous purposes (white horse in the shadow). General *flat* impression distances any idea of *representation*. The result is the *suggestion* of the subject in a great decorative beauty.'

The painting thus follows Denis' dictum that art should suggest reality rather than try to represent it. The word *décorative* connects the work to wall painting or muralism. Charlot was also intrigued by Delacroix' method of painting "par touches apparentes" 'by visible strokes.' These suggest their subject at a distance, but "de près éblouit de violence mais le sujet disparaît—comment s'est-on ensuite étonné de Monet" 'close up, dazzle with violence, but the subject disappears—how were people astonished later by Monet?' The influence of distance on perception is a major concern of muralism.

On one movement, Charlot's silence is significant and became characteristic. Aside from the ominous reference in "de Picasso" to that artist's commercial possibilities, Charlot did not discuss the new Neoclassicism that would become the next dominant movement in Paris and in art history. The famous 1919 *rappel à l'ordre* by the artist and critic Roger Bissière (1888–1964) was claimed by most art movements except Dada, but became identified with the Neoclassicists.³⁷

Neoclassicism had been the bane of the young liturgical artists of Charlot's generation, and the new movement resembled only too closely the Neoclassicism they had encountered in church and rejected, with its pastiche and overdependence on Classical models. Indeed, the increasing Classicism of Maurice Denis seemed to Charlot a diminution of his earlier art, a retreat into known solutions rather than a search for new forms of expression. Moreover, Charlot could not privilege Greece and Rome when he was so admiring of the Middle Ages, folk and popular art, and Aztec codices. The break from Classical art was in fact a prototype of the creation of a liturgical art appropriate to its time:

all felt how the arts of Greece and Rome, despite good drawing, anatomical correctness, and the stress put on physical beauty, lacked the power to express sentiments that pagans had never experienced...the medieval artist was brave enough to turn to modern art, then as now the only way of expressing new truths.³⁸

This pious disguise of things religious into an obsolete masquerade refuses to take into account the religious emotions of today, begging for an original mold into which to pour themselves as did in their time the emotions of those others, dead now.
(Summer 1951 Apologia)

The artworks themselves of the new movement could be criticized as derivative, academic, and pastiche (Silver 1989: 101 f.), a criticism made especially of Picasso's (133 ff. 244). Silver himself is more positive about Picasso's work (316), but criticizes others: "Can it be denied that after the war not only Gris but Severini, Delaunay, La Fresnaye, and even Braque made much art that was lifeless, uninteresting, simply bad..." (360). Cork (1994: 10) argues that the Classical movement was also the result of a desire to find a more accessible style to communicate a message about the war. Good examples can be found of this, but the major works of Picasso and others with their Greco-Roman subjects appear to be more a form of denial. While the German and British artists were heroically and

tragically communicating their experience of the war to the public in order to prevent future wars, the Neoclassicists were producing salon paintings. While Charlot and others were wrestling with the problems of expressing their war experience, Picasso was riding the trends of the latest revivals of earlier artists. The works of the new movement were clearly designed to be marketable to the rich, which Cubism emphatically was not. When Cocteau describes the classicizing movement as “the discovery of a middle-of-the-road solution attuned to the taste for luxury and pleasure,”³⁹ he could not be further from Charlot’s artistic aims or more clearly expressing that movement’s state of denial of the war. Charlot was close to German artists like George Grosz and John Heartfield who denounced:

cloud-wandering tendencies of so-called sacred art, whose adherents mused on cubes and gothic while the generals painted in blood. (Hoobler and Hoobler 2009: 313)

I can imagine that Charlot was repelled by the opportunism, careerism, and commercial interests that were apparent and criticized in the avant-garde Neoclassicists by their contemporaries. The Mexican Renaissance also would commit itself to serious subject matter and a social role for art and suffer the same fate as the German Expressionists, swept into neglect by the triumphant forces of art-for-art.

Throughout his life, Charlot felt little sympathy for or interest in avant-garde Neoclassicism. Although he always spoke and wrote admiringly of Cubism, I remember only slighting references to the later movement. This attitude influenced his thinking and scholarship. In his essay “Cubism: R.I.P.,” he relegates “Picasso’s Greek period” virtually to the level of a footnote between Cubism and Surrealism and derives any quality it possesses from Cubism (*AA* I 68–85, 84). Similarly, in “Diego Rivera in Italy” (*AA* II 213–230), he traces Rivera’s artistic transformation to his encounter with Renaissance art itself and ignores any developments in Paris. Charlot’s view needs to be supplemented by an examination of the influence on Rivera of Neoclassicism and its Mannerist derivative, Art Moderne.⁴⁰ The influences are obvious, and Rivera was always attentive to trends and fashions in the art world; European Neoclassicism provided for him, I believe, the psychological support he needed for his stylistic transformation. I would group him with “those who look to Paris for a needed reassurance” (*AA* I 145).

More generally, in “Cubism: R.I.P.,” Charlot describes the Mexican muralists as basing their work on Cubism. He takes the same position in his *The Mexican Mural Renaissance: 1920–1925*, which also minimizes Neoclassicism. That movement is, however, emphasized in the five articles Charlot published with David Alfaro Siqueiros in 1923 under the pseudonym Juan Hernandez Araujo, “El Movimiento Actual de la Pintura en México”: avant-garde Neoclassicism is described as an influence and a validation of the Mexican movement.⁴¹ This emphasis comes certainly from Siqueiros, who expressed the view once again in 1943 (1996: 201 f., 205 f.). Charlot’s desire to accommodate his friend can be seen in the manuscript of his “D. Alfaro Siqueiros” of February 1924. When describing the bad art against which Rivera’s generation revolted, Charlot first wrote “l’art académique. néoclassique” ‘academic art. neoclassical’; he then changed this to “l’art d’idéal quasi-photographique” ‘art of a quasi-photographic ideal.’⁴²

Charlot always stated that he was too close to the Mexican Mural Renaissance to write a definitive history of it, and he was surprised that such a work had not been produced in the many years

since his own book had been published. Nonetheless, Charlot strove for objectivity, basing himself on written sources and the memoirs of others and making every effort to be just to Mexican artists whose work he disliked. One could argue that he knew Classicism so well that he could see how the Mexicans differed from Neoclassicism and found other aspects of their work more valuable. Nevertheless, that he misjudged the importance of avant-garde Neoclassicism on such artists as Rivera and Siqueiros and on the Mexican Renaissance as a whole reveals the depth of his antipathy to that movement.

In his “D. Alfaro Siqueiros,” Charlot described the effect on the young artist of living at his particular moment in art history. Siqueiros’ work moves Charlot

aussi pour des raisons privées, pour ce qu’elle raconte des luttes intimes, des perplexités aiguës dont ont souffert jusqu’ici, de par fatalité chronologique, les peintres de ma génération.

‘also for private reasons, because it tells of the inner struggles, the sharp perplexities that the painters of my generation have suffered up to now by chronological destiny.’

Earlier, quasi-photographic art had ruled through the allegiance of buyers. The generation before Charlot and Siqueiros fought that art by embracing “des théories qui lui étaient *absolument* contraires” ‘theories that were *absolutely* contrary to it’; they forced the enemy to retreat and established a place for themselves. But in their revolt, they destroyed good along with bad and did not always achieve a harmonious synthesis of the new materials. As a result, the new generation arrives on a scene of still contending parties: on the one hand, a senile academicism, and on the other, “de belles résolutions d’algèbres plastiques” ‘some beautiful resolutions of plastic algebras’ without “force émotive et surtout descriptive” ‘emotional and especially descriptive power.’ The young painter must examine this situation guided only by his reason. Unlike the previous generation, he does not have a clear target against which he can revolt with the easy weapon of an opposite esthetic.

Mais pour lui, venu après la guerre, l’enthousiasme serait anachronique. On lui a laissé, comme rôle tout spécial, la *liberté redoutable du choix*.⁴³

Problème quasi-insoluble dans lequel patauge la jeunesse depuis 10 ans déjà...

‘But for him, arrived after the esthetic war is over, enthusiasm would be anachronistic. As a completely special role, he has been left with the redoubtable liberty of choice.

Quasi-insoluble problem in which for already ten years the young generation flounders...’

Siqueiros solved the problem by his return to Mexico. Charlot had to solve it in Paris.

Charlot’s vision of liberty is strikingly expressed in his next entry in *Notebook C* after that on *Sardanapale*. Charlot seems to be applying his experience of that painting to the accusation that the Impressionists ignored composition. Just as Denis before him (1912: 60), Charlot finds that Monet and Renoir “*composent rigoureusement*” ‘compose rigorously’ and “les chicaner parce qu’ils *ne tracent pas*

de lignes serait enfantin” ‘to cavil at them because they *don’t draw lines* would be infantile.’⁴⁴ He describes a subject as painted by an Impressionist and a Cubist:

même sujet (un bras par ex) sera traité par impressionniste : forme veule mais ombre verte et clair jaune, par ex.

par cubiste : forme toute lyrique mais couleur veule.

‘same subject (for instance, an arm) will be treated by the Impressionist thus: weak form but green and light yellow shadow, for example.

by the Cubist thus: completely lyrical form but weak color.’

He concludes, “Les résultats s’équilibrent” ‘The results balance each other out.’ For Charlot at that point in his life, styles could be considered equivalent in intrinsic worth as long as they were true art. The question that rose for the young artist was which he should choose and why.

However, Charlot ended the passage with the curious statement: “Pourtant nous devons haïr l’impress. historiquement” ‘Nonetheless, we must hate Impressionism historically.’ Although the statement is extreme, I do not believe that Charlot was being sarcastic. An artist belongs to a certain moment in history and cannot ignore what has been done up to his time, including the rejection of earlier movements. An artist must look to the esthetic options of his time just as he looks to contemporary needs. Moreover, although *as an art historian* Charlot felt a responsibility to appreciate all possibilities, he felt at that time and at least through his period in Mexico that *as an artist* he needed to assume a more judgmental stance. In the same way, the Gothic builders had to be unappreciative and intolerant of Romanesque (*AA* I 278 f.). This contrast is vivid in Charlot’s discussions of Mexican artists between his polemical writings of the early 1920s and his historical treatments of later years.

8.1.2. THE TRAITÉ DE PEINTURE OF 1920

Placed in the art-historical situation of postwar Paris, Charlot clearly felt the need to organize his thoughts. His *Traité de Peinture* is a manuscript of twenty-four pages on Henri Charlot’s business stationery. Charlot dated it 1920 and later added 1922, probably indicating a few minor additions; the manuscript appears, in fact, to have been written at one time. The *Traité* is important, not only for Charlot’s biography in this period, but also for the influence he would soon exercise on Mexican artists, who recorded that he instructed them informally in various aspects of art. Diego Rivera wrote that in the “bagaje” ‘baggage’ that Charlot brought with him from France, “traía ya—escrito a los veinte años—un Tratado de la Pintura” ‘he carried already—written at twenty years of age—a treatise on Painting’ (Rivera n.d.). Charlot’s addition of “1922” reveals that he was still using the *Traité* in Mexico, and his “exercice sur les lignes” and “exercices sur les valeurs” in *Notebook C* are based on it.

The *Traité* is presented as a practical manual, not a polemic for a particular theory or school. It thus resembles Charlot’s life plan of 1919, outlined in his “Des Leçons de la Guerre”: “le minimum théorique nécessaire au groupement et à l’achèvement des tâches proposées” ‘the theoretical minimum necessary for the grouping and achievement of the proposed tasks.’ The *Traité* is tolerant of a variety of

devices, which are described as solutions to problems rather than as stylistic commitments; this was Charlot's continuing view:

But the painter is mainly a craftsman preoccupied with his trade. Anything that looks like a limitation—for example, the flat lighting on Byzantine figures—must have a very good craft reason. (Disney lectures May 31, 1938)

This emphasis and stance represent Charlot's continuing fascination with the intellectual problems and solutions of picture making. As he stated in the interview of September 17, 1970: "those are some of the problems that we use in mural painting, and the interesting thing is that even though the solutions are very complex and rather esoteric, the desire of the painter is to make things easy to the onlooker." Charlot discusses with great sophistication a large number of such problems in the *Traité*, resulting in a practical tone that I will distort by focusing primarily on its ideas in my discussion below. The solutions Charlot discussed were not the property of a single school or moment of art history, but had been discovered by artists of many times and cultures. Charlot is, therefore, not striving after originality, but clarifying for himself the ideas that he has found correct and useful. He agrees with many of the ideas of his time, which I will indicate by comparisons with Denis, although I cannot be sure that Charlot knew the particular passages to which I will refer.

Charlot bases his thinking on the physical nature of the art object and on the psychology of the viewer. Charlot starts from Poussin's famous definition of painting:

C'est une imitation faite avec lignes & couleurs en quelque superficie, de tout ce qui se voit sous le Soleil. Sa fin est la délectation" (Félibien 1688: 364)

'It is an imitation made with lines & colors on some surface of everything seen under the Sun. Its end is delectation.'

Delectation is a total human response that includes ratiocination along with the senses and emotions. That is, Poussin's definition covers both artwork and viewer.⁴⁵

More than the contemporary critics I have read, Charlot explores the role of the viewer with his natural vision. For instance, geometric composition is traced back to an inherent mental activity:

Chercher l'harmonie de la ligne : illustration par les systèmes de lignes dans la vision naturelle : (dégager ces systèmes de leurs données accessoires) qu'en cas de vision douteuse, l'œil reconstruit par équivalents géométriques, l'appareil de photo aussi (cf. : canaux de Mars non-existants à fort grossissement).

Cette tendance sensuelle peut être développée par le raisonnement. On peut trouver l'équivalent géométrique de formes non perceptibles géométriquement.

'Seek the harmony of the line: illustration by systems of lines in natural vision: (disengage these systems from their accessory data) that in cases of doubtful vision, the eye reconstructs by geometric equivalents, the camera also (cf.: the canals of Mars, nonexistent when greatly enlarged).

This sensory tendency can be developed by reasoning. One can find the geometric equivalent of forms that are not perceptible geometrically.'

Charlot will refer on several occasions to photography and work on perception, e.g., "Ces opérations toutes scientifiques peuvent être produites mécaniquement (photographie. id. des couleurs)" 'These completely scientific operations can be produced mechanically (photography, the same with colors).' The continuity of Charlot's thinking on this point, as well as the way he could expand the compact statements of the *Traité*, can be illustrated from his later lecture series *Pictures and Picture-Making*:

Photographers know what an enormous amount of training you need to make a photograph look natural, proof that even the mechanical vision of the camera is not academic. We could make a collection of the most extraordinary artistic points of view from photographs taken by untrained people. So the problem is not to escape from our vision. It may be just to try to adapt our painting to the laws of natural vision. (Disney lectures April 12, 1938)

A further complication of the logical picture I made for you earlier is that the painter does not work with geometric figures or lines made by ruler and compass. He works with natural forms, which rarely coincide with geometric ones. But something comes to the help of the structure of the picture. Within our brain and eye is a purely physical property by which we reduce every natural form to its equivalent in geometry. This happens also in the camera. If you photograph at a distance and slightly out of focus an area covered irregularly with spots, you find there is a trail that relates those different spots so that the photograph looks like a geometric diagram, where before there was only a quantity of spots in disorder, Figure VIII.

The camera eye invents its geometry on the pretext of natural figures. Human beings have the same property in their eyes. When we treat of natural shapes—say, a head and an arm, Figure IXa—those shapes are not geometric. But we imagine the axis of the body, of the head and the arm. We reduce the irregular figure to one that can be talked of in terms of geometry...

The camera eye plays tricks also in astronomy. The famous canals of Mars, beautifully geometrical, inspired many fables of waterworks made by intelligent beings, Figure X. We can imagine groups of WPA Martians at work. Those canals were invented, rather than discovered, in the 1850s, when telescopes were not what they are today. The better and bigger the telescopes became, the fewer canals were seen. When the 100-inch telescope was built at Mount Wilson, one of the smaller observatories sent a telegram, "Tell me what you see on Mars. How are the canals in your telescope?" Mount Wilson telegraphed back, "Telescope too good for canals."⁴⁶

The Classical tradition articulated this problem as a tension between the object as momentarily perceived and the object as known by the mind on the basis of multiple perceptions. Charlot would later illustrate this point from his intercultural experience:

I once made a drawing of a little Mexican Indian girl in an interior. There was a little straw mat at her feet, which I didn't draw completely, just the corner. There was a little window, which I drew whole on the wall... That was my Occidental idea of the picture. The Indian girl looked at it and said, "That's good." I pointed to the window and asked, "What is that?" She said, "It is that," and pointed to the rug. It is a very sound point of view, and it usually comes to civilizations whose people make their own objects themselves. The person who weaves the rug knows the shape by experience so well that it is represented that way. (Disney lectures April 12, 1938)

As a result, a number of devices are necessary to make the painted image legible to the viewer, for instance, correcting for distortion when a mural must be seen at an angle:

we are going to try and correct the deformation. We will paint a very long head that doesn't look human, but after shrinking the verticals, we will have something fairly natural. In painting on surfaces where the point of view is diagonal, we are like the cross-eyed man who doesn't shoot where he is looking. When we paint something normal, we get a deformity or modernity. When we paint a monstrosity, we get a fairly natural head. (Disney lectures May 17, 1938)

Maurice Denis' Neotraditionalist version of Poussin's definition, used with or without acknowledgment by later critics, emphasized the physical nature of the artwork: "un tableau... est essentiellement une surface plane recouverte de couleurs en un certain ordre assemblées" 'a picture... essentially is a plane surface covered with colors assembled in a certain order.' Charlot always remembered this definition⁴⁷ and adapted it with underlining to begin the *Traité*: "*La peinture consiste à couvrir harmonieusement de couleurs un plan*" 'Painting consists of covering harmoniously with colors a plane.' He adds the word *harmonieusement* to distinguish art as art and also to indicate the response of the viewer. This physical nature of the work requires the artist to study "les matériaux mis en œuvre" 'the materials put to work.' Those materials are colors with their values—or their range from white to black—the juxtaposition of which creates lines. Those lines can be arranged according to plane geometry.

Charlot devotes the next section of the *Traité* to exploring the possibilities presented by these means. He then turns to the human perception of one of these physical materials of art:

Voici le matériau *valeur*. Pour en user harmonieusement, voyons comment notre vue le reçoit dans la vision naturelle qui est un exemple d'harmonie...

'That is the material *value*. To use it harmoniously, let us see how our sight receives it in natural vision, which is an example of harmony...'

The viewer reads the juxtaposition of values in a certain way, such as seeing them as representing a convex, concave, or undulating shape. This is just like writing: "Comme à une lettre ou système de lettres correspond un son" 'Just as a sound corresponds to a letter or system of letters.'⁴⁸

After discussing various effects that can be created with values, Charlot concludes: "Egalement aux valeurs correspondent des idées comme à un système de lettres des idées" 'Ideas correspond to values

just as much as ideas correspond to a system of letters.’ Because values, colors, and lines address themselves to human vision, which uses spontaneously complex means of perception and association, they inevitably express emotions and thoughts. For instance, in values, white connotes day, joy, freshness; black connotes night, death, and sorrow; so there is “un dégradé sentimental superposé au dégradé des valeurs” ‘a degradation of feeling superimposed on the degradation of values.’ To cold colors are attached the ideas of sadness, weakness, and night; to warm colors, vigor, joy, and day. On the shadow side of Charlot’s Paris mural project, cold colors would be planned to express the sadness of war; on the sunny side, warm colors to express the joys of peace. Horizontal lines suggest tranquility and repose; vertical ones dignity; and diagonals action:

La répétition de lignes de même genre dans un plan évoque l’idée correspondante; de lignes de divers genres, un composé ou une confusion de ces idées

‘The repetition of lines of the same type on a plane evokes the corresponding idea; of lines of different types, a composition or a confusion of these ideas.’

Lines can also evoke concrete objects in the mind of the viewer. A horizontal line suggests “mer, couché, horizon (cf. : calme. grandeur) etc.” ‘sea, setting, horizon (cf.: calm, grandeur) etc.’; a vertical one “debout, colonne, arbre (cf. dignité, vie latente)” ‘erect, column, tree (cf.: dignity, hidden life).’

Ainsi à la ligne correspond une idée comme à la lettre (ou au système de lettres), un sens (à travers le son qui est ici l’image reconstruite)

‘Thus to the line corresponds an idea just as to the letter (or system of letters) a meaning (through the sound, which is here the reconstructed image).’

As a result, emotions and ideas are not simply added to the means of painting, but are an inevitable part of the human perception of the painted surface. The artist arranges the materials into a whole, in which the individual items are modified by being juxtaposed and made part of the artwork’s general image and message: “*suggestion d’idée par des moyens plastiques*” ‘*suggestion of idea by plastic means*.’ The artist can use this phenomenon of physical means and human vision to create a more powerful work of art. Charlot is clearly agreeing with the theory of “correspondances” articulated by Denis,⁴⁹ among others, but basing it more simply on human perception and disregarding its usual mystical, esoteric overtones. Charlot expanded these points in his *Pictures and Picture-Making*:

The difficulty is that, as human beings, we use our eyes in everyday life for practical purposes. If we cross a street, we don’t admire the cars. We try to find out with our eyes their speed and angle, so we can cross without them getting us. We look at food, at the color of a steak, to find out if it is fresh. The same eye that has been trained by ourselves to be a very practical servant of our well-being is put by us suddenly on a painting. I am not at all trying to be funny. The eye, which is a kind of slow-minded physical being, looks at the picture the same way it would look at the automobile or the steak, that is, with the practical purpose of helping us.

Let's take a very simple figure, a spot on a sheet of paper, a plane surface, Figure I. That is the simplest thing we can think of. Mentally I know it is a very simple, geometric, abstract figure. But as soon as my eye looks at it, it begins to think about it and see things. My eye reasons: this may be a hole in the paper or maybe a fly. So abstract art, even in its simplest manifestations, is immediately transformed by the eye into something realistic.

If I make another of those abstract figures, a horizontal line, immediately I will think of the sea, the horizon, different things that are realistic. If I make a vertical line, I will think of a tree, a wall, or a construction. So—although abstract art is possible in theory—for the human being, for the person whose eye has been trained by everyday life, it is nearly an impossible proposition. There really is a problem for the artist in the relation between art and nature. For the person who really wants to be abstract, the biggest problem is completely to eliminate nature from his picture, which is impossible. Every time I see a half circle in Kandinsky's pictures, I see a little boat floating. I invent things he did not want to put into the pictures, but that are there nevertheless. (Disney lectures April 12, 1938)

Charlot has started from the description of the artist harmonizing a surface to the fact that the result for the viewer is the communication of an idea. In Scholastic terms, the idea is an attribute, not the essence of the physical artwork. This designation may appear inadequate given Charlot's view that an idea is psychologically inseparable from the physical artwork. Charlot wants, however, first to safeguard the autonomous value of art as art; in scholastic thinking, art, as an individual activity, must have its own proper end. Charlot also wants to acknowledge that a good subject or message does not justify bad art. Bad liturgical art exploits beautiful subjects just as a great work of art can communicate an ugly message. If art were only a form of writing a message:

son but serait atteint par l'élaboration et le classement de ces signes idéographiques
(et donc l'écriture serait l'art parfait).

'its end would be attained by the elaboration and classification of these ideographic
signs (and thus writing would be the perfect art).'

Art would be reduced to "écriture idéographique" 'ideographic writing,' denying its essence: "Mais l'art est essentiellement 'harmonier une surface'" 'but art is essentially "to harmonize a surface."' Art is thus independent of message and external reality, obeying its own rules that accord with its nature. All abstraction, deformation, and so on, can be justified for esthetic reasons: "*raison plastique suffisante*" '*sufficient plastic reason.*' Most important, the physical artwork can be seen by all with natural vision, but the message is interpreted by a single person in a cultural context:

La valeur plastique essentielle est de lecture universelle.

“ “ d'idée attribut “ “ “ individuelle.

(un sauvage ignorant la chaise objet peut goûter le système de ligne "chaise.")

‘The plastic value, which is essential, is readable universally.

The value of idea, which is an attribute, is read individually.

(a savage who didn’t know the object chair could appreciate the line system [that represented] “chair”).’

Charlot must then ask what the esthetic relationship is, if any, between the artwork and its idea: “la théorie des idées élément d’harmonie plastique” ‘the theory of ideas as an element of the plastic harmony.’ Because it is an attribute, the idea can contribute only “indirectement” ‘indirectly’ to the harmony of the artwork:

Pourtant l’idée contient sa beauté propre, et si l’idée est liée à un mode plastique, sa beauté y est liée également et peut constituer pour le panneau décoré un surcroît d’harmonie superposé à l’harmonie plastique. L’idée en tant que belle sera donc instrument dans “harmoniser une surface.”

‘However, the idea contains its own beauty, and if the idea is tied to a plastic mode, its beauty is tied to it equally and can constitute for the decorated panel an increase in harmony superimposed on the plastic harmony. The idea, inasmuch as it is beautiful, will indeed be an instrument in the “harmonizing of the surface.”’

I have not found this idea elsewhere in contemporary art criticism, where the nearest discussion topic would be that of saving the subject matter in design. In 1940, G. H. Hardy arrived at similar ideas for his own field, mathematics: “The best mathematics is *serious* as well as beautiful...” (1967: 89). That is, as opposed to chess problems and amusing mathematical puzzles, a serious theorem is recognized by “the *significance* of the mathematical ideas which it connects”; “if it can be connected, in a natural and illuminating way, with a large complex of other mathematical ideas.” This principle can be extended to other fields, like poetry:

The beauty of a mathematical theorem depends a great deal on its seriousness, as even in poetry the beauty of a line may depend to some extent on the significance of the ideas which it contains...The pattern is just as fine, and in this case the ideas have significance and the thesis is sound, so that our emotions are stirred much more deeply. (1967: 90 f.; 103–115)

Charlot felt deeply in his own art the ideas that he articulated in the *Traité*. He would search for themes that were in themselves interesting and beautiful, and would contribute to the inspiration of the work both for the artist and the viewer. The importance of subject matter for Charlot is a broader topic than the *Traité*, involving, for instance, his discussion of the hierarchy of subjects in later articles.

In the *Traité*, Charlot uses the potential contribution of subject matter to the harmony of an artwork as a criterion for defining artists. A *decorator* will deal only with the plastic values, like Gleizes. A *painter* will treat “la valeur plastique dans les voies nécessaires pour qu’elle n’étouffe pas la valeur d’idée” ‘the plastic value in the ways necessary so that it does not suffocate the value of the idea.’ He

will use “*idées correspondantes ordonnées en vue de la beauté du tableau*” ‘corresponding ideas ordered in view of the beauty of the picture.’ The decorator will study the representation of the external world only as a “*répertoire d’harmonies plastiques*” ‘*repertory of plastic harmonies*’;⁵⁰ the artist will do all of that and then study the external world as a

magasin d’objets propres (représentés) à exciter la beauté d’idée, et il faudra étudier les objets évocateurs au maximum et leurs liaisons

‘*a storage house of (represented) objects appropriate to excite the beauty of the idea, and it will be necessary to study the maximally evocative objects and their relations.*’

Charlot is following theories of Symbolism in this part of the *Traité*, and skirting the danger in some Symbolist writings of finding the beauty or idea of the picture in the objects portrayed themselves. Further in the *Traité*, he will write more clearly that beauty and idea are found, not in the object, but in the treatment of it:

La beauté plastique n’est pas inhérente à l’objet mais à la conception que s’en fait le peintre. Un œil bien éduqué découvre la beauté plastique dans les objets les plus humbles.

‘Plastic beauty is not inherent in the object but in the conception the artist makes of it. A well-educated eye discovers plastic beauty in the humblest objects.’

Nonetheless, the object is not indifferent:

L’objet le plus riche d’idées (et donc fréquemment désigné) c’est l’homme.

Et donc *l’étude du corps humain présente un intérêt particulier.*

‘The richest object in ideas (and thus frequently drawn) is the human being.

And thus *the study of the human body presents a particular interest.*’

In his thinking, Charlot would always move between the two poles of the intrinsic interest of objects and the particular value given to them by the artistic treatment.

The connection to the idea also introduces a consideration into the artist’s esthetic choices. Although all styles can be justified in purely esthetic terms, “*pour que la valeur d’idée subsiste il faut que l’objet peint présente un minimum des convenances de l’objet réel*” ‘*for the value of the idea to subsist, it is necessary that the painted object present a minimum of agreements with the real object.*’ This consideration of saving the subject—much discussed at the time—distinguishes for Charlot the *painter* from the mere *decorator*.

The problem was then for Charlot—as for the other liturgical artists and the Mexican muralists—to express subject and ideas in authentic art. Charlot wants to use all the dimensions of art: intellectual, sensual, and emotional. For this, he will use all the means the long history of art has put at his disposal: media, composition, symbolism, ideographs, and so on. This requires a study of all the problems and solutions of art. Because of its differences from natural vision, painting cannot be merely a realistic

record of the external reality: “*peindre les choses telles qu’elles sont ne signifie rien*” ‘to paint things just as they are means nothing.’ In such a painting, the idea would not be made visible, and all the means of painting must and need to be used to render that idea visually clear:

Cet ordre de dignité voilé dans la réalité et constitué dans la raison doit être découvert plastiquement dans le tableau pour que l’idée occupe son rang qui est premier.

‘This order of dignity, veiled in reality and reconstituted in reason must be uncovered plastically in the picture so that the idea occupies its rank, which is the highest.’

But all those individual artistic means must be subordinated in a harmonious and communicative whole. When Charlot relates this point to the actual application of color, his words anticipate his later writing on mural painting. They apply equally well to *L’Amitié* and to his *Planiste* gouaches:

Il faut qu’elle se tienne dans ce rôle subalterne, se faisant oublier : éviter les empâtements, les irrégularités de touche, en général tout ce qui peut rappeler le travail accompli.

‘[Color] must confine itself to this subalternate role, making itself be forgotten: avoid impasto, irregularities of stroke, in general anything that could recall the accomplished work.’

The emphasis on the whole is clearly classicist.

Similarly, the subject of an esthetic canon is classical, especially when it is connected to the human body, as Charlot does. Adhering, however, to his universalist perspective in the *Traité*, Charlot recognizes that any canon is historically and culturally conditioned, for instance, the Assyrian. The artist develops as an artist within an overall canon that contains all the individual canons within it. The external world has a limited but, for Charlot, important role as “l’initiateur et le régulateur scientifique (par voie superficielle de description) du CANON” ‘the initiator and scientific regulator (by superficial way of description) of the CANON ...’ Indeed, in view of the richness of the natural object, the creation of canons is theoretically unlimited:

En supposant au peintre une science d’investigation illimitée, on peut dire *tout objet existant suppose sur un plan d’idée un canon correspondant* engendrant une multitude de *canons d’expression* (du même objet)...

‘Supposing for the painter an unlimited science of investigation, one can say that *any existing object presupposes on the level of ideal a corresponding canon*, engendering a multitude of *canons of expression* (of the same object)...’

These remarks are important for Charlot’s work in Mexico. There he will study Indian art to discover its canons and, working from the body like the Greeks in his nude studies of the Aztec model Luz, develop from personal observation his own canon appropriate to his new Mexican art.

Charlot also discusses a subject of great importance to him: the relationship between the artist's personal morality and his art. Denis and others had treated this subject gingerly, well aware that some great artists were immoral and vice versa.⁵¹ But writing for himself, Charlot feels the need to clarify his ideas, especially in view of his desire to create liturgical art: "*Le peintre (orienté vers Dieu) devra ordonner tous les objets à Dieu*" '*The painter (oriented to God) should order all objects to God.*' The painter does not do this by moralizing. Rather, since the truth and beauty of the idea add to that of the painting, the painter's philosophy and morality become essential to his work. Charlot does not think the painter should become a philosopher. Rather, by becoming a good person, the painter can feel and respond to God's order in the world:

Il peut soit sentir d'instinct cet ordre grâce à sa volonté rectifiée et donc travailler à cette rectification de sa volonté (Fra Angelico, Cézanne), soit étudier les sciences qui se sont occupées de cette question : philosophie, théologie.

Suivant que le peintre aura une conception ordonnée du monde et sera ordonné, la beauté d'idée existera dans son œuvre; ou

la beauté d'idée d'une œuvre sera fonction de la sainteté du peintre

car la rectification de la raison entraîne la rectification de la volonté.

'He can either instinctually feel this order because of his rectified will and thus work at this rectification of his will (Fra Angelico, Cézanne) or study the sciences that have occupied themselves with this question: philosophy, theology.

According to how the painter will have an ordered conception of the world and be himself ordered, the beauty of the idea will exist in his work; in sum:

the beauty of idea of a work will be a function of the holiness of the painter

for the rectification of reason brings with it the rectification of will.'

Art-making and thinking are collaborative explorations of reality. In a meditation, Charlot prayed on June 2, 1920 (*Ludwigshafen Notebook*): "Que l'offre de mon travail physique correspond[e] pour les Saints aux contemplations—" 'May the offer of my physical work correspond to contemplation for the saints.' Making art that is good as both art and message means becoming a good person because both depend on a correct view of the world, a view that can be dimmed and distorted through one's moral faults. Charlot would later speak with interest of morally reprehensible people who had been important for art, like Pope Alexander VI and George IV of England. But he himself believed, I feel, although he never said it, that he could not do his art unless he did his morally best in living. This passage of the *Traité* reveals, I believe, a psychological depth of his life and work. In an interview of October 7, 1970, I asked him about the connection between art and religion. As part of his answer, he stated:

I think I have always been conscious that art is a unifying of matters that are not unified, and the only thing that is parallel to that in, well, thoughts or affective thoughts and so on, is a cement between things that otherwise would be unrelated, and

I think God is that cement. That is, I don't see any possibility of representing the union of things if you don't believe in that union, and that union we can say is God. That's certainly something that has remained with me always.

Charlot's *Traité de Peinture* belongs to a particular moment of his life. He will write extensively on the same subjects and change his opinion on several points. For instance, in the *Traité*, in discussing the natural order of dignity in nature that the artist should reveal, he argues that the face has the highest dignity in the human body. He will later downplay the face in his work as too easy an art solution. Charlot also does not discuss a number of other subjects important to him like the place of the artist in society. But the *Traité* does reveal the thoughts that preoccupied him at the time and the extent of the knowledge and sophistication he brought to their discussion.

8.1.3. ART

Charlot was characteristically prolific. His notes for a list of works produced in 1920–1922 include “gouaches (une cinquantaine)” ‘gouaches (about fifty)’ (*Ludwigshafen Notebook*). Since the next entry refers to the *Chemin de Croix*, the gouaches referred to were probably those produced in 1919–1920; very few survive. The accidents of survival have a serious impact on our conception of Charlot's work throughout his French years.

At this time, Charlot used at least two small sketchbooks and single sheets. A particular difficulty of this period is that the small sketchpads were disassembled and are hard to reconstruct. Two different kinds of paper are found, which I have identified as two sketchpads. *Sketchpad 1919–1921* has smooth paper, 17-1/2 cm X 10-1/2 cm, of which ten sheets survive. One of the earliest surviving sketches is *Commandant de Coligny*, which would date from the Moroccan Division and the Occupation. The latest materials seem to have been produced in Mexico City during Charlot's exploratory trip from January through May 1921. These sheets may have been from more than one sketchpad.⁵² Twenty-two pages on rougher paper, 7-1/2” X 5”; 19 cm X 12-1/2 cm, belong, I argue, to *Disassembled Sketchpad*. The earliest subjects are connected to the Occupation, and I have discussed several in the last chapter. The latest datable material is the page of notes on the “Atelier de Desportes,” an exhibition Charlot viewed in 1921. Both sketchpads contain, therefore, materials that stretch from at least 1919 into 1921. However, the order of the drawings is not clear. Charlot apparently picked up the sketchpads at different times, and used versos at different times from rectos. Some sketches can be grouped satisfactorily by subject matter. For instance, the sketches of the dog in *Disassembled Sketchpad* are preparatory work for *L'Amitié*. Nonetheless, dating remains insecure.

Charlot was continuing his usual sketching activity, including portraits, caricatures, animals, plants, and copies.⁵³ At this time, he developed further a light, soft-focus style found in such earlier works as the *vase of flowers, with bird perched on top* of the *Small Sketchpad*. The light has been increased to the point that it washes out all but the soft outlines of the objects; those outlines are indicated, not by single lines, but by delicate, Impressionistic shading. This style of drawing enabled him both to suggest light effects and to simplify natural forms into geometric ones. *Disassembled Sketchpad*,

I verso vase with flowers could be a transition between the two styles. In the *Sketchpad 1919–1921*, *The Pavillon de Flore of the Louvre* has been carefully drawn, despite the fact that a further, unconnected sketch of a male head was later added at the bottom. The Paris light is suggested by the soft-focus drawing and the use of reserves for the side of the tower on which the sun falls. The park in front of the building seems pleasantly peaceful for the two people sitting in it, the trees simplified into near geometric shapes. Charlot has positioned two foreground hedges parallel to the picture plane, fitting them to the requirements of the drawing rather than to those of the park; he had used the same device in his childhood drawings. Charlot admired the way David in his *View of the Luxembourg Gardens* (1794) geometrized the naturally more disorganized view of a park by placing such a hedge in that way. The horizontals of the hedges are contrasted with the clear verticals of a thin tree trunk, a street light, and the emphasized nearest corner of the tower. Building and natural setting are brought closer together by light effects and composition. From the same sketchpad, *vase of flowers* and *table setting* are in the same style, again using simplification to combine light effects with the geometric study of form.

A large, perhaps unfinished drawing in this style, *Two Houses and a Wooded Hill*, can be found on the verso of *Self-Portrait in Gray Gouache; Study for L'Amitié*.⁵⁴ The delicate pencil strokes create an almost Impressionist picture of the leafy slope. Charlot later proposed three dates, I believe in the following order: 1920, 1919, and 1917. He finally settled on 1919. Charlot will continue to use this style during his exploratory trip to Mexico, rendering it more solid in his Cubist studies of Boucher.

The largest surviving work in this style is the watercolor *Flowering Plants in Pot*, probably painted in 1921.⁵⁵ Again, the strong light wipes out most of the detailing within the forms, illuminating even areas that would normally be in shadow, like the stems under the leaves. The outlines are then delineated by faint blushes of watercolor, sometimes falling under the actual edges of the objects. The effect is both delicate and, because of the clear forms, compositionally strong. Charlot is combining his appreciation of Impressionism with his own more geometric tendencies. The style had potential that Charlot abandoned for other directions, one of several options he created for himself during this period. Indeed, *Flowering Plants in Pot* is connected to a preparatory gouache for *L'Amitié: Unfinished Flower Study*, described below. A similar connection is found in the case of *Two Houses and a Wooded Hill*, described above, and perhaps the *Flower Study* on the verso of *Legendre, Right Arm and Hand*, discussed below. That is, Charlot seems to have been working simultaneously in the two radically different styles of this group of works and *L'Amitié*.

8.1.3.1. Commercial Art

The postwar Paris fashion world was full of energy and creativity. Legendre provided introductions for Charlot to the workshops of both Elizabeth Arden and Paul Poiret: “I think the fellow got me both jobs, the Poiret job and the Elizabeth Arden job”:

I tried, of course, to make a little money on my art, and a friend of mine knew Elizabeth Arden, and I was presented to her. She was in Paris at the time, I suppose shopping for beauty aids or so, and I made for her two or three things. I am not very sure now what they were. But of course, I decorated, I think it was a powder box or

perfume box, and I tried to make it as pleasant as I could. I think it was flowers and little birds, and it stayed in stock for a long time. It was, I think the original was a watercolor, and it became a cardboard box with those pleasant colors on. (Interview October 18, 1970)

Although Elizabeth Arden products had been sold earlier in France, the first salon was opened at the beginning of summer 1920 (Lewis and Woodworth 1972: 108). The inclusion of Paris on the wrapper discussed below, *Elizabeth Arden Paris New York*, indicates that it was done once the salon was established.

Charlot was employed with a regular salary by Poiret, one of the greatest and most original couturiers in the history of fashion, whose house was in its postwar decline:

I also worked in fashion designs for Poiret, who was at the time the big, modern fashion designer, and he had the most dazzling models in the most dazzling clothing, and they were all very nice to me because I was an artist. And I did one rather complicated thing where he had maybe twelve people or more representing something connected with Spanish-type fashions. I liked it, but he didn't like it too much, so we didn't establish really a friendship. But I was very glad to have a check for 900 francs, which was a lot of francs at the time. And I enjoyed also seeing Poiret and the way he worked. He was a very original fellow. He had a rack of his own clothing, and on it was a crown, a king's crown in metal—gold, I think. And when he had parties—I suppose shop parties—he would put it on before he sat at the table, and he considered himself, he was think[ing] of [himself] as a king. Later on, of course, he went out of fashion. He wrote a very nice book of memoirs, and I think ended in total poverty, but with a good deal of philosophy. The last I knew of him he was, I think, boiling peas for his dinner. He enjoyed being poor as much as he had enjoyed being rich. So just knowing the guy was interesting and getting a check from him was useful.⁵⁶

Despite all their obvious differences, Poiret and Charlot shared an interest in the Nabis and folk art (including Russian and Breton). For both, the principle of decorum, of “what is suitable,” was important. Poiret had a long history of selecting and patronizing young artists and, besides employing Charlot, purchased several of his works; in Charlot's list “Accomplish. 4—” of November 1930, he states that some are in the “coll. Paul Poiret, Paris.” In turn, as seen in chapter 3, when Charlot wanted to illustrate the contrast of elegant Mexican Indian clothing to fussy bourgeois clothing, he based his drawing, probably consciously, on one published by Jean-Louis Boussingault in 1909 to contrast Poiret's style to those of his predecessors. Poiret had been one of the great sources in the movement away from the kind of women's clothes that had horrified Charlot as a child. In his writings, Charlot compared Indian women's clothing to Greek and would have appreciated Poiret's being inspired for his pleated dresses by classical art, like the *Hera* from Samos in the Louvre (ca. 560 BC).

Little remains of Charlot's commercial work in Paris. The following pieces are undated, but I would place them in 1920. Charlot had little time between his return from Mexico and final departure, and he was busy with practical matters like closing up his family's affairs and with serious artistic projects like his studies of nudes and finishing *L'Amitié*. Moreover, he had decided to leave Paris, so seeking a career in commercial art was pointless. Finally, Legendre, who was the connection to Arden and Poirer, broke with Charlot shortly after his return from Mexico.

In the Jean Charlot Collection is a small process print: *Elizabeth Arden Paris New York*.⁵⁷ The print is unsigned but accords with the work that can be securely attributed to Charlot. The print appears to be a color proof; the name "Vortier" is written on the verso in another hand. On the verso of a larger commercial work, *La Poudre de Riz de Rosine*, discussed below, is written in yet another hand: "Voir lettre de Vortier pour prix de ces pancartes" 'See letter of Vortier for the price of these placards.' Vortier was apparently connected to the printing of the artwork. *Elizabeth Arden* seems to be the wrapper for a small cylinder. On the left is a vertical gold band that could be used for overlap, and above the main image is a blue-bordered circle with a close-up of a heavily made-up face from just below the mouth to half-way through the eyes. When the wrapper was applied around the cylinder, done by hand at the time, the circle would cover the top. The illustration indicates that the cylinder contained lipstick; the bright red mouth is the most prominent element in the circle, and in the main image, a young woman in profile is dreamily contemplating, daubed onto a tiny white cloth or paper, the color of the lipstick she is wearing.

The young woman is as bare-shouldered as Eve, but her makeup, although much more skillful, is as heavy as that of the prostitute in *Anny* and *Femme fumant* of 1919: she has mascara on her long upper and lower eyelashes, eyeliner that carries back to the outside corner of her eye, blue eye shadow above and below her eye, an impossibly long, darkened gold eyebrow, heavy rouge, and a reddened cupid mouth. Her hair is a shiny brass-gold. She wears no nail polish, but her hands are drawn with as much distortion as those in *Femme fumant*. The connection between this print and the prostitute pictures is not accidental. Before World War I, cosmetics—especially eye makeup—were little accepted by respectable women. After the war, a successful effort was made to extend the use of makeup—a symbol of liberation and pleasure-seeking—and its heavy application became stylish. A P. G. Wodehouse character remarks, "Now before the War young ladies didn't use lipstick, whereas after the War they do use lipstick" (1938: 64). Cosmetics retained, however, much of their raciness for both wearer and viewer. Charlot and others could provide the ambivalent painted woman with a context that was both fashionable and naturalizing. Charlot stands the young woman before a window through which can be seen flowering red, yellow, and white roses. Charlot had used background flowers before, but these are made to resemble the large bright blossoms produced by the young girls at Paul Poirer's Martine school, founded in 1911, which were popular in all areas of design and influenced a number of fine artists.⁵⁸ In this context, the woman's makeup becomes just another example of the natural use of strong colors for attraction. The final artistic effect is jewel-like, with the umber on the border at the bottom and on the transverse wooden bar of the window providing a foil for the sharper colors. The small scale of the image adds to the gem-like impression of the precious object it enwraps. Elizabeth Arden was famous for its packaging.

The composition becomes clear when the image is turned into a cylinder. The woman's head becomes three-dimensional in reality, and she seems to be looking at the daub of lipstick through real space. Her long eyebrow echoes the turning of the cylinder. Laid flat, the design reveals the use of both corner-to-corner diagonals. Charlot has, however, made an awkward correction to solidify the design. The top of the woman's head was originally slightly below the transverse bar; to create a clearer connection between that bar and the lower border, Charlot has now extended the woman's hair upwards to touch the bar, but in doing so, he has left a bare patch in the front section of the correction and a color and form uncertainty in the back. This may have been ameliorated in a later version. The circle design is more secure, with the rouge on the cheeks providing portions of bisecting circles at either side.

Five more prints for packages survive; four are top and side combinations and one is the top only of a large rectangular box.⁵⁹ Top and side are related in color and subject, but do not form a unified image. Flowers are the main subjects in all these designs; he remembered them in his above description of "a powder box or perfume box...it was flowers and little birds." Charlot is working in the Martine vein, but his flowers are strongly three-dimensional—either through hatching or coloring—and, in all but one case, overlap to create a space filled to profusion. A tonal spectrum is used from very light to black, each work occupying a different section of the spectrum. Charlot was clearly intrigued by the potential of process prints and was experimenting with different effects. His rich, glossy dark colors—especially the decorative use of blue-black—are innovative and elegant.

On the verso of *Standing Female Nude Model, full front* of August 1921, four sketches using flowers have survived for "Pâte de Savon Kenott dentifrice rationnel. Paris," an Elizabeth Arden product developed in Paris.⁶⁰ As I reconstruct the sequence, the earliest idea in pencil uses a small area for the inscription and a large border with large flowers, each separated by some intervening space. Charlot then makes a more finished version in pencil, inking in some of the lines. The inscription is now larger, the flower border narrower, and the flowers are smaller—either closer together or overlapping; these flowers are more two-dimensional than those of the first version. The effect recalls the flower borders of some of his print and bas-relief designs. More realistic flowers fill up the space between the border and the inscription. In the third, small sketch in pencil, Charlot explores more abstract and two-dimensional flowers; they are reduced to circles with interior variations and arranged with seeming randomness inside a thin border. Anticipations of these abstractions can be found in the border of the second design. In his final design, Charlot uses pencil and black wash to simplify and dramatize further the flower design: abstract forms are presented as solid silhouettes against a background of the greatest possible contrast. This final design resembles curiously some Cubist work of the time, such as the decorative border at the bottom of Picasso's *L'Italienne* of 1917 (Silver 1989: 134), but Charlot seems to have arrived at it through his own uninfluenced progression within the current of commercial art. The similarity is due, I would argue, to the influence on fine art of such developments in commercial art. This two-dimensional treatment of flowers can be considered a characteristic of Charlot's 1920 commercial work: it distinguishes that work from Charlot's flower studies, like his sculptural *Cyclamens* painted in January, from the flowers in *L'Amitié*, which he was working on through 1920, and even from the flowers in his 1919 *La Virginité*, with its experimentally flattened space. Charlot would, however, use two-

dimensionality in his “planiste” Cubist paintings, discussed below. That is, Charlot’s own work in commercial art had an effect on his own fine-art innovations.

Charlot’s largest surviving commercial work is *La Poudre de Riz de Rosine, Parfumerie, 107 Faub. St. Honoré, Paris, France: Ha ! Quelles Délices !* ‘The Rice Face-Powder of Rosine, Perfumery, 107 Faubourg Saint Honoré, Paris, France: Ah What Delights!’⁶¹ Since face powder was still more of a novelty for respectable women even than eye makeup, Charlot has chosen the only context in which it was considered normal: the theatre. A curiously attired young woman—preparing either for the stage or for one of the masked balls fashionable at the time—sits at her dressing table, her face lit from below as if by footlights, recalling the lurid lighting of *Femme fumant*. Her eyes are unusually large and lustrous under her blued eyelids and mascaraed lashes; the inside corner of each eye sports a prominent orange dot. The top two-thirds of her eyebrows are blackened, leaving the part below in its natural green-gold color. Her hair is tightly done and articulated by Charlot with short, close vertical lines contrasting with the similar horizontal ones on her neck, shoulders, and arm; some verticals and cross-hatchings add variety. The rest of the image is treated more broadly. The face is analyzed into color areas, like Charlot’s *Portrait of Louis Goupil, profile*, discussed above, but the colors are all pastels and seem to have been applied by the woman herself. The hands are lengthened and distorted like those of *Femme fumant*. Behind her, large flattened flowers writhe embroidered on a velvety damask of a Martine-like design.⁶² In textural contrast, hair and clothes have the slick sheen of silk. The effect is one of over-charged artificiality. Curiously, only the color of the face powder looks natural!

Dandy French Officer with Binoculars has no explicit commercial reference, but the flowers and elegance identify it as commercial.⁶³ Far from the scruffy realism of “*Charlot Crapouillot*”, discussed in the last chapter, the officer poses one foot forward in profile on a bluff, briefly lowering his opera-glass-like binoculars below his monocle. His tailor-made uniform is impeccably natty. Only the almost unnoticeable, spatially distorted fortification far below the bluff at the bottom left of the image adds a momentary chill of realism.

Charlot had nothing in principle against commercial work and was happy to earn money, but commercial art was not central to his interests:

I had to force myself a little bit to do things for the beauty-aid business. It wasn’t exactly my desires at the time. I was already really shopping for murals, but I was glad to get some money out of it. I think I got quite a little bit, for me at the time anyhow.⁶⁴

I am reminded of my mother’s story that Edward Weston was delighted to receive a commission to photograph a product to be advertised, but spent so much time engaged in making the photograph that the agency had forgotten about him by the time he presented his work! Charlot did not stint on his effort. He used the analysis and distortions he had developed in his fine arts and even continued his explorations of genuine artistic problems. For instance, in *La Poudre de Riz de Rosine*, he progresses from the foreground white of the white and black porcelain powder jar and the back of the powder puff to the absolute black velvet in the background; he even suggests that the source of light in front of the picture surface is whiter

than the apparently absolute white in the foreground. This is a problem he had set himself but failed to solve in his 1919 *Flowers in Vase*;⁶⁵ after crossing out the image he wrote:

J'ai cherché sur fond dégradé du noir au blanc Le sujet du blanc au noir. raté.

'I attempted on a background degraded from black to white—the subject from white to black. failed.'

Even the crowded impression of *La Poudre de Riz de Rosine* was being used in the more serious *L'Amitié*. Charlot did not, however, develop a unified commercial style; for instance, in *La Poudre de Riz*, the analysis of areas in the face does not support the distortion of the hands. Each of those stylistic elements is used separately in his earlier works in which they are integrated more successfully into a whole.

Curiously, Charlot had already developed two unified styles that had great commercial potential and were exploited by others increasingly through the 1920s. The first was the anticipation of *art moderne* in the graceful, elongated figures of his liturgical tissue designs of 1917; Charlot was strengthening and synthesizing this style in his textile designs of 1920. The second was the germanesque distorted style of Occupation works like *Femme fumant* and the self-portrait *Moi*. Around March 1918, Charlot had even played with a commercial image using his liturgical elongations. On the *Paper Portfolio Cover for Drawings* of the preparatory drawings of the *Chemin de Croix*, Charlot has used extreme elongation for a mundane image: on a field of tennis courts, a young man is preparing to serve the ball while an elegantly attired and behatted young woman stands admiringly behind him. The sketch is very large, 19-3/4" high X 13" wide, and the figure of the man and the woman were originally sketched without humor. But then Charlot added elements that caricatured the subject: a huge smile for the woman, a dog barking at the man while it urinates, and, in the background, a woman tennis player hit by a ball and flying into the air along the route of an accompanying arrow.

Charlot saw that elongation could be used to express two opposed qualities: spirituality and worldly elegance. In 1918, in the *Chemin de Croix* drawings, he decided to continue to use elongation for spirituality, as he had stated in his speech "Nous les Jeunes !" of 1916. In 1920, Charlot was working both on his commercial work and on the completion of the *Chemin*. I believe that he did not use elongation in his commercial work because at that time he was using it to express spirituality in his liturgical art. Despite the distortion of the hands in *Elizabeth Arden* and *La Poudre de Riz*, the general bodily proportions are slim but normal; this is true also of the *Dandy French Officer with Binoculars*. Indeed, Charlot's intensified encounter with elongation in commercial art may have contributed to his eventual rejection of it to express spirituality; he came to feel that the elegance could not be sufficiently neutralized to express a religion of the poor. For Charlot, style is not expressively indifferent and is laden with connotations. Ultimately, Charlot had to practice his art with the greatest seriousness as he wrote to Brenner about illustrations for her book of Mexican folk tales:

You know that my work no tiene much elasticidad, because, to satisfacer [*sic*] me it has to be submitted to the famous X which is rather a terrible master. Now there is an other way of working for the book and this would be to do commercial drawing as I

did in Paris with casas de moda and here with Mexam. *Pero no me gustaria.*

(“Excuse the paper”)

‘You know that my work does not have much elasticity, because to satisfy me, it has to be submitted to the famous X which is rather a terrible master. Now there is an other way of working for the book and this would be to do commercial drawing as I did in Paris with fashion houses and here with Mexam. *But that would not please me or be to my taste.*’

In any case, Charlot never had a sense for the commercial.

Charlot may already have felt uncomfortable using commercially elements like flower borders that had been prominent in his religious work. The main stylistic elements of his commercial work are taken from the fashionable art of the time (like the Martine flowers), or from his own secular art (like the area analysis of faces), or from the distortions used for racy subjects (*Femme fumant*). Finally, the beauty business must have tickled Charlot’s sense of humor. On a sheet of *Sketchpad 1919–1921*, the subject, difficult to identify with certainty, seems to be a young woman wearing a complicated headset for one of the electric or hydrotherapeutic beauty treatments of the time. Seen this way, the drawing is humorous, but Charlot has spent some time on it in his finest soft-focus style, and the science-fiction-like result is chilling.

Nonetheless, as stated above, Charlot was able to use commercial art to explore artistic problems, like two-dimensional outlines, which he will use in his “planiste” ‘planarist’ gouaches. The dark blue coloring and crisscrossed design of *Elisabeth Arden, Paris-New York* anticipate *Bullet*, discussed below; Charlot even pasted *Bullet* onto a gold sheet, producing a golden border like the one in the commercial work. Charlot was certainly aware of the interaction of commercial and fine art. In his “Cubism R.I.P.” of 1938, he wrote, “Cubism has at least succeeded in achieving a dictatorship in the realm of the applied arts” (AA I 70). He could have cited the Cubist sweaters of Jean Patou and the Cubistic jewelry and accessories of Cartier.

A reflection of Charlot’s commercial work can perhaps be found also in his bookplate, his second process print, “Jean Charlot me crut sien,” mentioned above.⁶⁶ The ex libris is a print in two colors on yellow paper: a light blue gray with the initials in black capitals. The lines of the letters in different colors are designed to touch, but not overlap. Slight inconsistencies in the difficult fitting of the end of each black initial to that of the following blue-gray letter seem to me to indicate that the bookplate was printed in two passes; indeed, part of the technical challenge was placing the plate properly for each pass. The medium—perhaps a mimeograph or a hectograph like Morse number 4—has none of the rough effort of woodcut; all is smooth calligraphy, subtle color, and graceful design. Charlot would produce lettering throughout his life, but this little bookplate distinguishes itself by its elegance.

8.1.3.2.Nudes

The study of the nude is an integral, even central part of the classical tradition both for the subject matter and the development of styles, such as canons of proportion. Charlot was raised and

trained in this tradition and agreed with it, as seen in his *Traité*. He had also started early, doing nude studies as a youth, drawing his own legs and hands, often using a mirror, and he continued drawing his own hands through this period.

Three pages of studies of hands can be found from the *Disassembled Sketchpad: Three studies of the model's hands*, *Studies of artist's hand and ear*, and *Three studies of the artist's hand*. Despite changes in scale, angle, and elongation of fingers, all but one of the hands can be recognized as Charlot's by the rough cutting of the nails. The exception is the hand with unusually stubby, pudgy fingers in *Three studies of the model's hands*; I believe these are the same ones depicted in *Portrait of young blonde woman*, the studio model, discussed below. The two sketches of Charlot's hand holding a brush may be early preparations for the hand of the artist in *L'Amitié*; they are of Charlot's right hand, so he was either drawing with his left or using a mirror. Although some hatching for stylistic effect can be found in *Three studies of the artist's hand*, the sketches are mainly studies with Charlot making several lines to achieve a satisfactory outline.

Charlot's earliest surviving nudes of models are those that were probably done in 1915 at the Beaux-Arts: *Studio Female Nude* and *Studio Male Nude, Shoulder and Arm*. The drawings are anatomical studies in the exacting, realistic style of the academy with no effort to achieve or impose a distinctive style. From this baseline, Charlot will later progress to various stylistic explorations of the subject. The 1915 drawings provide the social context for Charlot's French nudes: classical art study. Charlot will continue this practice at various times: the postwar nudes discussed here, a series of nude drawings of the Mexican model Luz Jimenez in the mid-1920s, and the studio nudes of the 1930s when he was teaching at the Art Students League in New York City. At the University of Hawai'i in the 1950s, Charlot taught life class in the art department, but did not produce many works himself. Charlot always recognized the importance of the study of the nude. In the early 1950s, I asked him about Edward Weston's nudes, because they seemed problematic to me as a Catholic grade-schooler. My father told me that it was important to see human beings as they really are and not just the superficial, historical accidents of their clothing. Artists must study the nude as part of their study of reality, of which human beings form such an important part. Moreover, Edward's art purified the subject of anything immoral. Charlot felt this was a virtue of true art: "Great art, good art even, has cleansing properties close to the sacramental. As happens with blessed water and holy chrism, to contact art constitutes a purifying rite" (AA I 267 f.).

Nevertheless, Charlot was not entirely comfortable with studio nudes; as he stated of his work during this period: "And I wasn't too keen on just drawing and drawing from the model" (Interview October 18, 1970). The reason was not a conflict created by the model's presenting a sexual temptation. As seen earlier, Charlot was extremely attracted physically to women and continued to be. A poem of February 8, 1922, his birthday, begins:

celle-ci chaste avec sa nuque de panthère,
l'olive de sa face et l'acier de ses seins,

le souple de la hanche et l'ample du bassin,
stoppe mes désirs sur sa piste, groins en terre.

'this chaste woman with her panther neck,
the olive of her face and the steel of her breasts,
the suppleness of the loin and the amplitude of the belly,
stops my desires in their path, snouts in the dirt.'

He was also aware of the prurient exploitation of nudity in art. In his "Conseils du Peintre à un Client Possible" of 1922, he writes:

Au bas sont celles mêlées de sensation—comme de gourmandise et de luxure. Si tu
désires satisfaire à cela, cherche de beaux tableaux de fruits et de femmes nues.

'At the bottom of the rankings are paintings mixed with sensation—like gluttony and
luxuriousness. If you want to satisfy that, look for pretty pictures of fruit and naked
women.'

In a sketch for an article from the mid-1920s, "Fête foraine estrade," he satirizes the misuse of art:

Affiche: "Le Musée d'Art, Rien d'immoral."

Ça représente des femmes nues.

Poster: "Museum of Art, Nothing immoral."

That represents nude women.'

Probably in August 1921, Charlot even began a poem on the social plight of models, which he left unfinished:

Seigneur prenez pitié de ces modèles, femmes
prostituant leur chair sur tant d'ordes trétaux
Leur blanche chair sans savour, qui fane très tôt,
bleuie au froid, sous l'œil scrutateur qui diffame⁶⁷

'Lord, pity these models, women
prostituting their flesh on so many filthy stands,
Their tasteless flesh, that withers very soon,
blue with cold, under the scrutinizing that defames them'

The poem is based, I believe, on Bloy's famous narrative of a woman fainting when forced by poverty to model nude (Bloy, *La Femme Pauvre*, 1890). Charlot is explicitly denying any sexual attraction and lamenting the economic circumstances that would force a woman to pose. He left the poem unfinished, I believe, because he did not wholly assent to the Bloy-like positions expressed, although models could of course be disrespected and ogled (Jacques and Schwartz 2001: 66, 190 f.). His description of the model's body does not fit those seen in his sketches; he did not believe that posing nude was "prostituant leur chair" 'prostituting their flesh'; and, by the evidence of his drawings, his own stance did not include "l'œil scrutateur qui diffame" 'the scrutinizing eye that defames.' Charlot's poem was expressing a conventional

Christian puritanism that was incompatible with personal opinions he expressed elsewhere, for instance, “l’uniforme des bienheureux sera la peau” ‘the uniform of the blessed will be their skin.’⁶⁸ In this period, Charlot was also working on his designs for liturgical textiles, in which he accords a privileged position to the nudity of Eden, the depiction of which draws on Charlot’s contemporary studies of the nude. Although Charlot did not finish his puritanical poem, it does reveal that remnants of a more conventional Catholic attitude still made themselves felt in his thinking; he had not yet reached a consistent view that he could hold with undivided emotions. Although as seen earlier, Charlot acknowledged and appreciated the centrality of sensualism in art, the study of nudes was not a personal occasion of sexual temptation except for a short time in Mexico. Indeed, after his sexual problems in Germany, he would definitely have stopped drawing from the nude, if it had done so. The problem was more general:

Some of us remain terrified by the difficulties of our calling, and genuinely conscious of the moral danger inherent in the sensual approach to the world that is our working tool. The temptation to court salvation by denying our specialized vocation should remain only a temptation. (AA I 324)

Charlot’s difficulty with nudes was more with the artificiality of the social context. He disliked art that was confined to an artistic context just as he was opposed to art for art’s sake. He was happy to find subjects in which nudity was a part of everyday life, like Hawaiian swimmers:

There is also one way, a correct way if you want, to represent the nude. I never can quite understand the nude model unless there is a reason for the nude, and of course a swimmer, especially the Hawaiian swimmer, is in the nude naturally; it is the correct thing to do. (Interview October 1, 1970)

Similarly, Charlot in Mexico used the Aztec sweat bath, the *temascal*, as a subject, and even when he painted a model in a studio, he would often provide a social context, like the river bath the pilgrims took before they entered Chalma.

Charlot never found a normal social context for his nude studies in France, but he clearly recognized the importance of the subject matter and his need to use it as a basis for developing his style. Indeed, the quantity of nude studies at this time is a symptom of the intensity of his stylistic search. Because of the difficulties of dating a number of the drawings of this period, the sequence I propose is insecure. In any case, a number of the nudes can be grouped together, however they fit chronologically.

Charlot began drawing from the nude while on leave in Paris, in all likelihood, during the longer leave from late December 1919 to early January 1920. The argument for this is that he met Legendre while they were both doing nudes at the academy Colarossi and the Grande Chaumière and he mentions Legendre as a friend to cultivate after demobilization (note of May 31, 1920, cited above). He returns definitively to Paris with the intention of devoting as many of his mornings as possible to “travail d’après nature : fleurs, étoffes etc. (Si possible nu)” ‘nature study: flowers, textiles, etc. (If possible nudes)’ (*Ludwigshafen Notebook*).

The earliest nudes of this period appear to be *Two female nude studies* on the verso of *Commandant de Coligny*, probably from the *Sketchpad 1919–1921*. The recto portrait suggests that the drawing was done while Charlot was in service during the Occupation, and the drawing differs from those in the groups to be discussed below. Charlot is working from a living model viewed from the front and the side and posed, like the *Studio Male Nude, Shoulder and Arm*, to show the articulation of the arms and, in this case, also the neck. Charlot has also drawn a light or ghost articulation of the model's right leg in the frontal view. In contrast, the model's features are not drawn, and her head is diminished in size in the frontal view. The setting is clearly a professional life class in a studio. Charlot is using fine, light lines on this sheet.

Charlot's stylization of the subject goes clearly beyond his work in *Studio Female Nude* and *Studio Male Nude, Shoulder and Arm*. The side view is just lightly sketched. Charlot much preferred the frontal view for the compositional opportunities presented by the bilateral construction of the human body. Charlot has drawn the knees and shoulders and upper arms of the model with precise realism, but has analyzed the breasts and belly into circles. The hips and thighs are midway in abstraction between the belly and the knees, and the rib area has been handled indecisively: Charlot's first outline was an abstract inward curve, which he then changed to a more realistic line. Inside the outline, the depiction of the central rib cage area is off-center and awkward. Finally, Charlot has provided the figure with some overall design by simplifying and pointing the feet unnaturally downward—rather like those of Jesus nailed to the cross—diminishing and geometrizing the head, and having the arms disappear. Charlot is using this studio session for both his interests—the subject itself and stylistic exploration—but the final image he produces is not a synthesis.

Next in order, I would argue, is the group of nudes from the *Disassembled Sketchpad* that represent Charlot's work at his studio in St. Mandé with Legendre. Indeed, a number of the drawings enable us to visualize their sessions. A sitting "Female nude" is obviously not by Charlot; the hand is amateurish and may be Legendre's (drawings of Charlot's younger Mexican cousin appear in *Sketchbook 1910*). The studies of Charlot's pet dog Mousmé are preparations for *L'Amitié*. The dog would of course have been in the St. Mandé studio, so while Legendre was drawing the nude, Charlot would be drawing Mousmé: "While he was drawing from the model, I was already composing that big picture" (Interview October 18, 1970). A geometric nude study has been done on an erased drawing of a guitar leaning on a wall with two framed pictures; as can be seen from the resemblance to *Louis Goupil Seated in Jean Charlot's Bedroom* of late 1915 or early 1916, the erased drawing was probably of Charlot's bedroom or studio.

I believe that a sequence can be established within this group of drawings. The earliest are connected to the stylized frontal nude of *Two female nude studies*, described above. On the sheet *Short-haired model, seated, twisted; geometric study of torso, frontal*, is a more developed version of that earlier study, in which some of the problems I noted above are solved: breasts and belly form three clear circles and are now symmetrically arranged; the interior rib cage lines are more secure and are now related to the belly muscles. The haunch and hip lines are wide enough to encompass the belly circle. Charlot has solved the problem of the appendages by stopping at the shoulders, above the knee, and halting a single-

line indication of the arms just below the breasts.⁶⁹ However, Charlot is still unclear about how to connect the circle of the belly to those of the breasts and tries several lines, which ruins the drawing as an artistic result. His is also still unsure about the outer lines of the rib cage and waist. This drawing is on the same sheet with a more realistic sketch of a seated nude model. The style used is one of heavy hatching on the major lines, the same style Charlot was using in his innovative liturgical style described in the last chapter. This is the style, I would argue, with which he began this series of nudes; it is a different pencil stroke than he used on the verso of *Commandant de Coligny*.

Charlot's two main tendencies are again apparent: the study of the nude itself and the exploration of style. Up to this point, however, he had been unsuccessful at finding a geometric scheme in the frontal human body. I believe he felt that his scheme failed to account for important anatomical features and was, therefore, an oversimplification. He later criticized Matisse and others for "leaving too much out" from the subject in order to achieve their designs.⁷⁰ Charlot solved the problem he encountered, I believe, by closer observation of the nude model. That is, his stylization was premature, and more observation was needed to achieve a design in which geometric analysis and natural observation reached a point of synergy; in Charlot's art, this usually meant a point at which the geometric elements were absorbed or sublimated into a recognizable and convincing image. Charlot, therefore, abandons mental geometrizing and looks at the model again: the frontal nude appears anew in *Short-haired model head and torso, torso, feet, elbow*, but synthesized in three dimensions. This new torso is based on the geometric study of the above drawing, stopping at the same places. Charlot has, however, solved his problems by exploiting the three-dimensionality of the observed body, turning it slightly sideways and using the strong, hatched modeling of his current style. Rather than making the belly a single circle—which always detached it from the body—Charlot now uses the opposing curved lines of haunches, hips, pubic area, and lower belly muscles to represent the rotundity of the entire body area. Unrealistic stylization is maintained, however, in the extension of the lower belly muscles and the use of the bottom line of the rib cage to continue the curve of the hips. The breasts, now mounds rather than circles, are successfully connected to the belly area, again unrealistically, by means of a new simplification of the central chest and upper-middle belly area. The resulting torso is no less stylized than the previous ones, but it succeeds.

On the same page as this torso is a drawing of the model with hands raised, depicted to just below the breasts. The head is done in strong hatching, but the hatching on the body is closer to Charlot's soft-focus style. This drawing is related to that of the torso, again done in softer focus, of the model on the page *Chest of short-haired model, three studies of feet, one of hand*; this is on the verso of the sheet with the previous geometrized torso, discussed above, *Short-haired model, seated, twisted; geometric study of torso, frontal*. Both the pages in question—*Short-haired model head and torso* and *Chest of short-haired model*, also contain studies of feet in the same heavy-hatching style. In conclusion, the two sheets discussed are closely related and probably done at the same session.

The anatomical studies of body parts are strong and convincing, except for an awkward ankle on *Chest of short-haired model*. The heavy hatching emphasizes the muscles, creating at times a masculinized image of the female model, like the arm with a bent elbow in *Short-haired model head and*

torso; similarly, the leg in *Leg and hands* could appear masculine, but belongs, I believe, to the same female model. Nonetheless, Charlot felt the need to move forward. An indication of this is *Geometric study of body from back* on the verso of *Short-haired model head and torso*.⁷¹ The female model is seen three-quarters from the back. The artist's eye line is at her feet, and the distortion this creates is exaggerated in the drawing. Her body has been analyzed into areas with clear outlines; the outlines have been emphasized and some of the areas filled with a regularized version of Charlot's heavy hatching of this period. This is the only completely diagrammatic nude Charlot will do until his Cubist nudes of 1921. The analysis here is not Cubist, nor a mere analysis of natural form; Charlot is analyzing and stylizing in his own individual way.

The next page, as I reconstruct the sequence, is *Four studies of head of short-haired model, one of breast*. The model is the same as in the head and breast drawings described above, and Charlot again uses a style between his strong hatching and his soft-focus drawing. In these heads, he leans towards the stronger hatching, but the lines join to create a more uniform dark area, removing some of the boldness of the hatching. In *Nude, front; study of head*, Charlot starts a page with another head of this type, but then draws a full-front nude. The hatching is again strong, but less pressure is applied to the pencil and more reserves are used, again softening the effect. The connection between this full-front torso and the earlier ones can be seen in the explicit cutting off of the image just below the shoulder line. The lines that cut off the image are so brusque as to seem to scratch it out. The figure is indeed weak and still tentative about the rib cage. Charlot seems to have been happier with his heads than his bodies.

Charlot then starts a new page with another head, *Head of short-haired model in hatching style, Female nude, line outline, profile, left leg forward, arms raised towards front*. He is now at the point he was on the previous page: he has drawn a satisfactory head and now wants to draw a satisfactory body. Instead of attempting another combination of heavy hatching and soft focus, he takes up a completely different style, one that he had used successfully on other subjects: outline drawing, *au trait*. Significantly, the model is turned sideways, thus releasing Charlot from the geometric problem he was struggling with. In the earliest drawing analyzed above, *Two female nude studies*, Charlot barely sketched in the side view of the nude. This very successful sketch from the side seems to free Charlot's pencil. He is not working in the careful and precise outlines of such earlier drawings as *Still Life: Army Personal Effects* and *Guittou*, discussed in the last chapter. He is making quick sketches as the standing model shifts her pose slightly: from arms being held straight over her head to hands behind her head, to hands held horizontally towards her right, to arms slanting downward at her side, to arms touching her sides, to hands behind her back.⁷² He is allowing himself to be caricatural in the faces and hands. He is having fun.

The sequence of poses proposed above is supported by an examination of the amount of pencil pressure used. The first two sketches are done with medium pressure; the second two with light pressure, but with an increase in pressure through the sketching of the latter as Charlot moves down through the legs; the pressure is even stronger in the second to the last and strongest in the last. Charlot is moving from free sketching towards some conclusion. This can be seen also in his increasing return to frontality through the sequence: from a profile view, he moves to different three-quarter views while avoiding a

perfectly erect posture in the model, which would recall too strongly the problem of bilateral design. In the second to the last sketch in the sequence, he is two steps away from the posture of the model he was using for his geometrizing attempts. The pencil is pressing down with more definition, and the observation is more precise, for instance, at the folds of the skin on the waist as the body tilts and, most important, on the bulge of the belly. In the last sketch, Charlot is one step away from the pose on which he was working out his geometric problem. The model's hands are behind her back, and she is being viewed frontally, but she is standing with more pressure on one foot, throwing her hip out of line: the classic contrapposto position. For the first time, Charlot is secure about the relation of the bulge of the stomach to the rib cage to the breasts, and his pencil is applied with the most pressure in the series: he is now ready to define his image.

Three sketches from the *Disassembled Sketchpad* are significantly different from those discussed above. In *Female nude with hand extended towards viewer*, the setting is again a studio: the hand of the model, with the thumb touching the middle finger, is obviously being presented as an anatomical problem. The sketch has some of the freedom of the outline drawings described above, but differs from them in the use of multiple strokes for the lines. The drawing does seem to be by Charlot, but is unusually crude, and the hand does not reflect his capacity at this time. However, similarly odd hands can be seen in the very accomplished *Female Nude from Front, on One Knee, Hands Extended Forward* of 1921 and in number 31 of the 1922 outline nudes in *Notebook A*. I conclude that this was one way that Charlot was drawing hands at the time.

Female nude, Mediterranean type, with armband is in the heavy hatching style of the works described above, but the model is a different person and is depicted with unusual detail in the facial expression and with a kittenish, sensuous twist of her whole body. She seems to have been flirting with the artists, and the singular result is the most erotic drawing in the series of all Charlot's early nudes. In the 1930s in New York City, Charlot will explore more systematically such unclassical poses.

On the verso of *Female nude, Mediterranean type* is the different but equally anomalous *Portrait of young blonde woman*, done in a fine, delicate stroke. I believe that this is a true portrait of the main model in the nude studies. Charlot has deemphasized or classicized the faces in the studies, but this woman has the strong chin and squarish nose that can be found in them, and her hairdo seems a fluffier version of the classical casquette found in the nudes (the drawing in another hand, perhaps Legendre's, turns the same haircut into a pouf). Having looked at her impersonally as a body, perhaps Charlot wanted to examine her as a person; or perhaps she made a request. In any case, Charlot establishes the same contact with her through the eyes that he had with his subjects in Germany. She smiles at Charlot with the affection he normally evoked in his models, but one eye looks at him alert and serious while the other looks off into space. Her hairdo is modern, and when not nude, she is probably nicely turned out; but her strong, stubby fingers indicate, for the French viewer, her peasant origins. I believe that these are the same fingers in the sketch *Three studies of hands*. Charlot later showed the same interest in the stubby toes of a model (*Notebook A*, 1922 series of nudes, number 16). Charlot's careful observation of them is significant as he is making the transition from elongated elegance to his stockier style, a transition that reflected his social sympathies.

With the work in the *Disassembled Sketchpad*, Charlot establishes two of the styles with which he will draw nudes: strong hatching and outline drawing.⁷³ He could also work in the realistic, academic mode he had learned earlier. Five studies of a female nude were done in the *Sketchpad 1919-1921*. The subjects of the sheets to which they are attached suggest that they were done either just before Charlot left for Mexico on December 31, 1920, or were done in Mexico City itself. Charlot was using the library of the national school of art, the Academy of San Carlos, and may also have participated in one or more life classes, which were offered “with a stand and a model posing” (Interview August 7, 1971). Four of the drawings are of the model holding the same pose: *Female nude, full front*; *Female model, neck to knees, three-quarters view*; *Female model, neck to knees, three-quarters view, right buttock undrawn*; and *Female nude, legs*. A fifth seems to be an older model: *Female nude, seated*. Similarities can be found with the earlier nudes. In the full-front drawing, the head is minimized, and in the other drawings omitted. Charlot again seems particularly interested in studying the knees and the lower belly—where the heaviest pencil strokes can be found—as well as the transition from belly, over the rib cage to the breasts. The drawings are, however, much easier and more assured than those in the *Disassembled Sketchpad*. Charlot is enjoying working with the subject in his masterful draftsmanship and not pressing himself to stylistic innovation. In all five drawings, his manual skill and extraordinary sensitivity to tone can be appreciated. Most of the shading is created with fine parallel lines that simultaneously create the contours of the younger model’s body and indicate the perfection of her skin. Charlot also demonstrates his ability to suggest changing contours below a film of parallel lines. He communicates his own pleasure in the very act of drawing.

The next three groups of nudes can be dated to 1921, between Charlot’s return from his January–May exploratory trip to Mexico and his departure for Mexico in November. The earliest group is *au trait* ‘outline drawings.’ The second group, which contains three items, uses prominent shading. The third group is a set of four Cubist works that I will discuss in a following section. Charlot made a partial list of his 1921 works in his *Ludwigshafen Notebook*, making it clear that he worked both with single sheets and with “albums” or sketchbooks. After the “album” of his Cubist studies of a book of eighteenth-century prints, which he did on his first trip to Mexico, he lists “[album] nus couv. noire” ‘album of nudes, black cover,’ which is lost. If my identifications are correct, all three items of the second group are listed:

femme gueule de travers. [1]

nus maigres modelés [2]

‘woman with crooked mouth. [1]

skinny nudes modeled [2]’

The Cubist items listed, which I will discuss in the section on cubist works below, are:

2 nues cubist...

1 nu Picasso 12

‘two Cubist nudes...

one Picasso nude 12’

The identification of these three items with the existing pieces is uncertain, because Charlot, as usual, did not list all his works. Moreover, Charlot may have produced works at this time that did not fit into the three groups that have survived. The pencil study *Two feet* has some of the sharp faceting Charlot took from Cubism, but differs in pencil stroke from the drawings being discussed; I have the impression that it is an earlier drawing.⁷⁴ The *Ludwigshafen Notebook* list does reveal major losses. Charlot painted a nude watercolor or gouache in Mexico and had another sketchbook of nudes: “[album nus couv.] bleu” ‘album of nudes, blue cover.’

The outline drawings are *Three studies of a Female Nude, Studio Model* in pencil on the verso of the gouache *Self-Portrait; Study for L’Amitié*, dated 1921.⁷⁵ The date fits the nudes stylistically; they can be placed between the outline drawings of the *Disassembled Sketchpad* and those in *Notebook A* of 1922. For instance, Charlot distorts the figure more freely than he does in *Disassembled Sketchpad*, especially the feet. One of the three poses is even similar: both arms held out and to the model’s right. The line is, however, much more secure than in the earlier drawings, and the legs resemble those Charlot developed for his first mural project, discussed below. Perhaps as a result, in contrast to the other outline nudes, these three convey a sense of the heavy bulk of the human body, notably in the sturdy legs of the strong, erect figure with extended arms. Charlot will continue his work in outline nudes in his 1922 series in *Notebook A* and in the more formal pencil and wash nudes based on it.

Charlot’s second group of nudes from this period, distinguished by the prominent use of shading, is represented by three items listed in his *Ludwigshafen Notebook*. The earliest one dated is *Head of Woman* of October 8, 1921, or “femme gueule de travers. [1]” ‘woman with twisted mouth.’⁷⁶ Charlot has characterized the drawing by the twist of the model’s mouth, a feature he had used earlier in *Michel* of February 11, 1920, and will use again in his woodcut *Head of a Woman* of 1922. His purpose was to create a design that would unify into one line the nose, mouth, and chin. Charlot has analyzed the model’s face extensively, using two different devices. He uses the sharp faceting he was studying in Cubism on the model’s nose and left cheek. In the rest of the drawing, especially on the right cheek, mouth, and chin, he uses the rounded area definitions found earlier, for instance, in his *Portrait of Louis Goupil, profile* of April 26, 1920. In August 1921, Charlot made a series of four increasingly Cubist nudes. Now in October, he is absorbing his Cubist study back into the mainstream of his stylistic development. The head is perfectly recognizable, but closer inspection reveals the unnaturalistic sophistication of the analysis, for instance, the lines extending straight from the nose to the cheek. The drawing and tonality are Charlot’s at his finest. Even the darkest and smoothest areas preserve the clarity and individuality of the pencil strokes. Despite the sometimes microscopic delicacy of the drawing, the head impresses with its three-dimensional bulk. This paradoxical combination of intense analysis and communication of volume points forward to the large paintings and strong woodcuts of heads that Charlot will create when he first settles in Mexico. Finally, although the subject is a model, Charlot conveys a strong sense of her personality, making another unusual combination of artistic exploration and psychological penetration. In sum, Charlot uses the more complex and extensive device of shading to convey a greater amount of information.

The same fine shading is found in *Female Nude, Studio Model, Lying on Side, with shading*.⁷⁷ Again Charlot combines sharp faceting with rounded area analysis; he adds the new element of x-ray vision, revealing the skeleton in the left arm and the upper hip. In the *Ludwigshafen Notebook*, Charlot described this as one of the two “nus maigres modelés” ‘thin, modeled nudes’; contemporary standards of thinness differed from ours, and Charlot seems to be referring to the model’s boniness, the way her hipbone and elbow poke out. Again, despite all analysis, Charlot creates an impression of bulk. The mountainous jutting upper hip will appear in Charlot’s later work, notably, on the female personification of America on page 33 of Paul Claudel’s *The Book of Christopher Columbus* (1930). Charlot distorts expressively, for instance, in the long right hand that displays itself deliberately to the viewer.

The second of the “nus maigres modelés” ‘modeled thin nudes’ is *Nude studio model* of November 1921, done shortly before Charlot left definitively for Mexico.⁷⁸ The model with her boniness seems the same one as the one in the previous drawing, and Charlot reveals her right hip joint and thighbone as if with an X-ray. The distortion is equally strong with the flesh hanging irregularly from the skeleton. However, Charlot returns to the bolder, heavier stroke that he had used in 1920, similar in style to his innovative liturgical style with its hatching of primary lines. All of the analysis is done in Charlot’s rounded style, although he has penciled in a right angle at the left shoulder which extends one line down the arm and the other across the top of the collar bones, recalling the cut-off lines used earlier in his frontal nudes. Charlot is now comfortable in his handling of the frontal figure, making a more complex analysis than the geometric one he first attempted; his application in August of Cubism to a frontal nude has solved the problem for him. The final figure is an organic harmony of rounded, counterbalancing muscles hung on a solid bilateral frame. Charlot makes visible the way the body works as a complex of powerful parts, and the resulting beauty is strong rather than pretty.

By including these drawings in his annual list of works, Charlot indicated that he considered them finished pieces, ones in which his aims were achieved. The quantity and intensity of Charlot’s nude studies distinguishes this period of Charlot’s life from most of his career. I believe that this effort was a symptom of his feelings of uncertainty as he prepared to move to Mexico. He had no security that he would be able to pursue his art there or, if he could, what kind of art it would be. His response was the energy and emotion that he poured into these nudes and into *L’Amitié*, taking advantage of what might be his last chance to function as an artist at the highest level.

8.1.3.3. Liturgical Cloth Designs

Charlot had long been interested in designing for cloth as seen in his Rondels of 1915 and larger designs of 1917. At the *Exposition d’Art Chrétien Moderne*, December 1920 to January 1921, Charlot exhibited item “104. – *Trois projets pour tissus liturgiques*” ‘Three projects for liturgical cloths.’ These are mentioned by C. de Cordis in *La Revue Moderne* of April 1921: “Cette exposition comprenait également trois projets pour tissus liturgiques” ‘This exhibition included also three projects for liturgical cloths.’ A large number of preparatory drawings exist for these but not the final designs that were exhibited. There are two arguments for this last point. The largest surviving drawings have been used to trace the image onto another surface, and the cloth designs he exhibited in 1917 were finished, colored

projects. Charlot would normally not have exhibited preparatory drawings. Indeed, several notes can be found on the drawings; for instance, on the largest Noah drawing is written: “étoffe fond vert” ‘cloth green background.’

The known drawings seem to belong to only two projects. The more numerous set follows the Bible from the creation of Adam and Eve through the story of the flood; I will refer to this as the Old Testament Series. The other subject is the Second Coming of Christ, for which two preparatory drawings exist on two sides of the same sheet. The Old Testament Series is quite large and might have been divided into three projects; the Second Coming would, therefore, have been created later or simply not exhibited. I believe, however, that the three projects included the surviving Old Testament Series, a lost New Testament Series, and a section on the future of which only one subject survives.

These preparatory drawings are from several stages of the work. The earliest stage is represented by four drawings. Two of these are on both sides of a single sheet, *noé: animals—lion, elephant, monkey, etc.*: sixteen different animals done for the section on Noah’s ark.⁷⁹ These are studies, not finished drawings, and were in all likelihood done from pictures or sculpture rather than life; Charlot notes “voir Barye” ‘see Barye,’ the famous French sculptor of animals. Some of the animals are labeled. The third and fourth drawings are for the figures of Eve and her two children in *Expulsion from Eden, Life of Labor*, which I will discuss below.

The next two stages are from the creation of the final design: studies of single figures or groups of figures were made first and then combined into larger drawings. As I reconstruct the general process, Charlot first developed single figures or small groups of figures in pencil. At least some of these were done on Henri Charlot’s old stationery, which limited the size of the image. Several unrelated figures were done to a page. Charlot then cut out the individual figures as closely as possible to the outside lines, resulting in paper fragments of irregular shapes. The reason for this was that Charlot wanted to arrange the figures onto larger sheets and, therefore, needed to eliminate as much excess paper as possible. Once Charlot had placed his images as he wanted them, he drew them together on sheets of intermediate size. Charlot then traced them in pencil onto the larger sheet; the scale is identical. Charlot went over the pencil lines with thin ink lines, occasionally introducing slight modifications. Finally, Charlot filled in the areas between the traced images. As will be seen below, a number of the tracings are from verso to recto, and Charlot seems to have used the translucence of the paper for several different purposes. In *For abel, caïn, lamech: Caïn Killing*, a set of curving lines on the verso corresponds to the forward thrust of the figure of Cain on the recto; that is, Charlot was developing the figure by using both sides of the paper.

The next stage was tracing this full image onto another surface; the entire image has been traced, both anthropomorphic figures and the elements between them. This other surface was probably a thick paper like cardboard, similar to the large sheets of his finished 1917 projects. The process of tracing indicates that the drawings represent the actual size of the planned designs; the short straight lines that represent facial features are designed for stitchery. Just as in 1917, the larger sheets would have been colored, as indicated by his note “étoffe fond vert” ‘cloth green background.’ In order to be visible against the background, the anthropomorphic figures needed to be created by cutting their profiles out of

a cloth of a different color, in all likelihood a pink like the one used in 1915 rondels. Within that cloth area, stitches would have been used for facial features and so on. The same method could have been used for the broad-leafed plants. Again as in 1915, some areas may have been colored by stitching, and some objects may have been outlined by stitches against the colored background; for instance, plants could have taken advantage of the green background. Charlot's 1915 rondels were designed to be sewn onto larger strips of cloth that themselves had complicated designs. The edges of Charlot's 1920 Old Testament Series are irregular, and the image is designed to correspond to those edges; even the preparatory drawing for the sheep in *cain, abel, lamech* indicates the final outline. The large drawings are undoubtedly planned as panels that would be elements in some larger design. This process was similar to his 1917 cloth designs in which a previously developed image was reproduced repeatedly on a larger sheet or eventually cloth. However, the 1920 images are not repeated but illustrate different stages of the story. No sketch survives, however, of such a design. Finally, the type of liturgical cloth is uncertain. The panels are too large to be used on vestments and would require a larger surface, like an altar cloth or a hanging on the front of the altar.

In any case, in 1920, Charlot's designs were not realized as cloth; he exhibited only "projets" 'projects' for liturgical fabrics. Charlot characteristically modified his designs during their realization in the final medium, so any imagination of the final product is speculative. Charlot may have realized some designs or at least planned to in 1921; in a list of items he might submit to the 1921 Salon d'Automne, he mentions "étoffe rouge" 'rust-colored cloth' and "tapisserie ?" 'tapestry?.' The large amount of preparatory work preserved for *L'Amitié* and other projects reveals, I believe, Charlot's enjoyment of the Classical process: careful preliminary studies used like building blocks to compose the final product. This enjoyment is evident in his predilection for fresco.

The Old Testament Series is an example of the contemporary practice of using Biblical stories to articulate one's feelings and views about World War I. The key to understanding Charlot's message is to recognize that the Flood represents the war just as it did on the title page of the *Chemin de Croix*. The deep background of the war is the original fall from innocence into sinful human nature whose acts increased in evil until God destroyed all but a remnant of the living things on earth. After the flood of the war, human beings now have another chance to repent and to build a better world under God's mercy and direction. Charlot bases his message on an historically accurate interpretation of Genesis, but introduces Christianity by using the Old Testament figures as prototypes for those of the New. Indeed, God the Father wears a cruciform halo conventionally used for Christ. Finally, the drawing for *The Second Coming of Christ* may indicate that the Old Testament Series was followed by two others that would have brought the story further towards the present.

In the first panel, *The Creation of Adam and Eve*, the couple enjoy the nudity of innocence, and the lioness is at peace with the buck. The difference of genders is in God's plan and so is their union, symbolized by the joining of their halos. After Adam and Eve succumb to temptation, they cover their genitals with leaves when they face God. He scolds them while behind Him an angel brings the skull of death for the first time into the garden and carries the sword that will bar the couple from their original home and expel them into a world of pain and labor. Adam does suffer, but Charlot's depiction of Eve

with her two sons is idyllic, and the infant Abel in swaddling clothes is a clear prototype for Jesus in the manger. Even Cain is endearing as his mother teaches him to walk; possibly Charlot's first depiction of a subject that will become a major one for him. Accordingly, Adam and Eve have received their halos again, a promise of forgiveness to all.

abel, caïn, lamech is the only panel in which the stages of the story are not presented in sequence. The center section is the sacrifice of Cain, the agriculturist, and Abel, the shepherd. Proudly, Cain offers two apples, similar to the two between God and Adam and Eve at their confrontation after the Fall. Cain's sacrifice is not accepted, but the humble Abel's is. In jealousy, Cain kills Abel, who, as he expires, casts a last loving, caring look back at his flock. Even as he dies, he worries about his charges. Abel is being used traditionally as a prototype of Jesus, the Good Shepherd. Accordingly, a dead lamb is presented in the top left corner under an emblem similar to a cruciform halo. The nadir of human conduct is represented by Lamech, who boasted in an ancient saying of being the most vengeful of men (Genesis 4:23–24). The head of Lamech's victim is surmounted by the same cruciform emblem found above the lamb. The good will always be persecuted by the evil. The peaceful lioness of Eden now hunts with Lamech.

Charlot does not depict the flood itself, but the moment in which the dove returns with greenery in its beak, signifying that the waters have at last receded below the highest land. In the ark, animals, both wild and domesticated, again live at peace with human beings; two children play with a bunny. Birds fly free of the ark, and a fish looks at it with curiosity. By the side of the boat, a rainbow forms, the token of God's promise never again to destroy the earth. Landed on the mountaintop, Noah and his family offer a lamb in thanksgiving. All pray except the youngest child, who rediscovers a flower, and two doves return to the domestication of their basket. Unbiblically, Charlot has Noah also offer a heart, just as he had himself in his self-portrait in the *Chemin de Croix*. He too had survived a flood. The last large drawing of this project, *The Second Coming of Christ*, is so much farther along in Biblical history that I suspect it is the sole survival of the third of Charlot's "*Trois projets pour tissus liturgiques*" 'Three projects for liturgical textiles.' That is, the whole project would have been completed by a second section on the New Testament and a third on the end of time, for instance, the Second Coming, the Last Judgment, and the New Heaven and the New Earth, the future parallel of the Garden of Eden. Indeed, the emphasis on prototypes in the Old Testament Series points forward to the New Testament types themselves.

In my interpretation, a secondary, extra-biblical theme of sexuality can be traced through the series. In the first panel, *The Creation of Adam and Eve*, the lioness is related to Adam, the buck to Eve. In Eden, the difference of genders is less pronounced, as seen in the fact that Adam and Eve are of the same size. Although their sexual union is blessed, the scene of temptation conveys an inconsistent suggestion of illicit sexuality. Moreover, their sin serves to increase gender differences. Eve is enthralled by the serpent into an unthinking trance, but Adam is stealthy because he realizes intellectually the sinfulness of the act they are committing. Again, as a woman, Eve feels remorse more acutely than Adam. The couple wears unisex leaves as they confront God, but at the expulsion, they are dressed in gender-differentiated clothes. Outside Eden, work and social roles are again differentiated by gender:

Adam digs, and Eve rears children. As the history of the world degenerates into evil, men become the chief actors: *abel, caïn, lamech* is the only panel in which no women appear. In the last panel, in which all humankind is reduced to a single extended family, men and women appear to have achieved a satisfactory relationship within the organization of the family. However, this arrangement is not eternal. Charlot knew the New Testament saying of Jesus that after the Resurrection, the institution of marriage would no longer exist and people would live like angels, that is without sex or gender (Mark 12:25 and parallels). In the last surviving large drawing, *The Second Coming of Christ*, a certain gender equality appears restored, in any case under a male God. Below him at his left kneels Mary; at his right, John the Baptist. Below John, a female angel proclaims Christ's coming; below Mary, a male angel. On earth, the Twelve Apostles and two holy women worship and rejoice. My interpretation of this aspect of the cloth designs is not supported by Charlot's writings, and he never made these points in conversation. But I do think that they represent his unsynthesized thinking on sexuality at this point in his life. Later, in Hawai'i, he would be influenced by the native idea of male and female as the two principles of the universe and of sexuality as the cosmic energy.

I will now discuss the relation of the preparatory drawings to the last stage now available, the large drawings. With few exceptions, these preparations are anthropomorphic studies: actual human beings, God, or angels. That is, the primary figures, the main means of communication, are various poses of the human body. Charlot was thus able to use his contemporary study of the nude and also to connect his work more closely to Michelangelo's versions of the same scenes in the Sistine Chapel, a characteristic linking of his own project to the tradition. Indeed, through Michelangelo, Charlot could link his work to even earlier artists whom Michelangelo had used himself. Other influences can be felt. For instance, the genitals are not portrayed, but the genital region is indicated by a bulge in the belly, as in late medieval illuminations. Also, the serpent in the temptation scene seems based on Aztec art.

The first large drawing from the Old Testament subject is *The Creation of Adam and Eve*⁸⁰ for which four preparatory drawings survive. Two of the three scenes depicted are based on Charlot's study of Michelangelo. In *For the Creation of Adam and Eve: the Creation of Adam*,⁸¹ Adam is semi-reclining while God approaches in a circular form from the right. On the verso, an earlier preparatory sketch has Adam's left knee raised just as in Michelangelo's painting. God blesses Adam instead of reaching out to him, while Adam raises his hands in astonishment and awe. Curiously, God the Father wears a cruciform halo, usually reserved for Jesus. In Adam's case, Charlot follows the Byzantine convention of using a square halo for a living person. *For the Creation of Adam and Eve: Eve Emerging from Adam* is nearly identical to the drawing on the larger sheet.⁸² Charlot adopts the prayerful gesture of Michelangelo's version, but portrays Eve in an earlier, and thus clearer, stage of emergence. Two preparatory drawings exist for the standing figures of Adam and Eve in Eden: *For the Creation of Adam and Eve: Adam and Eve in Eden, without halos* and *For the Creation of Adam and Eve: Adam and Eve in Eden, with halos*.⁸³ The latter is closer to the version on the large sheet, providing two stages of preparation. The most obvious difference is the use of the halos, which are sketched tentatively in the former drawing. Both figures have square halos that join as they incline their heads towards each other, an indication of their sexual union. Significantly, Charlot has broadened both figures, especially Mary's around the hips in

accordance with her role as the mother of the human race. This is one of the few surviving instances from this period of Charlot broadening his figures. The conception of the eye of each figure in profile characterizes their Biblical role. Adam's is a straight horizontal with a short vertical descending from it; Eve's is a horizontal with a short vertical ascending from it. That is, he looks at her with an open eye, while she lowers hers. The means of expression are designed for stitching.

The next large sheet, *Comê notre mère Eve fut du serpent trompée*,⁸⁴ contains the scene of the eating of the apple and the confrontation with God, accompanied by an angel with a sword and a skull. Two preparatory drawings exist for Adam and Eve at the tree.⁸⁵ Charlot changed Adam's head from three-quarters to facing backwards in profile, thus increasing the impression of his fear and stealthiness. Adam assumes some of the serpentine writhing found in Michelangelo's version. Eve's head has turned so that she no longer rests her cheek on the apple but touches it with her mouth. In the first drawing, Eve's hair has not been shown; that is, Charlot wanted to begin his work from the essential nude figure. He changed the pose of both Eve and Adam in both sketches, increasing the sinuosity of the figures. In the first sketch, the apple is a single sphere; in the second, it is attached to a stem with leaves. In the final version, the apple is joined to another by a branched stem, creating a curious testicular impression; two similar pairs hang from the tree. Charlot seems to be alluding to the unorthodox interpretation that the real sin in Eden was the first practice of sex, but I have no evidence that he ever entertained such a view.

A single sheet contains two preparatory drawings for the scene of the confrontation with God: *For Comê notre mère Eve fut du serpent trompée: God Figure from Confrontation with God* and *Adam and Eve Figures from Confrontation with God*.⁸⁶ The figures of Adam and Eve are again hairless, and Charlot has spent some time on the poses. Eve was originally kneeling on one knee in profile, but Charlot transferred this pose to Adam, seen full-front in a display of anatomical competence. Eve has then been placed on both knees groveling before God. On the recto, the figure of God is simpler than in the final version, which provides, for instance, an ampler cloak.

The third large drawing, *Expulsion from Eden, Life of Labor*,⁸⁷ is accompanied by several stages of preparatory drawings, which illustrate Charlot's methods in this project. The figure of the expelling angel and those of Adam and Eve were first composed separately: *For Expulsion from Eden, Life of Labor: Angel* and *For Expulsion from Eden, Life of Labor: Adam and Eve*.⁸⁸ Both drawings reveal Charlot modifying his lines and poses, a process that continued into the large drawing in this case. For instance, in the preparatory drawing, Charlot first extended Eve's crooked left arm and then erased it and brought it closer to Eve's shoulder. He retains this pose in the next preparatory drawing, but goes back to the more extended pose on the large sheet: it expresses more violence in Eve's emotion as she is being expelled from Eden. Similarly, her right hand no longer holds Adam's left, but is also raised. Also, Charlot has first composed the figures in the nude and then added the clothing. Although Charlot's composition is original, he clearly knows those of Michelangelo and Masaccio in the Brancacci Chapel.

Charlot then put the three figures together in one larger drawing: *For Expulsion from Eden, Life of Labor: Angel and Adam and Eve*.⁸⁹ This larger page follows the earlier drawings for the figures and coordinates them with the aid of a parallelogram that has been lightly ruled in. In the large, final

surviving sheet, Charlot made the scene more dynamic and emotional. The angel, who has been maintained constant through two stages, is now elaborated and given more forward thrust; rather than barring the way to Eden, he is now actively expelling the couple. Both Eve's hands are raised, and Adam's left hand is now raised to his head.

For the scene of the life of labor outside Eden, early sketches have survived for the group of Eve with her two children. The earliest is *Preliminary Ideas for Eve and her Two Children; Flower Studies*.⁹⁰ The plants resemble Charlot's army sketches and are far from the synthesis of the final drawings. Eve sits cross-legged on the ground, holding one of her sons; her head is drawn in two different positions. The paper and the irregular cutting are the evidence for these drawings belonging to the cloth project. A second version of the same scene can be placed between the above and the final: *For Expulsion from Eden, Life of Labor: Eve and her Two Children*.⁹¹ Eve is still sitting cross-legged on the ground and holding her younger son, Abel, with her left arm; she extends her right to her very active older son, Cain. The final version on the large sheet is again more dynamic: Eve kneels on her left knee, extends her right leg far forward, and reaches with both hands towards Cain, who is younger (naked rather than clothed) and just learning to walk. Abel lies at her side in swaddling clothes, a prefigurement of the Infant Jesus. The figure of Adam digging has also been made more dynamic than in the earlier sketches, which were based on the figure in Michelangelo's Sistine panel, *The Drunkenness of Noah*. In Charlot's final version, Adam's head rears back in the pain of his effort, but in doing so, it also looks up to heaven.⁹² Charlot has changed in this scene from square halos to round ones; whatever their shape, they express the fact that Adam and Eve were readmitted into God's grace after the expulsion. Significantly, landscape elements are included for the first time in these preparatory sketches (except for the unavoidable trunk of the apple tree); those elements are being accorded more compositional importance in this stage of the project.

The large sheet, *abel, caïn, lamech*, depicts three scenes: the sacrifice of Cain and Abel, the murder of Abel by Cain, and Lamech murdering a man in revenge.⁹³ Lamech's was the most complicated pose, and Charlot first made a completely nude study: *For abel, caïn, lamech: Lamech Nude*.⁹⁴ After several stages, he drew—or more likely traced—in pencil only and in reverse a clothed image onto the verso of the large sheet. This was then traced onto the recto, again reversing it so that the image was facing in the right direction. He then inked the lines on the recto, leaving out only the hairline; baldness represented brutality for Charlot in the *Chemin de Croix* as well. The naked body appears through the clothing in the preparatory drawings of the other human figures, revealing again that Charlot based all his figures on the nude before clothing them for this project.⁹⁵ These sketches are early; the figures are single and unrelated to each other. On two sheets, the two figures would probably have been cut apart, but they overlapped slightly. However, in the case of *For abel, caïn, lamech: Two Abel Figures*, another interpretation is possible. In that preparatory sketch, the figure of Abel sacrificing is placed above that of him being killed. This follows the sequence of the story. On the large sheet, in contrast, the killing is placed above the sacrificing, the only instance in which Charlot does not follow the chronological sequence. His first plan may have been to place the scene of sacrifice at the top, but he broke the sequence in order to accommodate the large vertical figure of the murderous Cain.

Charlot also made sketches for the sections between the human figures. On the verso of *Lamech Nude* is the preliminary sketch of the plant between Lamech and his victim. Sketchy lines of Lamech's head, arm, and bow are used to coordinate the forms. On the same side is the preliminary sketch for the top left section of the big sheet: a dead lamb underneath an emblem that resembles the cruciform halo used for Christ. Abel the shepherd is being used as the prototype of Jesus. The emblem is more detailed and explicit in the sketch than on the big sheet, and Charlot may have been deciding how overt his symbolism would be. The same abbreviated emblem is found over the head of Lamech's victim. Charlot also sketched the group of sheep in the top right corner—experimenting in light pencil with one that he did not use—and, on the verso, the lioness under Lamech.⁹⁶ The lioness seems to have been done from an illustration, which Charlot tried to change from lying down to walking: the front legs are flat on the ground, but the hind legs are walking. Charlot solved the problem on the large sheet by eliminating the right hind leg: the lioness seems to surge forwards as aggressively as Lamech.

For the large sheet *noé*, two preparatory drawings survive of the large groups of human beings and animals in the ark and on land after the flood; these are the last survivors of a probable group of penultimate studies.⁹⁷ The preparatory drawings and the final one are so close as to suggest tracing.

The last large sheet, *The Second Coming of Christ*, differs from the Old Testament Series in its regular shape: a truncated, vertical triangle.⁹⁸ Two preparatory drawings of the lowest section survive on the recto and verso of a single sheet of paper and illustrate Charlot's procedure.⁹⁹ The earlier drawing on the verso has simplified heads and nude or seminude bodies; the multiple strokes creating the outlines reveal this as an early stage. Charlot then traced this drawing onto the recto, deciding on his final outlines and providing hair, clothing, and other details. Some multiple lines are still found in the outlines and parts of the nude bodies are still traced through the clothing. This drawing was then traced onto the large sheet, with final, single lines for the outlines, which were then inked, and with the clothes completely hiding the anatomy they cover. These preparatory drawings are almost identical to their section of the large sheet, indicating that they represent the final stages of the preparation.

The long preparation described above resulted in some of Charlot's most interesting compositions. As in his 1915 rondels and 1917 textile designs—and also in his large *Portrait of Louis Goupil, profile*, discussed above—Charlot organized and framed the flowing lines of his figures completely within rectilinear frames. The outline of the truncated pyramid appears, ruled lightly, on the large drawing of *The Second Coming of Christ* and ruled heavily on the earlier preparatory drawing. The many swirling lines of the figures are oriented along the slanting lines of the sides, as seen clearly in the wings of the trumpeting angels. Several compositions of the Old Testament Series are organized by traced parallelograms, which have been ruled onto the drawings: the recto and verso of *Noé* and *For Expulsion from Eden*, *Life of Labor: Angel and Adam and Eve*. On the sheet of *For Expulsion from Eden*, *Life of Labor: Adam and Eve*, the true vertical of the sheet has been indicated, but above Adam's shoulder, a cross-like shape marks the top edge of the parallelogram and the vertical within it. Charlot has gone so far as to make two folds in the sheet of *abel, caïn, lamech* to create a fan-like section—similar to the one in *Louis Goupil, profile*—to enclose a section for the scene of Cain and Abel's sacrifice.

However, just as in the 1915 rondels, the figures—with the single exception of *The Second Coming of Christ*—can protrude beyond the ruled lines.

Indeed, although the rectilinear frames provide solidity for the compositions, the use of the parallelogram with its own interior vertical and the irregular outlines demonstrate that Charlot was avoiding a rectilinear impression. Those compositions are characterized by a successful sense of flow both in lines and in narrative. For instance, in *The Creation of Adam and Eve*, the viewer is drawn from the figure of God on the right down to that of Adam in front of him; Adam's body points upwards towards the next scene, the creation of Eve; his legs then point towards the third scene of the couple joined together. In *Comé notre mère Eve fut du serpent trompée*, Adam and Eve's leaning towards the right flows into the angel's right wing and down its vertical body behind that of God confronting the couple. Charlot can also create a separation between scenes. *Expulsion from Eden*, *Life of Labor* is divided horizontally by the plants that frame the lower scene, indicating the length of time between the expulsion and the development of their new life. The two scenes of *noé*, flood and post-flood, are divided by an expanse of water. Finally, *abel*, *caïn*, *lamech* has the business of the disorderly behavior it depicts. The next panel, *noé*, gradually reestablishes order, culminating in the emphatic verticals of the scene of the post-flood sacrifice. The three levels of *The Second Coming of Christ*—heaven, subordinate angels, and earth—are joined by a complex series of interrelated lines. The three levels are presented in three dimensions from background to foreground. The nimbus around Christ is placed within a larger one starting at the level of his head and continuing down to the hems of the angels' robes. The angle of those robes is echoed by the lower legs of Christ behind and above it. The lines of the angels' wings and robes are picked up and run through variations by the crowd of followers on earth. All of this movement is contained within the rectilinear frame of the truncated pyramid.

The flow of these drawings relates them clearly to Charlot's 1917 liturgical cloth designs, but Charlot has increased the size of the projected works, the amount of material they assimilate, and the complexity of the compositions. Similarly, the figures are even more surprising in their anticipation of *art moderne*. They have all the grace of those of 1917 with an increase in elongation, solidity, and strength, a result in part of Charlot's contemporary study of the nude.

The style Charlot uses here differs from that of his other projects of the time, and in view of its similarity to the 1917 textile designs, he seems to have considered it appropriate to the medium. Their flow and general two-dimensionality would evoke the textile, the short simple lines could be stitched, and the graceful outlines could be cut from cloth. Despite those characteristics, the final drawings are imbued with monumentality, especially when they are more three-dimensional, like the figure of Lamech and the scene of the Ark with its arch-like rainbow. In fact, on first viewing, the drawings could appear to be mural projects.¹⁰⁰ At this time, Charlot was working on his mural project for a parish church, and his natural propensity to monumentality was stimulated.

Similarly, the textile plans are emotional but do not have the tragic intensity of the *Chemin de Croix*, which Charlot was finishing at the same time. In contrast to that work, in the textile designs, Charlot allowed himself the easy devices of labels and emblems. One reason for this was that he was

designing for a liturgical congregation rather than a meditating individual, but he also seems to have felt more relaxed. In *noé*, he even permits himself to inject the humor of the flying birds and the gawking fish, who have no need of the ark. Despite the seriousness of its subjects, the textile designs radiate a religious confidence and joy: despite all our sins, God will forgive and restore. God received Adam and Eve back into his grace and promised never again to flood the earth. At the Resurrection, God will conduct a Last Judgment but will then create a New Heaven and a New Earth for the blessed. Charlot celebrates God's mercy and humankind's capacity for repentance and regeneration.

8.1.3.4. The Parish Mural Project: *Processional*

8.1.3.4.1. The History of the Project

Charlot's most important project in 1920 was a large mural for a parish church in Paris, to which I assign the title *Processional*, a word he used for the subject in our interview of November 18, 1970: on each side wall of the nave, people would be processing towards the sanctuary. Charlot summarized the event:

Demobilized, my first mural commission proved a failure. It was to be a frieze running on both sides of the nave of a newly built suburban church. Between the start of the preparatory work and the completion of the gouaches to scale, the priest in charge changed his mind. He said so in a curt note, declining even to look at the sketches. (AA I 288)

The project had first arisen either before Charlot entered the army or during one of his last leaves. In "An Artist Looks Back" (March 8, 1972), he stated:

So before leaving for the army, I had a parish priest who told me to come and see his parish, and he wanted something on the wall. So I rushed, and I took all the blue-prints, and I started working out a frieze.

Charlot described the same event in the interview of November 18, 1970:

Well, I don't remember the details, but, that is, I don't remember who got me in touch with the priest who wanted to decorate his church. I think it was a result of the things I had shown at the Exposition des Arts Décoratifs. What was that? 1916 or '17, I think... And I saw the priest. He was quite nice. We went in a back room in which he had the plans of the church. He gave me the blueprints, so I could take my measurements from the architect's blueprints, and then I went home. I was living in St. Mandé at the time...

Charlot participated in two exhibitions in 1917, one of sculpture and paintings with the Gilde at the rue de la Paix, and the other in March, the Exposition d'Art Liturgique at the Pavillon de Marsan, where he received an award for his designs for liturgical cloths.

If Charlot's memory was correct, his military service forced him to delay work on the project until he was demobilized in 1920. Two arguments can be made, however, that Charlot's memory was

faulty on this point and that the first contact would have been on one of his last leaves in Paris, although it may have been the result of his much earlier exhibition. First, no preparatory drawings of any kind for this project can be found before 1920, although he produced many for the other projects he was working on; nor in Charlot's memory were any of his many projects of 1917–1920 related to this mural. Second, Charlot's surprise and hurt at the cancellation of the project makes no sense if it occurred some three years after the commission was discussed; indeed, he would not have completed a full color study in 1920 on a project that had last been discussed in 1917. Both positions can be harmonized if an initial contact was made before Charlot went into the army, but he picked up the blueprints and began serious work on the project only towards the end or even after the end of his war service. This accords with the account Charlot published in *Born Catholics*:

My career as a French liturgical artist was cut short when, with the priest's approval and working from blueprints he had furnished, I planned the mural decorations of a new church in a Paris suburb. Weeks later, my exultant note stating that the sketches were at last finished was coolly answered: there had been a change of plans and murals were out. This, the first of many heartaches that I came to experience in my career as a mural painter, was one of the factors that sent me to Mexico. (*Born Catholics* 1954: 101)

The date of the cancellation of the project can be thus established more easily: it was one of the reasons that led Charlot to explore the possibility of leaving Paris for Mexico, which he did at the end of 1920. Moreover, he exhibited his color study of the mural at the Exposition d'Art Chrétien Moderne of December 1920 to January 1921.

Charlot's disappointment was great:

The rest of the story was a sort of a disillusion with things because I wrote the priest and said I was ready to show him now the drawings, and I had a rather curt note saying that for this and that reason—I suppose they were practical reasons, whatever it is—he could not decorate the church now. And he never saw, actually, the gouache that I had prepared for him. So it was, of course, a little bit of a disillusion for me because I had put all my art and all my heart in it, given that I knew—that's the one thing I knew—that I *was* a mural painter. And I realized that a mural painter is not like an easel painter, who can always paint his pictures, but that the mural painter needs walls. And because I was what I would call a monumental mural painter, I needed certainly a whole church, a whole building, a whole hall to work my problems in terms of architecture. So it was a little hard on me. I was very young at the time. And that's the story.

Well, I think that is the only one [commission] that was articulate enough so that I felt sorry that it became a nonentity. I really believed in it. I had worked my first steps towards an actual execution of the work. There were some other, well, I would say

possibilities and so on, but nothing that was as jelled as that particular commission or would-be commission. (Interview November 18, 1970)

Charlot and the other members of La Gilde had hoped that their talents would be used in the postwar reconstruction of churches, but the failure of the project boded ill. Colombier noted specifically that “Les nouvelles paroisses de Paris ont été érigées en réduisant les frais à des sommes dérisoires” “The new parishes of Paris have been erected by reducing the expenses to derisory sums.”¹⁰¹ Denis described poignantly the approach of the young artist to church authorities:

Quand un pauvre diable d’artiste pénètre dans une sacristie bien chauffée ou dans un presbytère cossu, que lui dit-on presque toujours ? “Nous aimons les arts, mais nous n’avons pas d’argent.” (1922: 209)

‘When a poor devil of an artist penetrates a well-warmed sacristy or a well-to-do priests’ house, what is he almost always told? “We love art, but we don’t have money.”’

Even less was being spent on reconstructing damaged churches. Charlot may have feared that he would suffer the same fate as Marcel Lenoir:

There was that other thing which I spoke of, and that is my feeling that like Marcel Lenoir I was a mural painter. It’s a horrible feeling when you don’t know where to get the wall. (March 8, 1972)

In the mid-1940s, Charlot wrote that this experience influenced his decision to move to Mexico:

This first heartbreak at the realization that a born mural painter is helpless without a wall was not to be the last. The experience was instrumental, however, in inducing me to leave postwar France for Mexico.

Postwar France seemed barren after my mural fiasco. (*MMR* 178, 180)

This position is corroborated by Zohmah Charlot, who insisted in conversations and in notes for an article that “the disappointment of having a mural commission cancelled” was a major reason for Charlot’s decision. However, in our interview of November 18, 1970, Charlot minimized the influence of the failure of the project:

No, I wouldn’t say so, but I had been well received as an artist. You’ve seen the clippings and so on. I was spoken of, I’m not very sure why, but I was spoken of as a mural painter, in fact as a fresco painter, and I think that if that first commission had jelled and I had decorated that church, I would have had other commissions, and I would have stayed, naturally, in France, given that I would have had a means of living and more than that, a means of working in my chosen form of art in France. I wouldn’t have, probably, gone to Mexico, so maybe it was in a way a blessing in disguise.

I believe the discrepancy is explained by the fact that there were two trips to Mexico: an exploratory one in late 1920 and early 1921, and a final one in late 1921. Charlot's career prospects seemed bleak before the first, but had improved before the second.

In any case, Charlot always regretted the unrealized mural itself. Since he conceived his projects so completely in advance, he had a clear image of the mural he might have done, and his sense of loss must have added an emotional element to his decision to leave France.

8.1.3.4.2. Artistic Context

Charlot knew the history of muralism, but he was also living in a city where Neoclassical church murals were so numerous as to be inescapable. Indeed, he faced them in his two parish churches in Paris and at St. Mandé. Although he discussed those works only peripherally himself, they shed light on a number of his artistic choices. Most obviously, the physically appropriate medium for a mural had to be found. Charlot rejected oil as a medium for murals.¹⁰² Oil painting has a shiny surface whose reflections obscure part of the image and force the viewer to change position in order to see all parts of the work. Moreover, the oils of Charlot's predecessors had darkened almost to invisibility and were molding and flaking in the dank atmosphere of their churches. In our time, cleaning and electric lights have improved the visibility of a small number of these paintings, but they all were originally created to be seen by natural light, and their failure is a fault. Finally, oils encouraged virtuoso brushstroke and dramatic chiaroscuro, which also decreased the legibility of the work, as in the panels by Jean-Paul Laurens in the Panthéon.

More appropriate media were mosaics and even tiles, which helped increase the interior light and could be easily cleaned. Charlot's own Parish church in Paris, l'Eglise de la Trinité, at the end of the rue de la Chaussée d'Antin, had addressed this problem effectively. Designed by Théodore Ballu (1817–1885) and dedicated in 1867, the church was flooded with light from large, clear windows; walls were a light beige, mosaics were extensive and bright, and the painted murals were in almost pastel tones.

Encaustic has many advantages, but the technique is difficult and slow. For Charlot, the most attractive medium was fresco, with its great expressive potential, mat surface, and typically light coloring. The model for Charlot was Puvis de Chavannes in his work for the Panthéon;¹⁰³ although oils, his murals imitate fresco with their light colors and flat brushwork. But Charlot did feel that Chavannes should have dared to try fresco:

I think that there is a little bit of affectation when you read the books about fresco painting—about people saying that they cannot paint fresco in such and such place. I read for example that in Pittsburgh a fresco would disappear in two weeks...I think the worst example of that sort of precious approach to fresco was Puvis de Chavannes, the French muralist. We are grateful to him because he is one of the few muralists that truly was born a muralist in the 19th century. But all through his life he was afraid of fresco painting and he imitated the effects of fresco in oil. The French government in that sense was very enlightened and they pushed him to do fresco.

They asked to do fresco, so [he] had all sorts of excuses. He said I cannot do fresco unless we bring Italians masons here. They are the only fellows who know how to do fresco. So they said we will bring Italian masons. And then like all those other people, he said, the climate of France is not suitable to fresco. So instead of having true frescoes by Puvis we have imitation frescoes. And great as they are, they are still a fake of a sort. (Lesley and Hollis 1961))

In Charlot's view, Puvis was the only painter of the original group who understood the requirements of mural painting. Indeed, he showed the way for later artists in the Panthéon like Jacques-Ferdinand Humbert and for other groups like the Nabis. The occasional frescoes found in Paris churches have indeed lasted better than their neighboring oils, and they often enjoy some of the stylistic advantages of the medium. In Saint-Sulpice, the frescoes of Eugène Delacroix are the most highly regarded of all; although not his strongest work, they read well in the available light. In the same church, Abel de Pujol's fresco *St. Roch* (1785–1862; 1822) appeared to me to be done with a fine technique; rather than pouncing, he used incised lines for the outlines, a practice Charlot himself would adopt halfway through his first fresco (1922–1923).

Charlot reacted also, I believe, to the compositional weakness of most of the Paris murals. The artists are daunted by the size and shape of the wall and divide it into smaller, more conventional shapes for painting. A tall wall will be divided about three-fifths of the way up, leaving a conventional rectangle below that can be filled with a conventional composition. An empty space divides this from an equally conventional composition in the space at the top. For instance, a crucifixion scene will fill the bottom 60 percent of a wall. Above it will be an empty sky, and then the top area will be filled with clouds and heavenly figures.¹⁰⁴ In contrast, seventeenth-century Baroque murals, like those in Notre-Dame de Paris, cover their spaces completely and with great energy. Charlot was certainly convinced of the need to avoid dead spots in a composition, as seen in his forceful treatment of the narrow right edge of his first mural (John Charlot 2000). Indeed, no greater contrast can be found than between his *La Théologie Régulatrice des Arts*¹⁰⁵ and Louis Charles Timbal's (1821–1880) *La Théologie* (1876) in the church of the Sorbonne. Timbal's exquisitely posed figures are separated by vast distances of empty space as if he had made a large composition out of a small one simply by pushing its figures apart. Charlot's people are pressed together as if to concentrate the complicated power of the composition. Timbal creates a listless rather than a serene mood. Charlot's seems charged with centuries of intellectual search and controversy. Timbal's painting collapses into its space; Charlot's can scarcely be contained within it.

Basically, the Paris church decorations were not murals but inflated easel paintings. They were composed to be seen straight ahead instead of from the many different angles from which they might be approached by someone moving in a building. They were surrounded by wide, heavy borders like frames or tapestries. In St. Germain-des-Prés, Hippolyte Flandrin, faced with the large free walls of the transept, divided them into small spaces by broad emphatic borders; the result resembles the wall of a nineteenth-century salon, with easel paintings reaching from floor to ceiling. Flandrin even framed his flower decorations, framing filler, as it were. The process of creating the Paris decorations also resembled easel painting. Charlot praised Puvis de Chavannes for painting his murals in situ, whereas other artists

brought them from their studios all ready to be pasted on the wall. Later he would criticize Marc Chagall for a similar procedure. Similarly, Charlot would always be leery of murals built to be detachable from their settings.

Flandrin's frieze in St. Germain-des-Prés contrasts with an essential element of Charlot's project: the sense of movement and direction. Flandrin's space, like Charlot's, is set above the arches of the nave, with two differences: the arches are higher and the inter-arch columns continue up into the space of the frieze, dividing it into panels. Flandrin emphasized this architecture by dividing yet again the frieze space between the columns, thus subdividing it into two panels. All these divisions were reemphasized by heavy and elaborate framing. Each panel was then treated as a separate composition to be seen from directly in front. The subject matter enhanced the effect: each pair of intercolumnar panels was devoted to a New Testament subject and an Old Testament subject that corresponded to it; for instance, the Crucifixion was paired with the Sacrifice of Isaac. Finally, these subjects were not organized in any chronological or narrative order, but seem to be random. As a result, the frieze enjoys no sense of direction or movement whatsoever. Viewing it resembles a visit to a museum or exhibition where single, unrelated paintings by an artist are hung along a wall. Even when Flandrin depicted a procession of two hundred and five saints, on the side walls of the nave of the church of Saint Vincent de Paul in Paris, the sense of movement is lacking. The solemn, classically or liturgically clothed figures face, rather than move, toward the front, their file separated into groups by spindly trees that trace the connection between the columns below the frieze and those above it. On the back wall of the church, Peter and Paul are depicted preaching, each facing his side of the church and supposedly sending forth the two processions that will walk down the friezes. However, their listeners face the apostles rather than turning or starting to move in the direction of the procession, negating the overall scheme.

Direction and movement are, however, essential to mural painting and were central concerns for Charlot in *Processional* as they had been earlier for his *Chemin de Croix*. The viewer—or worshipper—moves in certain directions inside a church. The artist must take that movement into account in order to preserve the legibility of the artwork and even to help direct the movement of the worshipper. The artist can also use that movement to add to the power of his work.

Again, Charlot could have studied Puvis in the Panthéon. As one enters the church, one sees immediately on one's right the panel *L'Enfance de Sainte Geneviève*. The figures face and even incline forward towards the interior of the church, directing the visitor. The visitor walks up the nave, across the transept, into the ambulatory of the apse, and rounds the far end of the church. He then sees the single, striking figure in the panel *Sainte Geneviève veillant sur Paris*. The saint faces in the very direction the visitor is following, back towards the entrance, down the side of the nave opposite to the one he walked up. Puvis' two panels are kitty-corner to each other across the length of the building; together they offer full directions for a visit to the church, or a full description of the visitor's walk. Since the panels were created, visitors have found them particularly striking and made them the most famous of all the paintings of the Panthéon. The panels lack, however, the bravura, the grandiloquence, the histrionics of panels by other painters in the same church. The figures are as quiet as the use of the medium. Rather, the panels gather their power from the architecture around them and from the energy of the walking viewer himself,

a power peculiar to murals. From the evidence of his preparatory work, Charlot wanted that power for his own.

Neoclassicism offered much more for Charlot to dislike, such as its lack of passion, similar to Beuron's. The very reasonableness of Classicism, Charlot felt, its learnable formulas, made it useful for jobbers, whose work was inevitably cold and calculated. Neglected by art historians because of the mildness of his talent, Domenichino had provided a handy model for mediocre Neoclassicists.¹⁰⁶ In contrast, the Carracci brothers were not great artists, but their energy had created vast programs.¹⁰⁷ Such energy, emotion, and ideas are necessary to achieve the level of art. Charlot's criticism of Puvis de Chavannes was that he was insufficiently bold in his compositional ambitions:¹⁰⁸

Puvis de Chavannes' idea of always making a picture flat is the idea of a little man like Mr. Milquetoast: "There is a wall, and it is going to be the same when I am finished. Nobody is going to know I painted on it."

Charlot also disliked the Neoclassicists' often vague or abstruse subjects burdened by bad storytelling. Their blatant references reduced their murals to professorial pastiche. In a fit of temper when his first design for *Calvary* (1958) was rejected, Charlot threw together a number of figures from famous paintings of the subject. When I remarked on this, he said, "I'll give you the references!" Fortunately, a third design was created.

In 1902, Denis wrote a long appreciation of the mural decorations of the students of Ingres and others, "Les Élèves d'Ingres," many of which were liturgical and in fresco.¹⁰⁹ Charlot never mentions them. After the plaster saints of commercial liturgical art, the Paris murals were the main artworks against which he and the other Gildeurs were reacting. Charlot was always willing to speak as positively as he could about an artist, movement, or style; but he felt no inhibition about being negative on Neoclassicism. Indeed, no artwork seems further from his own, and in all my viewing, I have found only one point of possible positive contact.¹¹⁰ On the other hand, Charlot must have been encouraged in his career plans by seeing so many murals in the churches of his home. Unfortunately, the nineteenth century had provided good patrons and poor artists; the twentieth century, the opposite.

Significantly, two artists who would be major in the Mexican Mural Renaissance had the same reaction to the Neoclassical murals as Charlot. While together in Paris shortly after World War I, Rivera and Siqueiros viewed them to see what they could learn from them for their own burgeoning interest in muralism:

Escuchábamos en esa época, vaga y excepcionalmente, que los discípulos de Ingres habían impulsado un modelo de pintura mural en algunos templos de París. Dimos con ellos. Caminamos por las iglesias como por templos vacíos. No había un alma que se interesara por los viejos mentores. (Scherer García 1996: 94)

'At this time we heard a vague and exceptional report that the disciples of Ingres had promoted a model of mural painting in some churches of Paris. We investigated. We

walked through the churches like empty temples. There was not a soul who interested himself for these old mentors.'

Despite his vagueness, Siqueiros had probably learned of the murals from Denis, whose *Théories* he quotes elsewhere. In any case, the two Mexicans were not impressed; when he wrote about liturgical art in 1950, Siqueiros mentioned "los discípulos mediocres de Ingres [sic] y más tarde de Maurice Denis, Matisse, Léger, etc." 'the mediocre disciples of Ingres and later of Maurice Denis, Matisse, Léger, etc.' (Siqueiros 1996: 323).

8.1.3.4.3. Preparatory Work on *Processional*

Surprisingly few preparatory works survive for *Processional*, but fortunately, one of these enables us to appreciate Charlot's plan. The primary survival of Charlot's preparatory work is the over seventy-inch long gouache, *Two Color Studies for Parish Mural Project: Processional*.¹¹¹ Charlot described this work several times as an exact plan for the mural: "And I made a gouache that was rather complete, to scale, representing—more than representing—duplicating those ideas... I still have the gouache" (Interview November 18, 1970). Discussing a slide of a section of *Two Color Studies* in his lecture "An Artist Looks Back" of March 8, 1972, Charlot stated:

This is just a small part of a large frieze that ran all around the church. This of course is small scale, but to scale, to the architecture, and could have been translated at the full size I think very well. It is made in fact for that.

For each study, sheets of paper have been pasted onto three cardboard panels, which have been taped together in such a way that they can be folded over each other, making a smaller package. The studies present a 1/10th scale model of the mural and can be set up facing each other as the two friezes would have been in the church.

Two other works connected to the mural provide some impression of how Charlot's plan would have been realized. The large gouache *Leafy Plants* is probably a study for the plant "capital" of the second engaged column from the back, to be discussed below; the coloring and shape of the leaves appear the same.¹¹² The study is both two- and three-dimensional. The overlapping of the many leaves creates a two-dimensional tapestry effect, but the range of tones from black to yellow highlights and the emphatic use of shadows is three-dimensional. Color areas are large and tonal contrasts are strong with little transition between them. Expanded to a mural scale, the area would appear to be a dark, if dappled, two-dimensional surface. Only when the viewer neared would the colors resolve themselves into recognizable shapes in depth. The scale of the leaves is unusually large for the sheet of paper; it is, I believe, the scale Charlot was considering for this section of the mural. Finally, the surface of dominant cool colors is animated by the use of a few small areas of opposing warm reds and browns, irregularly spaced. Charlot knew this device from Byzantine mosaics, in which a few opposing color tessera are inserted into large areas of a dominant color. Charlot would find the same device, called *kīna'u*, being used by Hawaiian makers of feather cloaks: a few red feathers would be sprinkled on a yellow ground and yellow feathers on a red. The use of this device also argues for *Leafy Plants* being a mural study.

The Jean Charlot Collection contains the copy of an old, unclear photograph of an already battered drawing of a helmeted French soldier with closed eyes, leaning his head against his rifle, which he holds upright with fixed bayonet. No information survives about this drawing, and the figure does not correspond to any in the color study for the mural. Nonetheless, the drawing appears to me to be a full-size cartoon for the mural. The helmet and uniform are the same as those of two soldiers in the color study, and the soldier in the drawing appears to be praying. If my view is correct, the drawing shows how much detail Charlot would have added during the execution of the mural.

On the evidence of the color study, Charlot's memory about the church was accurate:

I went to the church, and it was a rather nice church. Not an old one, but it was vaguely Romanesque or Early Gothic, and on both sides, right and left as you entered the church, there was a frieze. That is, there was the cement or stone—I think it was cast cement—two long friezes that may have been from what I remember something like sixty or seventy feet long on each side and not very high. (Interview November 18, 1970)

The mural is designed in two parts for the facing side walls of the nave, which was a little over seventy feet long. Each wall had five arched openings. If the church was large enough, these would have opened onto side aisles; more probably, they opened onto small side chapels or shallow wall depressions with altars. The four walled areas between the open arches were wide, and the center of each was occupied by an engaged column, the square top of which can be seen in the color study. The distance from the back arch to the back wall of the church was half that between the arches themselves; the distance between the front arch and the beginning of the sanctuary was the same. There is no sign of an engaged half-column either at the back wall or at the sanctuary. Above the arches was an expanse of bare wall that probably ended in a narrow clerestory under the ceiling.

The mural on each side is divided into three levels to fit the wall. The lowest level begins just below the tops of the four engaged columns and is a little under three feet high. Charlot has created an organically irregular inverted and truncated pyramid that flares out and up from just below each column top. This space is devoted to plants, providing a two-dimensional Corinthian-type capital for the column tops, which can now also be read as pots. That is, Charlot has replaced the schematized acanthus leaves of Corinthian capitals with natural plants. I believe that the gouache *Leafy Plants*, discussed above, is a study for one of these sections. At the front and back ends of each wall, Charlot uses the half of this capital shape that is available there to extend the image of the processional into this lower level. The remainder of the wall surface after the creation of the inverted pyramids has been painted a dull red, which serves to exaggerate the thickness of the wall under the arch. Even more important, Charlot uses the archings to emphasize the forward movement of the procession. On the sunny side of the nave, two arching shapes—the trees behind the dancing girls and the group of nuns—are placed out of parallel with the arches, creating a syncopated forward effect. On the shadowy side, the same effect is created with a rounded hill near the sanctuary and with tree trunks; indeed, the same placement of a trunk is used above

the third and fourth arches from the back. In this his first mural design, Charlot was using the architecture as a basis for his design and fully exploiting it to achieve his effects

A horizontal line was then drawn across the tops of the capital shapes and the apexes of the red archings to create the base for the long rectangular strip on which the processional itself has been painted along the entire length of the wall. This strip was a little under five feet high, so the figures would have been large but not life-size. The image of the procession descended at the front and back into the lowest level, as described above. The image was also extended above the processional strip in four shallow rectangles—a little over half a foot high and two and a half feet wide—directly above the tops of the columns. These rectangles, which form the third and highest level, have the same height as that between the column top and the beginning of its attached painting below it; the rectangles are, however, wider. The connection between the columns and the higher rectangles is reinforced by intermediary verticals in the processional, whether trees, people, or long candles. The one exception will be discussed below. This relation between column and rectangle, between the lowest and highest levels of the mural, is a major device used to connect the painting to the architecture. Denis praises the students of Ingres for “le louable souci de se conformer au style des édifices qu’ils décoraient” ‘the commendable concern to conform themselves to the style of the buildings they decorated’ (1912: 99).

The mural at its most extensive is, therefore, a little over eight feet tall and seventy feet wide on each side. Charlot has not simply extracted a conventional rectangle from the wall and designed his mural as if it were a large easel painting; he has deliberately used the structural features of the wall to create a design that would be impossible without such an architectural setting. Similarly, in his first mural in Mexico, *The Massacre in the Main Temple* of 1922–1923, he deliberately chose a wall that could not be decorated with a simple rectangle.

The style of the church probably influenced the choice of the subject:

I decided to do something that was a little similar to the idea of the processions in Byzantine churches. In Ravenna, for example, you have the martyrs and the virgins and whatnot going towards the altar on both sides of the church as if they were entering the church and in one movement, one processional, going towards the altar. And that is the same motion, the same movement, that I arranged for the two friezes that I worked out. (Interview November 18, 1970)

Charlot had already depicted processions in Brittany and Paris and would make the procession at Chalma a major theme of his art. Byzantine art was being used also by other liturgical artists at the time, and depictions of processions were prominent. The earlier Neoclassical frieze of a procession of robed figures by students of Ingres in the Paris church of St.-Vincent-de-Paul—construction started in 1830—is very close in its architectural setting to Charlot’s project.¹¹³ In his 1898 mural *The Exaltation of the Holy Cross*, Denis had painted a mural with angels and altar boys processing with censers, candles, and flower-baskets towards the altar in an outdoor setting.¹¹⁴ Later, working as an archeologist at Chich’en Itza, Charlot would copy several ritual processions from the Temple of the Warriors and use his liturgical knowledge and experience to understand the artistic decisions and achievement of the Maya artists:

Artistic considerations would also dictate low relief...the sculptures on the columns should have remained as they do, merely decorative; that is to say, they adorn the surface without destroying or distorting it. A wish to avoid bulging masses such as would be made by faces or feet seen in full front is probably at the root of the convention of depicting all the heads and feet of the figures in profile. This technical limitation, which might seem a drawback, really led to the striking use of a processional movement, oriented toward the altar, which was the central point of interest.¹¹⁵

In his parish mural, however, Charlot wanted to create a contemporary work: the use of the everyday clothing of the time rather than Neoclassical robes or liturgical vestments, the use of the outdoor setting as more than a mere backdrop, and a strong narrative element, different sections of the mural telling a story. The mural was also more dynamic than his models:

Besides, there were some changes in the motions: the people, the painted people, as they entered the church, entered rather stiffly, still stylized, and as they went towards the altar, there was, I think, an accelerated movement and motion. That, of course, was my own idea. (Interview November 18, 1970)

Indeed, the procession is not a hieratic march. People move at different speeds, stop, turn backwards, and so on. Charlot's description of a sense of acceleration fits the sunny side of the mural: standing figures turn into dancing ones, kneeling nuns stand and carry the *châsse* forward. But this acceleration is not mechanical; the movement stops and starts in a natural way. Ultimately, in the section nearest the sanctuary, the motions become regular and ritualized, and finally come to a standing or kneeling position, as if the often painful procession had reached peace and restored order. As with the *Chemin de Croix*, the orientation of the mural towards the altar conveys an important part of the message.

Charlot's plan is remarkable for its use of contemporary clothing, unusual even today in church art.¹¹⁶ Moreover, Charlot planned to use a wide variety of clothing styles, which would have helped characterize the individuals. Besides different military uniforms and religious habits and vestments, one sees workers in billowy trousers and sleeves and a rich young man-about-town in knee boots and riding jacket; toddlers in slippers and boys moving from short pants to long; peasant women in skirts and aprons, and bourgeois women in long dresses; teenagers in bright pullovers and widows in weeds. All the members of the congregation would have been able to recognize themselves somewhere in the mural. One recognizes also Charlot's own themes from his poems and previous artworks: the dead, the wounded, the blinded with gas, those whose faces have been mutilated, the widows, orphans, and desolated parents and fiancées. The numbers were staggering: 600,000 widows, 760,000 orphans, "650,000 elderly who had lost their breadwinner," and so on (Greenhalgh 2014: 397 f.). These various victims process through the flowers Charlot had scrutinized so lovingly during the war towards the altar on which they could sacrifice their own sufferings and begin to build a better world. The prominent dead and wounded soldiers would have reminded the parishioners of a historical event as well. On July 14, 1919, a national celebration was held to celebrate the ending of the Great War. In Paris, the government made the noble

decision to have the military's victory parade led by the *mutilés de guerre* 'the wounded and mutilated of the war.'¹¹⁷ Charlot was in Germany at the time, but reports of the deeply moving event may have influenced his idea for the mural.

Charlot identified light and color as keys to understanding the mural:

And the thing that I remember which I still am sorry I didn't do because I could have done it very well at the time—I was working perhaps with a fuller, what I would call a rainbow palette, than I work now, being a little closer to Post-Impressionism—there was a change of value and color, and there was an increase of light, I would say light translated into color, as you came close to the altar, so as to suggest that the focus of light came from the altar itself, or the presence of God, if you want. (Interview November 18, 1970)

Charlot's solutions were never mechanical. Just as the figures do not move steadily forward, so the increase of the light is not unvaried. On the sunny side, a splash of light contrasts immediately with the darkest section containing the three female saints. The brightest section with the adolescent girls is followed by a chiaroscuro one of three kneeling to receive the blessing of a nun. The shadowy side is more consistent, especially in the background, which is without the variations found on the sunny side. Variations in brightness are found, however, through the whole procession in clothing and haircolor.

Equally important was the peculiar lighting of the church itself. For Charlot, the exploitation of this lighting was part of the challenge of mural painting:

In my last trip to Italy, I was interested in the way the mural painters, well, we could say, did the obvious by looking first at the room where they were going to paint their murals and then using the natural light: where the light came from the windows, what intensity of light hit the walls on which they painted, was the light frontal or glancing, we could say. I was really taken by the *Last Supper* of Leonardo, even though I had seen it so many times in reproduction and in so many mediums...when you enter the room, you realize that he has added a painted room, an illusive space of a room, to the real space of the room and that the light in that hall in which Christ and the apostles are having the Last Supper is exactly the same light from the same windows, we could say, that are in the room itself. So between the true room and the illusive room, you have an extraordinary impression of depth, and the people come to life, which they do not when you look simply at the reproduction. Or in Venice, for example, the things that Tintoretto did in which he does the same thing—he uses the light that falls from the windows to model his nudes in the series of the Pleiades and so on. And from the beginning I think I always have had problems of that type that I needed to do my art at its best, and I think that's one of the reasons why I am a mural painter: because I like to depend at the beginning—to start from a difficult problem that is stated by an architecture. (Interview November 18, 1970)

In Charlot's church, one wall received more sun than the other; he exploited this by creating a shadowy side and a sunny side: the former in cool colors (blues, dark greens, purple), the latter in warm (orange, yellow, rose). Although both sides start in darkness and suffering and move towards the light of the altar, they are clearly differentiated. The shadowy side, peopled mostly by men, depicts more details of physical suffering, and maintains its cool colors even as it lightens. The sunny side has many more women and children, the sufferings portrayed are emotional, and the colors glow with warmth. The two sides can be related also to the battlefield and the home front, which Charlot contrasted in his later *Bullet*, and with the sufferings of men and those of women, which he described in his poems. The shadowy side is in an urban setting; the sunny is in the country. Finally, the shadowy side can also be considered to emphasize the past—the dead and wounded—while the sunny side, with its many children, looks forward to the future. Although each side wall contains all of Charlot's message as described above, each has a different emphasis. Moreover, the two sides are coordinated, so the message in its entirety is complex.

Charlot announces the color and gender differences of his walls from the very first step. Starting from the back, each wall is initiated by three saints, male on the shadowy side and female on the sunny. In my identifications of the figures, these saints are important in French nationalism, military tradition, and art. Most obviously, the three female saints represent the premier religio-military symbol of the nation, Joan of Arc, as a child—anticipating the many children in the mural—and the two female saints who spoke to her in her childhood vision. Saint Margaret of Antioch holds the palm of her martyrdom. Saint Catherine of Alexandria fondles a deer as did the figure in Charlot's 1919 *La Virginité*; Catherine was the patron of cloistered and lay virgins. Along with Saint Barbara, another subject of Charlot's, Catherine and Margaret were considered among the most powerful saints to whom one could pray for help. On the male side, the bishop holding his severed head is Saint Denis, the early Bishop of Paris, martyr (he carried his head after it was severed), and protector of the nation. The male saint in the Roman uniform, I would argue, is Saint Maurice, the martyred soldier and patron of the military, whom Charlot planned to depict in his Saint Barbara Series; his gorgeous attire follows a tradition found, for instance, in Nicolas Froment's *King René of Anjou Presented by Sts. Mary Magdalen, Anthony and Maurice* of 1476. The kneeling monk with the book resembles the figure of Saint Stephen Martyr in Jean Fouquet's *Étienne Chevalier Presented by St. Stephen*, ca. 1450.¹¹⁸ In 1917, Charlot had planned a *St. Étienne, 1^{er} martyr* for his Sainte Barbe Series, in which the saint embraced a wounded soldier. The mural section on the saints also introduces Charlot's color contrast: the lightest color among the male saints is the light blue of their halos, the same blue as on the robe of the Saint Margaret. The section of female saints, however, has the warmer, brighter colors of golden halos and the bright yellow of the child Joan's hair, which looks forward to the dance section further along the wall.

Next on the shadowy wall is found a group of five soldiers with halos; they are those who have died in battle. Facing them on the sunny side are three groups of their orphans. Four children are led forward by a nun, and a peasant woman is helped by her two children because they must assume the tasks of their father. In front of them, a group of six children of different ages is followed respectfully by a servant. These orphan groups are in a shady forest that will open onto the sunlit dell in which children

will dance. In the meantime, the first and youngest orphan, barely a toddler, is haloed by an anomalous backlight, the glow of her familial past or the care of her spirit father.

The next section on the shadowy side shows three returning survivors of the war. The first one seems almost to be pushed from behind by the dead back into the world of the living. He stands tottering, the man in front of him falls to his knees, and the next man crumples further to the ground. The motion of falling to the ground is portrayed in three stages. The lowest coincides with the space between the top of the engaged column and the shallow rectangle on the uppermost level of the mural. This is the only such space where the three levels are not connected by a vertical; Charlot is using the unexpected emptiness to emphasize how low the survivor has fallen, how crushed he is by the void created by the war. In Charlot's poems and his address on the war, he described the mix of violent emotions felt by the soldiers at the cease-fire: surprise, disbelief, relief, anguish. The soldier on his knees wears the uniform of Charlot's branch of the service, the artillery.

Behind the falling survivors are intact buildings. The men are returning home. Two men—shakey, perhaps limping—are greeted by a priest and a worker who has probably been exempt from service. The priest and the worker turn to look at a seriously wounded man lying slumped on a cot. A woman of the family—the first on this wall—prays for him on her knees. Four male friends—one perhaps an African—try to lift his body and his spirits by pointing to heaven and the altar. As if in response to this urging, the procession of the shadow side begins: a soldier with a head wound and a cane, another blinded by gas and led by a rich friend. One man holds a bottle of medicine, another leans forward on his crutch. An emaciated man, perhaps an ex-prisoner, drags his cane behind him and reaches towards the altar. A monk, distressed at all the suffering, hurries forward. A layman kneels distraught in prayer, but a young blonde woman prays with confidence. She is dressed in lay clothing and is unattached to any person around her; I believe she represents those who pursue intensely their devotions as lay individuals, a type Charlot met and admired in the Gilde. A man walks forward, hiding his bandaged face. Dark canes, crutches, trunks, and branches, express the rhythm of the halting march. A widow urges her three children gently towards the altar; her oldest, a boy, seems to question her at the same time that he helps by holding his younger brother and sister by the hand. A young woman receives her fiancé, pulling his hand to her breast, while an old woman thanks God for the return of her grandson. A beautiful young woman holds two soldier friends by the hand. One has lost his other arm, but she looks only into the face of the other: staring stiffly ahead, he wears the prosthetic mask of someone whose face has been hideously mutilated. A nun with her prayer book announces the beginning of the ritual section of the mural, but a single figure precedes the ceremony: a misshapen man—a dwarf or hunchback—stands and prays. The procession thus includes everyone: the living and the dead, the wounded and the whole, the poor and the rich, men and women, clerics and lay. All have suffered in the war and will find succor at the altar.

Facing this procession, on the sunny wall, young girls emerge bringing offerings from the dark wood of an orphanage into the golden sunlight of a clearing. Led by older girls, the children hold hands and turn and talk, transforming their procession into a May dance. Their vibrant athletic energy contrasts

with the wounded marchers on the shadow side. This section most nearly resembles Charlot's descriptions of Denis' work:

In France the visage of the Church had been not unlike the art of Maurice Denis, like a maypole dance in May, or a provincial outdoor procession of Corpus Christi: little boys in blue satin and little girls in pink organdy holding beribboned baskets filled with rose petals to strew on the passage of the Host. (*Born Catholics* 1954: 104)

As the girls grow older, they quiet into thoughtfulness. The foremost girls meet the last section of a procession of nuns emerging from the background. Three of the girls fall to their knees to receive the blessing of the last nun. This section faces the family groups on the shadow side: the widow with her three children, the fiancés, and the old woman with her grandson. The three serious young women may be thinking of becoming postulants, of taking the vows of sisterhood, of joining more intimately the family of the Church. Next, as with the shadow-side group of three soldiers crumpling to the ground, Charlot uses three nuns to create a transition: the first nun faces towards the back of the church as she moves out of the background and blesses the three young women before her. The nun before her is turning from out of the background into the procession moving towards the front of the church; the robes of the two nuns are so similar that the viewer sees two stages of the motion of the same person. A third nun is turned completely into the direction of the procession, but holds her gaze on the viewer as if she had glimpsed something while she was turning. (The movement out of the background into a procession is a reference, I believe, to a similar passage on the Arch of Titus in Rome with Roman soldiers carrying booty from the Temple of Jerusalem; Charlot is following Classical practice in referring to the relevant art tradition.) A group of nuns in white clothes that glow with the sunlight now moves towards the altar, forming an arch whose forward slope is composed of multiple bodies used to express the movement of falling from a standing position onto one's knees. The most forward nuns kneel in the opening of a cluster of birch trees, their white bark contrasting with the dark trunks on the shadowy side. In front of them, two nuns carry a shoulder litter with a *châsse*, a richly decorated medieval coffer for relics. On his 1913 tour of Bruges, Belgium, Charlot had been impressed by the famous Châsse de Sainte Ursule 'Shrine of Saint Ursula,' with paintings by Hans Memling (1489).

From this point in the procession, all the participants are young men dressed in ritual vestments; at that time, women were not allowed in the sanctuary or the ritual area. On the shadow side, Charlot moves the procession into a religious structure. First, he bridges the gap between the two most forward arches with a geometrically rounded hill; this hill is placed a little forward of the exact center between the arches in order to emphasize the forward movement of the procession. The form is then picked up by two arches of a Romanesque building, echoing the actual arches in the church as well. The young clerics start on their knees in prayer and meditation before rising to walk forward carrying long candles towards the altar. The broad hems of their surplices create a rhythmic band that depicts their forward motion. Under the Romanesque arches, they become a choir with hymn books led by three monks at a lectern. Below the lectern, in the space descending into the lowest level of the mural, a young cleric kneels before the altar, the devotional basis and heart of all ritual. On the sunny side are corresponding candle bearers and choir singers, with a Gothic structure behind them. However, at this point, Charlot breaks with Catholic

practice: the person kneeling towards the altar is a young woman in accordance with the female emphasis of the sunny side. Both she and the corresponding young monk on the shadowy side are not, strictly speaking, in the sanctuary; they kneel on a flowery field outside the actual religious structure in the mural and just before the sanctuary in the real church. Nonetheless, the placement of the young woman is unconventional and reveals how strongly Charlot felt his plan.

A comparison with Charlot's later color studies for murals demonstrates that this gouache can provide only an idea of Charlot's general plan at its stage of the preparatory work. Charlot habitually modified his design through the final stages of realization. Although Charlot was using his liturgical style, he would have had to develop it further for the monumental scale required. Moreover, he clearly intended to use details to communicate much of his message, and they are indicated only sketchily in the gouache. Because of his long planning and powers of visualization, no one will ever know better than Charlot what was lost in the cancellation of this project.

8.1.3.4.4. The Challenge and Experience of Mural Composition

For *Processional*, Charlot was planning on a much larger scale than he ever had before. The experience of doing this, despite the cancellation of the project, confirmed Charlot in his vocation as a mural painter. Although, as seen above, he acknowledged the influence of Denis and Marcel Lenoir, he found them of little help in mural composition:

It reflects, of course, influences that I had come upon, and it reflects them rather clearly. I think my little first communion girls in their white or pale blues or whatnot depend on Maurice Denis for their innocence. But I think that the soldiers—I have some of those veterans or wounded soldiers and so on—depend for the elongation of the proportions and the limbs and whatnot on Marcel-Lenoir. On the other hand, the planning is not at all anything that Denis could have done. Perhaps Marcel-Lenoir could have done it if he had had a chance, but the man never got a complex mural commission. But I've seen some big Maurice Denis for example—Saint Paul in the ship and so on, the wreck of the ship of Saint Paul, I think, for a Swiss church—and Denis is rather innocent about the problems that intrigue me. I think he is not really a born mural painter. Or he is a born mural painter only in the sense that he has admired the very light average values of fresco, the fact that the fresco, unlike oil painting, cannot go into very darks in the shadows, and he has imitated that in his form of painting, either tempera or in oil. But that is purely an influence of the medium, and he...I don't think he's gone as deep into the problems of relation to architecture that other people have. So there is influence of Maurice Denis on me, especially in that sort of Neo-Impressionist or Nabi type of thing, and maybe even in the niceties of the devotional attitude of those people. And there is that influence of Lenoir in the elongated proportions. But the deep problems, which would have come out better, of course, in the finished mural than they did in the small sketch. I was

very conscious at the time that they were problems proposed, for example, by Nicholas Poussin. (Interview November 18, 1970)

Indeed, the “deep problems” of mural composition were what drew Charlot to the genre: “I think that’s one of the reasons why I am a mural painter: because I like to depend at the beginning—to start from a difficult problem that is stated by an architecture” (Interview November 18, 1970).

In order to solve such problems, Charlot had to study the great Classical painters in whose tradition he placed his own work. When I asked him about his use of light in *Processional*, Charlot replied:

Well, I’ve always admired what I would call complex planning in painting, and some great masters, well, Ingres comes to mind in his great, what is called *machines*, his great complicated things with many people and very large size. And Poussin himself had tackled that business of different, we could call them, weights of light, and weights of light really represented by color. And it was one of my desires, certainly, to do that, to do complex things that would be as complex as those of the Classical masters. I think that Poussin, especially, that I had studied in the Louvre, had astonished me with the way in which he translated his values into color. There are some things...well, later on, of course, I looked at that picture which is in the Metropolitan, I think, of the apostles coming down the steps of the Temple—Peter and John curing the poor by their cast shadow—and it has in it, it sums up, if you want, all the things that I had learned in the Louvre, in the Poussins in the Louvre, in that extraordinary sensation of light that of course has nothing in the means to be borrowed by the Impressionists—which was an absolutely original idea of light. That Poussin impressed me because he had to use in it by the subject itself—and he was always a thorough illustrator—he had to use in it cast shadows—that is, he had to consider as sunlight—because the poor people on the steps, the beggars and the cripples and so on, were being cured by the cast shadow of the apostles. So it’s a very interesting thing to see a completely original solution of sunlight, original especially for somebody of my generation who had accepted the somewhat loose solution of the Impressionists with blue shadows and orange lights and so on. And I have wanted always from the beginning to do, we could say, Poussin and to do Ingres. You find similar things in Ingres. I think I’ve already mentioned the *Martyrdom of St. Symphorien*, which is a superb thing, equal to any Poussin. And I could do that only on very large scale things because I really needed those large spaces in which to modify the quality of light and so on. I couldn’t do things with those little personages that Poussin does so well and that could be enlarged to true murals. At the bottom of everything, I think the translation of value into color is the real problem that I’ve tried to tackle all my life, and I have succeeded to an extent. (Interview November 18, 1970)

Charlot was also using his study of Cubism to help him in mural composition:

Now I do like, I do like very much those problems; they are very esoteric in a way, and in another way they allow people to look at things as if they were natural in situations that are impossible for normal vision. I was very interested in those things because I saw it in the Old Masters perhaps; perhaps the first time I got conscious of those problems was looking at some of the early Cubist pictures. By Cubism I usually speak of the Cubist pictures done around 1910 or so, maybe just two or three years before, two or three years after, that sort of brown analytical Cubism which is really the only one I truly like. But of course, before Cubism, I had seen the Old Masters in the Louvre, and Cubism was using some of the same problems, semi-geometric problems used by the Old Masters. (Interview September 17, 1970)

Charlot felt that all of his art studies had the ultimate purpose of helping him with muralism:

Well, perhaps the common denominator of all my things is mural painting. Of course I can't reason why it was so, but from the beginning I knew that I was a mural painter, and I went through a number of styles in art. Of course if I start from being very young, I have, for example, my first mural-to-be, which never happened, was nevertheless done in great detail and to scale, and that was something close enough to the Post-Impressionism, let's say, of Denis, close enough to a man like Marcel Lenoir, which is rather difficult to describe as a stylist. Soon after that, I did a few things that you could call, well, in a Cubist language. That was still pretty early, before 1920. But of each thing, I extracted the possibilities that would allow me to do murals. (Interview September 19, 1970)

Indeed, Charlot always felt that Cubism itself should have culminated in murals:

And then of course, I grew up, I would say, puzzled by early Cubism, Analytical Cubism, the Cubism from just a little before and just a little after 1910, and the puzzlement now is, of course, gone after forty years of knowing those things, but there remain that feeling, which is also in a sense not a feeling of a complete success on the part of the people who were the early Cubists, that Cubism could have gone further, could have done something. And again here it is strictly my own craft or from the point of view of my own craft that I speak. It was a marvelous tool for monumental art, and again here the very quick and close contact of the painters with the dealers squashed the painters into doing things that were first, portable, of course, because you can't sell things that are not portable, and then saleable. Some of the contracts that were signed by the Cubists and the dealers are extremely revealing from that point of view. I think Rosenberg was the one who was making most of those contracts with the Cubists. There was a contract with Fernand Léger in which Fernand Léger was to do, I think, thirty pictures with the subject of Yale keys, and he did them. He was very happy, of course, to get the money, but Léger for me could

have been a great monumental painter. And they were so distorted by that close tie with the market that when the time came for Léger to do monumental art, for example, the decoration of the large hall of the United Nations in New York, he simply gave two little watercolor sketches and said, “Well, I’ll send one of my boys, and he is going to paint them on the wall.” So Léger’s student went and painted those things on the wall full-scale, monumental stuff in size, anyhow, and then sent Léger a telegram saying, “I’ve finished. Come and see it.” So Léger went from Paris to New York—it was a time when I knew him then—and he went to the hall of the United Nations, and he looked at those two enormous things and he grumbled. He said to the fellow, “No, that isn’t at all what I had in mind.” So there is a lack of the old sense of the artist being a craftsman that has plagued most of that generation. And maybe that’s why I find myself more at ease with earlier centuries in which the artist was by definition a craftsman.¹¹⁹

The reference to the craftsmen of the earlier centuries identifies the difference in attitude and philosophy that separated Charlot and also the Mexican Muralists from the Cubists. Both groups were equally interested in the problems of composition. Charlot in 1920 was writing his *Traité de Peinture*, and besides its diagrams, a geometric design survives in *Notebook A* (p. 18,616), probably from late 1921 or early 1922, in which Charlot demonstrates the distortion needed to perceive a figure as regular when it is seen from the side. However, unlike the advocates of art-for-art’s-sake, Charlot and his models and colleagues in the history of art used their solutions, not for display, but to communicate a message more powerfully (Interview September 17, 1970).

In 1920, the potential of Cubism for muralism was still alive, and Charlot felt that he had to deepen his study of it in order to develop his compositions. He later criticized his *Chemin de Croix* for its lack of Cubistic composition, and he may have had similar feelings about *Processional* after the project was cancelled. In any case, on his first trip to Mexico, he would concentrate on studying Cubism by making Cubist analyses of eighteenth-century prints.

8.1.3.4.5. The Medium: Fresco

Gustave Flaubert joked in his *Le Dictionnaire des Idées Reçues* ‘Dictionary of Received Ideas’: “FRESQUE. On n’en fait plus” ‘FRESCO: one doesn’t make them anymore.’ In fact, although the medium had declined from its Renaissance and Post-Renaissance heyday, it was still used widely in secular settings—from hotel lobbies to the Houses of Parliament—and in liturgical art, especially of a high-minded type. Peter Cornelius (1783–1867) and the Nazarenes used the medium as did the artists of Beuron. The late Beuron artist, and former modernist, Willibrord [Jan] Verkade turned to fresco in reaction against easel painting and in enthusiasm for Giotto; he insisted that he was working in fresco buono or true fresco:

Toutes les décorations furent faites *affresco* en aquarellant simplement sur le mur fraîchement enduit sans mettre du blanc de chaux dans les couleurs, ce qui est la méthode la plus commode et la plus sûre.¹²⁰

‘All the decorations were made *affresco* in simply water coloring on the freshly plastered wall without putting lime white into the colors, which is the most convenient and secure method.’

Both Denis and Marcel Lenoir—Charlot’s model of a fresco painter—worked in fresco, as did later liturgical artists in France.¹²¹

Fresco was one of the media studied by the members of the Gilde, as seen from Charlot’s “Nous les Jeunes !” Geneviève Dévignes (1918: 4) wrote in a Gilde review: “I’on souhaiterait voir cette aquarelle devenir une fresque” ‘one would like to see this watercolor become a fresco.’ Marguerite Huré (1918) reviewed an exhibition of fresco at the Pavillon de Marsan in which she sketched the history of the use of that medium in France and praised its characteristics: “Quel métier plus sobre, en effet, que celui qui se contente de si peu d’éléments très pauvres et bien vulgaires...” ‘What craft is soberer, in effect, than this one that is satisfied with so few elements, very poor and quite common...’; “cette beauté, primitive et saine, faite de force et de simplicité” ‘this primitive and healthy beauty, made of strength and simplicity.’¹²² Her appreciation was Classical and can be compared to Joshua Reynolds’ (1961: 74): “*Fresco*; a mode of Painting which excludes attention to minute elegancies...” Significantly for Charlot, Huré appreciated the beauty of an incised line in fresco: “Le dessin creuse le mortier d’un canal rempli ensuite par la couleur” ‘The drawing grooves the mortar with a channel filled subsequently by the color.’ Charlot himself would change from pounced to incised lines halfway through his first mural. Huré compared fresco appreciatively to her own medium, “la peinture sur verre” ‘painting on glass.’ Fresco always appealed to Charlot because it demanded the effort of the full human being, from mental planning to manual craft:

It is perhaps in fresco where the plan must be matured before execution, where lines must be traced and pounced, where colors must be put on “blind” with only a mental knowledge of what they will become, and where an objective architecture mocks all excesses of subjectivity, that the craftsman’s tradition and technical knowledge imposes more forcefully its mark on aesthetics. (Foreword 1941)

Charlot’s parish church was built in concrete, so fresco would have been esthetically appropriate and also practical: the walls would have been strong enough to hold it. Charlot often stated that he had planned to do his mural in fresco, which was a long-time interest of his:

I was interested in fresco even before I painted a fresco because I realized the many stages through which the work had to go, many of them technical and manual stages, manipulations if you want, before it became a work of art, before it became a painting. And I had an innate distaste for oil painting because of the quality that everybody praises oil for, that is, the facility with which it can be done and undone. I was looking for something that would be permanent, where the changes and corrections would be nearly impossible. And later on in life I found that fresco suited me just right from that point of view; also the sense of being very close to the material itself.¹²³

Exceptionally, Charlot voiced a doubt in our interview of November 18, 1970:

I don't quite know what I would have used for a medium. I know that at the time I was thinking, of course, in terms of murals, of true murals. I don't think that I would have had the means, actually, to do it in true fresco. But the intention, anyhow, was to get something that would be close enough to the values and colors of fresco and would stay on the walls, so to speak.

The coloring of the gouache plan is in fact similar to that of Charlot's first realized fresco.

However, just as later in Mexico, the problem was learning the medium. Charlot knew of the book on fresco by Paul Baudouin, whom Denis called "le fresquiste obstiné" 'the obstinate fresco painter' and whose studies had been used by the students of Ingres:

I had probably read it before going to Mexico. I had wanted to work in fresco and was going to put in fresco in the parish church. I *probably* studied fresco for it then. But Marcellenoir is the real beginning here. Through him, I got the desire to do fresco.¹²⁴

Charlot borrowed Rivera's copy of the book to do his own first fresco, *The Massacre in the Main Temple* of 1922–1923. Although he knew Cennino Cennini's book on fresco, Charlot was apparently unaware of the 1858 translation by the fresco painter and student of Ingres, Victor Mottez (1809–1897), with supplementary information from Mottez' own research.¹²⁵ Charlot also recalled that there had been an Ecole de Fontainebleau de fresque around 1910, which he did not attend, but "I was studying in the Bibliothèque des Arts Décoratifs. They had a lot on techniques, and it was probably there that I learned about fresco."

However, the contemporary evidence is clear that Charlot was indeed intending to paint his mural in fresco. As early as his address to the Gilde, "Nous les Jeunes !" of 1916, he wrote : "On essaie la peinture à la fresque..." 'One tries fresco painting....' The word *essaie* suggests actual experiments. In a list of works he planned to show at the Salon d'Automne of 1921, Charlot includes a "fragment fresque" 'fresco fragment';¹²⁶ this may have been a portable fresco of the type that Charlot had seen Marcellenoir exhibit. This fresco probably remained in the planning stage, because Charlot would have remembered completing it. However, C. de Cordis' 1921 review of Charlot's work in the Exposition Saint-Jean of December 1920–January 1921, makes it clear that Charlot's mural design was planned to be done in fresco:

Jean Charlot vient de prendre part, avec succès, à la récente Exposition Saint-Jean. Il y avait là, de lui, deux frises, réduction au 1/10, pour décoration d'église... Cette exposition, malgré l'intérêt qu'elle a pu susciter, ne suffirait pas à donner une idée des ressources dont Charlot dispose comme décorateur. Cet artiste mérite, en effet, d'être encore connu comme peintre de fresques, genre auquel il tend à consacrer une part de plus en plus large de son activité.
'Jean Charlot has just participated with success at the recent Saint-Jean Exhibition.

Included were two friezes by him, at a reduction of 1/10, for church decoration...

‘This exhibition, despite the interest that it excited, would not be sufficient to give an idea of the resources that Charlot commands as a decorator. This artist deserves, in effect, to be known more as a painter of frescoes, the genre to which he tends to devote an ever large part of his activity.’

We can conclude with certainty that Charlot planned his mural in fresco, but did not reach the stage in its production when he could be sure that this could be accomplished. In any case, his desire to use fresco would become historically important in Mexico, where he completed the first mural in that medium and helped to teach it to the other artists of the Mexican Mural Renaissance.

8.1.4. THE DECISION TO TRY MEXICO

The financial situation of the Charlot family was worsening steadily, and Jean himself had been unable to find work or commissions sufficient to remedy the situation. In mid-1919, the family funds had been divided. After forbidding Odette’s marriage to a social inferior, a proper dowry had to be provided for the acceptable substitute. According to the Contrat de Mariage of May 12, 1919, the bride brought 95,258.70 francs into the marriage, and the groom, 41,406.10 francs.¹²⁷ On May 17, 1919, Odette married Jacques Marie Jules Bouvier (December 7, 1885–1962). Bouvier was from an established *petit bourgeois* family and a veteran who had lost a brother in the war. He had worked in small businesses and, when young, had tried his hand at drawing.¹²⁸ The couple looks very happy in their marriage pictures, and at first they seem to have lived well. Bouvier describes their home as: “le pavillon que nous habitons alors (14 pièces)...entièrement meublé de meubles anciens...” ‘the pavilion that we lived in at that time (fourteen rooms)...entirely furnished with antiques...’ (Testimony 1941). Their daughter Arlette was born on June 11, 1922, and was devoted to both her parents. Soon, however, the couple argued about Bouvier’s occupation and proved amply their incompatibility. The disastrous marriage ended in a bitter separation on February 28, 1931, and finally, after many legal disputes, in divorce on October 14, 1941. From early childhood and through much of her life, Arlette would be caught between her two feuding parents. Anne seems to have been happy to have her daughter married. In a letter from New York that Odette received on March 20, 1932, Charlot wrote:

Je ne t’ai jamais écrit peut-être combien tes mauvaises nouvelles m’avaient touché ; je n’avais pas pu m’attacher à Jacques et la suite des événements ne m’a pas trop surpris. Mais il est certainement dur pour toi de vivre seule.

‘I never wrote you perhaps how much your bad news touched me; I had not been able to become attached to Jacques, and the succession of events did not surprise me too much. But it is certainly hard for you to live alone.’

The division of the property for Odette’s dowry meant that the remaining Charlot family could no longer maintain itself without a complete change of lifestyle:

No. It was a purely financial stuff. We had lived, of course, with the money that my father made at his business. His business was really imports, and he depended on a German firm for his imports from China. That was his big business. So with the war and the Franco-German War, that was the end of his business, and he really withered and died as a result. Then we found ourselves with enough of a little sum of money to live a while. But given the habits of the French people, my sister got married, and we had to give her what was considered a decent bourgeois dowry, which actually was half or a little more than half of all the money we had. And so it seemed safer to pay our passage to Mexico and to go back to my Mexican branch of the family, where I knew we would be well received. I didn't go there at all knowing of any possibility of making a living with art. But our choice was between France—where really we had broken, so to speak, the routine of living and had nothing to... we would have had to start from scratch on entirely different lines—or Mexico, where I knew that my uncles and so on were very desirous to have us and were ready to help us, at least with our daily living until I found something. It really came as a surprise that the something I found happened to be art and furthermore mural painting. Those things were not in the cards, so to speak, when we left France. we had really to take a decision and go. Otherwise I would have had to get a job which, certainly in Paris, would not have been a job connected with the arts or very indirectly.¹²⁹

Charlot's mother, Anne, seems to have been the person who initiated the plan to move to Mexico:

Well, I told you that of course I had to stay in Europe while I was in the army. And at the time my sister, Odette, married, and then my mother and I were free. We had really no attach[ment]...that is, no business or no jobs in France, and she was, mother was very fond of the Mexican branch of the family and very close to what would be, I suppose, her cousins in a kind of a loose arrangement of our Franco-Mexican family, so we went to Mexico. There was—that first going—must have been through the year 1920 or part of the year 1920. At the end of '20, perhaps in '21. I'm not sure; we'll have to check on that. And we stayed then the whole stay with my uncle Louis Labadie. (Interview May 14, 1971)

Family connections were the basis of the plan:

After the war, after the occupation of Germany, where I was involved, my mother and I remembered that a goodly part of our family was in Mexico. My father had died in between, and we went, I would say, back to Mexico. When I say back to Mexico I mean that around 1820 my great-grandfather had emigrated, we could say, from France to Mexico. So we are mixed up between the two countries. (March 8, 1972)

Indeed, the children of Luis Labadie had come to stay with the Charlots in the summer of 1911, after the death of their mother. Nevertheless, the plan seems characteristically impractical:

...at the beginning of the first stay, what happened to us, I mean economically, is very simple. We divided what money we had—I don't know if it was little money, maybe not little money, actually in retrospect—but what money we had in two parts. One went to my sister as a dowry, which was the proper thing to do at the time, and with the other half we paid, of course, the trip to Mexico. And my mother brought in some fashions, hats and things, that she sold in Mexico, and so that we got a little cash out of those sales. She was the person actually who had the job there. I think there was no, any possibility as far as I knew of having a job. I mean, I never thought of it in a money sense, looking for a job. All my life I have been somewhat impervious to those things, but I knew that I would paint and so on. (Interview May 14, 1971)

The contract by Anne of December 15, 1920, consigning feathers for sale in France, suggests that she was going through the remaining stocks of Henri's business in preparation for the journey. More important than practicalities was, however, escaping the social consequences of their financial collapse in France:

And I felt more at ease in Mexico than in France because in France we really had let go both of the situation we had when my father was alive and perhaps of some friends that had depended a lot on that situation. There was a certain social standing that existed when father was alive, and I think mother, especially, suffered from having that shot from under us, so to speak, after the war and the death of my father. So it was easier, really, to be in Mexico than to be in France. (Interview May 14, 1971)

Charlot himself suffered from their social decline:

Je n'ai pas la puissance de l'argent (même un peu). *socialement* la seule.
choqué dans tous mes goûts je me restreins au strict nécessaire.
Fermer les yeux. inférieur *socialement* je m'isole.
rancune de cela contre les hommes.
“ . “ “ contre Dieu : du jour où je lui ai remis entièrement le soin de mon argent j'ai été ruiné (*Notebook C*, entry for September 25, 1922)

'I do not have the power of money (even a little). socially, the only one.
shocked in all my tastes, I restrict myself to the strictly necessary.
Close the eyes. socially inferior, I isolate myself.
rancor about that against people.
rancor about that against God: from the day I confided to him entirely the care of my money, I was ruined.'

My father told me that people, including relatives, treated them differently as they lost their money. This experience certainly nourished his long-held negative feelings about the rich.

In a document written for his divorce from Odette in 1941, Jacques Bouvier gives another reason:

Aussitôt la guerre terminée, ma belle-mère avait tout fait pour marier sa Fille avec les 90.000 Frs restants et ensuite est partie avec son fils pour le Mexique espérant y refaire sa fortune...

‘As soon as the war was ended, my mother-in-law did all she could to marry off her Daughter with the remaining 90,000 francs and then left with her son for Mexico, hoping to remake her fortune there...’

Quelques jours après mon mariage j’ai surpris involontairement une conversation de ma belle-mère avec une de ses amies. Elle expliquait qu’elle avait hâte de partir au Mexique car, étant donné le caractère de sa Fille, il était certain que celle-ci divorcerait avant 2 ans et qu’elle ne voulait pas être présente en France à ce moment là...

‘A few days after my marriage, I involuntarily overheard a conversation of my mother-in-law with one of her friends. She was explaining that she was in a hurry to leave for Mexico because, given the character of her Daughter, it was certain that she would divorce within two years and she did not want to be in France at that moment...’

The trip to Mexico was exploratory: “We had left without knowing what decision to take...” (Interview May 14, 1971). Nonetheless, the structure of the final decision was already made. Odette would stay in Paris with her husband and would care for her grandfather Louis Goupil. Jean would leave with his mother. In this way, Odette and Jean divided the responsibilities. Odette would care for Louis, whom she loved and who was probably too old to return to Mexico; moreover, Odette and Anne did not get along. Jean would care for his mother, to whom he was devoted, and she wanted to explore the possibilities of a better life in Mexico. For Charlot himself, the basic motive for the move was to fulfill his duty to his mother. For this reason, he can react sarcastically when relatives insist “sur le ‘sacrifice’ que maman avait fait, de les abandonner pour me suivre !” ‘on the “sacrifice” Mama made in abandoning them to follow me!’ (letter to Odette, received on March 20, 1932). The sarcasm is based on the fact that the opposite was the truth.

However discouraging Charlot’s situation was in Paris in late 1920, he saw no career prospects in Mexico, and as a single man, he could have struggled along as a young artist. Indeed, in 1921, he began to succeed, participating in important Paris exhibitions and receiving favorable notice. Liturgical art was beginning to be patronized: “Nous assistons depuis quelques années à une renaissance de l’art religieux, ou, du moins, aux débuts d’une renaissance...” ‘For several years now, we have been witnessing a renaissance of religious art, or at least the beginnings of a renaissance...’ (Brillant 1920: 307). Indeed many murals would be commissioned for French churches after Charlot emigrated (Bony 1993). France would be a lost career (letter to Odette May 16, 1964): “Je suis content que l’article sur Fiji est publié en français, et à Paris ! Ma carrière est si lointaine” ‘I’m happy that the article on Fiji is published in French, and in Paris! My career is so distant.’ Ultimately Charlot went to Mexico for his mother, not for himself: “my father died, and my mother wanted to go and visit—and stay in fact in Mexico. So we went there from France” (N. 1978). From the sea trip over, he kept a locket of hair with

the label: “cheveux de ma maman. Coupé le mercredi 16 Janvier 1921” ‘hair of my mama. Cut Wednesday, January 16, 1921.’

8.2. THE EXPLORATORY TRIP TO MEXICO

Charlot and his mother arrived at the Atlantic port of St. Nazaire on December 29, 1920, and embarked on the 31 aboard the *Flandre*, of the Compagnie Générale Transatlantique. The ship made a regular stop at Havana and an unscheduled stop at Puerto México on January 20, 1921, before reaching its destination, Veracruz, on January 23, at 6:00 AM. By the 24th, they could have arrived in Mexico City.¹³⁰ The fact that the journey began in 1920 led Charlot and others occasionally to date this exploratory trip to that year, but the entire visit in Mexico occurred in early 1921. In *MMR* (180 f.), Charlot writes of this trip as if it were the final immigration, an odd simplification due probably to his omission of his 1921 work in Paris. Charlot and his mother returned to France in early May, perhaps leaving Mexico in late April.¹³¹

A fellow passenger on the *Flandre* was General Giuseppe Garibaldi, who had fought in the Mexican Revolution and was being received with honor by the government. Charlot made contact with his first young Mexican artist, from whom he received an orientation to the art situation in Mexico:

I think the first Mexican that could be called “of the group” that I met was Carlos Orozco. In my first trip to Mexico, which was in ‘20, he was on the same ship that I was on, coming back from Spain, I think, and we met and talked; he was a very nice guy. He amused the passengers by doing caricatures of them one evening, for example, when everybody was trying to do something to amuse the others. And we talked, and I think he is the one who spoke of Rivera first. Rivera was his brother-in-law or was going to be his brother-in-law. Anyhow, he mentioned Rivera, and I had a very faint knowledge of Rivera, I think, as connected with Cubism and with Ángel Zárraga, the one of the Mexicans I had been close to, not personally but to his work in Paris, for example, going to a show of his Cubist pictures. (Interview August 7, 1971)

Charlot’s first view of Mexico was heady:

The “Flandres” brought us—Mother and me—to a refueling stop at Puerto México, Oaxaca, the disused head port for the cross-continental railway made obsolete by the opening of the Panama Canal. Tropical Mexico, Tehuana girls with natural flowers braided in their hair, houses on stilts with black hogs wallowing underneath, and sailors’ streets with varicolored women and calicoed brass beds displayed in cells open to the sidewalk made a stronger impact than the final official landing at Veracruz on January 23, 1921. (*MMR* 180 f.)

Charlot recorded his impressions on the spot:

Puerto Mexico. 20-1-21.

Entrée au port vers 7 heures. sable. cocotiers et cahutes bois et chaume. très

africain. temps d'orage. une langue de terre dont s'échevellent des touffes aux panaches hauts et, à l'extrême pointe, une chaumière. Reflets dans l'eau. De lourds vols de vautours.

La ville : baraques alignées, fenêtres en retrait sur des piliers de bois. Affiches américaines. photos et cadres d'or. marchands de fruits au coin. bananes. cocos.

L'Indien : terre cuite et masques japonais. Les vieux aux pommettes avancées. Le beau chapeau de paille.

Les Femmes : jeunes et belles. gestes harmonieux des coiffures tressées et lissées, des fleurs mêlées aux nattes.

Le Marché : L'une câline une guenon petite. Des perruches à tous coins. parler doux très appuyé. Lenteur et noblesse. Européens casqués. petits chevaux aux selles travaillées. cactus.

Au soir : "rue" des bars. indiens et gens du bateau. orchestre xylophone. blanches et noires en robes claires. chambres voilées de mousseline. Danses. Le tout large ouvert sur la nuit.

'Puerto México. January 20, 1921.

Entrance into the port around 7:00 AM. Sand. Coconut trees, and wood and straw huts. Very African. Stormy weather. A tongue of land with disheveled tufts of grass with high plumes, and, at the end of the point, a thatched cottage. Reflections in the water. Heavy flights of vultures.

The city: aligned barracks, recessed windows on wooden piles. American posters. Photos and gold frames. Fruit sellers at the corner. Bananas. Coconuts.

The Indian: burnt earth and Japanese masks. The old with prominent cheekbones. Beautiful straw hats.

The Women: young and beautiful. Harmonious gestures, hairdos braided and smoothed, flowers mixed in the braids.

The Market: One woman fondles a little monkey. Parakeets at every corner. Soft speech very emphasized. Slowness and nobility. Europeans with pith helmets. Little horses with decorated saddles. Cactus.

In the evening: "street" of bars. Indians and boat people. Xylophone orchestra. Whites and blacks in light dresses. Rooms veiled with muslin. Dancing. The whole completely open on the night.'

Charlot remembered writing about the scene:

Well, I think some of the writings that you have are from that first trip. It was a trip in which we stopped in Puerto Mexico because the *France* [*sic*], the ship on which we were traveling—something went wrong with it and we had to stop in Puerto Mexico. And that is in Oaxaca and very close to Tehuantepec, and the women dress in the Tehuantepec manner, and of course the race—and you could say the picturesque—was supreme. I wrote two or three things on that first trip, and it's probably in words

rather than in pictures that I gave my impression. One of them is that Indian priest celebrating Mass in Veracruz, I think you have.¹³² The other one is the first landing at Puerto Mexico, which preceded that to Veracruz, and I think those things are important as first impressions, of course. But I don't think there is anything in painting or drawing at the time that connects with Mexico. I'm rather slow at getting the hang of things, perhaps slower with the forms and colors than I am with words. (Interview May 14, 1971)

Charlot was mistaken about not producing visual art with Mexican subjects. He would later sketch several in Mexico City, and in Puerto Mexico, he painted his first watercolor in Mexico. *Puerto Mexico*¹³³ is dated "1-21" 'January 1921' and was painted either between his arrival on the twentieth and his arrival at Veracruz on the twenty-third. Pictured are the same subjects Charlot mentions in his prose: huts and trees. A few weak pencil lines sketch loose outlines and areas, leaving description to the unusually wet and forceful strokes with loaded brush. The air is heavy to bursting with the humidity of an approaching storm and the lighting seems scattered and explosive: a "temps d'orage" 'stormy weather.' Charlot's experiments with geometric style fall away as he tries to record this radically new sight. The result recalls his earlier "Impressionism," but the chaotic illumination and muggy stillness make all the objects appear weighty rather than filled with light. Charlot uses more black than in any other Impressionist work, juxtaposing it to bright colors or the glare of reserves. Black will later become the key to his Mexican palette. No human beings appear, although they will become Charlot's central subjects in Mexico. He must first look at the land and the light. Like the huts built right on the ground—so symbolic of Mexico—Charlot must recreate his art from the ground up. The watercolor is unique in Charlot's œuvre. The direct recording and Impressionistic style are different from Charlot's later treatments of similar subjects, such as *Yucatan Landscape with hut* of 1928.¹³⁴ Moreover, a few months later, he would return to the style he was developing in France to complete *L'Amitié*. The watercolor records a powerful, as yet unassimilated first impression and reveals yet again Charlot's openness to experience and observation, which would eventuate in his creation of a new style from the ground up, the earth itself of Mexico.

Charlot and his mother remained in Mexico City, lodging with their relatives: "we stayed then the whole stay with my uncle Louis Labadie" (Interview May 14, 1971). A photograph dated March 31, 1921, shows Charlot and his mother with the Labadies, all elegantly dressed. Charlot's Mexican family had been among the middle-class supporters of the dictator Porfirio Díaz, against whom the Mexican Revolution had been initiated, and living with them enabled Charlot to understand better the events that would inspire the ideology of the Mexican mural Renaissance:

I was very protected, so to speak, in my first trip because we lived with a conservative family, and what I had, which was of great import for me to understand Mexico, was really a hangover of the pre-Revolution days among people who had been protected economically...

And so it helped me a lot. It was sort of a trampoline later on, when I was thrown into

the post-Revolution world, by which I could compare the two worlds. I would not have had the same clarity of mind, I would say, if I had not first experienced what we could call pre-Revolution life among what we could call the good families of Mexico or conservative families of Mexico—and later on, of course, in the post-Revolution, the rather mixed up Revolutionary people who were my colleagues. (Interview May 14, 1971)

However, Charlot would never stereotype his family, to whom he always remained close and who were proud of his work and gracious to his revolutionary friends. Moreover, they shared the family tradition of appreciating indigenous art. For Charlot, his uncle Aristide Martel's collection rivaled the archeological museum, still in its old quarters:

And of course, another one of my uncles, Aristide Martel, had a magnificent private collection of pre-Hispanic things, and that was something of a tremendous impact on me. At the time the museum proper was not at all what it is now. It was the Museum of Ethnology. It was in the old building of the seventeenth century, eighteenth century of La Moneda, where they had had the mint in the olden times, in colonial times. And of course the collections were very beautiful, but they were presented in absolute disorder, which of course didn't faze me. I enjoyed very much having a contact with pre-Hispanic things in Mexico. It wasn't the first time, of course; I had had contact with the collections of my uncle Eugène Goupil and with the manuscripts of the Bibliothèque Nationale. (Interview May 14, 1971)

Charlot did not meet any Mexican archeologists on his first trip, but they would become valued friends later.

Charlot did not remember studying folk art on his first trip, although I believe a drawing of a crucifix, described below, was done in a city church: "I think the main thing was really pre-Hispanic and of course just seeing Mexico itself and the people themselves and dipping again in what I consider some of my racial roots" (Interview May 14, 1971). Charlot did visit the collection of the Academy of San Carlos, where he was received graciously by Don Lino Picaseño y Cuevas:

...there was the collection of paintings, and I was extremely interested in the old, colonial paintings in Mexico. I've always been looking for roots—go and search in the past—and much of my time was either with the Museum of Archeology or with the museum of paintings in San Carlos, so that I was known, certainly, in the corridors of the school. (Interview June 12, 1971)

Picaseño also showed Charlot the large collection of student prize drawings, which Charlot would later use in his book on the Academy (*San Carlos*), a copy of which Charlot wanted to be given to the man who had helped him: "I am very desirous to reach Picaseño (Librarian) if he is still alive. He is the one who introduced me to the collection of student works."¹³⁵ Charlot was most impressed by the Academy's library:

I went, of course, to the San Carlos Academy. I made very good use of the art library there that had incredible things in it. Things like the original edition of Pacheco, the father-in-law of Velasquez, which is of the utmost rarity. They just treated it like any other book and let me go through it. It was a great experience. (Interview May 14, 1971)

I noted after a conversation with my father:

When JC visited the Academy of San Carlos, he asked if they had the Pacheco book. They said, "Certainly" and brought him the original edition, which had just been set on one of their shelves. Pop said he'd been sorely tempted to "lose" it. (Tabletalk April 22, 1977)

Charlot's "Félibien : Entretiens sur la vie des peintres 1690" and "Notes sur des Artistes Grecs" were probably based on his study at the Academy library, and he continued to visit it after his immigration to Mexico. With a bibliophile's gratitude for Picaseño's hospitality, Charlot gave the Academy a copy of his *Chemin de Croix*, which became his introduction to the young Mexican painters:

Vino a México trayendo una colección de grabados en madera que tuvieron un gran éxito entre los círculos de arte. (Fernández Ledesma 1924)

Picaseño was in charge of the library, so every time I went there to look at books, Picaseño was the man who would look for the books for me. There wasn't any complicated mechanical things or computerization, and so on. You described what you wanted, and then the librarian would look for it. Of course, I went there often, and he knew me. In fact, as I think I told you before, when I gave the book to the Bellas Artes, I put Picaseño's name on the first page, so that when he left the job, he took the *Via Crucis* with him. And it stayed there long enough so that the young people had seen it and rather admired it before they had met me, and maybe that is what Leal means when he says that he knew me through people in Bellas Artes. (Interview June 12, 1971)

Now the one contact I had was somehow indirect with the very young painters that I was to meet on my next trip; that was men like Revueltas, Fernando Leal, and so on, because I left at the San Carlos Academy my *Way of the Cross* in woodcuts, and in a way, they discovered the woodcuts without knowing me. And when I came the next time, my best recommendation, so to speak, had been those woodcuts that had made quite a splash with the younger artists, because there was nothing very much in Mexico at the time going on. The one thing, of course, they could have tied my work with would have been the folk woodcuts and metal cuts of Posada, but at the time he was not thought of or considered as part of the art, of the picture of art in Mexico. (Interview May 14, 1971)

My baggage, if you want, of art was that *Way of the Cross* made in woodcut, and that was a good introduction to people. The major artist at the time and the one who was doing most for art in Mexico was Ramos Martínez, who was the head of the Beaux Arts School, and he was very nice to me, gave me a studio, in fact, to work in. And the graphic arts that I had, the woodcuts especially, played a role in the graphic arts of Mexico. There was a change, if you want—people recognize that usually—that my *Way of the Cross* brought in. I gave it to the Fine Arts School for their library, and when I came back on my second trip to Mexico, I think it had been a very fruitful contact with the people. There was a very nice going-on in the graphic arts, so that my first art, if you want, in Mexico, was not mural, because there was no more mural possibilities than there were in France. But there *was* something connected with the graphic arts. (Interview October 18, 1970)

Picaseño was Charlot's only personal contact with the Mexican art world at the time: "in my first trip, my first voyage, Picaseño was really the only person I knew there" (Interview June 12, 1971). Only on his return would he meet the younger artists and Alfredo Ramos Martínez (1871–1946), who would offer him hospitality at the Open-Air School at Coyoacán. Leal wrote:

Don Lino Picaseño, librarian of the National School of Fine Arts, put us in touch and a great friendship began at first sight. I was happy to take Charlot with me to the school of Coyoacán and to have Ramos Martínez confer on him all the prerogatives of a Mexican student. (Leal Writings Related to *MMR*, Passages Cut, The Gospel)

On Charlot's first trip, he saw no exhibitions, and his impression was that very little was happening:

I had a feeling, I didn't analyze it, but that nothing very much was going on in Mexico at the time. It wasn't quite true. Some of the very young men, again Revueltas, I would say, or Fernando Leal, were probably doing some things that were relatively interesting, but the thing that would not have made it interesting for me is that they were learning in a way the language of Impressionism, not even of PostImpressionism, and of course, coming from Paris where I had already sort of dipped into Cubism, it was a little hard to get interested in that. There was nothing suggesting even that there would be a mural movement that would come very quickly, in fact one year after my first arrival in Mexico. (Interview May 14, 1971)

The Mexican Mural Renaissance would have to wait for its great patron, José Vasconcelos, to establish his ministry later in the year:

Of course, in retrospect, it's very easy to simplify and to say that I went to Mexico so I could exercise that potential of mural painting and fresco painting in me, but it's not the way it happened, because I absolutely didn't know. And in fact, when I arrived in Mexico the first time—that was before the return of Rivera, before Vasconcelos had

been able to whip together his group of painters—there was really rather little going on. (Interview October 18, 1970)

Charlot had little contact with Mexican Indians on his first trip other than sketching them in the streets and meeting the servants of the Labadie household:

There was no other tie with the Indians than, well, the servants in the house, but again the servants in the house were something a little different from what people in the United States would think of; that is, it was a family that had had servants for generations, and even though they had gone, I wouldn't say "seedy," but gone down at least in the general social picture, they were what is called "old retainers" and very obviously a relationship of servant and master that had a sort of a feudal beauty, and that of course I had to feel. The contact or the direct contact with Indians came later on, and much of it really was funneled through the one person of Luciana, or Luz, which started, of course, just as a pictorial thing, because she was *one* of the Indian models at the Academy, but later on, going to her village, meeting her mother especially, and her family, it became something more important and more human.¹³⁶

Charlot's first experience of Mexico was, therefore, impressive but limited, and his mind was divided between experiencing Mexico and clinging to France. His main artistic study of the trip was his Cubistic analysis of eighteenth-century French prints, described below. That is, he was "stuck aesthetically in eighteenth-century France" (Morse 1976: 19), a symptom, I believe, of the emotional difficulty he felt at the idea of leaving France and his earlier hopes and plans. As I will argue below, his artistic identity was at stake. He had seen himself as a French artist in the French tradition and thought he had a mission in the reconstruction of France. Now he was leaving France for an undefined future. His perturbation is another indication that the decision to immigrate to Mexico was made largely by his mother.

Nonetheless, that decision was made by the end of their stay, and they returned to France only to settle their affairs and pack whatever belongings they would bring with them:

we had that house in St. Mandé, where we had all our belongings. I had already there whatever I had done in art before, and my books and whatnot. So we packed between the two trips, and when we went to Mexico, we had nothing that would force us to go back to France. (Interview May 14, 1971)

Again, the decision seems impractical. Charlot had not found a job in Mexico, nor had his mother. They had lived from the sale of the luxury goods she brought with them. When they did return to Mexico, Anne worked as a seamstress, and Charlot found a low-paying job as an artist. They soon descended into poverty. Their decline can be followed in their clothes through the photographs of the 1920s, starting from their finery in a photograph of March 31, 1921. Anne, a dressmaker, will always be neat, but Charlot will be wearing out a hodgepodge of regular and formal clothing.

In early 1921, the basis for their decision to immigrate seems to have been that they thought they were living comfortably with their relatives. Even that, however, was not to last long on their return. Mexico was certainly cheaper than Paris, suffering from its postwar inflation, and they did not need to maintain the luxurious lifestyle of their French social set. But no long-range planning is discernible in the decision nor any consideration of Charlot's career as an artist.

8.2.1. ART

On a list of works from 1921 in the *Ludwigshafen Notebook*, the items that appear from their placement to have been done in Mexico are the following:

dessins :

copie Boucher 6

aquarelles et gouaches

Puerto Mexico.

nu.

4 études plantes

album :

album conte XVII s.

'drawings

copies of Boucher 6

watercolors and gouaches

Puerto Mexico.

nude.

four studies of plants

album:

album tales XVII century'

Of these "Puerto Mexico" and the "album conte XVII s." survive. As to the "nu," I have suggested above that Charlot may have continued his drawings of the nude at the life classes of the San Carlos Academy; a watercolor or gouache may have resulted from those drawings. The six "copie Boucher" were undoubtedly connected to Charlot's work with the "album." The "4 études plantes" have been lost to view. As stated earlier, Charlot did not include small works in such lists, and in Mexico, he continued his regular sketching, examples of which survive from the *Sketchpad 1919–1921*; some of the drawings I have tentatively assigned above to Paris in 1920 may have been done at this time. The

sketchpad contains the earliest sheet of Charlot's *Mexican street sketches*, which he would continue throughout his stay in Mexico. The many strokes he uses to establish his outlines reveals his unfamiliarity with the subjects; later he will draw such figures quickly with a single line. He is still unsure about the relationship of the peak of the *sombrero* to its brim, correcting all four examples. Charlot's French humor was tempted by the paunchy *charro* with his caparisoned but inadequately small and woebegone horse. The viewer is given a nag's eye view of the *pistolero*'s machismo. Charlot was more drawn to the graceful woman riding sidesaddle on the rump of a charged donkey, evoking images of Mary riding to Bethlehem or Egypt. Charlot twice drew her head with its hat set at a rakish angle.

Historically the most important image on the sheet is the *cargadora*, the female burden bearer, seen from the side. Charlot had seen burden bearers in the folk figures in his childhood home, in the Aztec codices, and in illustrations of books by Charnay and others. He had drawn his first burden bearer as a young child in his *Juvenilia 1904* (73c recto). Now he was seeing burden bearers in real life, walking the streets of Mexico as they still do today. He would make them one of his major themes. This first sketch has much of the geometry he will use in his later versions. The woman's burden is a large rectangle being held on her diagonal back. The viewer feels the weight of the rectangle as it presses down to reestablish its true vertical and horizontal. The woman's back is cantilevered out from her short legs. The forward step of the one in the foreground seems inadequate to stop her from falling forward under the weight of the rectangle. Similarly, in his later mural *Cargadores* (1923), Charlot will use the weight of geometry to create a sensation of instability. Two small sketches found on the verso of Charlot's "Félibien : Entretiens sur la vie des peintres 1690" probably belong to this period: an armadillo—still an exotic animal for Charlot—and a man in a *sombrero* carrying a large rolled mat. The latter is a very assured sketch in a few single lines and shows that Charlot was quickly assimilating his new subjects.

Just as in Brittany and Germany, Charlot studied the art as well as the people. *Head of crucified Christ, full-front and three-quarter views* appears to have been done from a statue of Spanish or Mexican style. The lines are sharp and exact; Charlot is intent on recording as well as analyzing the painful figure. On the verso is the *Profile of man looking down*, done in the light drawing style started in Paris. Along the jaw line, the geometric analysis is so abstract that I cannot connect it to any anatomical features.

parc à S^a Maria, Mexico displays Charlot's further development of his light drawing style in Mexico: the composition is very like the earlier ones done in the style, but the pressure on the pencil is heavier, creating darker lines that delineate the forms more sharply from each other in the ambient light. The same development is found in *geometric study of plants* to which the sheet of the *parc à S^a Maria* is still attached. Compared to the earlier flower studies, the shading is darker and the forms more distinct. Moreover, the composition seems to be a freeform fantasy rather than a study from life. The style of that fantasy is baroque and even rococo. That is, the drawing is near to Charlot's main artistic work at the time, the "album conte XVII s.," his Cubistic analyses of some eighteenth-century prints.¹³⁷

8.2.1.1.Ovide

Charlot carefully labeled his sketchbook *d'après les Métamorphoses d'Ovide, Amsterdam 1732* and dated it from January 1921 to May 1921.¹³⁸ He considered it an important stage of his study of art-making:

So I passed actually as far as art is concerned that first trip to Mexico in looking through the books of my Uncle Louis. He had some rather rare things. One of the books that I communed with was the *Metamorphoses* of Ovide. It was in French, 1730, if I remember, and it had been illustrated very lavishly by François Boucher and men of his generation. And I made, I still have, I think you've seen that sketchbook which is entirely full of what we could call, roughly speaking, Cubist translations of those rococo engravings.

...

I was very strongly—we were just speaking about Cubism—I was still very strongly in what I would call a Cubist mood in which there was a sort of alchemy of picturemaking that didn't need any excitement from the outside. And I think that little notebook, which is really the most that I have to bring as plastic fruits or plastic results of that first Mexican stay, is very definitely a digging into the rules, the abstract rules or the mechanical rules of picture-making. Before getting into things that were either picturesque or social or human, I had to find a way of putting together the machinery that would make a picture. And that was my stage at the time. I think I would have done exactly the same thing if I had been in Paris that I did in Mexico, that is, just finding out first what the rules of game were for a man who was going to do pictures. (Interview May 14, 1971)

Charlot considered the sketchbook an example of his learning from the old masters:

But I have upstairs, or you have now in that box we gave you, a whole notebook, which, incidentally, was done on my first trip to Mexico—that's why it's so difficult to date things properly—and which is entirely made after copies of the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid in a very beautiful eighteenth-century edition that my uncle Louis Labadie had. So I used the book to make what I considered copies of...some are, I think, Fragonard, some are by Boucher. And when you look at the book, there is no doubt that—a book of copies, my copies—there is no doubt that it is done along certain lines by a young man who understood Analytical Cubism. But nevertheless, for me, that thing, like the copies of Greco, was a way of understanding eighteenth-century rococo masters. Of course, in retrospect there is perhaps more of myself in *my* El Grecos and *my* Bouchers than of these Old Masters, but I learned a lot, really, by copying their things.

...

But with Boucher I learned some rather very complicated ways of composing, and

through Boucher, that is, through rococo masters, I went rather deep into the precursors of the rococo, which are the baroque masters. Now that thing was good for me in a way, by contrast, because it emptied myself of those desires of using too much rococo–baroque elements in my things, and maybe that’s where the so-called label of “primitive” came to me. But before I could truly be a “primitive,” I had to go through those more elaborated styles and at least have a working understanding of them. (Interview October 18, 1970)

Charlot always thought it was odd that he had made this study on his first trip to Mexico: “The first trip to Mexico I did nothing at all. I was stuck aesthetically in eighteenth-century France” (Morse 1976: 19). I believe there were two reasons for this. The first was the particular stage of Charlot’s stylistic development, moving from what he called his Nabi-Gilde style to a more Cubistic one. When he returned to France in May 1921, he produced several completely Cubist works. The second reason was, I believe, emotional. The idea of leaving France was traumatic, and Charlot was clinging to his French heritage.

Charlot’s copies are elaborate and original. They are stylistic developments of the Impressionistic drawings he had created in Paris in 1920. Like them, these drawings seem to have an overall ambient tone, but it is created by means very different from the earlier pencil strokes, which were so light as to contrast only slightly with the paper itself. On the contrary, in the *Métamorphoses*, the tonal range has been increased all the way to areas of black, and sharp tonal contrasts are used for chiaroscuro effect. In order to maintain a unified tone, Charlot releases his most virtuoso drawing techniques, employing a large variety of directions and tones in the strokes. This uncharacteristic display accords with the showiness of the originals and reproduces their scintillation.

Charlot was copying the prints in order to study their mechanics, their composition in all its baroque complication. He first renders the composition more visible by analyzing the image into areas and accentuating those areas by increasing the contrast between them. The result for such Baroque compositions is a faceted surface that resembles works of Analytical Cubism. For Charlot, this process was revealing the perennial rules of composition beneath superficial differences of style. Charlot chose an especially faceted drawing (number 27) to make into a print, *After METAMORPHOSES d’OVIDE* (Morse number 26).

Charlot’s analysis is, nonetheless, personal because he stresses elements that characterize his own art. The first is a strong directionality. Charlot’s own lines project their direction, convey a thrust, and Charlot appreciated that quality in other artists, whether copying Degas or Maya murals. In *Métamorphoses* number 59, the man precipitates himself on the woman, his torso perpendicular to the diagonal he descends. This directionality enables Charlot to extract the main lines of the geometric composition that organizes the faceted surface, in this case, a horizontal X of crossing diagonals.¹³⁹ Moreover, these lines and thus the composition often describe three dimensions, adding a further level of complexity. In perhaps a depiction of the flood, a woman passes a baby up to a man. The movement is an ascending diagonal, but also one that moves from the foreground towards the background. That is, the

composition is simultaneously two- and three-dimensional, and the very complexity adds to the narrative a sense of desperate effort. Such compositions are virtuoso displays, a fact flaunted in number 81 with the three-dimensional angle of the arrow or dart that provides the clue to the converging interplay of two- and three-dimensional diagonals.¹⁴⁰ Finally, Charlot adds a personal sense of bulk in his strong distortions of limbs.¹⁴¹ Charlot does not, however, absorb his models into his own style. On the contrary, he revels in their uninhibited stylistic flamboyance and the blatant grandiosity of their multileveled compositions.¹⁴² Charlot captured not only the intellect, but the gusto of baroque art. As he stated in our interview of October 18, 1970, he got it out of his system. An especially large drawing of February 1921, *Copy of Boucher's "Metamorphoses d'Ovide,"* suggests, however, that he might have planned a large painting at one time.¹⁴³

Charlot returned to the *Métamorphoses*, number 27, in 1922 for his only dry point (Morse number 26). The faceted image was appropriate to the medium. Charlot's lines are even finer than in the drawing, at times approaching the microscopic without losing their regularity. Without losing any baroque business, Charlot clarified the image further by almost imperceptible touches. For instance, the woman's left hand is now entirely in the light, and the shadow on her right hand has been lightened; as a result, her whole form is easier to read. Moreover, Charlot has emphasized even further the distorted bulk of the woman's left leg and added strength to the man's. That is, Charlot has continued to appropriate the images ever more to his own stylistic concerns. The limits were, however, clear, and Charlot never worked in dry point again or allowed himself such boisterous bravura. In fact, the dry point may be a deliberate contrast to the very different woodblock prints he was creating at the time. The print was part of his farewell to his French period.

8.3.

PARIS AND MEXICO

Charlot and his mother left Mexico on the *Flandre* on Friday May 6 for St. Nazaire by way of Havana, Coruña, and Santander ("Ecos del Puerto" May 4, 1921; May 7, 1921). The only record of the trip may be a caricature of a woman with a young boy from *Sketchpad 1919–1921*, on which Charlot noted "en mer. Mai 1920" 'at sea. May 1920.' Since Charlot made no ocean voyage in May 1920—he was just leaving the army and returning to Paris—I believe this is the earliest example of his misdating his trip. The little boy seems very much tied to his mother's apron strings. Did Charlot feel he was being attached to his mother at this time?

Charlot's career prospects had improved since he left Paris at the end of 1920. In January 1921, Pierre du Colombier had published a long laudatory passage on Charlot in *La Revue Critique*, and in April, C. de Cordis had published "L'Art religieux de Jean Charlot" in *La Revue Moderne*:

it is between the two trips to Mexico or between coming back from Mexico and going back to Mexico that I showed my—I painted and showed my large picture—*Amitié*, that sort of a gouache at the salons and so on, and got my first, actually, reports on myself as an artist. (Interview May 14, 1971)

Charlot prepared carefully to submit works to the Salon d'Automne. On the back of a 1917 drawing is preserved a list of possibilities:

“Exposition Octobre—grav. s. bois, fragment fresque, étoffe rouge.

Legendre.

tapisserie?

Etude dessin”¹⁴⁴

‘October Exhibition—wood engravings, fresco fragment, rust-colored cloth.

Legendre.

tapestry?

Study drawing.’

The wood engravings are probably the *Chemin de Croix*, which Charlot had already exhibited. I have discussed the fresco fragment above. The rust-colored cloth and the tapestry would be more work in liturgical designs, and the “Study drawing” is unidentifiable. The work that Charlot eventually exhibited was “Legendre,” which I argue below was the original title of *L’Amitié*. But that work would be praised in print only after Charlot had left for Mexico, in *La Revue Moderne* of February 15, 1922. Even though Charlot’s prospects had changed in Paris, no change was made in the decision to leave. Charlot’s own view of his situation in 1921 was different from that of 1920. Before he left for Mexico, Charlot saw a priest slight his *Chemin* at its exhibition; however, the *Chemin* had now received a laudatory review:

I remember that *that* is one of the things, that I remember very distinctly, that didn’t endear the cloth, shall we say, to myself or to myself as an artist. However, the thing was well received. I think it was shown the same year that I showed my wood sculptures that also received some medals, awards, and even sales. So it was a good beginning as far as being a Paris artist showing in Paris exhibitions.¹⁴⁵

In the above passage and in our interview of October 18, 1970, Charlot was thinking of his success in prewar exhibitions as well:

JPC: You really didn’t have the feeling you could live, say, in designing. So many of your interests were in things that could have made money. For instance, church decoration or vestment designing, things like that.

JC: Yes, those things actually went well, if you want, from a financial point of view. I showed at the Pavillon Marsan—that was the Decorative Arts—got, as you say, sort of a medal and recognition. And every one of these sculptures, really, that I did—they were direct carved wood and polychromed—sold and, I think, sold for a good price at the time. That is, I perhaps was on my way to make a living with my art. I think it would have been probably the direct carving rather than the painting that would have become my career then.

Without the obligation to support his mother, Charlot could have stayed in Paris, lived like a poor young artist, and pursued his career. Instead, he and his mother were liquidating their assets and

making a bad job of it. As I described in an earlier chapter, Anne left her affairs in the hands of a man who was later convicted of fraud and who emptied her safe-deposit box. Anne had failed to tell Odette about the box, although she gave Odette's name to the bank! The incapacity in business matters of both Charlot and his mother would continue to trouble them to the end of their lives.

8.3.1. ART

While in Paris, Charlot was intensely productive. Before he "went back to Mexico for good" (Morse supplement: 2), he was able to continue his earlier studies, to produce several works that showed new directions, and to sum up his French period in his masterpiece *L'Amitié*.

I have discussed above Charlot's continuation of his nude studies. Cubism was the basis for Charlot's most extensive stylistic explorations during this period, but he did paint one work in the mode of children's art, then being used by some fine artists as an alternative direction. In *Garden Park with Blue Chair*, Charlot makes his intention clear.¹⁴⁶ The viewer is placed in the position of the artist seated at a yellow table on which one of his watercolors of a stick figure has been laid below a brush and a bowl of water. The painting that the artist/viewer has done is, however, that of a child. The viewer looks up from the table and sees the park before him through the eyes of the child artist. Colors are bright and fresh. Space flows as glutinously and buildings tilt as unexpectedly as in Charlot's German cityscapes. A man walking a dog becomes a hunter, endowed incongruously with a rifle, and a little girl at the far end of a path turns into a lemon-yellow dream. The uninhibited vision of the child is recorded with great manual skill, even when employing childish formulas, like wavy blue lines for water. Indeed, the adult's hand pierces through in the delicate brushing of the central bush at the side of the path. The cognoscenti will recognize the allusion in the childishly simplified flowerbeds to Martine-like stylizations of individual flowers. But Charlot has remained faithful to the childlike thinking of the putative artist: the child does not draw the adult's strong distinction between the natural and the man-made. Rather, chair and table legs turn and twist like vines, and buildings lean like tree trunks. The whole world and everything in it participates in the exuberantly colored flow of energy. I am reminded of Charlot as a young child copying both nature and art indifferently with the sovereign freedom of first sight.

Garden Park with Blue Chair is also evidence of Charlot's project of adapting devices of folk and other unconventional arts to high-art purposes. For instance, he places the child artist's stick figure so as to invite comparison with the more "realistic" man in black in the background: the viewer thus compares and contrasts the childish means of expression with more developed art. Stick figures return the viewer to the earliest ages of art, to the minimum needed to depict an object. In Charlot's experience, they could embody the mystery of art:

this power [of Transubstantiation at Mass] seemed to me as natural, though more sublime, than the power I had of scribbling matchmen in the margins of my school books. (Summer 1951)

Charlot will use stick figures of a man and a dog in his modernistic Estridentista print *Esquina: Cover* of 1923 (Morse number 46). which I will discuss in the next volume along with the more extensive use of stick figures in Charlot's work.

8.3.1.1. Cubist works

Charlot had been exposed to Cubism since his childhood and stated in our interview of September 19, 1970, that "I did a few things that you could call, well, in a Cubist language. That was still pretty early, before 1920." Charlot's *Self-Portrait, Cubist Style* of January 21–24, 1919, is the clearest surviving example of such a work, although Charlot may have felt such analytical gouaches as *Michel* and *Bihain* of February 1920 were "in a Cubist language." Charlot apparently began his intensive study of Cubism in 1920, which stimulated him to make his Cubistic analyses of eighteenth-century prints while in Mexico from January to May 1921. Late during his return trip to Paris, he wrote informally on Cubism and created several works that were completely Cubist in style.

The earliest works, I believe, were those in a genre that Charlot used for stylistic exploration: the nude. I have discussed above the non-Cubist nudes he was drawing at this time. *Standing Female Nude Model, full front* is a transition between those nudes and the fully Cubist ones.¹⁴⁷ Charlot is still studying the relation of the breasts to the rib cage and belly. Just as in his earliest attempt—*Two female nude studies* on the verso of *Commandant de Coligny*, probably from the *Sketchpad 1919–1921*—he turns the breasts into circles and tries to connect them with lines to the rest of the body. The result is uncharacteristically indecisive. The rib cage is unconvincing as anatomy or design. An awkwardly placed upside-down triangle marks the waist. Charlot is more successful with the outline of the belly than he was earlier, but the interior X-lines and the negative-positive bellybutton make no clear sense. Charlot is more assured with the strong thighs and legs, although a number of erased lines on the side of the legs and feet reveal that he had to try several possibilities before he arrived at a solution. He seems to have modified the upper body to correspond to the lower: he started with the hands behind the head and then lower down on the back before settling on them being held high on the back. The drawing does have interesting points. The knees, always a subject of interest to Charlot, are simple yet originally designed, suggesting the greater abstraction of the next drawings. A correspondence is created between the downward tilt of the pubic triangle and the inner curvature of the thighs down to the knees. The face is highly abstract: an oval with the bar of the nose descending from the straight, symmetrical eyebrows all the way to the chin. I am reminded of the later faces by Alexei Jawlensky (1864–1941).

Charlot did not include *Standing Female Nude Model, full front* on his list of works for 1921. The next two are, I believe, listed under "dessins" 'drawings' as "2 nues cubist." 'two Cubist nudes': *Standing Female Nude Model, full front, 20A* and *Standing Female Nude Model, full front, 20B*.¹⁴⁸ They are dated August 1921, and are of the same model used in the earlier drawing, recognizable from her original horizontal hairdo. Similarities can be found between this earlier drawing and the two Cubist ones; for instance, one foot faces the viewer and the other is turned in profile. I believe the two Cubist drawings were done immediately after *Standing Female Nude Model, full front* to solve the problems that arose from that earlier drawing. That is, in 1920, Charlot turned primarily to closer observation in order

to solve the problems that had arisen from his premature schematization of the nude. In late 1921, he turned primarily to a more intense stylization, to Cubism, in order to solve them. The numbering “20A” and “20B” suggests earlier drawings that are now lost and corresponds to an increasing stylization. That is, Charlot was seeing how far he could push the Cubist language.

Both drawings are perfectly accomplished, as if Charlot had been using Cubism all his life. The pencil work is particularly fine and nuanced. Moreover, Charlot joins Cubism to his own observation and to the concerns found in his contemporary non-Cubist drawings. As a result, the drawings are original creations rather than exercises or copies.

“20A” was, I believe, done directly from the model and solves his long-time problem of stylizing the torso, using both Cubism and observation. Curiously, the breast is treated realistically, comparatively speaking. Charlot has found the proper line to join rib cage to belly, a line that is a natural result of the bilateral symmetry of the human body. He has observed a vertical line that rises from the center of the pubic triangle towards the navel, a line created or accentuated by childbirth. He extends this line to the navel and then from the navel up to the central bone of the rib cage. The ribs are then simplified into round-cornered rectangles on either side of the central bone, and the belly is indicated by a three-dimensionally protruding rounded form. Charlot has thus solved his problem by a combination of closer observation and more intense stylization. Throughout his life, he will continue to devise further solutions to the formal problem of the torso.

The pubic triangle lent itself particularly to Cubism, and Charlot had already related it to the inner thighs. In “20A”, the hips to the knees are analyzed into straight-lined sections that are classically Cubist but recognizably connected to the anatomy. The same method can be found in the head, legs, and feet. However, the rounded shapes in those sections—and indeed throughout the drawing—indicate again Charlot’s anatomical concern. Obviously, belly, outer thighs, and leg muscles are realistically curved, although simplified. More unusual is Charlot’s use of X-ray vision to reveal the skeleton. He was doing this also in such non-Cubist drawings as *Female Nude, Studio Model, Lying on Side, with shading*, described above. In the Cubist drawing, however, the skeleton is not only revealed through the skin but stylized. For instance, the inner ankle knob on the left foot is turned into a circle and enlarged. Knees, left elbow, outer left wrist knob, and head are similarly treated. As can now be recognized, Charlot has treated the breast realistically because he wants to use circles to indicate skeletal elements. These circles are connected by the straight lines of the bones. The X-rayed skeleton is treated more realistically in the right arm and hand, and more Cubistically in the left. In the same way, the left thighbone is connected more realistically to its hip socket, and the right with more stylization. The pelvis framing the rounded, but not circular belly, has the shape of the bone. Just as in his non-Cubist nudes of the same time, Charlot presents the whole human body: the skeletal scaffold and the attached muscle and flesh. He is particularly drawn to the knees—and secondarily to the elbows—where the complicated bone structure is most apparent under the skin and where the muscular attachments are complex but clear in function. Thus, Charlot is interested in the human body as a functioning organism and also in the different ways that a portion of the body can be seen: for instance, the right side of the rib cage is presented as rounded, and the left as angular; the right side of the hip is presented as flesh, and the left as bone.

Charlot is still interested in the correspondence between the upper and lower body. In order to increase the bulk of the upper body to balance that of the hips and legs, he devises a pose of the arms that extends them sideways and towards the front. He has retained the up-pointing triangle of the left shoulder from the earlier, non-Cubist *Standing Female Nude Model, full front*, even though it makes the least anatomical sense of all the stylizations in “20A.” The head is tilted towards the model’s right to balance the extension of her left foot seen in profile; the horizontal hairdo increases the similarity of form between the two parts of the body. Moreover, despite the Cubist analysis and X-ray vision, the model retains a three-dimensional bulk, and both the shading around her body and the floor she stands on place her in a three-dimensional space. Charlot does, however, preserve the two-dimensionality of the design. He expresses the recession of the model’s right leg behind the left by revealing the diagonal of the leg bone in X-ray vision and then straightening it to correspond to that of the left leg; that is, he shows the leg simultaneously in two different positions. Finally, the strong directional quality of Charlot’s drawing creates a sense of movement atypical of Cubism; for instance, the straight lines of the thighs flow into the swirling eddies of the knees. “20A” is as original and as expressive of Charlot’s concerns as his nonCubist nudes; as a result, it is a personal contribution to Cubism itself.

I believe that “20A” was drawn directly from the model; that is, it was based on observation. “20B” is, however, a stylistic intensification of “20A” without further observation: for instance, the realistic breast of “20” is transformed into a geometric circle in “20B” and the geometric regularity of the knee designs has been increased. Throughout “20B,” the anatomical observation of “20A” is suppressed in favor of the further development of that drawing’s stylistic abstractions. A clear example is the suppression in “20B” of most of the left foot of “20A” in order to give greater prominence and geometric regularity to the knob of the inner ankle. The linear analysis of the inner thighs has been made much more abstract, and the belly has been regularized as two concentric circles and further analyzed into linear areas. The complicated attachment of the right knee to the leg in “20A” has been simplified into two curiously Léger-like striped tubes connecting at an angle. The right foot has been both stylized and raised to the level of the left thigh, exaggerating the recession of the right foot, which was deemphasized in “20A.” The result of such changes is a larger number of elements in the drawing that are not anatomically attached. The up-tilted left shoulder fits better in “20B” than in “20A.” Charlot has also allowed himself much more room for distortion: the elbows and arms have been enlarged unrealistically in accordance with his desire to make the upper body as bulky as the lower. The stylization of “20B”—its distance from “20A”—increases from the top to the bottom. I believe that Charlot started at the top and became increasingly bold as he worked his way towards the bottom.

A major difference between “20A” and “20B” is that the figure in the former is an integral form within a space whereas, in the latter, the figure itself has been partially disintegrated in order to integrate it into the background or the whole composition. Charlot will use the disintegrating potential of Cubism for narrative purposes in *Bullet*. Again, “20B” intensifies elements in “20A.” For instance, the left foot of “20A” is rendered with the aid of background shading. The top right arc of the ankle knob circle is shaded with a dark band that arises diagonally from it; that shading helps distinguish the knob from the leg above it and the top of the foot below it, shaded darker than the background. The side of the foot is

light, and the bottom is indicated by an irregular triangle of shading descending diagonally from the ankle knob. Finally, the dark toe is set against a nonrepresentational reserve: an area of light has been fabricated in the background by a pencil line and exterior shading. “20B” then suppresses the anatomical elements and leaves only a more regular ankle knob, the upper and lower shadings radiating from it, and the nonrepresentational reserve. The result is an abstract design. Moreover, the shaded radiations have been extended into the background, thereby integrating the foot into the background and more fully into the whole design. Another example from “20A” is the dark triangle on the right hip, one angle of which connects with a larger triangle created by background shading. In “20B,” the hip triangle is no longer held in by the form of the figure but extends beyond it, and the shape of the background triangle is exactly the same; the result is the extension of the figure into the background. Similar variations of “20A” can be found around the whole figure in “20B.”

The second means of disintegrating the solid figure in order to integrate it more fully into the background and composition is the use of lines that cross through both the figure and the background. In “20A,” the right lower line of the pubic triangle is connected by lines upwards to the top of the hip and downward across the left thigh. In “20B,” that line has been straightened and accentuated by alternating light and dark; it also extends beyond the hip and beyond any representational remainders of the thigh. All through the drawing, such lines have been lifted onto a plane that floats above the other elements. The figure, especially from the breast down, is disintegrated into different planes, anticipating Charlot’s later gouaches *Music* and *Bullet*.

The lines and outlines of the planes embody a geometric composition of great complexity, only a few points of which will be discussed here. The principle appears to be that circles form centers from which lines radiate. Examples include the ankle knob described above, and the top of the right hip from which several lines radiate. These circles are often joints from which limbs radiate; for instance, the right knee connects to a leg and foot whose recession is now emphasized rather than deemphasized as in “20A.” Similarly, the main compositional lines—across the pubic triangle, the top of the belly, and the top of the left arm—fan out diagonally from a center about 2-3/4” from the left edge of the drawing at the level of the upper dark triangle inside the incomplete circle of the right elbow. These fanning diagonals, descending from left to right, push against other lines, modifying their position. The outside line of the left hip has been pushed far beyond the figure to become part of the background, although it still radiates from the circle of the left knee. The vertical across the belly of “20A”—also accented with alternating light and dark—has been turned to the right, using the navel as the point on which it turns. As a result, that line is now detached from the central bone of the rib cage; the bone has been turned into a broad band, tilted to the right, and extended to the bottom of the belly. The tilt of the vertical on the belly creates a potential kaleidoscope effect: to change the composition, one need only turn the circles and thus their radiating lines. A comparison with the color version, *Standing Female Nude Model, full front, gouache*, reveals that the main fanning diagonals represent rays of light being projected from the source outside the picture. Charlot is thus applying to Cubistic, geometric composition the Impressionist idea of light modifying form. For instance, in terms of light, the extension of the left hip would be a shadow; however, in “20B,” the outside line of the left hip itself is pressed outwards. The kaleidoscope effect

applies also to the modification of form that occurs as the position of the light source is changed. Charlot is thus exploring the description of light without the use of either color or tone; he is using means that are conventionally considered antithetical to color and light, that is, geometric composition.

The idea of modification is, therefore, built into the composition itself. Indeed, in its very complication, the composition appears to be realizing simultaneously several of its possibilities. The eye follows lines or jumps from circle to circle, and always seems to find new directions and combinations. The kaleidoscopic complexity is anchored characteristically by the retention of some true horizontals (the baseline and the horizontal at the right knee) and verticals (the left leg). Charlot would use these same compositional devices—circles and radiating lines, descending diagonals modifying verticals, the retention of some true verticals and horizontals—in the composition of his first Mexican mural, *The Massacre in the Main Temple*. These devices can indeed be traced back into his earlier works, such as the fifth station of the *Chemin de Croix* (Morse number 16). Similarly, in *The Massacre*, he worked from the top to the bottom, increasing his mastery of the medium as he progressed. Charlot's intense study of Cubism helped him solve not only his problems of designing the nude but also, as he anticipated, those of mural composition.

In his 1921 list under "aquarelles et gouaches" 'watercolors and gouaches,' Charlot listed "1 nu Picasso" '1 Picasso nude.' I believe this is the surviving *Standing Female Nude Model, full front, gouache*, a color version of two previous drawings.¹⁴⁹ Those drawings are based on "Analytical" Cubism, which Charlot was identifying with Picasso. Moreover, Charlot has modified the face of the model so that it now reads as both full front and profile, a Picasso device (e.g., Silver 1989: 134). The gouache illustrates Charlot's interest in the problems of translating tone into color. The gouache is based on "20A" more than "20B", although the latter is used, for instance for the projection of the form of the left thigh. The effect of both drawings is much simplified, and the purpose is more synthetic than analytic; the analysis was done with the drawings, the synthesis with color. Similarly, Charlot has naturalized the anatomy: the right heel is now a curve rather than a straight line, and the light on the thighs follows anatomical curves rather than straight, analytic lines. Charlot has simplified the design into broad shapes that are painted flat and hard edged. Some of the shapes, especially those connected to the anatomy are comparatively simple; others, like the shadows, are almost rococo flourishes, recalling Charlot's study of eighteenth-century prints. Some color areas are based on the nonrepresentational stylistic elements from the drawings, like the background above the left foot and the light rectangle under the smallest right toe. Charlot fills the forms with an unusual combination of nonnaturalistic colors. For instance, the most deeply shaded areas of the body are rendered in a bright orange. The light pastels contrast sharply with the absolute blacks and whites used for some lines and small areas. Both colors and shapes are used to connect figure and background to a degree about halfway between "20A" and "20B."

Some of the areas are numbered, suggesting that the work is preparatory, perhaps for a silkscreen. The use of black lines recalls his bookplate print: "Jean Charlot me crut sien." If the numbers do refer to colors, Charlot hesitated between a lighter and a darker pink; the top areas of pink are the only ones in which two shades are used. The gouache is both bold and decorative, reflecting Charlot's happiness, I believe, in the accomplishments of the drawings. He is also using those accomplishments to

return to a more recognizable treatment of the subject, a tendency that will become a principle of the Mexican Mural Renaissance. This is the direction of Charlot's remarks on the gouache in his lecture, "An Artist Looks Back":

I did things that look suspiciously like what people nowadays call abstractions, abstractions of a certain type. It's not wild; it is ruled; we would say hard edge with a geometry underneath... This is perhaps as far as I went, that particular style, into something that would be considered abstract. Though I loved to do that, I had a certain scruple, because it seems to me that, I said that before, art should be put to other uses than itself. (March 8, 1972)

The scruple was expressed by Charlot in his "de Picasso": the delight in art alone could only be "*un repos entre 2 actes*" 'a relaxation between two acts' for the liturgical artist, who must ultimately deal with important subject matter.

The gouache *St. John the Baptist, Cubist Style, after El Greco* was completed on September 1, 1921, that is, right after the Cubist nudes.¹⁵⁰ The gouache is a Cubist study of El Greco's *St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist* (ca. 1600–1607) in the Prado, Madrid. Charlot has chosen just one figure, but has recognized that the left cloak of the omitted one is important for the composition; he has transformed its curve into a blue area with a gray band, like that around St. John. Charlot discussed the work with me in our interview of October 18, 1970:

JC: Well, it's an analysis of the Old Masters...I was honestly trying to find out the secrets, if you want, of the art of El Greco. Now, of course, it is obvious that I was trying to find these secrets from the point of view of a young painter that had just come to, well, early adulthood in painting, at a time when Cubism was Analytical Cubism...But nevertheless, for me, that thing, like the copies of Greco, was a way of understanding eighteenth-century rococo masters. Of course, in retrospect there is perhaps more of myself in *my* El Grecos and *my* Bouchers than of these Old Masters, but I learned a lot, really, by copying their things.

JPC: Why did you choose El Greco to copy?

JC: Well, he was very much in the air. I told you that Maurice Barrès had written not much before, I think 1912—you can check on the date—the *Secret de Tolède*,¹⁵¹ which was a sort of rediscovery of El Greco, who had been in bad odor or had been forgotten, if you want, through the nineteenth century. And that tied up at the time El Greco was boosted—I think justly so, of course, but perhaps more for his mystical qualities than for his art as a painter—and that tied up with our desire to find Masters that could help us on the Gilde Notre Dame to find our own liturgical art form. So that there was at least that religious angle, that mystical angle, that singled out El Greco from other people.

The work is a study in the sense that it identifies individual elements in El Greco's work and clarifies them by exaggeration. The highlighting of the cloud on St. John's right has been turned into a gray band; the highlighting above and behind his head has been turned into a triangular ray. Forms have been simplified. St. John's toes have been suppressed. The already ovular lamb at his feet has been geometrized like Charlot's Dalmatian in *Moi* of 1919 and the sheep in the textile designs of 1920. The landscape on St. John's right has been reduced from four levels to three, and all landscape details have been suppressed. The two huts in the background are now one, the two sides flanking the door performing the same function as the two huts in the original. Simplification and clarification has also been applied to the colors by making them stronger and reducing the tonal range in opposition to El Greco's subtle application of mixed colors. The dark section behind the opening in the cloud on St. John's left has been made an absolute black rather than El Greco's variegated gray.

The above methods are applied for the purpose of studying the means of El Greco's achievement. Charlot is, however, interested particularly in certain aspects of El Greco's work—those already apparent in his Cubist nudes—and he uses the means developed in those works to articulate what he finds in El Greco. First, Charlot studies the relation of figure to background. For instance, in the original, St. John's left shoulder is connected to the cross-staff he is holding by a curving line of cloud. Charlot creates a band between the shoulder and the crosspiece. El Greco uses his feathery brushstroke, especially on the pelt St. John is wearing, to merge figure with background. Charlot cannot use this means because he is emphasizing form; instead, he makes the background forms as strong and solid as a figure and strengthens their color. In contrast, the figure of St. John is more complicated in form and disintegrated by sharp color contrasts and highlights. Charlot then reintegrates the figure by adding more contrast between it and the background; for instance, he extends the highlight on St. John's upper left arm down to the hand. The connection to the background is then provided by the similarity to the highlight around the black background shape on the right margin of the picture. That is, because he is changing El Greco's style, Charlot must at times use contrary means to create similar effects; the contrast clarifies the means used by each artist. Similarly, the feathery brushstroke of El Greco is replaced by late Cubist stippling or the application of small dots of color.

Just as in "20B", Charlot is interested in the way a line modifies another when they meet. A dramatic example is the angle produced in St. John's cross-staff by the line of the background hill, similar to the angle produced when a stick is put in the water. Charlot is also interested in nonnaturalistic coloring. The bright yellow of the highlights recalls the orange of the shadows in his gouache Cubist nude.

Most obviously, Charlot is interested in the nude and removes the front of St. John's pelt-clothing to study his body, leaving the cape as a dark shadow. The most obvious difference is that Charlot has shortened El Greco's attenuated figure. The original body below the neck is about seven and a half times the length of the head; Charlot's version is five times. As Charlot has shortened the figure, he has also broadened it. The total length of the El Greco figure is about seven times the width at the shoulder; Charlot's is a little more than three times. Moreover, the hips and legs that constitute about five eighths of the length of El Greco's figure have been reduced to less than half of Charlot's. As a result, the

mystically attenuated figure by El Greco has become stocky, and its slim muscles now bulge like a bodybuilder's. As the figure has been pushed down, it has spread out. Charlot is in the process of moving from his elongated style to his shortened and broadened one. In his 1922 print, *Saint Martin, after El Greco* (Morse number 39), Charlot will apply the same stylistic change to the two figures and even the horse of the Master's *St. Martin and the Beggar* of 1597–1599 (National Gallery, Washington).

St. John's pose is similar to that of the model in the Cubist nudes: the right hand is raised to the chest, and the foot seen head-on is slightly behind the one seen in profile. Charlot modifies the original to bring the pose even closer to that of the female nude: for instance, the foot in profile is twisted even further. He also distorts elements in his characteristic way; he enlarges the hands as he has done in his Cubist and non-Cubist nudes, exaggerates the muscles, and pays special attention to the knees. The belly is again treated as a circle, with a line connecting the navel to the central bone of the rib cage. The pubic area is curiously female, with its central shadow masking the genitals. As in his textile designs, Charlot has again used the medieval convention of a bulge to indicate the genitals. The maleness is expressed more in the treatment of the thighs: rather than the corresponding concavity of the female model, the thighs bulge out convexly, as if symbolizing the penis.

Color is essential to Charlot's treatment of the figure and indeed the whole work. The figure is joined to the background by using mainly colors that are less vivid than those that surround it. The stippling inside the figure corresponds to that of the background. The middle section of the body is colored differently from the top and bottom. As in the gouache Cubist nude, strong highlights and other color contrasts help disintegrate the figure. As stated earlier, this blending of the figure into the background is countered by equally strong elements that distinguish it, like the black cape and the backlight on the figure's left side. Those distinguishing elements are themselves integrated into the whole effect by their similarity to the simplified and strongly colored forms of the background. The whole composition can be seen as a study of figure and ground or, more precisely, the means of integrating a principal figure into a total composition.

Charlot's study of El Greco is so different from the original that he appears to be exploring himself more than the older artist. This process of assimilation will intensify in Charlot's 1922 print *Saint John, after El Greco* (Morse number 38). The gouache illustrates again how Charlot studied other artists for his own purposes.

Charlot's gouaches *Music* and *Bullet* are painted in an extreme version of the flat style he described as *Planisme* in his "de Picasso," quoted above. In his note on Lhote, he described that artist's "Etude des valeurs surtout à leurs points de jonction" 'Study of values especially at the points of juncture,' and wished the artist would sweep all that away, creating a "painting flat as a carpet." The edges of areas in Charlot's gouaches are clean, with no changes in value and with none of the rough stroking that gives earlier Cubist paintings their shaggy look. Planes overlap less than in most Cubist paintings, such as Lhote's *Tableau* (1921; Gamwell 1980: ill. 30), and less space is suggested in their overlap. Even small windows that open onto the sky—the sky with flying birds in *Music* and with stars in *Bullet*—do not create a deep space because of their coloring. The result is an extreme flatness like a

carpet or a puzzle. Charlot remembered doing the two gouaches easily and felt the style was simply in the air (Tabletalk February 18, 1972). He did not feel he was creating a mere study or copying: “But perhaps, while I was doing it, I was neck and neck with other things being done...I find the things I like are around 1921 and later, which is after *Nude*” (Tabletalk February 3, 1972)

Music fulfills its pianist aim as described in Charlot’s “de Picasso”: “Le tableau existe physiquement comme une décoration agréable...ce but décoratif” ‘The picture exists physically as an agreeable decoration...this decorative end.’ The subject was appropriate to the pianist style: “Elle s’adresse aux facultés spirituelles sans alourdissement d’objet (cf. musique...)” ‘It addresses itself to the spiritual faculties without being weighed down by the subject (cf. music...)’ ¹⁵² Charlot had at least planned to use music for relaxation on his return to Paris from the Occupation: “Soir : repos. musique. lecture de repos” ‘Evening: rest. music. restful reading.’ The general mood is relaxed and sunny.

The picture can best be understood when studied from bottom up. The base of the picture is a horizontal band with two colors: an ochre and a light blue. The viewer is reminded immediately of earth and sky or physical and mental or spiritual. This impression is confirmed by the next horizontal band. Above the ochre is a keyboard, the physical element of music. Over the blue is a black square area inside of which is a bar of musical notation, the mental side of music. The notes and staff have geometric forms: circles and straight vertical and horizontal lines. Above the black square is the only perfect geometric form above the first two horizontal levels: a circle. The rounded bottom left corner of the black square gives the impression that it will roll over the keyboard; the slightly tilted line of the left side of the square continues up through the whole picture. At the top, it is met by an ochre band arching from the other direction. Music is created by the opposing pressures of the mind or spirit on the material and the resistance, as it were, of the material to the impositions of the mind.

Between the black square and the keyboard is an irregular triangle of a neutral color. The right side of the triangle adjoins the left side of the black square. The left side of the triangle extends from the curved, bottom left corner of the black square. From this meeting ground of mental and material, music arises and unfurls in a curve. In the same way, above the square, the circle begins to divide in two like a living cell, and then turns into a sparkle of single notes. The pink circle in the middle of it being divided resembles the side of the guitar that Charlot depicted in his bedroom or studio; Charlot described the same shape being used by Picasso to represent a violin (e.g., Cabanne 2001: 90), as quoted below.

At the outer edges of music are experience and natural observation: birds, fish, and trees. The mind tries to impose order on these, but as it does, the rectilinear categories change in shape and color. As one swirls closer to the meeting of mind and matter, the forms become more abstract and the curves of matter invade and color the rigidities of thinking. Mysteriously, mind and matter are neither entirely separate nor entirely united. They thus interact simultaneously with each other and themselves. The artist intensifies that interaction until new material and mental forms are created—new but communicative and meaningful for other human beings.

The viewer of *Music* sits at the piano just as the child artist sits at the table in the contemporaneous *Garden Park with Blue Chair* of September 10, 1921. Instead of a childhood drawing

on the table, the viewer has the notes in his head. Instead of looking out over a garden with the eyes of the child artist, the viewer sees the music being played in his own material and mental space. The fingers that touch the keys move to the same impulse as those that hold the brush. The music being played is sunny, able to penetrate even the darkest areas of the mind with unfurling bolts of light. *Music* resembles the sunny side of *Processional*.

But sunniness and relaxation were not for Charlot the most serious purposes of art, and treating the subject matter as a mere point-of-departure went ultimately against his grain. He would write in late 1922 about art's "rapports av musique" 'relationship with music': "le sujet : possibilités : inférieures à littérature" 'the subject: possibilities: inferior to literature.' More than any other work of the period, *Music* makes the impression of being an experiment.

Bullet is a more important work, with its essential subject matter, narrative, and basis in a traumatic personal experience that Charlot wanted to communicate to others: being shot at.¹⁵³ As the bullet heads directly towards the viewer, his world is shattered around it. The decomposition of objects by Cubist analysis is used as a visual pun for the imminent destruction of the world of the human target:

the early Cubism, the faceted Cubism, analytical Cubism, really was an exercise in cutting things that were one and making them into multiple facets, but also in multiple pieces, that is, it was a sort of explosion. There are some images of bottles, there are some sculptures, in fact, by Picasso and so on of bottles that are really the bottle exploded, so that—it sounds like a pun, but it wasn't a pun—it seemed proper that in the war where those explosions were around us, Cubism would have been one of the ways of representing this disappearance—maybe not disappearance of the body but disappearance of the units of the body into multiples, into fragments. And that is probably why I did that thing...in which the soldier, because that is the subject of the picture, the soldier is literally exploded. So in a sense it is realistic; in a sense it is not realistic, but it is, as I said, nearly a pun: that is, taking the faceting of Cubism and using it to represent death on the battlefield.¹⁵⁴

Charlot emphasized the painting's personal meaning in his lecture "An Artist Looks Back":

Naturally, just because it was, shall we say, in the air, I could talk the Cubist language even when what I wanted to say was very personal and very dramatic. This is, for example, the summing up, the summing up of my, I would say more than experiences, simply my being in the First World War. And it has to do with the... of course, that gray-blue uniform, with the wounds, with death, with those searchlights in the dark of the night that were there all the time, because we already had, not so much the planes at the time as the balloons, zeppelins and what not. And it is interesting to show you this because even though it looks like a stylized affair and could be said at first sight to be art for art, it's actually the one picture in which I summed up some of the most tragic among my life's experiences. (March 8, 1972)

The bullet, seen head-on, is divided by radiating diagonals into six spaces, which then are externally related in various ways to disconnected planes. Radiating diagonals were a frequent compositional device in the art of the time, especially to depict explosions.¹⁵⁵ But in *Bullet*, unusually, the long rectangular diagonal planes are set turning like the blades of a propeller. The effect is of a spinning missile shattering the surface of the picture like a pane of glass and making the victim-viewer's head spin. The composition, unusually complex even for Charlot, makes its areas move without losing their connection to the rectangle of the painting. For this, a number of sophisticated devices are used. For instance, the pink areas of the bullet with the rounded edges at the top and bottom appear to be rotating towards the right of the viewer, but they are truly vertical. The illusion of rotation is created by the shape and placement of the straight-edged areas of the bullet: the edges of the green areas are indeed tilted, and the red areas are placed one above and one below a diagonal that cuts across the center of the bullet. By a large number of such devices, the composition creates an impression of disorder that can, on study, be reduced to order. But the impression of disorder is immediate and striking.

Situated on the created planes are diagrammatic emblems,¹⁵⁶ which are explained by Charlot's note, "idéographie aztèque et Gleizes" (*Notebook C*), written in 1921, in late August or after: the subject matter would be articulated by emblems that were inspired by Aztec ideographs or picture writing. Cubists had been and were including within an overall Cubist style patches of realistic detail as well as symbols and simplified signs (not to mention collage). Their purpose was, however, decorative and descriptive rather than narrative, which Charlot wanted to introduce into Cubism. For Charlot, the Aztecs were the masters of narrative ideographs. In *Bullet*, the ideographs designate the scattered thoughts and sights of the victim's shattering mind. Some of the ideographs created by Charlot and mentioned in his note can be found in *Bullet*: searchlights, the negative-positive death's head, playing cards with spots of mud and blood, the German helmet, the red cross and the wooden cross, the tricolor with black-edged death announcement, and a row of ribbons or military decorations.¹⁵⁷ A passage from "de Picasso" (1921a) indicates, however, that Cubist signs were also in his mind:

Puis P. revient au sujet physique (violon, bouteille, etc.) non plus représenté, mais suggéré : exemple : le violon : la *forme* est rappelée par 2 doubles cercles [FIGURE] l'un ombré l'autre lumineux. et le volute [FIGURE] du manche. L'esprit reconstitue l'ensemble. La *matière* par des planches placées autour offrant l'idée *bois* qui se superpose à la forme déchiffrée, etc. Les cartes à jouer : tantôt négatif : le blanc du fond représenté par un noir : (à ce propos : perception cérébrale identique des contraires...

'Then P. returns to the physical subject (violin, bottle, etc.) no longer represented, but suggested: example: the violin: the form is evoked by two double circles [FIGURE] one in shadow, the other in light. and the volute [FIGURE] of the neck. The mind reconstitutes the ensemble. The *matter* by some planks placed around offering the idea *wood* which superposes itself on the deciphered form, etc. The playing cards:

sometimes negative: the white of the background represented by a black: (in connection with this: identical cerebral perception of contraries...’

Charlot applied this negative–positive depiction to the skull in *Bullet* and later used the emblem on a warrior’s dance shield in his first fresco, *The Massacre in the Main Temple*; that is, he had not forgotten the ideographic program he outlined in 1921. He would always be interested in Aztec writing and appreciated Amado de la Cueva’s use of ideographs in his Guadalajara murals (*MMR* 311 f.). However, in Mexico, Charlot’s emblems were no longer placed on the planes of a strict Cubist composition but were given a realistic setting.

That a number of ideograms mentioned in “idéographie aztèque et Gleizes” are not used in *Bullet* (and that *Bullet* contains what seems to be a target absent from the notes) shows that that note was made for a much larger work that was never painted: a full statement of Charlot’s feelings about the war. In that larger project, the ideographs divide themselves between the front and the rear, in this case, Paris and home. Although at times less than one hundred miles apart, front and rear were different worlds, and soldiers felt a mixture of longing and resentment for those not doing the actual fighting, as Charlot wrote in *Ex-Voto*:

C’est pour la grand’pitié des quartiers suburbains
où, dans le luxe et la luxure on prend un bain (February 15, 1918)

‘It’s out of great pity for suburbia
where one bathes in luxury and luxuriousness.’

Charlot reveals his bitterness in the ideographs connected to the rear-protected officers of the GHQ and to diplomats in their dickies; and his homesickness in the ideographs of the nightlight and the bedroom slippers. The sarcasm of the soldier is expressed in ideographs of wounds and decorations. Perhaps the “lauriers au naturel” ‘realistic laurels’ recalled the real heroism displayed in the war. The planned painting would have been comprehensive and probably large—Charlot was thinking big with his mural project and with ideas for large oils, like *La Théologie Régulatrice des Arts*, discussed below. That Charlot never completed this large project is regrettable, but in *Bullet*, small though it is, he achieved an authentic and original Cubist composition, adding to Cubism an uncharacteristic emotion and narrative power with few parallels.

8.3.1.2.L’Amitié

Charlot’s large gouache *L’Amitié* is a masterpiece in the medieval sense: a young artist creates a work that displays his education, capacities, and creativity.¹⁵⁸ In it, Charlot absorbed all of his previous influences—notably, medieval art, the Classical tradition, and Cubism—into a unified style. The painting is a summation of his previous work and a basis he would have used, had he stayed in France, for his future work. The painting is ostensibly a portrait of his friend, Legendre: “He is, of course, the fellow who is represented in that big painting, the *Amitié*, the first one that I showed, I think, at the Salon d’Automne” (Interview May 14, 1971). Probably after the break in their friendship, Charlot renamed the

painting, and the new title includes his own self-portrait, painting his friend at Saint Mandé (Interview October 18, 1970): “It’s myself and Legendre together in my garden.”

Charlot worked on the painting over an unusually extended period. The earliest surviving preparatory sketches are from the *Disassembled Sketchpad*, which was started during the Occupation in 1919 and was used into 1920. Since Charlot met Legendre during one of his leaves from the Occupation, he started planning the portrait early in their friendship. He worked on it along with other projects after the Occupation, while Legendre was sharing his studio, and finished it after his return from his exploratory trip to Mexico. Charlot emphasized the long preparation for the painting when I interviewed him on the subject on October 18, 1970:

JPC: Were you trying to do sort of a masterpiece in the old sense as your first piece to show at the Academy, so to speak?

JC: Well, the intention wasn’t especially the showing at the Academy, but I was interested in complex compositions, and of course it was very much that idea that murals have to have more complex compositions than easels. But I didn’t have any wall, and I was really full of the ways of doing of men like Poussin. I remember that I had read that Poussin would establish little puppets with the clothes in a sort of a little theatre and copy those little things to make out his compositions, moving the puppets, raising their arms, or changing the drapes in a certain type of light. And I decided to do something that would put together quite a number of separate studies because I understood that the Old Masters were doing so. Now neither, certainly, the Cubists nor the Impressionists nor the Post-Impressionists had that method of work. And I think I really felt that even though nobody around me was doing it, it was my way of doing. I always have had a tremendous respect for what we like to call the Old Masters, but my respect goes not so much to the people themselves as heroes, if you want to say it, as to their craftsmanship and their approach to things.

So that picture, *L’Amitié*, was large enough and complex enough so that I could put in it together a conglomerate of separate studies. I think I still have around a study, for example, of the door of our garden, the iron grill and so on. I made separate studies of plants, flowers, and whatnot. I still have some of those separate studies of my dog, which is there, Mousmé. It was incidentally a little Mexican hairless. I don’t remember how we got it because we hadn’t been to Mexico then. Studies, of course, of myself—self-portrait painting—and of my friend. And I remember that I had a clay [?] figure on which I put on some bedsheets and so on and draped it to represent the angel. And I felt, of course, I was a Classical painter doing things just like Poussin. Of course, the thing didn’t quite turn out Poussin-like. There are lots of things in there, in fact, that come out of Cézanne and Cubism, but nevertheless at the time, it was an anomaly, I would say, to do things that way.

...and I was scolded by my teachers for doing things that didn't seem quite right to them. And it's a picture, of course, that seems very discreet and sort of quiet, and that is not excited and couldn't excite nowadays anybody at all; but in those days, nevertheless, there was something that was surprising. I think that was one of the reasons why it was accepted. And that something surprising was that I had worked at it from that craftsman's point of view—or Old Master point of view, if you want—by putting together separate studies into one unity, so that there is, if you look at the picture, there is no really moment of the day and there is no, well, shall we say, African sculpture type of thing. It's different, and for me at the time, certainly, it seemed, it seemed close to the French classical seventeenth century, which I was looking at as my model. There is, of course, other things. The angel with the wings and the ribbon that he has and the writing on that sort of a ribbon or banderole are things that come from the liturgical arts, the cathedrals, the stained-glass windows, Maurice Denis, and so on and so forth. But anyhow, for me it was, as you say, my attempt at a masterpiece, that is of putting together the different things I knew of the craft of painting.

The choice of medium was connected to Charlot's other interests at the time:

Well, I think gouache on paper was cheaper than oil on canvas. It would have been difficult to work out a single canvas that size; at least at the time I didn't have a canvas roll that would have been big enough for it, and if you put a seam, you get into difficulties if you don't attempt to paint with impasto and thicknesses and so on to hide the seam. I was also afraid of impasto. I was afraid of oil painting for something that I considered, if you want, a portable mural, and of course the tempera that I used, the gouache that I used, with its matte effect, its impossibility of going into bravura passages, seemed to me to tend to mural, that is, if you want to tend to the texture and the quality of a fresco. Now, I didn't know fresco too much, but I tended to fresco by painting the thing in tempera.

Charlot appreciated the qualities of tempera itself:

Quicker drying tempera (pigment ground with an emulsion) and distemper (also called glue tempera) do not allow for much fumbling. The tempera painter of today is impelled by the salutary limitations of the medium to come back to decisive drawing, sustained local color, hatched modeling, an aesthetic at variance with that of the painter in oils. (1941 Foreword to an Exhibition on Art Techniques)

A study of the surviving preparatory drawings confirms Charlot's memory of his work on *L'Amitié*. They can be grouped into studies for plants, the dog, the angel in a thick robe and holding a banderole, Legendre, and Charlot himself. Studies for the dog and the angel, and perhaps for the artist's hand (as mentioned above), appear already in the *Disassembled Sketchpad*; the general idea for the

painting belongs, therefore, to the early stage of their friendship and the first impression that Legendre made on Charlot.

The process used by Charlot is illustrated by the major surviving example of his preparatory work on the plants of *L'Amitié*: *Unfinished Flower Study*.¹⁵⁹ The composition is similar to the semi-Impressionist *Flowering Plants in Pot*, discussed above—a profusion of leaves and blossoms explodes from a narrow base of vertical stems—and the two works are certainly connected. But *Unfinished Flower Study* is not Impressionistic; on the contrary, the coloring would have been flat and thorough, emphasizing the hard outlines and strong composition. The toughness of the leaves was emphasized by the clear delineation of their semi-rigid fibrous support structures within their contours, areas and details untouched by both *Flowering Plants in Pot* and *L'Amitié*. *Unfinished Flower Study* was designed as an independent work, filling out its horizontal rectangle with a balanced design, and exploring a stylistic possibility that Charlot abandoned. However, he used the left side of the drawing for the plants in the bottom right corner of *L'Amitié*, fitting them into the painting by omitting the details of the leaves, thinning them out, and extending the blossoming sections outwards. Although the right side of *Unfinished Flower Study* was omitted, the viewer still feels its presence because it is needed to balance the left side; that is, the original composition was so strong that even a mere section of it implies the whole. Charlot is using the viewer's half-conscious sense of symmetry as a means of expanding the pictorial impression beyond the limits of the image itself. Just as the viewer would complete mentally an arm that extended beyond the picture frame, so he will complete a composition. As a result, *Unfinished Flower Study* provides more than a few details to *L'Amitié*; it brings much of its independent power to the painting. Other preparatory drawings can be understood in the same way, as discussed below.

Flower Study,¹⁶⁰ on the verso of *Legendre, Right Arm and Hand*, has been drawn from nature and simplified for the two flowering stocks above Charlot's self-portrait on the left side of the painting. Simplification included thinning the leaves and selecting the two most striking stocks from the several possibilities in the drawing. The unfinished state of the drawing makes it difficult to decide whether it is in Charlot's semi-Impressionistic style.

Branches and Leaves appears to be a study for the plants behind the artist on the left.¹⁶¹ If so, Charlot has consolidated the form, thereby thickening it. In style, this gouache is nearest to *L'Amitié* of all the preparatory flower studies. However, if my identifications are correct, Charlot used several styles in these preparatory drawings for the flowers of *L'Amitié*, rather than assimilating them into the ultimate style of that painting. This procedure reveals the independent value of those studies in his own mind. A number of other plant studies done at this time may have been intended for *L'Amitié*, but not used, or may have been studies for decorative sections of *Processional*.

The earliest sketch for the angel is, I would argue, the one most different from the final: *Disassembled Sketchpad*, x verso: *Cloth draped over furniture*.¹⁶² Charlot has arranged three narrow pieces of furniture, probably straight-backed wooden chairs, so as to form three high points and has

draped some heavy cloth over them, perhaps woolen army blankets. As a result, the straight top of the central piece now resembles shoulders, and the cloth hanging from the central piece forward to the ones at either side resembles a pair of extended arms. As in the painting, the shoulders are placed so that the figure faces slightly towards the left; however, their perspectival tilt backwards and downwards is much stronger than in the painting. Charlot's decision to make the shoulder and right arm line more frontal and horizontal was important for the final composition, emphasizing the frame. A bigger difference is that in the drawing both "arms" are lifted up and away from the body, whereas in the painting, the left arm and hand are held over the chest. This change makes a less conventional pose and fits the angel better into its place at the right edge of the painting. The pose in the drawing would have enveloped Legendre from above.

The other drawing of cloth from the same *Disassembled Sketchpad*, xii verso: *Study of folds in cloth*, is a section of the final pose: the point at which the robe of the left arm joins with its fold back over the angel's wrist. The cloth is again heavy and full and has been draped over a narrow rod. A study of Charlot's next version suggests that he was working on the continuity of the juncture and facing the problem that the arm could look like a tube of one material bumping up against a larger bundle of another.

Much work has been done between the above small sketch and the large 1920 *étude pour L'Amitié*. A carefully finished pencil drawing with highlights in white gouache, it could be mistaken for the preparatory drawing by an Old Master.¹⁶³ Charlot is now using the clay model he mentioned in our interview to drape the bed-sheets for the angel's robe; the cloth is noticeably thinner and lighter. The model has helped Charlot partially to solve the problem of juncture, described above, by supplying the lower left hand, missing from the straight rod he was using to drape the cloth. The hand rises from the wrist, taking the cloak with it and providing the reason for the cloth's falling back over the wrist and end of the arm. The fold back is extended downwards and backwards along the arm, tying it more closely to the structure of the cloth hanging from the horizontal arm. This precise study will be discarded in the final painting, where the passage of arm, wrist, and lower hand will be simplified into exaggerated rhythmic folds, and the bottom part of the left sleeve will be covered by the banderole.

The *étude pour L'Amitié* depicts the whole cloaked upper body of the angel, without the head and the banderole. The preparation was thus classical, respecting each physical object in the painting beyond merely what would appear. For instance, nude studies were often done of figures that would be clothed in the final painting. Accordingly, Charlot felt he had to study and draw even those parts of the robe that would be covered by objects between it and the viewer. The robe falling over the chest and from the right arm is monumental with its impressive planes and long, sweeping shapes emphasized by the strong light on them. The more complicated folding on the left arm is cast into shadow by that odd light, which falls between the left arm and the body onto the inner left elbow. Such a light—impossible by natural lighting or within the context of the picture—is only one example of Charlot's nonrealistic devices in the painting. Charlot may have been using a pinpoint light source on his mannequin, which he had dressed with a skill that recalls his puppet theatre. This lighting will be used in the painting and reveals that Charlot already had an advanced, if not final, conception of the total composition.

In the *étude*, Charlot appears to be conceiving his compositional problem as balancing the two directional forces: first, the movement towards the left of the viewer created by the movement of the two arms of the angel; and second, the strong sweep of the right sleeve back down towards the body of the angel. Reinforcing the former, Charlot has the straight bottom edge of the right sleeve correspond to a similar line of a fold higher up the sleeve. The two lines provide a downward diagonal movement towards the left. Also, from the edge of the right side of the angel's robe begins a series of verticals that works its way along the angel's right arm towards the wrist. This series works initially to move the viewer's focus towards the left. However, the first two folds to the right of the angel's neck are long and curve down and backwards to a single point at the junction of the right sleeve and the waist. From the extended wrist, the longest curve in the drawing falls backwards to meet at the same point. A fourth curve—detaching itself about a fourth of the way down the longest—both creates the sweeping bottom edge of the sleeve and provides the straight lower line described above. From that edge the viewer can work up a zigzag of connected lines towards the arm, a sequence of straight and curved, light and dark, and tendency to the left or to the right.

The *étude* has been squared for enlargement onto the painting, so it represents a late, if not the final preparatory drawing. For instance, the odd lighting of the painting is clearly articulated in gouache in the drawing. However, the corresponding section of the painting will be radically different. In the drawing, the left arm from the shoulder to the elbow is anatomically correct; in the painting, it will be elongated down to the hip, an extreme distortion that emphasizes the right vertical frame. The cloth will be thicker even than army blankets. The sleeve hanging from the right arm will be shaped into very complex folds that reinforce the general composition; indeed, Charlot sketched two complications of the folds on the left side of the *étude pour L'Amitié*. But the *étude* is so lovingly done that it reveals Charlot's delight in the process he has chosen.

The surviving studies of the Mexican hairless Mousmé seem to have been done closely together: the old dog is lying down in the studio on an old blanket, dressed against the cold in a homemade jacket with a double collar. The dog is opening or closing its eyes as it slumbers intermittently.¹⁶⁴ The three drawings in the *Disassembled Sketchbook* are probably the earliest. Two are genuine portraits of Mousmé's head and face: he presses his eyelids together in sleep and curls his lip, as if having a martial dream; he then opens his eyes and lies uncertain, returning to his placid world. In the third, Charlot steps behind the dog and draws it in outline from the back, its front legs tucked under its chest and, with a flexible twist of its body, its left hind leg almost flat on the floor with its right hind leg lying free on top. This is almost the pose that Charlot will use in the painting, except that the head will turn left instead of right, and its twisting will accord with the general composition. On the independent sheet of sketches, Charlot does another portrait of Mousmé and then a more generic outlined face; he is trying to find the right ratio of unique Mousmé as opposed to typical dog. He draws Mousmé's body from the side, with a fuller description of the jacket and blanket nest. He is anxious to get the ear right, isolating it or looking at it from several angles. Charlot then finds the pose he will use in the final painting, in which he will remove any traces of Mousmé's old blanket and lay him down on the grass. On the way, Charlot makes a funny caricature when Mousmé curls himself practically into a ball for purely canine purposes.

*Study for Amitié, Legendre, Clothes*¹⁶⁵ is an advanced preparatory drawing of Legendre's body without the head and with the right arm only vaguely outlined. The lighting is flatter, so the description of the different areas is easier to follow than in the painting. The image is that in *L'Amitié*: Legendre is dressed beyond the heights of fashion in thick, rich cloth with enormous turned-up pants cuffs and bellbottom sleeves; all meant to be related to the angel's robe. Legendre's fine shoes have elevated heels and stiletto points. The bright pink flower in his boutonnière will contrast with those growing darkly and lushly in the garden. The pose is the same as in the painting, but its depiction is even more extreme. Legendre lounges at an even more horizontal angle, and the legs are much longer in relation to the torso. The torso itself is thinner, and the pinch at the waist more prominent. Similarly, the left sleeve is even wider than in the painting. The effect is even more mannerist than in *L'Amitié*, which will balance legs and torso more evenly and righten the posture.

The image of the body, as in the painting, is created by impossibly shifting points of view. The chest and shoulders provide the viewer's initial point of view from his position standing on the ground of the picture but in front of the picture plane. In order to look down at the proper angle on the lower torso and the waist, the viewer must then slide upwards and slightly back, as it were, along a line represented by the continuous leg, arm, and back of Legendre's chair. That odd chair is Charlot's creation as is clear from the normal one Legendre is using in the preparatory drawing *Legendre, Left Arm and Hand*, discussed below; in the final painting, Charlot has smoothed out the irregular movement still found in *Study for Amitié, Legendre, Clothes*, using a cluster of flowers to mask a dip. He thus creates a continual slide along the chair arm and back.

The viewer must proceed yet higher to see the lap and thighs at the proper angle, and even higher for the legs. In the drawing, the viewer must quickly descend to a level even lower than the initial one to see the shoes almost in profile. In the painting, the viewer must continue his rise to see the left shoe from almost directly above; the effect is smoother because more consistent. Because of this difference in point of view in the painting, the right leg and shoe are more visible in the drawing. In the painting, the leg disappears to the point that the viewer wonders why it is not crossed by the left leg. That is, the legs are accurately described from the raised point of view, but unless the shift in that point of view has been noticed, the artist seems to be distorting natural vision or even creating an optical illusion. Charlot balances that extreme angle by painting the right shoe at less acute an angle, in fact, almost in profile as in the drawing. That is, each shoe is seen from a different point of view, a Classical device. I believe the landing stages necessary for the shifts in point of view are represented in the painting first by the ground, then by the cluster of blossoms covering the dip in the chair, then by the hand, and finally by the shoulders. Charlot has provided instructions, as it were, for the proper viewing of the figure. Charlot will use such a shifting perspective much later in the 1976 oil *Iolani Luahine, Kneeling Hula* (38" X 48", 1976, CL 1350).

As in the paintings of Cézanne, the different points of view on Legendre's body are emphasized by the tipping of planes elsewhere in the painting. The point of view on the torso and waist is reinforced by the tipping of the table next to Legendre, which looks normal from that perspective. Similarly, the point of view on the lap corresponds to that on the lawn. The ground beneath Legendre's shoes is twisted

to accommodate their different points of view, and the third house in the Germanic-style cityscape in the background tips forward away from the first two in order to echo the contrast in perspective between Legendre's lap and his feet.

In both the drawing and the painting, the figure of Legendre is twisted into an elegant, even overly elegant shape. The twist recalls William Hogarth's spiral line of beauty, but his line was meant to be seen from a single point of view; that is, the subject depicted was twisting.¹⁶⁶ In *L'Amitié*, Legendre's body is not twisting, Charlot's point of view is shifting. Charlot could have learned the procedure from his tradition, for instance, Cézanne's portraits and, in more overt form, Cubist portraits. But he would never have seen it used for the same effect. This procedure endows the figure of Legendre with an energy and compositional depth lacking in the Art Moderne figures it anticipates.

*Legendre, Left Arm and Hand; Study for L'Amitié*¹⁶⁷ is an earlier study, certainly done from life, that reveals the amount of stylization applied in the above drawing. The cloth of the suit is much thinner and the cut less full. For instance, the normal, if fashionable sleeve and cuff have been turned into a full bell-bottom in the *Study* and the painting. Indeed, Legendre wore a business suit with a wide breast pocket rather than the formal wear with wide lapels of the final image. The realistic folds of the drawing from life of the shoulder through the elbow have been thickened and regularized as were those of the angel's robe. Charlot noticed an interesting long fold from the top of the elbow to the armpit resting on the chairback; in the later drawing and painting, Charlot extended this fold over the chest and connected it to a farther one; they will represent the drawing of a circle with a compass based on the coat's single button. Legendre's hand, a delicate three-quarter drawing from life, has become disquieting, even spectral, in the painting. Charlot has turned the palm area to full profile, while the fingers are seen from above, giving the hand an unfamiliar, plant-like shape. Next, Charlot has thrown a strong light on the hand, blanking out its inner details and coloring it a phosphorescent white, in extreme contrast to the dark shadow of the interior of the sleeve from which it emerges. Charlot is applying a device he had developed in the semi-Impressionist, light line drawings done through this period.

Most interesting, Charlot has made the hand larger than it would be in normal Italian perspective. In his *Traité de Peinture*, Charlot discussed the modifications of natural vision necessary for an artist to make his picture look realistic or normal. Photographs can appear distorted because they do not make the necessary corrections. A well-known example occurs when a part of a person's body is nearer to the lens; it can appear much larger than expected in the print. Charlot mentions "Un homme étendant la main" 'A man holding out his hand.' Such distortions can be used expressively, as Charlot does in *L'Amitié*: Legendre's hand looks like it's been caught by a flash bulb too far out from its body. Even more extreme is the continuous back, arm, and leg of his chair—certainly one of the boldest photographic distortions in art and a major element in the general composition of the painting.

*Legendre, Right Arm and Hand; Study for L'Amitié*¹⁶⁸ must have been done at the same time as the above study. Legendre's right arm is in the same suit as his left, and has undergone the same stylization in the painting. The cloth has become thicker and fuller, the sleeve opening has been enlarged, and the shirt cuff has been pulled out further from it. The realistic juncture of sleeve and jacket has been

changed completely in one of Charlot's major expressive distortions: the right arm emerges well below its shoulder socket to join the elbow at a more horizontal angle, the distortion being masked by the inflated upper sleeve. In the drawing, Legendre's right hand is described as small and thin; in the painting, it is enlarged and fattened. In contrast to the spectral left hand, the right is painted a fleshy rose rounded with dark shadows. Legendre seems to be deciding between life and death.

Preparatory drawings and final painting of the figure of Legendre present a consistent picture. Charlot's conception of Legendre was finalized early in their relationship. The position was chosen, and Legendre posed for it. Charlot made drawings from life, but he introduced major modifications in the painting to accord with the vision he had of the subject.

The same process can be found in Charlot's three self-portraits for *L'Amitié*. As I reconstruct the sequence, the first was *Self-Portrait in Bright Gouache; Study for L'Amitié*.¹⁶⁹ Since it is dated 1921, the period in which Charlot executed this section of *L'Amitié* must have been short. The nudes on the verso place this self-portrait in the context of the Saint-Mandé studio, where Charlot and Legendre had been pursuing their art study. *Self-Portrait in Bright Gouache* is the least stylized of the three preparatory self-portraits: Charlot's haircut clings less to the skull, his eyes are normally wide and provided with pupils, and the color of his skin under the strong lighting can be perceived as natural. Charlot is leaning forward in a natural attitude to look at Legendre as he paints him. In the later self-portraits and the final painting, for compositional purposes, he will be sitting a little rigidly straight. Most important, two strong lights are thrown on Charlot's face. A bright yellow light is placed high in front of him and falls down, lighting especially his mouth and chin. In the final painting, this is the light falling full on Legendre and grazing Charlot's face. This lighting is, therefore, part of the initial and realized composition of the painting, although Charlot ultimately made it a phosphorescent white. However, in *Self-Portrait in Bright Gouache*, a second strong light, more orange in color, hits Charlot's face horizontally from three-quarters right, putting a glow on the stems of his glasses. This second light will be eliminated by the time of the second self-portrait, but it raises the possibility that originally a brighter, happier lighting was planned for the painting, or at least that Charlot himself emerged more from the shadows.

Self-Portrait in Bright Gouache is freely painted without an initial drawing, a procedure that encouraged immediate expression of the object viewed. The strokes are bold and display Charlot's ability to describe a form with strokes that seem to go against it. For instance, the hatchings at the hair and neck seem to blend into their forms until one notices that, if they were real objects, they would have to be floating above them. In passages, Charlot uses almost pure colors for modeling, like Cézanne; but in the junctures, he pushes to an extreme the contrasts of color and tone. The result is that the subject is presented vividly through means so bold that they would destroy the form if they were not so well controlled. To portray himself, Charlot is looking at his own face through angled mirrors. Though young and intent on its task, the face emerges through a mist of sadness. The portrait is personal: Charlot has the war behind him, his current difficulties, and is facing an uncertain future in Mexico. This individual, psychological dimension will be generalized, even depersonalized, as *L'Amitié* is developed.

The next study, *Self-Portrait in Gray Gouache; Study for L'Amitié*,¹⁷⁰ is a major step in absorbing the first, very personal and emotional study, into the general composition and mood of the final painting. A pencil base has been used, making the painting less spontaneous and more purposefully integrated into the general conception. Charlot has been straightened up, his new posture fitting into the final composition. In accordance with the formal character of *L'Amitié*, the head has been depersonalized: his glasses have been removed, his haircut has been geometrized, and his eyes have been narrowed and have lost their pupils. His face has become mask-like. Similarly, the emotion has been elevated from personal sadness to communal tragedy. Charlot is returning to the mood of his 1919 *Self-Portrait, Cubist Style* for which he used gray gouache. He used the same color and medium in 1920 for his portraits of fellow soldiers *Michel* and *Bihain*, and felt they gave a severity to his portraits *Portrait of Louis Goupil, profile* and *Louis Goupil's Hands*. He wants *L'Amitié* to express a widely-shared feeling about the war rather than his singular, personal troubles of 1921. Besides the somber grays, Charlot uses broad washes of black to darken the mood, concentrating them behind the artist's head—where he is thinking—and proceeding from his mouth, his expression. The person of the picture is emerging from tragedy, surrounded by gloom, but still looking forward, still acting.

This darkened, chastened mood will be maintained through the final painting. To support that mood, the strong horizontal light on Charlot's face will be replaced by a less intense three-quarters light rising like a footlight from a lower level. This light is strongest in *Self-Portrait in Gray Gouache*, where it may be drawn from life: brushed in boldly with white gouache and placing highlights on the lips that are stronger even than the principal light falling from above. But in the next study and the final painting, this lower light loses its own power and can be perceived only in the colored modeling of the face itself.

Like the other preparatory drawings for *L'Amitié*, *Self-Portrait in Gray Gouache* can be appreciated as an independent work of art. The brushwork is bold, and the range of tones is extended and their clashes heightened. The simplifying conception is strong, for instance, in the unusual geometrizing of the hair. The face juts forward powerfully like a tragic mask, with emotions so strong that they leave the individual behind and merge him into humanity. Charlot is tapping again into his emotional undercurrent from the war.

The third gouache, *Self-Portrait in Dark Gouache; Related to L'Amitié*,¹⁷¹ is not, I would argue, a study for *L'Amitié*. Charlot would sometimes extract from a larger work a section or detail and use it for an independent picture. Probably shortly after the completion of the large gouache, Charlot has displaced and supplemented the props of *L'Amitié* to create a more conventional self-portrait: the easel and canvas are in front of the artist rather than to the side; the strong light on the mouth and chin has been eliminated because it belonged to a now extraneous section of the composition; the light is now from a single bright window; and a conventional drape is roped aside to allow the light into the room. The artist's hand holding the brush, whose palm was turned towards the model in *L'Amitié*, is now turned inwards towards the artist: the gouache portrays *The Artist of L'Amitié*. As such, it is not a personal depiction, like *Self-Portrait in Bright Gouache*, nor yet fully absorbed into *L'Amitié* itself; it is Charlot's view of himself as the artist who painted the larger masterpiece. What kind of an artist is he?

Self-Portrait in Dark Gouache places the artist on the elevated emotional plane of *L'Amitié*. He is not interested in the personal and anecdotal like the artist of *Self-Portrait in Bright Gouache*. He turns away from the open window to look upon his canvas. His face is intellectual and strong. He wears a loose shirt with a collar like a monk's robe; the artist's mission is religious. His hand is strong and workmanlike. As he scrutinizes his work, his artistic background is revealed behind him, just as Charlot had earlier used the area behind the head to express the emotions of the person depicted. The roped drape is typical of portraits in the Classical tradition and seems to attach itself to the back of Charlot's head and continue through his eyes to the canvas below. The cityscape outside the window clearly evokes early Cubism and is a quotation of the post-Cubist cityscape in the background of *L'Amitié*.¹⁷² The power and energy of Cubism is being strained through or compacted with Classicism to produce the new style of the self-portrait itself.

The pressure necessary for synthesis is expressed through the spatial composition, different from that of *L'Amitié* because articulating a different theme. In *Self-Portrait in Dark Gouache*, different objects press from different directions into the space occupied by the painter. Those directions cannot be reconciled with each other in Italian perspective, and their discordance creates much of the mood and point of the painting. The drape is painted as if parallel to the picture plane; it provides, therefore, a second corner after the edge of the gouache itself and pushes downwards, compressing the picture space. Outside the window, the cityscape seems to topple forward against the window. The two artistic directions, Classicism and Cubism, are expressed by two apparently irreconcilable physical directions. The movement of the cityscape is picked up and increased by the window sill, the view of whose top cannot be reconciled with the position of the drapes. Rather, a new force is created that swings down on the pictorial space, compressing it from above. Moreover, the sill is not parallel to the picture plane but at a slight angle, heading into depth from right to left. The right side, therefore, does not extend the space beyond the right edge of the picture, but pushes the space back inwards. This movement is picked up and given a strong twist by the frame of the picture the artist is working on. If the viewer reconstructs the placement of the the canvas as it would appear in front of the artist in Italian perspective, it becomes clear that Charlot has displaced it for expressive purposes. He has lifted it up off the easel, so to speak, tilted it so that the left side is higher than the right, and then turned it so that the bottom left corner is higher and more forward than the right. This compresses further the space in which the artist is working. More important, this new movement seems to activate the drape to twist forward, catching the interior space into a double twist. If the viewer imagines the movement required for the interior angle of the drape to join the exterior angle of the canvas frame, he will experience the spatial twisting that Charlot is describing. The compressing and twisting of the space in which the artist works expresses forcefully the intellectual effort needed to synthesize the differing artistic tendencies of the time and to create a new style that would solve the esthetic problems with which his generation was faced and yet be legible enough to fulfill its social mission.

In his interview, Charlot emphasized the importance of the process of creating *L'Amitié*: organizing preparatory work into the final composition. Charlot felt that such a process contributed to the ultimate power of the painting:

Choosing the correct point of view and planning the composition in three dimensions comes back to that one single law by which a two-dimensional design is obtained. There is a tremendous difference between planning the whole picture in two dimensions and planning it in three and four dimensions and then bringing it back to two. There is much more richness, much more realness, to a picture that comes back willingly as a kind of discipline or obedience to two dimensions, after all those mental processes; because it is not then by a decorative point of view that those figures are obtained, but by a very conscious knowledge of the physical reality of painting, which is flat. (Disney lectures May 31, 1938)

Again, Charlot felt he was following Poussin:

Poussin built up small maquettes of places with mannequins propped up at given points and thus established his horizontal composition on ground level before he collapsed the whole scene on the window-pane of the vertical canvas. (AA I 213)

Similarly, the intense study of the individual objects in a painting can be felt when they are integrated into the whole. Each object in the picture has been respected for itself; preparatory drawings include even those parts that will not be visible in the final design. Each object is vivid, none is casual or ill-considered. Each object projects a sense of its individual worth, important in Charlot's thinking, and adds its strength to the final effect. The artist has truly engaged with each object and developed his way of viewing and using it. The viewer feels the long relationship of the artist with the object, for instance, Charlot's lifelong feeling for plants. The viewer also feels the independent strength of the preparatory work, not all of which can be employed in the final composition. For instance, the compositions employed in the artist's preparatory studies can be felt. Only the left side of the abovementioned *Unfinished Flower Study* was used at the lower right of the painting, but the now invisible right side of that composition is used to make the viewer expand in his mind the visible image beyond the picture frame. As will be discussed below, the displacement of the easel in *L'Amitié* is felt more strongly because the figure of the artist using it has the strength of the preparatory gouaches in which he was facing the canvas. A certain tension is thus produced between preparation and final composition, between the object and its use, that parallels the classical awareness of the tension between objects as seen in natural vision and as known by the mind. Indeed, the tension, because it makes itself felt, adds to the achievement of the final unity. The danger of this process is that the final painting will be a mere assemblage of prepared figures, as is only too clear in academic works like Timbal's *Théologie* or *La Renommée Distribuant des Couronnes* by Paul Delaroche (1797–1856) in the hemicycle of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. Such paintings are collections of perfectly rendered, posed models, often chosen for the appropriateness of their types. Only great energy of composition can absorb an intense preparation. This is one of the points of Charlot's *Self-Portrait in Dark Gouache*, discussed above and emphasized by him in his *Pictures and Picture-Making*:

All properties, save those in two dimensions, must be taken by the painter with a grain of salt. For example, people who make little statues, clothe them, put them in a

certain light, and make a picture from them, may be trying to find out what is happening in nature. But if they take those things too seriously, if they don't just play with them, there is a chance that their picture—which is not after all three-dimensional but two—will suffer. (May 31, 1938)

L'Amitié makes a strong impression on the viewer. First, it is big, bigger than an easel painting and seeming more like a mural on a wall. Moreover, it seems to be bursting its bounds, projecting itself forcefully beyond the edges of the actual image. The painting is packed with objects, which it would seem big enough to contain if they were not moving with so much energy. The quantity of objects makes the painting appear bigger, but not big enough to contain them completely. Similarly, the conception of the painting seems bigger because it must expand to incorporate all of its materials. A historical parallel would be the work of John Singleton Copley (1738–1815), who was criticized in his own time for covering his whole canvas with vivid elements rather than restricting himself—like George Romney (1734–1802)—to a few towards the center, leaving the rest of the canvas vague.

The objects in *L'Amitié* are striking because of the process described above, a process motivated by strong views and emotions. In fact, the objects in *L'Amitié* are a compendium of the artistic subjects that had drawn Charlot up to that point in his life. Charlot was acquainted with the medieval and Renaissance books of themes that were produced by artists' workshops as source material and advertisement, and his *Picture Book* of 1933 was consciously designed as such as was his later *Picture Book II* of 1973 (Morse 1976: 89). *L'Amitié* is such a compendium in mural form. The flowers and plants—as well as the basket with fruit—can be traced back to Charlot's early childhood; the dog to his earliest drawings of animals. The gate of the garden at Saint-Mandé was painted by Charlot soon after they moved into that house and joined a long series of similar subjects from the Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin and Poissy. The little seascape recalls his childhood and adolescent vacation drawings in Normandy and Brittany; its folk-like style acknowledges Charlot's long study of folk art. As Charlot stated:

The angel with the wings and the ribbon that he has and the writing on that sort of a ribbon or banderole are things that come from the liturgical arts, the cathedrals, the stained-glass windows, Maurice Denis, and so on and so forth.

Beyond the gate, the foreground, Germanic cityscape resembles those he made during the Occupation and contrasts in style with the post-Cubist cityscape beyond it. Cubism itself is represented by a black-and-white print, used as a sort of ideograph, at the artist's left shoulder. The print is kept from falling off the table by a Bible, I believe, that pins it by its corner. The point is made that Charlot has moved from pure Cubism to the post-Cubism of the landscape under the influence of his mission as a liturgical artist. Finally, Legendre is the latest in a lifelong series of portraits, and his image is informed by Charlot's recent experience in commercial art and the fashionable world. Besides objects, Charlot uses at least one compositional reference to present his artistic background. The dark right sleeve of the angel blocking the sunlight from the street is a reference, I believe, to Poussin's *The Empire of Flora* (1631), which Charlot

admired greatly and which he felt exemplified that artist's intellectually daring approach to color. Other significant objects and references may be found in the painting on further study.

Charlot addresses major problems of composition in *L'Amitié*, which he usually calls to the attention of the viewer by some clear means. The angel's elbow, the foot of Legendre's chair, and the tip of his left shoe, carefully touch the edge of the picture, but the easel seems to be flying violently out of it and the plants grow uncontrollably beyond it. The viewer is alerted that the composition will be exploring the picture frame, what it encloses and what explodes it. Lines of composition will push inwards and outwards; classical devices will be explored that expand the physical picture into a larger mental image. The artist will have to solve the classical problem of creating a satisfying composition simultaneously within limits and without and using the resulting tensions as expressive effects.

A second major problem for the Classical artist is the reduction of the three dimensions of the subject to the two-dimensional plane of the painting. Charlot discussed this problem in the quotation above, and it is implicit in his long preparation of the objects in the painting. The problem is recognized as a kind of ideograph in the juxtaposition of the two-dimensional Cubist print and the three-dimensional Bible on top of it. Charlot displays several methods of solving the problem, including the print itself. The post-Cubist cityscape tips forward towards the picture plane; the Germanic cityscape uses tilting and distortion, bounded on the right by the corner of a pink building apparently echoing the picture plane. The table on which the Bible is resting tips forward like one of Cézanne's. Lighting is used both to create three-dimensional form and also, by its absence, to create a flattened tapestry effect in the darkest sections of the plant passages. Finally, the overall composition is in a constant dialogue between the picture plane and the created space with its rounded objects.

Similarly, Charlot signals with the checkered tablecloth his intention to explore the problem of perspective; checkerboard patterns were used by Renaissance artists to display their mastery of linear perspective. Again, he provides several solutions, the most obvious in the post-Cubist cityscape and the Germanic distortions. The discordance between the garden wall and the angle of the walk is a perspective flattened by tipping towards the picture frame. These clear departures from Italian perspective prepare the viewer for the strong manipulation of space in the general composition.

As is clear from the description of Legendre's figure, Charlot uses multiple points of view as one of the main devices of *L'Amitié*. Indeed, the painting impresses immediately by the artificiality of its angles of vision. Artist and subject are supposed to be in the garden, but the lawn appears to be seen from a second-story window. The ideograph, as it were, of this problem is the obvious contrast in point of view between the Germanic cityscape and the post-Cubist one, and Charlot will use the device expressively throughout the painting.

The lighting of the painting is boldly artificial, extending across the whole range of values, from the white of Legendre's shirt to the black on the back of the gate. Charlot wants to control the gamut and make it expressive. Like Poussin's *The Empire of Flora*, *L'Amitié* is divided into an area of strong sunlight and a shadowed area divided from the light by a drape in Poussin's and by the angel's right sleeve in Charlot's. The one kind of lighting deliberately excluded is Impressionist; "there is no really

moment of the day.” The seascape, which by its placement almost demands atmospheric, is painted with the hard edges of folk painting. This division enables Charlot to explore the possibilities of extreme lighting; for instance, the flowers are described in different degrees of lighting, but always with the sense of the emphasis given to local color by low light.¹⁷³ Charlot also studies reflected light, for instance in Legendre’s face, and the capacity of light—when it hits an object on the side away from the viewer—to wrap its way around the object, highlighting its edges, as with Legendre’s legs. Backlighting also causes light to appear where least expected as, for instance, on the lower part of the garden wall. Impressionism is not the only way to study light.

However, Charlot does not use this lighting naturalistically in the painting. The lighting of the cityscape beats against the outside wall of the garden, creating a strong yellow highlight under the gate. But the lawn itself is overshadowed from the opposite direction, the shadow of the house falling towards the inside of the gate. Moreover, within the shadowed area of the foreground, a strong, pinpoint light slants down from an invisible source to illuminate sharply the chest of the angel above and below the left arm but leaving the outside of that arm in shadow.

A strong, white, broad light is supposed to be falling from high up down onto Legendre, lighting the artist’s chin in passing. But that light would have to be divided in three. One strong light falls from above right and from in front of the picture frame down onto Legendre’s hand and boutonnière, casting a small highlight on the front bar of Legendre’s seat. A second, weaker light falls from about the same height but from the other side of Legendre, highlighting the far side of his right cuff and his inner left elbow, and casting the shadow on his shirt. This second light is picked up by the thick leaves of the plants at the lower right side of the painting. The third light, again strong, is falling on the far side of Legendre’s legs from a lower angle and from further to the right as one looks at the picture. This division of a putatively single light into three effects increases the impression of twist in Legendre’s body: the viewer, under the illusion that the light is single, feels Legendre must be twisting for his body to catch the light as it does. The division also echoes the contradiction in lighting described above: one light coming from the cityscape towards the viewer and another falling towards his back and casting the shadow of the house over the garden. That the light on Legendre’s legs cannot, however, be identified with that from the cityscape is indicated by its direction and by its being white, rather than yellow. In deliberate contrast, the orange basket with fruit under Legendre’s legs can indeed be understood as being colored by reflected light from the cityscape. On the other hand, that same light, crossing over the table, should illuminate the far side of Legendre’s legs instead of the near side as it does now. Yet another light is used to describe Legendre: it falls on the right side of Legendre’s face and the side of his right wrist and hand from slightly higher and somewhat inside the picture plane. To this light is added the reflected lighting from the shirt and collar on Legendre’s face, all adding a further twist to Legendre’s body.

The lighting around Legendre is deliberately, even ostentatiously dramatic, adding to the showiness of the figure and connecting *L’Amitié* to a traditional portrait tradition:

One rule I could give you, to come back to being dogmatic, is that painting is at its best when the plastic climax is different from the psychological climax. The

eighteenth century English portrait technique, which John Hoppner [1758–1810] uses, makes the face very light against the dark background so that it bulges. The head is at the same time the human point of interest and the plastic climax. All the dark comes forward to the light, which is the face. In contrast, Rembrandt would use as his climax the white of the model's collar, and the face and background would recede in a kind of brown. The human climax is still the face, but to look at it, we must first meet the impact of the black and white contrasted in the collar and then grope in the dark to find out that the face is in there. The plastic climax is different from the emotional climax. The Rembrandt manner is superior to the 18th century way, even for purposes of illustration. A face that is white on a dark background is easy to find. We do not want to look at it again. It is there. But in the Rembrandt, we are not sure. We have to look again to find the face. We look twice.

A strong contrast of color is rarely found in great painters where the climax of the subject is. (Disney lectures May 10, 1938)

In *L'Amitié*, the plastic climax is in the collar, shirt, and flower, and Legendre's face is partly in a softer light and partly in shadow. But the portrait has a Hoppnerian glamour—if nothing of Hoppnerian facileness—for which Charlot confessed a guilty pleasure (Disney lectures April 26, 1938). Though subdued, the lighting on the face is theatrical, making it resemble a face lit by footlights, as the harlequin's in Charlot's advertising poster *La Poudre de Riz de Rosine*. Legendre belongs to the fashionable world, and his society extends its influence even towards the artist, whose face is itself bathed in a dark footlighting.

Given the artificiality of the lighting, Charlot does not hesitate to invent a light for a small area when useful. In the bottom right corner, the face of a leaf is unaccountably lighted strongly from in front of the picture plane, helping to pull that section of the painting nearer to that plane. The lowest section of the banner is also provided with its own light source, connecting it also with the picture plane. Both these lights could be interpreted as emanating from the viewer's area, but no such light from that direction touches other foreground objects. In fact, lighting is one of the devices Charlot uses in *L'Amitié* to preserve the two-dimensional quality of the image. The strong light of the cityscapes and the pinpoint light on the angel's chest pull forward deep sections of the pictorial space. The outside light shines through the openings in the leaves on the left. The angel's halo appears to be parallel to the picture plane. An occasional highlight, like that on the front bar of Legendre's seat, attaches dark sections to the front. The far side of Legendre's face is lighted while the near side is in shadow, turning, as it were, the three-dimensional face towards and into the two-dimensional picture plane.

Color is also used as a means to achieve the general composition. As will be discussed below, devices such as rotation and asymmetry are used prominently in *L'Amitié*, and serve to destabilize conventional elements of composition. Nonetheless, the painting does not lose its sense of equilibrium. Charlot achieves this through his use of color as a compositional device. Whereas the strongest *lines* in *L'Amitié* create a top right to bottom left diagonal, the *coloring* creates a broad top left to bottom right

movement. The difference of means used for each diagonal preserves the desired sense of asymmetry while satisfying the need for equilibrium.

The composition of *L'Amitié* is one of the most complicated ever created by Charlot, and I will discuss only its salient features. Like the composition of his *Massacre in the Main Temple*, that of *L'Amitié* requires a full monograph. Geometric composition always begins with the two-dimensional shape of the painting, as Charlot stated when describing his work on *Massacre*: "I then made on this reconstructed rectangle all the measurements found in any easel picture: Golden Sections, horizontal middle, and so on" (Disney lectures Tuesday May 24, 1938). Accordingly, the Golden Section is carefully marked by the highlight on the seat of Legendre's chair, and his torso and head are emphasized along with the angel by placing them in the smaller section. *L'Amitié* is remarkable, however, for its few allusions to the verticals—the plant stocks on the left and the folds on the angel's left sleeve—and for its lack of true horizontals amid a quantity of diagonals. The few verticals must be interpreted, therefore, as mere reminders of ordinary composition, reminders that also throw into relief the variations to be imposed on conventional composition. The rectangle is acknowledged, but will not provide the key to the composition. As Charlot stated of his *Massacre*:

I was also careful to do what Cézanne did in his portraits of his wife: to keep in some places the natural horizontal, and vertical lines, remaining from the original position of the rectangle.

Accordingly, the corners of the rectangle are not used as anchors for diagonals. Charlot is deliberately depriving himself of standard compositional devices in order to explore other possibilities, just as he did with problems of perspective and multiple points of view. Moreover, just as he signaled those problems with ideograph-like objects, so here devices like the dot marking the Golden Section display his knowledge of classical composition. However, Charlot is not being merely learned. His choice is expressive: the decision not to rely on the rectangle adds to the sense of uncontained ferment in the painting.

Nonetheless, the straight lines of two-dimensional composition are carefully connected throughout: for instance, the line formed by the meeting of street and buildings in the Germanic cityscape, if extended, would touch the point at which the right side of the artist's easel leaves the frame. This is also true of the lower line of the lighted triangle on the lawn. Diagonals can also be used to signal Charlot's departure from ordinary composition. The strongest diagonal in the painting moves up Legendre's shoe and leg to the right side of his tilted head; it departs from a point to the right of the bottom left corner and arrives at a point to the left of the top right corner. That is, the diagonal has been clearly rotated into its present position. A counterpoise and foil for this strong diagonal is found in a weaker, more vertical diagonal descending along the edge of the leaves on the left and crossing over the side of the artist's head and shoulder. The asymmetry of the two diagonals in shape and strength helps to destabilize any conventional compositional elements and accentuate the unconventional, that is, the rotated diagonal. Rotation is in fact characteristic of the entire composition.

In place of straight lines, the composition of *L'Amitié* is based on fan movements, or segments of circles, in both two and three dimensions. The base of those movements, the place at which the point of

the compass is fixed, can be either inside or outside the picture frame. In *Massacre*, Charlot balanced straight lines and compass movements. In *L'Amitié*, compass movements have pride of place and create the dynamism of the image. Again, Charlot signals his intention, this time with the halo of the angel. Just below it, the button of Legendre's jacket can be understood as the base of a compass and the hems and folds as the movement of creating the right side of a circle, with Mousmé's body below providing the left.

The major two-dimensional fan movement is based on the angel's left elbow, which touches the picture frame. The top arm of the fan is the top of the bandolier; the movement swings down landing on the bottom line of Legendre's distorted right arm, then on his legs, and finally on the spine of a large leaf in the bottom right corner. To the right of Legendre's head, the relationship of the two sections of the bandolier and Legendre's left arm provide stages of this motion. This fan can be understood also in three dimensions, sweeping forward from the band towards the viewer; the color connection of the pink building corner beyond the garden wall to the pink boutonnière marks the sweep. Behind the band, a smaller fan movement with an interior base can be followed down the angel's right sleeve and over Legendre's shoulders. Legendre's left elbow is the base of a fan seen foreshortened that extends across the arm straight to the two bright flowers in front of Mousmé; those flowers start an upward curve that connects to Legendre's right elbow and arm and comes to an end at his head, joined by the straight line of the upper left arm back to the base of the fan.¹⁷⁴ Small fan shapes are found in the light on the lawn and the street of the Germanic cityscape as well as in the organic shapes of the plants. The effect is one of energetic movement sweeping down from the top right, an energy too great to be easily anchored or contained.

A sense of containment is, however, provided by the garden wall, which, in the general compositional emphasis on fan shapes, can be understood as the side of a three-dimensional fan that is anchored outside the picture frame on the right. The opposite side of this fan is not stated, but is echoed by the foreground part of Legendre's chair. The whole dark foreground of the painting appears mentally, therefore, as part of a large enclosed area that is opening towards the left. Moreover, as in *Self-Portrait in Dark Gouache*, the enclosed quality of the space is emphasized by tipping the garden wall into it, a tipping echoed with an increased inward angle by the side of the table. Similarly, the two cityscapes from their different angles tip towards that same space. This device is recognizable, I would argue, from a study of the self-portrait. Finally, the angled light on the lawn provides a new inward position for the wall to occupy, thereby further compressing the interior space. The artist's chest can be understood as the plane of the garden wall moved into a more inward position. Indeed, the Germanic street seems to be pushing the wall forward to occupy that position.

All of the elements of the composition culminate in its central effect, which, as far as I know, is an unprecedented creation. Just as in *Self-Portrait in Dark Gouache*, Charlot uses the viewer's expectations about the easel: it should be in front of the artist, who is reaching out to touch it with his brush. The long preparation of this self-portrait gives it an intensity that increases the viewer's expectation: the whole figure of the artist is intent on touching the easel. The surprise is thus great when the viewer sees that the easel has been ripped away from the artist and pulled back and around to the left

to the point where it is slipping rapidly out of the picture frame. The sense of the movement undergone is strong. In *Self-Portrait in Dark Gouache*, the easel was moved inward to compress space; in *L'Amitié*, it is as if space had been stretched to create a vacuum into which Legendre is pulled.

In its new position, the support column of the easel now almost touches the tip of Legendre's extended shoe; their verticals meet below the edge of the picture. The shoe touches the picture's bottom edge, and the column descends below it. At this point, the composition could be understood as an explosion with two large jets of power being expelled from the point of detonation, and this impression adds to the power of the picture. The angle of the easel frame and the general emphasis on rotation argue, however, that Charlot is creating a three-dimensional rotation. He later analyzed Pieter Breughel's *The Land of Cockaigne* as "one of the greatest dynamic constructions ever made":

The little platform with the food is a geometric shape, a circle, treated with enough thickness to make it really a cutout of a plane seen in space. The tree, going through the platform at its very center gives an axis around which the platform could revolve like a Lazy Susan... Each of the men is the materialization of the rays or spokes from the tree, the center of the circle, to the circumference.

When we look at this picture, we cannot but think of a piece of machinery made to turn around. We have the actual feeling that it is not static but works around with a large movement. The men seem to be lying on a kind of rotating fair wheel, submitting to centrifugal force, and sliding outward and off of the wheel. That kind of sliding out through the circular movement gives a lot of animation to the picture. (Disney lectures May 31, 1938)

In *L'Amitié*, the easel and Legendre are the spokes radiating from an axis, represented by the little plant and flower growing from the point where easel line and the diagonal of Legendre's shoe meet. The powerful force that has whipped the easel away from the artist and around and out of the picture is now pulling Legendre up and around toward the viewer, pushing him into the viewer's face. The far side and back of the chair as well as the circular position of Legendre's arms and shoulders emphasize the motion, and the tilt of the first two Germanic buildings pushes into it. Rather than the viewer moving to different points of view to see Legendre correctly, Legendre is now being moved so rapidly towards the viewer that his body is being leveled horizontally, producing the same effect: the viewer sees him at an ever acuter angle. The strong lighting on the shirt and the softer lighting on the head fit the movement: Legendre's head is almost jerked back as he is moved forward. Legendre's forward tipping is emphasized by the backward tipping of Mousmé's body in natural perspective. The movement also finds new uses for conventional devices. The viewer would expect the long back, arm, and leg of the chair to be his way *into* the picture. Instead, they are Legendre's way *out*. This direction is emphasized by the extreme photographic distortion of that part of the chair: it looks much bigger than it should because it is so close to us. The unnaturally quick and exaggerated widening makes it plunge towards the viewer.¹⁷⁵ The photographic distortion of Legendre's left hand adds to the effect. The curved, vertical bars of the chair

under Legendre's right arm now reveal their function: they help push Legendre up and out. He is being whipped around towards us as if he were clinging to a carnival ride.

The easel and Legendre, in being whirled around, form an inverted cone. Their tipping in opposite directions can now be understood as part of a single motion. In two-dimensional profile plan, the cone would be represented by the fan shapes described earlier: segments of circles. That is, the three-dimensional has been reconciled with the two-dimensional. Charlot emphasized this in his analysis of *The Land of Cockaigne*:

If we consider the picture in plan instead of in three dimensions, we find that the center of the whole picture is exactly point O, the tree, which is the axis of the whole machine... So we have the same circle represented in plan.

Moreover, the two aspects should be essentially connected; in *The Land of Cockaigne*:

The point of connection between the two-dimensional and the three-dimensional in this painting is that the same spot represents the axis in both.

In *L'Amitié*, the connection is the point that is both the juncture of easel column and the shoe's diagonal and also the beginning of the strongest diagonal in the painting. Moreover, while the top of Legendre's left leg forms that diagonal, the bottom helps create the largest fan motion starting from the angel's banderole. Two-dimensional and three-dimensional elements are thus connected in elaborate ways in the painting.

The whirl of the cone is also provided with three-dimensional correspondances. As stated above, the fan connected to the angel's banderole can be understood in three dimensions as well as two. However, two clearly three-dimensional bands curve from right to left. The first is created by the Germanic street and the lawn path and crosses over Legendre's lap through the two prominent flower clusters at bottom right. The second is formed by the first two Germanic buildings and continues through the two flower clusters above the artist, crossing in turn over to the two flower clusters at bottom right. Besides balancing the movement in the picture, these bands emphasize by contrast the opposite movement of Legendre's cone, propelling him more forcefully towards the viewer.

Finally, in a distortion of perspective, Charlot provides a moment in the stage of the whirl of the inverted cone. The left foot of the chair and the tip of Legendre's left shoe both touch the edge of the painting. This is impossible in Italian perspective because the shoe would have to be behind the foot in space. In order to accommodate the present position, the easel would have to be picked up and tilted back and to the right. That is, the easel would have to be in a position between the one it occupied in front of the artist and the one it occupies now at the extreme left of the picture. The distortion in perspective records, therefore, a stage in the movement of the easel.

At the age of twenty-three, Charlot had created one of the most complex, innovative, and successful compositions in the history of art. My analysis has been long but not complete. A good composition is like a genuine poem: inexhaustible.¹⁷⁶ But *L'Amitié* is not an intellectual exercise. All the composition and design is a deeply emotional expression of the failed relationship between the artist and the subject, the ideal proclaimed on the banderole that should be passing through Legendre's head: *quam*

bonum et jucundum habitare fratres in uno ‘how good and joyous for brothers to live as one.’¹⁷⁷ The painting contrasts the two figures. Legendre is the more striking, being privileged, indeed thrust upon the viewer, by the composition. He is characterized vividly as a member of the social whirl with his formal, rich clothing, elegant shoes, languid air, and exotic boutonnière. His clothing contrasts with the Classical, medieval simplicity of the angel’s robe, just as Charlot would later contrast the Classical robe of the Mexican Indian woman to the furbelows of the imported European fashions of the rich. In 1921, such a mundane figure would be normal in an equally casual medium, such as watercolor. But Charlot has stylized the figure with such energy that it has become frightening. *Surchargé* ‘overcharged’ like his placard *La Poudre de Riz de Rosine*, the intensity of Legendre’s sophistication looks perverse. Indeed, Legendre is portrayed as at a decision point in his life and prey to conflicting influences. Legendre’s right hand is fleshy and ruddy; his left is spectral. His right hand touches the right side of his head; the angel’s hand touches the left. But in between them, Legendre himself is self-absorbed in an esthetic trance.

The portrait is too serious to be caricature or even essentially negative. As seen in the early preparatory drawings, the conception of the portrait was reached at an early stage of the work and, therefore, of the two men’s friendship. That conception derives, I believe, from Charlot’s first impressions of Legendre: Charlot must have been struck by the contrast between his new friend and his army companions of the last years. The strong stylization of the figure is normal for Charlot and can be compared to his portraits of *Michel* and *Bihain* and his *Cubist Self-Portrait*. The difference is not in the treatment, but the subject. Charlot had never done an *haut mondain* and never would again. This unique example—even more striking in the context of Charlot’s wholly different œuvre—is a tribute to their doomed friendship. Legendre may well have been shocked and offended by the way Charlot saw him, but in a few years, Art Moderne would turn preciousness and perversity into visual ideals. The rich would soon pay to be painted with elegant elongation, fancy clothes, and esthetic attitudes. Along with Charlot’s earlier work, *L’Amitié* anticipates a later stylistic movement. But the ideals and characteristics privileged by Art Moderne could not be attractive unless emptied of the energy and rigor that Charlot brought to his masterpiece.

The artist of *L’Amitié* contrasts point by point with Legendre. The artist sits quietly while Legendre whirls. He is in the shadows while the other enjoys the floodlights. The artist’s dark work clothes contrast with Legendre’s fancy wear. The artist sits on the ground amid the flowers; Legendre sports a boutonnière. The artist holds the tools of his trade; his brush points directly at that same boutonnière. Unlike Legendre, the artist is decided in his life; he seems older by dark experience. He looks at his subject with the eyes of nature; his eyes are paralleled by the two clusters of blossoms above his head. His easel faces heavenward.

The artist is not, however, a distant critic of Legendre. He occupies in the painting the traditional place of the artist before his patron or even the suppliant before his saint: the artist is the dependent. Charlot imagined Legendre as such a patron and emphasizes this aspect of their relationship in the two portraits, rather than the equality of comradeship and collaboration.

Friendship is, however, the theme stated in the title and the *banderole* and is addressed in general and in particular by Charlot. In general terms, a spectrum of friendship is depicted. At one extreme, a friend can be *dévoué comme un chien* 'have dog-like devotion,' a proverbial French expression, used especially for social dependents. Mousmé, in fact Charlot's dog, curls contentedly under Legendre's legs. At the opposite extreme, a putative friend can be self-absorbed and indifferent, like the object of the artist's attention. The artist himself represents the *juste milieu*: he is devoted to his friend but can examine him critically. A good friend is not blind. For Charlot, close observation was an obligation to everyone and everything he loved, and love included a concern for their salvation. Moreover, when Charlot observed, he saw more than others; all his portraits attest to an unusual psychological penetration that was disconcerting to some of his subjects.

Charlot also depicts his particular friendship with Legendre. On the table between the artist and his subject is a sequence of three objects: the Cubist print, the Bible, and a hat with a colored ribbon; the "straw hat with a very loud ribbon" that was the ostensible reason for their rupture (Interview October 18, 1970). The hat is turned upside down and covered, as if in a gesture of rejection, by Legendre's right elbow. Read from right to left, the sequence suggests the story of their friendship from an initial common interest in art, to a more spiritual sharing, to their break. This sequence is emphasized by one of the interior fan shapes of the painting. From the angel's right wrist descends at a slant, on the left, the side of a pink wall, whose attention-getting color, atypical of the painting, connects it to Legendre's *boutonnière*. The left edge of the wall can be extended to cross the overlap of print and Bible. On the right descends the edge of the angel's sleeve, forming a line that cuts across the center of the hat. The slant of the pink wall and its lack of perspectival connection to its surroundings and the picture plane make it unstable. The wall seems pulled towards a true vertical; that is, it has to move inward, creating a pendulum swing across the three objects, thereby emphasizing them as a sequence in time. Alternatively, paired with the angel's sleeve, the edge of the wall can be understood as one of the two strings of a scale in which the print and the Bible are being weighed against the hat. The angel becomes the figure of justice, and the hat rises above the two more weighty elements. For Charlot, the positive aspects of the friendship were much more important than the putative cause of the break—a point of fashion!—and this passage of the painting is his confession that he cannot understand the end of their relationship.

L'Amitié enjoyed a success that would be most valuable for any young artist. Firstly, it was accepted for a prestigious exhibition and hung prominently. In our interview of October 18, 1970, Charlot stated:

Incidentally, the picture, to the surprise of everybody around him, was accepted by the jury of the Salon d'Automne, which was a pretty stiff jury, and before I left for Mexico, I could see it exhibited. And my teachers of painting went to see the picture, and they didn't like it very much, but they were, of course, impressed that it was hung and rather not badly hung at that, because in the old days, the salons, they piled up things from the bottom of the wall to the top. If you were at the top you were in the salon, but nobody could see your picture. But mine was rather very well presented...

Secondly, the painting received favorable notice in the press. The critic Claude Blanchard wrote in the *Revue Moderne*:

Jean Charlot, que je connaissais surtout jusqu'à présent comme un des plus intéressants représentants de l'art religieux moderne, vient de nous montrer, au Salon d'Automne, que quoique spécialisé en un genre d'une technique assez particulière, il sait, à l'occasion, réaliser, lui aussi, des œuvres d'inspiration profane.

Son tableau *l'Amitié* est une belle composition, dans laquelle ses tendances à la peinture décoratives l'ont heureusement servi. Sans recherches exagérées du détail, sans souci des effets faciles, il a su mettre dans cette toile autant de charme et d'harmonie que d'expression profonde.

Le dessin est d'une belle pureté de lignes ; le coloris, discret et délicat, a cette vigueur tamisée qui incite au rêve... L'ensemble est émouvant de simplicité et de sincère sentiment...

Cette œuvre, en nous permettant d'apprécier la diversité des moyens de Jean Charlot, ne peut que renforcer l'estime en laquelle ou [*sic: on*] tient désormais cet excellent artiste.¹⁷⁸

'Jean Charlot—whom I have known up to now primarily as one of the most interesting representatives of modern religious art—has just shown us, at the Salon d'Automne, that—although specialized in a genre with a fairly specialized technique—he knows how, on occasion, to realize himself works of a secular inspiration.

His picture *L'Amitié* is a beautiful composition, in which his tendencies towards mural painting have been used successfully. Without exaggerated research into details, without worrying about easy effects, he has known how to put into this canvas as much charm and harmony as profound expressions.

The drawing has a beautiful purity of line; the coloring, discreet and delicate, has that subdued vigor that inspires dreams... The whole is moving with its simplicity and sincere emotion...

This work—in enabling us to appreciate the diversity of Jean Charlot's means—can only reinforce the esteem in which this excellent artist will be held from now on.'

The notice was accompanied by a full illustration of *L'Amitié*. Blanchard remembered the painting when reporting later on Charlot's activity in Mexico:

Jeune peintre français qui exposa l'an dernier au Salon d'Automne un tableau d'un beau sentiment et d'une très jolie harmonie, intitulé "l'Amitié." ([Charlot] Blanchard September 16, 1922: 18)

'Young French painter who exhibited last year at the Salon d'Automne a picture with a beautiful feeling and a very pretty harmony, entitled *l'Amitié*.'

Charlot always felt that *L'Amitié*, its acceptance by the Salon d'Automne, and the favorable criticism it received were an important moment in his life. In a 1930 list of accomplishments, he included:

1921 Salon d'Automne Paris

(A tempera picture)

8.3.2. FIRST DAYS IN MEXICO

Charlot and his mother emigrated to Mexico on the *Flandre*, the boat they had taken on their exploratory trip. At sea, Charlot drew a serious portrait, "*Soulfi??a? esprit égyptien sur le Flandre.*"¹⁷⁹ Drawn from a three-quarters angle in very light pencil, the young woman with her high cheekbones, strong eye sockets, and well-defined mouth, looks like the Sphinx. Charlot also wrote the poem *D'Exil*, which he finished in December.¹⁸⁰ The poem reprises his old themes: his desire for a good Christian marriage to a simple woman, his loneliness in isolation, and his exhaustion bearing the burden of God's commands: "d'avoir l'Infini pour prison" 'to be imprisoned in Infinity.' The poem is unspecific, but the title suggests that he fears their move to Mexico will hinder his finding a sympathetic companion and that the commands to which he is "lié comme l'esclave du moulin" 'tied like a slave in a mill' are his family obligations. Mexico is a problem rather than a solution. The poem is one of the few indications of the emotional difficulty of the move.

The *Flandre* reached Veracruz on November 24, 1921,¹⁸¹ and Charlot was immediately and deeply impressed. As on his first arrival, Charlot was moved to write down his impressions:

Ce prêtre mexicain à la nuque noisette issue d'hors la chasuble damassée d'or aux gerbes lourdes contre grenat. En gestes nobles le Sacrifice s'achève que préfigurèrent ses ancêtres, quand le couteau de pierre crevait les peaux haletantes, par l'ostension aux paumes sacerdotales du cœur vif encore, dans la gloire des soirs chômés.

Sa pénitente, fillette dont on ne voit, dans la prosternation totale, que deux plantes poudreuses devant le jupon rayé bleu.

La Dormition de la Vierge dans ce beau cercueil en cristal, costume riche et masque fade. Le badigeon lépreux des voûtes. L'échelle du maçon cernant l'Ecce Homo de cire. ("Seconde Arrivée au Mexique," November 1921)

'This Mexican priest with a nut-brown neck emerging from the chasuble damasked in gold with heavy sheaves against the garnet-red. With noble gestures, the Sacrifice is achieved that his ancestors prefigured, when the stone knife cut into the panting skins, by the exposition on the sacerdotal palms of the still living heart, in the glory of the festival evenings.

His penitent, a young woman of whom one sees, in her total prosternation, only the two dusty soles in front of her skirt with its blue lines.

The Dormition of the Virgin in this beautiful crystal coffin, rich costume and faded

mask. Leprous distemper of the vaulting. The mason's ladder framing the wax Ecce Homo.'

Luis' note on his business stationery survives in which he welcomes the Charlots to Mexico City:

Mon cher Jean:

J'ai reçu ta carte et suis heureux de savoir que vous êtes bien arrivé. Nous vous attendons vendredi vers les 6 heures du soir, car demain Lucha attend le medecin qui probablement lui fera garder le lit jeudi.

Mes meilleurs souvenirs à tous deux.

Louis H. Labadie (November 29, 1921)

'My dear Jean,

I have received your card and am happy to know that you have arrived in good state.

We await you Friday around six in the evening, because tomorrow Lucha visits the doctor, who will probably make her stay in bed on Thursday.

My best wishes to both of you...'

The note indicates that the Charlots would not be staying together with the Labadies as they had on their first trip. Anne's residence is unrecorded; Charlot himself stayed with his uncle Aristide Martel and took the opportunity to study and enjoy his superb collection of Precolumbian art:

Well, I was living at the time with my other uncle, Aristide Martel. And he had all his pre-Hispanic collection at home, and so I was literally living in the middle of some of the most beautiful pre-Hispanic items. Some of them were monumental things, great stones from ballgame rings and some things like a sort of a monkey head that was part of the Nezahualcoyotzin baths, and so on—so that for me it was, of course, something more intimate and profound than going to a museum, that living you could say, day and night, in a small place—because he was at the time in a small place—that was literally packed with pre-Hispanic masterpieces.¹⁸²

Charlot and his mother would later find a place together, although Charlot appears to have lived periodically either alone or with other people, including Siqueiros.

Charlot began a new life, putting aside his regrets about France, and giving himself with his characteristic energy and generosity to the home of his ancestors, which would inspire the second great period of his work. Significantly, he bought a diary for 1922. The entry for Monday, January 2, is "Coyoacan. paysage" 'Coyoacán. landscape.' That is, Charlot had been contacted by the young Mexican artists who in his absence had discovered the *Chemin de Croix*, which he had left on his first trip at the Academy of San Carlos, and they had invited him to work with them at the open-air school in that town.

In his new home, Charlot began his second great stylistic quest; speaking of his early works in Mexico, he stated:

Very soon, I found I couldn't go on, I would say, as a Frenchman, as a Cubist, in front of the things that I was seeing because they were different. They were different from Paris, and I had to learn again; I had to be, I would say, literally born again, and so I started with small pictures... (March 8, 1972)

This quest became urgent with the beginning of public art, which in Mexico was directed at a sociologically diverse, multi-cultural population (*MMR* 184): "there was an aesthetic search to be made of no less importance, if my mural work was to shoot valid roots in this new soil." For Charlot, such a search was moral:

I could not flaunt art in the face of my Indian friends, because it would be wrong, it would be prideful, and it would end by alienating them. So I had to learn, as I said, I had to be born anew. (March 8, 1972)

Such a stylistic transformation required apparently abandoning much of what he had accomplished in France and replacing it with what he was learning in Mexico, in daily observation and the study of Mexican art: he was "painting like a folk artist without wanting to, but simply because I was in a hurry to forget what I knew. And I knew a heck of a lot. I still do" (March 8, 1972). Brenner speculated that Charlot felt "perhaps an irritated repudiation, after the war, of trivial and smart gymnastics" (*Idols* 313). Most important, he took to heart the reactions of the Mexicans he knew:

Of course, one of the great influences on me at the time is Luciana, who was my Indian model. I would ask her what she thought about the things I did, and I would correct them very carefully. For example, I remember once I had put a highlight in her hair. She was in her twenties, and her hair was a beautiful black, and those highlights were of course white, and she said, "Why do you put white hair in my head. I don't have white hair." So I had to learn and try something else by which I could make her head go round without highlights. It wasn't easy.

Another one of my teachers was my mason, because when I did that fresco, I had a mason, Luis Escobar, and he was quite outspoken about what he liked and what he disliked. I remember that one day in the top of the wall where I hoped that nobody would see what I was doing, I had done a little bit of a thing that was a little bit Cubist. I hoped nobody would see that. So he was up there on the scaffold, and he looked at that and said, "Oh, you had a headache yesterday, no?" So there went my Cubist knowledge.¹⁸³

The result was "that particular style that I worked hard to do as if I had never known Paris" (March 8, 1972).

Part of this search was the abandonment of conventional European esthetic devices in order to find a more cross-cultural and thus more universally human means of expression. In a 1928 article written in collaboration with Anita Brenner and published under her name, "Une Renaissance Mexicaine," Charlot clarified this goal:

Jean Charlot, d'origine française et d'affinité mexicaine. Passionné comme tous les convertis, il a cherché l'alphabet plastique de la plus plastique des terres. Il s'est dépouillé des doctrines professionnelles qui alourdissent son œuvre européen et, au cœur de son travail mexicain bat l'émotion humaine.

'Jean Charlot, of French origin and Mexican affinity. With the passion of a convert, he sought the plastic alphabet of the most plastic of lands. He stripped away the professional teachings that burdened his European œuvre, and at the heart of his Mexican work beats human emotion.'

For Charlot, such a change involved his whole person: "I had to be, I would say, literally born again..." Changing from a French artist to a Mexican one involved his very identity. In an unpublished article of 1926, Brenner wrote:

Jean Charlot says that one must always be choosing in life, and he practises what he preaches. He is French by birth and training, notwithstanding one Mexican grandfather and a Spanish Jewish grandmother, but he has chosen to be Mexican. For several generations, his family has been closely connected with Mexico.

This identity would be controverted, and Charlot would be challenged to defend it as he did in the draft of a letter, dated September 1925, to W. Alanson Bryan of the Los Angeles Museum:

As a pretext for criticizing my sending a picture, they seized upon my nationality. It is true that I am of French origin, but of a french family that is one of the longest established in Mexico. My great-grandfather Victor Goupil came to Mexico in 1820 and since then my family has always been represented here, both he and my grandfather having married Mexican women. This is not a mere geographic accident, since both of the Goupils were interested in this country to the extent of having done important archeological work. They collected and edited Aztec manuscripts and part of their collection was formed by the Boturini manuscripts. This Goupil collection was donated in part to the Trocadero Museum and in part to the National Library of Paris, much of it remaining in Mexico. Facsimile editions of the most valuable manuscripts were made at their own expense.

List Arzubide, for one, recognized Charlot's family connection to Mexico as essential to his work:

Jean Charlot llega a México (1921) en pos del sueño que se le ha hecho obsesión: encarar la parte mexicana de su sangre que en la lejanía europea ha sido mantenida viva mediante fotos, artesanías, recuerdos que afectuosamente guarda la familia y mediante el cultivo cuidadoso del idioma Español. (April 12, 1994)

'Jean Charlot arrived in Mexico (1921) in pursuit of the dream that had made itself an obsession for him: to come face to face with the Mexican part of his blood that in the distance of Europe had been maintained alive by photos, artisanal objects, memories

that the family kept fondly and also by the careful cultivation of the Spanish language.’

Brenner and others did not dismiss Charlot’s claim:

His idea is simplicity, as well in painting as in other things. This is one thing that has been instrumental in assimilating him so completely to Mexico, an assimilation recognized and accepted especially by his fellow-painters, who often assert “Charlot is even more Mexican than we are.”¹⁸⁴

Indeed, an apparent simplicity will be the touchstone of his new style, which Charlot will again contrast to what he came to see as the overt compositional tours-de-force of his late French work. The distant historian sees more continuity: Charlot absorbed the complexity of his compositions into the greater monumentality that was the major accomplishment of his Mexican period.

Charlot’s description of his transformation reflects his deepest thinking about art. Style is created from the very identity of an artist. Style is connected to a land with its distinct viewing public and artistic traditions. His statements are also deeply revealing of his emotions and character. He could not think of his Mexican period as a transition; it was a break with his French past. He would destroy his last large work in his French style, *La Théologie Régulatrice des Arts*, and would depreciate as late as the 1970s his great *Chemin de Croix*, explicitly rejecting its style with its meaning in favor of his later, Mexican work. Such drastic actions reveal, I would argue, the emotional difficulty he had leaving France and his artistic future there. His having “chosen to be Mexican” indicates a powerful exercise of his will, a will strengthened by lifelong religious practice. Such impositions of the will are never made without emotional cost. Isabelle Bonzom writes: “L’artiste fresquiste est nomade et le spectateur pèlerin-voyageur” ‘The fresco artist is nomadic and the traveller-pilgrim spectator (2010: 58).

Charlot’s connection with Mexico was, however, based on more than accident and family history. The enthusiastic reception of his *Chemin de Croix* by Mexican artists revealed a deep common concern. The Mexicans recognized in the images an expression of what they themselves had suffered during the Revolution. On his side, like many veterans, Charlot felt that most people in France were anxious to forget the war and the soldiers. The world, and especially the art world, had moved on before he had had a chance to fully explore and express his tragic experience.¹⁸⁵ He arrived in Mexico, therefore, with emotional and artistic concerns that resonated with society and found there an audience that could empathize with him. The artist Xavier Guerrero wrote: “Charlot, francés, venía de Europa aún bajo los efectos trágicos de su participación en la guerra” ‘Charlot, a Frenchman, arrived from Europe still under the tragic effects of his participation in the war.’¹⁸⁶ Leal wrote:

Al final llegó Jean Charlot, que venía, en compañía de su madre, en busca de un poco de tranquilidad en el Nuevo Mundo, para olvidar las tragedias de la guerra que acababa de pasar, como un torbellino, sobre el Continente europeo. (1990:170)

‘At the end arrived Jean Charlot, who came with his mother in search of a little tranquility in the New World, to forget the tragedies of the war that had just passed like a whirlwind over the European continent.’

The last arrival was Jean Charlot, who came with his mother. They were looking for a little quiet in the New World to forget the horrors of the war that had just swept like a hurricane over the European continent. (Leal Writings Related to *MMR*: Passages Cut, The Gospel)

Charlot’s friend, Jehanne Bietry-Salinger, wrote later: “The end of hostilities found him, his illusions gone, in search of himself in relation to society. In 1921, he answered his own questions by going to Mexico...” (1938). Back in Paris, “Romanticism seemed gross, with its accent on experiences shared by all men—passion and pain and death”; in Mexico, the Mural Renaissance would soon assert “forcefully... the artist’s right to deal in intense human drama, and his duty to master didactic requirements” (1966 *Painted Walls*: x). Moreover, in Mexico, artists would be offered a prominent role in the reconstruction of the nation on the basis of the experience and ideals of the Revolution. Instead of reconstructing France, Charlot would aid in the reconstruction of Mexico.

Charlot will act through the next ten years as a Mexican and not a French artist, developing a Mexican style and creating Mexican subjects and themes. In her valuable “Notes for an Article,” his wife Zohmah records his mental return to France. In 1931, in New York City, Charlot happened on and acquired a photograph by Eugène Atget (1856–1927) of a Paris bakery woman delivering bread from a cart.¹⁸⁷ The photograph apparently triggered Charlot’s childhood memories and inspired a series of oil paintings of *La Boulangerie* (checklist numbers 248–250, 252): “Mexico, which continued to be his subject matter with the exception of portraits until 1931 when he painted ‘L’Homage to Adget.’” Mexico would always remain central to his work, but he would begin moving in other directions with other points of departure.

8.3.3. FIRST ART IN MEXICO: THE LAST WORKS OF THE FRENCH PERIOD

Charlot began immediately to explore the new sights and stylistic possibilities of Mexico. But a number of works produced during his first months in Mexico are the last echoes of his work in France.

After METAMORPHOSES d’OVIDE (Morse number 26) is Charlot’s last print in a style connected to his French period and apparently his first print created in Mexico. The print is based on one of the most complicated drawings in the earlier series of Cubist analyses of eighteenth-century prints—done during his first, exploratory trip to Mexico—themselves a sort of *envoi* to his earlier life. The tiny print is done in drypoint, a medium atypical of Charlot; indeed, his next use of drypoint will be in 1940 (Morse number 444), and drypoint will be used only to supplement other techniques in his later work. Charlot was probably taking advantage of the opportunity to learn the medium from the technical master Emilio García Cahero, then working at Coyoacán. In any case, the near microscopic lines push the fine

manner of the medium to its limit and display Charlot's physical control. The contrast seems deliberate, even programmatic, between *After METAMORPHOSES d'OVIDE* and the bold woodcuts on Mexican subjects Charlot created next (Morse numbers 27–40). That is, Charlot was choosing monumentality and boldness over the ultrafine lines of his first drypoint, a scale of execution to which he never returned, even in his smallest prints. Even in his tiniest etchings, he would use the broad manner.

8.3.3.1.Nudes

In a series of thirteen nudes done *au trait* 'in outline,' Series of Nudes in Rust-Red and Blue-Gray Line, three are dated 1922, but there is evidence that the series might have been begun in late 1921.¹⁸⁸ This series is based on an earlier series of thirty-four pencil outline drawings of nudes found in *Notebook A*, one nude per sheet 10-1/2" high X 8" wide from tear line. The earlier series was numbered from 1 to 29, pages 18,603a to 18,614b, followed by five unnumbered drawings. Numbers 1 and 18 are missing, and number 23 is unnumbered but placed between 22 and 24. Pages 18,608c and 18,610c are missing, but do not disturb the numbering of the drawings.

This earlier series was probably done soon after Charlot's arrival in Mexico. Nothing in *Notebook A* can be clearly identified as being done in France. In any case, both series continue Charlot's French work with models and provide a baseline for his later study of the nude body of the Aztec model Luz Jiménez.

In the *Notebook A* series, the pencil line is light and flexible; Charlot was sketching quickly and freely, not trying to be exact or explore a special style. The light, free manner negates any sense of bulk, emphasizing the images as the products of a moving pencil point. The image is not classical, but realistic; the viewer is seeing drawings of real human bodies, individual models posing for an artist. Accordingly, although most of the faces are schematic, Charlot can become intrigued by those of two unusual models; the result is not portraits, but using the face as much as the nude body to create the final impression.¹⁸⁹ In one drawing, a model seems to be making a funny face (number 31), and Charlot can fill the few lines of a schematic face with humor (number 9). The poses are often dramatic, displaying the strength and flexibility of the human body.

Charlot was also drawing pencil nudes on single sheets as seen from the surviving example *Female Nude from Front, on One Knee, Hands Extended Forward*.¹⁹⁰ Charlot first made a very light sketch in a dark crumbly line, perhaps very soft pencil. He then strengthened the lines with heavy pencil, introducing modifications: darker lines stop short of the end of the earlier lighter ones or change their position slightly. The hair, armpits, and pubic area are shaded in light pencil; the eyes, nipples, and navel in dark. The drawing is formal and finished rather than a sketch. The figure presents itself frankly as a strong human body, and, unusually, kneels on the bottom edge of the sheet as if on a platform. This drawing seems to have been done between the sketches in *Notebook A* and the Series of Nudes in Rust-Red and Blue-Gray Line discussed below: in the Series Charlot used the same technique as in *Nude from Front* but used washes of two colors instead of a stronger pencil.

Charlot used the sketches in *Notebook A* for the thirteen, more finished drawings of the RustRed and BlueGray Series. The main lines were first drawn with light pencil or crayon. These were then overlaid with lines in either rust-red or blue-gray wash; the warm color coordinates very elegantly with the cool. For these drawings, Charlot developed a set of stylistic rules. Each line is separate and can only touch another line; that is, there is no penetrating or overlapping. In only one detail, mentioned below, is there an overlap of the colors, though occasionally they may brush against each other teasingly. Only occasional small areas—the eyes in three drawings and the underarm shadow in a fourth—have been filled in, and with pencil rather than wash. In this, they resemble the light shading in *Female Nude from Front, on One Knee, Hands Extended Forward*.

The technique of these drawings is the same as Charlot used in his lettering of the bookplate: “Jean Charlot me crut sien. p.p.l.”: the lines of the letters, in two colors, were designed to touch but not overlap. The effect created is of absolutely clean draftsmanship. The technique permits no line that is false in any way: direction, thickness, or necessity. Charlot even intensifies the difficulty by thinning the lines, displaying his extraordinary dexterity. The unusual color combination creates a stronger coloristic effect than expected. Finally, the design of the sheet and the figures is elegant.

The development of the Rust-Red and Blue-Gray Series can be illustrated with a typical example. Number 29 of the *Notebook A* series was used as the basis for *Female Nude, Lying on Side, Head in Hand*. Sheet 18, 666 from *Notebook A* was laid over the original drawing, which was then partially traced in very light pencil. The pencil lines were then covered by lines in wash—rust-red and blue-gray—lines were added that exist in the original drawing but were not traced, and the pupils were grayed in with pencil. Charlot has simplified and lightly regularized the image. The woman’s hair has been simplified to become less obtrusive. Her face has lost much but not all of its singularity. A line has been omitted between the neck and the left breast, the nipples are a single circle instead of two, and other lines have been smoothed and modified to make her body younger. Her left foot has been finished in more detail. Moreover, certain lines have been made thicker and darker than others, investing the form with greater clarity and rhythm. To achieve the same effect, a line at the right ankle has been changed to support the curve of the whole leg; that is, design has been preferred to strict observation. The wash adds clarity and formality without sacrificing the spontaneous and observational qualities of the original drawing. Indeed, the impression is very much the same: a bulkless, realistic depiction of a real body. The same process was used in developing the wash *Female Nude, Sitting on Haunches, Hands on Floor* from number 32, with the added singularity of Charlot’s use of both red and blue-gray washes on the toes and his leaving a pencil line uncovered at the ankle.

The next stage tends to greater formality. For two drawings, Charlot used better paper and was probably not tracing. *Female Nude, Sitting Up, Arms extended* is the same pose as number 4 in *Notebook A*, but seen from a different angle. The underlying drawing is in the light, black crumbly line, perhaps crayon or charcoal or even very soft pencil, that Charlot had used in his early watercolors. Similarly, *Female Nude, Sitting, Face in Crook of Arm* can be related to the sitting nudes in *Notebook A*, but has no prototype. I believe that in these two drawings, Charlot was not tracing, but was rather creating new drawings based loosely on those in *Notebook A*. These two later drawings have a thinner, stiffer line than

the previous two—a more difficult technical challenge—and the lines are much more tightly fixed in place. The distinction is imposed more systematically between primary lines in heavy wash and secondary ones in light. The result is more finished and formal in comparison to the earlier drawings. The figures convey a stronger sense of the bulk and strength of the human body. In these nudes, Charlot has demonstrated many of the possibilities of outline drawing. The thirteen drawings of the Series of Nudes in Rust-Red and Blue-Gray Line are one culmination of the drawings of Charlot's French period. They are the baseline of his innovating work with the Aztec nude and anticipate aspects of his developing Mexican style: the creation of monumentality through simplification. The point of view looking slightly up at the model in *Female Nude, Sitting Up, Arms extended* makes a monumental impression that is new in Charlot's nudes.

8.3.3.2. La Théologie Régulatrice des Arts

Charlot's decisive act in rejecting his French period in favor of beginning his Mexican was his destruction of the unfinished monumental, 60" X 75", oil, *La Théologie Régulatrice des Arts*:

The St. Thomas and so on that you speak of is the last tie, really, with the Gilde Notre-Dame. I had done a much, of course, more important thing, much bigger thing in that blueprint for the mural for the church that I wanted to decorate, and having no wall in Mexico, I took a large canvas as a sort of a next best thing. But my tie with Paris, of course, was very obvious in that large mural... It ties with the *Way of the Cross* in woodcuts, which is also in a way a very monumental thing that could have been easily translated in mural.

...the destroyed ersatz mural, if you want to call it that, of St. Thomas ...

Let's say, it's a little crude, but let's say that the St. Thomas and so on, that big thing, was close enough to the Nabis and to Maurice Denis, not that it looked like it, but still it was along those same lines that we could call Parisian lines, and then in those ugly, big heads, I found something else, something that did not depend on France but on Mexico, and I lost interest, if you want, before finishing it really, into that big picture. (Interview August 7, 1971)

Now, on the second trip, the paintings that were done at the same time than the woodcuts were of different styles. One of them was a hangover, so to speak, of my days in Paris, and it has a rather long title. It was a *Crucifixion with Thomas Aquinas* and perhaps is related to the *Amitié*, the first thing I showed, that had been painted in Paris. It was to a great extent analytical but rather connected with my days of the Gilde Notre Dame with the idea of doing, I would say, obviously religious pictures, pictures with obvious religious subject matter.

...that big *Crucifixion with Thomas Aquinas* was nearly entirely done on a French basis, so to speak.

It was already a mural, so to speak. (Interview May 18, 1971)

Towards the end of the war and in the Occupation, Charlot was planning at least two large formal paintings. In his 1918 notebook *Guerre*, he drew a long, vertical, rectangular frame with an arched top separated by the top line of the rectangle. This shape is similar to his *Christ Carrying His Cross, with rich border* of 1916–1917. Below the rectangle, he appears to be indicating an inscription. Inside the rectangle, he listed in a column:

Arithm.

Géom.

Algèbre

Imagerie

4 vents

5 à 4 sous.

Algèbre

‘Arithmetic

Geometry

Algebra

Imagery

Four winds

five or four [?]

Algebra’

The abstract subjects are similar to his projects for liturgical prints of virtues, but the simple column of subjects provides no clue to his intended composition. In any case, he appears to have abandoned this project.

In 1919, in the *Small Sketchpad, Occupation, 1919* (2-3/8” X 1-9/16”), Charlot made his first sketch for a large composition, *La Théologie Régulatrice des Arts*; he himself identified the sketch in the early 1970s. The center of the horizontal composition is occupied by an iconic crucified Christ, with the feet planted on the ground and with the body full-front except for the tilting of the head towards the viewer’s right. Mary is on Christ’s right and Thomas Aquinas, identified by “S.T.” below the image, is on his left. On the right side of the composition, a painter sits at his easel; on the left, an architect and a sculptor are tightly grouped over an unfinished wall of dressed stone.¹⁹¹ The figures are bulky, as in *Christ Carrying His Cross, with rich border*, rather than attenuated, as those in the *Chemin de Croix*. The human figures and all the properties of the composition will continue to be powerfully bulky throughout the surviving stages of the project.

The sketch is part of a work in progress. Charlot seems to have penciled over the two segments of circles that separated the figures on the sides from the three in the center. Moreover, he appears to be pulled in two stylistic directions. The iconic Christ, the stone wall with its horizontal rectangles, and the painter’s large canvas, all indicate an obvious geometric composition based on flat planes and straight

lines. The wall indicates the picture plane, the cross is set a little in front of the background plane, and the canvas represents the receding right wall of the spatial box. In contrast, the figures of the architect and sculptor on one side and of Thomas Aquinas and the painter on the other are intricate compositions of flowing lines that mold around themselves a more plastic and responsive feeling of space.

The next surviving evidence for the project is a large drawing, 13" high X 19-3/4" wide, dated December 1921 and providing the title. The composition has been lengthened horizontally and is intended as the basis for a painting whose mural-sized dimensions are specified: "1^m.50 X 3^m." Charlot planned further studies for the details of the final painting: "à étudier—21 mains, 9 pieds, 12 têtes (dont la statue)" 'to study—21 hands, 9 feet, 12 heads (including the statue)'; he was following classical practice as he already had for *L'Amitié* earlier in the year and would later for his first fresco in 1922–1923. As indicated, Charlot has added five figures to the original six. All the figures are identified in Charlot's notes below the drawing:

La théologie (Christ, *à droite* l'Eglise (Marie) tenant l'Eucharistie (dogme.)
 St Jean baise la plaie de la main (mystique)
 à gauche St Thomas enseigne un disciple écrit (on peut mettre la Poésie.)
 en avant La figure couchée avec la licorne signifie la sagesse divine—(il faut
 1 femme avec attributs)
 au fond à gauche Aristote (philosophie.)
 Les arts : à gauche architecte offrant sa maquette
 sculpteur avec fil à plomb
 à droite peintre un ange tient la Règle.

 'Theology (Christ, *at right* the Church (Mary) holding the Eucharist (dogma).
 Saint John kisses the wound of the hand (mysticism)
 at left, Saint Thomas teaches, a disciple writes (Poetry could be put here).
 in front, the figure lying down with the unicorn signifies divine wisdom—(a
 woman with attributes is needed)
 in the left rear, Aristotle (philosophy).
 The arts: at left, architect offering his model
 sculptor with his plumb line
 at right, painter, an angel holds the Ruler.'

The symbolism is an important expression of Charlot's thinking at this point in his life. Indeed, elements remained with him: in his mural *Inspiration, Study, Creation* of 1967, he again contrasted the book-reading "Study" with "Creation," as he contrasted here the student with the mystic.

For the style, Charlot has decided completely for the flowing lines and plastic space evident on the two side sections of his first sketch. The linear elements that represented the stylistic alternative have been nullified: the stone wall has been largely covered (and tilted slightly upwards towards the center) as has the cross; a note specifies, "drap posé sur la croix" 'cloth placed on the cross.' Most important, the painter's canvas has been turned around so that it no longer represents one side of the spatial box, thus

stabilizing the space; instead, it destabilizes any possible idea of a simple spatial box and pushes the writhing figures forward into the center of the picture, compressing the composition and concentrating its power. The background is now a glimpse of Jerusalem, perceived only through a small gap in the figures at the upper left; this resembles the bit of cityscape in *L'Amitié*, and Charlot may have intended at this point to treat it equally abstractly.

Similarly, the crucified Christ is no longer iconically frontal, but flexes his knees and bends, twisting into a spiral. His right arm is detached from the cross and lowered so that St. John can kiss the wound of the hand. The spiral of Christ's body tilts back in space from the feet to the shoulders. In doing so it forms the diameter of a tilted oval that stretches across the entire width of the composition: it flows from the angle of the architect's body on the left down through the knees of the sculptor to the edge of the canvas under the feet of Christ and then across the feet of the figure of Sagesse 'Wisdom' and up, curving along the body up to the shoulder of the painter; from there, the oval moves over the artist's hand to the top of the head of St. Thomas' student, over the shoulders of Thomas and Christ, and finally down Christ's right arm to his hand; Christ's hand points to the head of the architect, which leans towards it. This oval tilting back in space is then crossed by an X of crossing diagonals from the four corners. The descending diagonals join with the lower oval to create a strong three-dimensional wedge that juts forwards seemingly into the space of the viewer. A second wedge is formed behind this one from the figures of St. John and the student on either side, through Mary and St. Thomas, to the legs of Christ flexed forward. Corresponding to this inner wedge, is an inner X formed by two diagonals: one descends from the nail in Christ's left hand to the toe of the sculptor's right foot; the other from the corresponding place on the crossbeam down the raised leg of Sagesse. The inner X is tilted backwards like the horizontal oval described above.

This description of the main lines of the composition omits the ferment of contrasting and corresponding lines that circulate and recirculate over the whole surface of the drawing, complicating every attempt to formulate a simple view of this most complicated design. Charlot teases the viewer with the plumb line of the sculptor, the ruler of the painter's guardian angel, and a carpenter's square at the foot of the cross, but such geometric clues cannot be followed mechanically. Most obviously, the tilt of the painter's canvas creates for that figure a space that seems to be somehow outside of the general composition, however many elements attach him to it. In the same way, Charlot would later use a "dead angle" created by the composition of his first fresco to portray himself and his friends as if they were spectators outside of the time and space of the mural's subject. The painter's character as an observer is thus expressed no matter how theoretically he is placed below theology.

The last surviving evidence for this project is the color sketch in oil of 1922, probably early in that year: *Calvary with St. Thomas*, 13-1/2" high by 25-1/2" wide.¹⁹² All the figures except Christ are now clothed, as opposed to the nudes of the earlier study; Charlot was again following the academic practice of drawing the figures first in the nude and later with clothing. The stone wall has disappeared completely, and the crossbeam of the cross flexes downward. The clearest geometric form, the painter's canvas, still creates an anomalous space by its unassimilated angle. The biggest difference in the composition is that Charlot has increased the space below and above the group of figures; although the

group still crowds both sides. Below, the knee of the sculptor and the buttock of Sagesse no longer touch the bottom limit of the painting; a little ground cushions the edge. Above, the horizon line has been lowered and the figures have been spaced a little more widely in order to make room for a background with Jerusalem on the left and a green plain on the right, lit brilliantly as if by lightning under a stormy sky.

Indeed, color has transformed the image. Painted with bravura brushstrokes, the colors range from absolute black to absolute white with strong chiaroscuro. The Mexican artist, Fernando Leal, saw this coloring as a challenge to the Impressionism being taught at the art school at which he and Charlot were working. Indeed, the finished project along with the unrealized parish mural would have constituted the high points of Charlot's post-Impressionist use of color. The coloring of the upper portion of *The Massacre in the Main Temple*, Charlot felt, had begun the process of change towards the earth colors he would use in the next period of his art.

The coloring of *La Théologie* at times emphasizes the composition visible in the pencil drawing; for instance, the top-right to bottom-left diagonal of the inner X is accented by spots of bright colors. Most often, however, the coloring adds a new level of complication. For instance, the two end figures of the horizontal oval, the architect and the painter, are both dressed in blue. The blue of the architect is, however, lighter than that of the painter. The viewer would, therefore, expect the architect to be closer than the painter; he is, however, placed deeper into the painting, that placement working in counterpoint to the color. This difference in distance from the picture plane between the architect and the painter can be seen in the pencil drawing, but it is not used in the composition. In the color sketch, in contrast, the horizontal oval has been given a second three-dimensional direction: not only does it tip back vertically from bottom to top, it also turns horizontally with the right end nearer the picture plane and the left end further away. To accomplish this, Charlot has for the first time made visible—and emphasized with light coloring—the thickness of the side of the cross that faces the painter. That thickness, along with the angle of the canvas, creates a three-dimensional horizontal direction for the group, which is added on top of the other compositional elements described above.

Most important, Charlot has used the chiaroscuro lighting in counterpoint to the bulky figures evident in the pencil drawing; that is, the integrity of their forms is challenged by the non-uniform lighting, which creates highlights unrelated to the understood form. This device offers a clue to Charlot's intention. He is working from the idea—developed later in the seventh lecture of *Pictures and PictureMaking*, May 31, 1938—that three main methods are available for creating a composition based on line. In the first, the lines of the composition coincide with those outlining the forms, presented flattened in a flat light. In the second, the compositional lines pass through the axes of the forms, conceived as three-dimensional in a diffuse light. In the third, a strong, directed light—which produces highlights—and color, more or less independent of form, are used to create the compositional lines. In *La Théologie*, Charlot is using all three methods, sometimes to reinforce each other and sometimes in counterpoint. In sum, *La Théologie Régulatrice des Arts* constitutes one of Charlot's most impressive compositions.

Charlot actually started on the full-scale painting, approximately 60" X 75", in the studio he shared with Fernando Leal in Coyoacán. Leal remembered "an enormous picture with a religious theme, in which he boldly used the anathematized black" (Charlot 1963: 166). However, for the reasons given above, Charlot destroyed *La Théologie*. Regretting it involves regretting Charlot's abandonment of his entire French direction, even for an astonishing future. The resulting mixed emotions approach the mystery of Charlot as a man and of his unique career as an artist.

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- ¹ *Portrait of Louis Goupil, profile*, pencil and gouache, 52 cm high X 74-1/2 cm wide, 20-1/2" X 32" wide, dated April 26, 1920. *Louis Goupil's Hands*, pencil and gouache, 52 cm high X 74-1/2 cm wide, 20-1/2" X 32" wide, dated 1920.
- ² *Louis Goupil, three-quarters*, pencil, 20-1/2" high X 14-1/2" wide. Perhaps in the 1920s, Charlot first wrote "17" on the verso and then scratched it out. He next wrote "20?" and struck it out; finally he wrote "19." Much later, he wrote "1920?" on the recto. I guess that Charlot's indecision between 1919 and 1920 stemmed from the fact that the portrait is clearly done from life, but Charlot remembered still being in the army at the time he did it.
- ³ Interview May 14, 1971. The JCC contains an undated ticket: N° 12/*Académie Colarossi/Bon pour un Croquis*.
- ⁴ Interview October 18, 1970. The boater was later rendered fashionable by the Duke of Windsor.
- ⁵ *Adam and Eve*, oil, November 1932, 62" square, checklist 302.
- ⁶ Silver 1989: 49 f., 74–85. Cork 1994: avant-garde artists, 73 f., 132 f., 146 f., 192 f., 208 ff., 214, 226; conservative artists, 197, 203, 223.
- ⁷ Vinchon 1924. In 1929, Charlot and Brenner attended an illustrated lecture on psychopaths, and Charlot found the faces "so utterly sincere" (Glusker 2010: 746).
- ⁸ Charlot pasted his ex libris in the book and wrote in troche date February 22, 1920. He inserted a sheet of four photographs of Cézanne cut from a magazine, adding the title "Cezanne" [*sic*] and the note "photos prises en 1906 année de sa mort" 'photos taken in 1906, the year of his death.'
- ⁹ Charlot wrote in the book "Mayence 26-11-19" 'Mainz, November 26, 1919.'
- ¹⁰ Charlot's ex libris was found in the book.
- ¹¹ Cooper 1971: 22 on Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J. R. Version O)* (1907), also 18 f.
- ¹² E.g., Gamwell 1980: 24, 27 f., 45. See Denis 1922: 68, 118, 122, 127, 132.
- ¹³ Altschuler 1994: 36; see also 36 f., 40 f. Gamwell 1980: 172.

¹⁴ Gleizes 1921:

12: “les musées apparaissent comme des nécropoles, où les œuvres achèvent de se décomposer, sans qu’à l’interrogation elles puissent révéler le secret des lois qui les provoquèrent et les organisèrent.”

‘museums seem necropolises, where the works succeed in decomposing without revealing to interrogation the secret of the laws that provoked and organized them.’

12: “Il réduisit les éléments accidentels à certaines simplifications essentielles.”

‘He reduced accidental elements to certain essential simplifications.’

14: “La pénétration des plans et des volumes occupa l’esprit des peintres. La présentation cinématique des objets les retint quelques temps.”

‘The penetration of planes and volumes occupied the mind of painters. The cinematic presentation of objects held them for some time.’

39: chapter “Lois de la Beauté” ‘Laws of Beauty’

1^o L’appréciation de la surface.

2^o La connaissance des principes d’équilibre.

3^o La science de la loi des charpentes.

4^o La science des contrastes colorés.

‘ 1. Appreciation of the surface.

2. Knowledge of principles of balance.

3. Science of the law of framework.

4. Sciences of color contrasts.’

Charlot found *Du “Cubisme”* by Gleizes and Jean Metzinger (1912) in Mexico, so apparently read it later (Tabletalk July 19, 1971; February 1972). Charlot made a note also in his copy of *R. de la Fresnaye* 1922. Charlot’s reading was doubtless wide.

¹⁵ Gleizes 1921: 18, 39. Braque also echoes Denis, Silver 1989: 106 f.

¹⁶ Tabletalk March 2, 1972. Tomkins 1996: 57, young Cubists looking “for an art that would engage the mind as well as the eye.”

¹⁷ Tabletalk July 19, 1971; February 17, 1972; February 18, 1972: he knew directly the work of Metzinger and Lhote; March 8, 1972: “Juan Gris, one of my great favorites...I think Gino Severini, Juan Gris, were two of my favorites.” All but Gris and Severini are mentioned in contemporary documents. Jullian 1975, on Gleizes. Raymond 1975, on Lhote.

¹⁸ Tabletalk February 3, 1972. Charlot may be speaking loosely of Cubism for the early periods and Purism for the later. Charlot met Amédée Ozenfant at the opening of an exhibition on Native American art at the Museum of Modern Art, New York City, in 1941 (AA I 128). They became friends and were colleagues at Black Mountain College in 1944 (December 1967). They exchanged paintings, and Charlot bought another painting from Ozenfant in 1966. Charlot was impressed by Ozenfant's 1942 philosophy of mental "preforms" in art, which he might have discovered when Ozenfant sent him a copy of his *Foundations of Modern Art* in 1952: "J'espère que le chapitre Préformes vous intéressera" 'I hope that the Preforms chapter will interest you' (letter to Charlot, December 1, 1952). But evidence is lacking that Ozenfant was a focus of Charlot's during the postwar period or later. Ducros 1985: 78, note 27, states that Charlot was influenced by Ozenfant and cites Charlot December 1967; I found, however, no support in that article for her statement (in fact, Charlot did not follow Ozenfant's criticism of his planned mural at Black Mountain, 28). The longer typescript for the article contains no further information. Charlot did compare Indian color symbolism to Ozenfant's work (1946 "Prep-Hispanic Quota": 5). Charlot never mentioned Le Corbusier to me as a painter and criticized his rejection of art for architecture.

¹⁹ *Cubisme physique* is used by Apollinaire in a different sense, Gamwell 1980: 55. Neizel in *Neue Französische Malerei* (1913: 5), which Charlot read, interprets Apollinaire's "Physischer Kubismus" in a sense somewhat closer to Charlot's.

²⁰ Cooper 1971: 74 ff., 210–218, 226–229. Silver 1989: 134, illustration 100 (322, for an opposing interest in "illusionistic pictorial space" among the younger Cubists). Compare Gleizes and Metzinger 1912: 19 f.: "il suffit, les surfaces étant les limites des volumes et les lignes celles des surfaces, d'imiter un contour pour représenter un volume..." 'it suffices, surfaces being the limits of volumes and lines the limits of surfaces, to imitate a contour to represent a volume...' Jullian 1975: 146, on Gleizes.

²¹ March 1926: 16. The Mexican artist Fermín Revueltas uses the term in an unpublished document of November 9, 1922 (JCC; *MMR Documents III*); did he learn this term from Charlot? Of course, the use of planes is essential and mentioned by Cubist writers. For instance, by Gleizes 1920: 14: "La pénétration des plans et des volumes occupa l'esprit des peintres" 'The penetration of planes and volumes occupied the minds of the painters.'

²² Raphael 1919:

83, quotation from Bernard or Denis: “L’étude modifie notre vision à tel point que l’humble et colossal Pissarro se trouve justifié de ses théories anarchistes” ‘Study modifies our vision to the point that the humble and colossal Pissarro has been justified in his anarchistic theories.’

86, the color organization of Cézanne creates relief without mixing colors: “elle passe par une parfaite gradation des bleus aux verts et des laques aux jaunes” ‘it passes by a perfect gradation from blues to greens and from red lakes to yellows.’

95, quotation from Cézanne: “Gauguin ne m’a pas compris. Jamais je n’ai voulu et je n’accepterais jamais le manque de modèle [Charlot corrects: modelé] ou de gradation; c’est un non-sens.” ‘Gauguin has not understood me. I have never wanted and would never accept the lack of modeling or gradation; it’s nonsense.’

²³ Charlot cannot be referring to the Cubist *Harlequin* (1915) that was in the exhibition. Good and bad Harlequins face each other across Silver 1989: 128 f. In Mexico, Charlot would use Rivera’s poverty to defend his sincerity. Weston 1966: 165, made the same connection, arguing that riches would hurt the quality of art.

²⁴ Tabletalk February 8 (?), 1972; July 1978. Interview November 12, 1970:

Well, I think the world. I mean seeing is the biggest influence. The big influence is nature as it comes to the artist through his eye. I think all those things that we speak of are sort of bookish. It's the same difference between reading a book and living. I don't think any artist is influenced in any major way by any school of art or any other artist. I think he's influenced by what happens between his eye, I would say nearly his eyeball, and nature. So we speak of that simply because it can be spoken of, because it can be written down and put in a book, all those scholarly influences, but they are at most, at least in the great artists, I think, they are at most 10 percent of influence. Influence comes from the world itself. Well, there are a few exceptions. I think a man like Picasso, for example, remains in that strange twilight of having an art, making an art influenced by art. But that is a great exception. That is, he uses already the chewed-up solutions of other artists. I was very impressed looking at the three hundred or so etchings that he did in six months in 1968. I was looking at those things that he did when he was nearly ninety, well, not exactly, but pretty close, and all those bookish, we could say, influences are there, and he doesn't seem to have done what painters do who work and are taught by nature. There is always a sort of a synthesis towards the end of their life that can be translated as a sort of increased wisdom. I found in those Picassos a tiredness using the same formulas, and it's like he had lived a very long life without having learned very much while living his long life. It's a little frightening. But as I say, artists influenced by art more than by nature are a great exception.

²⁵ Tabletalk ca. February 23, 1972. I did not have this note before me when I wrote “The Source of Picasso's First Steps: Jean Charlot's First Steps” (1992). With that point, the influence turns an interesting circle. Charlot's works are so different from Picasso's that I would never have suspected the influence. Frances Toor's name is written on the title page of the Reverdy book, so I assume she gave it to Charlot. Charlot marked some text, overdrew *Le Violon*—transforming it into a landscape—and made a very careful copy or version of a Cubist composition (54 f.). Charlot refers to Picasso in his diary, e.g., “lu un livre sur Picasso” ‘read a book on Picasso’ (November 30, 1927).

²⁶ John Charlot 1976. Charlot usually identified the terms as labels some critics used, although at times he used them without qualification.

²⁷ Cooper 1971: 72 ff., 83. Gamwell 1980: 19, 30, 32, 55. Altschuler 1994: 36 f. Ducros 1985: 60. Several Cubists would create murals later in life.

²⁸ Cooper 1971: 42. Silver 1989: 378–389, especially 380, on the Purists. Altschuler 1994: 26. *AA* II 10 f.

²⁹ E.g., Jacques and Schwartz 2001: 170. Lapauze 1921: 192, the 1911 exhibition of his works at the Galeries Georges Petit. Alexandre 1921a: 195, Ingres' works were included in a 1913 exhibition of David and his students.

³⁰ Lapauze 1921: 192. See also Alexandre 1921a and b.

³¹ Bissière 1921: 268 f., 273. Compare Denis 1912: 98; 1922: 37 f. (1916).

³² On page 213 of his copy of Vollard's *Paul Cézanne* (1919), Charlot pasted a clipping labeled: “Art et les Artistes : 1908 (critique du Salon d'Automne)”:

Pour tout dire en un mot, c'est Cézanne, c'est-à-dire le plus mal doué, le plus pauvre, le plus triste, le plus avorté des impressionnistes qui a représenté, pour la nouvelle génération, l'exemple à suivre, le *style* à instaurer, la tradition à reprendre.

‘In a word, it's Cézanne, that is the least gifted, the poorest, saddest, most abortive of Impressionists who has represented for the new generation the example to follow, the *style* to adopt, the tradition to take up again.’

³³ Alexandre 1921: 198 f. Bénédite 1921: 336; 337, “Les menuisiers, les tapissiers, les cordonniers, ont encore un métier; il n'y a que les peintres qui n'en aient plus” ‘Woodworkers, carpet makers, shoemakers still have a craft; it's only painters who no longer have any’; Ingres is a “véritable honnête homme” ‘a truly honest man’ (the phrase has untranslatable connotations in French use, including a common-sensical, down-to-earth lack of pretention and false display).

³⁴ Compare Bénédite 1921: 328 f. Similarly, Charlot would later believe that the Mexican muralists realized the mural potential of Cubism.

³⁵ *Nude back*, 1926, checklist 138, 39” X 19.”

³⁶ A first exhibition was held from June 28 to October 4, 1920, but the placement of Charlot's entry in *Notebook C* demands the later date. I thank Karin Delahay, Jean-Paul Sergni, and Jean-Pierre Samoyault for information on these exhibitions. The first exhibition was the subject of articles by Louis Hourticq 1920 and H. Quignon 1920.

³⁷ *Le Retour à l'ordre dans les arts plastiques et l'architecture, 1919–1925* 1975. Laude 1975: 15 f., 25 f. I have changed my position from that expressed in my "Jean Charlot's First Fresco: *The Massacre in the Main Temple*" (2000).

³⁸ *AA* II 371. Compare Siqueiros 1996: 328, when European liturgical art adopted Neoclassicism, it paganized itself and lost its authentic Christian character.

³⁹ Silver 1989: 126; see also 365 f. Gide said of Cocteau in August 1914:

"Although he made himself extremely agreeable, he simply cannot be serious, and to me all his aphorisms, his witticisms, his reactions, and the extraordinary brio of his customary ways of talking were as shocking as a luxury article on display in a period of famine and mourning." (Spotts 2008: 221)

Tomkins 1996: 253, "André Breton, who detested Cocteau...was consolidating his position then as standard-bearer for the authentic avant-garde as opposed to Cocteau's society version."

⁴⁰ E.g., Lucie-Smith 1990: 23, 29, 32, 120; Lozano 1999 "Reinterpretaciones."

⁴¹ Republication and bibliography in Jean Charlot *Escritos*. See especially the articles of July 26, 1923 and July 29, 1923.

⁴² Similarly, in the same manuscript, he changes "classicisme" to "naturalisme constructif" in the passage:

ici où toutes les idées et les modes de là-bas arrivent avariées ou défraîchies par le séjour sur mer, avec de tels retards que nos pauvres "intellectuels" se voient forcés de baver impressionnisme quand ils en sont au cubisme, et cubisme quand ils en sont au "naturalisme constructif" et que nos pauvres mondaines doivent porter la jupe courte quand on en est à la jupe longue...

'*here* [Mexico] where all ideas and modes from over there [Europe] arrive spoiled and worn by their overseas travel, with such delays that our poor "intellectuals" find themselves forced to drivel Impressionism when the Europeans are on Cubism, and Cubism when they're on "constructive naturalism," and that our poor fashion-plates have to wear short skirts when they're wearing them long...'

⁴³ Compare Charlot quoted in Bunker 1927: 10:

If it be true that all art evolution passes first through a period called primitive, when strong and unique convention rules representation, next through a period of classicism, when nature and style are fairly equilibrated, and finally through a period of eclecticism, when the artist works freely, accepting what he wants from past tradition.

⁴⁴ Compare his Disney lectures May 10, 1938:

Renoir, like Degas, was born at a time when artists were supposed to be Impressionists. It has taken a long time to discover that they both are really constructive architectural painters in the most classic sense. Such a painter compares the small side of the rectangle to the larger one. The outer line of the curtain suggests the compass line the eye follows to do that. I don't mean that Renoir actually drew that line with a compass; just that he was sensitive enough a painter to proceed with that comparison and to bring in the clue to the relationship.

⁴⁵ Denis 1922: 116:

La fin de l'art c'est la délectation. Depuis Cézanne notre plaisir est surtout intellectuel. Dans la vieille esthétique on n'opposait point l'intelligence et la sensibilité.

'The end of art is delectation. Since Cézanne, our pleasure is mainly intellectual. In the old esthetic, one did not oppose at all intelligence and sensitivity.'

⁴⁶ Disney lectures May 10, 1938. Compare Rees 1997: 121, "The patterns of galaxies in the sky look like a tracery of filaments. But the eye is ultraefficient at picking out such features, even when they are not significant."

⁴⁷ Denis 1964: 33. Charlot recalled Denis' definition in my interview with him of September 17, 1970:

...as Maurice Denis said, and that thing remains perhaps his most important pronouncement, and he said it when he was nineteen or twenty years old: that is, before being a horse in the battle or a portrait of your aunt, a picture is a flat surface with colors on it in a certain order arranged.

⁴⁸ Compare Denis 1922: 96, "Le dessin est une écriture" 'Drawing is a writing'; 149 f., it is natural for art to signify; 235, "L'art est un langage..." 'Art is a language...' Compare Charlot's use of *alphabet* in "Nous les Jeunes !."

⁴⁹ Denis 1914: 26; 1918: 522, 530; 1922: 27 f., 228 ff., 232 ff. Charlot would later become interested in Ozenfant's theory of "preforms."

⁵⁰ Charlot may be alluding to Delacroix's description of nature as the dictionary or encyclopedia of the artist, a view he himself rejected (Interview October 7, 1970). The view was also characteristic of Symbolism. Compare Denis 1912: 85, "ce répertoire sublime de formes et de couleurs qu'est la Nature" 'this sublime repertory of forms and colors that is Nature.'

⁵¹ Denis 1922: 144, 157, 232 f., 252.

⁵² Zohmah Charlot put these and the following sketches in an envelope on which she mentioned three sketchbooks. The first she dated 1918, and it seems to correspond to the *Disassembled Sketchpad*: "hands/man seated on chair/vase of flowers/sketches of horses/dogs/Nudes." Her date of 1918 for this sketchpad is, however, too early for the subjects (for instance, the dogs are preparatory drawings of *L'Amitié*) and for the style. As seen in the main text, I think Charlot started using this sketchpad at the earliest in late 1919. She gives her second list the label "from two notebooks" and the date "1920" to which she added "May" above the line. All the items listed could be recognized as the subjects in *Sketchpad 1919–1921*. The Mexico City sketches and the notes on the "Atelier de Desportes" were, however, made in 1921. The date "May 1920" may be some reminiscence that this sketchbook was used after Charlot's demobilization; this seems to be true of the majority of the drawings. The possibility must be recognized that the sheet with the drawing *Commandant de Coligny* and perhaps others are from different sketchpads, despite the fact that the paper and the size are the same.

⁵³ Portrait: light sketch of a man's face and unfinished portrait of a man, three-quarter view, in *Disassembled Sketchpad*. Caricature: "cocker" (two sketches or caricatures of dogs) in *Disassembled Sketchpad*. Animals: discussed in text. Plants: the 1921 list in *Ludwigshafen Notebook* includes "4 études plantes." Copies: the 1921 list in *Ludwigsheim Notebook* includes "copie Cézanne."

⁵⁴ *Two Houses and a Wooded Hill*, pencil, 20-1/2" high X 14-5/8" wide, dated first "20," then "19," then "17?"; "20" and "17?" have been crossed out; on verso of *Self-Portrait; Study for L'Amitié in Gray Gouache*.

⁵⁵ *Flowering Plants in Pot*, watercolor, probably 1921, 20-1/2" X 29-1/4", property of John Charlot. This may be one of the "4 études plantes" listed for 1921 in the *Ludwigshafen Notebook*.

⁵⁶ Interview October 18, 1970. Charlot mentioned working with Poirret to Brenner 1970: 303: "he worked for Poirret..." For the information on Poirret below, see Adhémar 1971: 81, 93; White 1973: 15, 28 f., 41, 47, 53, 64 ff., 73, 173, 175.

⁵⁷ *Elizabeth Arden Paris New York*, process print, perhaps a color proof, 3-1/4" high X 3" wide, undated; I would date it 1920.

⁵⁸ White 1973: 102–134, 144, 166. Bowman 1985: 26 f., 30–33, 37 ff., 49, 54 f., 64, 67, 70 f., 74; compare 22; for the use of gouache, e.g., 32, 59, 71, 93. Such flowers were also produced in other places like the Wiener Werkstätte.

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- ⁵⁹ *Elisabeth Arden, 673, Fifth Avenue-New-York/255, Rue St Honoré* (basket, flowers, bird, insect), 17-1/2 mm high X 25 mm wide. *Elisabeth Arden, Paris New-York* (horizontal rectangle and circle, flowers hanging from above), 16 mm high X 23-1/2 mm wide (with cutout square top right). *Talcum, Elisabeth Arden, Paris-New York*, cut horizontally along the top, 9 mm high X 21-3/4 wide; with *Flowers and insect*, oval, 7-1/2 mm diameter. *Paris-New York, Elisabeth Arden* (crowded flowers, reds and oranges), 4 mm high X 26 mm wide; with *Flowers at night, circle*, 7-1/2 mm diameter. *Elisabeth Arden, Paris-New York* (two single flowers, two pairs of flowers, dark blue), 5-1/2 mm high X 32 mm wide; with *Three flowers bound at stems*, 8-1/2 mm square.
- ⁶⁰ *Standing Female Nude Model, full front*, pencil, 14" high X 7-1/8" wide, dated August 1921, labeled: 20A. Lewis and Woodworth 1972: 114 f.; in 1932, Elizabeth Arden considered bringing out new shades of lipstick, one of which would have been named "Charlot"—the name was, however, not uncommon, being used for Charley Chaplin in France.
- ⁶¹ *La Poudre de Riz de Rosine, Parfumerie, 107 Faubg. St. Honoré, Paris, France: Ha ! Quelles Délices !*, pencil, ink, and gouache on board, 16-3/8" high X 11-1/8" wide. Charlot may have been able to keep this work because it was rejected.
- ⁶² E.g., Bowman 1985:67; see also 49.
- ⁶³ *Dandy French Officer with Binoculars*, pencil, ink, and wash on paper, 9" long X 5-1/2" wide, 1920.
- ⁶⁴ Interview October 18, 1970. See also Charlot to Anita Brenner "Excuse the paper," quoted below.
- ⁶⁵ *Flowers in Vase*, pencil on paper, 14-3/4" high X 10-1/4" wide, on verso of *Unfinished Drawing of Young German Woman*.
- ⁶⁶ Morse 1976: xviii, describes the process and dates the print "ca. 1919." Charlot's first process print was the ex libris for the Sézanne pharmacist Gérardin, of which no copy is known (Chapter 6).
- ⁶⁷ The draft is on the verso of the manuscript of *Thérèse de l'Enfant Jésus*, dated August 1921.
- ⁶⁸ *Je crois qu'il vaudrait mieux suivre la route droite* of February 7 and 8, 1924. Compare Denis 1922: 108.
- ⁶⁹ Compare Dürer and Picasso, Antliff and Leighton 2001: 133. Charlot reverted to this three-circle design for his very stylized 1922 Mexican oil *Indian Woman with jug (Familia Chincuate)* (Checklist number 3).
- ⁷⁰ Compare Reynolds 1961: 134, "SIMPLICITY, when so very inartificial as to seem to evade the difficulties of art, is a very suspicious virtue."
- ⁷¹ The study has been done on a side that originally contained a drawing of the interior of a room: a guitar can be seen leaning against a wall on which two framed pictures have been hanged. This is probably Charlot's bedroom or the studio; a guitar appears in *Louis Goupil Seated in Jean Charlot's Bedroom*, probably of late 1915.

⁷² *Female nude, line outline, hands behind head; Female nude, line outline, tilted to right, extending both arms to her right; Female nude, line outline, frontal, arms hanging at sides and slightly extended; Female nude, line outline, arms hanging at sides, torso tilted; Female nude, line outline, hands behind back.*

⁷³ Curiously, Charlot may have owned at this time the drawing of a Greek dancer by Denis and a sheet of female nude studies by Marcel Lenoir, the former nearer outline drawing and the latter with the heavy hatching Charlot himself was using. After my father's death, my mother gave these drawings to my sister Ann. My mother said they were from my father's "private collection" (Ann to John, e-mail April 18, 2005), but I do not know whether he owned them in his youth.

⁷⁴ *Two feet*, pencil, 9" high X 12" wide.

⁷⁵ *Self-Portrait; Study for L'Amitié*, in pencil, 13-1/2" high X 10-1/4" wide, dated 1921. The verso with the nudes has a pen and ink vignette in another hand, and Charlot has drawn his nudes around it. In all likelihood, this was done before the gouache, since he would not have used the verso of a finished painting for sketching, but could easily have done the contrary. In consequence, there is a chance that these nudes were done in 1920 after those in the *Disassembled Sketchpad*. However, I judge them closer to *Notebook A* of 1921 than to that sketchpad.

⁷⁶ *Head of Woman*, pencil, 9-3/4" high X 6-1/2" wide, dated October 8, 1921.

⁷⁷ *Female Nude, Studio Model, Lying on Side, with shading*, pencil, 9-7/8" high X 14-1/4" wide, signed "J.C.", dated 1921.

⁷⁸ *Nude studio model*, pencil, 12-1/2" high X 9-1/2" wide, signed Jean Charlot, dated: 11-21, November 1921.

⁷⁹ *noé: animals—lion, elephant, monkey, etc.*, pencil, 8-1/4" high X 10-1/2" wide, writing: "voir Barye"; verso: *different breeds of dogs, deer, wolf, squirrel, mouse*, writing: some labels.

⁸⁰ *The Creation of Adam and Eve*, ink over pencil, 20-1/2" high X 29-1/2" wide.

⁸¹ *For the Creation of Adam and Eve: The Creation of Adam*, pencil only, 5-1/2" high X 8-1/2" wide; verso: sketch of legs of man lying down, one knee up.

⁸² *For the Creation of Adam and Eve: Eve Emerging from Adam*, pencil only, 5-3/4" high X 9-1/2" wide.

⁸³ *For the Creation of Adam and Eve: Adam and Eve in Eden, without halos*, pencil only, 8-1/4" high X 7-1/2" wide. *For the Creation of Adam and Eve: Adam and Eve in Eden, with halos*, pencil only, 8-3/4" high X 8-1/4" wide.

⁸⁴ *Comê notre mère Eve fut du serpent trompée*, 25" high X 18" wide.

⁸⁵ *For Comê notre mère Eve fut du serpent trompée: Adam and Eve being tempted with the apple, Adam three-quarters*, pencil only, 10-1/4" high X 7-1/4" wide. *For Comê notre mère Eve fut du serpent trompée: Adam and Eve being tempted with the apple, Adam profile*, pencil only, 10-3/4" high X 8-1/4" wide.

- ⁸⁶ *For Com   notre m  re Eve fut du serpent tromp  : God Figure from Confrontation with God*, ink over pencil line, 10-1/4" high X 8-1/2" wide; verso: *Adam and Eve Figures from Confrontation with God*.
- ⁸⁷ *Expulsion from Eden, Life of Labor*, 23-1/2" high X 18" wide.
- ⁸⁸ *For Expulsion from Eden, Life of Labor: Angel*, pencil only, 9-3/4" high X 8-1/2" wide. *For Expulsion from Eden, Life of Labor: Adam and Eve*, pencil only, 10-3/4" high X 8-1/4", wide, regular rectangle.
- ⁸⁹ *For Expulsion from Eden, Life of Labor: Angel and Adam and Eve*, ink over pencil line, 11" high X 15-1/2" wide.
- ⁹⁰ *Preliminary Ideas for Eve and her Two Children; Flower Studies*, 9-1/4" high X 8-3/4" wide, irregular shape.
- ⁹¹ *For Expulsion from Eden, Life of Labor: Eve and her Two Children*, pencil only, 7-1/2" high X 9" wide.
- ⁹² *For Expulsion from Eden, Life of Labor: Adam Digging*, pencil only, 10-3/4" high X 8-1/4" wide, regular rectangle. *For Expulsion from Eden, Life of Labor: Adam Digging*, pencil only, 9-1/2" high X 7-1/4" wide.
- ⁹³ *abel, ca  n, lamech*, ink over pencil line, 25-3/4" high X 20-1/2" wide.
- ⁹⁴ *For abel, ca  n, lamech: Lamech Nude*, pencil only, 10-3/4" high X 7-1/4" wide, regular rectangle.
- ⁹⁵ *For abel, ca  n, lamech: Ca  n Killing*, pencil only, 10-1/4" high X 8-1/4" wide. *For abel, ca  n, lamech: Ca  n Sacrificing and the Victim of Lamech*, pencil only, 8-1/4" high X 9-3/4" wide. *For abel, ca  n, lamech: Two Abel Figures*, pencil only, 7" high X 10-1/4" wide.
- ⁹⁶ *For abel, ca  n, lamech: sheep*, pencil only, 10" high X 7" wide; verso: *lioness*.
- ⁹⁷ *no  *, 20-1/2" high X 27" wide. *For no  : flood*, ink over pencil line, 14-3/4" high X 10-1/4" wide. *For no  : post-flood*, ink over pencil line, 14-3/4" high X 10-1/4" wide; writing at top left:
- [shorthand] femme. fils et leurs femmes.
Sem Cham Japhet
'woman. sons and their wives.
Shem Cham Japhet'
- ⁹⁸ *The Second Coming of Christ*, ink over pencil, truncated pyramid with 1" vertical cut of the paper to form a base; some loss of paper on edges: 19-1/4" at base, 7-3/4" at top, 23" sides.
- ⁹⁹ *For The Second Coming of Christ: Mary, Holy Woman, Twelve Apostles*, pencil only, 9-3/4" high X 20-1/4" wide, irregular shape. *For The Second Coming of Christ: Mary, Holy Woman, Twelve Apostles, Preliminary*.
- ¹⁰⁰ Nancy Morris first suggested to me that they were mural designs, and I agreed with her until I found the notation "  toffe fond vert" 'cloth green background.'

¹⁰¹ Colombier 1921: 98. Also Denis 1922: 210.

¹⁰² Special circumstances forced Charlot to use oil for three monumental murals: *Head, Crowned with Laurels* (central niche of *The Art Contribution to Civilization of All Nations and Countries*) 1934–1935; *Life of St. Bridget* 1939; and *Cotton Gin* 1942.

¹⁰³ Macé de Lépinay 1997, for all painters of the Panthéon. A difficulty of this subject is that many secondary sources use *fresco* as a synonym for *mural* and are generally imprecise on the medium used.

¹⁰⁴ Exceptions can be found, such as Pujol's large painting, *Prédication de Saint Etienne* (1817), in the Eglise Saint Thomas d'Aquin, and the two paintings by F. E. Picot (1786–1868) in the same church: *La mort de Saphira en présence de Saint Pierre* and *Saint Pierre guérissant un boiteux à la porte du temple de Jérusalem*, both 1819. Charles Timbal's 1864 compositions in Saint-Sulpice are more interesting than the painting discussed below.

¹⁰⁵ 1922; approximately 60" X 75", destroyed; discussed below.

¹⁰⁶ Domenico Zampieri, 1581/9–1641.

¹⁰⁷ Agostino (1557–1602) and Annibale (1560–1609). Charlot recommended I read a book on their work in the Farnese Palace to learn how a grand program was conceived and realized.

¹⁰⁸ Disney lectures May 24, 1938. On this point, Charlot compared the Mexican *pulquería* 'pulque bar' painters favorably with the French artist, October 1926 "Pinturas Murales Mexicanas":

Tal pintura iguala en osadía las más atrevidas creaciones de la pintura abstracta y presenta una resolución del problema decorativo, perfecta en sí, aunque incompatible con la de los decoradores a la *Puvis de Chavannes*, cuya mayor preocupación es, después de pintar, que quede la pared lo más igual posible a lo que era antes de decorarla.

'Such painting equals in boldness the most daring creations of abstract painting and presents a resolution of the decorative problem, perfect in itself, although incompatible with that of the decorators in the style of *Puvis de Chavannes*, whose main preoccupation is that, after the painting, the wall remains as much as possible the same as what it was before being decorated.'

¹⁰⁹ Denis 1912: 86–123, especially 98–122; see also 1921.

¹¹⁰ The only painting in a Paris church that I thought Charlot might have remembered in his own work, whether consciously or unconsciously, is a charming, small oil by Jules Richomme (September 9, 1818–1903) of Jesus in his father's carpentry workshop (1870). The use of table and tools for geometric composition and the wooden curlings from planing on the floor are normal for the subject. But the blonde Jesus in *Holy Family (Carpenter's Shop)*, checklist 792, 1952, is uncharacteristic of Charlot.

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- ¹¹¹ *Two Color Studies for Parish Mural Project: Processional*: a) *The Sunny Side*, b) *The Shadowy Side*; gouache on paper, pasted onto board; the board for each study is divided into three sections that fold onto each other; size, whole board 10-1/4" high X 85-1/2" long, the image itself 10-1/4" high X 84-1/4" long; date 1920.
- ¹¹² *Leafy Plants*, pencil and gouache on paper, 20-1/2" high by 14-3/4" wide.
- ¹¹³ Middleton and Watkin 1977: 217 f.; compare the mural in the church of St.-Paul at Nîmes, page 336.
- ¹¹⁴ Colombier January 10, 1921: 99. Frèches-Thory and Terrasse 1991: 142.
- ¹¹⁵ Morris, Charlot, and Morris 1931: 341 f.; see also 241 f., 266, 269 f.
- ¹¹⁶ Denis' *Le Christ aux Ouvriers*, 1931, showed workers in modern clothes and Jesus, Mary, and Joseph in classical.
- ¹¹⁷ See Jean Galtier-Boissière's 1919 *Procession of the Mutilated, 14 July 1919*, in Cork 1994: 238. The mutilated were so honored on other occasions as well, Greenhalgh 2014: 407 ff.
- ¹¹⁸ The habit does not seem to fit the Dominican St. Thomas Aquinas, whom Charlot was using also in his project on *La Théologie Régulatrice des Arts*.
- ¹¹⁹ Interview September 19, 1970. See also Tabletalk July 19, 1971: "Cubism was shrunk by dealers, who couldn't sell big canvases. Gradually the Cubists did what their dealers wanted them to."
- ¹²⁰ Verkade: 245; see also 94, 206, 230, 239, 278.
- ¹²¹ Brillant 1924: 265, Henri Marret is "un des apôtres de ce bel art de la fresque qui est en train de revivre si heureusement..." 'one of the apostles of this beautiful art of fresco which is being revived so happily...'; 267 f.
- ¹²² On the interest of the young liturgical artists in fresco, see also Denis 1922: 35, 265.
- ¹²³ Interview October 7, 1970. See also *MMR* 178. John Charlot 1999: 246 f.
- ¹²⁴ Interview March 4, 1972. Denis 1912: 66. Baudouin 1914.
- ¹²⁵ Denis 1912: 101, 114. Leal 1990: 101, mentions the book but does not say that the young Mexican artists knew it in the early 1920s. Bonzom 2010: 46 ff., 153 f.
- ¹²⁶ The note is on the verso of a 1917 drawing, *S^t. Étienne, premier martyr* (JCC number JCC.D1917.10).
- ¹²⁷ In his divorce "Testimony" of 1941, Bouvier gives the figures as "90,000 en titres et 10,000 en meubles" '90,000 in stocks and bonds and 10,000 in movables' and "45,000. en titres et 10,000 en meubles" '45,000 in stocks and bonds and 10,000 in movables.' All documents are in the JCC.
- ¹²⁸ Materials on Jacques Bouvier and his family are preserved in the JCC.

¹²⁹ Interview October 18, 1970. Compare Zohmah Charlot, notes for an article:

After serving in the French Artillery and two years with the army of occupation in Germany. He returned to France, his father dead, his sister married, and the disappointment of having a mural commission cancelled, he and his mother decided to move to Mexico where they went in a first trip in 1920 when Jean was 22, and a second trip in 1921 after showing a self-portrait *L'Amitié* in the Salon d'Automne.

¹³⁰ Jean Charlot, "My Trip," undated notes, probably for *MMR*. The date for Puerto Mexico is taken from Charlot's notes made at that stop. For the arrival at Veracruz, see the section "Ecos de Puerto" of the Veracruz newspaper *El Dictámen*: "Proximas Entradas: Vapor Frances 'La Flandre'" "Next Arrivals: French Steamship 'Flandre,'" January 22, 1921; "Proximas Entradas: Vapor Frances Flandre," January 23, 1921.

¹³¹ Charlot "My Trip" states that they arrived back at St. Nazaire on May 5. However, other evidence suggests that they were in Mexico City at least for part of May. For instance, the *Metamorphoses* sketchbook is dated January to May 1921.

¹³² This note was actually written on the second trip in November 1921.

¹³³ *Puerto Mexico*, pencil, ink (?), and watercolor on paper, 13" high X 19-1/2" wide, between January 20 and January 23, 1921.

On March 20, 1932, Odette received a letter from Charlot in which he wrote: "Parmi les choses à garder ajoutes le grand X où je mettais mes dessins et les 2 *tableaux de Mexico*" 'Among the things to keep, add the big X where I put my drawings and the *two paintings of Mexico*.' These were more likely paintings he brought back from his first trip than ones he sent from Mexico after his emigration.

¹³⁴ *Yucatan Landscape with hut*, oil, 11" X 14", 1928. Checklist 149a (on the drawing "148b" has been written by mistake). Illustrated in Koprivitz and Garduño 1994: 129, under title *Arboles y chozas*.

¹³⁵ Charlot to Brenner, February 27, 1963; also July 24, 1962. Charlot was anxious that Picaseño receive a copy of his book (1962).

¹³⁶ Interview May 14, 1971. A very similar family with Indian servants is described by Torres Bodet 1961: 225; 227, in their house, "todo...había de darme la impresión de un anacronismo—sí, de una visita hecha al siglo XIX" 'everything had to give me the impression of an anachronism—yes, of a visit made in the nineteenth century,' "el adios de una epoca singular" 'the goodbye of a singular epoch'; 201, his contact with Indians was through the servants who hid their native culture, but he met a servant woman in Cuauhtla who informed him about Indian life.

¹³⁷ On the verso of *Head of a Woman* of October 8, 1921, is a pencil *sketch of a composition with angels*; the right side of the drawing is cut off, and “libro 1921” is written upside down in relation to the drawing (an example of Charlot’s using recto and verso at different times). The subject is Christian, but the style seems connected to Charlot’s work on the *Métamorphoses d’Ovide*.

¹³⁸ *d’après les Métamorphoses d’Ovide, Amsterdam 1732*, sketchbook; title on endpaper, with illegible writing and shorthand, twenty-eight pages; page size: 4-3/4” high X 9-1/2” wide, dated: de 1-21 à 5-21” ‘from January 1921 to May 1921.’ The numbers on the pages probably refer to the pages in the book being “copied.” The book Charlot used is most probably Ovidius Naso 1732.

¹³⁹ See also, in their order in the sketchbook: 120, 41, 59, 28, 51, 74, 121 (?), 62.

¹⁴⁰ See also 50, 112, 44.

¹⁴¹ See 124, 95, 61, 27, 86.

¹⁴² See 59, 65, 107, 5.

¹⁴³ *Copy of Boucher’s “Metamorphoses d’Ovide,”* pencil, 14-11/16” high by 10-2/8” wide (373 X 260 mm), Fogg Art Museum. The recto is dated “21.” On the verso is written: “Mexico 2–21 d’après Boucher.”

¹⁴⁴ *St. Étienne, premier martyr*, pencil on paper, 9-1/4” high X 6-3/8” wide.

¹⁴⁵ Interview November 6, 1970. Brenner 1970: 303, writes that Charlot received prizes for his work: “won prizes for abstract sculpture and a Via Crucis series of woodcuts”; also 349, “Also polychrome wood sculptures; paintings; and projects for murals.” Brenner’s “abstract sculpture” may refer to Charlot’s polychromed bas-reliefs; no other record exists of a prize for the *Chemin de Croix*.

¹⁴⁶ *Garden Park with Blue Chair*, pencil and wash on paper, 12-3/4” high X 9-3/4” wide, dated September 10, 1921. I know only two other surviving examples of Charlot doing art in a child’s style. On the verso of *La Virginité* of September 23, 1919, is a doodle of a person, a circle representing the body from which the limbs radiate. On the verso of *Louis Goupil, three-quarters*, pencil, of 1920, is the doodle of a crowned infant in swaddling clothes.

Young Woman in Bed Reading, pencil and gouache, 50 cm high X 32-1/2 cm wide, David Charlot collection, is on the verso of *Branches and Leaves*, which is probably a study for *L’Amitié*. The gouache is extraordinarily rough, with heavy strokes and broad areas of coloring and reserve, and even if given more finish, would appear singular in Charlot’s work of the period; it can probably be best understood as another of Charlot’s explorations of new directions.

¹⁴⁷ *Standing Female Nude Model, full front*, pencil, 12-5/8” high X 9-3/4” wide, dated August 27, 1921.

¹⁴⁸ *Standing Female Nude Model, full front, 20A*, pencil, 14” high X 7-1/8” wide, dated August 1921. *Standing Female Nude Model, full front, 20B*, pencil, 14” high X 6-7/8” wide, dated August 1921.

¹⁴⁹ *Standing Female Nude Model, full front, gouache*, pencil and gouache, 13-1/2” high X 6-3/4” wide, (1921). In my notes from the early 1970s, I call this “20C.”

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- ¹⁵⁰ *St. John the Baptist, Cubist Style, after El Greco*, pencil and gouache, 12-3/8" high by 8" wide, dated: "fini le 1-9-21" 'finished September 1, 1921.' Morse 1976: 25, Charlot's memory is faulty when he guesses "gouache drawing, probably done in Germany." The word *fini* does leave open the possibility that the work was started long before it was finished, but I believe it is based on the Cubist nudes.
- ¹⁵¹ Maurice Barrès, *Greco, ou le secret de Tolède*, 1911.
- ¹⁵² *Music*, gouache, 9-1/4" high X 7" wide (after August 1921). Some avant-garde artists were interested in music more because of process: "Using color and form as a composer uses notes..." (Altschuler 1994: 39). Charlot shows he was aware of this possibility when he distinguishes in late 1922 between the relationship of art to music as subject and as form ("Notes Détachées sur l'Art").
- ¹⁵³ *Bullet*, gouache, 9-1/4" high X 7" wide (after August 1921). Interview February 18, 1972. Compare Cork 1994: 79, Wyndham Lewis on a drawing by Henri Gaudier-Brzeska: "Here is one, a great artist, who makes drawings of those shells as they come towards him...."
- ¹⁵⁴ Interview September 21, 1970. Compare Silver 1989: 78 f., "the most felicitous marriage of modern form and wartime subject—the representation of destruction by means of Cubism's analytic language"; also 84. For a Cubist painting with an explosive effect, see, e.g., Gino Severini's 1915 *Train blindé*.
- ¹⁵⁵ Silver 1989: 75 ff. Cork 1994: 24, 62, 70 f., 75, 152 f., 172 f.; compare 125 ff., 155 (searchlights). Otto Dix's *La Guerre* (1914) has been illustrated in several publications. Christopher R. W. Nevinson's *Explosion d'obus* (1915) is particularly close to *Bullet*. In an early-1950s lecture on Josef Albers, which I attended, Charlot discussed the use of this design in two figures to express panic and flight. *Mental Portrait of Maples Arce* of 1922 (Morse number 40) uses a similar design with the place of the bullet being occupied by the opening and cover of the *pneumatique*.
- ¹⁵⁶ This device can be found in other paintings of the time, e.g., Cork 1994: 75. Antliff and Leighton 2001: 81 (Gris, 1913), 203 (Gleizes, 1917). Braun 1993: 38, Apollinaire "used Mexican ideograms as models for his own 'calligrammes.'"
- ¹⁵⁷ The black circles surrounded by circles of mud-brown—which may be bullet holes—resemble abstractly the fashionable Madeleine flowers. Compare the painting by Per Krohg, *The Grenade*, 1916, Cork 1994: 126, where the resemblance may be deliberate irony.
- Long before civilian uses, searchlights had been developed for military purposes and used by Italians in the invasion of Libya. They provided a fresh symbol for modern warfare.
- ¹⁵⁸ *L'Amitié*, 1921, gouache, 58-5/8" high X 55-5/8" wide, Charlot checklist number 1, collection John Charlot. The illustration in Klobe 1990: 104, is cropped.
- ¹⁵⁹ *Unfinished Flower Study*, pencil and gouache, 52 cm high X 74-1/2 cm wide or 20-1/2" X 32" wide. This work is on the verso of a portrait of Louis Goupil dated 26-4-20.
- ¹⁶⁰ *Flower Study*, pencil on paper, 12-3/4" high X 19-3/4" wide.
- ¹⁶¹ *Branches and Leaves*, heavy gouache, 50 cm high X 32-1/2 cm wide; David Charlot Collection.

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- ¹⁶² The subject of *Disassembled Sketchpad*, ix verso: Study of clothes, appears to be a heavy army cloak, that is, one of the army subjects that occupied Charlot in this sketchpad. However, the heavy band or belt, either cloth or leather, does evoke the banderole in *L'Amitié*, and suggests a connection between Charlot's interests in the two sets of subjects. Compare also the collar with that of the angel.
- ¹⁶³ *étude pour L'Amitié*, pencil with gouache highlights, 19" high X 26" wide, on squared paper, titled and dated by Charlot in a later hand. I believe the date is correct.
- ¹⁶⁴ *Disassembled Sketchpad*: v) Study of Mousmé, lying down, seen full-length from back; vi) Head of Mousmé, lying down, squinting; vii) Head of Mousmé, lying down, eye open. *Studies of his Dog, Mousmé*, pencil on paper, recto and verso, 8-1/4" high X 10-5/8" wide. Mousmé is an old dog in these drawings and died before Anne and Jean left for Mexico. Probably in 1920, Charlot made a comic drawing of Mousmé's successor, *Mona Charlot*, pencil and ink on paper, 10 cm high X 17-1/2 cm wide (3-7/8" high X 6-7/8" wide), collection David Charlot. Mona stares frozen at a bug flying in front of her nose. Charlot had laid down a base in pencil and brushed a heavy ink line on top. The shaggy coat is well suggested, even though most of the lines are verticals, and the tail and hind legs are funny. The dog is young, dumb, and lovable. A photograph of Mona was taken in the garden of St. Mandé, probably in the 1920s.
- ¹⁶⁵ *Study for Amitié, Legendre, Clothes*, pencil, 32 cm high X 40 cm wide; collection David Charlot.
- ¹⁶⁶ Charlot Disney lectures June 7, 1938:
- The spiral shape has been one of the great sources of beauty in painting. Hogarth, who wrote an extremely important theory of painting, brings everything back to that spiral shape, which he calls the Line of Beauty. To make it perfectly clear that the spiral is not on the flat surface of the picture but in three dimensions, he winds it around a cone, Figure XIX. How primitive, how naive, are the painter's means. Hogarth has to bring in that cone and make people understand that the spiral is coiled around it. When he, like Rubens, wants to show the spiral in movement, how many assumptions and ways of seeing must he beg of the viewer.
- ¹⁶⁷ *Legendre, Left Arm and Hand; Study for L'Amitié*, pencil on paper, 20-1/2" high X 14" wide, probably 1920.
- ¹⁶⁸ *Legendre, Right Arm and Hand; Study for L'Amitié*, pencil on paper, 12-3/4" high X 19-3/4" wide.
- ¹⁶⁹ *Self-Portrait in Bright Gouache; Study for L'Amitié*, gouache, 13-1/2 high X 10-1/4" wide, dated "21."
- ¹⁷⁰ *Self-Portrait in Gray Gouache; Study for L'Amitié*, gouache, 20-1/2" high X 14-5/8" wide.
- ¹⁷¹ *Self-Portrait in Dark Gouache; Related to L'Amitié*, gouache, 18" high X 11-1/4" wide.
- ¹⁷² Lewis Andrews finds these cityscapes similar to those in Italian Primitive and early Renaissance paintings.

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- ¹⁷³ When Charlot and I visited a flowering park in Victoria B.C. in 1960, I regretted the fact that the day was overcast. “But you see the local colors better,” he replied.
- ¹⁷⁴ Elbows are used prominently as compositional devices by classical artists like Cézanne. An interesting example can be found in Heinrich Nauen’s *Bildnis des Malers Helmut Macke*, which Charlot saw illustrated in Flechtheim 1919: 33; however, by that time, Charlot had probably already fixed Legendre’s pose.
- ¹⁷⁵ Charlot’s watercolor *Chaise* January 1, 1919, was placed with similar aggressiveness. See my discussion in Chapter VII.
- ¹⁷⁶ I remember Charlot in the 1960s looking fixedly at his 1937 oil painting of United States builders, *Sixth Ave. New York* (checklist 510), which he had not seen in some time. When I asked him why he was looking at it for such a long time, he said that he remembered having created a particularly complicated composition in the oil but he now could not figure out what it was.
- ¹⁷⁷ Psalm 132 (Vulgate)/133, line 1: normally, *quam bonum et quam decorum*... Charlot used another version as an inscription for *Fresco Class in Action*, University of Notre Dame, 1955.
- ¹⁷⁸ Blanchard February 15, 1922. León-Martin 1921: 23, “les intéressantes œuvres de *Jean Charlot, Nezam-El-Moulk* et de *A. Boulard*” ‘the interesting works by *Jean Charlot, Nezam-El-Moulk* and *A. Boulard*.’
- ¹⁷⁹ “*Soulfi??a? esprit égyptien sur le Flandre*,” pencil on paper, 10-1/2 cm high X 17-1/2 cm wide.
- ¹⁸⁰ *D’Exil*, “à bord du Flandre. Mexico. Fini 3–12–21” ‘on board the *Flandre*. Mexico. Finished December 3, 1921.’
- ¹⁸¹ “Proximas Entradas: Vapor Frances Flandre” ‘Next Arrivals: French Steamship Flandre,’ “Ecos del Puerto” November 24, 1921: “Hoy arribará procedente de Saint Nazaire, Santander, Coruña y Habana trayendo 288 pasajeros y 480 cúbicos de carga general...” ‘It will arrive today from Saint Nazaire, Santander, Coruña, and Havana, carrying 288 passengers and 480 cubic meters of general cargo....’
- ¹⁸² Interview May 14, 1971. Brenner 1970: 304: “Charlot arrived in Mexico...in 1921, to live with an uncle whose collection of antiquities did not yet repose in the French National Library and the Trocadero, like most of the rest of the family possessions.”
- ¹⁸³ March 8, 1972. Charlot tells the same story in *MMR* 184 f.
- ¹⁸⁴ Brenner 1926: 3. Echavarría 1969: 13 f.
- ¹⁸⁵ Siqueiros 1996: 457, wondered why painters like Braque and Léger “no se hubieran transformado por obra de su contacto con la lucha militar” ‘had not transformed themselves due to their contact with the military struggle.’ He speculated that the reason might be that they had been drafted rather than volunteering for ideological reasons, as had the Mexican revolutionaries.
- ¹⁸⁶ Orozco V. 1983: 112. Baciú 1982: 24, quoted in Chapter 7.
- ¹⁸⁷ Verso: “Collection Bérénice Abbott,” New York City.

¹⁸⁸ *Notebook A*, is intact, and the few pages torn from it are easily identified by their paper quality, size (10-1/2" high X 8" wide from the tear-line), and the number printed on them. *Notebook A* was used for both writing and drawing, starting from opposite ends of the book. None of the materials in it can be shown to be earlier than late 1921. In his list of work for 1921 in *Ludwigshafen Notebook*, Charlot mentions, after an "album" he completed in Mexico, "nus couv. noire" 'nudes black cover'; *Notebook A* has a black spine, so may be the "album" referred to. I conclude that Charlot started using *Notebook A* as a sketchbook in 1921 in Mexico and, starting from the other end, began to use it for the first drafts of his Mexican articles.

¹⁸⁹ Numbers 2, 23, 25–34. In number 4, Charlot seems more interested in the lighting of the face than in the face itself.

¹⁹⁰ *Female Nude from Front, on One Knee, Hands Extended Forward*, pencil, 12" high X 8-3/4" wide; I date it 1921 from its similarity to the nudes of that year.

¹⁹¹ I am assuming that they are the same figures as in the later drawing. I cannot read the shorthand beneath these figures and the painter at the other side of the composition.

¹⁹² Charlot checklist number 8. The destroyed, full-scale painting is checklist number 9. Leal remembered Charlot working on the large painting before they both started making woodcuts together (*MMR* 166). That activity started as early as January 1922 and certainly by February 3, 1922 (Morse number 27). This date seems too early for Charlot to have been inspired by Diego's preparations for his first mural, *Creation*, in the amphitheater of the Escuela Preparatoria. In any case, Charlot had already planned a mural for the parish church in Paris, so his impression of Rivera's work would not have been as novel as Leal's.

In the *Ludwigshafen Notebook*, among works done in 1921, under "aquarelles et gouaches" 'watercolors and gouaches,' is listed "projet Christ" 'project for Christ.' No such work has been identified, and the watercolor or gouache may have been a preparatory study for *Théologie*. In the same notebook for 1922 are listed:

11 maquette pour grand tableau. X

12 Grand tableau (pas fini)

'11 maquette for large picture

12 Large picture (not finished),

The "maquette" may be the oil color study under discussion.