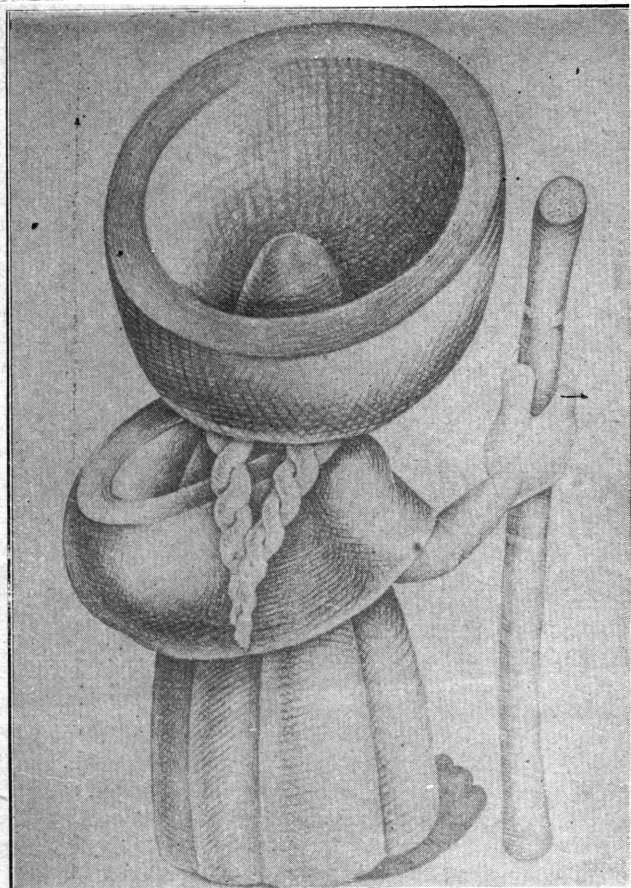


Art Interpretations

By Jean Charlot

WHEN I was preparing to leave France for Mexico, I had the idea that it was a tropical country: many blue, green and red feathers and plumes, and monkeys chattering and grimacing in the tops of the tall palms. I went to Lefrane's and bought a palette of colors picked from the most brilliant. I also had many ideas concerning modern art; the Cubists and the Planists and all the existing schools made of my brain a battlefield in which incompatible esthetics struggled, and I also admired many false teachers.

When I arrived I realized my error. Excepting the center of the city, a mirror little faithful to the European and American, all was beauty. Not the preconceived beauty of virgin forests with fruits and unimaginable flowers, but a discreet beauty, so subtle that a cursory examination failed to reveal the difference. The Greek statues often admired in the penumbra of the museums came to life before me in the same colors which we had forgotten. The men wrapped in their **sarapes** in the cold of the morning or in the glory of the dawn resemble in every way those ancient philosophers, the noble folds of whose mantles did not keep them from walking during the hot afternoons, their bare feet in the cool water of the rivers, conversing with their disciples. The shoe, the **guarache**,



A Wood Carving



A Mural Decoration

looked on with disdain by the rich, is similar to that worn by the Roman emperors and athletes, and in the postures they assume while resting in the sun or sitting on their **petates** I have recognized the immortal gestures on the Greek and Etruscan vases.

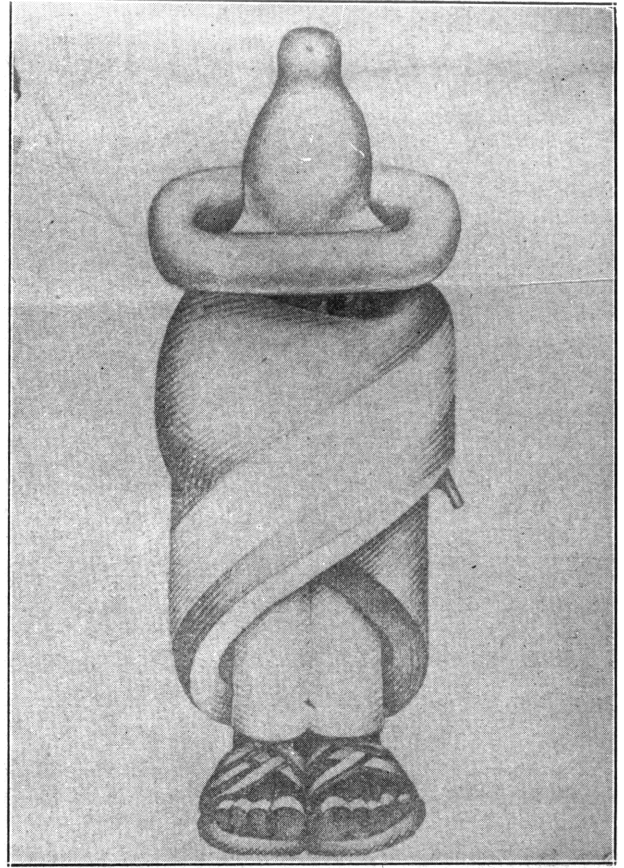
How can one see the exit from the early morning mass, "the mass of the **criadas**," without recalling the processions of the women sculptured in the Parthenon. The **rebozos** harmonize with the folds of marble, they have the same nobleness, they suggest the same power.

Egyptian also is the woman walking, the narrow thighs, the knees joined and the gesture of the **tortilleras** kneeling before the **metate** is immortalized in the necropoleis of Thebes.

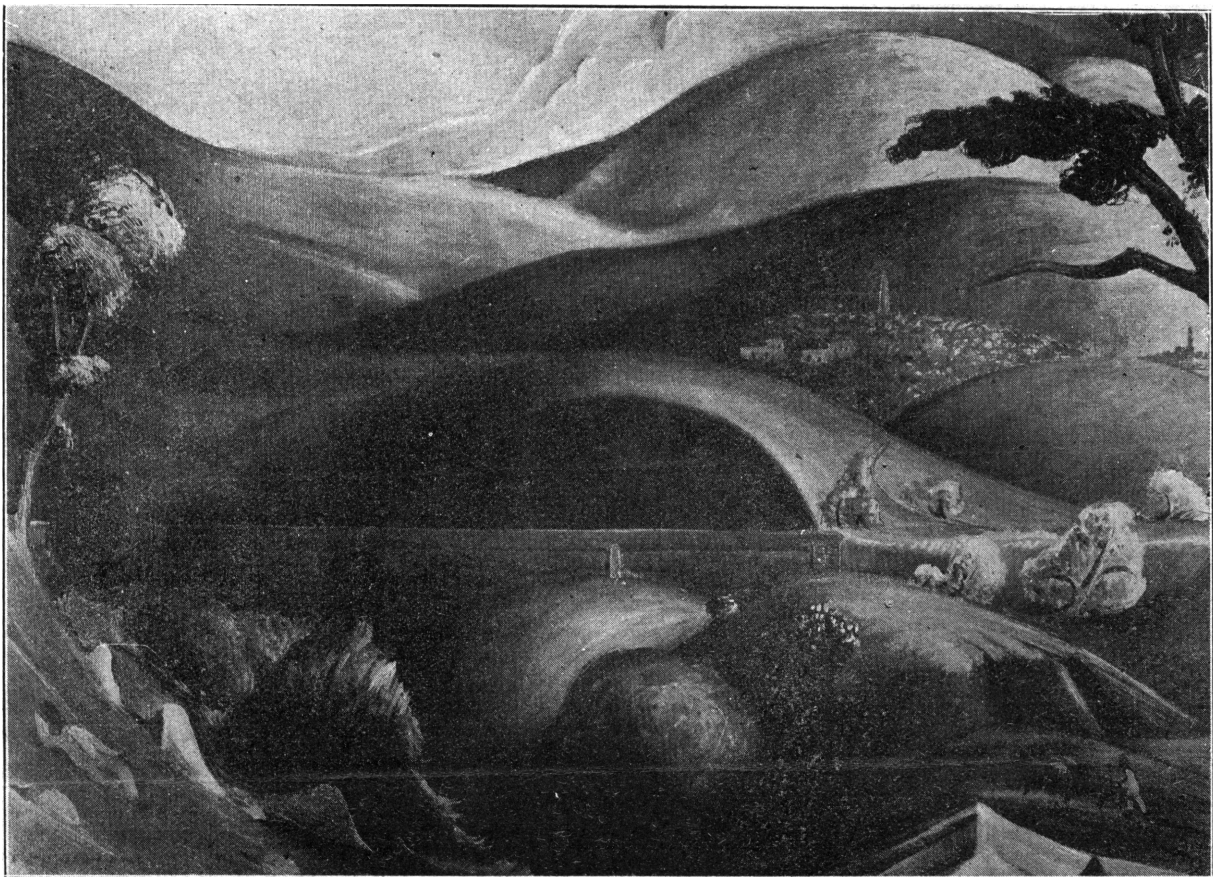
Sarapes, **rebozos**, and the same color of the skin are of few but essential tones: the color of earth, of straw, are those yellow ochres and reds which bring

about the resemblance of the face of the Indian to those secular masks of baked clay found in the pyramids, and the dresses of the women are of the same blue as the mountains on the horizon.

When I realized this beauty and the very simple elements composing it, I had to change my palette for humbler colors, and my artistic theories for simple admiration; deepening my knowledge of this beautiful people and producer of beauty, I began to re-study my profession, not with the prejudices of an "artist" nor a "cultured man," only with good will and gratitude. Some of my friends have done likewise, and from such a collection of works, something can be grasped; I believe it is simplicity. We no longer deal with theories, our intention is not to make noise to attract the buyer. Our only secret in working is to see nature with emotion, because it is really admirable, and to attempt to bring to our works some of its qualities for those people of good will who as yet live fictitious lives, because joy is not to be found in the possession of money, nor in luxury, nor in refined thoughts. We shall find it in the most common most depreciated things which have no value in the market, to the end of adjusting ourselves, that we may live in harmony with our bodies, our companions, the animals and the objects which surround us.



A Wood Carving



A Landscape